



The Grand Master's Message



ne of the most intriguing aspects of Freemasonry is its nebulous links to esoteric and unorthodox spiritualism and belief systems. This should not surprise. But it poses an interesting dilemma for the modern Freemason.

I read somewhere, I forget where, a writer speculate that the arrival of public Freemasonry, which came in 1717 with the emergence of the four lodges who formed the United Grand Lodge of England, was prompted by the arrival of the Hanoverian dynasty in England. The establishment of this dynasty on a firm footing allowed what had been underground to come to the surface. If so, what was underground must have been religiously controversial - a free thinking, enlightenment approach to spiritual beliefs that had to be carefully restrained and clandestinely followed during the years of religious persecution and uncertainty. If so, this would explain much of the appeal that Freemasonry held for the intelligentsia and social and religious reformers of the 18th and early 19th centuries. I also have forgotten where I read another author speculating on the development of the Emulation Work, the basis of what we in Manitoba call the Canadian work. This ritual was developed early in the 19th century to heal the rift between Antients and Moderns. Lord Sussex, the Grand Master of England, who led the craft through those turbulent years, is quoted as saying that the Emulation ritual was necessary to eliminate a lot of nonsense from the earlier rituals. What was that nonsense? Lord Sussex was a firm member of the religious, social and political establishment. One can only wonder what fascinating eso-

teric ideas may have been sanitized by that exercise.

Indeed Freemasonry has worked very hard since then to be respectable - to the point where we are often little more than just another service club. Yet we are supposed to be so much more, and in some places we are.

Tom Jackson, who many of you know, is one of the foremost thinkers in Freemasonry today. Speaking of the opposition to Freemasonry that exists in fundamentalist circles, Tom said "We wear their enmity with pride." I would go further and say we should actively deserve their enmity. I feel that to a large degree we have lost that sense of being radicals and free thinkers. Unfortunately, between our obsession with harmony at all costs, and our desire to attract more members—so therefore we cannot offend anyone—we have become incredibly timid at the business of challenging men to think about essential things, except in the most safe and orthodox fashions.

To those of you who might agree with the above—not all of you will—I recommend the works of one of the great religious thinkers of the second half of the 20th century; Bishop John Shelby Spong. He has written a number of wonderful books and is one of my personal saints (the people who don't like us get positively ballistic over him.) If you want a taste of what Freemasonry must have been like in the enlightenment, then sit down with some of your brethren and share your thoughts about a chapter or two of this man's work.

It is not so far-fetched an idea as you may think. There is a new generation (*cont'd. on next page*)

(Cont'd. from previous page)

of young men coming into Freemasonry, and many of them are hungry for more than what we are currently offering.

The Education & Training Committee is, through the Lodge Education Officer training program, preparing to provide resources and training to lodges

that will deliver the opportunity for serious education and discussion within your lodges. The soon-to-be-completed new library will provide a host of resources. The future is open brethren. We simply need the courage to step into it.

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

GRAND MASTER'S ITINERARY

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

FEBRUARY 2004

3	Three Pillars #169	Windsor Temple	6:30 pm
4	Beaver # 139	MMT	7:45 am OV
9	Empire #127	Empire Masonic Hall	6:00 pm OV
12	Starbuck	Starbuck MB	8:00 pm OV

MARCH 2004

2	Three Pillars #169	Windsor Temple	6:00 pm
3	Patricia #125	Sperling MB	8:00 pm OV
4	Norwood #119	MMT	7:30 pm OV
5	Capital #136	Windsor Temple	7:30 pm OV
6	District #8 Annual Mtg.	Starbuck	2:00 pm OV
13	District #7 Annual Mtg.	Brandon Masonic Temple	10:00 am OV
21	Daughters of the Nile	1155 Wilkes	2:00 pm
23	Cornerstone #179	Charleswood	7:30 pm OV
25	Grand Lodge of Minnesota	St. Cloud Minnesota	
26	Grand Lodge of Minnesota	St. Cloud Minnesota	
27	Grand Lodge of Minnesota	St. Cloud Minnesota	
28	Grand Lodge of Minnesota	St. Cloud Minnesota	
30	Library Opening	MMT	7:00 pm
31	Quatuor Coronati	MMT	7:00 pm

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Another year has passed and we must now look forward to the future and keep in mind the beloved Craft we are all a part of. Some of our lodges are beginning to show signs of growth as can be attested to by seeing more names in the Circular. However, our job is far from over.

We would still like to hold another "Open House" as we know, factually, that we did gain some members from the last one. But again we need your help and cooperation. We need you to submit the names of potential candidates so that when the numbers warrant it we can set a date and proceed. It would be nice to hold one this spring so that the process of dealing with petitioners can commence before the summer recess. If you have any other ideas for us to consider please feel free to let us know. We are open to suggestions.

By the time you are reading this we will have held a meeting of all the groups comprising the Masonic Family and hopefully some good discussions and dialogue will result from that. We will keep you informed of our progress. As well as the kids ID program helping to bring awareness of our existence to the public, we now have available for sale toques with the same symbols on them as we have on the golf shirts.

- R.W. Bro. George J. Forzley, Chairman, Membership Development

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Vision of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba:

“Freemasonry in Manitoba is the pre-eminent fraternal organization committed to the improvement of good men through leadership, fellowship and education.”

Our Mission:

“We will teach and perpetuate a fraternal way of life of high moral standards, through self-improvement, brotherhood, charity, community involvement and benevolence.”

On Thursday, January 22, 2004, the Board of General Purposes voted on the addition of the following article to the regulations in part II of the Constitution.:

“The Grand Master will appoint a Special Committee on Strategic Planning. Its duties and composition shall be as follows:

To develop and implement a Strategic Plan for the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, A. F. & A. M. which will allow it to accomplish its Vision and Mission.

To assist all committees of Grand Lodge to develop their own strategic plans in alignment with that of Grand Lodge.

To co-ordinate and integrate the strategic planning activities of all committees of Grand Lodge.

To ensure that the Strategic Plan is continually updated to meet the needs of the fraternity and the society in which it operates.

The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden, Junior Grand Warden, must be members of the Committee and the Grand Master may add any members he deems necessary.”

In order to accomplish the Vision and Mission of the Grand Lodge it is essential that the preceding article be approved by the Board of General Purposes. Our fraternity has reached that point where relying on chance to ensure the success of Freemasonry is neither acceptable nor permissible.

We must have a committee looking to the future needs and requirements of the Craft and ensuring that all committees agree upon and work toward meeting those needs and requirements. Our current Grand Lodge Officers are committed to this approach; and with the approval of the addition to the regulations, future Grand Lodge Officers must also be committed to this approach.

The Strategic Planning Committee will work diligently with all committees of Grand Lodge to direct their efforts to ensuring that they can help achieve the Vision. The committee will assist the committees in establishing a framework which will help them provide the necessary tools, programs and funding to ensure the Mission can be accomplished.

The Strategic Planning Committee relies on the support, assistance and encouragement of all the Freemasons in Manitoba as we go forward into a brighter and more vibrant tomorrow.

- M.W. Bro. Rick Porter, P.G.M.





A COLD WEATHER DIVERSION

Since it's February, and probably too cold to venture out of doors (except to go to your Lodge meetings, of course) here is a short word game to help pass some time. Simply unscramble the anagrams below to form other words. All of the words in the solutions are terms and names that should be very familiar to every Manitoba Mason.

Here's an example to help you get started:

Anagram: ANNA AND RICK MELT

Solution: ANCIENT LANDMARK

Good Luck!

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. DANGER SMART | 9. CHAIN IN ROT |
| 2. RAG HUDSON RON | 10. A MAC EVEN ITS MOP |
| 3. NANCY PAIL TENET | 11. OLD MEN SMOG US |
| 4. DRAW JOE IN RUN | 12. TONIC IN STOUT |
| 5. ARE LINGER MEGUT | 13. SMART SAM ONE |
| 6. DINNERWARE SO | 14. WART CELL OFF |
| 7. SECT ERR NOON | 15. ANTI GOB OIL |
| 8. LANE DORIC IN NOW | 16. AS CRY TREE |

(And everyone should get this one...)

17. THANK ME SO

The solutions to these anagrams will be published in the March edition of Masonry In Manitoba.

"There are one-story intellects, two-story intellects, and three-story intellects with sky-lights. All fact collectors, who have no aim beyond their facts, are one-story men. Two-story men compare, reason generalize, using the labors of the fact collectors as well as their own. Three-story men idealize, imagine, predict, their best illumination comes from above, through the skylight."

- Oliver Wendell Holmes

MASONRY IN MANITOBA is published monthly except June, July, and August by authority of **The Grand Lodge of Manitoba A.F. & A.M.**

420 Corydon Ave, Winnipeg,

R3L 0N8 Tel (204) 453-7410 or 1-800-665-2712 (MB) Fax (204) 284-3527

e-mail glsec@grandlodge.mb.ca.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Four weeks prior to the month of issue:

(January 31, 2004 for March 2004 issue)

M.W. Bro. Steve Kane - Editor Emeritus

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