

The District Light

The information bulletin
of Niagara B District

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A New Name

For many years there has been a masonic group in Niagara B District, called *The Past Masters and Officers Association*. They organized district dinners, arranged for a hospitality suite at Grand Lodge every July, and oversaw the way that district deputies were chosen.

Recently, the by-laws of the organization were reviewed and updated. One of the first changes was to change the group's name. The original name had a restrictive tone to it, seemingly limiting the membership to masons who had been officers.

The new name is *The Masonic Association of Niagara B District*. Now it is clearer that any of our brethren can participate.

A Better Path

The revised by-laws of "the Association" now clarify the roles of the executive and state the objectives of the group:

- to advance the study of Freemasonry by encouraging discussions and debates on Masonic and related subjects, and active participation in debates and discussions by all members of the Association;
- to provide assistance and advice to Lodge officers in their progress through the chairs;
- to encourage and co-ordinate Masonic activities, whether Lodge, social, or community;
- to work in conjunction and harmony with the District Deputy Grand Master.

Charts have been created to show the rotation schedule for lodge responsibilities:

- to nominate candidates for the Association executive;
- to propose a candidate for the office of district deputy;
- to host the bi-annual district dinners.

Arrangements have been made for us to have a room at The Royal York for a hospitality suite.

Coming Soon

Each lodge has received a copy of the new Association by-laws to consider. Alterations will be made to them as needed.

Two initiatives that the Association will be evaluating might provide us with closer contact with Niagara A masons:

- having a combined Divine Service, alternating between the two districts;
- sharing a hospitality suite at Grand Lodge.

Before you Change

Sometimes we desire change: of scenery, of personal appearance, of life choices, of political parties. Other times we balk at change, saying, "the old way has done good by us so far".

R.W.Bro. Thomas Jackson has this caution for us:

I propose that Freemasonry became as great as it did, and remained as great as it has, for three primary reasons:

- #1 it was probably the first organization to accept, at least philosophically, men from all stations of life as equals.
- #2 it attracted some of the greatest minds that ever lived.
- #3 it remained selective on the quality of the man it would accept.

The deletion of any one of these reasons would have prevented the Craft from becoming what it did or remaining as it has.



There is no question that the environment in which we exist has changed. Now we must determine whether we wish to retain our principles and values and lift others to meet our ideals or change to fit into today's environment and thus step down to meet their present-day standards..

Another Change

As it celebrates its 300th year, the United Grand Lodge of England has strategies to ensure its long-term future. It wants to build a positive reputation for Freemasonry as open and forward thinking.

One element is the change of its masonic logo.

The new one is both contemporary and instantly recognisable, while also linking to Freemasonry's rich heritage.



Another Choice

One point of masonic discussion is the 'proper' way to display the symbol on a masonic ring. Some say that you should see the square and compasses as they were revealed to you at your initiation. Others claim that the image should be recognizable to anyone you meet who sees the ring.



Our Grand Lodge does not comment on how we wear our jewellery.

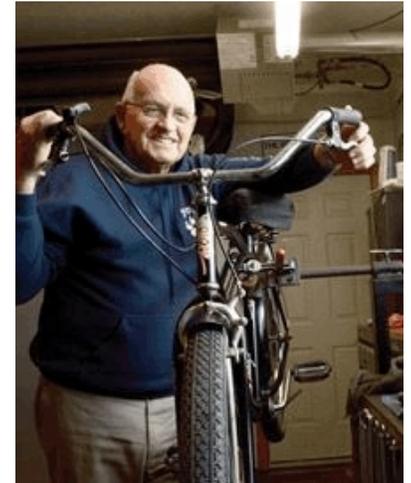
One Mason said that every day when he's getting ready to leave the house, he takes his ring off his dresser and puts it on without looking at it. He said if the points were towards him, he'd work that day on improving himself, and if the points were out, he'd work on improving the world around him.

Both are valid pursuits: making a daily advancement in masonry, or working to improve the world you live in.

One Who Strives

Bro. Aubrey Foley of Macnab Lodge has been refurbishing bikes for several years. Then he gives them away.

People of Port Colborne can come to his work shop to exchange their kid's bike for a larger one.



Or someone going to Cuba can take a bike to use there then leave it for one of the residents. That last option has expanded – Aubrey has sent over 1000 bicycles to Cuba.

Furthermore, his bikes have been shipped to Nicaragua, Mexico and Haiti.

Then last year he partnered with Port Colborne High School to found a school bike repair program, the first of its kind in Canada.

"I absolutely love it. This is the best thing that I've ever done in my life," he said, noting that the enthusiasm of the students is contagious. Most days when he shows up at the school, a half-hour ahead of class, students are already waiting to get into the shop. The students, like him, are addicted to the smiles and cheer the bikes spread.

Thanks to the efforts of students, 200 more bikes shipped out recently. Just last week they were passing through South Africa en route to an orphanage in the Congo.

"We've gone international," said Foley, who is now working with a veterans group in the United States and a pair of German educators to set up similar bike refurbishing programs abroad.

The community recognized Aubrey's value by naming him Citizen of the Year.

Bro. Foley often visits the district lodges. Come out to meet him at the next Official Visit to Merritt Lodge on Monday, May 9.

A Master's Message

W.Bro. Nowell Brain recently assumed the chair in the east at Myrtle Lodge. His message in the summons brought up some interesting points. In part, here are his words:

"I was sitting up in the East and I began to think about what the duties of a 'Worshipful Master' are. I do not believe that any of the junior officers are taught what to expect of them when ascending to this chair.

I think that the responsibilities are kept sort of secretive in order not to scare away any potential W.M.'s I have to wonder whether, during my first meeting as the W.M., that I did what our brethren expected of me.

"I am the facilitator of the monthly lodge meeting. I have to make sure that everything runs smoothly. I have to make sure that every brother who has something to say has the opportunity to say what he wants and to make sure that his contribution is heard."

[After listing some more duties, his concluding paragraph is insightful.]

"Lodge work does not end with the monthly meeting. As all former W.M.'s know, it continues on through the month. There is the degree, or the masonic education to plan, but more importantly, there is the health of the lodge to maintain. The lodge finances have to be healthy. This is the reason to have an extremely capable treasurer donating his time to our lodge in making sure we are solvent. (Brother Norman Gill)

"The lodge membership has to be happy. This is the reason for planning events such as the 'Ladies Night', First Friday Fellowship, the Summer Picnic and the Miner's Lunches. I am believing that 'Lodge Health' is the greatest area of failure or of success that a Worshipful Master is responsible for."



Leadership

"You cannot push anyone up the ladder unless he is willing to climb."

Andrew Carnegie

One of the traps of leadership is our desire to see people succeed. It is an essential characteristic in a leader, but a leader cannot create that desire in others. Success requires work, and work requires the desire to work, translated into action.

Leadership is influence, it is not doing another's work for him because we want that person to succeed. We cannot force action on our fellow Masons. We can only do what we can do, enthusiastically, offer opportunities, praise when praise is due, and act fraternally.

In all things, we must lead by example.

RWB Michael H. Shirley

Being a Mason

What is the worthwhile contribution that one makes as a Mason?

To me it is suggested by a story told by a Russian writer. He relates that a man was walking along and was accosted by another who asked him for alms.

"I'm sorry, brother," is the reply, "I have nothing and cannot help you".

"Don't worry," says the beggar. "You called me 'brother', and that's enough!"

This is the first thing that Masons learn to do, to call each other "brother". They meet in fellowship. They commence work in harmony and conclude in peace. They have their honest differences but respect each other the more highly for them. They see each



other's virtues and with good humour tolerate each other's faults. They know that one can depend upon a brother.

Wayne D. Anderson,

Being a Brother

When men meet on the level and enjoy the benefits of brotherly love, they no longer need to spend time and energy keeping up their protective defences. They can relax, be themselves, and enjoy true companionship and the solace they deeply seek.

Blood Facts

Masons have supported blood collection in the country by donating, volunteering, or by sponsoring a clinic. The results of the blood service are impressive.

In Ontario, 806,956 units of whole blood were collected last year. 28,000 people registered as potential stem cell donors. 7,490 new donors were added through community events.

Here are two short explanations of interest:

[Blood Types](#) or [Blood Pressure](#)

Diversions

The following are articles and quotes to increase your knowledge, or cause you to smile:

The Order of Women Freemasons

Women Freemason lodges have been in Canada for 62 years. Locally, there are lodges in Scarborough, Whitby, and Port Credit.

There is enough interest in Women Freemasonry to perhaps form a lodge in the Niagara peninsula.

Further information about the Order can be found [here](#) or you may contact Linda Borland at linda.borland@cogeco.ca

History

The history of our world is here compressed into 2 minutes of images.

The final scenes seem to be a just conclusion for the way we have conducted ourselves.

<http://marcbrecy.perso.neuf.fr/history.html>

On Participating

The most difficult thing is the decision to act; the rest is merely tenacity.

Amelia Earhart

"Those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music."

Friedrich Nietzsche

On Doing

Do more than belong . . . participate.

Do more than care help.

Do more than believe . . . practice.

Do more than be fair . . . be kind.

Do more than forgive . . . forget.

Do more that give serve

Do more that live grow

Do more than dream work.

William Arthur Ward

In a world full of people
who couldn't care less,
be someone who cares more.

You cannot do a kindness too soon
for you never know how soon
it will be too late.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Don't wait for people to be friendly;
show them how.

Henry James

On Drinking

I drink because my doctor said that I shouldn't keep things bottled up.

The answer may not lie at the bottom of a bottle, but you should at least check.