

The District Light

The information bulletin
of Niagara B District

November, 2013

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Time for a Change

The last few newsletters have dealt with the philosophy and import of Masonry. It is important to remind ourselves of the virtues of the Order. (The October issue might be considered as a piece of literature to be given to prospective candidates.)

But now it is time to relax and to read a few good stories.

My Quest to Belong

by W.Bro. Nick Andras of Adoniram Lodge

From my many trips to the library through the years, and from radio programs which I listened to in the wee morning hours, my interest in Freemasonry finally hit a saturation point. The decision came....I had to be one.

But the next question was how to actually become one.

While driving and pondering at the same time, I spotted the square and compass sticker on a bumper of a car. I decided to follow this car and take whatever exit he took and talk to him. Well, that attempt didn't work because I was low on fuel and he wasn't taking any exits.



"I'M AFRAID THAT 'CHASING CARS' IS NOT A VALID EXCUSE FOR SPEEDING."

After many futile attempts, of chasing cars down the highway I was ready to give in....until it happened. I was working one morning,(I'm a truck driver) and one of my pickups for the day was at a Swiss Chalet Restaurant. To my surprise, there was a silver Chevy impala blocking the door to which I needed to get to to do my pickup. But that wasn't the kicker: this car had a Freemason plate cover around its licence plate. What luck!

I said to myself, "This guy ain't going anywhere until I find out how I can become a mason."

I went in, asked around, located the owner of the vehicle, and popped him the question.... How can I become a Freemason?

From that moment on, I was on my way. If it wasn't for V.W. Brother Earl Jones and his silver impala blocking my door, I would probably still be chasing cars up and down highways.



Our Freedom

also by W.Bro. Nick Andras
October 30, 1995

Across our land so wild, and free,
We must think back to how lucky we be.
The men and the women, that made it this way
Come November 11th, we remember today.
How much they fought, and through all the pain,
It's almost unheard of to even explain.

Poppies are worn to show them respect,
So pride they would feel, and not just neglect.
As our heads bow in a moment of silence,
We think back to those days of violence.
And thank the brethren and soldiers so brave,
For fighting the wars, and lives that they gave.



A Lesson Learned

by Mark Walter of Merritt Lodge

As for most masons, my initiation was partly overload and partly enlightening.

I remember, almost more clearly than anything else that night, being asked to give anything I had on me. Of course I had nothing but a sinking feeling in my gut at the time. Of course, they explained the lesson of the event AFTER the fact.

I was reminded of that time the other day in Toronto when I almost walked past a man in the street while deliberately avoiding eye contact with him. I ended up giving him some change, then the next one, then the next one. I think I spent more on those three men than I did on getting around on the subway lol.



Anyway, my point is, I still wonder if I was tricked and maybe these guys weren't homeless and were just asking for money because they were lazy, but more than that, I still feel good because

at least if they did need it, I gave what I could, and helped with what I had.

The lesson had been learned.

Before my initiation I probably would've tried to avoid those men. Now I give what I can because I never want to feel that sinking feeling again.

I think it is cool how Masonry becomes part of what we do every day and how it changes us for the better.

What Masonry Does

“The leading objects of masonry are to promote morality; keep men honest and upright, true to their God and faithful to their country; and at the same time, unite them in the strong bonds of charity, friendship, and brotherly love.”



[from the Charge to the Master given during installation in an American lodge.]

The Silent Summons

an allegory submitted by John Newton of Palmer Lodge

A member of a certain Lodge, who previously attended meetings regularly, had stopped going. After a few months, the Worshipful Master decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening, and the Worshipful Master found his brother at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for the Worshipful Master's visit, the brother welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited. The Worshipful Master made himself comfortable, but said nothing. This was not unusual, since they had sat quietly in each other's company many times.

In the grave silence, the Master contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After several minutes, he took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth, all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, watching it.

His host watched this as well.

As the one, lone ember flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow, and its fire was no more. Soon, it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting.

The Worshipful Master glanced at his watch and slowly stood up. He picked up the cold, dead ember, and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately, it began to glow once more, with all the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the Worshipful Master reached the door to leave, his host said, with a tear running down his cheek, “Thank you so much for your fiery summons, my brother. I'll be back in our Lodge for our next meeting.”

Author Unknown



Brother John Newton is the Computer and Cornerstone Resources Chairman on the District Deputy's team.

Over the Threshold and Through the Chairs

You knocked, and the door was opened.

There was a lot of knocking that night, and in succeeding meetings. Perhaps you thought of yourself as someday doing some of that percussion.

On Advancing to the East

by Michael Ferguson of St. Mark's Lodge

Brethren, sometimes men are 'fast-tracked' through the chairs, but there is much learning and valuable experience to be gained by advancing more methodically. Sometimes it happens that one skips a chair or two on the journey eastward. But all in all, there are good reasons for going through all the Chairs prior to being Installed on the Throne of King Solomon.



Now not ALL the Chairs mind you. Typically those of Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, and Tyler usually go to a PM, but there is no ruling that these chairs MUST go to a PM.

As for Tyler, being a PM makes sense as who better than a PM to examine visitors, especially one claiming to be a PM?

The other 7 chairs are different. A MM who has proven his proficiency should advance through them all, going from JS to SS to IG to JD to SD to JW to SW and finally all the way east to WM in the eighth year.

Being the Master of a Lodge is quite a responsibility. By going through all the chairs, as a WM you'll know what is expected of each and every one of your Officers, as you've been there and done that!



That's 7 years. So that means 7 year's worth of Degrees, Official Visits, Installations, Elections, and countless openings/closings you'll have witnessed and participated in prior to becoming WM where you're expected to run the show. (And that's just in your own Lodge, not taking into account the visits to other lodges)

Sevens

This 7 years and 7 chairs likewise hold other allusions for us in Freemasonry, for do not 3 rule a lodge, 5 hold a lodge, and 7 or more make it perfect? Wasn't K.S. 7 years and upwards in building, completing and dedicating the T. at J. to God's Holy Service?

And what about the 7 Liberal Arts & Sciences? Could not each of those 7 chairs correspond with learning one of the 7 Liberal Arts & Sciences so that by the time you do become Master of your Lodge, you'll have learned them all, thus truly making you a Master of Arts & Sciences?

That's what makes Freemasonry beautiful, for it truly is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols.

So let's moralize on that first set of Working Tools presented to us. Use the 24 IG to remind you to properly manage your busy schedule, let the CG make you remember that to make anything happen, you actually have to do the work, for skill without exertion is of little avail, and lastly, let that chisel extort you to be patient and steadily persevere. Seven years isn't that long. Be patient, you'll get there, and by taking your time and learning all the work of the chairs, you'll be so much more the qualified and experienced in running your Lodge and employing and instructing the brethren in Masonry.

It is a personal challenge being the WM, but the rude material receives its fine finish from repeated efforts alone.

Brethren, don't cheat yourselves. Seven years and seven chairs is just a short span of time when you consider how long Freemasonry has been around, and with God's assistance and our own united endeavours, it always will be, until time shall be no more.



Bro. Michael Ferguson
Chair of Masonic Education