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The younger freemason

by Bro. Jason C. Russo

It is my opinion that Freemasonry must come to the realization that the needs of and from our fraternity for those of us under the age of 40 differ greatly from those who are elderly or retired. It is not sufficient to simply complain but to offer a solution to fix the problem.

The problems facing the under 40 crowd, or "masonic youth" are numerous.

We work. We frequently spend many hours at our vocation throughout the week; during our time off we enjoy spending that time with our family and children. Let's include them in more activities.

We are displaced. Due to the pursuit of our vocations to support our families we have moved away from our homes and many of us do not have family or kin in the area. Our lodge should become our extended family.

Our spouses work. With a working spouse it is usually up to us to care for our children in

the evenings and weekends. We can participate in more activities if the Eastern Star, Amaranth or Jobies could help with the kids and keep them occupied during a tyled meeting.

Ritual—many of us did not join Freemasonry because of the ritual, pomp and ceremony. Although we agree it is important, the esoteric and philosophical tenets, precepts and friendships appeal to us more.

The exact pronunciation of the word, "divested" is unimportant to us and the many hours of conflict in the lodge trying to correct regional dialects has us flummoxed.

Thank you for the educational proficiency method, but it needs to be utilized correctly; the mentors need to do their jobs as intended and provide the knowledge to enjoy the rights and benefits of our Craft.

When performed and executed to standard, ritual is a

Thank you for your support over the past several years and for the tremendous confidence that you have now reposed in me. The work of the esteemed brethren, who participated in the installation ceremony, is much appreciated. This is a humbling experience for each of the principal officers and represents quite a transition from being referred to as "pigs in a poke!" Having reminded you of this, I advise you that I do not regard my duty as your Grand Master as an honorary or figurehead position. I view this as one of the most challenging jobs I have ever undertaken and one which brings with it onerous responsibility.

From our Grand Master



MW Bro. William Ord Walls

It is heart warming to have so many brethren stay behind to witness me take the obligation to uphold the Constitutions of this Grand Lodge. It will be interesting, over the next twelve months, to see how many brethren go out of their way to have

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER

There are certain objectives, items and intentions that must be stated at this time. In order to keep this as short as possible, I offer you these guidelines under the following theme:

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source of pride. We need to learn the ritual and not be beat up by it. If it is arduous, tedious and a misery to learn it will be lost.

Community service: masonic youth is not adverse to community projects and we are open and ready to perform them. It is frustrating to have good masonic works declined by a vote in the lodge because the elderly do not want to participate in strenuous activities.

The way it has always been done: non-landmark traditions that hinder masonic progress

are not a benefit to us nor Freemasonry. If every Mason fifty years ago jumped off a cliff because that's the way the lodge had always done things—then we don't need to do it today. If it's broke lets fix it. If it hinders progress, get rid of it. If the most elderly's mentor's mentor taught them to do something that doesn't work today—it's time to do things differently.

Family involvement: if we can drag the wife and kids with us to some social events we are

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more likely to attend.

Youth begets youth. Activities specifically for masonic youth need to be developed and implemented to include social gatherings, fun activities, ball-games, and community projects.

Masonic Education. There is more to Freemasonry besides the ritual; even in the ritual how many actually know what is so special about the 47th problem that would cause Pythagoras to exclaim, "Eureka"? How many know the mathematical formula it represents and the esoteric value it has for the process of creation? How many know the word in our obligations is "Hele" meaning to conceal and not "Hail" meaning to exclaim. Please, we need a more complete masonic education regardless of what method an individual is raised with. We need a more philosophical and esoteric education to stimulate thinking and not just rote memory.

Lodge Programmes. Masonic youth would appreciate programs that are more uplifting, educational and fun. Retirement planning, extended health care briefings, and patriotic odes written so long ago they exclude our nation's last five major conflicts are not cutting the mustard for us.

Bulletins, newsletters and



Do well the part that
small may sound
The surest climber
takes each round.

W Bro. Palmer Cox

invitations. If the masonic youth doesn't feel welcome, appreciated, or involved we won't be in attendance. For those who have stopped attending or have attended one meeting and have never been seen again, they may need to be invited back to the lodge. The bulletins and newsletters need to be more inviting and informative with interesting articles. If they are being round-filed or ignored they are not working.

This was not written as a complaint, or to foster negative feelings of ill will. It was written with a genuine concern for our Craft. Please take a long hard look at the points listed above and consider the concerns of your younger brethren who will eventually shoulder the weight of our fraternity should our concerns be unheeded. Please do not make Freemasonry a burdened and broken yoke for us to fix when it is passed on to us.

Excerpted from a recent posting by <ssgrusso@earthlink.net> in a masonic email list.

Online

Brethren interested in writing masonic papers should be aware of the **Quatuor Coronati Lodge's** style guide, now available at <freemasonry.bcy.ca/aqc/aqc_style_guide.html>.

Our thanks go out to the Center for Interfaith Studies Masonic Report for directing its readers to our website's information on anti-masonry. ■

Great Architect

The Rev. James Anderson, a Scottish Presbyterian minister, borrowed the phrase, Great Architect of the Universe, from John Calvin (1506-1564) and introduced it into Freemasonry. Calvin repeatedly used the phrase in his commentary on the Psalms and in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. ■

Our detractors

An article earlier this year in the *Sydney Morning News*, in Australia, described the decision of the Anglican parish of St. Paul's, Lithgow to deny fellowship to freemasons and members of appendant bodies. Although the office of the Diocese of Sydney regarded this as a parish issue, it did point out that a 1988 report to the Diocese, found at <www.smh.com.au/news/0201/09/national/national2.html>, made fundamental criticisms of Freemasonry but drew no conclusions. ■

Military Degree team

The newly formed Masonic Military Degree Team in the Vancouver area is looking for new members. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 pm, Freemasons' Hall, 1495 West Eighth Avenue, in Vancouver.

RW Bro. John O'Connor is the team mentor and can be contacted for further details at 604-261-1225. ■

Our Junior Grand Warden

by RW Bro. Bob McSweeney

There are those whom I would like to recognize and there are also those whom I would like to thank. The ones I would like to recognize are RW Bros. Isaac Brower-Berkoven, and Jacques Boily and VW Bro. David Anderson. These brethren have done much for the good of Freemasonry this past year and I would like to wish them both happiness and success in all their future masonic endeavors. ■

Those whom I would like to thank are first of all my wife Eileen, who throughout the last year gave me her entire encouragement and support. Without her faithful support I could never have tried for the position which I was elected into and for that I love her very dearly. I would also like to thank the two brethren who signed my application for the position of Junior Grand Warden. They are MW Bro. Harold Nordan and RW Bro. Gary McCullough. Their continued support in my journey was much appreciated.

My biggest vote of thanks however goes to the brethren who voted me into this position. Needless to say that without your support I could not have had this opportunity to say thank you. For that I owe you much and I will most certainly do my very best to uphold the standard set by those who have previously held this position. My one concern is that I do not disappoint you in the choice you have made, and that I can make my friends and family proud of me.

Someone once wrote, "Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." I feel that we all can do this if we set our minds to it, and by doing so we will all make our friends and families proud of us.

Brethren, again I thank you for this humbling experience, and I look forward to the next time we have to opportunity to greet each other with an open hand and have the experience of sharing Brotherhood. ■

Take off all your clothes!

by Dr E. Otha Wingo

This stark demand, said to a candidate in the preparation room, is not designed to inspire confidence or to ease anxiety about the unknown experience

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MW Bro. William O. Walls, showing his support for the Shriners and the good work they do in the community.

before him. Some misguided brethren seem to think this is amusing. It is not. Here is a suggested way to explain his preparation for the initiation: "Mr. Doe, for the purpose of your initiatory degree, it will be necessary for you to remove your street clothing for our ceremonial clothing. We will step out of the room, while you slip into this degree garment and we will continue with your preparation.

The candidate's comfort is very important for his full participation in his initiation. We should make him comfortable in body and mind. A bit of mystery about the initiation enhances the experience. However, he should not be worried or frightened. Make sure your candidate is reassured that nothing either hurtful or embarrassing will happen to him.

The masonic education of a candidate should begin long before he appears at the lodge to receive his first degree. Typically, he receives a petition from a friend, who can answer some of his questions and tell him what to expect. When his petition has been received in the lodge, he will meet the investigation committee. This committee is crucially important also in instructing the candidate in such basic information as mentioned above. Making a candidate comfortable involves physical as well as mental comfort; accommodating any physical condition that would

make him uncomfortable during the degree. Be aware of the need to return his eyeglasses when appropriate or to adjust for a hearing problem.

Extend the comfort zone to the candidate's first meeting after his first degree. Instruct him in the proper way to respond to the Master, how to give signs, how to enter and leave the lodge. Be aware that a long time member, attending lodge after a long absence, may appreciate a quick review of words and signs for the opening. Extend this same courtesy to visiting brethren.

Make sure your lodge is a place where candidates, members and visitors are comfortable and glad to be a part of Freemasonry.

Excerpted from the Missouri Freemason Magazine.

Lodge notes

The 32nd Annual Loggers Night held at **Keystone-Lions' Gate Lodge No. 115**, Vancouver, on May 2, 2002 saw 84 brethren attending, including our then Grand Master, MW Bro. James C. Gordon who was accompanied by twelve Grand Lodge officers. In keeping with the forestry theme, a presentation of miniature double-bitted axes was made to our Grand Master and fir seedlings were distributed to all attendees.

W Bro. Victor E. Madge of

King Edward Lodge No. 28—recent recipient of a fifty year service award and with three sons in the Craft—has also recently received a commendation from the Provincial Motor Vehicles Department for an unblemished driving record of seventy-five years.

Sidney Lodge No. 143,

Sidney, has recently received an engraved sword; donated by the son of Bro. Thomas R. Stevenson, a founding member and first Tyler of the Gizeh Shrine of BC & Yukon in 1902. It was the family's wish that the sword be used by the lodge rather than locked up in a display case.

Once again this year, **Prince David Lodge No. 101**, Maple Ridge, has awarded bursaries of \$500 each to students of the five senior secondary schools in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows. Since 1952 the lodge has awarded nearly \$75,000 to assist in post secondary education. ■

Charity

Cancer survivor, **Mrs. Mary Armanson** of Burnaby, has recently donated \$25,000 towards the purchase of a car for the Cancer Car Project. As a cancer patient who required our assistance several years ago, Mrs. Armanson is an example both of the deep need for this project and for the esteem in which it is held.

St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver has written to express their gratitude to the Masonic Foundation for the recent donation of \$10,000. They intend to use this in the purchase of a Echocardiography machine for their Heart Centre.

While St. Paul's Heart Centre is renowned for its superior treatment and care, to continue to serve the needs of heart disease sufferers, they must be equipped with the most modern, technology available.

St. Paul's Heart Centre is most grateful that we have chosen to support them. ■

LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS

No. 1

CARIBOO REGION

October 4 -6, 2002
The Ramada Inn
444 George Street
Prince George BC

Registrar: RW Bro. D'Arcy Cavanaugh
2446 Ridgeview Place
Prince George, B.C. V2K 3Z3
Telephone +1-250-563-3656
e: dcavanaugh@canada.com

No. 2

VANCOUVER-FRASER VALLEY REGION

January 31 - February 2, 2003
The Ramada Inn
36035 North Parallel Road
Abbotsford BC

Registrar: RW Bro. Allan Large
15836 Suffolk Road
White Rock BC V4A 5L4
t: +1-604-538-1123
f: +1-604-538-1507

No. 3

CENTRAL OKANAGAN

March 28 - 31, 2003
Manteo Resort
Kelowna BC

Registrar: W Bro. Bill Ferguson
2031 Keller Place,
Kelowna BC V1Y 2G7
t: +1-250-762-0505
e: bferguson@silk.net

Our Grand Secretary's office has a limited number of Jack Delf's books for sale at \$5.00 each plus shipping

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Grand Master's message

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Masonic actions speak louder than words

Do not lower the cross-bar. Maintain or raise our standard of acceptance.

Stop insulting and demeaning the traditions of the Craft by reading the memory work. The simple act of providing a traditional degree in a traditional manner, is what makes us different from any other fraternal organization.

The Address to the Brethren, given at the conclusion of the lodge Installation, may be given in public. Public presentation will require the advance approval of the Grand Secretary's office. In this respect I am complying with a convention adopted by a number of my predecessors. Having said this, there will be no other authorized public presentation of our work. I respectfully caution you in advance, do not come for forgiveness for there will be none — come for permission.

Stop the practice of bringing candidates to light in empty rooms. Get together with other lodges, within and outside of your district, in order to try to ensure a healthy representation in the lodge room. Make the conferral of a degree a social highlight, not simply another monthly meeting. Make the Candidate aware that he is entering the masonic world and is about to embark on a great journey. Do not let him feel that he has bought his ticket on the Titanic!

Examine and develop a general awareness of the long-term aspirations of the members of your lodge.

Prior to December 31, 2002, and at least once in every masonic year thereafter, set aside a business meeting at which your lodge will evaluate

the attendance at your lodge meetings. Determine if the active membership is less in numbers than would be required to obtain a new charter or warrant. If so, determine and plan what your members intend to do about it. This may involve fewer meetings, more dinner meetings, consolidation with other lodges — but address the problem positively. I exhort you, do not ignore the attendance problem. There are too many lodges that are hanging on by the skin of their teeth and these lodges do not present Freemasonry in a positive light.

Be aware that failing attendance and membership must be our primary concern. Having solicited input from a variety of masonic sources,

I assure you that, by far, the primary problem identified is our inactive and diminishing membership. With this in mind, I suggest to you that individually we each have a sphere of influence beyond the masonic order. That sphere of influence may involve our church, business, golf club, other fraternities, family etc. I challenge each of you to examine that sphere of influence and find one or two good men for whom, and with whom, Freemasonry would be a mutually rewarding experience. Courteously approach these individuals once, and if successful, take the necessary steps to petition for membership. Make this a high priority, first step, in our masonic recovery.

Initiate or extend the use of 'buddy-nights' and 'guest nights' in order to familiarize a potential candidate with the social aspects of the Lodge.

In tandem with these actions, upgrade the quality of your Lodge Investigation Committee. To this end, I direct the lodge to acquaint

itself with the parameters of investigation as they are well defined by RW Bro., Brian Hemmingway. The Grand Secretary's office will be pleased to help obtain copies of these documents for you.

Stop the practice of concentrating and focusing on the small, incidental problems which we seem to look for in our lodges. Look more towards the outsider's perception of what we are. There is a whole world of Freemasonry outside of your lodge room. With this in mind I have requested the editor of the *Masonic Bulletin* to bring the masonic world closer to home. I have directed more attention be given to the masonic family and to the activities of other jurisdictions.

Over the past two years, we have spent considerable time and effort in generating and developing a purported understanding of the wishes and desires of the general membership of Grand Lodge. I have decided that it is now time for the members to formally review these findings and, should they consider action appropriate, to instigate any action which would be required to initiate Constitutional Reforms or Amendment. To this end I charge each lodge in this

jurisdiction to review the findings of the Masonic Commission and the Committee for Review of the Board of General Purposes. This review should take place in sufficient time for resolutions or amendments to be submitted within the parameters established within our Constitution and Regulations. The work of these committees has been extremely well done and, on behalf of the members of Grand Lodge, I extend congratulations and appreciation to the members of the committees. It is now time for the next step in the process and it is my considered opinion that this next step is the responsibility of the members of Grand Lodge, not any committee.

In conclusion: it is tempting to try to be all things to all people. If I were to do this, I would fail miserably. Shakespeare once wrote, "to thine own self be true." I am, quite simply put, "a wee boy from the streets of Glasgow." I have no illusions of greatness and I am acutely aware that the wisdom doesn't come with the apron.

I trust that you will agree with my findings and assist me in taking some first steps towards some long-term solutions. ■



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY SEPTEMBER, 2002

5	Thu	Concordant Bodies Meeting	Vancouver
6	Fri	Lodge Southern Cross No.44	Vancouver
7	Sat	Melon Feast Kettle Falls	Washington
10	Tue	District No 7 Friendship Lodge No.144	Trail
12	Thu	District No 10 Hedley Lodge No.43	Keremeos
14	Sat	District No 4S Cariboo Lodge No.4	Barkerville
16-23	M-M	Prince David Lodge No. 101	Alaska Cruise
27	Fri	Board of General Purposes Meeting	Vancouver
28	Sat	50th Anniversary Burnaby Lodge No.150	Vancouver