

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



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# Grand Master's message

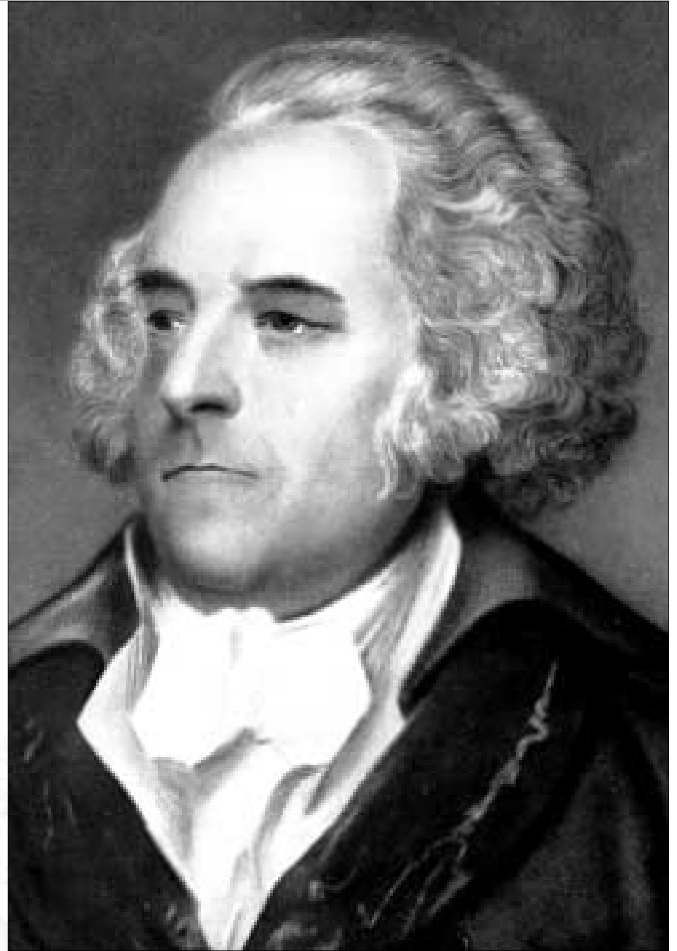
by MW Bro Robert D. McSween,  
Grand Master of British Columbia and Yukon, 2005-2006

Let me first tell you just how proud I am to be a freemason and also how proud I am to have the privilege of serving you as your Grand Master. The reception that I have received everywhere that I have travelled has been outstanding. It is most certainly a great time to be a freemason and I must say, as I have already said before, that if Freemasonry is doing well and accomplishing great things, it is only because you are the ones who are doing the work and making it that way. I simply cannot say that enough, because it is true, and for me to believe otherwise would be foolish. Thank you for all that you have done and for all that you will be doing. We have some great Grand Lodge officers coming through the ranks that will do you proud as your future Grand Masters. The future looks very bright for us and I look forward to that future.

It is hard to believe that my

year is coming so quickly to an end. It seems as though I had just started yesterday. We have accomplished a lot of things so far this year and there are still more things to do. We have had our meetings with the Van Zor Grotto and Order of the Eastern Star. Both of these meetings—organized to make us more knowledgeable of each other—proved to be successful.

We will be pursuing this a bit further on 25 February when the Concordant Bodies will be invited to attend a meeting under the auspices of the Vancouver Lodge of Education and Research, to be held at Freemasons' Hall at 1495 West 8th Ave., Vancouver. Lodge will be opened at 1:00 pm when they will receive their Grand Master. The lodge will then be called to refreshment and have the Concordant and Appendant Bodies enter the lodge room. They will then be introduced



William Preston, the author of *Illustrations of Masonry*, left a bequest to enable 'some well-informed Mason to deliver annually a Lecture on the First, Second, or Third Degree of the Order of Masonry according to the system practised in the Lodge of Antiquity'. The original series of lectures fizzled out in the 1860s, but were revived in 1923, with the difference that the lecturer was given freedom to choose his own subject. The title of Prestonian Lecturer is the most prestigious that can be bestowed on a masonic scholar in England, and the lectures provide the best introduction to mainstream English masonic scholarship. Lectures from 1988 onwards are generally printed in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, and are also available as separate booklets.

and asked to tell everyone about the body they represent. After all have done this, which will be around 3:00 pm, we will retire to the fourth floor for a social hour. If you have ever wondered how many

Concordant and Appendant Bodies we have, and what they do, this is the time to find out. I encourage all of you to attend if possible.

We have another important  
**continued on page 2**



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**From our Grand Master from page one**

meeting coming on 16 April. This will be a Grand Master's Day for the DeMolay held at the Marpole Masonic Building in Vancouver. This meeting will be to confer the degrees of DeMolay on several new members. I was a witness to this conferral last year and I was truly impressed. I would be even more impressed this year if there was a large turnout of freemasons present to witness the ritual done by these young boys. I know that they will impress you as well. They are our future and any support we can give them will pay off for us in the future.

Our Annual Communication, as you are aware, will be held in Chilliwack this year and the committee in that area has been working very hard to ensure that everything will go as well as possible. Our website is now up and running and I encourage everyone who is planning to attend to register as soon as possible. It will make the work of the local committee that much easier and will relieve a lot of the congestion at the registration area when you arrive. Remember, this will be our 135th Annual Communication: a milestone for us and one that I hope we remember with



W Bro. Palmer Cox, 1893

pleasant memories.

In a very short time I will be leaving on the bus trip for the Yukon and Alaska. I spoke of this in the last *Masonic Bulletin* and I would like to remind you once again of this trip. It is a 17-day trip which will take in northern British Columbia, the Yukon and Alaska. This trip which includes accommodation, travel and five breakfasts, will cost you a mere \$1,365 per person, based on double occupancy, taxes included in the cost. There must however be at least forty passengers on the bus to get it at this price. So if you have not yet registered for this trip and would like to go please do so now by contacting our Grand Marshal at quadman@sunwave.net. To date we have 26 passengers registered to go so we only require another 14 passengers. The bus leaves from the Fraser Valley area on 13 May and returns on 29 May. There are many sights to see along the way and the scenery is something else. We will be visiting lodges in Whitehorse, Dawson City, Skagway and Dawson Creek. I know that you will enjoy this trip.

In closing, I would like to again thank you for everything that you have done this past year for Freemasonry and for making this year a year to remember. It would not have happened without you and you should all feel very proud of your achievements. Working Together as a team has most certainly shown that in our jurisdiction there is "Strength Through Unity".

## Musical notes

W Bro. Herb Chow, **Blue Mountain Lodge No. 182**, W Bro. Malcolm Johnson, **Ionic-Kent Lodge No. 19**, and RW Bro. George Lamont, **University Lodge No. 91** met at a Grand Lodge sing-a-long

and decided to put their talents to work entertaining for free at care homes and seniors' lodges.

With W Bro. Chow singing, W Bro. Johnson on drums and RW Bro Lamont on electric piano, they have entertained, among other places, at Westminster House in White Rock, Surrey's Bear Creek Lodge, and Mission Hospital's Extended Care Unit, where they met a musical idol of their youth, Mart Kenny, leader of the 1940s and 1950s "Western Gentlemen". He is ninety-six and comes to all their performances, although he doesn't say why. They rehearsed his theme song, "The West, A Nest, And You", which was often on CBC radio during the Second World War. He smiled his approval. At least the group thought so.

## Medical alert

### Recognizing a stroke

Neurologist report that if they can get to a stroke victim within three hours they can totally reverse the effects of a stroke—totally. The trick is getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed and getting to the patient within three hours.

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

1. Ask the individual to smile.
2. Ask him or her to raise both arms.
3. Ask the person to coherently speak a simple sentence (e. g. "It is sunny out today.")

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher. After discovering that a group

of non-medical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. They presented their conclusions at the American Stroke Association's annual meeting last February. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage.

## Lodge notes

WM Bro. Don Cunningham and the officers and brethren of **Admiral Lodge No. 170** are in the final stages of finishing their Food Bank project and expect to have everything in place by the March opening. After preparing some 250 food hampers for Christmas distribution, the brethren are now painting the walls and building shelving. The brethren are very proud of the project and the Community Services Society volunteers are said to be absolutely thrilled.

## Chaplain's Corner

by **VW Bro. Doug Sowden, Grand Chaplain**

A few years ago, my wife gave me a paper with a prayer on it. I've kept it pinned to my office notice board; now I'd like to share it with you. You may have seen it before, but I believe the message bears repeating.

"Dear God: So far today, I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, and I haven't lost my temper. I haven't been grumpy, nasty or selfish. I have tried to follow your commandments and the path you have set for me. But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed... and that is when I'm going to need a lot of help."

This morning prayer tells us many things. It indicates that a

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good night's sleep can give us a fresh slate to draw upon. The new day is before us, and the cares and anxieties of yesterday have faded. Sleep has allowed our body to rest, and has allowed our mind to deal with the concerns we had the night before.

The prayer also tells us that it is easier to stick to rules and not commit any fouls when you aren't playing the game. Life is a team sport in many ways, and once you leave the comfort of your bed and start interacting with others, the rules come into full effect.

The prayer is petitionary. It is an acknowledgement that there is a greater power than ourselves, and that power is yielded to us through prayer.

Finally, I think this little prayer tells us that we don't have to wait for the sabbath, sunset, or the muezzin's call. We can pray at any time of the day.

Nevil Shute, in his book *Round the Bend*, had a main character who taught aircraft mechanics to pray as they worked. This character suggested to the mechanics that a short, "Is this a right action?" will be answered. In every word and action, keeping God in mind will produce better results.

You may not wish to pray at every moment of the day, but try this little morning prayer tomorrow. I hope it helps.

May God go with you and bless you. ■

## Politics

In Freemasonry there are certain basic rules and principles called "Landmarks", which cannot be changed, repealed or amended by any freemason, lodge, or Grand Lodge. These Landmarks are an expression of that which belongs to Freemasonry's identity. If they were removed, Freemasonry would cease to be Freemasonry.

One of the most important of all these Landmarks is that

which forbids us to participate, as freemasons, in any form of religious or political sectarianism. We cannot question a candidate as to his own peculiar beliefs in religion or politics. We cannot discuss such matters at any of our meetings. We must not take any kind of public action with regard to them in the name of the Craft.

A candidate must pledge himself to a belief in a Supreme Being and he must reverence that particular Volume of Sacred Law which he regards as the rule and guide for his life. The doctrinal interpretation that he may place on these beliefs must, however, be left entirely to him. So also must he pledge himself to good citizenship; but this choice of political party through which he works for the realization of his ideal of good citizenship must be left entirely to him.

The Craft's attitude toward all such sectarianism is more than a negative one. It goes further than merely saying "Hands off". It is rather a positive one, for it definitely prohibits all freemasons from sectarian controversies in any form whatsoever. Such controversies are unmasonic—that is they are an outright violation of masonic law.

It is not difficult to understand the reason for this Landmark. Freemasonry exists for the sake of, is dedicated and devoted to, the life of brotherhood. Brotherhood means that many of us, men drawn from all walks of life, with a great variety of ethnic characteristics, and religious and political opinions, are brought together and kept together, in a relationship of friendship, harmony and goodwill. To maintain that harmony it is essential that passions and prejudices that might divide us into opposing groups, schisms or conflicting cliques must be kept out. It is well known that nothing is more likely to divide and alienate men than religious or

political sectarianism. Sectarianism is prohibited because the needs and the welfare of brotherhood demand it.

Freemasonry thus prohibits sectarianism within its own membership. But what, you may ask, is its attitude toward that sectarianism in the outside world which leads men to attack Freemasonry itself? What is a freemason to do in response to attacks from the outside? The question is a very pertinent one. During its whole history Freemasonry has been the subject of attacks from without. Two or three of the great churches maintain enmity toward it. Some governments have outlawed it and forbidden their nationals to become members. In all probability the Craft will always have such enmities to deal with, as does every other organization.

The attitude of the Craft in such matters is to ignore them. The Craft does not fight back. We take the position that if some men, or group of men, disagrees with the teachings of Freemasonry, that is his or their own affair and does not concern us. We do nothing to invite or to warrant such attacks, therefore it is no affair of ours. Our faith in the truth and right of Freemasonry is so well-founded that we are certain that it needs to do nothing except to go on being itself, in order to silence, sooner or later, any charges that may be made against it by any kind of enemies.

That positive attitude, in its most general sense, takes the form of the great masonic ideal of toleration. Tolerance has always been one of the tenets of the Craft. What do we mean by tolerance? Tolerance does not mean, by any stretch of imagination, that one belief is as good as another, or is as true as another, or is as valuable as another. Freemasonry does not advocate a general indifference to all beliefs; nor does it hold that all differences of opinion

<http://freemasonry-bcy.ca>

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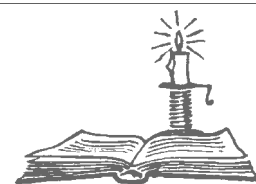
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## Vancouver Grand Masonic Day

Saturday  
April 22, 2006

Tickets: \$30  
1495 W. 8th Ave.  
Vancouver



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at  
Grand Lodge*

should be melted down into a drab compromise. As believers in toleration we, as freemasons, take the opposite position. We believe that one belief is truer than another, that one opinion is better grounded than another, and we want the truth to prevail. But we know that truth can never emerge unless man is left free to seek those facts for himself, to think for himself, to speak for himself, to confront life's realities for himself. Every human mind must be left free to observe the world for itself. This, Freemasonry believes, is the one way in which the truth about any of the great subjects of human life will ever be found. Tolerance, therefore, is a positive and constructive thing. It encourages every man to think for himself, because not otherwise will men learn in the long run to think the same things. In all our masonic meetings we try to deal with one another, in so far as religious and political matters are concerned, in the spirit of fair play. We may well disagree, but we try not to be disagreeable. But Freemasonry's attitude is even more definite than this.

First, as regards religion. Freemasonry is dedicated to, and devoted to brotherhood. Brotherhood rests upon a basis of religion. Every freemason must believe in a Supreme Being, the Volume of Sacred Law must be open at every meeting of the lodge. Before engaging in any important undertaking a freemason should seek aid and guidance through prayer to the Great Architect of the Universe. This is religion, but not a religion. It is faith—but not worship attached to any one altar. It is the ground which underlies all religions, all churches, all creeds, all sects. Once freemasons stand together on that ground they may afterwards proceed to build for themselves this church or that, may incline to one doctrinal interpretation

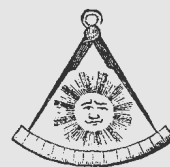
or another: the Fraternity does not interfere with them in so doing, but it insists that whatever be their private opinions they shall stand on that ground.

Second as regards politics. Politics means the discussion and determination of matters of public policy. Shall the government maintain a large army or a small one? Shall it charge custom duties on goods imported from abroad? How shall it impose and collect its taxes? Each question of this kind is a matter of national policy, and therefore of politics. Consequently matters of politics are of the utmost importance and the concern of all citizens. Every citizen, if he is a good citizen, will bring to bear on such questions his best judgment and will do whatever his duty demands toward putting into effect such policies as are determined upon.

That is good citizenship and Freemasonry demands of every member that he be a good citizen. Just as there is a common ground which underlies all religions so is good citizenship that which underlies all political parties. A freemason may belong to this political party or that, may hold one opinion or another on matters of foreign policy, or on the atom bomb. He may not attempt to persuade brethren in lodge to see things from his point of view. He must be and remain a good citizen—law-abiding, faithful to his country, loyal to the civil powers and as quick to do his public duties as to discharge his private ones.

To conclude: As a freemason one must never introduce into the Craft any controversial sectarian question. A freemason will pay no heed to those who, from without, attack the Craft. A freemason must adhere to that religion in which all good men agree and be ready to discharge the duties of good citizenship. ■

*"This is one of a series of Papers or Addresses which have been*



## GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY FEBRUARY, 2006

1	W		Scottish Rite	Langley
1-3	W-F	Communication	Grand Lodge of Alaska	Anchorage
5	Su	Installation	Shrine	Abbotsford
11	S	Scottish Breakfast	Meridian No. 108	Vancouver
11-12	S-Su	75th Anniversary	Job's Daughters	Burnaby
15	W	<b>District No. 25</b>	Pythagoras No. 194	Vancouver
17	F	<b>District No. 21</b>	Haida No. 166	Saanichton
18	S	<b>District No. 5</b>	Euclid No. 158	Port Alberni
23	Th	<b>District No. 13</b>	Vancouver No. 68	Vancouver
27	M	<b>District No. 14</b>	University No. 91	Vancouver
28	T	Table Lodge	Prince David No. 101	Maple Ridge

*compiled by the Grand Lodge of Scotland for the use of lodges." Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, Volume 83, 1970. p. 367.*

## Prestonian lecture

As part of his world tour, 2006 Prestonian Lecturer, W Bro. Granville S. Angell, will be the keynote speaker for Vancouver Grand Masonic Day on 22 April 2006. His lecture, entitled "The Victoria Cross – Freemasons' Band of Brothers", promises to be an interesting and lively exploration of the lives and exploits of the many freemasons who have received England's highest award for war-time valour. W Bro. Angell will be in British Columbia for two weeks and it is expected that he will also be speaking elsewhere in our jurisdiction during his visit. ■

## Quitting

If a member in good standing finds himself, for whatever personal reason, unable or unwilling to maintain his association with Freemasonry he may voluntarily withdraw by requesting a

demit, which he is entitled to receive.

If he is free of all charges (fiscal and conduct) and is in possession of a current dues card at the time of his demit or death, he shall be known as "a member in good standing at that time". However, a member in good standing at the time of demit is not a "member" nor is "good standing" thereafter, as he has voluntarily withdrawn himself from the rights and privileges of Freemasonry.

Taking a demit is preferable to being suspended. A demitted member may still, with some restrictions, visit lodges; he will also find it easier if he wishes to affiliate with a lodge in the future.

Just as important is the potential bearing of his masonic status on his family. Membership in appendant organizations such as the Eastern Star for women, or Job's Daughters for girls, requires that a relative be, or have been, a freemason.

A member who is suspended does a potential disservice to his children or children's children. Freemasonry would prefer not to lose a member, but if it must, let it be done in proper form. ■