



The Grand Master's Message

I am indebted to M.W. Bro. Neil Neddermeyer, Grand Master of Minnesota, for his insights into the following discussion.

There are three different styles of Freemasonry. They are on a continuum or spectrum, the lines blur into each other and many Masons spend time at more than one place on the continuum. It is mostly about emphasis. But if you look closely you see distinct styles.

Community Involvement – many Masons see the primary focus of the Craft as working in the community, volunteering for various community activities and raising funds for the needs of others. They recognize that the Craft has other purposes and other Masons have other interests, but that is not their focus.

Serious study – there are others who lean more heavily towards European or South American Freemasonry, with the emphasis on education and study. They agree community involvement is worthwhile, but not where the main emphasis lies. They support stringent proficiency, writing and preparing papers etc. for candidates going through the degrees and chairs. The Manitoba Study Group reflects this to a large degree.

Fun & Fellowship – all Masons are interested in fun and fellowship. However, some see this as a by-product of the first two activities, and some see it as the primary end in itself and have little interest in the doing the first two. Their main emphasis is on the social activities.

There is a small fourth group that sees the Craft as a degree and chair circuit. You recruit, put men through the degrees and chairs and send them off, confident they have become better men in the process. Perhaps they have, but although we degenerated to that level in some quarters and are paying for it, it is not a form of Freemasonry that anyone would seriously advocate.

Which one is right? Well, they all are, of course. Even for the last category this is partially true, if you add some of the other three. Easily said. But there are inherent conflicts within Freemasonry because of these styles - conflicts that we often refuse to recognize. It is essential we understand and deal with these contradictions.

Those who favour the more serious approach point convincingly to Europe. And they are frustrated because their efforts to introduce more serious discussion and education into their lodges are ignored or even resisted by other brethren. They believe Freemasonry should be more demanding of its members and more expensive.

Others are frustrated by the latter. They believe we need more members and should be making it easier and cheaper, not harder and more expensive to be a Mason. They are not interested in esoteric discussions. They want to get involved and have fun.

There is another factor that should be recognized. The European models are very successful, but they are also elitist - the product of societies with a history of class distinctions. In North America we have rejected that socially as well as in the Craft, and need to tread carefully in any effort to introduce that approach.

Lodges in the past were organized around several models. Most were geographic. This is obviously true of rural Manitoba, but also true of Winnipeg – Windsor, St. James, Charleswood, and others. But this is beginning to fade. Transcona is gone, Fort Garry and Norwood meet at MMT. The future of some of the buildings is questionable.

Others were based on vocation. Transcona and Empire were railroad lodges, Fidelity met on Fridays for salesmen on the road all week. That relevance is (*cont'd on next page*)

(Grand Master's Message, cont'd.)

gone. We have several lodges that were originally Jewish, in part to respect the wishes of those brethren, but also in part because of a very ugly element in the history of our city and our Craft that is thankfully passing away.

We are now in the process of reforming and restructuring ourselves for the 21st century. So far it has consisted of lodges amalgamating with others and taking new names or one lodge absorbing another. Perhaps it is time to consider some new models, such as conse-

crating new lodges, based upon common interest and desire for Masonic experience, drawing members initially from throughout the Craft. Then attempting to recruit a specific kind of candidate, but maintaining sufficient ties to the rest of the Craft to expose members to the full range of Masonic activity.

This is not as far-fetched as it sounds. As a starting place, some brethren are exploring a so called "European" style lodge in Manitoba. They have my support.

- M.W. Bro. Ken Thomas, Grand Master

"It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change..."

- Charles Darwin

GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY

Any Master Mason may accompany the Grand Master on official Lodge visits.

JANUARY 2004

6	Three Pillars No. 169	Windsor Temple	6:00 PM	
10	Shrine Installation	1155 Wilkes Ave.	1:00 PM	
13	District No. 12 Annual Meeting	MMT	6:00 PM	
20	Seven Stars No. 180	MMT	8:00 PM	OV
24	Treherne No. 51	Community Hall	6:00 PM	
26	District No. 13 Annual Meeting	MMT	6:00 PM	
28	Acacia No. 111	E.K. Temple	7:30 PM	OV
29	District No. 11 Annual Meeting	E.K. Temple	6:00 PM	OV
31	Eastern Star		10:45 AM	

FEBRUARY 2004

2	Three Pillars No. 169	Regular Meeting	6:00 PM	
4	Beaver No. 139	MMT	7:45 PM	OV
9	Empire No. 127	Empire Hall	6:00 PM	OV
12	Starbuck No. 160	Starbuck MB	8:00 PM	OV

The Grand Lodge Education Committee

Your Grand Lodge Education Committee (GLEC) held a Senior Wardens' Seminar at the Masonic Temple in Portage la Prairie on Saturday November 1, 2003. Over 60 people attended. Topics included Masonic Renewal, Leadership vs. Manager-ship, Lodge Financial Planning, Floor work and Protocol.

We also held a Lodge Education Workshop on Saturday November 22, 2003 at Kimberly Temple in Winnipeg. Over 25 people attended. An overview of the role of the GLEC was presented along with some theories on Adult Education. A brainstorming session was held to determine the responsibilities of the Lodge Education Officer (LEO). The GLEC will take this information and develop a Job Description for the LEO, whose primary function will be to act as a facilitator to assist the W.M. and his Officers to develop education programs for the Lodge, with the assistance and support of the GLEC. One key theme that came out of this workshop is that the LEO's feel that the Brethren need and want more education on the esoteric aspects of Freemasonry (Degrees, Working Tools and Secrets) in addition to Leadership and Management. The GLEC in conjunction with the LEO's will develop an esoteric curriculum.

- W. Bro. John Nesbitt, Masonic Education & Training Committee

The Special Committee on the Constitution

For many, the term Constitution, is a difficult piece of legislation to understand. Due to its nature, it can be very dry and boring. Generally speaking, a Constitution is the document which governs an organization and sets out the rules for its governance. For Masons of Manitoba, our Constitution is just that.

Many have felt over the years that a number of the Constitutional sections needed to be replaced, deleted or amended simply to keep up with the times and/or to make the process of change for the benefit of the Masons in Manitoba more efficient. Constitutional changes require a lengthy process, and must be voted on at the Annual Communications.

In his inaugural address in 2000, M.W. Bro. Rick Porter announced his intent to separate the Constitution into three parts; Constitution, By-laws, and Regulations, so that those sections of lesser importance that needed to be changed, could be, without the need for a lengthy process. At the Grand Lodge Communication in 2001 the membership of this jurisdiction voted unanimously to separate the Constitution into three parts. But change does not always come easily, and there were many difficulties within the process. To add to the confusion, a report to change the make-up of the Board of General Purposes was also being considered, and those changes to the Board were Constitutional. There was considerable discussion on the difficulties associated with this issue.

M.W. Bro. Stuart Allen appointed a Special Committee on the Constitution, with a mandate to solve the problems associated with the two documents and to finalize all aspects of the new Constitution.

This committee re-formatted the Constitution into a two-part rather than three-part document entitled Constitution and Regulations. The Constitution is now defined as being the fundamental legislative document which outlines the ideology and government of the Craft in this jurisdiction. An issue is said to be constitutional if its absence would or could have a substantial effect on Freemasonry in Manitoba. Regulations are defined as those issues or rules which support the Constitution. Constitutional changes must still be confirmed by a vote at the Annual Communication, while Regulations may now be changed by the Board of General Purposes.

Recent changes to the Board of General Purposes have been made to make the Board more effective and efficient. Some of those changes are:

- At the 2001 Communication, a motion to change the Committee on the Condition of Freemasonry (which used to be a standing committee of the Board of General Purposes - a constitutional section) to a Special Committee of the Grand Master was carried. The duties of this Committee were placed into the Regulations.
- The number of standing committees of the Board of General Purposes, as well as their names and functions, were changed at the 2001 Annual Communication. This was also a regulatory item.
- The Committee on the Fraternal Dead was deleted as it is no longer a committee of the Board of General Purposes.

Any member in good standing of this jurisdiction may submit in writing, a constitutional or regulatory change by way of Notice of Motion to the Grand Secretary. The Notice of Motion will be considered by the Jurisprudence Committee as to form and constitutionality. Constitutional changes will then be published and voted on at the Annual Communication.

Regulatory changes will be presented to the Board of General Purposes and subsequently sent to all Lodges for information. The Lodge Secretaries, upon receipt of such information should provide the details to their lodge membership. The motion will then be presented to the Board for vote at its next meeting, not less than 60 days from the date of the presentation of the original Notice of Motion.

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(The Special Committee on the Constitution, cont'd.)

Should there be disagreement with the Notice of Motion within the 60 day period, brethren should approach a member of the Board with their concerns. Once the Board has disposed of the Motion, brethren may appeal the Board's decision at the next Annual Communication.

The finished document will be presented to the Masons of Manitoba in the spring of 2004 in the small format similar to the old document in the blue plastic binders. It will also be available on our website with the ability to print sections or the entire document.

Constitutional section numbers will be preceded by the letter "C", and regulations will be written in italics, and preceded by the letter "R". This should eliminate all confusion.

Any questions regarding this article can be referred to R.W. Bro. A.B. Taylor, 663-5155, or vtaylor@merlin.mb.ca

- R.W. Bro. Bruce Taylor, Grand Master's Special Committee on the Constitution

Latest and Forthcoming Additions to the Grand Lodge Archives

We have received the first boxful of material for the William Douglas Collection. This includes the manuscript of M.W. Bro. Douglas's "Freemasonry in Manitoba 1875 to 1925" as well as a number of his other Masonic writings. Also included in this material is M.W. Bro. Douglas's Grand Master's apron and the certificate of copyright for "Masonry In Manitoba 1875 to 1925." We understand that additional material will be forthcoming.

Recent accessions include the minutes, membership lists and accounts of the Shilo Five Point Club as well as two photos showing the officers of the club in military uniform and wearing their Masonic regalia.

An e-mail was received recently from R.W. Bro. Mason Jardine, secretary of Russell Lodge No. 62, indicating that the Russell Masonic building was being sold, and requesting advice as to what should be sent in to the archives. We expect that these records, going back to 1900 or possibly earlier should be coming in during the next few weeks.

All of these contributions are greatly appreciated. Contributions of assistance in processing the material on hand would be equally welcomed.

- R.W. Bro. Al Brock, Grand Lodge Archivist

Masonic Resource Centre Update

The new Resource Centre is targeting an official opening of the end of March. Thus far \$10,000.00 has been raised and that has helped with the state-of-the-art ceiling, electrical and porcelain flooring (which will be installed before the Holiday Season). Though we are ahead of schedule much remains to be completed with new cabinetry, hardware & software, new inventory and accessories. Thanks to those who have supported the re-introduction of knowledge, learning and light in this jurisdiction!

- R.W. Bro. Victor Popow, Grand Librarian

Lodge Secretaries Please Note...

Please indicate on your annual reports to the Districts and Grand Lodge, how many Petitions for Initiation were the result of handing out the "Freemasonry is....." cards.

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M.W. Bro. Steve Kane - Editor Emeritus

M.W. Bro. Ken Thomas (ex officio) R.W. Bro. Scott Howarth - Editor