

# The Brock Broadcaster



***A newsletter for the Brethren of Brock Daylight Lodge No. 745,  
Niagara "A" District and all members of the Grand Lodge of Canada in  
the Province of Ontario***

April 2020

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Good evening Brethren and welcome to this, the April 2020 edition of *The Brock Broadcaster*. It's unfortunate, that we, as Masons, can not meet at this time in the flesh, but the health and safety of everyone including those nearest and dearest to us, should be our ultimate concern and priority.

Masonic meetings and subsequent social gatherings have been stagnated since March 12<sup>th</sup> and will be until at least June 1<sup>st</sup>. But that is no reason for one to shadow their Masonic pride and dismiss those values you so solemnly swore to observe. Since that time when you entered the Lodge room under a veil of complete darkness, and stated in whom you would place your trust, you began to prove yourself as a man and a Mason. As we continue to

face new and trying challenges through these times of uncertainty, let us never forget "That where the name of God is invoked, we trust no danger will ensue".

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## **MILITARY MASONS**

Freemasons have served with distinction in the defense of Canada throughout our history. Many of them have been called upon to pay the Supreme Sacrifice.

Did you know that the highest-ranking Canadian soldier killed in action was also a Mason?

Major General Malcolm Smith Mercer, Queens Own Rifles of Canada, was a member of Victoria Masonic

Lodge, and the Worshipful Master of River Park Masonic Lodge in 1906, both located in what is today the Greater Toronto Area. When the Great War 1914-1918 broke out, Brother Mercer accompanied the Canadian Expeditionary Force overseas.



*Brigadier General Mercer*

One of General Sir Arthur Currie's Masonic brethren serving overseas was General Malcolm Smith Mercer, hailing from what is now the Toronto area. Like General Sir Arthur Currie, (who eventually commanded the Canadian Corp on the Western Front), General Mercer had been active in the Militia, serving as a senior officer in the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. Like General Currie, his concurrent military experience and his various Lodge officers supported each other in his developing skills as a natural leader. Rapidly promoted to senior rank overseas during the First World War, he never lost his concern for the men in the trenches, many of them of course his Masonic brethren.

***It was estimated that between 10% to 15% of all serving Canadian soldiers were Freemasons.***

He would often go right up to the front lines to visit his soldiers and

brethren, and to observe the action first hand. The personal concern he showed for the soldiers in the field was greatly appreciated by everyone.

On June 2, 1916, the Germans began a sudden and terrific bombardment of the Canadian trench lines at Mount Sorrel. General Mercer was as usual right up at the front. Early on the morning of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, he was deafened by the German shells exploding right on top of him, sought shelter in a nearby ditch, then was wounded in the leg by a stray bullet. He soon disappeared in the brutal artillery barrage that followed. Tragically, the General could not be found. It was feared that he had been killed in action, and buried by the thousands of explosions of the artillery shells.

Such was the affection and respect that Brother Mercer had inspired, that several small detachments of Canadians volunteered to find him, dead or alive, regardless of the risk. Accordingly, several days later, on June 21<sup>st</sup>, one group of soldiers was crawling late at night in the mud of No Man's Land near Armagh Wood on their search. They observed an officer's boot and then the insignia of a Major General on a body part partly buried by the mud. There they found the body of their General, very indecently interred. They attempted to raise the body, but were fired upon, first by German snipers and then artillery. Lying in the mud, next to the body, they dug with their hands, their mess tins and bayonets, until the body could be raised and carried back behind the lines to safety.

The body of the General was buried in the British Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery of Lijssenthoek, Belgium, in Flanders, with the standard

military headstone, beside fellow Canadian soldiers and Brother Masons. General Mercer is the highest ranking Canadian ever to be killed in combat in any war.

*GLCPOO Library, Museum and Archives*

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## **CORNERSTONE LODGE ACCREDITATION**

As Masonic meetings and events have been cancelled since mid March with a proposed commencement of June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Grand Lodge Cornerstone Committee recognizes that events proposed and planned to meet the requirements for the accreditation mandate could not take place. Therefore, the Committee is giving Lodges credit for those events providing they can show proof they were properly planned for and announced in Lodge bulletins.

I'm pleased to report that of the "Major Standards", a Lodge is expected to complete five of the twelve requirements. BDL has met six of those standards, although some are ongoing as they are required to be achieved during each Masonic calendar year. In the "Basic Standards", a Lodge is expected to complete six of the thirteen requirements. BDL has met four of those requirements.

So, we, the members of Brock Daylight Lodge, are well on our way to meeting the required number of standards to receive accreditation as a Cornerstone Lodge. Well done Brethren!

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BDL extends best wishes to the members of St. Mark's Lodge No. 105

and Adoniram Lodge No. 573. On April 9<sup>th</sup>, by the power of the Grand Master, MW Bro. David J Cameron, they were amalgamated to become St. Mark's Lodge No. 105, GRC, Niagara "B" District.

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## **Niagara Distiller is Making Free Hand Sanitizer for Police, Health Care Workers and Others**

*Samantha Craggs – CBC news  
March 17, 2020*

Ordinarily, Geoff Dillon spends his days making vodka, gin, absinthe and other spirits at his small batch distillery in Beamsville. But these days, he's making something else – hand sanitizer.



*CBC photo*

**Bro. Geoff Dillon  
Seymour Lodge No.277**

The owner of Dillon's Small Batch Distillers has been using alcohol and store-bought aloe to make free hand sanitizer for local police, hospitals, long-term care homes and municipalities during the COVID-19 pandemic. He started on Friday, and by Wednesday morning, will have distributed 3000 bottles to police officers, front-line health care workers,

Meals on Wheels and the City of Hamilton, among others.

Now he's out of aloe, and he's providing bottles of 65 per cent alcohol, which works as a disinfectant. Dillon tweeted about its availability Tuesday afternoon, and now he's drowning in hundreds of emails and "a table full of Post-It notes".

Dillon is happy to do it, but said it's chilling how many of these crucial agencies need supplies.

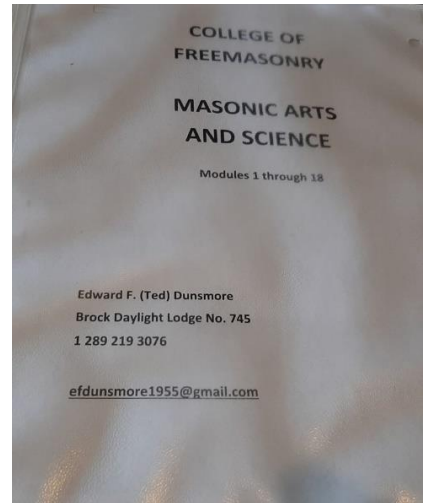
"We're a little scared because demand's been high", said Dillon, whose wife is a family doctor. "It's a lot of people that we thought could get these things, and it's kind of shocking. The City of Hamilton doesn't have any sanitizer left?"

Dillon said it started last week when the distillery put a basket of small bottles of hand sanitizer at the entrance, free to anyone who wanted one. Then the Niagara Regional Police Service reached out to him. ("We have received a small supply of hand sanitizer from Dillon's Distillers," confirmed police spokesperson Stephanie Sabourin.)

Since then, Dillon said, he's gotten calls from local mid-wives, long-term care homes, food banks, Meals on Wheels and community living agencies.

"It's been crazy", says Geoff Dillon of the demand for his alcohol-turned hand sanitizer. "No one's really sure what to think". (Twitter/@dillonsdistills)

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Now is your chance to enroll as a student of the College of Freemasonry. The enrollment fee has been waived while Masonic meetings and gatherings are cancelled. Once you have registered you may pick any one of the study modules to work on. Once completed, you simply send it back to the college and request another module. This promotion is open to all Masons who are of the rank of at least a Master Mason. You will find the registration form and study module list on the Grand Lodge website or you can contact the College at [masonic.college@gmail.com](mailto:masonic.college@gmail.com). Remember to mark "Facebook Promo" in the Amount column.

***"Make the most of  
Masonry Through  
Learning.  
Explore its Mysteries –  
Enjoy its Privileges"***

**RW Bro. Garnet Schenk, FCF**

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The Divine Service planned for Sunday; June 7<sup>th</sup> has been postponed until a later date. It is hoped we can schedule it for sometime in September.

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**Question:** *Does Freemasonry have any responsibility in bestowing benevolence towards the individual Mason?*

**Answer:** Masonry cannot afford to abandon its commitment to benevolence. To do so would be to demolish one of the three pillars supporting the whole edifice of the Craft. It is questionable whether Brotherly Love and Truth, great though each is in its own right, could uphold the structure if the third column, Relief, were taken from Masonry. Each of the three is absolutely required. But if Masonry cannot afford to repudiate its obligation to practice benevolence, neither can it afford to ignore changing attitudes and policies in society and government, with regard to social assistance to the less fortunate. Nature and beauty abound with the relics of life forms and societies which perished because they were unable or unwilling to changes in their environment.

Perhaps one of the most common misconceptions brethren today have is understanding the difference between benevolence and charity. In the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century, programs of social assistance were available, but with stringent qualifications. As the

industrialized nations advanced, corporate programs were put into place to look after their retired employees through pensions and personal benefit packages. These forms of monetary relief I would view as acts of benevolence. What about the Masonic widow who after living with her spouse for forty or fifty years, now finds herself virtually kidnapped in her own home because she has never learned to drive a motor vehicle and public transit is not available? Or the Masonic widower who has worked and toiled for years, but has no idea on how to operate household appliances, let alone prepare a simple grocery list? There are many people like this in our society, and all they need is perhaps some guidance and understanding instruction. These acts of kindness I would consider as acts of charity, more of a time sacrifice rather than a financial obligation.

“In this confused and busy world in which we live we must recognize that each of us has a personal responsibility to those around us that cannot be discharged by cash donations. Much can be done with our hands to make life more livable for those less fortunate but there is far more we can do with our hearts to relieve the deeper pain of loneliness and despair of many elderly people in every community”.<sup>1</sup>

*The Masonic Manual – Chapter 9, Who are We?*

*1 MW Bro. Robert E Davies- from his address at the 1974 Annual Proceedings*



On Saturday, February 8, 2020, the Masonic Districts of Niagara "A" and "B" held a Lodge of Instruction at the St. Catharines Masonic Building. The morning commenced with a "Meet and Greet" session where there was an opportunity for brethren to purchase numerous books and publications from Grand Lodge. The presenters delivered an overview of the mechanics of conducting the three degrees. RW Bro. Edward Dunsmore presented an overview regarding the preparation and planning for a Masonic Memorial Service. A mock service was conducted. Those brethren who had never attended a service acted as the grieving family, sitting on a row of chairs, front and centre as to have an unrestricted view of the service. Many thanks to RW Bro. Michael Locke FCF, for coordinating this educational endeavor.



*Chuck Cossette photos*

