

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

Brethren, here we are already the last Communique of 2016, time is flying by quickly and many are preparing the holiday season. The time of year to celebrate a number of activities of your respective spiritual persuasion and, of course, the opportunity to come together as families and enjoy many experiences that we sometimes don't take time for during the rest of the year. As some of you have heard me say, there is nothing more important than your family, your occupation and your church. MASONRY IS JUST A HOBBY. Although we learn a lot from Masonic teachings, these other aspects of your life are most essential to a successful effort of our life's path.

On November 18th – 20th a number of Grand Lodge Officers visited Algoma District for various seminars and a reception in Thunder Bay. On arrival there was about 5 centimeters of snow. Between five and ten o'clock we were treated to social gathering at one of the Lodge buildings at which time we were blessed with another 15 centimeters of white joy. Going home was a great experience with vehicles sliding everywhere, stop lights not working and passengers giving a lot of advice. We all arrived safely at our hotels in forty minutes in what should have been a twenty minute trip. I can tell you the warmth and kindness that was extended to us as visitors was a great experience. These brethren don't see as many Grand Lodge personnel as we might in the southern portion of the province. We have been treated royally in every corner of the province, at various ceremonies and receptions, but no one has provided a winter wonderland like Thunder Bay and Algoma District. After everything, we all had a good time and arrived home safely. Be assured Freemasonry is well in Algoma and I was excited and impressed with their Masonic activity.

In a little over a month we will be starting to recognize the three hundredth Anniversary of Free and Accepted Masonry. I have been impressed that many Lodges and Districts are already having meetings about the suggested open house concept I have proposed for June 3rd next year. I feel this is an opportunity to celebrate Freemasonry across

Ontario. In fact I would hope it might become an annual event. Shortly, you will be receiving other activities we are proposing as part of the 300th anniversary. I encourage Lodges and members to plan or participate in some type of celebration. We have received the coins with 300th anniversary on one side the 150th of Canada on the other. We will be distributing them as soon as possible for sale in your respective Districts.

We are so fortunate to live in Canada and to be afforded the opportunity to become Masons, so let's express our pride to the rest of the population and demonstrate our morals and generosity as an example to those who might be interested in our Masonic philosophies.

One final reminder; according to our records there are some Districts who have not indicated what members are considering letting their name stand for DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER. As I have mentioned previously there are two situations that occurs. One: the longer you leave it the less time you have to take the Past Master's course. Two: if your name has been assumed and you have decided not to let your name stand, you are shortening time for some other individual to prepare himself. Please let your intentions be known.

Brethren, we send a lot of Masonic information out, via Peter Sialtsis, which is intended for everyone's benefit. I hear from time to time that Grand Lodge is not distributing much information. Anything that is sent by Peter should be forwarded by the DDGMs or the District Secretaries to the Lodge Secretaries to be distributed to the membership. Valuable information is not useful sitting on somebody's desk.

Finally, my Brethren, my wife Barbara and I wish you and your families a joyous holiday season, as well as health and happiness in 2017.

***John C. Green
Grand Master***

From the desk of the Grand Secretary

NOTE: Rules governing the 2017 Annual Communication, provided by the F.R.Y.H. are designed to locate hospitality rooms in close proximity to each other.

District, Lodge, and/or Member Hospitality suites/rooms are solely permitted if registered as such with the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, They can only be booked by telephone to: 1 416 368 2511, requesting: a Hospitality Room/Suite Reservation. **Private suites/rooms** must remain restricted to one-self and/or person(s) sharing the suite/room. They cannot be used for general hospitality purposes. Email booking can be registered with the F.R.Y.Hotel at: <https://aws.passkey.com/go/grandlodgeafam>

From the Deputy ...

Brethren, Winter Solstice in Eastern Ontario is on Wednesday, December 21, 2016 at 5:44am. In Ottawa, when sadly we have the shortest amount of daylight, we can balance it with the lights of Christmas, making December a month of contrast.

Within the span of two days, I recently attended four Masonic services of three Brethren, all who were personal friends. One of the Brethren was a member of both a city Lodge *and* a country Lodge where each held a service. Each of the four services was well organized. Each member knew when to do his part. Physical barriers, at the small country funeral, were overcome before the service started. Out of town Masons were greeted and given a brief outline of how the service would unfold. The general public was made welcome and in each case there were many positive comments about the Masonic service - especially from the family. As Masons, when we observe great work in a Lodge, it is because the Degree Team has practiced. Great work at a Masonic Service happens because a Lodge cares enough to practice.

We are often asked about recommendations regarding books to read for daily advancement of our Masonic education. There are, of course, many books but I want to recommend two books in particular. One which was handed to you when you joined the Lodge and one you were given possession of if you were installed as Master of the Lodge.

Book One: Constitution

It would be safe to say that all organizations, whether the Fish Club or a Masonic Lodge, have a rule book. In our Fraternity, we call it Constitution of Grand Lodge of Canada. We received one when we first saw the light of Masonry.

It is truly a living document. The one you received on the first night has changed dramatically since it was given to you for reference.

I wonder sometimes if the Masons of Ontario think the Grand Master and I sit in the Grand Lodge Office and make up the rules. In fact it is the Brethren of our Grand

Jurisdiction who proposed the changes under certain guidelines which are found in the Constitution.

Are you a Brother who has an idea that would make a difference in Ontario Freemasonry? Is it a Section or Subsection presently in the Constitution that needs clarification or removal? Then, my Brother, you have a right to propose such changes. Open your 2016 Constitution to Section 70 and follow the steps, especially the guidelines. You have the ability to affect change in our Grand Lodge.

Book Two: Lodge Minute Book

If you have been the Master of a Lodge or when you have watched an Installation you have seen the hand off of the Lodge Minute Book.

The Minute Book of your Lodge is open for inspection at any time. It is a history of your Lodge. A research book that is the history of Ontario or, dare I say even Canada. In some cases before Confederation!

Imagine what you would read in a Minute Book of a Lodge which is celebrating 200 years of continuous service. You would be starting in 1816. Picture what this settlement would look like and follow the ups and downs, not only of the Lodge but also this small country.

Then, imagine for a moment a 100 year old Lodge Minute Book. 1916 would be the middle of the "War to End all Wars". There would be stories of Brethren who went on to be Canadian heroes. Lodges would be doing three degrees in one night to allow Master Masons to go off and fight in the war.

A wonderful night of Masonic education awaits your when you open your Minute Book and read the history of your Lodge.

In closing I would like to remind you that there are those Brethren "daily sinking into the sere and yellow leaf of old age" or "are being reduced to the lowest depths of poverty". Please take time this wonderful Christmas season to be sure that all Brethren in your Lodge know you care and are there to assist them.

On behalf of Gloria and I, please have a safe Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Paul E. Todd
Deputy Grand Master



On behalf of your Grand Lodge Office staff – **Gail Nickerson, Stacey Birks, Kathy White, Jen Manzer and myself**, we thank all those, transacting Masonic business throughout the year, for your courteous dealings. We extend to all, our best wishes for a very happy, healthy and safe holiday season.