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# MASONRY IN MANITOBA

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## THE GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

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**T**he month of October is when we traditionally celebrate Thanksgiving.

It is also one of my special times of the year with the upcoming season change. The summer has really been one for the memory books as we have been blessed with endless days of bright sunshine and warm temperatures. We now look forward to the annual splendor of the leaves changing, the crops being taken off the fields and preparing for old man winter.

As this was being written we suffered the untimely loss of MW Bro. George (Peanuts) Forzley IPGM, who regrettably passed to the Grand Lodge above Friday September 1<sup>st</sup> after a lengthy illness. George was an active participant in Masonic events right up until his last admission to hospital attending the Gimli Icelandic Festival parade with his Shrine unit the Khartum Komediens. We offer our heartfelt sympathies to Lady Barb and the extended Forzley family on their loss at this time. While it is never easy saying goodbye to a friend and loved one the Great Architect has called home a deserving and faithful brother who toiled tirelessly for the betterment of all mankind, Freemasonry especially. Bro. George your trestleboard is now complete we will cherish your memory.

A Masonic funeral service was conducted by the members of Ancient Landmark Lodge #3 following the regular service. An overflowing gathering came to pay last respects. The Grand Master was asked to lay a sprig of acacia on behalf of all Freemasons in this jurisdiction. MW Bro. Stuart Allen PGM a close personal friend gave a heartfelt and wonderful tribute to our dearly departed Brother.

The Morden Corn and Apple Festival parade was a huge success as this was their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. I believe this has to have been the largest crowd to watch a parade there I can remember in the last several years. Grand Lodge participated

bringing two Masons Care vans to lead the Masonic component of the parade. Some errant old time tractors tried to separate us from our Shrine brethren but the very capable Chief of Staff W Bro. Tom Love soon had this problem cleared up and we resumed. A terrific day of fellowship for all in attendance. My personal thanks is extended to the Khartum Komediens for inviting the Grand Master and Officers to their Oasis following the parades in Selkirk and Gimli. We were treated warmly and the resulting fellowship was appreciated. Daughters of the Nile Queen Joy Derhak and husband Noble Gerry manned the desert table and the ice cream treats and toppings were delicious. Congratulations to you all.

The Grand Lodge officers attended to Viking Lodge who held a ceremony to celebrate the new moon and to give a final farewell to some accumulated regalia from several lodges now making up Viking. A ceremony complete with a grave was conferred to inter the collection which was placed into a box then lowered into the ground. This was held at the residence of W Bro. Baldur Johnson north of Gimli. There is some significance as to the exact location of the opening in relation to the sun and the moon. Bro. Baldur is the man to ask if your curious. A barbecue preceded the event. I was asked to speak to a combined men and ladies gathering. I chose the paper A Celestial Lodge and supplemented it with some trivia and real life stories from dispatches from our 911 centre.

The Grand Master and my Lady Marie had the privilege of being invited to the Jobs Daughters of Manitoba Jurisdictional Guardian Council Installation on September 9<sup>th</sup>. I brought greetings on behalf of the 3300 brethren of this Grand Lodge and offered them whatever support they may need as they continue to work

*(Continued on page 2)*

together the reclamation of their official charter. Best wishes to the newly installed officers, may your year be filled with many memorable experiences. As I have stated numerous times in the past the youth members in our extended Masonic family is the future of our craft. They need our undivided support and attention if they are to not only survive but prosper. The time is now brethren, together we can all make a difference we only need to begin the process.

As you read this there have been some Official Visits carried out. I hope the Grand Masters calendar will be updated as events come in. I have decided wherever possible my District Deputies will attend on my behalf for the presentation of 50-60 year medals and awards unless I personally am able to be present. I only ask that a short report on noteworthy brethren be forwarded to me as I wish to send personal greetings and congratulations. To the Masters and Secretaries please continue to follow the proper form and contact the office of the Grand Secretary and not the DDGM's for presentation.

We have been invited to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Minnesota Communication. The Grand Master and Grand Secretary will be attending down in Minneapolis. More on this in the November report. Also in the month of October we will be attending the annual Western Canada Conference of Grand Lodges or the short version the 4 West. Our Senior Grand Warden R.W. Bro. Ted Jones will be in the spotlight this year as it is his turn to give his paper. We will have held our first Board of General Purpose

meeting for the new term.

Personal strife in the world continues on and as this month we give thanks for our continued quality of life that we all very much enjoy and a lot of people take for granted. The Grand Master wishes to convey not only his personal but the brethren of this jurisdiction a sincere Thank You to the men and women whom comprise our great Canadian Armed Forces who are fighting to ensure these freedoms we enjoy continue.

We have many Freemasons serving in the military worldwide, be grateful they are there and please take a moment to share a prayer for those far away in harms way. We wish them Gods Speed and a safe return home. May the peace we enjoy always endure.

On a final note we have embarked on a joint spirit of cooperation with our Shrine Masons of Khartum Temple. Details of the program to encourage, promote and foster new Freemasons joining the craft and subsequently becoming Shrine Masons will be communicated to you through this forum as well as the Grand Lodge website in the near future. I have met with Illustrious Sir Bill McKeigan Potentate of Khartum Shrine to discuss my concerns we had with the initial program. We are all on the same page and there will be some exciting combined efforts coming up. The time is now and together we will accomplish the goal. Watch the website for further information later September.

Till we meet again brethren.

Fraternally yours.  
MW Bro. Brian J Bailie

### **GRAND MASTER'S FALL WORKSHOP**

**\*\*\* UPDATE \*\*\***

Please watch the lodge circulars as well as check the Grand Lodge Website for information. An informative program is being put together at this time. Target members are Masters, Wardens, Deacons and LEO'S and interested brethren. Details to follow.

### **UNION HISTORICAL LODGE MEETING NOTICE**

Union Historical Lodge No. 108 will meet in the Lodge building on the grounds of the Manitoba Agricultural Museum south of Austin, MB on Friday September 29, 2006, commencing at 8: 00 p.m. It is hoped we will have the JRC Evans lecturer as our guest speaker.

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***It is with great sadness that we report the loss of our good friend and brother  
Freemason, Most Worshipful Brother George Forzley, who passed to the Grand  
Lodge above on September 1st, 2006.***

***MW Bro. Forzley was the Immediate Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of  
Manitoba. His friend, MW Bro. Stuart Allen has kindly allowed us to publish  
this eulogy to our dear departed Brother.***

George became a Freemason in September 1958 with Ancient Landmark Lodge No. 3 becoming Worshipful Master of the Lodge in 1968, subsequently served as the Lodge Secretary for five years. In 1999 he was elected District Deputy Grand Master of the 12th Masonic District, and was also elected to the Board of General Purposes of Grand Lodge, serving on various committees. In 2002 George was elected Junior Grand Warden, and installed Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba on June 4th, 2005.

George was also a member of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Valley of Winnipeg and enjoyed the Rite-irees Luncheon Group held on the second Wednesday of every month. George was also and also a member of the Khartum Shrine, becoming a member of the Khartum Shriners Past Masters Club, and Past President of the Khartum Komediants, known by the clown name of "Peanuts"

George was a Past Associate Bethel Guardian of Manitoba No. 9, International Order of Job's Daughters, and also was a volunteer driver for the Masonic Cancer Drive Program for six years and also volunteered at Winnipeg Harvest for the past two years.

All this activity, quite apart from the usual committee work, involved a great deal of time, learning the ritual which Brethren know (and non-masons will have to take my word for it) is increasingly hard to get your head around as the years go on! But George was one of those rare individuals who could easily recall within a short time the ritual work that he memorized weeks, months or years before and recite it word perfect.

George never refused to render assistance to any Lodge or Brother in this jurisdiction when called upon, unless previous commitments rendered this impossible, in which case he usually arranged for another brother to act for him.

We were all concerned during the later year, of his year in office when his suspect health caused us concern; however he completed his term fulfilling all obligations.

So much for the facts about George. What of the man himself?

He was a man of great integrity who lived his life in accordance with Masonic principles and it must be said that (as Masons are regularly enjoined to do) by the regularity of his own behavior he provided the best example for the benefit of others, He was a natural leader who got his own way without alienating the affection of this brethren, and without ever compromising his own integrity for the sake of popularity, Another injunction is,

"You agree to be a good man and true and strictly to obey the Moral Law." Yet another "You are to be exemplary in the discharge of your civil duty."

How well George obeyed these injunctions! The qualities expected of a Master of a Lodge are stated thus:

"He ought to be of exemplary character, courteous in manner, easy of address, but steady and firm in principles."

I am sure we are conscious of the way in which George upheld these principles. I quote further example from the Charge that is delivered to all new Brethren on their Initiation;

"As a Freemason let me recommend to your serious contemplation The Volume of the Sacred Law charging you to consider it as the unerring standards of truth and justice and to regulate your life and actions by the divine precepts it contains.

Therein you will be taught the important duties you owe to God to your neighbour and yourself to your neighbour by acting with him on the Square, by rendering him every kind office which justice or mercy may indicate, by relieving his necessities and soothing his afflictions and by doing to him as on similar occasions you which he would do to you."

*(Continued on page 4)*

How well George carried out this important duty to his fellow men! None could have been more exemplary in the discharge of his civil duty.

None could have more strictly obeyed the Moral Law nor have been more conscientious in following the Divine Precepts particularly those relating to his duty to others. Courteous in manner and address he certainly was. His gentle, kindly attitude to those under his jurisdiction, his genuine concern for the personal welfare of his brethren and his unswerving loyalty to his friends created an affection for which friendship is too neutral a word and which can only be described as Brotherly Love.

The second grand principle of Freemasonry, Charity, was carried out by his tireless efforts on behalf of those charitable bodies who sought his assistance. In addition to generous financial assistance, he was a man who demonstrably lived by and lived up to the highest Masonic standards of conduct but his greatest service to the fraternity society which he and Barb loved so well was to provide to the world an example of those standards so that the non-masons could say "Well if George is one of the Masonic Leaders there must be a great deal of good in it"

Until we stop and think for a moment or two we all tend to take for granted the qualities of our friends and loved ones. As I prepared these notes I was forcibly reminded of the exceptional qualities of the man whom I had been privileged to call a dear friend and a Brother for so many years. At first it may sound strange to thank God that his end should have been so quick but on reflection while we would all have liked to have him a good deal longer I am sure most people will be thankful that at the age of 71 he did not have to suffer months or years of pain, failing mental capacity or disablement which is the lot of many and which he and his family would have found even harder to bear than the shock of his sudden loss.

Beyond doubt George was a man of great stature who we might well all try to emulate. Although what we lost is tremendous, what he gave us is immeasurable.

We shall all miss him tremendously and I am sure all our hearts go out to Barb and her family in this time of great sorrow, but I am equally sure that they must all feel great pride at the respect admiration and love which so many people had for George.

I am reminded of Sir Christopher Wren's epitaph which reads;

*"If you seek his monuments look about you. Though with the passage of time the grief will be healed the memory of a great man who we all loved as a husband, father, brother and Uncle or a friend will remain in all our hearts until time with us be no more."*

I think this poem would express George's feelings;

*Do not stand on my grave and weep,  
I am not there, I do not sleep  
I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the diamond glints on snow  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,  
I am the gentle autumn rain,*

*When you awaken in the morning's hush  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quite birds in circled flight  
I am the soft stars that shine at night  
Do not stand at my grave and cry,  
I am not there, I did not die.*

"Goodbye, my Friend"

- MW Bro. Stuart Allen

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