



Positive thinking.....p. 1
Fighting menp. 1
Lodge notes.....p.2
The Masonic familyp.2
Society todayp. 3
An asylump. 4
Rosslyn Chapel.....p. 4
Our Grand Master's itinerary.....p. 4

Fighting men

Freemasonry is primarily a peace society, the greatest organized peace society in the world. Its doctrine of universal brotherhood, the principles of justice, toleration and forbearance on which it is founded, would, if generally adopted, speedily do away with war, and the countries of the earth would have no need of armies and navies. Yet Masonry inculcates patriotism and love of country, and while its influence is for peace, it does not breed weaklings or mollicoddles. And so it has transpired that in every war between civilized countries Freemasons as individuals have taken prominent parts. As an organization, however, it stands aloof, and strives to mitigate the horrors of war by acts of mercy and benevolence, ever remembering the humane principles of brotherhood. With the return of peace, its good offices are exercised, quietly, yet effectively, to heal the wounds of conflict and restore feelings of amity and confidence.

Notwithstanding its peaceful

character, Freemasonry is composed of a vast army of fighting men. Its followers are enlisted in a nobler warfare than the sanguinary conflicts between armed foes. It is theirs to fight their own evil passions and propensities; to subdue the habits of indolence, selfishness and intemperance which insidiously sap the moral and mental strength and lead to ruin and destruction.

This is a silent, secret warfare, not seen of men. There is none of the artificial stimulus to high endeavor "born amid the roar of battle, the flash of cannon and the shock of contending armies;" none of that bloodthirstiness and savagery which inspires men to "heroic" deeds. And yet the fight within ourselves goes forward constantly, and every day sees us victor or vanquished. We win today and lose tomorrow, with every victory gaining strength, losing something of our godlike quality with every defeat.

We are told, and truly, that there were never more

From our Grand Master



Allow me to express to you my sincere thanks and gratitude for electing me to this high and responsible office in the Craft. If anything could, for me, add to the honour of being elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, it is the personal gratification of being obligated by MW Bro. Grant Wardlaw and invested by MW Bro. John T. Harper in the presence of so many Past Grand Masters whom I have served and respected over the years. In this address as your Grand Master my message is brief and to the point. Our theme is Positive Thinking Masonry.

If you cannot say anything Positive about Freemasonry or a Freemason, best leave it unsaid.

Harmony is the essence of Freemasonry and anything that threatens that harmony must be regarded as divisive and undesirable. We are the oldest and finest organisation in the world and we must strive to keep it so. Membership decline continues to be a concern and certain sectors continue to advocate a lowering of

POSITIVE THINKING

Masonry's antiquated standards to meet

those of present day society. This I urge against, Brethren, rather be it that we work by example to raise the standards of society to meet those of Freemasonry, that our ranks may swell with men of quality.

We live in a very negative world, where only the dark side of life is considered newsworthy. Let us not allow Freemasonry to fall into this trap; let us talk about the successes in Freemasonry and help rather than criticize those Freemasons or Lodges that are less fortunate. This year we will continue the process of participation and involvement throughout this Grand Jurisdiction. The Masonic Commission set up under MW Bro. Harper will continue its work but with a greater focus on the items deemed, by the participating Brethren, to be deserving of further review. The Board of General Purposes will be held at different venues in order to reach as many Brethren as possible. December 8, 2001 will be the only time it will be held in Vancouver and it will be an

continued on page 4

excellent rules and useful maxims laid down than are inculcated in Freemasonry. True, Freemasonry consists in the personal application of these excellent precepts, not in their

mere parrot-like recital. It is not the work in the lodge room that makes a man a Freemason, but the fulfillment in his daily life of the obligations there assumed, and the practical



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Fighting men from page one

exemplification of the principles there inculcated. We should not lose sight of this essential truth in the mummery and pageantry of the "work". We must not exalt the form above the substance, nor in the pleasing amenities of brotherly intercourse in the lodge allow worldly vanity, self-glorification and "mutual admiration" to overshadow the lessons of morality, equality and rectitude taught by the square, the level and the plumb.

We sometimes hear men condemn the simple, time-honoured work of Freemasonry as trivial and incomplete. They are not content with this slow and silent, yet irresistible, force for the elevation of mankind, and long for some visible sign. They wish their work to be seen of men, to cut a conspicuous figure. They would rush into political movements, and espouse "reforms" of various kinds. They are radical, and aspire to "do things." Above all, they talk of "justifying Freemasonry before the world." They know not Freemasonry who speak thus.

The real work of Freemasonry is not in building temples, nor in erecting homes, nor in endowing hospitals. These are incidental and accidental. Its true mission is in training an army of fighting men who can successfully resist their own vices and weaknesses



At your task
be never late
For the moments
will not wait.

W Bro. Palmer Cox

and build up pure, noble, unselfish characters. It takes good men and makes them better, confirming them in the ways of righteousness. It makes good husbands and good fathers, good neighbours and good citizens, true to their God, their country and themselves. When it has done this it has done all.

"He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." The true Master Mason is Master of himself. ■

Reprinted from the Masonic Tidings, February 1910.

Lodge notes

Keystone-Lions' Gate Lodge No. 115 held their 31st Annual Loggers Night this past May. With our then Grand Master MW Bro. John T. Harper and many visitors in attendance, Mr. Les Reed gave a presentation entitled "100 years of lumber wars." After the traditional reading of one of Robert E. Swanson's Bunkhouse Ballads, a toast to departed Loggers and the presentation of the Loggers' Working Tools, seedlings were distributed to the Brethren to take home. ■

Ten reasons...

Here are ten reasons to join Freemasonry:

A place where you can confidently trust every person and trust your family with them also.

A place where, within moral and civil guidelines, free thought, free speech and the spiritual growth of man, can grow fully its fullest potential.

A place to meet outstanding individuals from all walks of life, that a person would not otherwise have had the opportunity to know and call brother.

A place to be a part of an organization which has for its

principal tenets—Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

A place that provides opportunities for self-development, leadership training and experience, and improvement of public speaking skills.

A place you can go to seek support as well as give it.

A place where **moral virtues** are taught and through these teachings a regular reinforcement of the moral virtues is experienced.

A place to spend time with a group of brothers, who by acting as good men, make you want to become a better man. Not better than others, but better than you would have otherwise been.

A place to become better equipped to serve church and community.

A place to meet with established members of the community and to become a part of the community. ■

Fraternal relations

Our Grand Secretary's Office is happy to announce that the **Grand Oriente Español** has set aside its historical differences and joined the Gran Logia de España. Those lodges holding warrants under the Grand Orient of Spain will continue to do so but will now be recognized as constituted under the Grand Lodge of Spain. As of this past March 31st, all of the usual Masonic rights and privileges of communication, visitation and recognition have been established. Once again, the bonds of fraternity have overcome adversity. ■

Personal service

In petitioning for admission into the Masonic fraternity applicants are required to affirm that they are actuated by a desire of being serviceable to their fellow men.

Can it honestly be said that he is a true Freemason who, never visits a sick brother nor harkens to the appeal of those in distress?

Unfortunately too many Freemasons imagine that their only duty as such is fulfilled by the prompt and regular payment of Lodge dues. If the thought of personal service enters their minds it is dismissed as quickly as possible for one excuse or another.

Freemasonry contemplates that each member shall diligently strive to strengthen his own character. In addition, he is expected to lend his aid to others who are struggling toward a like end.

Opportunities for helping others are to be found on every hand. It only remains to select the most needy, worthy case and go to work. Having finished that, another will be found waiting. ■

Reprinted from the Masonic Tidings, February 1910.

The Masonic family

The Scottish Rite Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction will celebrate their **200th anniversary** this September 30th through October 4th in Charleston, South Carolina. As part of the celebrations, Sovereign Grand Commander C. Fred Kleinknecht will open a Scottish Rite Commemorative Exhibit at the Charleston Museum. ■

In our community

Bro. Malcolm Drew of **Lynn Valley Lodge No. 122** has brought to our attention that the TB Vets personal address mailer labels are now available with our square and compasses symbol. They offer a number of symbols and logos on their mailing labels but if you wish to

make use of the square and compasses you have to specifically request it.

Many of our Brethren have supported this charitable programme over the years. Now they have an opportunity to also identify themselves as Freemasons in their community and to their friends and colleagues.

Our thanks to Bro. Drew for convincing the TB Vets to include our symbol in their programme. ■

Society today

As world changes happen faster, and in more complex and unpredictable ways, our natural needs for security, control, certainty and predictability are being undermined. This type of environment is a breeding ground for what is now termed the "Achilles Syndrome" where more and more people who are, in fact, high-achievers, suffer from a serious lack of self-esteem—men apparently more so than women. This is gleaned from an article on the work of Petruska Clarkson, a consultant chartered counselor and clinical psychologist.

Dr Donal Murray, former Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin and now Bishop of Limerick, identifies "a hunger which is not being satisfied. People need to feel they belong; they need to feel they can be fully committed to something. The prevailing mood, in Ireland and elsewhere, is one of disillusionment and cynicism. We have come to see ourselves as living in a world of institutions and structures—we think of ourselves as belonging not to a country but to an economy; we think of our national life and resources in terms of statistics and of the machinery of government, rather than of people and culture."

Dr Murray goes on to say 'it is increasingly presumed that

“Some day, when the cloud of prejudice has been dispelled by the searchlight of truth, the world will honor Masonry for its service to freedom of thought and the liberty of faith. No part of its history has been more noble, no principle of its teaching has been more precious than its age-long demand for the right and duty of every soul to seek that light by which no man was ever injured, and that truth which makes man free.”

Joseph Fort Newton
(1880-1950) Clergyman and Masonic author

the ideal citizen possesses no strong religious or moral beliefs, or at least has the decency not to intrude them into the public arena. Strong moral beliefs are, we are told, divisive; religious belief is, at best, embarrassing. In other words, he continues, "one is not meant to participate in national life with one's whole self, with one's religious beliefs and moral convictions. These are private matters. We are in danger of trying to build a culture which regards as irrelevant the very realities which make people tick. Divisiveness results only when religion and morality are misunderstood. The individual conscience is worthy of respect because it seeks the truth, as every human being is obliged to do."

Freemasons will hardly fail to notice these references to ethics, morality and truth, the very foundation of Masonic teaching and endeavor. But these cultural jewels without price are coming under increasingly powerful destructive forces which are eroding the foundation and base on which they rest. Conor Cruise

O'Brien—a distinguished Statesman and commentator—says that "for as far back as we can go in history, human discourse concerning ethics has been infected, in varying degrees, with hypocrisy." Another commentator states that the term "business ethics" is fast becoming an oxymoron—that is a contradiction in terms; and the Bishop of Waterford felt it necessary to denounce publicly "the Cult of Excessive Individualism."

What is needed, in all this, is some form of mental sheet-anchor—a sort of fixed navigational point like the pole-star which, when the clouds pass, can be seen and provides the traveller with the means to identify his exact position and thereby the knowledge to return to the true path. ■

Excerpted from the Short Talk Bulletin, Vol. 77, No. 11, November 1999.

Truth

Some day, when the cloud of prejudice has been dispelled by the searchlight of truth, the world will honor Masonry for its heroic service to freedom, of thought and the liberty of faith. No part of its history has been more noble, no principle of its teaching has been more precious than its age long and unwavering demand for the right and duty of every soul to seek that light by which no man was ever injured and that truth which makes man free. Down through the ages—often when the highest crime was not murder, but thinking, and when the human conscience was dragged as a slave at the wheel of the ecclesiastical chariot—always and everywhere Masonry has stood for the right of the soul to know the truth and to look up unhindered from the lap of earth in to the face of Him in whose great hand it stands. Not freedom from faith, but freedom of faith, has been its watchword, on the ground that



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despotism is the mother of anarchy, so bigoted dogmatism is the prolific source of skepticism.

Against those who would fetter thought in order to perpetuate an effete authority, who would give the skinny hand of the past a scepter to rule the aspiring and prophetic present, and seal the lips of living thinkers with the dicta of dead scholastics, Masonry will never ground arms. Her plea is for the government without tyranny and religion without superstition, and as surely as the suns rise and set her fight will be crowned with victory. She fights—not with force, still less with intrigue, but with the power of truth, the persuasions of reason, and the might of gentleness, seeking not to destroy her enemies but to win them to the liberty of the truth and the fellowship of love. ■

Excerpted from The Men's House by Joseph Fort Newton.

Roslyn Chapel

W Bro. Robert L. B. Cooper, Librarian and Curator of the Museum, Grand Lodge of Scotland, will be **touring our jurisdiction** this month, speaking on the history of Roslyn Chapel, the Knights Templar, and the various theories and myths relating them to Freemasonry. From the Saint Clair Charters of 1601 and 1628, to the current discussion on the chapel's sub-structure, Bro. Cooper promises a fine evening's educational entertainment.

Unfortunately, at press time, we do not have information on his stops in the Interior.

His address in **Victoria** will be hosted by the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research on Tuesday, September 25th in the Victoria Masonic Temple at 650 Fisgard Street at 8:00 pm.

In **Seattle**, Bro. Cooper will speak at University Lodge No. 141. Co-hosted with Walter F.

Meier Lodge of Research No. 281, the meeting will tyle at 7:30 pm on September 27th, 2001. University Lodge is located at 4338 University Way N.E. in Seattle.

Although Grandview Lodge No. 96 will host his **Vancouver** engagement on September 28th, at 8:00 pm, the venue has yet to be determined. W Bro. Wally Turko can be contacted at +1-604-465-9238 for further details. ■

Eyes of the world

The eyes of the world are upon us all as Masons, and they are particularly focused upon those who are in authority. It becometh us therefore, to, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, for "By their fruits ye shall know them." It is not all of Masonry to wear a Masonic pin, nor to know certain letters better than the Ten Commandments. Our profession is to be exemplified by our works and not by our speaking. The world needs Masonry now more than ever before.

Never perhaps, in history were such rapid advances made in all that appertains to the welfare of the human race. Masonry has done much to bring these conditions about, for while it remembers the tradition of the fathers, it plans as well for the children, and our progress must continue to be in keeping with modern civilization. ■

Reprinted from Masonic Tidings Milwaukee, 1910.

An asylum

Many men wait to be asked to join the Freemasons, and because they are not solicited, infer that they are not wanted. Masonry is an asylum, not a propaganda. One of the fundamental ideas of Masonry is that all who join it must be uninfluenced by the entreaties



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY SEPTEMBER, 2001

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|-------|---------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| 4 | Tue | District No. 16 | <i>Composite Lodge No.76</i> | Vancouver |
| 6 | Thu | District No 7 | <i>Fidelity Lodge No.32</i> | Trail |
| 7 | Fri | Board of General Purposes | | |
| 8 | Thu | Ambulatory Centre Cornerstone Laying | | |
| 11 | Tue | District No. 14 | <i>Zion Lodge No.77</i> | Vancouver |
| 13-15 | Thu-Sat | Grand Chapter | <i>Royal Arch Masons</i> | Penticton |
| 13 | Thu | Anniversary | <i>Joppa Lodge No.112</i> | White Rock |
| 15 | Sat | Installation | <i>Dunbar Lodge No.118</i> | Vancouver |

of friends. It does not draw like a cord, but like a magnet. It does not pull, it attracts.

It is a positive violation of Masonic law to use an argument to induce any one to join a lodge. The sun needs no patronage from the stars in

order to increase its light and its benign warmth in the ministry of nature. Masonry is an essence. It receives no glory from its adherents, it imparts it to them. ■

Reprinted from the Masonic Tidings, February 1910.

Grand Master's message from page one

extended meeting. This is rather than having an Emergent Communication of Grand Lodge and hopefully the absence of ceremony and regalia will permit more time and a friendlier platform for open and meaningful discussion.

In closing I would draw your attention to the quite extensive coverage in the Yukon press given to the recent Corner Stone Laying Ceremonies in Dawson City and Skagway. In describing Freemasonry it was said that Freemasonry was perceived by some to be the oldest, richest, most powerful private force in the world! They then went on to make some rather strange comparisons! However, just for the moment let us think about that statement. Oldest? Well, I do see a fair number of grey or thinning heads of hair around. Richest? Again there is quite a bit of gold adorning the shoulders of our Past Grand Masters. Powerful? I suppose if

we consider that out of a world population of six billion one in fifteen hundred is a Freemason, that seems to be a fairly powerful force working for the common good.

Whilst we are knowledgeable and mature enough to withstand the good natured fun often targeted at Freemasonry, most of us realise that Freemasonry as such, does little other than set and maintain the rules. It is the individual Freemason that makes the difference.

Brethren, this year I ask of you three things: let us work so that we may establish society's opinion of Freemasonry, rather than letting our critics do it for us; let us work to improve the quality of our attitude towards one another as Freemasons; let us encourage a leadership based on knowledge and skill.

Brethren, I sincerely hope that with my assistance and your own endeavors we will, this year, make a positive difference for the common good.

MW Bro. James C. Gordon
Grand Master