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Is your house in order?

by VW Bro. M. Flikweert, St. Lawrence District, Ontario

The Grand Treasurer of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, RW Bro. Thomas W. Hogeboom, recently presented a session entitled 'Is Your House in Order?' He wanted to speak about the physical lodge itself, its financial strength, its buildings and the financial foundation that supports it.

He said he hoped to encourage his listeners to return to their lodge with some idea how to make their lodge a better place to be. It is the responsibility of each lodge or building society not only to pay the day-to-day expenses of the building but to develop a plan to establish and accrue capital funds to be applied to planned preventive annual and emergency maintenance for the renewal and replacement when the needs arise in the future both long and short term.

Our masonic buildings need to be run as a business. As with any small business, the

management of our buildings faces a constant challenge to keep abreast of ever burgeoning legislation on employment, health and safety, fire safety, food safety, disability, discrimination, and others. Non-compliance can result in civil and criminal legal proceedings potentially resulting in fines and damaging adverse publicity for the hall and Freemasonry.

He elaborated further on important issues of safe buildings, food safety, smoking ordinances, health safety, and fire safety, and said that members, especially new members, "expect our buildings to be safe and healthy."

In Ontario, the Grand Lodge has directed that all lodges and building societies must begin the process of seeking current compliance to all fire, health, safety and municipality code requirements.

Switching to other financial issues, the Grand Treasurer



With the support of the British Columbia Masonic Foundation, 'Ashlar', a Yellow Labrador Retriever, has begun his training with the BC & Alberta Guide Dog Services

stated that "many lodges have a dues structure that is under funded." "A reasonable Initiation fee and annual dues," he said, "is expected, because new candidates truly believe that you get what you pay for." They believe that dues should be based on current and future requirements, not on a 1960s cost of living index. Fifty dollars in 1960 has the same buying power as three hundred and thirteen in 2012. The majority of our lodges today maintain a

dues structure that is insufficient to support the lodge and lodge property at a level that it previously enjoyed fifty years ago. The key to sound financing is a lodge budget. More and more lodges are adjusting their dues structure to meet their budget needs, and contrary to general concerns, the number of annual demits is not increasing as a result. Addressing the importance of

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VOLUME 76 / NUMBER 4

EDITED by Trevor W. McKeown for the Grand Secretary's Office and published by the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of British Columbia and Yukon. The VIEWS AND OPINIONS expressed in the *Masonic Bulletin* are those of the individual authors and writers, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of this Grand Lodge. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions. CORRESPONDENCE: 1495 West Eighth Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia V6H 1C9 Canada. WEB: <http://freemasonry.bcy.ca> TELEPHONE: +1-604-736-8941. FACSIMILE: +1-604-736-5097. EMAIL: editor@freemasonry.bcy.ca

Is your house in order?
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long range planning, finance committees, life membership funds, and dues in arrears, he advised everyone there to act now, and not to wait another year to "Get Your House In Order." Don't leave it to the next generation, who may not have the disposable resources to repair the neglect of today. ■

Excerpted from VW Bro. M. Flikweert's *Square and Compasses*, St. Lawrence District Newsletter, October 2012.

Grand Treasurer

RW Bro. Del W. Paterson, having been first elected as Grand Treasurer in 2008, will complete his fifth term this masonic year and will not be putting his name forward for election in 2013.

Qualified brethren who are interested in serving in the office of Grand Treasurer are asked to communicate with the Grand Secretary.

Section 26.2 of the *Book of Constitutions and Regulations* requires that the Grand Treasurer be elected without nomination. The duties of the Grand Treasurer are detailed in section R1. ■

In the news

Sgt. Scott Rempel, current commander of the Lake Country RCMP detachment and member of Miriam Lodge No. 20, was one of a number of men and women presented the Medal of Bravery by Governor General David Johnston at Ottawa's Rideau Hall this past October.

Bro. Rempel was one of four RCMP members honoured whose acts of bravery are a testament to the risks and the noble acts members perform

every day, not for recognition but out of a dedication to keeping Canadians safe.

In Cloverdale, the Police Officer of the Year Award, Nominated by Peers, went to Const. Mark Levesque, a member of Langley Lodge No. 184.

Due to his commitment and work ethic, Levesque was able to solve several outstanding theft cases, earning him the respect of his peers.

On the Island, W Bro. M.F. 'Skip' Whitfield of Malahat Lodge No. 107 has received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his work in founding the Submariners Association of Canada.

During 2012, the Queen's jubilee year, the medal is being presented to Canadians who have made a significant contribution to their community. ■

Masonic legends

by W Bro. Goran Ivankovic



In the time of the Roman emperor Diocletian (244-311), the city of Sirmium was one of four administrative centres of the empire, then organized as a tetrarchy.

Sirmium—today the Serbian city of Sremska Mitrovica—was placed between the rivers Sava and Danube in the province of Pannonia.

Legend tells us that Diocletian visited the city and mines, at which time he directed the builders of a Temple to Apollo to carve—from a single piece of stone—a statue of the sun-god *Apollo* sitting in his chariot. Although



Congratulations to RW Bro. Stephen W. Coffey, the first to correctly identify the photograph of the Burma Siam Railway bridge over the Mae Klong River near Tha Ma Kham—the inspiration for the film *The Bridge Over the River Kwai* (1957) and the subject of a recent BBC TV documentary on British Freemason, Bro. Gus Anckorn, subject of *Captivity, Slavery and Survival as a Far East POW: The Conjuror on the Kwai*. Many of the brethren of the River Valley Road POW Masonic Club in Singapore died whilst working on the railway. In yet another masonic angle to this story, W Bro. Angel De Fry, the engineer responsible for constructing the bridge used in the film, is a member of our Rainbow Lodge No. 180. ■

a reputed 622 workman and five philosophers were unable to find a single piece of suitable stone, before they were able to inform Diocletian of their failure, four stonemasons, Claudius, Castorius, Simphorianus, and Nicostratus found the perfect stone and, according to legend, they carved a statue 25 feet in height, much pleasing Diocletian. The emperor rewarded the four stone squarers and awarded them responsibility to make all the sculptures for the temple, including a sculpture of *Asclepius*, the god of health.

A related legend has another stoneworker, Simplicus, experiencing bad luck, daily damaging his tools and materials. He asks Claudius for help. According to masonic author Albert G. Mackey, Claudius took the work tools in his hands, and said: "In the

name of the Lord Jesus Christ be these tools henceforth strong and faithful to their work."

After that, the story goes, Simplicus became very successful and his tools unbreakable. Some time after that he was apprenticed to the four stone squarers. They completed the sculptures for the temple with the exception of *Asclepius*.

Being secretly Christians, for religious reasons they refused to make that particular sculpture, leading the overseers of the project to order other workers to carve the *Asclepius* sculpture. They then informed Diocletian that the job was complete but also telling him that it had not been done by his favorite workers. Diocletian ordered the tribune Lampadius to investigate the case. After five days of investigation Lampadius directed the four stone squarers to offer a sacrifice to the pagan god, which they refused. Lampadius had them scourged with scorpions. The legend continues that an hour later Lampadius was found dead on his seat of judgment, seized and killed by an evil spirit.

Diocletian, when he heard what had happened, ordered leaden coffins to be made and the stonecutters to be placed therein alive and be thrown into the river Sava. This order Nicetius, assistant of Lampadius, caused to be obeyed, and thus the faithful stonecutters suffered the penalty and gained the crowns of martyrdom.

There is a second legend, that two years later, Diocletian ordered that every Roman soldier in Rome must offer a sacrifice to *Asclepius*. Four ring-leaders of the city militia refused. They were ordered to be put to death in front of the image of *Asclepius* and their bodies cast into the streets to the dogs, where their bodies lay for five days.

According to Catholic

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legend, it is both these four soldiers and five stonecutters who are commemorated annually as the four crowned martyrs or *Quattro Coronati* on 8 November.

The first legend of the stonecutters led to their adoption as the unofficial patron saints for the operative stonemason guilds of Europe in much the same way that the two Saints John are venerated in the Ancient Work.

Why would operative stonemasons choose these martyrs for their patrons? Although the *Quattro Coronati* were soldiers and not stonecutters, the conflation of legends allowed them to be identified as speculative masons.

Some records of the legend

Media Liaison

In order to better assist Grand Lodge and individual Lodges in responding to media enquiries, current issues and public commentary the Grand Secretary, RW Bro. George Moore, in consultation with the Grand Master, has asked MW Bro. William R. Cave to act as our official Media Liaison Officer.

Lodges which may be approached for comment or response regarding current issues relating to Freemasonry are urged to refer those queries to the Grand Secretary's office for response. Those which require direct action will be referred to MW Bro. Cave for response. He will work in close consultation with the Grand Secretary and the Grand Lodge Committee on Community Relations to formulate and make appropriate response to such requests for comment or information from the media throughout our jurisdiction.

express the ideal of initiation where the good man Simplicus, through initiation, becomes a better man and therefore his actions in the profane world become more successful. The legend also gives an example of speculative symbolism regarding operative tools, whereby the tools become unbreakable when Simplicus gains faith and becomes an apprentice. By making Simplicus' tools unbreakable Claudius brought moral teaching which made Simplicus more faithful.

This new faith was so strong that he choose rather to sacrifice himself than obey Diocletian's order to offer sacrifice to *Asclepius* and with that act betray his new religion.

The legend is great example of the practice of truth, hope and charity, the martyrs living truthful lives and dying for their ideals. Their hope was in God. Their legend later instructed generations of Freemasons as a moral example of personal sacrifice and faith. ■

Gen X

by W Bro. Wes Regan

I've been asking the question of what's important to men of my generation who have been attracted to the Craft since I was initiated in 2008. At Grand Masonic Day 2010 I presented research that I had conducted—not the most scientifically rigorous, but thorough enough to get a good snapshot of the types of things that had drawn to Freemasonry men between the ages of mid-20s to early 40s.

Thirty younger Freemasons (and a few others) had responded to an online survey on Survey Monkey®, answering questions such as “who do you think is the ideal example of a Freemason?” and then listing names such as Tommy Douglas, Benjamin Franklin, Albert Pike, Franklin D Roosevelt, Prince Edward Duke of Kent, John Glenn, Sir Isaac Newton

(knowing that he has not been confirmed as a Freemason). Another question, “what era of Freemasonry are you most attracted to?” gave the choices of the Enlightenment, American and French Revolutionary era, Regency, Victorian and Edwardian, Modern era, Post WWII era and ‘The Best is Yet to Come’ era. Out of those two questions the clear winners were Benjamin Franklin, Sir Isaac Newton, The Enlightenment Era and the Best is Yet to Come.

When asking the brethren outright, “What do you feel attracted you to the Craft the most?” the top answer was:

“The potential for a forum to freely explore esoterica, philosophical and intellectual ideas in a safe and open minded environment,” followed by “self improvement and charity.”

Now, this is a small sample group—not the most scientific or statistically rigorous research, and it is research that I want to build on. Based on these limited findings and from the qualitative research of just talking frankly with younger members of the Craft, I truly feel that there are a couple of key things that we get out of being Freemasons.

Those of us born in the 1970s and 80s have grown up in a completely insane era, in a hyper-materialistic and fear-driven period that has seen a decline in the quality of nearly everything around us. The decline in our environment, our school system, the nutritional content of our food, the quality of political discourse, and the integrity of our institutions and their ability to meet the challenges we collectively face.

I know that every generation could say they were born into crazy times but I think the insanity has been clearly ratcheted up a couple of notches in the past thirty or forty years. That being said, many of my friends and I, and



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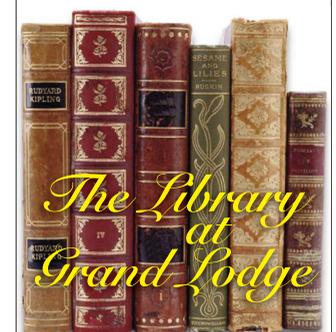


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brethren in my age group (let's say late 20s to late 30s) crave something genuine. We crave something meaningful. Something that isn't done for profit. Something that speaks to the nobler part of us that isn't nurtured in the realm of consumerist mass culture.

Some of us want to understand why the world (or the universe) is this way. And what real, genuine knowledge is there to seek? And we crave a sense of history, a sense of purpose and a sense of tradition that Freemasonry offers us. It's something to be proud of, and it's something that we appreciate for its rareness or exclusivity and the traditions or threads of other traditions that are contained within it.

Maybe it's because of my group of friends and professional associates with whom I spend time but I think we've come to a point in our western culture or western society where hope has been stolen from my generation, hope that we are still building something, hope that we're travelling together somewhere.

Something we used to call civilization, somewhere we called a future.

More than ever, we need innovative solutions, strong moral and ethical leaders, and truly humanist ideals to guide us. Many men throughout history who displayed an ability to innovate, who showed moral and ethical fortitude, grit and courage and a compassion for the human struggle and human condition were Freemasons whom I admired. They were

men in whose footsteps I knew I could be proud to follow and on whose work I could feel rewarded in building. Not to blow my life's work of just trying to be a decent person out of proportion, but I feel that this is a collective venture of building our communities, contributing to the body of knowledge, and generally working towards a better world.

To me Freemasonry, and the ideals of the enlightenment era in which it truly first flourished, are about the great task of exploring, of building, of understanding, of challenging the *status quo* of the time and propelling us into a greater knowledge of self, of where we come from, and what would be a useful way to spend our time while here in this world. Building, learning, searching, loving, caring and giving, perhaps these are the most useful ways to spend our time?

I believe strongly that many of us are drawn to the Craft because we are not getting what we need from the greater society surrounding us.

We've become cynical regarding organized religion, and there is no meaning in mindless consumerism. There is no meaning in just having a job, and there is no meaning in a world where we are constantly told that the future that awaits us is most likely dire and terrifying.

Anyone who cares, I'm sure, at one point has to step back and ask, what can I do? How can I deal with this reality and how can I effect change to make this world better? Can I



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY DECEMBER 2012

1 S International Night Lafayette Lodge No. 241 Shoreline, WA

be an example of how a good man tries to live in a bad world?

And it's not all bad, but I think, all in all, it's pretty bad.

I think with many of us it begins with trying to make ourselves better, build ourselves into a vehicle for change, a vehicle for moral integrity and intellectual growth so we feel better equipped to face the darkness and confusion of a world gone at the very least completely delusional. And within that building process is the very personal work of finding and nurturing our connection to the divine, that spark, and to the construction of our own personal cosmology, which at the end of the day provides the most complete relief.

Freemasonry gives us the tools to build both ourselves in the social sense and that cosmology in the spiritual sense. It is the most meaningful things in life that are celebrated in Freemasonry, those same things that are being thrashed, trashed and disrespected in the profane world. Much like we prepare ourselves "to be living stones for that house not built with hands, eternal in the heavens" I believe we are living stones right now for that world we live in. I didn't know until I became a Freemason, that what led me to become one was that I knew I was searching for something. Meaning. Inspiration. Identity. Sense of

self. Sense of purpose. A connexion. To be part of something. To know. Or at the very least to search far and wide. To be a part the great work of being a human, and building on the work of humans before me, setting up the ones who will come after me so that they can flourish and be inspired to reach further into the unknown and do what hasn't been done. To maybe do what those before us said could not be done.

To me, to be a Freemason is to engage in the work of building the self-actualized man, who in turn can build communities and contribute to that building of civilization, no matter how great or small ones contribution is, and the work of digging deep into the psyche of mankind, unearthing knowledge and history that one is unable to find in the din of modern mass culture, and reach further into the unknown with courage and humility.

What's important to me is that Freemasonry is able to contribute to the self improvement of men in every sense, the moral, spiritual, intellectual and social aspects of a man's life, so that those men in turn can be inspired and supported to make better communities and in turn build a better world with a better future. ■

Excerpted from an open letter to an informal masonic discussion group meeting in Kamloops this past autumn.

Nota bene

Reading of ritual

"Reading of the ritual by officers in our jurisdiction should not be tolerated, emergencies excepted. Memorization is the established practice in British Columbia and Yukon. Being forgetful or going blank while doing work is understandable and happens to us all. Putting in no effort is inexcusable and an insult to the dignity of our ancient fraternity. One officer must be assigned to give prompts when necessary."

Ritual Committee Report, 2012 Annual Proceedings