

# THE COMMUNIQUE

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

Brethren,

You may have heard me say that I believe we need to stop trying to be everything to everyone. Focus on what is quintessential about Masonry and drop the rest.

I think that means we concentrate on:

- the Ritual
- explaining and discussing the meaning of the Ritual – that’s education
- and teaching the Ritual - mentoring our brethren

and that’s it, really.

All the rest falls out from that naturally

- charity
- community involvement
- fellowship

If you live the teachings in the Ritual you will naturally do those things.

I discussed Ritual in a previous communique. The Ritual teaches us everything we need to know to be a Mason. But it does need some explanation, and that is where education comes in.

Reading, lectures, contemplation, and discussion are all routes to understanding. So is hearing it again and again. You may have heard those words a thousand times, but one day, whether due to the way a brother delivers it, or to what is rummaging around in your subconscious, you suddenly hear it in a new way and your understanding is expanded.

Travelling helps as well. That’s where you will hear a brother put a different emphasis on certain words. If you go to lodge in the United States you will hear a totally different ritual – one based on the Antients. For obvious reasons, the U.S. was not part of the unification discussions in England in 1813 and so they maintain a ritual close to the Antients’. You will hear parts that were removed in the Union. The Antients were mostly Irish Masons so you will also hear this if you visit one of the Irish lodges in London. If you go to Europe, you may hear parts from the Moderns’ ritual that we left out. That totally expands your insight! If any of you are familiar with Mozart’s Magic Flute, you will know that it is said to be a portrayal of a Masonic Degree. Some even say he was murdered because he wrote it. I have seen the

opera several times and it did not look like a Masonic degree to me. At least not until I read the European first degree that the “red” lodges in Louisiana use!

On the other hand, we can be overwhelmed by education lectures from other countries. So much of what is on the internet is American and often doesn’t really relate to our ritual. Luckily, we have a treasure trove of education pieces on our website – in Reflections, the Ontario Mason Magazine and the various subtabs listed under education. And in the books written by M.W. Bros. Bradley and Daniels, which are available from the office.

And education does not need to be a drawn out lecture. A five minute talk or discussion is often more memorable. I found when I was Worshipful Master that if it was a very busy night, it was always suggested that we drop the education to save time! But education is the second most important thing in a lodge meeting (after the Ritual, of course). Every lodge can easily have education every meeting.

Just look up one word from the Ritual in the dictionary each month and share it with your lodge! Suggest a phrase to have a discussion on in lodge – I’ll bet one of your brothers will have an idea about it that you never thought of.

The five minutes that a candidate spends changing is an excellent time for some short education like that. People often say, “but the candidate misses out if the education is then”. Or they want to have the education after the degree so he can hear it. But frankly, the candidate is so overloaded with information after the experience of his degree, he is not going to absorb anything more. Besides, Section 335 of the Constitution says that “Balloting shall be the last order of business except the conferring of degrees” which implies that a degree shall be the last thing you do. This only makes sense, because what you want the candidate to go home with, prominent in his mind, is the degree.

Which gets back to point one. If our primary goal is to impart the Ritual to the candidate in an impressive way, it should be the apex of the night.

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

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

My Brethren:

So back to where we left off on our renewal of your Board of General Purposes and the Grand Lodge programs.

In December, we had one Management Committee meeting at the Grand Lodge office to continue the discussion on where we were headed and how the Pillar teams and Committees were working towards their goals and objectives. The first weekend of the new year was reserved for the District Deputy Grand Master's Mid-term meeting and then the second was for the first 2020 meeting of the Board of General Purposes Committee Chairman to report on their progress.

Starting this month with the Craft Stewardship Pillar, under R.W. Bro. Jamie Ireland, we will update you on the progress of their special assignments given to them this year:

- 1) Develop a communication proposal to encourage the presentation of Masonic Education, on the floor of the Lodge, at every meeting

The Committee Chairman, R.W. Bro. Dale Graham, reports that this item is in progress. The Grand Master and Deputy have been talking about the importance of Masonic Education on every agenda of every Lodge meeting during our visits – and in some Lodges, even providing that Education. The proposed Constitutional amendment to make Masonic Education mandatory at every Lodge meeting has been submitted to the Constitution and Jurisprudence Committee for their review, prior to presentation at the next Annual Communication. We are awaiting a communication strategy for this from the Masonic Education Committee.

- 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

Chairman Graham reports that some articles are ready for the Publishing Review Committee to suggest any edits and revisions prior to posting on a special section of the Grand Lodge web site and suitable for distribution via the Resource Digest e-mail distribution. The vision is that these articles will be an easy and readily accessible source for Lodge Education leaders to present in Lodge to assist with compliance to the proposed Constitutional amendment as mentioned above.

- 3) Develop a mediation handbook for use of Lodges to de-escalate differences of opinions that are disturbing the harmony of the Lodge

The Chairman reports that they are progressing on this task using specialized committee members. They have

the outline for a workshop that will focus on communication skills, conflict resolution, de-escalation, early intervention awareness and Lodge, District and administrative implications. The objective is to decrease the amount of wasted time that the Grand Secretary and the Discipline Committee members spend dealing with un-Masonic behaviour of our members.

- 4) College of Freemasonry is to submit a conference format plan for review and approval

The College of Freemasonry Committee is happy to announce the 2020 Ontario Masonic Education Conference to be held on Saturday, February 22, 2020 at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Hamilton. Registration opens at 8 a.m. with a welcoming address by the Grand Master at 9 a.m. Lunch will be catered at noon with the wrap-up scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Seating is limited so please register on the form in the December 2019 Resource Digest or via the Grand Lodge web site. For more information, please contact R.W. Bro. Rick Cadotte at [masonic.college@gmail.com](mailto:masonic.college@gmail.com)

- 5) Create a plan for Grand Lodge web site On-Line Books sales for review and approval

The plan is to have just such a 'Store' where members can access the Grand Lodge publications via the Grand Lodge web site and is in the process. Our Chief Operating Officer, R.W. Bro. Lou Domjan, is marshalling this task as part of the overall electronic revisions of the management of our Grand Lodge operations.

- 6) Leadership Development to work with the Mentoring Committee to re-introduce a training plan for new members to the Board of General Purposes

Our Leadership Development Chairman, R.W. Bro. Graham Tait, reports that the resurrection of the Board of General Purposes training manual will be accompanied by an explanation on how a Past Master of our Craft can become a member of the Grand Lodge committee team.

Someone mentioned to me last week that there were too many expectations being placed on our Grand Lodge Committees. I believe that we have the right team in place to meet the goals and objectives of restoring our Grand Lodge to the mecca for young men that it once was through our focus on Ritual, Education and Mentoring. Please tune back in next month to hear how your Grand Lodge Membership Pillar is supporting these efforts. See you then!

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

*From the Grand Secretary ...*

## **Ceremony of Installation & Investiture of Officers of a Lodge**

The new 2019 version of this publication is now available from the Grand Lodge Office (for Past Masters only).

## **Honourary Memberships – Dues Exempt**

Brethren, with the increasing number of Lodge amalgamations we have discovered that a number of Lodges have not been following the Book of Constitution with respect to Honourary memberships – Dues Exempt that the Lodge has granted over the years.

When this situation comes to light at the time of amalgamation, it can be embarrassing for the Lodge and the members affected.

I refer you to Sections 185 and 187 of the Book of Constitution.

Section 185 describes the process to be followed in submitting the commutation of dues and in setting up a Life Membership Trust Fund for Life Members.

Section 187 indicates that a brother can be made an honorary member of a Lodge through outstanding service rendered.

### **But, Section 187 (b) is overlooked or ignored:**

(b) If honorary membership is granted with exemption from lodge dues, then the same terms must be applied with respect to commutation of dues as exist for life membership in accordance with the provisions of Section 185.

Section 187 (b) clearly states that **dues exempt honorary members MUST be treated as Life members**. That means that the commutation fee to Grand Lodge must be paid and a Life Membership Trust Fund must be set up according to the Book of Constitution Section V111 - Regulations Governing Life Membership.

When Lodges amalgamate, the newly formed Lodge **MUST** either set up the proper funding for these honorary dues exempt members or revert them to dues paying members.

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