

The District Light

*The information bulletin
of Niagara B District*

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We Know This

We know that masonry has a presence in almost every country in the world. We also know that each country or province has its own Grand Lodge which is independent, overseeing its own jurisdiction and not answerable to any other. [That must disturb the conspiracy theorists]

In Ontario, there are 46,000 masons grouped into 560 lodges in 38 districts. Each man belongs to a somewhat independent lodge which maintains the principles of masonry, but its independence may lead to isolation and perhaps a loss of brotherhood identity with other masons.



What can we do?

One answer is to visit other lodges.

The Official Visits of the District Deputy Grand Master is an opportune time to do that.

At each of those meeting the masters of the visiting lodges are brought in separately and are introduced to the members present. Later, the brethren from each lodge stand to be recognized.

The next time to participate in such an event will be at Van Alstyne Place on April 8 when St. Mark's Lodge receives the D.D.G.M.

Certain lodges have a reputation for being particularly active with their visits.

One lodge that has been present in large numbers is Macnab Lodge from Port Colborne. Here is a photo of the group that attended the official visit to Merritt Lodge last month.



Front row: W.Bro. Roy Etling, W.Bro. Barrie Wilson, Bro. Craig Rohe, W.Bro. Barry Bitner,
W.M. Brent Tarabalka, V.W. Bro. Larry Peyton, Bro. Richard (Dick) Bell.

Back row: Bro. Andrew Etling, W.Bro Ken Burke, Bro. Ron Jordan, Bro. Mike Metzger, Bro. Pat Brown

How Does It Happen?

Michael M. Metzger of Macnab Lodge had this to say about his lodge's masonic spirit:

We of Macnab Lodge have been pleased to attend the recent Official Visits.

We are very fortunate to have an active and enthusiastic core of brethren in our lodge. We hope to continue our visits to the lodges within our District in the spirit of brotherhood and reciprocity.

The leadership of Macnab lodge deserves the credit for energizing the brethren to attend other lodges for their official visits of the DDGM. That leadership consists of our current Master, Brent Tarabalka, our several past masters, especially Barry Bittner who is at the forefront of promoting such visits. These good men have dedicated countless hours of their own time to build our spirit of enthusiasm and brotherhood.

As Macnab enters its 150th anniversary, we hope to celebrate this landmark and thank our other lodges for all of their kind support by doing our best to visit those very same lodges that have been so supportive of us throughout the years. Through the efforts of our Master, our Past Masters and a dedicated and enthusiastic group of junior officers emerging into leadership roles in the lodge, we hope to continue our efforts and enthusiasm throughout our 150th anniversary celebration, and thereafter.

What Else Can We Do?

Meetings are meetings. What else is there? I'm glad you asked.

The choices range from social to formal.



Masons meet often for coffee, lunches, and dinners just for the fun of it.

Is There More?

On April 5, there will be a Friend-to-Friend gathering at the main masonic hall in St. Catharines for masons to bring family or friends to learn more about the craft.

11:30 – gather for coffee or tea.

12:00 – enjoy a hot lunch.

12:45 – go to the lodge room to hear about masonry. People will have their questions answered.

2:30 – desert and good-byes.

If you want to take advantage of this experience, inform Michael Locke at 905-646-4789 or email him at mjlocke@cogeco.ca to tell how many will be coming.

On Tuesday, April 15, masons of the district will meet at the legion hall on Spring Street for a dinner and a talk on the war of 1812 by W. Bro. Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Nehring.

On Sunday, April 27, Masons will gather at St. David's Anglican Church in Welland at 2:00 for our annual Masonic Service.



Concordant bodies have their own special events.

The Scottish Rite performs an impressive ceremony on Maundy Thursday and then hosts a morning breakfast on Easter Sunday.

Heritage Lodge meets at various locations to listen to talks on masonic history.



Ask in your lodge about the many choices that are available to anyone wanting more light in masonry.

A Mason in Germany

In a previous issue, W.Bro. Jack Harrington, 50 years a mason, of Adoniram Lodge, recounted some of his masonic adventures while in the Canadian armed forces. He continues the story:

I recall visiting a German lodge in Baden Baden. Upon entering the main hallway I noticed that the floor tiles were bordered with swastikas. Was this Gestapo HQ?

Well, it was explained that the mark was a Greek symbol slightly different from the Nazi symbol.

I also learned that the masons were on Hitler's hit list so they had to be very careful. They would meet at the local gasthoff (pub) and make certain gestures that would signify a masonic sign, for example a simple scratch on the neck or a slight collar adjustment would be used for the first degree. They would have to be very careful.

I understand that the forget-me-not pin was created as a symbol or in memory of those brethren who lost their lives.

It took a few years after the war before the German Grand Lodge emerged from Darkness to Light. The American and British Brethren who were part of the occupation force encouraged this to bring some normality to the occupation.

The Americans and British were given their own charter which the Canadians were part of.

The members of the Lahr Canadian Lodge visited many American and German Lodges and enjoyed some wonderful fellowship. My favourite visit was at lodge in a small town near Frankfurt where I found out that General Rommel's aide, a colonel, was a member of that same lodge.

I didn't visit any lodges in France as most of them were not authentic and not recognized by Grand Lodge.



I hope I have shed a little more light in Masonic traditions. Wherever you go, make every effort to visit a Lodge. It matters not if their rituals are somewhat different; the experience is great.

A Response to a Previous Article

Last month, Erick Escolero told about becoming a mason, and expressed his appreciation of the men who were role models.

The issue reached Samuel Cerna in San Salvador in Central America. Here is his response, translated from Spanish:

After reading what Erick wrote about me, I remembered the Masonic morality code:

If the Great Architect of the Universe gives you a son, give thanks, but tremble for the responsibility that he entrusts to you, because from now on you shall be for that child the image of Divinity.

For ten years, be his teacher, in his twenties, his father, and to the death, his friend.

It brought tears to my eyes when this apprentice calls me his adoptive father because now I see that I have left a mark on my way.

Heritage Lodge No. 730 G.R.C.

Heritage Lodge was formed to provide an intellectual environment for the pursuit of Masonic knowledge and also to provide a means for receiving and recording historical artefacts to ensure the preservation of our Masonic Heritage without encroaching on the normal functions of Constituent Lodges. Heritage Lodge accepts, by affiliation in the usual manner, all Masons of like mind, who are desirous of working together to fulfil the aims and objectives established by the membership.

The lodge has established a strong relationship with Brock University. There is a masonic library there and every year a lecture on a masonic theme is given.

This year's talk explored the strong presence of masons during the War of 1812.