

# THE COMMUNIQUE

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## ***From the Grand Master ...***

Brethren, January is named after Janus, the Roman god who had two faces, one looking back and one looking forward. And so, it is a time that we look back at the year that has passed and make plans for the year to come.

There is a movement all over North America, and in Australia as well, where Lodges are looking to the past for ideas on how to run in the future. Of course, we've always heard about "how we used to do things" but typically, that is just how we did things in living memory - "in my day" as it were. But that is not far enough back. Our peak membership was in 1960, so 1961 was actually the start of declining membership. We must look back before that time period, for our models.

I have attended a handful of 70 year pin presentations. This honour happens only rarely. The first two I went to were about 2005. The two brethren had therefore been initiated in the 1930s. Now I had been to several 50 and 60 year pin presentations as well. At those, the honorees, when asked if they would like to speak, would thank the brethren, talk about the many friends they had made, the charitable projects they had worked on, and told some stories of long-gone brethren who had been their mentors.

However, neither of these 70 year Masons did that. Instead, when asked to speak, they gave pieces of Masonic Education which they had prepared. They gave Masonic Education! I wonder what Lodge was like in the thirties that would prompt them to do this. Was there a greater emphasis on education at every meeting then?

In 2018, I attended a Conference in Indiana called "Looking Back for our Future". I wrote about it in my blog on the Grand Lodge website. The keynote speaker laid the blame for decreasing membership squarely on the shoulders of past periods of rapid expansion: the great Western migration in the

United States, and the booms after each of the World Wars. We expanded so rapidly we were not able to adequately mentor our new members, and the original guideposts of Masonry were lost.

The other presentations highlighted the recuperative effects of re-introducing education and mentoring to your Lodge. You can read more about this at <https://grandLodge.on.ca/index.php/blogs/deputy-grand-masters-blog/444-dgm-blog-april-2018>.

As we consider where our Lodge, and Grand Lodge, will go in the future, let us recall the words of M.W. Bro. Frank A. Copus in his address to the Annual Communication of 1935:

*"I suggest that we may well look with confident expectation to a future that should hold every promise for the fraternity. But I suggest also the thought that we may well pause to take stock, to ask ourselves quo vadis?, whither goest thou, and whither the Craft we love so well, to seek if perchance we may find wherein we have failed to measure up to the noblest and the best that Freemasonry has to offer. Perhaps in such a quest, we shall make some surprising, some disconcerting discoveries. And if we do so, shall we not mark this important occasion by a new, a real rededication to Freemasonry and to the promulgation in public and private life of those principles of belief and conduct for which it stands? I would that you and I might here and now seek if haply we might recapture that white flame, that first fine rapture of devotion that characterized our entry to the Craft."*

*Res quondam resque futurus*

Freemasonry: the once and future thing.

**David J. Cameron**  
**Grand Master**

## ***From the Deputy ...***

My Brethren: Happy New Year and all of our best wishes for joy, health and happiness to each of you, my Brethren and your families, in 2020!

So back to our renewal of your Board of General Purposes and the Grand Lodge programs:

We left off at our November 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee meeting of the Board of General Purposes which was followed the next week by a Management Committee meeting at the Grand Lodge office to have a smaller discussion on where we were headed and how the Pillar Teams and Committees were working towards their goals and objectives.

In addition to all of the duties and responsibilities of the Committees that make up the five Pillars supporting our Grand Lodge operations, as laid out in our Constitution, these five Pillars have been given special assignments to accomplish our push for excellence in Ritual, Education and Mentoring as we discussed in the last Communique.

**The Craft Stewardship Pillar** has been given the following special assignments:

- 1) Develop a communication proposal to encourage the presentation of Masonic Education, on the floor of the Lodge, at every meeting.
- 2) Create a library of Masonic education articles and have them posted on the Grand Lodge web site and Digest e-mail distribution for the use by the Brethren and Lodge Leaders.
- 3) Develop a mediation handbook for use of Lodges to de-escalate differences of opinions that are disturbing the harmony of the Lodge.
- 4) College of Freemasonry is to submit a conference format plan for review and approval. (Spoiler alert – save Saturday, February 22, 2020)
- 5) Create a plan for the Grand Lodge web site On-Line Books sales for review and approval.
- 6) Leadership Development to work with the Mentoring Committee to re-introduce a training plan for new members to the Board of General Purposes.

**The Membership Pillar** has been given the following special assignments:

- 1) Update the Brother-to-Brother, Friend-to-Friend and Cornerstone manuals for web site posting and Grand Lodge office distribution when requested.
- 2) Notice of all presentations, seminars or workshops must be sent to Seminars and Workshops Committee to ensure there is no overlap and to have them recorded on a central calendar on the web site.
- 3) Seminars and Workshops Committee shall place their presentation focus on training of the following: Strategic Planning, Mentoring, Lodge Finances, Masonic Education and Condition of Masonry.
- 4) The Mentoring Committee shall submit and implement a plan that will be focused on training Mentors, Lodge Officers and to have a Ritual Leader in every Lodge.

**The Communications Pillar** has been given the following special assignments:

- 1) All Grand Lodge Committee communications need to be reviewed by Publishing Review Committee to assure consistency and professionalism before being released to the E-mail Distribution Chairman for Event or Digest distribution.
- 2) The Library Committee needs to get the catalogue search working on their web site and revise their brochure for distribution.
- 3) The Grand Archivist and Librarian were charged to explore the publication to assist Lodges in the preservation of their antiquated possessions a la "Caring for Your Masonic Treasures" from the Massachusetts Scottish Rite. (In fact, all the Committees have been encouraged to steal shamelessly from our Sister Grand Lodges if they find something that will support our objectives.)

**The Operations Pillar** has been given the following special assignments:

- 1) Prepare the next generation of the Strategic Planning presentation for the Seminar and Workshop circuit.
- 2) Move the Strategic Planning material from the outside web site to the Grand Lodge web site.
- 3) To make a Lodge Finance Advisory Committee Power Point Presentation for the Seminar and Workshop circuit and regionalize the Committee to have experts all around the Jurisdiction. This Committee has been a great resource to a lot of Lodges, Temple Boards and Corporations and they need to get their message out to a wider audience.
- 4) Prepare report and recommendations on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- 5) Develop a new building safety compliance policy proposal.

**The Community Outreach Pillar** has been given the following special assignments:

- 1) Update the Open House manual for web site posting and Grand Lodge office distribution when requested.
- 2) Develop a business card size elevator speech for each Mason in Ontario to carry in their pocket to become familiar, comfortable and succinct in communicating with interested people as to what Masonry is, what we do, who we are, etc. in order to provide a cohesive and uniform message without verbally stumbling.
- 3) Develop a Grand Lodge brand for general focus of all members and use in the next Strategic Plan.

Knowing all of that, I'm sure you will want to return back in next month to hear how your Grand Lodge team is doing with these new assignments. See you then!

***Thomas W. Hogeboom  
Deputy Grand Master***

***From the Grand Secretary ...***

**Did you know?**

Did you know that on many occasions your Grand lodge Office staff find it necessary to contact your Lodge?

Generally our communications go either to the Lodge Secretary or to the Worshipful Master of the Lodge.

It becomes frustrating and time consuming when we are unable to locate CURRENT contact information for those two officers. What often causes this problem is that the Return of Officers form for the Lodge has not been submitted. Therefore, the Grand Lodge database contains outdated information.

At this time of the year, there are many Installations occurring in our jurisdiction. Brethren, please ensure that the Return of Officers form is submitted immediately after Installation so we can reach you when needed.

“..... and to all a Good Night (for 2019).”

***D. Garry Dowling  
Grand Secretary***