

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

Brethren:

Is it possible that another New Year's Eve has been celebrated and now can we now look forward to the first sign of spring which in the Ottawa Valley is not expected till late March?

This past month I had the opportunity to travel and represent the Masons of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario in France, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania.

In Paris France, I attended the Session of the Grande Loge Nationale Francaise, Grand Master M.W. Bro. Jean-Pierre Servel. Once again I was very pleased to learn in what high regard our Grand Lodge is held which, in my opinion, has been created by our continual support of this Grand Lodge.

I was escorted into Grand Lodge with a formal introduction and was given a simultaneous translation headset. I was able witness to a great speech by the outgoing Grand Master who, without notes, gave an inspirational message for some twenty minutes.

I found the Grand Lodge of Washington D.C. to be less formal than previous Grand Lodges. A very positive youthful membership, willing to try new avenues, managed a very relaxed open Installation of their new Grand Master, M.W. Bro. Richard J. Bautista.

Finally, my travels took me to Hershey Pennsylvania for the Installation of the new Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, M.W. Bro. S. Eugene Herritt at a very large convention centre. The open Installation was done in a very formal setting with nine hundred Masons and their Ladies in attendance. Certainly an enjoyable learning experience for your Grand Master. I also found the Brethren of this Grand Lodge had an attitude of making a travelling Mason feel at home, it was overall a very enjoyable experience.

Brethren, I have over the last few months had an opportunity in my travels to deal with several agencies whether an airline, hotels, taxis and in most cases I found them most helpful however there were examples which reminded me of the words on most of my school report cards "there was room for improvement". Unfortunately, these poor examples of service and, usually it is an

attitude, leaves you with an impression or image of a particular company that I am sure is not what the company wants to portray. In other words, because of an action by one employee, the company's effort for positive branding is lost.

I believe these companies pay their public relations considerable sums of money to develop a brand which is usually identifiable by a trademark signage and which hopefully will immediately identify, to the consumer, a positive impression. However all is lost when an employee leaves the consumer with a negative impression.

It gives cause for reflection regarding the image that we, as Ontario Masons, portray when dealing with or being part of a public display. The Square and Compasses, we present to the public, is the image (signage) which immediately identifies us as Masons here in Ontario.

In July of 1989, at the Annual Communication of your Grand Lodge, the Brethren passed "A Standard Logo" amendment to the Constitution which, in part, says that this Square & Compasses will be the one used "in all Masonic signage, communications and publications".

With the Square & Compasses, now being identified in the Constitution, the Masons of Ontario decided that the usage of the Standard Logo should be controlled by Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario.

On July 4, 2014 Office of the Canadian Intellectual Property agency, part of Industry Canada issued on registration number TMA881232, file number 1597140, a Trademark Certificate of Registration which certifies in part "this trade mark has been registered" and the continues "In accordance with the provisions of the Trade-Mark act this trade-mark is subject to renewal every 15 years from the registration date".

It is up to Grand Lodge and by extension the Grand Master to make sure nobody is using our trademark without permission and to take legal action if someone does.

"Such is the nature of our institution" General Charge.

***Paul E. Todd
Grand Master***

From the Deputy ...

Brethren,

The Roman god Janus had two faces: one looking back and one looking forward. In Masonry at this time we look to our future and what the Craft will be like. There are some things we should modernize, but many things we should keep the same, or even change back to how they were long ago.

Your Grand Lodge is well aware of this and is active on several fronts.

We are looking for an office manager to move our office systems into a modern paradigm. Much can be streamlined by an efficient use of computer and internet technology. From e-mail communications, through database management to e-commerce. We ought to embrace what technology can do for us. If you might be interested in this position please check out the ad on the website, or drop me a line.

We are exploring the setting up of a Grand Lodge Facebook page, keeping in mind our recently developed Social Media Policy. We must be aware of the pitfalls as well as the opportunities. I encourage individual lodges to read and follow this guideline as well as our website and privacy policies. All are posted on the Grand Lodge website.

On the other hand, we must maintain our core values and those ancient practices that make us unique – one-on-one mentoring, care for our brothers, and above all, our ritual. Millennial brethren come to lodge to get away from the incessant lure of their smart phones. Although they use them to know where and when a meeting is, they are more than happy to turn them off and leave them with the Tyler in order to enjoy an evening of old-fashioned brotherhood and learning.

The Observant Lodge movement, which advocates embracing ancient practices, is catching on in Canada now. New observant lodges have recently been instituted in Ontario and New Brunswick. We have two in Ontario - Templum Lucis No. 747 in Stratford and Templum Fidelis No. 746 in Bath, and several more looking at the concept. For sure, this model is not for everyone, but I notice that there is a great interest in visiting them and brethren are taking away things to start (or restart) in their lodges – reviving the practice of a full festive board with toasts and speeches, music and contemplative time in lodge, and a focus on the experience of the candidate. A Chamber of Reflection is not mandated in our tradition, and if one is

used, it must be outside of the ritual of the ceremony. But as one who has travelled all over the province, often changing when I get to lodge, I have noticed that many of our preparation rooms are essentially used as broom closets, filled with stacked chairs, accoutrements from other bodies, and even cleaning supplies. What does this say to a candidate when we send him in there to change? Is it too much to ask for a nice, clean room with a chair where he may sit and contemplate what lies ahead of him?

And things that are working that we should keep? There are lots of those. I'm sure you can name several in your lodge. I will highlight some of the Grand Lodge programs at which your elected and appointed officers are hard at work.

The Cornerstone project has been a great vehicle for rejuvenating interest in lodge activities. Pulling together elements from the Brother to Brother, Friend to Friend and Mentors, and promoting inter-lodge visiting, community involvement, and solid fiscal practices, it has everything. And it has been shown time and again to raise the interest of the members and enhance the lodge experience for everyone. (And for you Senior Wardens out there wondering how on earth you will plan a program for next year – a template!)

The Five Steps to Application is something that we think will benefit all candidates, and all lodges. If a prospective applicant has a chance to get to know your members and to learn what he is getting into, there is a much greater chance that he will persist in getting all his degrees and then stay on as an active and enthused member. Rushing him through is no favour to him or to the lodge.

Looking to the past, looking to the future, looking to the past to move to the future.

To borrow and tweak a phrase from Malory:

Res quondam resque futurus. The once and future thing.

David J. Cameron
Deputy Grand Master