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# Nature of the Craft

by MW Bro. Neil Neddermeyer, Minnesota

An age old question that has plagued many for centuries has to do with the fundamental nature of the Craft. Three questions that continually need to be considered are: Who do we think we are? Who does the public think we are? And truly who are we?

We seem to have divided ourselves in the following three groups:

### Group A

This group believes that we are a social club and a support group. They believe that the Craft exists for bonding through events that are both member and family oriented. They support our concordant and appendant bodies and are very much in favour of public relations and new member initiatives. They may feel that the lessons learned from the ritual and the public charities that we support are valid but the main reason for us to exist is for fun and fellowship.

### Group B

This group feels that our sole function should be to support our philanthropies and our community service programmes. It may be apparent to them that masonic fellowship and teachings are compelling, but they are necessary in order to have an organization in place for the continuation of public giving.

### Group C

These members of the Craft are involved primarily to receive masonic light. They believe that the histories and philosophies of Freemasonry are the principal reasons for our existence. They may feel that the best way to increase our membership is through word of mouth and that the mystery of the Craft is what sets us apart from other organizations. They seek introspection and edification.

These three groups represent the reasons that

## IN MEMORIAM



### M.:W.: Bro. Claude Alfred John Green

**MARCH 11, 1904 ~ SEPTEMBER 7, 2003**  
**GRAND MASTER 1957~1958**

Initiated June 14, 1927 Temple Lodge No. 33  
Passed August 30, 1927  
Raised September 27, 1927  
Life Member

Affiliated July 2, 1954 Sidney Lodge No. 143  
Affiliated April 12, 1961 Admiral Lodge No. 170  
Honourary Member

Affiliated January 11, 1988 North Star No. 167  
Honourary Member

Senior Grand Deacon 1949-1950  
District Deputy Grand Master District No. 1 1950-1951  
Representative for the Grand Lodge of Washington 1951  
Vice-president Banff Conference 1957

Born in Harrow, England, MW Bro. Greene moved to Duncan, BC where he worked as a painting contractor specializing in industrial work. Little interested in politics, he was chairman of the Duncan Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1938.

He was an active athlete in his youth, rowing bow for the winning team of the Rowing Championship of the North of France in 1920. During his term as Grand Master he still played the occasional game of cricket. Married to Ms. Edna Francis Castley in the Church of England in 1928, they had two children: a son and daughter.

many of us give for  
Freemasonry to exist, namely  
Brotherly Love, Relief, and

Truth. These three groups are  
often at odds with each other

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## Nature of the Craft from page one

as to how the Craft should be managed and led. This becomes apparent when new ideas are explored and old customs are challenged. Of course the lines of definition that separate the three groups are sometimes vague and we may individually change our thoughts as to who we are over time. Many true freemasons, however, feel that we can equally serve all three beliefs. This is not, however, as easy as it seems.

Non-members who examine the Craft may feel that these three concepts do not dispel rumors or false accusations that have been directed towards Freemasonry. They may feel that our purposes are not clear and that more explanation is needed. We have adopted a more definitive slogan that the public can more easily understand and can identify with. This motto comes from hundreds of years of masonic tradition and explains much as to who we are and what we stand for. The motto is simply "Religious Tolerance, Political Freedom, and Personal Integrity".

There is a need for each one of us to have a working definition of what Freemasonry is, not only as an explanation to others but also to ourselves. Each of us needs to decide what we personally feel the Craft is and how we fit in to it. We need to respect the



It should give pleasure  
to us all  
To aid the weak or those  
who fall.

W Bro. Palmer Cox

opinions of other freemasons who may not see the Craft in the same light. The fundamental nature of the Craft may be as simple as Tolerance, Freedom and Integrity. You decide. ■

*Reprinted from Cinosam, 9/25/03 as part of a keynote speech presented by MW Bro. Neil Neddermeyer, Grand Master of Minnesota, at the 2003 Shrine Membership Seminar in Tampa, Florida.*

## Cable's length

The cable, or cable's length, is indeed a unit of marine measurement, defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "about 100 fathoms; in marine charts 607.56 feet, or one-tenth of a sea-mile." The same work quotes several examples of the early use of this term, the earliest being dated 1555. It may be assumed that this distance from shore was specified in our ritual to ensure that whatever was buried there would be irrecoverable. ■

*Reprinted from the Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076 notice for September 2003.*

## Lodge notes

On 24 May, 2003 twelve members of **District 7**—four being cancer survivors—participated in the Haley Park Relay for Life by pushing the cancer survivors around Haley Track in the District 7 roadster, a replica of a Cancer Car, while two well-known members handed out Cancer Car Project leaflets. Their team raised \$2,400 of the total \$76,000 raised that day.

The car—built by RW Bro. Al Martin—was taken over by the Job's Daughters of Bethel No. 4 and friends who then provided rides for the children.

Later in the summer, the masonic family participated in Salmo's Canada Day parade with **Ymir Lodge No. 31**

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**It is not our part  
to master all the  
tides of the world,  
but to do what is in  
us for the succour  
of those years  
wherein we are set,  
uprooting the evil  
in the field that we  
know, so that those  
who live after may  
have clean earth to  
till.**”

**Mithrandir**  
SR 1419

entering an old car with Cancer Car signs on the doors. The Job's Daughters of Bethel 4 carried their banner in front of the District 7 roadster, driven by the Honored Queen and pushed by freemasons, while others distributed leaflets.

Next, in clown costumes, were the Castlegar-Salmo Shriners riding on small open trailers, the Kettle Falls, Washington, Shriners in mini-cars and members of the Northwest Shrine Club from Spokane.

On this occasion the District 7 roadster was sporting the square and compasses emblem from the front of **Corinthian Lodge No. 27's** lodgehall as



The District 7 roadster.

well as two square and compasses embossed metal ceiling tiles which had been recovered and repaired after their lodgehall in Rosland had burnt to the ground in 1976.

Sponsored and organized by **Rainbow Lodge No. 180**, Port Hardy, this year's Filomi Days Kids' Fishing Derby saw fifty-five children participating. The members of the lodge and members of Eastern Star Polaris Chapter No. 98 ably assisted while many local businesses donated prizes and helped promote this popular community event.

W Bro Michael T. Spence, Worshipful Master of **Centennial-King George Lodge No. 171**, Richmond, would like to remind the lodges of Districts 20, 25 and 26 that his lodge has been holding the Talking Stick for years, and it's about time one of the other lodges claimed it. A replica of a stick presented to MW Bro. H. C. MacNeill in 1967, the Talking Stick can be claimed by the Master of any of the lodges of these districts if accompanied by six members of his lodge. There are several other rules attached to making a claim but at bottom this is a device to encourage visiting outside of the usual round of installations and official visits.

**Composite Lodge No. 76**, Vancouver, invites the masonic family to an Appreciation Party for MW Bro. William Ord Walls and his wife, Jackie, on Saturday, 8 November, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at 1495 West Eighth Avenue, Vancouver.

Dress is jacket and tie—no regalia or tuxedos. Please carpool if possible.

A donation of a large golden square and compasses, left over from an Arts Club production of *Amadæus* at the Stanley Theatre in 2000 was recently arranged by Bro. Giles Goulding of **Maple Leaf Lodge No. 74**. Currently on display on the third floor at 1495 West Eighth Avenue, Vancouver, it is available for loan from the lodge for special functions by contacting Bro. Goulding at 604-722-9742.

**Tsawwassen Lodge No. 185** was pleased to see their Immediate Past Master, W Bro. John Laing, receive recognition in a recent issue of the *Globe and Mail*. An old hand at the job, W Bro. Laing spent this past summer flying air-tankers (water bombers to the rest of us) over the forest fires that forced some 8,000 people to flee their homes in the BC Interior.

**Prince Charles Lodge No 153**, Kelowna, recently entertained W Bro. Chuck Powell, a visiting fireman from Wainwright Alberta, who was stationed with the army in Vernon. ■

## Summer fires

by *RW Bro. C. Graham McAllister*

On 16 August, 2003 lightning struck a remote area of Okanagan Mountain Park near Squally Point across from Peachland. What appeared to the passerby as a minor fire that would be quickly extinguished by a couple of passes of a water bomber less than a week later had spread south to the outskirts of Naramata and east some 15 km into the outskirts of Kelowna.

After high winds in the evening of 22 August the fire had consumed 253 homes and

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**In simplest terms, a leader is one who knows where he wants to go, and gets up, and goes.** ”

John Erskine

30,000 residents—nearly a third of the population of Kelowna—were evacuated from their homes.

The families of about thirty members of **St George's Lodge No. 41** and **Prince Charles Lodge No. 153** were evacuated from their homes into motels, hotels or to stay with friends. The fire spared the homes of most of the brothers but unfortunately Bro. Rusty Brackin's and Bro. Rod McDowell's homes were destroyed by the fire.

Throughout this adversity freemasons rose to the occasion and lived up to their motto "Freemason's Care". Many brethren from both lodges opened their doors to invite displaced families into their homes. Others volunteered at the two evacuation centres set up in the city to arrange for lodging, food and care of the evacuated families. Many brethren who are ex-RCMP members were seen assisting in traffic control and patrolling the accesses to the evacuated areas, ensuring no one entered. The Cancer Project car was used to relocate some people from the Kelowna Cancer Lodge to make room for evacuees, if necessary.

Through the well coördinated efforts of the Emergency Services Branch, the City of Kelowna, numerous volunteers, including our brothers, the evacuation, lodging, feeding and protection of the evacuees went smoothly and no lives were lost through this disaster.

As one of the Evacuees, let me say "Thanks — well done!" on behalf of all of us who were forced from our homes. ■

*RW Bro. C. Graham McAllister is DDGM for District 9.*

## North to Inuvik

The consecration ceremony for **Far North Lodge No. 199**, GRA has been set for 3 July, 2004 at Inuvik, NWT. A planned air charter from Southern Alberta with stops along the way at Edmonton and Yellowknife is scheduled to arrive at Inuvik on 1 July, 2004.

As this will be Canada Day all visitors are being encouraged to take part in Canada Day celebrations. On 2 July, 2004 local tours are being arranged and the main event will take place on 3 July, 2004 with the consecration ceremony held in the early afternoon and a banquet and dance following in the evening. As this is prime tourist season prices will not be cheap and Far North Lodge will be renting all facilities. A block of hotel rooms has been reserved and will be handled by the registration committee. As well campground facilities will be included for those who wish to drive the Dempster Highway which is accessible from Alberta, BC and Alaska through Whitehorse and Dawson City, Yukon. The Dempster Highway is an all-weather gravel road that can accommodate all types of vehicles including motor homes, provided good tires and a lot of common sense prevails. The scenery along this route is spectacular.

Another air charter is being organized—from Whitehorse to Inuvik early on the morning of 1 July, 2004 and returning to Whitehorse on 4 July. In order for this to happen it will be necessary to have 108 passengers. The price per person will be \$428 (including taxes) return. Failing the air charter, a bus charter is considered with a

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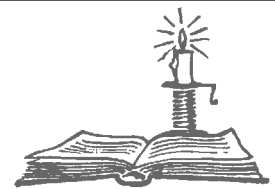
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*The Library at Grand Lodge*

preliminary price of \$325 per person. For information on transportation beyond Whitehorse please contact RW Bro. Tom Mickey by email at <tmickey@polarcom.com>, phone +1-867-633-6870 or fax +1-867-633-2342. Once the website <www.master-mason.com/FarNorthMasons> is online and the registration forms are available, you are urged to reserve early.

The Grand Master of BC and Yukon is planning a District Visit to District 11 which will take place at Dawson City, Yukon. It is expected that this will occur after the Inuvik event. Air North—Yukon's Airline—flies a six day schedule from Vancouver to Whitehorse return at a cost of \$390 per person plus taxes on a 14 day advance ticket. ■

## Excluding women

Are we justified in excluding women? The Grand Orient of France has formally recognized them. We call their lodges clandestine but it is difficult to define this epithet in any other way than as denoting a lodge not in friendly relations with the particular Grand Lodge to which we ourselves owe allegiance. In 1921, formal application for recognition was made by a Co-Masonic Grand Lodge to the Grand Lodge of England. The application was rejected, as we know—but there were those who voted in favour of it.

What are the objections commonly urged against the acknowledgment of women as 'fit and proper persons?'

(a) That they never have been admitted. Waiving the reply that this is not quite correct as a matter of history, a suitable rejoinder might be made that the working classes at one time had not the parliamentary franchise, while today it is their absolute right. And similarly, women are rapidly

receiving the same privilege of the suffrage, in one country after another.

(b) But there is the danger of improprieties. The feminist answer to this is surely easy. There is exactly the same danger in countless other associations of the sexes;—and we get occasional disclosures of the misdoings of ministers of religion, choir women, and Sunday School teachers. Will it be argued that therefore we should have separate churches for the sexes? (I think I know which would be empty).

The truth is, within the next few years this serious problem will have to be faced. The feminist is knocking at the door. We shall not be prudent if we ignore the demand. We shall not be exhibiting temperance of action if we refuse to discuss the claim; nor fortitude if we run away from a situation bristling with difficulties; nor justice if we give an adverse decision without giving reasons.

As a parting shot, the feminist asks, 'If a woman is good enough to be our mother or our wife, can she be less worthy to be a - well, a 'sister,' I suppose. What is the answer? I do not want to admit women, but I have not succeeded in finding an apt reply to that question. ■

*Excerpted from a paper delivered by Bro. Rev. E. H. Wyatt to United Masters Lodge No. 167, Auckland in February, 1929.*

## The effective master

A Worshipful Master newly installed has two options for his year. He can continue along the path that previous leaders of his lodge have traveled and by doing so, receive congratulations from many members that the his year was a great success. Or he can take the path less travelled and move in new directions. He may receive



### GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY NOVEMBER, 2003

1	Sat	District No. 28	Landmark Lodge No. 128	Maple Ridge
6	Thu	International Night	Lafayette Lodge No. 241	Seattle
7	Fri	Principal Officers Meeting		Vancouver
7	Fri	District No. 23	Cloverdale Lodge No. 168	Langley
8	Sat	District No. 16	Aviation Lodge No. 175	Richmond
14	Fri	District No. 5	Ashlar Lodge No. 3	Nanaimo
15	Sat	District No. 21	Malahat Lodge No. 107	Mill Bay
21	Fri	Installation	Ymir Lodge No. 31	Salmo
22	Sat	50th Anniversary	Sentinel Lodge No.146	Castlegar
25	Tue	Blighty Night	Comox Lodge No. 188	Comox

some questionable support. Either way, members of the lodge will applaud him or denounce him. The path of a Worshipful Master can be a rocky road to travel. Yet the philosophy of Freemasonry should be one of listening to our teacher—to his instructions—and to work his plans for the better of the lodge. We are taught that at high twelve our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff, entered the Sanctum Sanctorum or House of Holies to offer up prayers to the Great Architect of the Universe. It was his custom, in order that he might receive instructions for the building. So, allegorically, we are taught to find time to contemplate our plans: personal, masonic, and vocational.

Worshipful Masters are therefore competent freemasons, having spent years in preparation for their year of service as a leader. The master who comes unprepared for his year has no excuse. Work of the three degrees has laid out the plan for all good freemasons to follow. He should have spent time to advance in knowledge each day; used the twenty-four inch gauge to learn to spend time wisely; used the gavel to become more effective in his work. What kind of leader am I then if I repeat the

previous years of service others have spent crafting? Have I, as master of the lodge, truly contemplated a plan which fits the brethren's needs today? Is what was done ten years ago just as important for today's generation of Master Masons?

The true leader of freemasons has his understanding of the needs of the workmen and applies plans to fit them. So, when the time comes for the brethren to elect a brother to the office of Worshipful Master, they have placed in his hands the life of the lodge for a year, expecting good and wholesome instructions for their labours, and in the knowledge that he has been effective in building his knowledge of the lodge culture and can see his instructions and plans continuing to help build a superstructure which will last for years to come—a beautiful edifice worthy of his year as master.

John Erskine points out that the journey to lead will indeed be simple. But there is some homework involved. ■

*Supplied by RW Stephen Godfrey for the Leadership Committee.*

**The portrait in our previous issue, purportedly of masonic author Dr. James Anderson, was taken from A.E. Waite's A New Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry. In fact Waite had mistakenly reproduced an engraving of the economist, Dr. James Anderson (1739-1808).**