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The process of change

by Aereopagus

When the topic of conversation turns to our Grand Lodge, the question is often posed, "How does one bring a motion or resolution to our Annual Grand Lodge Communication?"

It is the duty of our Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence to consider and report to Grand Lodge on such questions, papers and decisions relating to masonic law and usage as may be referred to it.

If a member of Grand Lodge wishes our jurisdiction to take specific action or direction in regards to its practices, it is his responsibility to submit a written resolution to this committee.

This isn't difficult. The author should not concern himself with precise phrasing but simply present the intent of the resolution and a reasoned justification or explanation.

An important point is that resolutions must be received in our Grand Secretary's office prior to February 1, 2003. The

sooner in advance of this date, the better: unless the phrasing is precise and proper, the committee will need time to review submitted resolutions and to discuss any concerns they may have regarding masonic usage.

If a member wishes to bring a motion to Grand Lodge that will change our *Constitutions*, he must submit it to the Committee on Constitution. It is the duty of this committee to examine all proposed amendments to the *Constitutions* to confirm that they are in accordance with strict masonic usage.

Although any member of Grand Lodge is entitled to bring a motion before Grand Lodge, it is historically demonstrated that resolutions brought to the committees by a lodge have a better chance of succeeding. While healthy discussion at the lodge and district level should be encouraged, brethren are reminded of our *Constitutions'* edict



Number three in an occasional series of historical masonic lodge halls: Figgard Street, Victoria.

regulating circular letters.

Brethren submitting resolutions and motions are required to forward them to our Grand Secretary's office. ■

September to open the US Congressional session held in New York to commemorate the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Cuba's freemasons have seen their ranks more than double since the 1980s to some 29,000 members in more than 316 lodges. Earlier this year, the Cuban government gave permission for two new lodges, the first since 1967.

A new book has been written by Patricia Cornwell, entitled *Portrait of a Killer; Jack the Ripper Case Closed*. The author purports to present hard evidence that the Whitechapel murders were committed by the world famous artist, Walter

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Our masonic world

More than \$125,000 has been donated by the freemasons of Ohio to support the athletes who participated in the 2002 Ohio Special Olympics Summer Games in Columbus in June.

The Washington Bible, originally of **St. Johns Lodge No. 1**, was used this past



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Sickert.

Dr. S. Brent Morris, noted masonic author, and Steven C. Bullock, author of *Revolutionary Brotherhood*, recently discussed Freemasonry on the National Public Radio show *Public Interest*, broadcast to 30 public radio stations across America and on the Internet.

Duke of Connaught Lodge No. 64, in North Vancouver, will be celebrating ninety years this Tuesday December 17th with a festive seasonal dinner provided by the International Order of Job's Daughters, Bethel No. 9. Children under 12 years are free; tickets are available at 604-986-2357.

Aurora Lodge No. 30, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is planning a special evening next August, when they will perform a modified French Rite degree in German. This will coincide with the 100th Jubilee of the Harley Davidson Motor Co.

Some 300 mourners, perhaps half of whom were freemasons, assembled recently to say goodbye to RW Bro. Lorimer "Dale" Dickson (1931-2002), Past Master of **Kamloops Lodge No. 10**, who served as property manager of the Kamloops Masonic Temple Association for twenty-two years.

The Grand Lodge of Russia is to be congratulated for its continued growth since its



Through life but few
can go
Without some touch
of woe.

W Bro. Palmer Cox

constitution in 1995. Only two years ago **Pacific Rim Lodge No. 13** was warranted and this past July **Alpha Omega Lodge No. 23** was warranted, representing ten new lodges in two years. ■

Electing Junior Grand Wardens

by W Bro. Jon H. Broadberry

I want to outline concerns about the respect for the Grand Master's office, the responsibility of the brethren for it, and issues related to electing its incumbents. My goal is to articulate opinion, motivate discussion, and generate action on the floor of Grand Lodge.

I must emphasize at the outset that I support the widely held position that the office, regardless of the quality of its incumbent, deserves all the respect we can afford it. It is a symbol of the craft itself — to show it disrespect is to belittle the order we cherish. And since one of the chief responsibilities of that office is the maintenance of the harmony and unity of an institution whose tenets address some of the most basic needs and beliefs of our civilization, it follows that our members need to behave toward our leadership in a way that supports that unity and harmony. Furthermore, the office of Grand Master is the repository of ultimate authority in the governance of the jurisdiction. Behaviour, therefore, which diminishes that authority, has the effect of reducing the effectiveness of our government.

At the start, I referred to a "widely held" position, implying that the position is not universally held. I mean that there are those who are dubious about the degree of respect that the office of Grand Master should be shown. This

lack of confidence about the worth and nature of the office stems from many sources.

Perhaps the source least worthy of serious attention is simple lack of involvement. Many members do not bother to participate in organized Freemasonry at all. Why? They may be on their way to demit or suspension. Freemasonry may not be for them what they hoped it would be. They may have been slighted, mistreated, or ignored. Others will continue to pay dues to support principles they believe in but are not able or willing to actively promote in the organization itself. However, even this source of disrespect for the Grand East merits the question, is there anything that can be done by our leadership to increase their participation — to merit the confidence they once showed, at their initiation into our noble Craft?

Another source of disrespect is lack of interest. These members may attend, but not actively. Their reasons may be personal. They may be burdened by a misplaced sense of duty or obligation, or they may have failed to make a "daily advancement in masonic knowledge." Or their lodge may have failed them or have pressured them prematurely to accept responsibilities for which they were not prepared.

A more serious source is lack of respect from active members. These men have run into difficulties either of their own making or of others. Insofar as their difficulties have external causes, they are of two sorts. Either there has been ineffective leadership, or the very structure of our organization is at fault. This last is a most profound issue of great urgency, but it cannot be dealt with here. Suffice it to say that even a cursory analysis of the issues relating to the governance of our gentle Craft reveals a widening rift beneath the surface. We ignore it at our peril.

It should by now be clear that the leadership of the Craft is faced with mounting challenges. Those who aspire to positions of leadership need increasingly to be endowed with a wide range of attributes. They shoulder heavy and ever-greater responsibilities, not the least of which is to merit, by their quality and performance, the respect that their office is accorded.

It is crucial to remember that in this jurisdiction the incumbent of the office of Grand Master is elected, and so represents the enfranchised brethren. Therefore the quality of leadership in the Grand East is the responsibility of the brethren. If the brethren have that responsibility, then they have the right to be able to exercise that right to the best of their ability.

Granted that the brethren have the right, how then shall they be empowered to exercise it? They need to be able to make an informed decision. How should they be able to obtain that information? This is a particularly thorny problem in this jurisdiction. Geographically, we are one of the most extensive in the world. Our concentration of population and, traditionally, of masonic activity, is not central, so many talented brethren in the outlying regions are unknown there. Also, it seems, the vitality of freemasonry is declining in the metropolitan centres, by comparison with that of "younger" centres, so we should bring on board their emerging leaders. The involvement of younger men should be encouraged, but they have often not had the opportunity or time to become well known. Frustration is on the rise and pressure is mounting to respond to these needs.

There is, however, a serious issue here — that of preserving harmony. This is important because ours is an institution that deals with matters which are close to men's souls, and

which are of most profound importance to the future of our society and our civilization. Let us look at how we get information on which we base our vote.

The process leading to election begins when, after soul-searching, encouragement from peers, and waiting for the right moment, a man announces his decision to let his name stand for election to the "Grand South." He must believe in himself, and he must have the support of others. His closest supporters will be the circles of those who know him personally — and the wider that is, the better. It was, traditionally, taken for granted that a candidate's masonic commitment, involvement, experience, and, consequently, the size of his acquaintanceship in Grand Lodge, would suffice as the basis for the informed decision of that body of similarly committed, involved and experienced brethren who attend the annual communication. Today, that seems to be changing.

The next best source of information for those interested in the candidate is from those who are themselves personally acquainted with him. They are those whose actions speak to their conviction of his worth. This is "the tongue of good report," and it is here that the harmony problem can raise its head, if groups of supporters become pitted against each other.

The rest of the candidate's support will come from less personal sources. The office of the Grand Secretary publishes factual information about the candidates. They have the opportunity to briefly address the Annual Communication prior to balloting. Numbers of other methods have been proposed and experimented with, including candidates' forums, personal essays in the *Bulletin*, and the like. To the extent that any of them involve other brethren, a potential for

disharmony exists.

In the end it all boils down to one issue. There seems to be a rising level of frustration related to the needs of the brethren to be better informed about the qualities of the aspirants to the office of Junior Grand Warden. Concomitantly, there is an increasing danger that efforts to present these qualities to the brethren risk disharmony.

In the face of these tensions, the most dangerous course of action will be avoidance. The longer we put off dealing with the issue, the more serious the problem will grow. At the very least there needs to be active and in-depth study of the issue at the Grand Lodge level. ■

Two-year terms

by RW Bro. Stephen Godfrey

The proposal:

To extend the term of office of the Deputy Grand Master and the Grand Master to two years, thereby eliminating the position of Junior Grand Warden and Senior Grand Warden as elected positions.

Statement:

The history of this jurisdiction has shown, especially in the past ten years, that electing four different brethren to hold the grand line offices, creates programme after programme which have life expectancies of one year. Where single-year plans were beneficial for our jurisdiction in the past, today they do not work. With the continued loss of membership, and the high demand monetarily from our membership to cover costs, we are in need of a stabilization of programmes and a clear focus on the future. Ten-year goals, which meet our visions for the future are a minimum. It would be more prudent therefore, as a starting point, to reduce our elected officers of the grand line from four to two. By doing

so we have a better chance for two men to combine their ideas and plans and see them through a four year cycle, rather than the one or two year cycle which is now the case.

Supporting the argument.

The Grand Master, having two years to work through his mandate, would be in a position to reduce his traveling time through the province by half each year. He could spend more time working in committee and with brethren seeing his plan put to work.

The Grand Master would have time to listen to proposals for future plans, and, with the Deputy Grand Master, to create committees whose mandate could be from two to four years in length rather than the present single year.

The Deputy Grand Master would be in a position to familiarize himself with the plans of the Grand Master, and to see that his own schedule, when the Grand Master completes his years of office, continues the work of the Immediate Past Grand Master. At least it would allow one further year for work not completed.

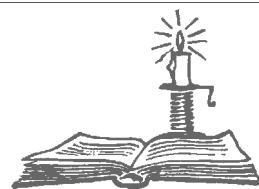
At the end of the Deputy Grand Master's two-year mandate, as Grand Master he could allow for further work on the plans of his predecessor for another two years.

The role of the GM would become more balanced. Ceremonial work, important to the position, would be better balanced with executive work to continue to plan for the future of the jurisdiction.

There would not be changes of programme each year. Rather, there could be two-year themes, initiatives, and special committees.

Disadvantages of the proposal.

As a jurisdiction the selection of a Deputy Grand Master would have to be looked at very carefully, knowing full well that there



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would be just one opportunity to elect him "out of office" if he was shown to be an inappropriate choice for the full term.

Should that occur, there would be a glitch in the system, for a new Grand Master could then be elected from the floor of Grand Lodge and might not necessarily have plans in place for his two years.

How many brethren could financially afford two years in this position? At the moment the years as Junior Grand Warden, Senior Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and Grand Master, tend to be at a cost of about \$200,000 with the Grand Master's year taking probably half of that. Would costs be the same for a two-year term Deputy Grand Master and Grand Master, or more?

Is there anyone willing to stay in this position for two years? Possibly not, especially if the brother is elderly. Would he have the strength to survive the long haul?

Resolved:

That the Grand Master establish a committee to survey the jurisdiction for the opinion of brethren on the proposal of electing a Deputy Grand Master and Grand Master for two years each, thereby eliminating the present four one-year terms of office. ■



OUR MASONIC WORLD

Manitoba

The stiff winds may blow freely over Lake Winnipegosis, but the stiff winds of change are having a tougher time with the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, judging by that jurisdiction's 2001 *Proceedings*.

The annual Grand Lodge Communication was some distance to the west of windy Winnipegosis, in Brandon, on

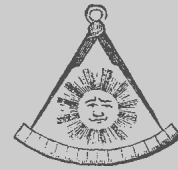
June 1, and was presided over by MW Bro. Rick Porter, who has graced our Grand Lodge with his presence. He laid it on the line: "We must change in order to be relevant. We will change in order to survive.... To those who oppose change because it wasn't their idea, I say shame...Freemasonry in Manitoba is in too fragile a state to tolerate any more time-wasting and empire-building."

His comment was echoed by the retiring Grand Secretary: "the problem is as simple as conflicting egos and goals."

He reported membership in Manitoba stood at 4,488 at the end of 2000, a drop of 296. Deaths more than doubled initiations.

The freemasons of Manitoba are equally as blunt as their Grand Master. A proposal was made to raise the per capita \$2, partly to increase the Grand Lodge officers' travel budget from \$18,000 to \$27,000. One outraged lodge drafted a response: "Grand Lodge is fiscally irresponsible because it practices extravagance beyond logic" and described it as "a body that closely resembles a mediaeval king and his court." This was countered with the thought that "Commitment to masonic principles and the organization has to be worth \$2." Others remarked \$2 was not enough, considering Grand Lodge ran a \$7,000 deficit. Still another came up the theory that BC would not recognize Manitoba if its officers didn't travel. In the end, the increase was approved.

There was more impassioned discussion over a Constitutional amendment to conduct the whole installation in the EA degree, with the Installed Master's secrets given at another time. The winds of change didn't blow too hard here and the motion was defeated. One Past Grand Master stated it would be undignified to confer any of the installation in the EA degree, which would be news to the



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY DECEMBER, 2002

10 Tues	Christmas Dinner	Vancouver Cemetery Association
13 Fri	Meeting	Board of General Purposes Vancouver
14 Sat	District No.14	Meridian Lodge No.108 Vancouver

founders of his own Grand Lodge.

Manitoba does much good. They have a Cancer Car programme, but with a \$6 user fee attached. Financial cuts by the Cancer Society have ended the rural driver programme. They donated \$42,000 in special projects in 2000. They have an annual workshop for Senior Wardens and have even produced a free CD of music to lodges to use in their ceremonies.

As in British Columbia, lodge summonses may be sent by e-mail, and their version of our Bulletin is available on their web site. Unlike BC, they now accept advertising. Tasteful ads only, we're assured.

The Junior Grand Warden was elected by acclamation. Manitoba has an efficient voting system for membership on the Board of General Purposes — polling stations are set up and open from 8:00 am-11:30 pm.

With some regret, it was noted 239 requests came to our Grand Lodge office for the COMELY programme (to keep in touch with Manitoba freemasons here). There were only five replies.

Various grand dignitaries spoke, including our own MW Bro. W.O. Walls, who was Senior Grand Warden at the time. He even joked about the travel expense discussion, pointing out Manitoba gave up Yukon Lodge No. 45 to our Grand Lodge and it cost him \$2,700 to visit there, so Manitoba may want to have

the lodge back.

The *Proceedings* also contain Fraternal Reviews, as BC's did for many years under the caustic pen of the late MW Bro. W.A. Dewolf-Smith. BC was not reviewed, so perhaps his pen was a little too caustic those many years ago. ■

Review by VW Bro. Jim Bennie, PM, Lodge Southern Cross No. 44

We can help

The following letter has been received from a grade four student at Norquay Elementary School:

"On Friday my brother, sister and my cousin were eating pears after dinner. My cousin choked on a piece of pear. Nobody knew what to do, I had to think fast. I took my cousin and I gave him abdominal thrusts. After one and a half minutes the piece of pear came out and then my aunty gave me a hundred dollars for saving his life."

The "we Can Help Program" has saved another life. ■

Nota bene

Due to the theft of your editor's computer, complete with the back-up disk in the drive, brethren who submitted articles and notes, or registered with the Masonic Internet Directory in the month of October, are asked re-submit or re-register, as the case may be.

We apologize for any inconvenience. ■