

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 and Education in previous communiques. The third thing is Mentoring - not just the short time spent getting candidates ready for their degrees, but real mentoring – and for a lifetime.

Back in the day, the proficiencies that a candidate had to learn were not written down. They had to be learned mouth-to-ear. Doubtless during all those hours spent learning the ritual on-on-one, there was time for questions on our philosophy, our practice, our charities, our way in the world. Time to get to know the man, and his family, his hopes, his ambitions. Time to build a lasting relationship.

Like the character named Mentor in Homer’s *Odyssey*, a mentor is with you for the length of your travels. And all would agree that our Masonic journey does not end with being raised.

Sadly, this element of our Craft became neglected. Often, the lodge mentor would teach the candidate the questions and answers required for the next degree, as well as the

steps, grips and tokens, and that was it. A mentor’s job was considered finished after just a handful of sessions over a few months.

Dr. Marina Picciotto of the New York Academy of Sciences suggests that mentoring is like adoption.¹ The commitment is like that of taking on a new family member. I may add, like getting a new “brother”!

She also points out that there is no “one-size fits all” style of mentoring. The style must fit the personalities and situations of both the mentor and the mentored.

We have developed numerous Mentor Programs through the years, but no “program” can replace that age-old one-on-one process that is true mentoring. It is a relationship that is built up over time. It must therefore be something that each of us *does*. Like so much in Freemasonry, it cannot be imposed. It can, however, be facilitated.

The United Grand Lodge of England has developed an excellent vision on mentoring² and the first point that stuck out to me was that the job of a Lodge Mentor Chair is not to mentor candidates; it is to make sure that every candidate is paired with a member of the lodge who is suitable to mentor him. The second point was that part of the mentor’s job is to run interference and prevent the new Mason from being rushed too quickly into office, or other bodies!

With a tradition in place of giving true mentorship to new members, a lodge may ensure that they develop fully as Masons, learn our precepts and philosophies, and go out into the world to provide leadership in their communities and in their lodge. They will be seen to be good men, contribute to society and be someone others will want to emulate. They will be Freemasons: the Once and Future Thing.

David J. Cameron
Grand Master

¹ <https://www.nyas.org/news-articles/academy-news/five-quick-tips-for-effective-mentoring/> accessed 2020.01.14

² <https://www.freemasonrytoday.com/more-news/initiatives/masonic-mentoring-a-vision> 2010.10. 01, accessed 2020.01.14

From the Deputy ...

My Brethren:

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

This month I would like to report on the progress the Membership Pillar, under R.W. Bro. John Hay, with an update on the progress of their special assignments given to them this year:

- 1) Update the Brother-to-Brother and Friend-to-Friend manuals for web site posting and Grand Lodge office distribution when requested.

After several years of these two successful programs being promoted by two separate Grand Lodge committees, it was decided that the limited Grand Lodge resources could be directed to more pressing concerns and with so many successes in these areas, these two programs should be accessible on the Grand Lodge web site for Lodges and Districts to have readily available for continued use. After the first few months of looking at the current Brother-to-Brother and Friend-to-Friend programs to determine what would need to be updated and made suitable for posting on the website, a plan of action was developed. Further edits based on feedback are being applied for the final submission to Management.

- 2) Submit a proposal on how the Cornerstone Program can be moved from being a committee responsibility, to being administered on the Grand Lodge website and office.

Based on the same plan as above, it was decided to do the same with the Cornerstone Program. This program has only been successful because of the District participation in assuring compliance so what better place to run the program than at the District level. The major difficulty that R.W. Bro. David Armstrong and his Committee have been struggling with is the transition of the program to the Districts when so many Lodges are in the process of working towards being so designated. Following the same steps as above, the draft plan for this transition is expected at the next Management meeting.

- 3) Notice of all presentations, seminars or workshops must be sent to Seminars and Workshops Chairman to ensure there is no overlap and to have them recorded in a central Seminars & Workshop Calendar on the Grand Lodge web site.

In the hopes of not over-loading a region or double booking our resources, a Grand Lodge Seminars and Workshops calendar now exists on the Grand Lodge web site thanks to the efforts of the Web Site Committee and Chairman Michael Locke who keeps it updated as changes are submitted to him. We still have some opportunities to improve on this item with some of the Grand Lodge Committees

and District endeavours, but we are getting better with these efforts.

- 4) Seminars and Workshops shall place their presentation focus on training of the following: Strategic Planning, Mentoring, Lodge Finances, Masonic Education and Condition of Masonry.

The push for an emphasis in these five areas comes the basic needs of survival of our Lodges throughout the Province. Without a strategic plan and the financial resources to get there, we are lost. As you have hopefully all heard by now, the focus on mentoring for our young members and officers is essential in restoring our lodges to what they were originally intended to be – a place where like-minded men can enjoy each other's company, provide a forum where they may openly discuss and freely debate the basic questions of life. And with new District Deputies each year, it is essential that we train them on the Condition of Masonry materials needed to measure our successes.

- 5) Draft a proposal for the Annual Communications Tuesday afternoon Seminars and Workshops schedule for approval by the Management Committee.

Given the above direction to R.W. Bro. Muss and his Committee, I probably don't have to tell you about the afternoon Seminars and Workshops that are being scheduled for your education and enjoyment at the next Annual Communication on Tuesday, July 14, 2020.

- 6) The committee shall submit a document and plan that will be focused on training Mentors, Lodge Officers and to have a Ritual coach in each Lodge.

R.W. Bro. Robbie Manz and his Mentoring Committee have been given one of the most important tasks of our Grand Lodge, indeed of Freemasonry in general. This Committee has been charged with the true task of making each Mason better; each Lodge Officer better; and each Grand Lodge Officer better. At the end of the day, if we haven't supplied our new Brethren, Officers or Grand Lodge leaders with the tools to do their jobs, improve their skills as a man, a husband, a father and to leave each Degree, Chair or Office in a better state when they arrived – we won't succeed and we have failed our members and our ancestors. A big task for this Committee and they will very soon be reaching out to every District and every Lodge for their assistance and support to find the Mentors that will be trained to make this happen in every Lodge.

Please tune back in next month to hear how your Grand Lodge Communications Pillar is supporting these efforts. See you then!

Thomas W. Hogeboom
Deputy Grand Master

From the Grand Secretary ...

Ordering New Regalia, Pins and Jewels

This note is directed towards any Lodge Secretary or individual brother ordering regalia from Masonic regalia suppliers.

Brethren, we are noticing a number of items of masonic regalia appearing in our jurisdiction that do not conform to the standards as laid out in our Book of Constitution. This includes some aprons, collars, pins and jewels and even some lodge furniture.

The onus is on you, the Lodge Secretary or Lodge member, when ordering regalia to ensure that the supplier conforms to the requirements of our Constitution. Regalia Suppliers are in the business of making money. They have products for sale to many Masonic jurisdictions and may design the product to generate the most sales across those many jurisdictions. They may not give the appropriate care and attention to the subtleties that distinguish our regalia, etc. from that of others.

Allow me to give you some examples.

Masonic pins or other products that contain the Square and Compasses: Our authorized Square and Compasses are defined in great detail in Sec. 3.1 of our Book of Constitution. It is also trademarked. Anyone ordering any pins, clothing, stationary, etc. with the Square and Compasses on it for use in our Jurisdiction is expected to use that version of the Square and Compasses found in our Book of Constitution.

Aprons and collars: Once again, these are detailed in our Constitution - both Grand Lodge collars and Lodge collars as well as the jewels that are attached to them. We have seen collars worn by Wardens that are essentially Master's collars with the level and plumb jewel attached. In our jurisdiction, only the Worshipful Master wears a Master's collar. Likewise we are seeing examples of the jewels on collars of our Grand Lodge Officers that do not conform to the specific standards laid out in our Constitution.

We also are seeing Master Mason aprons that have 'different' blue colours than specified in our Constitution.

Lewis Jewels: Of special note are the bars on a Lewis jewel. Our Constitution specifies that there are to be only two bars on any Lewis jewel worn by a member of this jurisdiction – a

bar for the father and a bar for the son. Suppliers of this jewel are open to selling you as many bars as you want to buy. If you have more than the two bars on your Lewis jewel, you are not in conformity with our Constitution.

Brethren, we are a jurisdiction that takes pride in our regalia and furniture. The conformity of our regalia to certain rigid specifications was enshrined in our Constitution from day one. It is a part of who we are and how we are made known to others.

**Does conformity to the specifications matter? Yes – it does!
But the onus is on you.**

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