

*The heart may conceive and the head devise in vain if the hand be not prompt to execute the design.*



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# Building through participation

by MW Bro. Jack T. Harper, Grand Master for 2000-2001

BRETHREN, WHEN I stood before you for the first time three years ago, my strongest feelings were those of appreciation and humility. Now I stand before you today as your Grand Master, and realize that my feelings then were only half as strong as they are at this moment. You have placed your trust in me and I return the compliment by pledging my support for continuing growth in our fraternity.

So my address this afternoon will be about three things. It will be about improvement; it will be about working together; and, with luck, it will be about ten minutes.

This Annual Communication of Grand Lodge is a celebration of Freemasonry, symbolizing an end as well as a beginning, signifying continuance as well as renewal. Grand Masters before me have laboured long and hard to build upon our ancient foundations, knowing full well that the building is not yet complete. Last year our Grand Master stressed the

basics, something every organization needs to do periodically to appreciate its purpose. This year we will continue that approach, but our emphasis will be on growth and participation as we tackle new challenges and search for fresh solutions to old problems.

What basic principles are fundamental to this focus? There are four.

Firstly, knowledge. As Freemasons we can be better when we deepen our knowledge about our history and our mission and when we use this knowledge to confidently and enthusiastically present ourselves to the world.

Secondly, improvement. We can lessen the drift away from our Craft when we work hard on lodge improvement; when we have specific goals to strive for—goals that are written down for all to know; and when we have an on-going process of doing things, measuring the results, adjusting and moving on.

Thirdly, support. We can



M.:W.: Bro. Jack T. Harper, Grand Master of British Columbia and Yukon

make a difference when we become guides and role models for new members and when we support each other with mentorship initiatives in our Lodges.

And finally, attitude. As Freemasons we can benefit from a positive attitude towards meaningful change. We can create environments that encourage discussion of new ideas; we can actively welcome the voices of all Master Masons in our lodges and in this Grand Lodge Communication, and we can emphasize one of the basic building blocks of our order—namely the involvement of the many.

Four key principles of our focus then:

- Knowledge
- Improvement
- Support
- Attitude

Now Brethren, here are ten strategies to put these principles to work.

We can begin, by listening and talking to each other. In a world where the speed of change outside our Craft is greater than it is within, and where our membership is declining at an increasingly rapid rate, it is imperative to initiate a dialogue about our future. Therefore, we will establish a travelling **Masonic Commission** to conduct improvement workshops throughout this jurisdiction to focus on your ideas about what is important to our future. We will listen to your concerns and suggestions. We will act on the recommendations of the Masonic Commission. And we will build a common agenda for our future. I believe that the process used in these regional



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## Our Grand Master

from page one

meetings, one that encourages enlightened discussion, may prove to be as valuable in bringing our fraternity together as the information gathered.

Next, we can **create goals**. Your Grand Lodge Officers have been involved in developing the following six broad goals for the next three years, with plans to be acted upon by me and my successors:

1. Participation. We will actively promote an attitude of individual responsibility towards meaningful participation in the affairs of this fraternity.
2. Leadership. We will continue to focus on strengthening the leadership function in our lodges and Grand Lodge,
3. Communication. We will consciously work at improving our communication methods between Grand Lodge and our lodges and with each other,
4. Improvement. We will make improvement an on-going focus in all areas of Masonic endeavour.
5. The Masonic Family. We will strengthen the bond between the Craft and members of the Masonic Family
6. Image. We will encourage our brethren to be creative about ways in which we can heighten community awareness.



Let the day  
be dark or bright  
Keep the heart  
within you light.

W Bro. Palmer Cox

### OUR GRAND MASTER'S STATEMENT OF DIRECTION FOR 2000-2001

**OUR THEME: Building through participation.**

**OUR IDEAL: A Grand Lodge:** That provides quality service to our lodges and our members.

**Lodges:** Which are committed to Masonic growth.

**Freemasons:** Who are inspired by the Mission of Masonry.

**OUR FOCUS: Improvement:** So that our struggling Lodges can get going; our good Lodges can get better; and our better Lodges can become beacons.

If we are to be successful, every one of these goals involves every one of us. So my challenge to all of us, Brethren, is to roll up our sleeves and get started.

A third strategy centres on **leadership**. Because of their huge success, we will continue the leadership seminars. However, expanding this concept is vital to our development. Therefore, in addition to the Committee's planned workshops in Whitehorse and Vancouver, a pilot leadership programme, open to all Master Masons, will be presented in Salmon Arm by a leadership team from the Interior

There is a story about a Brother who, after his wife died, went to live with his daughter in another state. When he passed on, his daughter asked the Master of a Lodge to come and collect his Masonic things. She told him that she was aware that her father was a Mason, and nothing more. When the Master examined his effects, he was amazed to find the regalia of a Past Grand Master. And, you guessed it, his daughter didn't even know it!

This leads us to strategy number four—**education**. It has been said that Freemasonry is a University of Life, with the improvement of the mind an important principle, and it is certainly true that we all need to become more informed. The role of the new Education Committee then, will be to stimulate individual growth in Masonic knowledge, to

encourage dialogue with our families and non-masons, and to address the critical issue of mentorship.

Five—**research**. Being a progressive science, Freemasonry's search for ways to improve is never-ending. With this in mind, a new Research Committee will search out successful initiatives in other jurisdictions and share their findings with our committees and our Lodges.

Six—**improvement**; it is a given, that if our Lodges become committed to growth, we can only stand to gain. Therefore, I encourage every Worshipful Master, working in concert with his Lodge members, to submit to his DDGM by February 1st, 2001, a working plan for his Lodge, complete with goals, action steps and timelines. The intention is to report successes to the Annual Communication in June, 2001.

Seven—**participation**. When a brother feels involved in a meaningful way, he will naturally feel more connected to his lodge and Grand Lodge. To increase and diversify this involvement, eight regions have been assigned a major Grand Lodge committee, and the Board of General Purposes will go on the road to bring the business of Grand Lodge closer to you.

Another avenue of implementation is founded on the idea that organizations that grow are those that provide **opportunities** for their members to think creatively. To

foster this concept, the above mentioned core programme committees and the Masonic Commission have been charged with the task of brainstorming useful ideas. This group will become a Think Tank for presenting suggestions to your Principal Officers for study.

Number nine (we're almost there, Brethren!) It has become clear that the Annual Grand Lodge Communication does not lend itself comfortably to adequate discussion of items of business. Therefore, we will have an **Emergent Communication** of Grand Lodge in Freemasons' Hall in Vancouver, on Saturday, Dec. 9th, 2000, to receive and discuss interim reports. The purpose is to create more opportunities to discuss issues and for all of us to be more informed.

The measure of the worth of any institution is the effect it has upon the individual and society. And therefore, we should always be prepared to ask ourselves, "If Freemasonry were to disappear from our civilization, would it be missed?" The answer to that question is absolutely fundamental to our future.

Without a doubt, new challenges await us in the years ahead, ones that will test our ability to hold fast to our basic principles while adapting to a rapidly changing world. Let us then re-examine our attitudes towards constructive change as individuals and as members of this Grand Lodge. Let us be the beacons for the 21st century.

In conclusion Brethren, let me say that united, and with the help of the Great Architect of the Universe, there is little we cannot do, if we act together. But your efforts more than mine will ultimately determine our future success. Freemasonry has always been a work in progress and much of what is proposed here today will not be finished this year or next or even in the near future. Nevertheless, let us begin.

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For me, I look forward to a fraternity that focuses on high standards and **the building of character**. I look forward to a fraternity that commands respect in every community, not only for its strength, but for its commitment to human development. I look forward to a fraternity that our sons and grandsons will be proud to be a part of.

For all of us, may the best be yet to come. And let us never forget, "There's Fun to be had in Freemasonry!" ■

*Reprinted from our Grand Master's acceptance address at our Annual Communication in Vernon this year.*

## Lodge Notes

Bro. Fred Seeley of **Kamloops Lodge No. 10** had the pleasure of attending the Raising of Bro. Glen Seeley and his two sons, Bro. Thomas Seeley and Bro. Robert Seeley at **Joppa Lodge No. 112**, in White Rock this past June. The three recently Raised Brethren were also Initiated and Passed together, making this quite a family affair.

**Nanaimo Lodge No. 110**, in Nanaimo celebrated their Seventy-fifth anniversary this past summer with a banquet, a time capsule and a Memorial Garden behind their hall.

Also this past summer, **Slocan Lodge No. 29** celebrated 100 Years of Masonry. The original Lodge, **Alta Lodge No. 129**, was founded in the gold rush town of Sandon in 1899 and later merged with **Slocan Lodge No. 71**. ■

## Masonic Commission

*by Murray Webster*

A Masonic Commission has been appointed by MW Bro. Jack Harper. The mandate of the nine-member Masonic Commission is to *listen* to the

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*Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness, concerning all acts of initiative (and creation). There is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance that no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.*

”

**Johann W. von Goethe**  
1749 - 1832,  
Poet, dramatist, Freemason

concerns and priorities of the Brethren of our Grand Lodge. Using this information, with the assistance of the other groups organized by our Grand Master, the Commission will advance proposals at future Grand Lodge communications. The Commission will be hosting one-day workshops at thirteen locations in the next six months. Each workshop will consist of an interactive presentation designed to focus upon "enlightened and progressive improvement." Regular updates on the progress of the Commission will be sent to Lodges and be included in the *Masonic Bulletin*. ■

*Murray Webster has been appointed Chairman of this jurisdiction's Masonic Commission.*

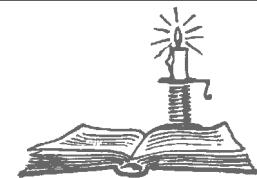
## The true mason thinks!

*by RW Bro. C. E. Pinnell, Senior Grand Warden, Grand Lodge of Alberta, 1967.*

Nothing can survive by reflecting on past glories, nothing can survive by recounting the opportunities that have been missed. We must realize, as MW Bro. Dr. Thomas S. Roy told us, that Freemasonry is a *force* and not a *form* and any force needs fuel to keep it going. Our individual members must provide the fuel by their studies, by their discussions and their faithful interest and support of their Lodge.

Let us take an individual who has been made a member of the Lodge after due enquiry. He comes to us with an open mind; he comes with a receptive mind and his talents are put to good use in preparing himself for each Degree. To avoid learning and reciting the work in a parrot-like fashion, it is desirable that he have an enquiring mind; something to motivate him to seek the hidden truths and real meanings so carefully concealed in the allegories and symbolism of the Work. Explanations should be available to him from his coach at all times and when he has received his Master Mason Degree and has been examined, he should be guided to the library. Our new member must be imbued with the idea that it is not a mere form he has been taken through, but a means of conveying a great teaching of how to live our lives on this earth, how to live with our fellow men.

Senior members have a tremendous responsibility at this stage to instill this thought in the minds of new members; to follow it up and to provide opportunities that can be accepted by the individual.



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