

MOSTLY



MASONRY

The Grand Lodge of New Brunswick F. & A. M.

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No. 1

GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

1986 will be remembered for a variety of reasons, but for the Masons of New Brunswick, many will recall it as the year Grand Lodge held two communications. The subject for the extra meeting in October was Masonic Housing, and after discussion and by written ballot, the members voted in favor of the motion. The committee under the chairmanship of R:W: Bro. Don Gruchy, is to be congratulated for a job, well done. 48 of the 51 Craft Lodges were represented at this October meeting.

The acceptance of this motion is only a first step, and many more will have to be taken before the first apartment complex becomes a reality. It will not be easy, nor will it be accomplished in a few months. To do so, will require the assistance of every Mason in this jurisdiction. The work is great, but the rewards to the fraternity are greater and I am confident that we have enough men of character and dedication in the Craft, to see this Masonic Housing

project through to a happy conclusion.

The result will be, that the future of Freemasonry will be strengthened in New Brunswick, that new members will be attracted to the fraternity.

Can we count on your help?

J. William Murray

From your Editor:

The brethren will recall that Grand Lodge, meeting May 10th, directed that the Luncheon Address, delivered by M.W. Bro. Lou Copeland, Grand Master (Ontario), be printed in the next edition of MOSTLY MASONRY. A photocopy of a photocopy of that Address was delivered to me on July 31st and many hours were spent in preparing it for publication; it has been somewhat abridged.

It is a particular pleasure for me to extend my Warmest Greetings and Best Wishes to your family circle at this Holy Season and that 1987 bring health and happiness to one and all.

THE DEADLINE FOR OUR NEXT EDITION IS FEBRUARY 15th, 1987

1987 — OFFICIAL VISITATIONS

Howard No. 15	Hillsborough**	Jan. 6th
Tweedie No. 41	Moncton**	Jan. 10th
The Corinthian No. 13	Hampton**	Jan. 14th
Lebanon No. 28	Sackville**	Jan. 24th
Woodstock No. 11	Woodstock	Feb. 5th
Zetland No. 24	Shediac	Feb. 12th
Union Lodge of Portland No. 10	Saint John	Mar. 17th
Sussex No. 4	Dorchester	Mar. 18th
Colebrooke No. 39	Grand Falls	Apr. 8th
Keith No. 23	Moncton	Apr. 17th
Mananook No. 38	Grand Manan	Apr. 25th
GRAND LODGE	Saint John	May 8th/9th

**Official visits and installation.

GRAND MASTER COPELAND'S ADDRESS (Abridged) (May 10, 1986)

Public Relations -- or how to deal with adverse Masonic Publicity, which I have paraphrased "The Silence is Deafening" -- a subject which all of us are becoming more and more aware of, Public Relations is taking on a new meaning, a new importance for Masons around the world, and we are no exceptions.

Nor are we exceptional when we ask ourselves these questions -- "What will be the status of Masonry in our country in the year 2000 -- just 14 short years away?" Will we be following the declining pattern of the last 25 years, losing members at the rate of 2 to 4% each year? Will the total numbers in Canada be reduced a further 30% by the turn of the century?"

As leaders of Freemasonry in Canada it is our responsibility to accept the challenge, and to seize the opportunity of re-establishing the validity of our craft. If we are ready to do this, we must first admit the problem and identify the underlying causes. Secondly, we must formulate a plan of action that is both feasible and practical within a definite time frame. Thirdly, we must initiate the plan.

The attitude of aloof independence has almost disappeared from our way of life. I say, almost, because some institutions, including our own, are only beginning to realize that the public expects openness and distrusts secretiveness. Like industry, we should have recognized this long ago. Tolstoy told us that people are against that which they do not understand. Masons in several countries have discovered the truth of Tolstoy's observation.

A lack of understanding can, and has aroused public animosity towards Masonry. Just as importantly, it has produced indifference and apathy within our membership. Certainly in these times, hiding our light has not and will not bring new members into our lodges.

That is why I say our silence has been deafening. Deafening the ears of too

many people.

Fortunately, there is another side to this coin and it is time to take a look at it. Good, solid information about Masonry can create a positive public attitude, a new enthusiasm and pride among our members, and induce prospective members to approach us, and that should be the essential goal of our public relations efforts -- to have people feel better about us whether they are strangers to our craft, brother Masons or prospective members.

Now a brief look at what is happening with my own responsibility, the Grand Lodge of Canada in the province of Ontario.

In December 1984 an ad appeared in the classified section of a Toronto newspaper (with the largest national circulation) requesting Masons and former Masons to contact the advertiser either by mail or 'phone. Curiously a Mason responded only to learn that a large national TV chain was gathering information to present to their viewing audience (at prime time in the evening) an overview of the secret Masonic Society.

After discussion with our Grand Secretary, we decided the time had come when we should be properly prepared to speak positively on this subject.

An ad hoc committee was formed consisting in total of 5 brethren. We were fortunate to obtain a P.M. in the group of 5 who had spent his active business career as a PR expert with a major multinational firm. He served in this capacity in several major cities in both Canada and the U.S.A. The second member of our team has acquired great communication skills in the field education, firstly as a secondary school teacher and more recently in special education with the same regional group as part of their headquarters action force. Both are devoted Masons and complement one another in this "think tank" environment. The other 3 consist of the G.M., The D.G.M., and the Grand Secretary. We meet on a monthly basis.

The first step in preparing our G.M. was to submit a number of questions which the news media would be most likely to ask at upcoming conference or radio interviews.

3. Question: Why do you Masons not solicit members? Are you elitist?

Answer: Over the past 250 years we have found this non-solicitation method successful and a volunteer is always better than a conscript.

In our discussions we agreed that:

- 1) Success in Public Relations depends on setting goals, establishing priorities in order of maximum gain, and having the courage to stick with them unless there are compelling reasons to change, and
- 2) Getting through to people by getting words to mean the same thing to all people, which serves as a basis for effective communication.

Discussions also revealed that some non-masons view Freemasonry as a secret organization. By secret they mean sinister and subversive. Somehow, we in the craft must be more active in dispelling these myths. Most men are attracted to the Order by (a) the high calibre of its membership by someone whom they know and admire, and for whom they have great respect, and (b) the great charitable works of the Order and (c) that Masons are basically humanitarians.

In October 1983 and again in 1984, we distributed an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet headed "What is Freemasonry?" to all 90 members of our Board of General Purposes. We realized then that we in the craft must firstly learn how to speak more intelligently to one another, before we could properly communicate with the public at large. This served as the forerunner of our current "What is Freemasonry?" Pamphlet, published last August and distributed to every member of the craft.

Our second pamphlet "Masonic Charity", is now being published and will cover all our benevolence in a simple and understandable manner. It is hoped it will help our brethren to dip

into their pockets more deeply and more frequently. But again, our objectives include a greater understanding of our principles and tenets.

At our very first PR meeting, it was decided that to the non-mason, PR might have some negative connotation that public information rather than PR would better describe this committee's activities.

As we move into the implementation stage from the defensive to the offensive, we must seek and create platforms for our official spokesman to carry our message to the non-mason. An example of this took place in Germany. The G.M. M.W. Bro. Jurgen Holtorf gave a public address at a jointly sponsored commemorative ceremony on Nov. 30, 1984 in Wiesbaden, which received heavy press coverage and was attended by 200 guests, among them the Hessen State Parliament and Ex-Lord Mayor George Buch; Bundestag Member and Ex-Lord Mayor Rudi Schmitt; representatives of the 3 political parties composing City Council; representatives of the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches and various Masonic luminaries. Similarly, R.W. Bro. Michael Higham, The Grand Secretary of the U.G.L. of England, was the guest speaker on October 1st 1985 at the first of a seven part series headed "A Christian in the Technological Age", at St. Margaret Pattens Church, Eastcheap. His topic, "Freemasonry -- from Craft to Tolerance." In his presentation he weaves a marvellous tale about Freemasonry as a potential force for good, and establishes a bridge of dialogue and understanding with his fellow Anglicans. He concludes, "We are confident that Freemasonry has a useful place in modern society. We know that we are likely to learn more about ourselves if we talk about Freemasonry, so we welcome ordinary interest as a way of helping us explain ourselves better. I hope that by talking to you today I have advanced your knowledge of Freemasonry, and that I can make a reasonable answer to any questions you may have."

In our Ontario jurisdiction, we are requesting our D.D.G.M.'s when arranging a district reception for the G.M., to arrange, wherever possible, both a media interview and a speaking engagement at a non-masonic luncheon, such as The Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, etc., such that it does not interfere with the G.M.'s address to his brethren at the evening district banquet. At the same time, we have also set up a late afternoon meeting with the 3 senior officers of each lodge in the district to make them part of our 5 point team plan -- "Igniting Masonic Pride - our Challenge" and our Theme during this Grand Master's two year term. The first of such interviews took place in Sault Ste. Marie in October 1985, and has been repeated in several districts.

The press coverage was good and many favourable comments have been received. Many lodges are now holding a "Buddy Night" annually, which attracts the proper type of non-mason.

If the visitor requests a Membership Application from his friend and host, he will firstly chat with him and when he is sure the prospective petitioner understands what is involved, he will receive one in due course.

*Memories come as memories will,
For the mind of man is never still;
And the past for each returns to tell,
Of friends and times they loved so well.*

*Of the men that were held in high esteem,
When being a Mason was only a dream;
And the ones I knew were true and good,
Belonging to an ancient brotherhood.*

*Of that very special evening when,
Joining with other Masonic men;
I found a circle most complete,
Where in its centre, all may meet.*

These are but a few of the innovative methods of change that we've implemented. What many of us fear is change, but change is both inherent and perpetual. We are constantly challenged to "change" our friend, rather than our enemy. My Brethren there is only one thing more dangerous than change, and that is no change at all. There is no standing still--we either go forward or go back.

Probably the greatest challenge Masonry faces today is the realization of inevitable change with faith -- not fear. We have a philosophical grandeur with which we can meet change -- a great system of morality and the ethics of our fathers to provide guidelines.

If Masonry is to live and prosper, it is going to be led by men who are convinced and determined to build eternity in time.

Finally, we are at the crossroads in time -- there are a large number of our young men out there not knowing where to go. They are looking for an environment and a lifestyle in which they can grow and flourish. As leaders of the Craft, we have a responsibility to answer this need.

Let's join together in this great challenge for your young people and mine.

*To worship Him who is divine,
No matter what our creed or sign;
For He; the Truth, the Light, the Way,
Will question not the way we pray.*

*Where brothers now as brothers then,
Are among the finest of gentlemen;
Careful for all, to gladly share,
Careful to act upon the square.*

*And may their future be as kind,
As the pleasant past we leave behind;
While with instructive word and thought
They teach the lesson we were taught.*

*By Leslie R. Ramier, P.D.D.G.M.
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