



# Education Monthly

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

## The Moon to Rule the Night

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From time immemorial, the Moon has fascinated mankind. It takes second place only to the Sun in its influence on daily life. The Moon is closest to us in the Solar System, and is our constant companion as we travel round the Sun. It is useful as a source of light during the night, and as a timekeeper marked by the regular changes in a twenty-eight day cycle (28.3 days to be exact). "Could it be a god?" the ancients asked, "or the home of a god?" The two great lamps of Heaven were deified as the Moon Goddess, the Bride, and Sun God, the Bridegroom. Moon-worship was common in ancient times and the lunar god was one of the principal deities. The Moon Goddess controlled the tides, the weather, rainfall, crop growth, and the seasons.

Astronomy is one of the seven liberal arts recommended for study by all Freemasons, and our Ritual has many direct and indirect references to the celestial bodies – Sun, Moon, and Stars. The Lesser Lights – "*The Sun to rule the day, the Moon to rule the night, and the Master to rule and direct his lodge.*" When the Working Tools are presented in the Third Degree, our earthly situation is described by the word 'Sublunary' (Latin *sublunaris sub* – under; *luna* – the moon), below the moon, earthly, mundane.

The Moon waxes, wanes, and disappears for three days, "the dark of the Moon." It is a symbol of life-rhythms, an ever-recurring cycle perpetually returning to its beginning, of periodical change, a cosmic image of growth and renewal, of resurrection and immortality – the cyclical nature of all things. The universal measuring gauge, its successive and regular phases measure passing time and were the basis of the first known calendars. As the Moon has no light of its own, but reflects the light of the Sun, it is seen by philosophers to be a symbol of knowledge acquired through reflection – theoretical, conceptual, and rational. As such, it is a meaningful symbol for Speculative Freemasonry. Freemasonry has adopted and adapted many symbols from the hidden mysteries of nature and science. We enjoy common origins and shared traditions with our forebears of ancient time. Even in modern society, the Harvest Moon in September heralds a time celebrated in song.

If one peruses the recorded history of our early lodges, invariably the regular meeting will be held on a certain day "*on or before the Full Moon*" holding thirteen meetings during the year. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when the population in Upper Canada was mainly rural, the natural illumination provided by the Full Moon guided members over rough country roads on their way to and from lodge. One also wonders if there may have been symbolic, esoteric significance in meeting 'on or before the Full Moon' as well?

There are three 'Moon Lodges' remaining in Ontario that retain the tradition: **Rising Sun Lodge No. 85**, Athens (St. Lawrence District) 1857 – Thursday on or before the Full Moon; **Plattsville Lodge No. 178**, Washington (Wilson North District) 1866 – Friday, on or before the Full Moon; and **Lancaster Lodge No. 207**, Lancaster (Eastern District) 1868 – Tuesday, on or before the Full Moon.

The first landing on the Moon was achieved by Apollo II on 20 July 1969, and Astronaut Neil Armstrong uttered the memorable phrase, *"That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."* There was a Masonic presence: Col. Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin, the second man to walk on the Moon, is a member of Montclair Lodge No. 144, New Jersey, and is a 33<sup>rd</sup> Degree Mason in the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. The Scottish Rite flag carried on the Moon and back by Bro. Aldrin is now deposited at the House of the Temple in Washington. John H. Glenn Jr., the first American to orbit the Earth, was also a Freemason, a member of Concord Lodge No. 688, Ohio.

## **Changes to College of Freemasonry courses**

Effective immediately there are significant changes to our courses. In order to encourage their use by more Masons each course has been divided into a number of modules. Each module may be taken separately with no obligation to take further modules unless the brother so desires. Should he subsequently wish to complete the whole course of study he will be given credit for any and all modules he has already completed. Furthermore there is integration of the course resulting in a cost saving for those who take more than one of the three complete courses (Masonic Arts & Science, Past Masters or W.Master Preparation courses)

The District Deputy Grand Master preparation course has been expanded to comprise 11 modules and is now titled the Past Masters Course. It will be offered to all who have reached the rank of Past Master. It is, by virtue of the Constitution, mandatory for those seeking election as District Deputy Grand Master.

For those who have already begun a course under the old system there is an OPTION to transfer to the new course if they so desire.

All repetition between the Masonic Arts & Science course and the DDGM course has been eliminated and spread throughout topic specific modules

An information booklet and application form is downloadable from the Grand Lodge website <http://www.grandlodge.on.ca> members section under membership/education. Your Lodge secretary or District Deputy Grand Master will be able to show you how to enter the members' section.

Any questions may be sent to Rick Cadotte, FCF [masonic.college@gmail.com](mailto:masonic.college@gmail.com)

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