



Why are members leaving?.....1
This is your hour2
Lodge notes2
Through a freemason's eyes2
Fidelity.....4
The responsibility of sponsors4
Lodge Officers Conference, 20084
Grand Master's Itinerary 4

Why?

by RW Bro. R. Glenn Allen Deputy Grand Master

Last year I submitted a paper to the Western Canada Conference in Canmore Alberta. This conference is made up of the Grand Line Officers of the Four Western Masonic Jurisdictions of Canada.

The gist of the paper was taken from a paper presented at the Banff Conference in 1942, written by RW Bro. Ben Parker who at the time was the Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba.

His paper dealt with membership and the lack of new members joining the lodges. He blamed the economics of the day and the fact that most young men were in the armed services.

Today, sixty-five years later, we are having the same problem fighting technology, TV, and relaxed liquor laws.

Young men today are allowed to drink in bars, enlist in the armed forces and join police forces, but they are not allowed to become freemasons

until they're twenty-one or older.

After 1945 our ranks soared, but peaked in 1964, when we boasted of having 27,000 faithful freemasons. Today we have 10,000.

VW Bro. Aidan Gordon plotted our losses on a graph from 1900 through 2005. Our attrition rate through deaths averaged 2.5%. Grand Lodges in the USA posted similar results.

Our best year was 1962, with a net gain of 400. Since that time we have suffered severe losses: In 1999 we lost 880 brethren. In 2005 another 765 left our beloved fraternity, but in 2005 we raised, restored, and affiliated 510 with a net loss of 328.

Here are some figures for 2006:

Died	339
Raised	481
NPD	167
Demits	257
Net Loss	282

So you can see, we lost



The image of a pair of clasped right hands is not simply a depiction of a fraternal handshake but symbolizes the virtue of Fidelity, also represented on ancient medals by a heart in an open hand. (See page 3.)

3.2% of our brethren to the Grand Lodge Above. That, we cannot control—but our demits are almost equal to our net loss.

Two lodges suspended twelve members each, two other lodges suspended nine each. The four lodges lost a total of forty-two members.

Why is this happening? Do we not live in one of the richest countries in the world?

Where have we failed? Why not remit some of these dues or make these brothers life members of your lodge?

If the lodge remits the

members' dues, the lodge only pays the *per capita*, plus the Cancer Car Assessment. Cost to the lodge : \$28. If you must, pay the Cancer Car Assessment out of your benevolent fund. If the brother is in dire straits, ask Grand Lodge for some assistance to get him over the rough spots.

Why are members leaving? Are we not providing interesting meetings? Do we have an education plan? Is the lodge being run in an efficient manner, or by competent officers? Let us set aside the

continued on page 2



VOLUME 71 / NUMBER 3

EDITED by Trevor W. McKeown for the Grand Secretary's Office and published by the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of British Columbia and Yukon. The VIEWS AND OPINIONS expressed in the *Masonic Bulletin* are those of the individual authors and writers, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of this Grand Lodge. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions. CORRESPONDENCE: 1495 West Eighth Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia V6H 1C9 Canada. WEB: <http://freemasonry.bc.ca> TELEPHONE: +1-604-736-8941. FACSIMILE: +1-604-736-5097. EMAIL: editor@freemasonry.bc.ca

Why?

from page one

ritual work for now. Do your lodge officers know how to effectively run a lodge? Does your lodge make proper use of your Board of General Purposes?

I would suggest that a regular lodge meeting should not last more than forty-five minutes.

If you have a speaker, allow him ten minutes. If you do not have a speaker, then ask a member to stand up and give five minutes on his life, his work, his family, or his thoughts on Freemasonry.

Why do we wait until a brother's funeral to say "I didn't know that about him?"

When we go to a cemetery, we see headstones with the words "Born (year) dash Died (year)." We should know what that dash represents. What did he mean to his family and his friends? Let's not leave our brethren as just a dash on a headstone.

Does your lodge have a Tyler's Committee? Your Tyler should perform a great service to the lodge. He and two or three other brothers should be the greeters of the lodge brethren and visitors.

According to *Forms and Ceremonies*, the Tyler is armed to guard effectively against Cowans and Eavesdroppers, to see that none pass, etc.

The Tyler and his committee should be the first to arrive at the lodge hall, to open the lodge, prepare the porch book, welcome the members and visitors, and to introduce new members and visitors to the members attending.

The Tyler and his committee should "play house". Let them pretend that the lodge is their home and greet every brother as if inviting them into their own home. Make them feel welcome and above all, as our Grand Master says, "Look Beyond the Trees." Do not let your brothers simply become a

dash between *Born* and *Died*.

I believe that if we focus on the dash and make each brother feel as a friend, they will find a way to pay their dues, and through your kindness and friendship, you will bring them back again and again to keep our great fraternity alive in perpetuity. I believe that if we focus on friendship and kindness to our neighbours and community we will stage a comeback to the greatness and prestige Freemasonry once enjoyed throughout Canada and the free world. ■

Lodge notes

In a noteworthy event, last month the brethren of **Euclid Lodge No. 158** in Port Alberni held an emergent communication to raise Bro. Andrew Whytock to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. Once Bro. Whytock had taken his obligation, he was raised by his grandfather, Bro. Jim Chisholm, who, the same evening, was presented with his 60 year lapel pin from the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario. ■

Your hour

Freemasonry is not an escape mechanism; it isn't an ivory tower; it is not an escape from the problems and tensions that are increasingly inevitable in our kind of world.

Freemasonry presents to us obligations, obligations from which we cannot escape by playing at the idea of brotherhood as an escape from reality of that brotherhood.

Freemasonry means a release of Freemasonry as a great force in the life of the community. We are privileged men. To you has been given a vision of a new life for humanity, a vision of a better life for the world, and to you is ever committed the obligation to translate that vision and that dream into reality, not at some

time in the future, but now, for this is your hour. Dream about it. Dream of your power; lean upon it; grasp it; clasp it; hold it tight; take advantage of this wonderful opportunity. If you hesitate and find yourself in the mire, climb out, climb out high. Do your best and do it now; your best as freemasons, and live it now. ■

From the address "Freemasonry in our time" by MW Bro. Thomas S. Roy at the Grand Master's Dinner in Toronto, July 20, 1960.

Through a mason's eyes

By Thomas Sherrard Roy

What you see in life depends upon where you stand, or what you bring to the point of vision. William Blake was standing on the seashore one morning watching the sun rising. He turned to a shopkeeper friend who was near and asked him what he saw when he saw the sun rise. His friend said: "I see a great big round golden guinea." There was an embarrassed silence, and then the shopkeeper said, "Well then, sir, what do you see?" And Blake said "I see an innumerable company of angels, crying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, the whole earth is filled with the glory of God.'" What made the difference? What each man brought to the point of vision. I had a friend who was a lumberman. If he came upon a stand of timber, he would estimate the average height and diameter of the trees, and thus produce so many thousand of feet of lumber, that at the market price would be worth so much money. Joyce Kilmer would look at the same trees and say: "I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree; a tree that looks at God all day, and lifts her leafy arms to pray . . . Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a

tree." What makes a difference? What each man brought to the point of vision.

Freemasonry creates a point of view, or gives us an angle of vision, or "a scale of observation," that enables us to see things to which others may be blind. The great artist Turner was one day painting a landscape. A lady came along and watched him for a while, looking at the landscape and then at the painting. Finally, she said: "Mr. Turner, I don't see what you do." His crushing reply was "No! Don't you wish you could?" That same Turner would not let a visitor go from the street right into the gallery where his paintings were exhibited. They first had to spend some time in a darkened room; for he said that people could not see his paintings aright with the glare of the street in their eyes.

Freemasonry gives us a new perspective on life, and takes out of our eyes the glare of a harsh, materialistic world, and enables us to see life from the viewpoint of brotherhood. I have been a freemason for almost fifty-four years, and I want you to think of some of the things I have learned as I have looked at life through the eyes of a freemason.

The exact minute when I moved towards the door that would open for me into Freemasonry, I should have learned one of life's greatest lessons. Up to that moment I thought of myself as a completely independent individual. All my life I had been hearing about self-made men. I felt that I had a claim to be called one, and that I could make my way in the world without much help from any person. Like many others, I wanted to be "beholden to no person." I was on my own, and proud of it. Then I discovered that in Freemasonry I was not going any place on my own. My boasted independence was torn to shreds as I found a very much needed

hand under my arm, and found a guidance, without which I would have been completely lost.

My first experience in Freemasonry symbolized for me the universal fact of our dependence. All over this continent there are men who are referred to as "self-made men." Those who know about their careers say that they did it all by themselves. Such a claim is absurd.

One of the things that has remained with me from the course in economics I had in college is that the factors that make for wealth are land, labour, and capital.

But land is not just the earth. It is all of the physical resources of the planet: the fertility of the soil, the wealth of minerals in the ground, the fish in the sea, the air that we breathe. Your self-made man was absolutely dependent upon these things for his wealth, but he produced none of them.

The second factor in the creation of wealth is labour. But labour is not just the men who work with their hands, nor the energy expended on production. Labour is society. It is this group over here who produce what your self-made man wants to sell, and without whom he would be helpless. Even if a man creates what he has to sell with his own hands, he is still dependent upon those who furnish him with the materials out of which he will create his product. Society is also this group over here who buy what the self-made man has to sell. He did not create this labour, but without it he cannot succeed. The third factor in the production of wealth is capital. But capital which ordinarily is identified with money is much more than that. Capital is the brains and personality with which a man is born. It is the potential executive ability which he has developed. Without them there can be no wealth, but your self-made man did not create this

capital all by himself. Take away from this self-made man all these things that have been factors in the production of his wealth and what have you left? Not an independent man, certainly; and not a self-made man in any sense of the word. Without the things upon which he has to depend, not figuratively but literally; not relatively but absolutely, there could be no wealth.

Freemasonry makes a great contribution to us, and to the world, in its dramatization of this fundamental principle of dependence. For no man is able to live a constructive life until he realizes the debt he owes to others.

For the hallmark of the civilized man is the ability to see that which he uses in terms of its human cost. This life of yours that you take for granted, and in nonchalant fashion permit to be absorbed in trivialities; this education that has greatedened your abilities and enriched your life; this liberty which in a real sense makes possible all that you enjoy in life; this religion that gives you faith and hope for time and eternity, were not created by you all by yourself. They are the work, and sometimes the sweat, and blood, and tears, and sacrifice of those who went in jeopardy of their lives; and should be used, not selfishly, but in the interest of building a world in which all men shall have a chance to find fulfillment of life.

As I have seen life through the eyes of a freemason I have been impressed with the necessity of emphasizing reality in life. We seem to have an inborn aversion to facing life realistically. Yet nothing is needed more desperately.

Freemasonry demonstrates that it is realistic when it places in our hands the working tools of the different degrees. By this act it proclaims that just as it is true that you cannot build a cathedral without working tools, so is it true that you

cannot build a life without working tools. That is, you cannot build a life without fulfilling the conditions for the building of a life. Again let it be said that it is no use wishing for ends if we are not ready to will the means to achieve those ends.

At the centre of the lodge I learned that at the centre of life there is obligation. But the nerve centre of obligation is responsibility. Obligation is predicated upon a sense of responsibility. Our masonic obligation is more than an engagement into which we enter with our brethren in Freemasonry. It symbolizes the fact that every relationship we form compels some new obligation. Our relationship to Freemasonry brings to us a great privilege. But every privilege in life lays upon us a corresponding obligation; just as every cherished right, whether political, religious or social, carries with it a corresponding duty.

Our masonic obligation, to put it generally, demands that our lives be the pledge of our fidelity. Let us not forget that in the figurative language we use, there is symbolized the fact that there are no broken obligations without penalties. There is nothing strange or peculiar about this. There is not a law on the statute books of any country whose violation does not carry a penalty of some sort.

Because of its repetition it would seem that there is no principle that Freemasonry would drive more forcibly into the consciousness of the world than this, that there can be no broken obligations without penalties.

These things that I have seen through the eyes of a freemason compel the conclusion that Freemasonry has a message for the world. It is the message that because of our interdependence we must learn to live together—recognizing the inherent worth of all men,

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

Sadie Hawkins Day BANQUET & DANCE

The Susi Francis
Hillbilly Comedy Show
Plus dance to the music of
Steve Hansen & his Band

**Saturday,
November 3, 2007**

6:30pm : Kickapoo Joy Juice

7:30pm : Grub

~ Raffle ~ Silent Auction ~

~ Door Prizes ~

Everybody Welcome!

\$35. per person

Gizeh Shrine Centre
3550 Wayburne Ave., Burnaby

and the ability of every race to bring enrichment to the lives of all men. It is the message that we must emphasize reality in life, cleaving to the truth in scorn of consequence. It is the message that at the centre of life there is obligation, from which neither man nor nation can escape, and in obedience to which, each shall serve the interests of all, and all shall serve the interests of each.

We should communicate this to the world with something of the passion of William Blake when he wrote the lines:

Bring me my bow of burning gold,

*Bring me my arrows of desire;
Bring me my sword, O clouds unfold!*

*Bring me my chariot of fire.
I will not cease from mental fight,*

Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,

*Till we have built Jerusalem
In all this green and pleasant land.* ■

MW Bro. Thomas Sherrard Roy was Grand Master of Massachusetts for 1951-1953.

Fidelity

In the lecture in the first degree, it is said that "our ancient brethren worshipped deity under the name of *Fides* or Fidelity, which was sometimes represented by two right hands joined, and sometimes by two human figures holding each other by the right hands."

The deity here referred to was the goddess *Fides*, to whom *Numa* first erected temples, and whose priests were covered by a white veil as a symbol of the purity which should characterize Fidelity.

No victims were slain on her altars, and no offerings were made to her except flowers, wine and incense. Her statues were represented clothed in a white mantle, with a key in her hand and a dog at her feet. The virtue of Fidelity is,

however, frequently symbolized in ancient medals by a heart in an open hand, but more usually by two right hands clasped.

Horace calls her "incorrupta fides" (non corruptible) and makes her the sister of Justice; while Cicero says, that which is religion towards God and piety toward our parents is Fidelity towards our fellow men.

There was among the Romans another deity called *Fidius*, who presided over oaths and contracts, and it is said that there was an ancient marble at Rome, consecrated to the God *Fidius*, on which was depicted two figures clasping each other's hands as the representatives of Honour and Truth, without which there can be no Fidelity not truth among men.

Freemasonry, borrowing its ideas from the ancient poets, makes the right hand the symbol of Fidelity. ■

Albert G. Mackey, Encyclopedia of Freemasonry (1917).

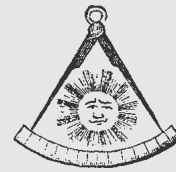
Sponsors

by Bro. Robert Prince

Towards the end of the Entered Apprentice degree ceremony, the candidate is charged never to recommend anyone to a participation in the secrets of Freemasonry unless he is convinced said person will "ultimately reflect honour on your choice." Should the alternate version of the *Charge* be used, he is enjoined never "to recommend him unless you are convinced that he will conform to our rules."

Either way, the message is pretty clear: don't sign someone's application for initiation unless you are positive that person will make a good freemason.

But if that message is so clear, why do so many application forms contain the signatures of brethren who don't know the first thing about the potential candidate they're sponsoring? Think about the last several applications that were read out in your



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY NOVEMBER 2007

1	Thu	International Night, Lafayette 241	Seattle
6	Tue	District 26 Commonwealth 156	Vancouver
10	Sat	District 24 Mt. Elphinstone 130	Roberts Creek
11	S	Annual Communication	Grand Lodge of Oklahoma
16	Fri	Installation Ymir 31	Salmo
17	Sat	District 6 Sentinel 146	Castlegar
20	Tue	District 9 St. George's 41	Kelowna
22	Thu	Principal Officers' Meeting, Grand Lodge	Kamloops
23-24	F-Sat	Fall Ceremonial Shrine	Vancouver
27	Tue	Blighty Night Comox 188	Comox

lodge. How many of those candidates had the secretary or master of the lodge as a sponsor? Most, if not all, right?

Now either your secretary and/or master know a heck of a lot of people, which would be pretty cool, or they're just signing to help a member of the lodge sponsor someone. Which is fine, if the notion that the judgment and integrity of a solitary brother is good enough, and that the other sponsorship signature is merely a formality. But if that's the case, then why bother with two signatures in the first place?

The whole point of two signatures, however, has little to do with the integrity issue. Rather, it is to ensure the brother-to-be has a strong support system in place when he joins the lodge: *i.e.* two brethren who know the man, and who are willing to assist him to thrive in our ancient fraternity.

Perhaps what we should be telling those newly initiated brethren is that if they meet someone they believe would make a good freemason, they should introduce that person to another member of the lodge and go for coffee, or a drink, or maybe even lunch. They should get the person to attend a

social function or two to give them an inkling of what it's like to be a freemason, and they should ask someone to take on the joint responsibility of sponsoring a candidate, realizing that it is, in some ways, a life-long commitment.

Freemasonry is not a fast-food concept; it's not supposed to be instant in any way. Which means that if you want to sponsor someone, you and the potential candidate should understand that it's a process that can only be developed properly with time, like any good relationship. ■

Officers Conference

This month is the last chance before the conference registration fee goes up to the full rate of \$230 for single and \$265 a couple.

This conference will provide leadership skills that apply not just in the lodge and concordant bodies but in all aspects of a freemason's career, and other walks of life.

Register this month to take advantage of the early bird rates! See the ad on page 3 or visit freemasonry.bcy.ca/calendar/officers_conference2008.html ■