

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

At this time, each year, with the short hours of daylight, the lower temperatures and the cool rain, I am reminded that November is a month of contrasts. First, we enjoy the beautiful colour of the trees which last for such a short time, contrasted with the sadness of the memories brought to mind by the loss of men & women who, from yesterday till today, stood in the defenses of our freedom whether at home or across the sea.

On November 11, at the eleventh hour, Masons from all over Ontario will participate in Remembrance Services, either in their Lodges or in their communities. Your Grand Master will be with you, as I have been asked to attend Sarnia District Service. My reminder to you is that, in your Lodge there are many Veterans young and old. Take the time to thank them and then listen to them as they relate what it was like to be young, to leave home for the first time and to suddenly become man on the day of their first military action. Always remember those who never came home. As one last reminder, check with your Lodge Veterans to see if they need assistance to attend the local Remembrance Day Services.

We will never forget!



The contrast for me, this month, has been the enjoyment of attending a number of Investitures of the new Grand Lodge Officers who were announced at Grand Lodge this year. It is an honour for your Grand Master to recognize outstanding Masons whether they were a hard working District Secretaries or a Mason who was conferred an Honorary Grand Rank. We know these are often inherited from the many traditions in the Craft and the old English guilds for duties which they have done and will continue to do.

The privileges will be great, the opportunities will be many, and the rewards will be immense and unimaginable. Brethren, enjoy your year as a Grand Lodge Officer.

When I have been given the opportunity to speak, at receptions or meetings, I have often spoken on social media and its many benefits. I have also identified a black cloud which, in my opinion, hangs over social media as it relates to Ontario Freemasonry.

In the past, gossip would slowly travel through the community from mouth to ear. However, in the world of the internet, with social media and the likes of facebook, twitter and others, anything can be written based on little known fact, hearsay or gossip.

As Grand Master, I continue to remind you that we have all promised to personally uphold a Brothers good name and to repel others who would slander his good name. This is the first and great lesson of Masonry. I implore you as Man and Mason to always remember and practise this lesson.

From time to time your Grand Lodge is asked by the Brethren to make a decision on a variety of subjects. I assure you, all decisions are not taken lightly, nor are they done by one man, in fact, all senior Grand Lodge Officers contribute to the final decision. We often seek advice from the Management Committee and the Past Grand Masters and thereby assuring that the decision rendered is for the good of Freemasonry in Ontario.

Beginning in January 2019 in this corner of the Communique and continuing for the next four months I will begin a discussion on the future of our Grand Lodge based on where we were; where we are now and where we may be going. Some might call it a Blueprint for the Structure of Grand Lodge based on the following:

- a) Continuity of our Senior Grand Lodge Officers
- b) Election & Term Length DDGM
- c) Regional election of Board of General Purpose Members
- d) Annual Communication where, length, voting

*If we are willing to learn and not change
then no one can help us!*

*If we are willing to learn and change
then no one can stop us!*

***Paul Todd
Grand Master***

From the Deputy ...

Brethren,

Our Strategic Plan holds a vision of where we want to go and a solid plan of how to get there – for both Grand Lodge and individual Lodges! This year we have aligned the Committees of the Board of General Purposes with the pillars of the Strategic Plan. Your Board Members have outlined how they will work toward these goals.

The Community Outreach Committee is headed up by R.W. Bro. Jamie Ireland. Under his purview are three Committees: Youth Initiatives, Brock University Partnership and Public Awareness. The Strategic Initiative which all these Committees strive for is to create opportunities to demonstrate Masonic values within our communities and convey a positive and accurate perception of Freemasonry.

The Youth Initiatives Committee liaises with the three Masonic youth organizations: DeMolay, Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughters. Sadly, the last operating Job's Daughters' Bethel in Guelph has closed due to lack of youth members, and lack of adult supervisors. The youth need the support of adults from the Eastern Star and the Masons in order to function. And remember, the youth organizations are not training grounds for Freemasonry but rather training grounds for life.

As not all communities have these youth groups the Committee also supports other organizations that help to build the moral and social skills of young people: Scouts Canada, Girl Guides and 4-H in particular. Take a moment to consider what *your* Lodge can do to support the youth of your community.

The Brock University Partnership is a unique endeavour for which our Grand Lodge is becoming known around the world. The academic world has a window on what we really do, and contacts to verify that, and we benefit from the professional research on our institution. Last month we heard an excellent presentation by Dr. William Moore of Boston University. The next Sankey lecture is scheduled for Sunday March 24th, 2019. The Speaker will be Professor Chernoh Sesay Jr., an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at DePaul University, speaking on Prince Hall Freemasonry. Of course, we are inviting our Prince Hall brethren to attend.

But the Partnership has engendered more than just lectures. Brock has started an undergraduate course of Freemasonry and fraternalism. And we were pleased to announce the creation of an endowed

scholarship, enabled by funds raised by M.W. Bro. Raymond S. J. Daniels. The scholarship will be made to an entering graduate student at Brock University who demonstrates academic excellence and who is earning a Masters of Arts in History. Preference will be given to a student studying Freemasonry/fraternalism. The first scholarship will be presented sometime in 2019.

In previous years the Blood Donor Committee fell under this pillar. As highlighted, in last April's Communique, we feel that this Committee has served its purpose and no longer is really needed. Masons are involved with charitable work in their community, through their faith communities, United Appeal etc. without Grand Lodge doing anything to "organize" such activity. All we were doing as a Grand Lodge Committee was collecting statistics - statistics that we knew were incomplete and meaningless, and so we disbanded this Committee.

Donating blood saves lives but collecting statistics does not. I hope you and your Lodge continue to donate blood, plasma and organs, and continue to help the Canadian Blood Services by sponsoring and/or working at clinics.

The Public Awareness Committee has been tasked with taking a fresh look at our relationship with the world. They have just started their task but they have already come up with some pertinent themes: We must take back control of our message and not leave it to the Internet. We should all develop and rehearse an "elevator speech" so when asked what we do as Masons, we can immediately give a good answer. To prepare, you may ask yourself: "*Who are we?*" "*Why am I a Mason?*" "*How does Freemasonry benefit society as a whole?*" Watch this Committee for more good ideas as they progress this year.

That is the Community Outreach Pillar, working hard on their present focus of engaging our communities and future focus of managing our image in our community.

David J. Cameron
Deputy Grand Master