



Grand Master's farewell address1
The price of Freemasonry.....2
History of the three dots.....2
Questions to ask the candidate.....2
Lodge notes3
The Gold Rush Trail3
Charity and education.....4
Grand Master's itinerary.....4

Charting your masonic course

by MW Bro. J. Alan Cross

What a year this has been! As I stated at our installation in Kamloops last June, I am a simple man who just wants to give back to his beloved fraternity as much as possible. Being installed as your Grand Master was so very rewarding, but not nearly as rewarding as the year which has just passed so quickly.

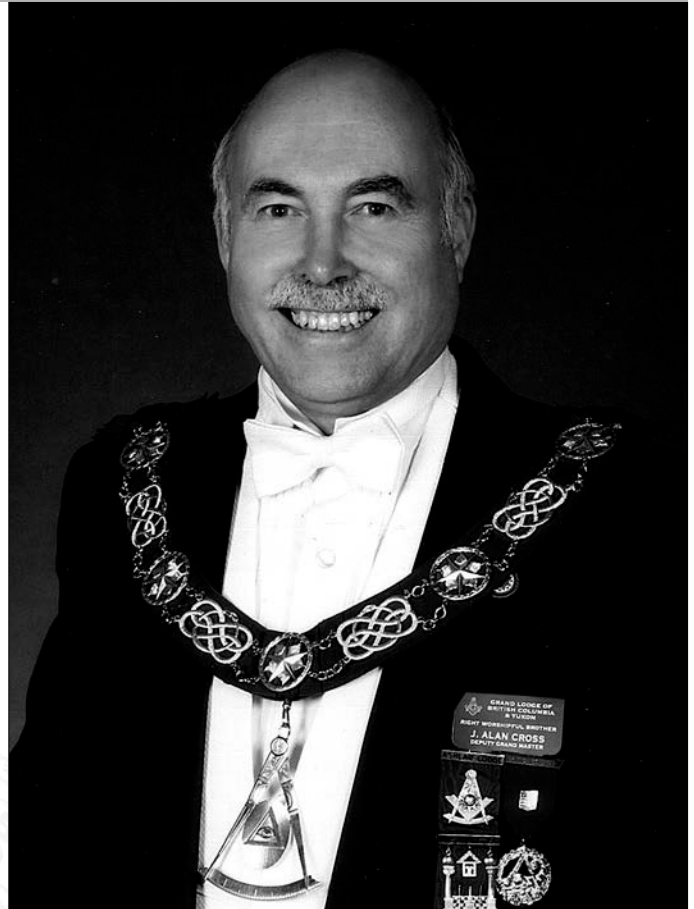
When I was elected Junior Grand Warden four years ago, I was told by my good friend, MW Bro. John T. Harper, to get ready for a "rocket ride". He was, as he usually is, very succinct in his description of the terms leading up to, and especially that of, Grand Master.

To say the least, this year has been the most memorable of my life. Losing Moya, my wife of almost thirty-six years, just weeks after becoming your Grand Master, while not unexpected, was still devastating. Moya had been diagnosed with breast cancer

just days following our Grand Lodge Communication in Prince George. She was a fighter and went through three courses of chemotherapy after surgery, but to no avail. I have made it a point to encourage all of our brethren—and hopefully their partners—to take advantage of our wonderful health care system to keep them apprised of their physical health. As I have repeatedly stated, don't do this for yourself, but do it for your loved ones.

As your Grand Master I am not only the head of the Craft in this jurisdiction, but also the unofficial ambassador of this jurisdiction to all other Grand Lodges. In this capacity I have had the pleasure of meeting so many distinguished brethren from all over the world.

I attended Grand Lodge Communications in Ontario, Alaska, Alberta and Manitoba plus the Conference of Grand Masters in North America held in Denver.



MW Bro. J. Alan Cross, Grand Master for 2010-2011.

While in Denver, we were pleased to learn that our jurisdiction has won the competition to host this event in Vancouver in February 2015! I will be attending the next three conferences to keep up to date and promote our opportunity to show the world of Freemasonry our world class city.

In July I attended the International Imperial Shrine Convention in Toronto. My hosts were our own Gizeh Temple. We are most fortunate that Gizeh is our only temple jointly sharing jurisdiction over

British Columbia and Yukon. We were so pleased to see Illustrious Sir George Mitchell of Ontario Installed as Imperial Potentate. One of the highlights of this event was a tour of the Ontario Legislative Building at Queen's Park led by the Speaker of the House – a brother—as well as another brother from the Government side of the house. Their Legislature is well decorated with many works of art by famous Canadian painters, including the Group of Seven.

In my travels throughout our

continued on page 2



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Charting your masonic course from page one

jurisdiction, I have been pleased to meet a good percentage of our membership. We have had twenty-five district meetings – including two combined meetings. Attendance in our district meetings ranged from around thirty to over 160 in one! As well as our district meetings I had the distinct pleasure of attending a number of lodges to witness the conferral of Master Mason degrees, plus several installations of officers. The couple of truly surprise visits were rewarding—and I hope were not too stressful for the Worshipful Masters.

A short while ago I heard that one lodge, Kitselas No. 123 in Terrace was raising their thirteenth brother in the last twelve months. Being curious and wanting to find out how a lodge in a smaller centre could be so successful, I flew to Terrace to witness this event. The brother being raised is a sergeant in the RCMP, one of one of several RCMP officers raised this year. Did I find the “Holy Grail”? No, but I did find a group of brethren who are committed to their lodge, and are truly having a great time and are communicating that “happiness to others”.

Big screen televisions are now in a number of lodge banquet rooms, and at least one in the lodge room. Is this an innovation in Freemasonry? Perhaps, but if it brings in interested men, then I am pleased! The brethren of Kitselas Lodge often congregate at their lodge building to watch special events (sports etc.) on their big screen and are able to invite non-masons, their ladies and children into this social activity!

We continue to lose a fair number of brethren to the Grand Lodge Above. At times I felt that I was the “Grand Mourner”, as we attended a number of memorial services

for so many dedicated freemasons. The Great Architect of the Universe is blessed to have so many great brethren to be with Him today!

My theme this year was “Charting your Masonic Course” and implied planning. Not just short term, but long term and strategic planning. I had a lapel pin struck with the square and compasses overlaid on a compass rose, and extending my theme into a nautical one. Living on an island, it is difficult to plan anything without referring to a ferry schedule. Over the past several years I have been blessed with being able to take several cruises as well. I alluded to some of my travels during my visits.

At Kamloops we showed a preliminary copy of a DVD which we have had produced for use of lodges in the process of gaining new members. I wish to thank the several lodges and building societies who contributed financial support to see this project through to its conclusion. By this point most lodges have received their copy of the DVD, and are using it already. We hope that this will assist you in improving our membership numbers.

This year our Grand Secretary put together a brochure for guarding the west gate, to aid lodges in providing an idea to spend more time in interviewing prospective members, and ensuring that the men that apply for membership are well versed in what is required of them upon joining a lodge

I look forward to seeing a great body of freemasons in Langley in June, to be present at and witness the work of your Grand Lodge in its 140th Annual Communication.

Thank you to every one of our Grand Lodge officers this year. Without your dedication and assistance, the experience would have not been possible. ■

Too cheap?

by *VW Bro. Raymond Chell, Tasmania*

It has been claimed that Freemasonry is far too cheap and that this is possibly one of the reasons our Craft is not attractive to the younger generation.

Why would anyone want to join an organisation that relies on cheap fees to retain members?

Why would anyone want to join or visit a lodge that provides home-made beef Belgium sandwiches and lukewarm small pies and sausage rolls for supper, after a night of trying to listen to small-voiced people struggling to remember bits of ritual?

Worse still, why would anyone want to sit through almost silently-delivered, often ill-researched pieces of masonic history, and then hang around waiting for supper while the hosts put away their gear and then slowly make their way to the supper room?

Come on, lets get real. Think about this.

In September 1950, the basic wage for adult males in Sydney was six pounds 15 shillings, although certain skills like boiler maker, tool maker, panel beater, carpenter, painter and plumber received just under 10 pounds.

For those who remember, a pound became two dollars in the 1960s.

Against that, the fee for joining lodges in 1950 was 15 pounds 15 shillings. This was in addition to the small fee paid by the proposer.

Points to consider:

Is membership of your lodge too cheap?

Is your supper one that you would provide if people visited your home?

Do you make people wait before starting activities in the South?

When was the last time you provided harmony?

Have you considered meeting earlier?

Do you find out if older members need transport to and from lodge?

Have you considered admitting all visitors at the start of the evening?

When was the last time you really listened to the standard of work in your lodge?

When was the last time you visited another lodge?

The most important item I have left until last. When was the last time you thought to yourself that an acquaintance would be a good member for Freemasonry and did not ask them if they are interested? ■

Three dots

by *W Bro. Albert G. Mackey*

Frequently among English, and always among French writers, a masonic abbreviation is distinguished by three points, ∴, in a triangular form following the letter, which peculiar mark was first used, according to masonic historian Jean Baptiste Marie Ragon, on 12 August 1774 by the Grand Orient of France, in an address to its subordinates.

No authoritative explanation of the meaning of these points has been given, but they may be supposed to refer to the three lights around the altar, or perhaps more generally to the number three, and to the triangle, both important symbols in the masonic system.

It may be observed that the doubling of the letter is intended to express the plural of the word of which the single letter is the abbreviation. Thus in French, F∴ signifies “Frère,” or brother and FF∴ “Frères,” or brothers. Today, the dots are found in A∴.F∴ & A∴.M∴ but rarely for masonic rank: M∴.W∴. &c. ■

Questions

In Germany and many other European countries, it is the custom for the candidate for

initiation to answer three questions in writing; these answers are read in open lodge and—if approved—the candidate may be initiated.

Hungarian composer, Franz Liszt (1811-1886) had to undergo this examination. Here are his answers.

Q. What is the purpose of man in life?

The purpose of man is to aim at any possible perfection in truth, virtue, and beauty, thereby, as far as his limitations permit, seeking a union with his creator.

Q. What do you expect from Freemasonry for your soul, your heart and your material happiness?

I believe and hope to enter into a union of good and just men, uniting in the preparation of these aims. I believe that my mind will find nourishment, and fraternal, hands will give support in dangers and difficulties.

Q. What can Freemasonry expect from you?

The Order will always find me ready to take part in all good causes by words and deeds, and to attend the worthy meetings. The order, in whose deep wisdom I respectfully believe, will find in me, in all which agrees with my religious and political opinions, in all which is not contrary to my honour and conscience, a willing neophyte and obedient member.

From these answers it is evident that Liszt was a well educated and thoughtful candidate, and that he took his reception into the order seriously. Liszt took his degrees in Berlin, in 1842. ■

A life to be lived

Most freemasons have earnestly searched for a statement that succinctly and adequately answers the question that each of us has been asked: "What is

Freemasonry?"

The following comes from RW Bro. Sir Jayantilal Keshavi Chande's autobiography, *A Knight in Africa*, published in 2005.

"Freemasonry is a life to be lived and not a formality to be observed. It is a life grounded in religion, organised in morality, mellowed by good fellowship, humanised in charity, dedicated to serve. The teachings of Freemasonry are not for today but are forever. It is a force for good and stability and it teaches its members tolerance, dignity and respect for the individual."

The chapter headed Freemasonry concludes with "...none of us can elude the challenge to make ourselves better people, by whatever means is at our disposal... check up once in a while, to make sure that you have not lost those human values that money cannot buy." ■

Solicitation

In 1990, this Grand Lodge adopted a resolution that "There is no objection to a neutrally-worded approach being made to a man who is considered a suitable candidate for Freemasonry. There can be no objection to his being reminded, once, that the approach was made. The potential candidate should then be left to make his own decision, without further solicitation." ■

Lodge notes

Cloverdale Lodge No. 168 held its second annual open house this past April, filling the Langley masonic hall with brethren, friends and family, and a fair number of potential candidates attracted by advertisements in the local press and a sympathetic article in the local newspaper, the *Cloverdale Reporter*.

In honour of MW Bro. Edward A. Clarke, the brethren of **Vancouver Lodge No. 68** have commissioned well-known Vancouver artist, Ken Wallace, to paint his portrait for display in the Ditmars Room of the Vancouver Masonic Centre. If you wish to contribute to the cost, or be notified of the dedication date, please contact W Bro. Jack L. Barr at 604-313-5326.

The past March **Landmark Lodge No. 128**, Maple Ridge, initiated Lars, Erik and Severin Peterson—perhaps only the third time in this jurisdiction's history that three brothers have been initiated together.

Noteworthy was the presence of their father, W Bro. Raymond E. Peterson and their grandfather, former attorney general RW Bro. Leslie R. Peterson. ■

Famous freemasons

The question must be asked, what purpose is served by compiling lists of famous men who also happen to have been freemasons?

Is it to demonstrate Freemasonry's beneficial and inspiring effect on men who have gone on to make a positive impact on their world, or is it a need on the part of contemporary freemasons to "ride on the coat-tails" of others?

Without a careful review of lodge records, there is no way of knowing if these men ever attended a meeting after their initiation, much less if the teachings of Freemasonry played any rôle in their lives. Harry S Truman left a record of active masonic service, while the Duke of Wellington in his later years could not even remember having joined.

There have been those, such as Léo Taxil and Éliphas Lévi, who were initiated and then expelled. They are, in some fashion, famous, and at one

continued on page 4



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:
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Grand Lodge of BC & Yukon
**140th Annual
Communication**

June 16-18, 2011

Langley

Online registration
freemasonry.bcy.ca/gl2011

Famous freemasons
from page two

time they were, in some fashion, freemasons. A definitive list should therefore include their names, although few freemasons would wish to draw attention to them.

And then there are those such as Henry Ford who made a profound impact on our world but whose personal beliefs may not have reflected the best of human nature. Honesty dictates that we record their names, celebrate their contributions and recognize their failings.

A list of famous freemasons is not a list of perfect men but simply of men who have tried to make this a better world. The purpose for such a list should be the remembrance of those members of the Craft who in some fashion embodied the ideals of Freemasonry. That is the purpose of the list found on our Grand Lodge website. ■

Masonic Builders' Travels

The Gold Rush Trail

Our Grand Master-elect, RW Bro. William R. Cave has titled his upcoming itinerary of visits around the jurisdiction during his year as the "Masonic Builders' Travels". This summer he plans to lead a caravan of motor homes and recreational vehicles on the "Gold Rush Trail" from Cariboo Lodge No. 4 in Barkerville to historic Dawson City for his Official Visit to District 11, followed by a visit to White Pass Lodge No. 1 in Skagway, Alaska, hosted by the Grand Master of Alaska, MW Bro. Ron Ackerman.

Following Cariboo Lodge No. 4's Annual Reunion on 12-14 August, Monday morning, 15 August, the brethren will depart on the Gold Rush Trail, arriving in Chetwynd that evening. Travelling through Fort Nelson

and Liard Hot Springs Provincial Park, they will arrive in Whitehorse on 18 August, and Dawson City on 23 August. The final destination will be Skagway, Alaska on 27 August.

Plan to join them on this historic journey. For further information, and to confirm your participation, contact the "Wagon Master" RW Bro. Joe Bare at joec4@shaw.ca or 250-991-7937. Campers, RV's and personal vehicles camp grounds

Other stops on the "Masonic Builders' Travels" will include the summer meeting and barbeque at Slocan Lodge No. 29 in Sandon on 23 July and a special meeting and barbeque in the original North Star Lodge No. 30, at Fort Steele on 3 September. ■

Conquering cancer

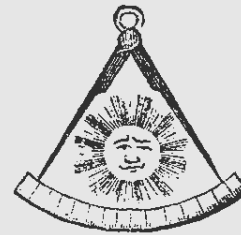
The Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer is a unique, two-day cycling trip from Vancouver to Seattle on 18-19 June 2011. The money raised for The Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer will benefit the BC Cancer Foundation and support leading clinicians, scientists, and researchers whose search for new discoveries and improved patient outcomes will have a real impact in our communities throughout the province, across Canada, and around the world.

This Father's Day weekend Bro. Bert Unrau of Langley Lodge No. 184 will be participating in this event. Last year his team raised over \$35,000.

To support Bro. Unrau, contact him at bertunrau@gmail.com ■

Speakers needed

All freemasons are invited to prepare presentations for the next Lower Mainland Grand Masonic Day scheduled for



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY JUNE 2011

2-4	Th-S	Annual Communication	Manitoba	Winnipeg
9-11	Th-S	Annual Communication	Alberta	Grande Prairie
13	M	Outdoor Meeting	Prince Charles 153	Kelowna
16-18	Th-S	Annual Communication	Grand Lodge	Langley

Saturday, 21 January 2012, at the Vancouver Masonic Centre.

Presentations can be made on any topic of masonic interest or interest to freemasons. They usually cover a wide range of topics, with either six or eight presentations given during the day. Each presentation is allotted thirty minutes, including discussion. PowerPoint is available.

Topics at the most recent Grand Masonic Day, held in March, included Working Tools of AF&AM (Ancient Free and Accepted Meteorologists), Serbian Anti-masonic Postage Stamps, Parking Karma Redux, In the Footsteps of Pythagoras, Masonry as Meditation, Cement and Adorn (Building Capability and Engagement), and Masonry as Meditation. Following tradition, the Junior Grand Warden was the luncheon speaker.

For further information, or to submit a presentation for next January, contact Bro. Wes Regan at wregan@sfu.com or 604-805-3591, or W Bro. Erik Futrell-Fruhling at erikff@telus.net or 778-232-5748. ■

Education

The connection between masonic education and a vibrant Freemasonry is clear. It is important that each

new member is assisted to develop an understanding of the organisation that he has joined. If positive steps are not taken to ensure the integration of the new member into the lodge he will be reluctant to take part in ceremonies and incapable of responding to the questions of friends, relatives and work colleagues. ■

Biomedical research

Scottish Rite hospitals and clinics are located throughout the United States and provide expert care for children with hearing, speech, language, or learning problems.

Less well-known though, is the Masonic Medical Research Laboratory, a not-for-profit New York corporation founded in 1958 whose cutting edge research has gained international renown. Its legacy of scientific breakthroughs has helped to generate new heart medications, combat the incidence of sudden infant death syndrome, and reduce the incidence of heart attack, stroke, and some forms of cancer.

One of the finest biomedical research centres in the world, the MMRL's "Campaign for Discovery" is supported by the Scottish Rite. ■