



Education Monthly

February 2012

R.W.Bro. John Forster, Chairman of Masonic Education

“ Every Brother has had his just due”.

Bro Angus Gillis FCF, S.W .St Andrew's lodge 560, Ottawa

At the opening and closing of every lodge meeting the Senior Warden says, “having seen that every Brother has had his just due”. What does that mean?

Consider the Senior Warden as the foreman of a large construction site. He must oversee the project and ensure that nothing disturbs the smooth progress of the work. If a dispute were to arise between the masons his job was to mediate and try to settle it on the spot maintaining absolute fairness. Thus ensuring that every brother had his just due. This is based on our earliest operative document, the Regius Poem of 1390.

*“A true mediator thou might be
To thy master and thy fellows free
Do truly all that thou might
To both parties, and is good right”*

The Mason delegated to the Senior Warden who was charged to take responsibility fairly and equitably for civil obedience. If the dispute proved too complex to remedy immediately a “love day” was called to settle the dispute amicably. This was typically done on a holy day so as not to interrupt the flow of work. This same theme is evidenced in many of the old Constitutions.

Variations in our modern rituals include “to pay the men their wages and to see that every brother has had his just due”. This suggests that the dues referred to are also their wages. Harry Carr however believes that after a careful examination of the texts dealing with the Warden's duties that wages had nothing to do with this particular phrase.

If the ancient duties of the Senior Warden were to mediate disputes and ensure the smooth, uninterrupted work, then today he must “ensure our brothers their due” in education and guidance. The Senior Warden is charged to ensure that he will close the lodge only after ensuring each member has gotten something of value from the meeting.

What does every Brother expect to receive as “his just due”? The only answer is that he must receive a good masonic education program in a carefully planned, interesting meeting. The Senior Warden's promise at the opening and closing of lodge implies that every meeting should be a learning experience that provides personal growth in Masonic knowledge.

If it isn't, then we have work to do. For a brother to advance in Masonry, whether it is to the next degree or to the Chair of King Solomon, he must have training, not only in the working of the Lodge and its ritual, AND education which will enable him to better understand Freemasonry.

- **What is it that makes a real Mason?**
- **What is it to play a part in promoting the welfare of the Craft?**
- **What is it to put his best into Masonry and get his best out of it?**

Junior brethren seek knowledge early in their Masonic life. Many are uncertain where and how to find it. So 45% of them leave our craft! It is the duty of the Lodge to ensure that every brother has had his just due. The Senior Warden must promote good order and regularity and, by virtue of good example, promote better conduct in others.

References:

Harry Carr Freemason at Work, Lewis Masonic 1992, Pg.12

R.W. Bro. Garnet Schenk, FCF Alumni

R.W. Bro. John A. Box, PDDGM The Newsletter Winter 1987 Vol. 6 No. 3

The 2012 Conference on Masonic Education

Please note that this conference will be on June 2nd. NOT JUNE 7th & 8th as previously announced

Place: The Ottawa Masonic Centre, 2140 Walkley Road, Ottawa

Registration will be limited to 150. Registration fee will include lunch and dinner and all conference materials. This will include the proceedings of the conference, which will be sent after the event

An official hotel will be chosen for the event. An informal dinner may be held at the conference hotel on the evening prior to the conference.

**Theme. The timeless vitality of Masonry, for the Past, Present & Future Mason.
Educational, Communication, & Spiritual issues relating to this.**

- Dealing with the “why” questions
- Answering the question, “Why is there apparently no time in which to learn the true essence of Masonry?”
- 8 papers will be presented: participants will choose 4 presentations & discussions

Outline of the conference

8:30 Registration.

9 am Plenary session in the lodge room. An invited masonic speaker

10 to 12 8 papers and small group discussions. Participants will attend 2 sessions of their choice

12:30 Lunch

1:30 to 3:30 The same 8 Papers and group discussions. Participants will attend 2 sessions of their choice

3:30 Plenary session : Reports from Small groups. Conclusions drawn from the day’s groups

4:30 Attitude adjustment time

5:30 pm Dinner. Followed by an after dinner speaker

Registration form will be included in next month’s Education Monthly

Call for papers: Participants are invited to submit abstracts of papers for presentation at the conference. Each presentation will be of 30 minutes or less followed by 30 minutes of questions and answers. Please submit abstracts of papers prior to March 15th. Abstracts should be less than 50 words. Should the paper be selected for presentation at the conference it will be published in the proceedings in full. The abstracts of those not presented will also be published with the permission of the author.

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