



Perfection News

A Publication of Perfection Lodge A F & A M No. 616

Volume 2, Issue 2, May 2014

Editor's Note

Well Brethren here we are with our fourth newsletter! First however I must offer an apology for my tardiness in getting this issue out. It should have been published by the end of April and here it is the beginning of June. We had a lot going on in the first three months of the year, not the least of which was shoveling the sidewalks and driveways on an almost daily basis. Aside from the snow our Lodge was very busy with a variety of activities directed at our Cornerstone Project which is reported on later in this issue. Well we can breathe a sigh of relief and put on our T-Shirts that proudly complain "I Survived the Winter of '14"! We can safely now say that Spring Is Here! So again brethren, my apologies for the lateness of this issue.

**GRAND LODGE 159th.
ANNUAL COMMUNICATION
JULY 14-17, 2014
ROYAL YORK HOTEL,
TORONTO**

Masters, Past Masters and Wardens are all members of Grand Lodge and can vote at the Annual Communication.

On Monday the Annual Communication begins with a meeting of the Board of General Purposes.

On Tuesday there is a variety of workshops and seminars throughout the day. The topics this year include:

- Officer Progression
- Protocol & Etiquette
- Library, Museum & Archives
- Mentorship
- Blood Donors
- Communication
- Brock University

- Engaging the New Mason (revisited)
- Masonic Debate
- Computer Resources

As you can see there is something for everyone. On Tuesday evening you can meet the candidates who have indicated their willingness to serve Grand Lodge.

On Wednesday, Grand Lodge convenes and at 3:00 pm on Wednesday voting finishes for all Grand Lodge positions with the exception of the District Deputies. Niagara 'A' holds their election for our new District Deputy Grand Master at 5:00 pm in the Territories Room on the Main Mezzanine. Please plan on attending to place your vote as is your right.

Wednesday evening is the Grand Master's Banquet.

Thursday, Grand Lodge reconvenes with meetings with the new District Deputies and the Installation of Grand Lodge Officers.

Check with the secretary if you need further information on any aspect of the Annual Communication.



SPOTLIGHT ON ...

Our newest Installed Master, W. Bro. Adam Kubias.

Adam tells the editor that he is a molecular geneticist by education, roofer by trade, mason by inclination and volunteer by heart. His interests include almost every category from opera to wrestling, stargazing to canoeing, movies to electoral reform, cancer

research to video games. Adam spends most of his time working on his house and garden. He keeps his traveling to within Ontario and would prefer to eventually move to Northern Ontario, with a career in air traffic control.



W. Bro. Adam Kubias

His main goal for the year is to not drop the ball. He said "As a lodge we are on a major upswing. I look forward to continuing to grow as a lodge, and as men."

Adam pursued his desire to become a Mason when as a young man he called on W. Bro. Tim Dunn and asked him if he was a mason because Adam had done some research on Masonry in the area and had come across Tim's name. Tim invited Adam in and then began a discourse on masonry.

Adam at the time was not quite 21 years, so Tim suggested that if he was still interested in masonry when he turned 21 to stop by again. Adam called back on his 21st. birthday and so began his masonic journey. Well done Adam!

Charity Golf Tournament in Support of Community Care

Monday, June 16, 2014

Rockway Vineyards Golf Club

Registration 12:00 noon

Tee off 1:00 pm

The above graphic was clipped from our District Website at <http://www.niagaramasons.com> This event is the major fundraiser for the District Deputy Grand Master's District Charity "Community Care in Niagara." **Rockway Vineyards Golf Club** is situated at 3290 Ninth Street, St. Catharines, Ontario. Tickets are \$100.00 and includes Range & Practice Facilities, Golf Cart, 10oz. New York Strip Dinner Buffet. It is a 4 man team scramble with a shotgun start at 1:00pm. Please contact the District Secretary Richard Green at 289-668-1235 for further details. Tickets can also be purchased on the District website.



Brethren it has been a busy but very rewarding year and a tremendous shout-out has to go to all of you. This was a two-year project that Perfection Lodge committed to, and we worked together to prepare our submission in only one year. On Wednesday, May 21 the project co-ordinator, Mike Locke, hand delivered a 3" binder containing the results of our work, to Grand Lodge for their consideration in designating us a "**CORNERSTONE LODGE.**"

If we are successful, and I believe we will be, the journey will continue but at a more relaxed pace. The designation is for a two year period at the end of which the lodge submits documentation to continue for a further two years and so on.

To recap the Cornerstone Project and to outline Perfection Lodge's submission to Grand Lodge, the following information is of benefit to all our members.

The project requires that a Lodge comply with certain standards which are broken down into three categories; **Mandatory, Major and Basic.**

There are three mandatory standards, and Lodges enrolled in the program must comply with at least one of the three standards. Perfection Lodge submitted proof of compliance on all three standards.

There are a total of eleven major standards of which five must be complied with. Perfection Lodge submitted documentation on seven of the standards.

Finally there are twelve basic standards of which six must be complied with. Perfection Lodge submitted documentation on seven standards for consideration by Grand Lodge.

From the total of all standards, we did not submit documentation on 4 Major and 5 Basic standards. As a lodge we may wish to visit those standards to see if we can include some or all of them in our next submission. Some of those standards are attainable and all it takes is a commitment from our lodge.

Talking about commitment, the members are to be congratulated on their individual and combined commitment to this project which has been a Labour of Brotherly Love. I believe that there exists in our Lodge a renewed energy that has come about from working towards, and achieving, a common goal.

Are we alone in Niagara A District by becoming involved in Cornerstone? The answer is emphatically No!

The first lodge in our District to become a Cornerstone Lodge was Dufferin Lodge No. 338 under the leadership of V. W. Bro. Chris Wojtowicz. Other lodges that have signed a Letter of Intent with Grand Lodge are Ivy Lodge No. 115 and Coronation Lodge No. 502. That represents 25% of the Lodges in the District, a number that any District can be very proud of.

An interesting note that can be made is that when the idea of creating "Cornerstone Lodges" was first put forward to Grand Lodge, the concept was to roll it out a little at a time in a few Districts. Such has been the enthusiasm and interest that Grand Lodge has had to accelerate the roll out of the project. Perfection Lodge is proud to be a part of it. We await patiently to receive the verdict on our efforts.

Well Done Brethren!!

It was a Very Good Year

Congratulations are extended to our D.D.G.M. R. W. Bro. David E. Gillis, District Secretary W. Bro. Richard Green and the members of the District Team. Their year of work is drawing to a close and they can be proud of what they have achieved in our District. The Official Visits were well attended and they were out and about at all the activities put on by the various lodges throughout the District. Well Done and Thank You!

THE OBSERVANT LODGE

8 Steps to Excellence



The following article is edited from an article written by W. B. Andrew Hammer, PM of Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 in 2011. It is an interesting piece that highlights to some extent why Freemasonry has existed since time immemorial.

To explore the concept of an Observant Lodge, it is helpful for the reader to understand what an Observant Lodge is and what is intended by calling a lodge an Observant Lodge. To do this close your eyes and recall the day that you knocked on the door of the lodge from the ante room. Now let your mind wander back 300 years or more and try to imagine entering the lodge room in those times. Now recall again your own entry into the lodge. Has anything changed? You bet it has! We now live in age of constant communication, digital documents, cell phones and X-boxes to name just a few. Within our own District what was Niagara like when Niagara Lodge No. 2 began its existence? Just to get to lodge meant a horse and buggy ride from several miles around. A mason had to allow for a fairly lengthy journey compared to modern times. So to understand what an observant lodge is, is to look back in history and understand how a man became a Mason in those days, and to follow those same precepts today.

In the words of W. Bro. Hammer;

“Simply put, observant Masonry means observing the intent of the founders of speculative Masonry. That intent was not to build a mere social club or service organisation. While the Craft—like any other human organization—has always been burdened by men in its ranks who subverted the purposes of the fraternity to a more mundane or profane enterprise, that was never the intent of the institution.

That intent was to build an institution that calls men to their highest level of social being, in a state of dignity and decorum, which could serve as a place for serious, mindful discourse on the lessons and meaning of life, and search for the better development of oneself. That intent means building a space where such an experience can be created, and carrying ourselves in a manner that is consistent with our highest ideals and noblest behaviours

Observant Masons believe that by observing what the history of our Craft tells us in regard to that intent, we will find the optimal Masonic experience. We say observant, and speak of observance, because we seek to observe the blueprints of that intent to the best of our knowledge and ability. Even more simply, we want to do things right, and we don't want to settle for less. We want to pursue excellence in all aspects of our Masonic labour.”

None of the 8 steps are at variance with Andersons Constitutions (1723) or masonry as it is practiced in North America.

1. Guarding the West Gate

Our fraternity is the sum of its members and therefore a lodge should be cautious as to who it admits. W. Bro. Hammer makes two excellent points on this. First is that not every man can or should be a Mason, and the second is that not every Mason should belong to any lodge.

The brethren of the lodge have a right to determine the quality and standards of membership to their own lodge. The sponsors therefor should only propose membership of an individual that meets those standards. This is followed up by the investigating committee whose job it is, among other things, to also ensure that the applicant can live up to the standards set by the lodge.

Thus the first step in pursuing excellence is to not blindly accept an application from every applicant who knocks at the door. It should also be noted that a sponsor has a responsibility to the candidate he proposes by being his mentor and not simply leaving it solely to the mentor committee.

Meeting the Challenge, published by our own Grand Lodge, contains some guidelines that the investigating committee can use in their enquiries.

2. Being Proficient in Masonic Ritual and Law

Proficiency is an essential element of an observant lodge. This is not simply memorizing the words of the ritual, but includes knowing the why of the rituals. Look behind the words to determine what the original author(s) meant. Also know the law of the jurisdiction (the book of constitution). You do not have to memorize it, but if you know where to find an answer that is all that is required.

Memory work is not everyone's forte, but perhaps there is a small piece that catches you and by starting off small, one can develop the skill. Besides, there is a difference between not knowing the ritual, and knowing the ritual but encountering the occasional difficulty. The audience knows the difference too. They want you to succeed.

3. A Commitment to Advance Brethren Through the Degrees by Mutual and Genuine Effort

Progress in the degrees requires a mutual commitment of time and effort from candidate and mentor alike. Some form of proficiency, should be required before allowing any brother to advance. Otherwise the brother learns that his advancement has no measurable value.

Not every man can do memory work, and not every man is a writer. But if he is not willing to even *attempt* to do either, then perhaps he should simply not be a Mason to begin with. The same goes for the mentor, who, though he may be experienced, must not take the easy way out when it comes to the knowledge he has pledged to impart to his apprentice.

We do a great injustice to the candidate who is advanced without demonstrating his knowledge thus far. More damaging though is the injustice we do to those that have demonstrated their proficiency. A message is sent that their effort was a waste of time and indeed it is not.

4. The Selection and Advancement of Officers Should be by Merit Alone

This step, while admittedly difficult for some, is firmly grounded in the *Book of Constitutions*, without question. Masonry has never intended the adoption of a progressive line. A progressive line should only function when the next man down has the full faith and trust of his fellows that he will rule and govern his Lodge properly, because he has properly learned the requirements of his office.

Of course, human nature is what it is, and mistakes can always happen, but they can be mitigated if such a standard is put in place, because no one advances until and unless they are ready to do so. The only way to justify a progressive line is if every officer is carrying his weight to the extent of his office, while at the same time preparing himself diligently to advance to the next one. Lodges ignore this step at their own risk.

To 'accelerate' an officer through the chairs will only lead to confusion and

bewilderment when he reaches the east. The old adage you do not know the man until you have walked a mile in his shoes fits here. When the officer reaches the chair of King Solomon he will have an appreciation of the duties of all he rules over.

In our jurisdiction there is also some

discussion that before becoming a Worshipful Master, completion of the College of Freemasonry course for "Worshipful Master" will be a prerequisite.

This article continues with Part Two in the next newsletter, when the remaining 4 steps are discussed.



Mount Moriah Chapter No. 19
Oktoberfest Dinner
Saturday October 4th 2014
"Ein Proxit Der Gemütlichkeit"

Doric Club, 8 Secord Drive, St. Catharines

Featuring: The Bavarian Dance Group

GTEV Alpenroesl

Dancing 8pm & 9pm

\$30.00 per person includes your meal.

For Tickets see Larry Penton, Mike Locke or any Mount Moriah Officer

Mentoring – *The Art of Helping People Grow*

A gardener prepares the soil and plants his seedlings carefully in the hope that they will bloom and bear fruit. If after he has planted the seedlings he simply walks away and does not tend to the garden, the plant will in all likelihood wither and die or at best, become scraggly and fail to blossom.

Thus it is with mentoring. Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential. Mentoring a new mason begins when an individual approaches a potential sponsor to join the craft. The role of the sponsor does not end with the signing and endorsing of an application for initiation. The sponsor has now taken on the role of mentor because to walk away and let others do the job is rather like the gardener above. The applicant will become a member but will he become a mason? There is a difference!

After the applicants initiation he is often assigned a mentor from within the lodge. That mentor now as a responsibility, **with the sponsors**, to nurture the new member and make sure that he has all the requirements to grow as a man and a mason.

Mentoring does not end with the candidate becoming a Master Mason. The mentor also has the responsibility of helping that individual as he serves on committees and proceeds through the various chairs if he wishes to aspire to the East. The mentor helps him grow! William Feather, American Author and Publisher, said "Next to doing a good job yourself, the greatest joy is in having someone else do a first-class job under your direction."

So when your lodge asks you to become a mentor they are asking you to commit to helping another person grow!