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Look beyond the trees

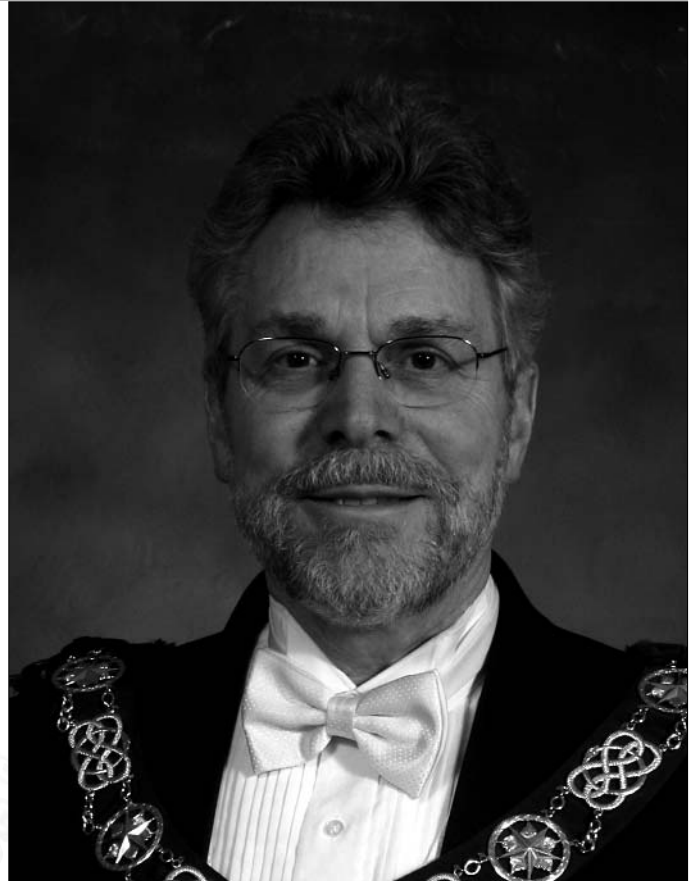
by MW Bro. Stephen Godfrey

If you have attended lodge meetings at the Masonic Temple in Victoria, or travelled the passageway of the Grand Lodge office in Vancouver, you will know of framed photos of Past Grand Masters gracing the walls. For three decades I have viewed these photos. To consider that I am about to follow in their footsteps is inspirational, and at the same time, overwhelming. These great men—masonic leaders, and pioneers in their own right—have led our Craft through 136 years of Freemasonry in British Columbia and Yukon. And I now pledge myself to humble service in the same cause; a different time, a different social climate, but the same fundamentals of Freemasonry to speak about, the same standards to uphold.

I am honoured and proud.

I thank all those brethren who have shown support for me. So many of you and each of your supporting gestures have been different and important to my masonic journey. My personal thanks are extended to RW Bros. Art Scott and David Washington who have been my sponsors since my decision to place my nomination before you. I must also express thanks to the brethren of Haida Lodge No. 166 who, from my affiliation, have been my inspiration. They have regularly allowed me to explore unknown areas, bringing programmes to our meetings which have not been tried before. They have risked and they have grown as I have grown.

It is impossible to calculate the value of the support given me by my family, Chris, my wife, Treana and Bruce, and Tricia and Matt. To you all my



MW Bro. Stephen Godfrey, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon for 2007 - 2008.

deepest thanks for being there when I needed you.

I stand before you ready to assume the responsibility for Freemasonry in British Columbia and Yukon. The mantle of duty weighs heavily; the continued quality of Freemasonry to be maintained remains paramount; the service to my fellow humans my main course.

While I was studying at the University of Victoria, a visiting professor challenged us to explore areas of study which were unknown to us. "Find a topic," she said, "which

demands new research—which demands new investigation." By the end of the course, not only had we all expanded our own experiences, but also through our studies we had travelled to fascinating destinations, into the unexpected, captivating, and fascinating, areas that we would never have found had we not been encouraged to look beyond the trees. This is my theme for the year—*Look beyond the trees.*

I offer you the challenge this year. In all that you do, in all

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Our Grand Master

from page one

that you research, find new knowledge, study new areas—find those interesting topics that are something that “you didn’t know you didn’t know!”

What you discover on your own is always more exciting than what someone else discovers for you—it’s like the difference between romantic love and an arranged marriage, says the noted film critic, Terrence Rafferty.

Last year a paper titled “It’s about Time” was published by the Masonic Service Association. Its thesis statement was that men seeking membership in our fraternity were not as enamored with what they saw when they arrived. The reasons concluded by the authors of the paper were:

1. Loss of masonic identity, and
2. Lack of energy invested in Freemasonry.

I agree with the conclusions. Of our membership we know that 20% essentially are working for the cause of good in our lodges, and it is obvious that 20% are also working for our Grand Lodge.

But I am even more convinced that we can raise the participation higher by implementing much of what I propose. We are the change needed. The responsibility rests with each one of us. As Gandhi said, “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” We cannot shine if we have not taken time to fill our lamps. Learn more about our craft. Make this year the year of commitment. Look beyond the trees, brethren.

Self discovery and change take time. We are reminded of the efficient use of our time and, to some extent, the effective use of our lives, when we are presented with the twenty-four inch gauge.

I believe there is good reason for placing this in the hands of each new brother as the first working tool.

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.”

Alvin Toffler

To the initiate, its metaphor seems obvious, twenty-four inches and twenty-four hours of the day. The portioning of the twenty-four hours into three equal parts, at first glance also appears evident. It teaches time management—a suggestion to bring our busy lives into a simplified correspondence of service: service to God and a distressed worthy brother, service to our usual avocation (here I use the old version of the ritual), and service to ourselves through refreshment and sleep.

The twenty-four inch gauge also reminds us that we should not live only for ourselves but for others, so as in just measure we serve our families, our friends, our neighbours and our country. It recalls to my mind the poem *If* by Rudyard Kipling, which says that we have no time to waste and should use every moment for good:

*If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,
And—which is more—you’ll be a Man, my son!*

These time management skills empower our lives and so I am using the twenty-four inch gauge as the symbol of this year.

There is no time to waste. Michael Altshuler said it best: “The bad news is that time flies. The good news is that you’re the pilot.”

And we do have time—the very precious commodity so necessary for our fraternity. In our hurried lives, we tend to

find less time for anything masonic. H. Jackson Brown, a director of an advertising agency, puts it all in perspective.

“Don’t say you don’t have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Louis Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein.”

Therefore I ask of you this year, give more time to the wisdom of Freemasonry.

Education is the major focus for this year. I encourage us all to read, read, and read some more. A new lapel pin has been struck for the year. Anyone can earn the pin by doing one thing: present an education programme in a lodge, a masonic function, or a social event. Be a masonic resource this year. The District Deputy Grand Masters have the pins. They will present one to any brother who helps with education this year. At the end of the year I will measure the amount of education in this jurisdiction.

Our District Deputy Grand Masters have received two CDs, the work of the Inter-provincial Conferences of the Officers of the Western Provinces, commonly known as the Canmore Conference. It is the complete set of papers and follow-up discussions presented from the years 1941 to 2001—over 260 papers. The second CD is a collection of about 700 papers and articles. They also have a CD of the mentorship programme and a new Power Point programme of learning for new freemasons created by W Bro. Larry Burden.

The District Deputy Grand Masters also have book lists compiled by prominent freemasons—worthwhile books to start any masonic library. I encourage us all to introduce these titles as extensions to all mentorship programmes. Make education count, make it worth something.

Five Pillar Plan

You have, at this Annual Communication approved in principle the long term plan we have presented as a map for the future of the jurisdiction. Under its five headings: Leadership, Education, Communication, Membership, and Community, plans are developing. With your help I will guide our jurisdiction along a new path of Freemasonry under a Strategic Plan: the Five Pillars Plan.

Leadership

- Officers Conference – for potential officers of lodges April 2008;
- DDGM Seminar – skill building for appointment;
- Supporting Youth – survey determining the full extent of brethren who support youth in any capacity including Job’s Daughters and DeMolay.

Education

- Priority in lodges – 7 to 12 minute papers followed by discussion time;
- Build lodge libraries and update existing libraries;
- GL Committee on Education – continued work on diploma programme and support of mentoring material;
- Masonic Day moved to Chilliwack this year: 29 September;
- Create Masonic Day in the districts – individually or jointly in districts;
- Encourage invited guests to speak before the members;
- Presentation of a special pin to those who present education this year.

Communication

- Beginning the implementation of e-communications report;
- Building ways to communicate to *all*, preferably face to face;
- Finance Committee available to help assess property, and plan for renovations.

Membership

- Lodge Achievement and Recognition Award Programme (previously called the Lodge Excellence programme) – participation and motivation programme;
- Organizing one (non-regular) meeting this year to discuss state of the Craft in their lodge;
- Encourage lodges to consider the five pillar plan as a template for their long term plans;
- Survey of all new free-masons raised as Master Masons since 2002, inquiring of the quality of their reception into Freemasonry.

Community

- Begin to build a pictorial history of our lodge buildings since they were built, including photographic and written inventory of furnishings
- Support the Benevolent, Bursary and Cancer Charity Community Funds.

Stephen Covey in his fourth book, *The 8th Habit*, a further study following his *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, states that the eighth habit is “find one’s voice first then inspire others to find theirs.” He speaks of determining what we wish to leave this world, what good can we offer those who come after us, and how can we help others to find a balance. He continues by saying we each have a body, a mind, a heart, and a spirit; a body to live, a mind to learn, a heart to love and a spirit to leave a legacy. That is what we must do.

I leave with you this final thought from Winston Churchill who said: “Those who try to build the present in the image of the past will miss out entirely on the challenges of the future.”

The challenge is now ours; the future is in our hands and our destiny is in our hands. Look beyond the trees, brethren, look beyond the trees. ■

From the Ladies

by *Deidre Brower-Berkhoven*

MW Grand Master (I hope you haven't become too used to that, this year), Distinguished and invited guests, ladies and brethren:

On behalf of the ladies present, I would like to thank RW Bro. Glenn Allen for his lovely Toast to the Ladies. Glenn has been teasing me for several days about proposing this toast, so I wasn't really sure what he was going to say, but I thank you, Glenn, for your very gracious words. We ladies have many rôles that we play in our lives, but the ones we share with you, our husbands and families, are the ones we hold most dear, and we thank you for making us feel so appreciated this evening.

As it has been my responsibility to reply on behalf of the ladies this year, I have tried to let you gentlemen know how much we love you and believe in what you do. We need very little exposure to the real world, with its daily headlines in the newspapers, to realize how fortunate we are to have tied our stars to yours.

My husband loves people and, more than that, he loves Freemasonry. Over the years, he has talked to me a lot about this great fraternity—none of the secrets though; I have enough of my own that I can't remember. He especially likes to talk about it when returning from a meeting at 11:00 pm when I'd rather be going to sleep, because 6:00 am comes rather early. But talk we do, and, as a result of his need to talk about this great love of his, I have also learned a great deal about Freemasonry and I've come to admire it. I've developed a deep and sincere pride for you gentlemen for choosing it as a way of life. This year in our travels, I have encouraged you gentlemen to

share your love of Freemasonry with your wives; tell us why you joined, why you love it as you do, how you think it has made you a better man. You see, some of the best advocates for your great order may be the very women who share this way of life with you

Freemasonry claims to take a good man and make him better. I have always believed that, in his heart, my husband was a good man and, over the years, I have watched Freemasonry slowly change him into an even better man. I have been very proud of him this year. I have respected him for assuming the huge responsibility that being Grand Master requires. I have appreciated how he has tried to make this year as easy as he could for me, because I still work full-time.

I have loved his good nature and infectious happiness. I have marvelled at his boundless energy and enthusiasm. I have admired his hard work and commitment to be the best Grand Master he could be. And I have been inspired by his love for Freemasonry, what it teaches, and what it can bring to the world when practiced by good men. As I've watched him this year, I have come to love him even more than I did before—and that's an awful lot.

As we ladies watch Freemasonry make you into better men, it gently shapes us as well. You know, I'm not a freemason, but I think Freemasonry has even made me a better person. I started this journey reluctantly, but it has carried me quite far. Standing up here is not my *forte*, nor will it ever be, but this was my husband's journey, so I've learned to let my love for him be stronger than my fear of standing up here. I've learned that we cannot assume that our husbands will know that we're proud of them and what they do. We must tell them why we are proud of them, and tell them often. I've

Lodge Officers' Conference 2008

INSPIRE, INFORM, ENABLE!

Take your lodge to the next level, with your lady's support! Plan to attend the Officers' Conference at the Delta Sun Peaks Resort next April 25, 26, & 27, 2008.

Conference Fee:

\$190 single/ \$220 per couple
(before November 30)

Rooms: \$109 per night plus tax.

Jon Broadberry

jbroadberry@shaw.ca

Rick Money

kmta@telus.net



Volunteer to drive a Cancer Car

+1-604-872-2034
+1-800-663-7892
+1-250-712-1101



Grand Masonic Day

Join us at the Vancouver and Fraser Valley Workshop in the Chilliwack Masonic Hall, 45905 Hocking Ave, on Saturday, September 29.

Inquiries:

VW Bro John Keirstead,
keirsteadjohn@netsca

learned that the people of this great jurisdiction are some of the warmest, friendliest, and most generous people I know. And, in the words of George Bernard Shaw, I've learned that "the journey is the reward", if you are only open to it.

Freemasonry is the guardian of many things that are "right" in this world: kindness in the home, honesty in business, courtesy in society, fairness at work, and concern for the unfortunate.

"Kindness in the home" comes first, and we ladies know that this is no mistake because we know it is the most important.

It is the relationships and dynamics within our homes that determine, in large part, whether our children will turn and face the world, eager and hopeful, trusting in their abilities, knowing that they are loved and have the unconditional support of their families; or escape into an already dangerous world, fearful, angry and hostile, having learned that they are not worthy of love, with their worst nightmares rooted in the very abuse they suffer at the hands of those who gave them birth and who society has set up as their protectors.

We ladies are so thankful that we live in homes where we and our children are safe, where we are loved and honoured, and where we are respected as valuable human beings. So, as trivial and self-evident as "kindness in the home" may seem, it is the single most valuable gift we can give society because, with it, we can shape the next generation and help change the face of the future.

As we journey through life, many of us wonder about the meaning and purpose of life—why are we here and what are we supposed to accomplish? I believe our great purpose in life is to learn to love each other, and to love each other unconditionally. This is not easy,

as many of us look for excuses and reasons to criticize or sit in judgement on one another.

For centuries, this ancient fraternity has had a heritage of brotherhood and brotherly love. It has provided a meeting place where men of all races, religions, cultures, educational levels and backgrounds can meet as equals. Rather than letting your differences tear you apart, men of different race sit side by side, and men of different religions clasp hands in friendship. You make this lifelong journey together, helping each freemason be the best Master Mason, the best Worshipful Master, the best Grand Master, and the best "man" that he can be.

At a memorial service, I was reminded of Freemasonry and its practice of brotherly love when I heard these words, "We will carve your good deeds in marble, and we will write your faults in the sand." In life and in death, we can ask for nothing more than that.

I thank you for allowing my husband to be your Grand Master because, in this process, you also allowed me to be your First Lady. This has been a wonderful experience, a definite once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, a great honour, and I thank you sincerely for this privilege.

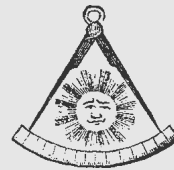
Given at the Grand Master's Banquet, 136th Annual Communication, Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, 22 June 2007.

Upcoming

Grand Masonic Day set for Chilliwack

A full day of presentations is scheduled for the 26th Annual Grand Masonic Day – a Vancouver/Fraser Valley Workshop – to be held Saturday, 29 September at the Chilliwack Masonic Hall, 45905 Hocking Avenue. Registration starts at 8:30 a.m. with official opening at 9:45 a.m.

Fee for the session is \$30,



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY SEPTEMBER 2007

7	Fri	GMs of WA, OR and BC meeting	Bellingham, WA
11	Tue	District 19 , Light of the Rockies 190	Tumbler Ridge
13	Thu	District 12 , Kitselas 123	Terrace
14-15	F-S	Queen Charlotte Islands 189	Port Clements
17	Mon	Appreciation Night, Camosun 60	Victoria
18	Tue	Official Visit, Victoria Lodge of E&R	Victoria
20-22	Th-S	Grand Chapter, Royal Arch	Nanaimo
21	Fri	Cancer Car Volunteer Dinner	Lantzville
24	Mon	Bethel 36, Goldstream 161	Victoria
26	Wed	Royal Arch, Scottish Rite, Shrine	
26	Wed	Principal Officers' Meeting	Grand Lodge
29	Sat	Vancouver & Fraser Valley Masonic Day	Chilliwack

payable at the door by cash or cheque. Breaks, luncheon, and a copy of the proceedings are included in the fee. Pre-payment is not necessary, but an indication of attendance is required for catering purposes. Those planning to attend should contact VW Bro. John Keirstead (604-524-1661 or keirsteadjohn@netscape.net) or W Bro. Doug Potter (604-465-3857 or dougpot@shaw.ca) by Monday, 24 September.

Officers' Conference

Take your lodge to the next level, with your lady's support! Plan to attend the Officers' Conference at the Delta Sun Peaks Resort next April 25, 26, & 27.

Presenters from Manitoba, California, and some of the best in British Columbia will bring you what you want to know.

- Plan a memorable year!
 - Run great meetings!
 - Attract and retain new members!
 - Hold successful events!
 - Build powerful teams!
 - Motivate! - delegate!
 - Care for your ladies and connect with your community!
- All this and more, in one of

the premium venues in the Interior.

The Conference Fee, a low \$190 single, or an incredible \$220 per couple till November 30, includes all materials, two breakfasts, a lunch, and the Banquet, including taxes and gratuities. Quote "Masonic Officers' Conference" directly with Delta Sun Peaks Resort and get their low room rate of \$109 per night plus tax.

For information and to register, contact Jon Broadberry (250-579-8576 or jbbroadberry@shaw.ca) or Rick Money (250-828-2231 or kmata@telus.net).

Charity

The Blanshard Community Chest Fund in Victoria, established through a \$10,000 donation from our Grand Lodge in 2002, received a second \$10,000 donation this past year. Set up to help people with short-term emergency needs for employment, health, housing and education, the programme is currently self-sufficient, working with interest income and reimbursement from people previously helped.