

The District Light

The information bulletin
of Niagara B District

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bhodwitz@gmail.com

Getting Out

Although a lodge can be a self-contained and self-sustaining unit, going to other lodges rewards us with new perspectives and new connections.

Within each district, the lodges find ways of encouraging visitation. Often a token object is the 'prize' for such activity.



In the two Niagara Districts there is a 'travelling gavel'

which is either captured or delivered when seven members of a lodge attend another lodge's meeting.

In Niagara A District, there is a Travelling Trowel which is to be delivered by the Worshipful Master to another Lodge where a First Degree is being held, and it must be presented by the newest Mason of the delivering lodge.



Its intent is to promote travelling and visitation by the newer masons.

Trophy Cups

Another type of reward is the trophy cup for lodges to display when they visit in strength.



There is a cup for the lodge with the greatest total membership present during the Official Visits.

In Niagara B another cup is awarded to the lodge with the greatest percentage of its members who arrive at the district's bi-annual dinner meeting. This 'percentage' system rewards lodges for their attendance when they draw from a smaller pool of registered members.

Inter-District Gavel

Originally known as the Busting Gavel, the inter-district gavel is shared between the brethren of Niagara A and B Districts to encourage fellowship between the two regions. A minimum of 7 Brothers must attend to visit and pass the gavel.

The lodge receiving the gavel has 60 days to deliver it to another lodge in the sister district.

If not delivered after the 60 days, a lodge from the other district may claim it by visiting the lodge in possession of the gavel.



In April, during the Official Visit of the DDGM to Ivy Lodge in Beamsville, 8 members of King Edward VII arrived to take possession of the Travelling or Busting Gavel.

Front row: Chris Ennest, W.Bro. Kevin Haner (master of Ivy Lodge), W.Bro. James Bradley (master of King Edward VII), R.W.Bro. David Gillis (DDGM of Niagara A), David Martin, John Manwarring.

Back row: Robert Ennest, Will Abbott, Richard Ennest.

Absent: Bill Hodwitz

An Address by a Past Grand Master

During a recent Friend-to-Friend event, M.W.Bro. Raymond Daniels spoke to the visitors. Here is some of his message (paraphrased with his permission).

What is the relevance of Freemasonry in the 21st Century?

What is there to find?

We accept good men and offer them ways to better themselves.

We offer stability, integrity, moral standards, and fraternal affection.

We encourage five points or principles:

self-examination, discovery, analysis, realization, fulfilment.

In the lodge room, we do *work*. The lectures and lessons present an ideal; something to strive for.



Just as stone masons in the past worked to create things durable and enduring, we are builders of character. A stone mason takes marble and works it to reveal or release the inner beauty.

In lodge, we offer opportunities to look inside ourselves and to implement change.

Everyone is on a quest. We want to know:

Where did we come from?

Why are we here?

Where are we going?

We search for 'The Great Truth', but it is something which we must discover for ourselves. It cannot be imparted by others.

Within the lodge, there are guiding images available for our consideration. For example, at the four corners of the room are tassels which represent self-control, bravery, wisdom, and justice.



Despite the inherent good within the lodge, the public is presented with a great deal of misinformation, often put out by people who know better but print whatever advances their own designs.



But good men still discover the values that we express. Nine Canadian Prime Ministers and fourteen Ontario Premiers have been masons. Canada Lodge in Kandahar, Afganistan, has initiated fifty new masons.

We are not a secret society. Except for some private matters, our ideals and functions are available in many publications.

There is one secret which cannot be put into words: when two masons shake hands, what transpires between us is the secret.

It is real, but it defies expression.



A Committed Mason



W. Bro. Nick Andras has been an active mason in our district.

As a member of Adoniram lodge, he developed an effective mentoring program.

He then promoted mentoring and brother-to-brother while

on a District Deputy’s team. As the master of his lodge he made sure that meetings had masonic education and entertaining programs.

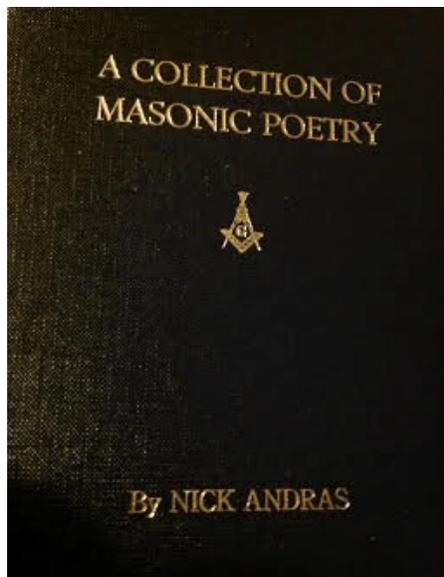
Book Launch

But brother Andras has extended himself further.

Nick has been writing stories and poems for many years, and now has collected his masonic poems into a volume that is being made available to the brethren of the district.

As Nick progressed through the craft, he recorded his experiences and expressed his emotions in poetry. Some of his works have been presented in lodges and reprinted on web sites, in newsletters, and in *The Ontario Mason* magazine.

Now the collected works are bound together with the theme of *Through the Eyes of a Brother*.



To What Purpose?

Nick Andras became concerned about the financial situation at Van Alstyne Place where many masonic orders meet. He wanted to help.

He decided to raise money by having his writings published and offered for sale to the masons. He got his poems edited, then found a publisher to produce a professional volume.

The books will be sold at coming masonic meetings and events, with the proceeds going toward the restoration and repair of the building at Van Alstyne Place.

Brother Andras’ passion for masonry will have a lasting effect on the region.

“It is my small part in helping to save this building which has seen many good men become better men and great contributors to our community”.

Gatherings

On April 27, brethren of ‘B’ District attended the annual masonic church service.

The last official gathering of this masonic year will be the homecoming of the District Deputy to Copestone Lodge on May 8.

After that, we will maintain our contacts by attending weekly coffee meetings, monthly lunches and dinners, and the many lodge events such as picnics, BBQs, fish fries, and pasta dinners.

Then it will be September and Lodge meetings will start again.

The Reason to Try

The past is for reference, the future for dreamers; the present moment is where you create success.

Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to become the best you are capable of becoming.

There is a choice you have to make
 In everything you do.
 But keep in mind that in the end,
 The choice you make, makes you.