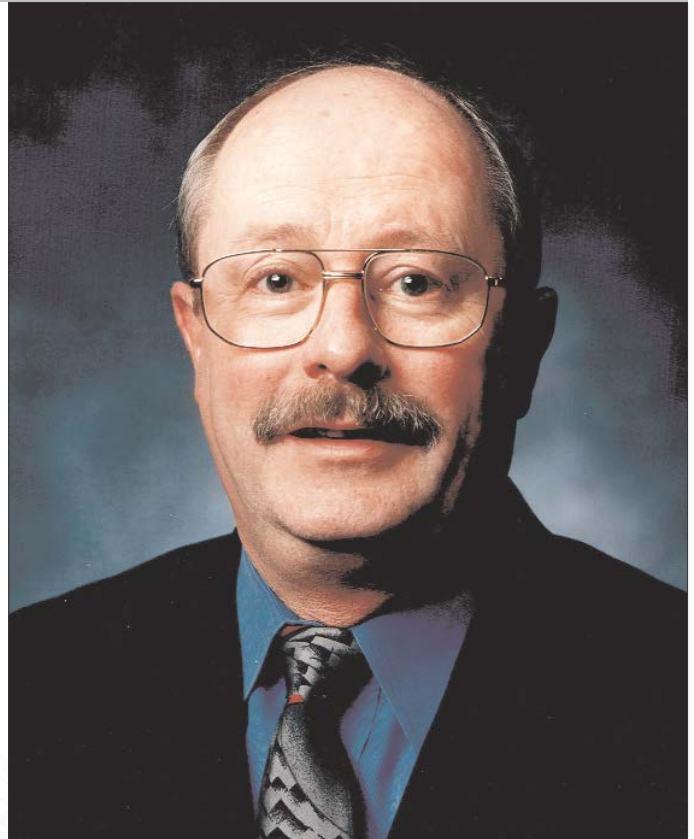


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Bro. Alan W. McLeod, recipient of the Masonic Medal of Merit in 2009 and chairman of the Cancer Car Program for the last five years, will retire at the end of this masonic year. A volunteer driver before he joined the Craft, he has been a tireless promoter of our flagship charity.

Agape

by W Bro. Daniel Zrymiak

This article was inspired by the image of climbing the rungs of Jacob’s Ladder, a reference noted in popular culture, such as the lyrics to the Bob Dylan song *Forever Young*, and the Canadian Work Entered Apprentice ritual. The rungs make reference to Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Charity in this context is actually an interpretation of the Greek word *Agape*, which was used when the scriptures of Paul’s Letters to the Corinthians were written (I Corinthians 13). The English translation for the King James Authorized version substitutes “charity”, and the modern translation uses the word “love”. However, to truly understand and appreciate the significance of Jacob’s Ladder, we have to explore the meaning and context of the original word *Agape*.

The author C.S. Lewis described *Agape* as one of four types of Love. Along with Affection (*Storge*), Friendship

(*Philia*), and Passion (*Aeros*), *Agape* (denoted by Lewis as Charity) is a category of Love. *Agape* is distinguished as being a selfless love, which does not require the lover to be moved or inspired by the object of his love in order to flourish. For this reason, *Agape* is frequently referenced within the Volume of the Sacred Law, and is reflective of God’s “worshipful” love for mankind.

Agape feasts are part of traditional religious observations, and consist of light refreshments following religious services. The purposes of *Agape* feasts were to reinforce the religious experience, and to build fellowship among the participants as part of the celebration.

An example is Maundy Thursday, which is followed by an *Agape* feast. According to the *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry* by Albert G. Mackey, “The original meaning of *agape* is not love or charity

but union or unity: thus *agapai* (usually translated love feasts) are originally unions for Christian edification, and mutual culture associations.”

Agape feasts are held within Freemasonry and generally are a traditional formal meal following a lodge meeting, where the Worshipful Master will carve the meat and serve the wine. Traditional Observance Lodges—such as Templum Fidelis Lodge No. 746 in Bath, Ontario—use *Agape* as the noun describing the banquet or festive meal.

Since the origin of the word described in our ritual as charity is really *Agape*, we can conclude that Freemasonry is not in and of itself a charity, but delivering charitable outcomes through the practice of selfless *Agape* love to others, and through sharing *Agape* feasts with brethren to build fellowship and brotherly love.

This is clearly revealed in the *Address to the Brethren*, which defines *Agape* in action.

“Before I conclude, my brethren, let me endeavor to

continued on page 2



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Agape from page one

portray to you the ideal of a freemason. If you see a man who quietly and modestly moves in the sphere of his life; who, without blemish, fulfills his duty as a man a subject, a husband and a father; who is pious without hypocrisy,

benevolent without ostentation, and aids his fellowman without self-interest...."

Hopefully through this article, the brethren of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon will gain a better appreciation for *Agape*, and will incorporate it and make it a more visible part of our regular masonic activities. ■

Love

by Bro. Gerald T. McRae,
Kamloops Lodge No. 10

At our initiation we were instructed that a tenet or principle of Freemasonry is brotherly love.

It is unfortunate the English language names the many

forms of feeling and affection with one word, "love," unlike the Greek language which employs distinctive words such as *agape* for love of God, *philia* for brotherly love and *eros* for love of a sexual nature. Our more limited expressions in English may, indeed, be restricting our thoughts of love.

Especially, we could be limiting our expressions of brotherly love.

What is brotherly love as practiced by Freemasons?

Recently, a brother extended to me an extraordinary act of assistance when I was in a stressful situation.

Naïvely, I asked why he did such a thing for me, a mere recent acquaintance.

He shocked me with, "You are a brother. That's what brothers do."

What a clear lesson in brotherly love!

This experience has not only filled me with a new joy of being a Freemason but, it started me thinking of what further lessons we all could share should our Grand Lodge *Masonic Bulletin* publish a series of instances submitted by brethren exemplifying thoughts and acts of brotherly love.

How do we express our brotherly love in thought and deed? Write your editor today. ■

With dignity

by W Bro. William Q. Stirling,
Lodge Southern Cross No. 44

Our lodges are very beautiful places to meet, and our work is of a very high and dignified nature. Because of this, all officers should be dressed in a dignified manner. I am quite well aware of the fact that there are times when it is not possible for officers to get home and change before a meeting. But when officers in a lodge are all dressed for the occasion there is a definite feeling of dignity which is most impressive not only to our members but also to visiting



RW Bro. Charles Buchanan, DDGM District No. 26; W Team Captain, Bro. Tomas Mojica, WM Tsawwassen Lodge No. 185; RW Bro. Philip Durell, Junior Grand Warden; Bro. Tim Rohwer, Tsawwassen Lodge No. 185.

November

Yes that's our Junior Grand Warden with a moustache—or in November parlance a Mo.

Movember participants grow a moustache for the month of November—or Movember as they prefer to call it—to raise awareness and cash for prostate cancer.

Our Junior Grand Warden was part of the Movember Masons team formed and led by W. Bro. Tomas Mojica of Tsawwassen Lodge No. 185. The team soon grew to number sixteen brethren from the Lower Mainland. Much to their surprise they raised \$12,637, thanks to the generous support of brethren from all over the jurisdiction, their friends, families, lodges and the Grand Lodge BC Masonic Foundation.

The Movember Movement was started eight years ago by four Australians. In the 2011 campaign the number of Canadian participants doubled from 118,000 to 246,000. Cash raised to date is \$40.7 million, up from \$22.3 million in 2010. Worldwide, Movember raised \$118 million in 2011, up from \$72 million the previous year.

Movember Canada is a Canadian registered charity. For 2010 86% of funds raised went directly to Prostate Canada programmes, 2% to prostate cancer awareness education, 2% to head office administration and 10% to fundraising costs such as advertising, card fees and fun motivational events to encourage participants—being part of Movember is fun!

Participants get their own Mospace webpage; check out team Captain Tomas Mojica's Mospace atca.movember.com/mospace/1408372/

Planning for next Movember

As a fraternity we should be concerned with men's health and we believe that a jurisdiction-wide effort could make a significantly greater contribution to prostate cancer awareness and to funds raised for research. In 2011 we had just one team raising funds but for 2012 we envisage brethren forming their own teams all over the jurisdiction under one network for Freemasons of BC & Yukon.

Teams could be based on lodges, districts, concordant bodies, geographic area, or any other basis. The team captain should be a Freemason but it is up to each team as to whether they allow non-Freemason Bros and Sistas (note adding them could raise awareness of our Craft). We also envisage friendly challenges between teams. We will be formulating our 2012 plans during the year and hope to have further information in the September *Masonic Bulletin*.

The Bottom Line

The most important request we have is not for a donation, it is for every brother in our jurisdiction to make sure they get their annual checkup and to encourage, and if necessary, coerce their loved ones to do likewise. If you haven't had a checkup for years, make that appointment a priority now! Remember, one in six men get prostate cancer and if you live long enough you'll get it—but detected early the survival rate is remarkably high.



L to R: W Bro. Bill van't Slot, RW Bro. George Stephen, DDGM Dist 23, Patrick the horse, and Michelle Meacher, Executive Director.

Pacific Riding for Developing Abilities

District 23 recently took advantage of the Grand Master's matching donation programme by donating \$1,300 to Pacific Riding for Developing Abilities (PRDA).

Located in Langley, PRDA—with over twenty horses—is a registered charity providing equine-assisted riding programmes for individuals with emotional, physical, and cognitive challenges.

For those riders who cannot walk, the horse is their feet, their vehicle of transport. Imagine the joy of escaping crutches or a wheelchair to find independence and freedom on the back of a horse.

PRDA is able to significantly contribute to the quality of disabled people in our community through the dedicated work of certified therapeutic riding instructors and volunteers. In fact the success of the riding program depends on the numerous volunteers who are trained to prepare the horses for lessons, assist with leading the horses and side-walking with riders. The horses and ponies needed for the program are usually donated and chosen for suitable temperaments and special skill sets.

Maintaining the PRDA facilities is costly. For funding PRDA relies on donations from agencies, clubs, corporations and private individuals. Many of the riders are unable to pay already subsidized lesson fees and PRDA offers an ongoing "support a Rider" donation campaign to meet this need. Together we can change lives one hoof beat at a time. ■

With dignity from page two

members.

Our lodges are an important part of our lives and we should all be proud of that fact. In order to show our respect we should at all times dress in a manner to conform to the high order to which we belong.

Once we become careless in the manner of dress, we lower the beauty of Freemasonry and the prestige of the lodge also suffers. I am sure every person

reading this will agree that a lodge with correctly dressed officers presents a harmonious aspect which gives them a certain amount of pride,

To be well dressed does not mean that such a lodge is high hat or stuffed shirt. On the contrary, it shows that the lodge maintains a high degree of dignity and the atmosphere created is most agreeable. I may be considered just an old fogey, but I feel this matter very keenly and am under the

impression that casual wear eventually leads to careless wear and the lodge so treated declines in beauty and dignity.

I am sure the great majority of Freemasons will agree that we should strive to keep up the reputation for being different from other organizations. There is no law that states we must dress in a certain manner; at the same time, no law should be necessary to impress upon all officers that they should dress in a becoming manner. A well-conducted meeting with officers suitably dressed cannot fail to merit the admiration of all who attend it.

Let us in all sincerity give this matter of dress our consideration. Be proud of your lodge, and be glad to show that pride by being at your best when you attend meetings. ■

Ashlar College

by W Bro. Phillip H. Archer,
Malahat Lodge No. 107

It has been a full year now that I have been a student with the Ashlar College of Freemasonry. I got in on the ground floor, so to speak, with 43 other Freemasons from around British Columbia and Yukon.

Ashlar College is "virtual" in that attendance to the work is done from home at one's own pace and direction. It consists of eighteen courses which explore the various intricacies of Masonic History, Governance and Philosophy. The creators of the curriculum suggest that six courses could comfortably be completed in the course of a year's study and research.

I have just begun work on the sixth course, so am taking a little longer to do the work. I am finding it to be a truly enlightening journey. What I find truly enjoyable is that the courses focus on true learning. They are not "pass or fail" courses. Students are encouraged to put forth their own opinions on various aspects of Freemasonry, thereby encour-

Be a builder

Here is an opportunity to gather with like-minded leaders of our organization in an environment conducive to working, learning, sharing knowledge and experience, and forming relationships that will be beneficial to you and your lodge, now and in the future.

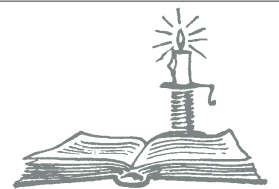
Download the registration form at freemasonry.bcy.ca/mlc2012.html

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The Library at Grand Lodge

aging and challenging us to really think about things we might not have otherwise. Each step of the way, the students are supported in the research and study by a knowledgeable and obliging mentor and then adjudicated by submitting work which shows a gained understanding in the area. The readings have been fascinating as well as motivating, and of course, lead us to further research should we become particularly interested.

Thus far, I have found my experience with the Ashlar College of Freemasonry to be enjoyable, informative, thought-provoking, and well... yes... time consuming. But time well spent. It has provided me with a huge repertoire of information very suitable for presentation at lodge education nights and certainly my research and discoveries have led me into many enjoyable conversations and debates with other Freemasons at the festive board. It is something I would recommend to any Freemason who wishes to "make a daily advancement" in the Craft. ■

Lodge notes

Eureka Masonic Hall will once again open its doors to the public on 3 April, for "Freemasonry Explained".

This will be the third year that the public have been invited to hear speakers explain the philosophy and structure of Freemasonry. Expectations are high that, as in previous years, there will be a full house.

Last month Centennial-King George Lodge No. 171 (Richmond) celebrated the quarter century of its amalgamation with its annual table

lodge, this year held at the Abercorn Inn where a good crowd of brethren, friends and relatives enjoyed an evening of song, music and good food. ■

Twitter

Brethren are encouraged to see what their Grand Lodge officers are up to by following them on Twitter®.

Grand Master: gm_bcy
 Grand Treasurer: gt_bcy
 Grand Secretary: gs_bcy
 Deputy Grand Master: dgm_bcy
 Senior Grand Warden: sgw_bcy
 Junior Grand Warden: jgw_bcy

You can follow our officers by visiting the website twitter.com and creating your own account. ■

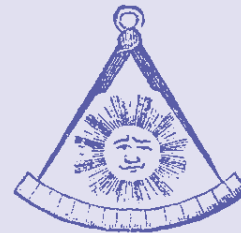
We can help

The "We Can Help" Program, a partnership with St John Ambulance, is designed to educate grade four students in the basics of first-aid.

Volunteers are needed to visit the schools and present the certificates of completion to the students. If you are interested, contact the Grand Secretary's office at 604-736-8941. ■

The lamp

The Lamp of Knowledge, although not a masonic symbol, has been adopted by Freemasonry as the guiding light of scientific inquiry in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom. Found on the emblems of both the Vancouver and Victoria Lodges of Education and Research, it originated with the Classical Greek philosopher, Diogenes, the most famous exponent of Cynicism, which called for a closer imitation of nature, the



GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY MARCH 2012

1-2	Th-F	Grand Sessions	Order of Amaranth	Langford
3	S	District 27	Malahat Lodge No. 107	Cowichan
9	F	Grand Lodge Principal Officers' Meeting		Vancouver
10	S	Installation	Daughters of the Nile	Burnaby
17	S	Districts 6 & 7	Corinthian Lodge No. 27	Trail
21	W	District 25	Pythagoras Lodge No. 194	Marpole
22	Th	Grand Session	Job's Daughters	Surrey
24	S	District 10	Penticton Lodge No. 147	Penticton
30-31	S	All Canada Conference		Winnipeg

repudiation of most human conventions, and complete independence of mind and spirit.

It involved a search for true happiness through the realization that wealth, rank, honours, success, and other such worldly aims were as nothing compared with complete independence of mind.

Diogenes became notorious for his philosophical stunts such as carrying a lamp in the daytime, claiming to be looking for an honest man. ■

Be silent

An old Greek philosopher, when asked what he regarded as the most valuable quality to win and the most difficult to keep, he replied: "To be secret and silent." If secrecy was difficult in the olden times, it is doubly difficult today, in the loud and noisy world in which we live, where privacy is almost unknown. Secrecy is, indeed, a priceless but rare virtue, so little effort is made to teach and practice it.

Someone has said that if Freemasonry did no more than train its men to preserve sacredly the secrets of others confided to them as such—except where a higher duty demands disclosure—it would

be doing a great work, and one which not only justifies its existence, but entitles it to the respect of mankind.

For that reason, if no other, the very first lesson taught a candidate is the duty of secrecy.

Yet, strictly speaking, Freemasonry is not a secret society, nor can it be said that Freemasonry has any secret truth to teach.

The wisdom of Freemasonry is hidden, not because it is subtle, but because it is simple. Its secret is profound, not obscure.

As in mathematics, there are primary figures, and in music fundamental notes, upon which everything rests, so Freemasonry is built upon the deep, lofty truths upon which life itself stands. It lives, moves, and has its being in those truths. They are mysteries, indeed, as life and duty and death are mysteries; to know them is to be truly wise; and to teach them in their full import is the ideal at which Freemasonry aims.

Truth is not a gift; it is a trophy. To know it we must be true, to find it we must seek, to learn it we must be humble; and to keep it we must have a clear mind, a courageous heart, and the brotherly love to use it in the service of man. ■

Note bene

The investigating committee

R139 If the report of the committee or any member thereof be unfavourable, no ballot shall be taken, but the Worshipful Master shall, upon the reception of such report, declare the applicant rejected. *Book of Constitutions*