



MW Bro. "Bill" McCoid (1926-2010)...1

Rights and responsibilities1

Junior Grand Warden Candidates2

Daylight lodges3

Cancer Car volunteers.....3

Annual Communication 2010.....3

Lodge notes4

Grand Master's itinerary.....4

Rights and responsibilities

by MW Bro. F.G. Fox

What are the rights and responsibilities of freemasons, and in what way, if any, do they affect the community?

All freemasons ought to know that every right is accompanied by a parallel duty. That is made abundantly clear in our ceremonies, lectures, and charges, yet we all know that too many freemasons attach more importance to their masonic rights than they do to their masonic duties.

Every freemason ought to be well informed about his rights and privileges, and he ought to understand the duties and responsibilities that, as a freemason, he must accept.

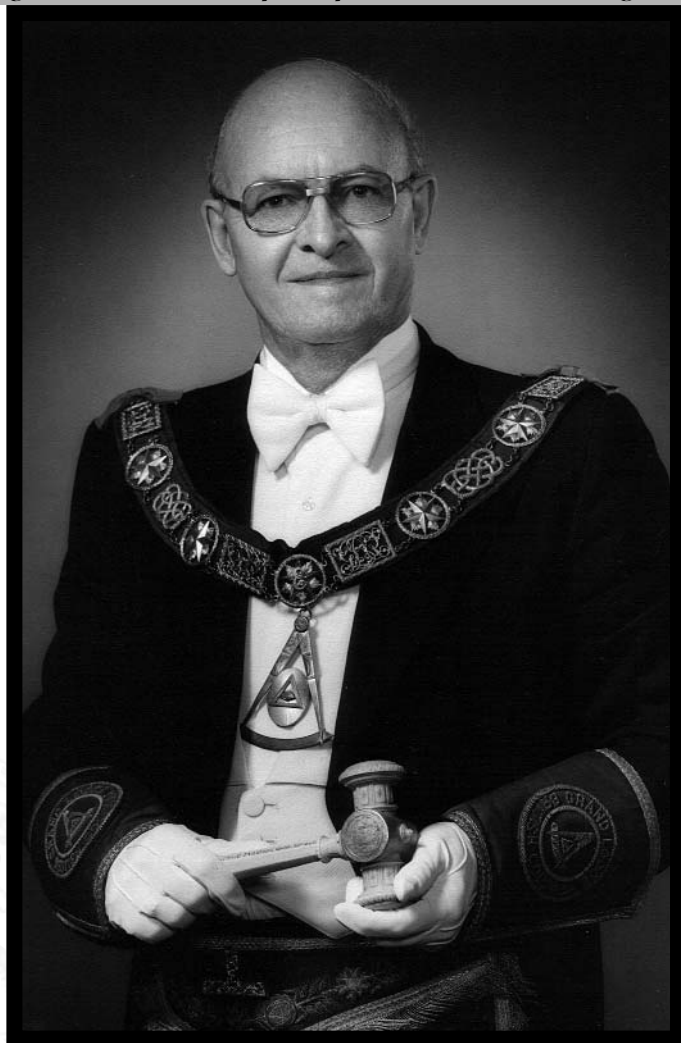
The freemason who wants to be fully informed about his rights and privileges must consult the ritual, the *Constitutions*, the ancient charges and the literature touching upon the ancient usages and customs of Freemasonry.

A freemason acquires his masonic rights gradually as he

is entered, passed, and raised, and once they have been given him they cannot be taken away so long as he remains a freemason. Privileges, on the other hand are not necessarily permanent. For example, a Past Master has the right to be addressed as Worshipful Sir or Worshipful Brother, and he has the right to vote in Grand Lodge. He has the privilege (not the right) of sitting in the east when invited to do so; he has the privilege of serving in Grand Lodge office if the Grand Master offers an appointment; he has the right to accept nomination.

Our brother also will learn that he has not discovered a single right or privilege that is not attended by responsibility. The balancing of rights and duties reminds me of one of the fundamental laws of physics, Newton's third law of motion. The law says that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Let me

continued on page 3



M..W.. BRO. WILLIAM JOSEPH MCCOID

Grand Master 1979 - 1980

Born in Kamloops on 16 April 1926, William Joseph McCoid superintended the Ashcroft Lumber Co. Ltd, and later BC Interior Sawmills Ltd. He then served as chairman of the Kamloops Board of Referees for the Unemployment Insurance Commission (UIC) for many years. Active in his community, he served as a director of the Kamloops Boys Club and president of the AOTS (As One That Serves) Men's Club in the Kamloops United Church, and was a member of the Kamloops Chamber of Commerce. Initiated in Kamloops Lodge No. 10 on 29 June 1950, Passed on 18 September 1950 and Raised on 30 October 1950, he served as Worshipful Master for 1968-1969, and District Deputy Grand Master of District 3 for 1973-1974. He later affiliated with Mount St. Paul Lodge No. 109 in 1980, as well as Prince Charles Lodge No. 153 and Cariboo Lodge No. 4.

MW Bro. McCoid Passed to the Grand Lodge Above on 3 March 2010.



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Junior Grand Warden candidates



RW Bro. Philip Durell

RW Bro. Philip Durell was born 27 July 1947 in Watford, England, and educated at HMS Conway in Wales, and Plymouth University where he received his BSc. and Master Mariner certificate.

Serving twelve years in the British merchant navy, he was later employed as a manager and senior executive in various seaports, including Empire Stevedoring and Fraser Surrey Docks, before joining BCIT as an instructor and chief instructor. He is currently self-employed, writing an investment newsletter that he founded in 2004.

RW Bro. Durell was raised in Maple Leaf Lodge No 74 (now Maple Leaf Park No. 63) in 1992, serving as Worshipful Master for 1996-1997. A founding member of Excelsior Lodge No. 195, he served as Worshipful Master for 2009-2010.

Appointed as DDGM for District 13 for 2001-2002, he is currently the Regional Representative to the Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes for Vancouver Region Six.

He served on the Grand Lodge Leadership Committee for 1995-1996, and again from 2007 to the present; the *ad hoc* Masonic Commission for 2000-2001; the Masonic Trial Commission for 2003-2004; and the *ad hoc* Committee on

continued on page 4



RW Bro. Doug Eaton

RW Bro. Douglas L. Eaton was born 4 August 1945 in Vancouver, BC and, after graduating from Vancouver City College as an Engineering Technologist initially spent a number of years in the pulp and paper industry and in electrical power generation as a Stationary Power Boiler Engineer. He then made a major career move into the field of real estate design, development, operations, and professional property management of numerous major multi-family residential, commercial, and retail development projects throughout Canada and the USA, where he held a number of key senior management positions.

In 1996 he joined a Vancouver engineering consulting firm specializing in Building Envelope Science Engineering. For the past ten years he has been employed by JRS Engineering Ltd., in Burnaby as a Senior Project Consultant and Manager New Construction Projects for JRS building science division. He is a certified LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Accredited Professional with the Canada Green Building Council, and is also certified as a Registered Roofing Observer (RRO) with the Roofing Consultants Institute of North America.

RW Bro. Eaton was raised in

continued on page 4



RW Bro. Don Stutt

RW Bro. Donald E. Stutt, was born 20 April 1948 in Sioux Lookout, Ontario.

Graduating from Steveston High School in 1967—after a short career as a structural steel fabricator—RW Bro. Stutt has been employed in the aeronautics industry in a number of rôles: aircraft welder for CP Air, technical repair writer with Canadian Airlines, technical configuration planner with MTU and, for the last five years, flight standards technical writer with CHC Helicopter Co.

Raised in Lewis Lodge No. 57, New Westminster, in 1984, he served as Worshipful Master for 1995-1996 and 2004 - 2005, and Treasurer for 1998-2003, later affiliating with Centennial-King George Lodge No. 171, Richmond where he currently serves as Senior Warden.

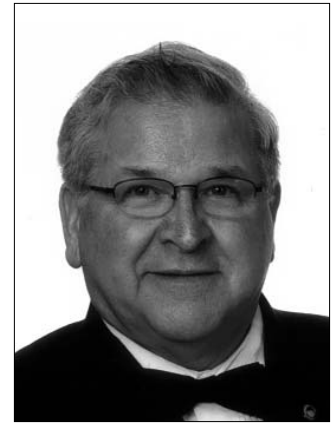
He served as a member of the Bursary Fund Trustees for 1996-2000, Grand Chaplain for 2000-2001, DDGM for 2001-2002, and chairman of the *ad hoc* Members Survey Committee for 2007-2008 and *ad hoc* Electronic Survey for Master Masons for 2009-2010.

RW Bro. Stutt is involved with Scottish Rite, Gizeh Shrine and the Order of Amaranth.

Married to Kathy in 1974, they have two grown daughters.

RW Bro Don Stutt has been

continued on page 4



RW Bro. Bob MacKenzie

RW Bro. Robert A. MacKenzie was born 5 August 1945 in Montréal, Québec, and, after four years in the science faculty at Sir George Williams University, worked as a chemist and administrator for a non-ferrous smelter in Montréal for several years. Moving to BC, and having received his BA, BEd and MEd, he was employed at the university and senior high school level for 35 years as a teacher and administrator.

Combining his passions for flying and teaching, he wrote and taught a career preparation programme in aviation and, through his own firm, offered aviation seminars throughout the province.

Initiated, passed and raised into Western Gate Lodge No, 48, Vancouver, in 1980, he served as Worshipful Master in 1986-1987. He was an active member of the Vancouver Lodge of Education and Research until relocating to the Cariboo where he affiliated with Mount Begbie Lodge No. 183, 100 Mile House. Also a member of Cariboo Lodge No. 4, Barkerville, and Cascade Lodge 12, Vancouver, he currently serves as Senior Warden of Centre Lodge No. 113, Williams Lake and Secretary of Mount Begbie Lodge.

He has served as Director of Masonic Education in Mount

continued on page 4

Rights and responsibilities from page one

paraphrase that law in masonic terms thus, *for every right there is an equal and parallel duty*. This is clearly stated in the charge that is delivered annually at the conclusion of the ceremony of installation.

It needs to be recognized that masonic rights are of two kinds. There are legal rights that are set forth in the law of Freemasonry, that is, the *Constitutions*. There are also moral and ethical rights, which are laid down in the obligations and charges. These are especially interesting because they commonly are not directly stated. For example, every freemason may confide his troubles to a brother freemason and expect them to be held in complete confidence. The ritual does not say that directly. What it does say is "I will keep the secrets of a Master Mason when communicated to me as such." That is a characteristically masonic approach—by laying upon us an obligation Freemasonry tells us what one of our rights is. If the obligations are considered in that light, it will be seen that most of the terms of those obligations tell us what some of our rights are by telling us what we must agree to do for other freemasons.

Some of the rights of freemasons are commonplace, and not at all unique to the Craft. A member of any social organization has the right to participate in its business, to serve on committees, to serve as an officer, to vote, and so forth. Because these rights are not uniquely ours, we may tend to under-use and under-value them. There are times when lodge members are absent because a communication is *only* a business meeting. That is, perhaps, the member's choice, but when he makes that choice he must be prepared to accept decisions in which he elected not to share,

and which he may not like. It is not uncommon, for example, for some members to complain about increases in dues, after the fact. All too often they have not studied the lodge financial statements and did not attend the meeting at which the problem was debated and the decision made. Every brother has the right to be heard on all matters pertaining to his lodge, but it is his duty to read the summonses calling the meetings and to be properly informed. He is remiss when he leaves the duty of making decisions to his brethren, and he forfeits any right to complain by absenting himself, without just cause, from the lodge's deliberations.

It is true that much of the business that comes before a regular meeting is routine and unlikely to spark scintillating discussion. Nevertheless it is important, and the Worshipful Master must see that it is properly and promptly done. It is the member's duty to be in lodge to support and assist him.

Furthermore, we are required by our obligations to obey all summonses if within the length of the cabletow. Some brethren apparently have exceedingly short cabletows.

Two of the most valuable rights enjoyed by freemasons are complementary, and consideration of one inevitably leads to the other. They are the right to sponsor candidates and the right to ballot. These rights are attended by especially compelling responsibilities. A freemason is told at his initiation that he must be particularly careful not to recommend any person unless he is convinced that person will accept and abide by our rules. So far as it goes, that is good guidance because it tells the new member that he should be careful about sponsoring any person. Assuming that he knows that the prospective petitioner is a good citizen, a good husband and father (or a

respectable bachelor), he needs to consider several other questions. Does he get on well with his neighbours? Is he a joiner? How many organizations does he already belong to, and what does he do about them, if anything? Is he an indiscreet talker? Does he have high moral standards? Why does he want to join? Is there any reason why he should become a freemason? Can he do anything for Freemasonry and is he likely to benefit from it? Is there any reason why he should not be made a freemason? There is only one way to find the answers to these and other questions and that is for the freemason to discuss them openly and frankly with the prospective petitioner, and to be satisfied with the answers, before he agrees to be his sponsor.

Balloting on petitions presents a different situation. No freemason, particularly in a city lodge, can know all those who submit petitions. When the ballot is called, therefore, the members must rely on the judgment of the sponsors and the investigating committee. That brings us back to the two imperatives to the avoidance of errors; first, the duty of the sponsor to exercise his right with care for the well being of the lodge in particular and the Craft in general, and second, the absolute necessity for the committee to do its work carefully and thoroughly.

Where the right to sponsor and the right to ballot are concerned the freemason must always try to be completely objective and to base his decisions on the well being of Freemasonry.

Any freemason has the right to hold any office to which he may be elected or appointed, in accordance with the by-laws of his lodge and the *Constitutions* of the Grand Lodge. It should not be necessary to remind freemasons that acceptance of any office involves the acceptance of expanded

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Grand Lodge of BC & Yukon
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June 17-19, 2010
Kamloops

Online registration
freemasonry.bcy.ca/gl2010

responsibilities. No freemason has any right to accept an office and occupy it at his own convenience or pleasure. It is the duty of every officer to support his fellow officers, and especially the Master, in the work of the lodge and apply himself assiduously to the duties that are especially his.

Appointment or election to any office is the gift of an opportunity to serve the lodge and the Craft. It is the duty of every officer to try to achieve perfection in his work. It is an unattainable objective, but the brother who sets easy targets will achieve nothing to the credit of Freemasonry, his lodge, or himself.

All freemasons have the right to redress of masonic error. Any brother who feels that he has become the victim of such error can appeal to Grand Lodge. It is his responsibility, however, to appear when summoned, to state his case truthfully and dispassionately, and to accept the decision of Grand Lodge with equanimity.

Freemasons have other rights, but there is no need to examine all of them. The essential commensal relationship between responsibilities and rights is clear. It might be well now, however, to examine two or three examples of certain assumed rights, simply because it needs to be understood that they are not rights.

No freemason has conferred on him the right, by virtue of his having been made a freemason, to join any con-

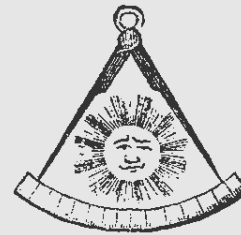
cordant body. The Craft does not and cannot confer any such right on anyone, and to suggest that it does or can would be an intrusion into the affairs of the concordant bodies. They alone decide who shall be permitted to join their ranks.

Membership in the Craft should never be conceived to carry any claim to preferment in business or under the law. No freemason is required to do business with another, no freemason has the right to assume or expect that the custom of other freemasons will fall to him.

Every freemason is expected to respect and obey the law, and should look for nothing more than fair treatment, equal, but only equal, to that accorded all citizens.

No freemason has the right to engage in masonic communication with a brother or a lodge in another jurisdiction without the knowledge and consent of both Grand Masters. It is the Grand Master's duty and his right to know what correspondence is going on between any of his freemasons and freemasons in another jurisdiction.

Masonic law is not exactly the same in all jurisdictions, nor, for that matter, is usage and custom. That is one reason why Grand Masters must know of such correspondence and what purpose it is intended to serve. Further, masonic courtesy demands that any brother wanting to correspond with a mason or a lodge in another



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY APRIL 2010

1	Th	Maundy Thursday	Scottish Rite	Kamloops
10	S	District 10	Orion Lodge No. 51	Penticton
15	Th	Principal Officers		Nanaimo
16-18	F-Su	Lodge Officer Conference		Parksville
24	S	International Day		Bonner's Ferry, Idaho

jurisdiction seek the consent of his own Grand Master and, through normal channels, the consent of the Grand Master of the other Jurisdiction.

There is no free lunch in Freemasonry. There is no right that is free of duty.

There has been far too much concern among freemasons in recent years with rights and privileges, honours and rewards, jewels and decorations, with image-making, and far too little concern with the idea of service to our brethren, and the daily application of the great moral and ethical philosophies of the Craft.

Duty must be served if rights are to be preserved.

Our efforts will be most effective if we exercise our rights with restraint, and embrace our duties with enthusiasm and determination, never forgetting that our great aim is to secure the power and

reputation of our ancient and honourable Craft

Excerpted from the proceedings of the 41st Annual Inter-Provincial Conference, 1961.

Lodge notes

Initiated into **Burrard Lodge No. 50** in 1930, RW Bro. Donat R. McMahon recently celebrated his 101st birthday and, last month, was presented with his Eighty-year Long Service jewel.

The Rabbie Burns dinner annually held by **Mount Garibaldi Lodge 127** was attended this year by Squamish mayor Greg Gardner who praised the lodge for its ongoing assistance to local charities. The event, attended by some 150, garnered positive coverage in the local newspaper.

Junior Grand Warden candidates

from page two

RW Bro. Philip Durell

Organizational Analysis for 2009-2010; as well as serving as chairman of the Committee on Warranted Lodges and Lodges Under Dispensation for 2003-2004.

Married to Paulette Goddard, they have one son, two daughters and two grandchildren.

RW Bro. Doug Eaton

Prospect Lodge No. 172, North Vancouver in 1977. He served as Worshipful Master in 1992.

In 2007, he was appointed District Deputy Grand Master District No. 17. He is also active in all orders of the York Rite.

Married to Anastazia since 1977, they have a son, daughter, and grandson.

RW Bro. Don Stutt

active in the Twin Pillars Music Society, Flying Toastmasters Club and the Mount Seymour Ski Patrol as Team Leader; research coördinator for the West End Residents Association, New Westminster, and founding president, coach and referee for the BC Touch Football Association

VW Bro. Rob MacKenzie

Begbie Lodge, District Education officer in Cariboo District 4S and is the current DDGM for District 4S.

Active in community affairs, and a member of the Royal Arch, he manages three businesses in the Cariboo

Married to Carol, they have a son, a daughter, and three