GEOMETRY AND THE DIVINE RATIO

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In this issue we have a number of topics and a particular new feature - our In Memoriam page. Too often brothers from different parts of the Jurisdiction are not aware of the passing of a brother whom they have met on their masonic journey for several months. We are asking all lodge secretaries to inform us of the passing of a brother so that we can inform all the jurisdiction of the event.

We are also instituting a series that will take you into the lodges of Nova Scotia. In no particular order each lodge hall will be spotlighted and it will provide you an opportunity to see the varied interiors and some of the artifacts they have on display.

Wishing you all the most successful New Year.

- Barry Imber, Editor

The Golden Mean was used in the design of sacred buildings in ancient architecture to produce spiritual energy that facilitated connectivity with spiritual realms through prayer. Our reality is very structured, and indeed Life is even more structured. This is reflected through Nature in the form of geometry. Geometry is the very basis of our reality, and hence we live in a coherent world governed by unseen laws. These are always manifested in our world.

The Golden Mean governs the proportion of our world and it can be found even in the most seemingly proportion-less (active) living forms. Closest to home, however, it is found over and over in the human body. In fact, the human body has more golden ratios than any other biological organism:
GEOMETRY AND THE DIVINE RATIO - SHORT BULLETIN FROM MSA

As Masons we have a special tie to geometry and often this tie is coupled with the divine. Why do we as Masons see God's handiwork in mathematics? In the Fellowcraft charge we are told that geometry or Masonry is of a "divine or moral nature." Later in the same charge, we are told that mathematics not only proves the "wonderful properties of nature" but that it also demonstrates the "important truths of morality."

In the beautiful "G" lecture, again from the Fellowcraft degree, we are told that through geometry, we can "trace nature through the various windings" and find out nature's most hidden secrets. From the same lecture, we find that again, through geometry, we can discover "the power, the wisdom and the goodness of the Grand Artificer of the Universe." We can view with awe and delight the "proportions of this vast machine."

That sounds like a lot to expect out of geometry.

If you were like me, geometry was one of those classes in school that you needed to get through, but with the theorems, proofs, and constructions, geometry was far from my favourite class. The only person who was ever excited was the teacher. So why as Masons are we so excited by geometry? Why do we view it as of a divine nature?

The answer is twofold. First, when Speculative Masonry was beginning in the late 1600's and early 1700's, man was unfolding the mysteries of nature and science at an unprecedented rate. This was the "Age of Enlightenment." The men of science and mathematics were looking to tie these new discoveries into their faith. The thing they rediscovered had been known to the ancient Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks. The Oriental cultures had been using it for centuries. It was used extensively by the great minds in the Renaissance. This discovery that seemed to tie everything together was a number, 1.618, which was represented by the Greek letter "Φ", phi.

This number 1.618, is actually a ratio and is referred to as the golden ratio, the golden mean, the divine/golden section, the divine mean, or the divine proportion. There is a long equation and some in-depth math that explain the number, so I will let you look that up yourself. Dan Brown in his books talks about this divine proportion, The amazing thing about this number is where and how it shows up.

This divine ratio is found in architecture from the pyramids, statues and tombs of Egypt, Chinese, and Japanese temples and gardens, the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and the Empire State building in New York. The most famous examples of this golden ratio, though, is the Parthenon in Greece. The building contains hundreds of examples of this golden ratio throughout. The shape of the building is according to this ratio; the pillars, the space between the pillars, the statues that line the top, etc., all conform to the divine mean. The buildings rated as the most aesthetic worldwide are all examples of this ratio. So, as builders, we Masons should find this ratio intriguing, but where does the divine come in?

This same ratio is found in the way sunflower seeds align on the face of the flower, all the key features of a penguin, the branching of a tree, the number of petals on a flower, the breeding of rabbits, plant growth, the alignment of the planets in our solar system, the chambers in a nautilus shell, and the arms in a spiral galaxy. The list of where this ratio appears seems endless. The human face contains
hundreds of examples of the divine ratio from our miles to the distance between our eyes to the chin etc....The surprising thing is that the closer one's features conform to this ratio, the more beautiful or handsome the person is deemed. The further off this ratio, the more homely.

The human body contains thousands more. Policet’s statue of Aphrodite, often deemed the masterpiece of feminine beauty; Botticelli’s painting, “the Birth of Venus,” or the famous “Venus De Milo,” by an unknown artist of Antioch, are all constructed almost perfectly with this ratio.

DaVinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Turner and Seurat all used the divine section to create their masterpieces of art. The keys on an organ or a piano are laid out according to the ratio, the fingerboard on a guitar, musical scales, musical frequencies and most stringed instruments conform to the divine ratio. The perfect shape for a musical amplifier is a rectangle which is based on this ratio.

A cross section of human DNA contains at least ten instances of the golden mean.

For the men of the Enlightenment the answer was obvious. Wherever God placed his hand, the number 1.618, phi, or the divine proportion, was left behind. Whatever the Grand Architect created – feathers on a bird, seeds in a flower or the arrangement of their petals, the beauty of the human face, the alignment of the planets and the stars themselves – the golden section was evident. Wherever the Grand Artificer of the Universe inspired, the Cathedrals and gardens, music, paintings and sculpture, man was able to find this ratio.

Like an architect draws up his building, so the Grand Architect must have drawn up his plans for the flower, the nautilus shell, the human form, the planets and the stars. God’s beauty and blessing is reflected in geometry. To study the liberal art of geometry was to study the divine nature of all things.

Today, science has explained much of what was a mystery in the 1700’s. The golden ratio is no longer held to be proof of God’s existence or plan, but the sheer number of times it appears in things natural and man-made are staggering.

It is with little wonder why our brothers of this time found that by a study of this ratio, or geometry, “we discover the power, the wisdom and the goodness of the Grand Artificer of the Universe and view with delight the proportions which connect this vast machine.”

R.W. Bro. Rev. David Ritchie
July 2012 MSA Short Bulletin
www.msana.com

To learn more:
An easy read and well illustrated – Ed.

“Demolition May Reveal Treasure.

During the demolition of an 86 year old building in downtown Toronto, Ont., Historians hope to uncover the long lost Masonic Stone of Nova Scotia, bearing the Masonic Square and Compasses, and dated 1606.

It was first discovered in 1827 and disappeared in 1876. The Stone found on the shores of Annapolis Basin, has been described as possibly the oldest inscribed stone in North America and symbol of the earliest meeting place of Freemasons.

Since its disappearance, the trail has taken Historians to many places, finally to this old building which was last owned by the Sons of England, and is now being demolished for a parking lot. Famous names are connected with the Stone, Judge Haliburton, Sir Sandford Fleming, who offered $1000.00 many years ago for its recovery. The Stone was supposed to have been set into a wall of what was then the Royal Canadian Institute. Unfortunately the workman must have sealed the stone into the wall and covered the inscription with masonry. The building has been thoroughly searched many times, to no avail.

If found, the Stone will be returned to its rightful owners.”

As we know, the Stone has yet to be recovered.

FROM THE GRAND MASTER

My Brothers it is that time of year again when we have begun our Annual Installations. It is hard to believe time has moved so quickly. It is with that thought in mind that I decided to look at what the Installation really means to me.

May I congratulate the Masters and their Lodge Officers upon their installation into their respective Offices. By being elected and installed you have been given a TRUST by your Brothers. The Trust has many points to it and I will only touch upon a few so as to act as a catalyst for some thought.

The Master and his Officers have been given a TRUST to maintain and strengthen the main tenets of our great Fraternity; Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. You are to practise these, not only in the Lodge, but outside the Lodge so that the community knows we are a compassionate and caring organization composed of “good men who have been made better”. You are to be Mentors and examples for all your Lodge Brothers and community to emulate, and in doing so, teach them the value of being a Mason. You are to practise Inclusiveness so that all Brothers feel they are an integral part of the Lodge from the first time they enter the door until they lay down their working tools of life. You are to be a Positive example and always seek out what is best for your Lodge through Discussion and Consensus, not by Dictatorship. You are to practise the simple art of Recognition of tasks well done by saying “THANK YOU” and giving credit where it is due. You are to practise the Positive by seeing the glass as half full, not half empty; and always look for the good in your Brothers and the positive in all situations. You are to teach that “it makes a difference” to Care, to Love, to Assist, and most importantly, to be your self and accept the Brothers for who they are and not for who you want them to be. You are responsible for passing your Lodge on to those following; Stronger and Better than you received it.

You are a TEAM and you should work as a Team for the betterment of your Lodge and Masonry. Every Brother has a contribution to make, and that does not necessarily mean holding an Office.” Many hands make light work!” Are you going to work towards making your Lodge a Positive environment for all? Happiness is a CHOICE! Choose wisely.

My congratulations to all the Brothers who have taken on the responsibility of governing a Lodge. May your year be one filled with satisfaction and success in knowing you did your best for our Fraternity. It is a very rewarding experience.

Reo J. Matthews, MW'TGM
THE OLDEST PETITION

What is probably the oldest petition for the formation of a Masonic Lodge in Canada is one dated at Halifax, June 12, 1750, and signed by Governor the Hon. Edward Cornwallis, the founder of Halifax, and four associates.

As the Halifax Lodge mentioned in the minutes of St. John's Lodge, Boston, for April 13, 1750 (two months before the above date) it would appear that these brethren had previously petitioned Henry Price of Boston for authority to form a Lodge in Halifax and he referred them to Major Erasmus James Philipps of Annapolis Royal, his deputy Grand Master for Nova Scotia since 1738 and the founder of the first Lodge, at Annapolis in that year. They accordingly wrote Major Philipps, and he agreed to their request and sent Henry Price a copy in his handwriting of the original letter to him. This later document is now in the archives of the Grand Lodge in Boston.

Under Philipps’ authority the brethren in Halifax organized the first Lodge in Halifax on July 19, 1750, and on that night initiated Admiral “Lord Colville and a number of Navy Gentlemen”.

The Hon. Edward Cornwallis was the founder of three Lodges, the first in 1748, in the 20th Foot (later known as Minden Lodge) the second at Halifax in 1750, and the third in the 24th Foot, during his term as Governor of Gibraltar.

Lord Colville was “raised” in the First Lodge Boston on October 24, 1750, was later “Deputy Grand Master for North America” and when returning to England in 1752 presented the Second Lodge in Boston with a copy of Field's Bible, printed in Cambridge in 1683 and still preserved by St. John's Lodge, Boston.

The First Lodge in Halifax is now known as “St. Andrew's Lodge No.1”, the oldest Lodge in the British overseas Commonwealth.
CONCORDANT BODIES: ROYAL ARK MARINER

History

This Degree has no connection with King Solomon’s Temple and was simply one of the many degrees that were prevalent at the end of the eighteenth century. It is thought to have originated around 1790 when there is an authentic account of a ceremony taking place in Bath in that year.

A Grand Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners was formed some time after the union of the two Craft Grand Lodges and oversaw its Royal Ark Mariner lodges until the formation of the Mark Grand Lodge in 1856, some fifteen years after which it declared that it was taking control of the Royal Ark Mariner Degree. This led to an argument between the, then, Grand Commander Noah one Morton Edwards and this difference of opinion lasted for some thirteen years, at which time in 1884 the sum of £25 changed hands and Morton Edwards relinquished his warrant. From that time the Order has been administered by the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons and the name of the Order has recently been amended to the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners.

In Canada, it is conferred by a Council of Royal & Select Masters (Cryptic Masons), bringing the number of Degrees worked by R&SM in to four (the third being Super Excellent Master.)

Regalia

The regalia comprises an apron and a breast jewel; the apron is of white kid having a segmental flap bordered with a one and a quarter-inch ribbon of rainbow colours. The apron has three rosettes of similar colouring. The jewel is a segmental plate of silver representing a rainbow from which is suspended a dove bearing an olive branch. Holders of Provincial or District Rank wear a collarette of rainbow colours suspended from which is a silver triangle, bearing the representation of Noah’s Ark. Grand Officers have a similar collarette with a gold triangle and Ark.

Ceremony

The ceremony, referred to as an Elevation, is centred on the period described in the Old Testament under the Book of Genesis Chapter 6 onwards. The candidate is not required to re-enact any of the scenarios of that time, but listens to an account of Noah’s construction of the Ark in which he and his family and all the living creatures of the earth were saved. In my experience, this is the only Masonic degree where the original penalties are still included. This is because at the period from which the degree takes its origin the Holy Bible was not in existence and the Oath is taken on the Porphyry Stone, which is said to be the stone upon which Noah offered up his sacrifice to God after his safe deliverance from the Deluge. The qualification is that of being a Mark Master Mason.
In October King Edward Lodge No.86 in River Hebert celebrated the Hundredth Anniversary of their Lodge Hall. The Junior Grand Warden, R.W.Bro. Peter Ponsford represented the Grand Master at the opening of a time capsule that had been inserted into the corner stone of the building.

After R.W.Bro. Allan White, WM of King Edward opened the Lodge and formally welcomed all the masons in attendance, all the brethren retired to the lower hall for the opening of the capsule. Many members of the community were present. After some difficulty in trying to find the capsule one of the newer masons in the Lodge, an operative mason by trade, suggested that they inspect the top of the corner stone as often a slot would be carved out of the stone and then cemented over. This turned out to be the case. Found in the stone were coins of the day including a silver dime, a coin from Hong Kong and a Victorian English penny. Unfortunately the paper material and deteriorated over the years but a newspaper and some paper money seem to have been placed in the capsule.

R.W.Bro. Alan Linkletter, PDDGM for Cumberland, acted as the master of ceremonies and gave the following address to those in attendance:

I would like to welcome all of you here this afternoon to help us celebrate the Hundredth Anniversary of this Lodge Hall and landmark of our community. I also want to take a few minutes of your time to tell you about the events that took place 100 years ago that has brought us here today. On December 18 1907, a meeting of Master Masons was held in River Hebert at J.L. MacDonald Hall for the purpose of forming a Masonic Lodge in River Hebert. (That hall was approximately where the medical center sits today.) At that time a motion was made and passed to organize a Masonic lodge and call it King Edward Lodge. Many of those brothers at the time belonged to lodges in Amherst and Parrsboro they all agreed to become members of the new lodge and support it fully. They proceeded to appoint officers to serve the lodge until June when Grand Lodge would be held. It was moved and passed at this time to rent MacDonald Hall and hold their meetings on the second Tuesday of each month.

April 21 1908 Dispensation was received from the Grand Master to open the lodge under the name King Edward Lodge, and power was granted to confer degrees and all other work that a Master Masons Lodge could do. Also on this date Midas Lodge #67 from Parrsboro, loaned the lodge all the necessary paraphernalia needed in the lodge.

On July 30 a dedication service was held at the Baptist Church. At this time the number 86 was given to the Lodge by the Grand Master of masons of Nova Scotia.

For the next year and a half, masonry continued to flourish in River Hebert.

On February 8 1910 a committee was appointed to look into building a Masonic Hall in River Hebert.

March 16 1910 it was decided to have a ground floor in the hall to serve as a public hall.

April 15 the committee presented an estimated price of between $2600 and $3500 for the hall, this would include a basement. A site was also chosen. It was referred to as Church Lot #14.
January 24, 1911 the first site was abandoned because there was no clear title to the land. Three sites were presented and voted on. The James Hennessy lot which we are sitting on today was chosen at a cost of $150. It was moved and passed to build a hall 35 feet by 70 feet with an upstairs lodge room and a down stairs public hall with a stage for concerts and a basement. The committee was asked to look into sketches, plans and cost.

February 21 after much discussion it was voted on to build a brick structure 33 by 72. Ideas for the lodge hall were passed onto an Architect to create plans. It was also reported that there was no problem with getting the money from the bank to construct the building.

March 8 plans and specification for the hall were presented for viewing by the brothers. After some discussion it was decided to ask the architect to specify steel girders to support the second floor so no posts would used on the first floor.

May 9 a motion was passed to levy a 10 cent per month tax on each member to raise funds for the new lodge hall.

June 13 a bill for the plans for the new hall from J. L. Allen was presented. Cost estimates from 4 companies were read with prices ranging from $6500 - $6600.

At the September 12 meeting, it was decided to postpone the building of the hall until the spring of 1912 because it was getting late in the year for construction to take place.

October 11, the building committee moved that they be given permission to make some changes to the plans for the hall that would hopefully lower the cost. This motion was passed. It also gave the committee approval to call for tenders on the revised plans.

February 23 1912 the building committee reported back on tenders received. The lodge voted to go with the lowest tender of $894 from J. E. Lusby Construction Company. The lodge borrowed $1000 to get started with the construction. It was also moved and passed at this time that any members that wanted to loan the lodge money for the construction would be repaid at an interest rate of 3% per year for 4 years.

June 6 1912 Grand Lodge Special Communication was held in River Hebert with 45 members present. The acting Grand Master of the day, J. R. Parker spoke on the subject of laying the corner stone. The lodge meeting was then called to refreshment and the brothers formed a procession that marched from MacDonald Hall to the new lodge site where Mr. Parker laid the Corner Stone of the new lodge and placed a Time Capsule behind the corner stone at this time.

June 19 the building committee ask that tenders be added to the hall for electric lights on both levels of the hall.

October 8, Secretary reported that the Grand Master would be present on the 25 to dedicate the new hall. A committee was established at this time to secure a Supper for the event at a cost of $1 per person.

October 25 just four and half months after the cornerstone was laid the first official lodge meeting was held in the new hall after it was dedicated by the Grand Master.

Over the past 100 years the lodge has welcomed in and raised hundreds of masons from all walks of life.

The upper lodge hall has served as host to lodge meetings, district meetings, Grand Lodge’s annual communication, and joint installations.

The lower hall where we are now gathered has served the community in many capacities over the last 100 years. Formal New Year’s Eve Balls were the first events to take place in the hall. The lodge has served as a community meeting hall, dances were held here on a regular basis, as well as youth dances, girl power workshops, variety shows, and even funeral services. The hall has also been used as a school when one of the local area one room schools burned down in the 1920’s. Most recently our by-weekly ever popular open mic music nights of which one is taking place later on this afternoon has turned the hall into a bee hive of activity on Saturday nights. Before leaving later this afternoon please make sure that you have signed our guest book so that in 100 years time on our bicentennial celebration our grand children’s grand children will be able to see that we all witnessed this historic event taking place today. Thank you for your time and I hope you enjoy the rest of the afternoon.

Alan Linkletter
1. The WM, RWBro. Alan White removing the corner stone.
3. The time capsule which was a slot in the top of the corner stone.
4. A group shot of the masons who attended the ceremony.
5. A variety of coins were found in the time capsule including silver dimes.
6. A copy of the Halifax Herald dated Friday May 31st, 1912 was also retrieved. Unfortunately moisture had damaged most of the paper materials.
7. RWBro. Peter Ponsford addressing the masons and members of the public who attended the ceremony.
A few months ago someone within the Craft asked me why Masons wear the Distinguishing Blue Colour in Craft Lodges, at least in this Jurisdiction. At the time I was caught unprepared but agreed to research the issue and try to find an answer. Apparently this is not the first time that this question had been asked for I found the following paper which I believe contains some plausible theories on the question. I give Colonel Tyler full credit for his research on this matter and thank him for providing this copy as Public Domain. This paper was researched in response to the same being posed to him by his wife.

Gary Patterson, Grand Lecturer

The origin of blue as the colour of Ancient Craft Masonry is accounted for by two schools of thought. Both can adduce considerable evidence. One believes that the symbolism of the colour, like that of the square, «comes to us from the "time immemorial"; the other demonstrates that blue as a Masonic colour is not as old as the Mother Grand Lodge, and that is was adopted for other than symbolic reasons. In either case, as Mackey says, blue is empathetically the colour of Freemasonry.

Blue was a sacred colour to the priests of Israel. The colour is mentioned first in the Old Testament in Exodus 25:1-3 and reads as follows in a modern version: Lord said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites to make an offering to me. Receive whatever offerings any man wishes to give. These offerings are to be: gold, silver, and bronze; fine linen; blue, purple..." Blue is mentioned 34 times in Exodus alone and many times elsewhere in the Old Testament. One writer notes that blue of the Old Testament is a translation of the Hebrew tekelet which is derived from a root signifying perfection. Among the Druids, blue was a symbol of truth. And the Egyptians esteemed blue as a sacred colour. Jeremiah tells us in the Bible that the Babylonians clothed their idols in blue. To the Chinese in their philosophy, blue is a symbol of the Deity.

Our ancient brethren held their meetings on high hills and in low vales. Blue is the colour of heaven which embraces the whole globe. Thus the blue sky was the covering of their Lodges. Today we consider our Lodges, when duly opened, a symbol of the world. It's covering is the world's, a sky as a canopy or starry decked heaven of blue - the blue arch of heaven itself. One Masonic writer goes so far as to say that only two colours are truly Masonic, white and blue. In heraldry, blue or azure signifies chastity, loyalty, and fidelity. To the artist, blue has a number of traditional symbolic significances such as friendship, humility, fidelity, and especially faith.

All of which brings us to what we know of the earliest use of blue as a Masonic colour, regardless of how much we may wish that our forefathers had adopted blue for the symbolism we are now content to read into the hue of heaven.

Two extracts from the minutes of Grand Lodge of England (1717) are explicit upon the matter of colour, "Resolved, that in all private Lodges and Quarterly Communications and General Meetings, the Masters and Wardens do wear the Jewels of Masonry hanging to a white Ribbon." Just 4 years later one of the Grand Lodge Officers took notice of some irregularities in wearing marks of distinction which have been allowed by Grand Lodges. So it was proposed that none but the Grand Master, his Deputy and Wardens shall wear their jewels in gold or gilt pendant to blue ribbons about their necks and white leather aprons lined with blue silk. Also proposed was "that all those who serve any of the three Grand Officers shall wear the like Aprons lined with blue silk in all Lodges and assemblies of Masons when they appear clothed."

But why did Grand Lodge adopt, or permit, blue in 1721, when white was specified just 4 years previously?

Passing over the common but wholly coincidental "reason" - that many taverns where Masons met were by blue signs, such as the "Blue Boar" or "Blue Star" - a reasonable theory seems to be that proposed by Masonic scholar Fred J.W. Crowe. He wrote in 1909-1910, in a Lodge Research Transactions, that "the colour of the Grand Lodge clothing was adopted from the ribbon of the most Noble Order of the Garter. The Grand Stewards from the second National Order - The Most Honourable Order of the Bath." The Scottish Grand Lodge undoubtedly copied the
ribbon of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, and the Grand Lodge of Ireland anticipated the formation of the Most Illustrious Order of St Patrick in 1788 by selecting light blue - thus accidentally completing the series. Crow further suggests that the blue be a "deep blue colour - 'Oxford Blue'.

The Order of the Garter is the highest and perhaps the oldest order of Knighthood in Great Britain. It originated in 1349 when King Edward III of England was dancing with the Countess of Salisbury at a great court ball. The Countess lost her garter, a light blue item, and the King reached down, picked it up and handed it to her. As the King handed the blue garter to the Countess he noticed persons smile and indulge in some remarks. This made him angry and he exclaimed: "Evil be to him who evil thinks." He then added that he would make little blue garter "so glorious that everyone would wish to wear it." Since that event in 1349 the Order of the Garter has been the most prestigious and honoured Order in the World. At first it was limited to 25 Members but it has been expanded since that date.

It is believed by many scholars that because of the Orders exclusiveness and prestige the Masons of Grand Lodge wanted the Order of Freemasons to be just as prestigious, and honoured. Thus the colour blue was adopted as the colour of Masonry. In this description Brother Crow draws attention to several facts with good reasons. First, that the Order of the Garter with its blue garter was and still is the most famous Order of Knighthood in existence, second, Freemasons in adopting the colour (garter blue) attempted to add to their own dignity and the growing prestige of Grand Lodge officers, and third, that two Grand Masters prior to the adoption of "Garter Blue" were John, Duke of Montagu (Grand Master in 1721) and listed as Master in Anderson 's Constitution, and also Charles, Duke of Richmond (Grand Master in 1724), both Knights of the Garter.

Of all the theories those which find the most believers are those here set forth; first, the adoption of the colour blue by early operative Freemasons because of an age-old association of blue with those virtues which are peculiarly Masonic and may be related to Old Testament Scripture as mentioned in the Book of Exodus. Second, the adoption of the colour blue by the early Grand Lodge in imitation of the nobility of the fame of the colour of the most famous Order of Knighthood in the world, the Order of the Garter.

Blue symbolizes universal friendship and benevolence. It is, however, distinctly the colour of the first three degrees, and they are in consequence known as Blue Masonry. The Sublime Degree, The Master Mason's Degree, The Craft Lodge or The Blue Lodge - all are precious and held in the highest and most affectionate regard by those who have heard the words spoken: "Remember now thy Creator."
This is a reminder that the Grand Master’s Award Program is in effect for the second year.

It is the aim of the program to encourage the lodges to provide a more active program and to include in their year those actions which go towards developing and having a viable and strong lodge.

Last year Alexandra Lodge No. 87 in Cumberland County received the Award of Excellence and hopefully many lodges will participate in the program this year.

The following is the criteria for a lodge to receive an award from the Grand Master. The awards are as follows: Award of Excellence 85 - 100 points; Outstanding Service Award 70 - 84 points; Masonic Pride Award 65 - 69 points.

- 10% or greater increase in Lodge membership = 20 pts _____ or a 5% - 9% increase in Lodge membership = 10pts _____
- Year end with no suspensions = 10pts _____ or year end with less than 2% suspensions = 5pts _____
- Three or more attended each District Association meeting = 10 pts _____ • WM, SW and JW attended annual District Meeting = 5pts____
- WM, SW and JW attended Grand Lodge = 5 pts _____
- Lodge members attended Grand Lodge in excess of three = 10 pts _____
- Lodge Educational Presentations – 1 point per month = 10 pts max _____
- Active use of the Mentor Program (inclusive of its 4 booklets) = 10 pts _____
- Lodge Attendance at Stated Meetings Increase over previous year = 5 pts _____ • Community Service Project = 5 pts max ______
- Lodge participation in Bursary Program = 5 pts _____
- Lodge participation on the Grand Lodge website = 5 pts _____

TOTAL POINTS EARNED _____ Maximum possible points 100

It will be the responsibility of the DDGM to confirm and counter sign the form submitted to Grand Lodge and there is no reason why the Grand Master should not be signing 97 certificates to be given out at the Annual Communication.
Charity No.69, Mahone Bay

With this issue we are beginning a series on the lodge halls in the Jurisdiction. Each Lodge has its own personality and for many of the brethren they will not have an opportunity of visiting the various localities to see for themselves. Through this series we hope to show some of the artifacts held in these buildings and the varied interiors of the lodge halls. The lodges have been chosen at random and we begin with Charity Lodge No.69 in Mahone Bay.

Charity Lodge is located in Mahone Bay, on the beautiful South Shore of Nova Scotia. The Lodge received its Warrant on 28 December 1874 and has operated continuously since that time. It meets on the third Tuesday of the month, except for July and August. The building that houses Charity Lodge was purchased in the early 1920s, originally being an oil skin factory supplying the fishing industry. The Rev. Canon Harris, a member of the Lodge, was its chief architect and through a labour of love created what is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful Lodges in Nova Scotia, and possibly the whole country. Situated north, east, south and west are finely carved columns depicting the various forms of Greek architecture, and ...
there are floor to ceiling murals at each of those points, depicting Masonic and pastoral scenes.

Visitors are most welcome to view the Lodge interior, and arrangements can be made by contacting any member of Charity Lodge or the Worshipful Master. Contact information can be obtained through the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia website.

*Photographs: the exterior of the lodge hall. The lodge room is on the ground floor making it accessible to all, while upstairs is a kitchen and dining room; the view to the east with the rising sun behind the Master’s chair; a view of the lodge room from the south west corner; the north wall showing the two columns and the spiral staircase; the Junior Warden’s station showing the waterford; and lastly the Senior Warden’s station with the setting sun.*
Good evening Brothers, tonight I want to speak of St. John the Evangelist and his connection to Freemasonry.

In masonry there is a phrase; “Erected to God and dedicated to the Holy Saints John.” All of our Lodges are so dedicated, yet we never hear any other information regarding these “Holy Saints John” or anything to explain why we refer to them as the Patron Saints of Freemasonry.

To say with certainty why Freemasons adopted the two Sts. John, and continue to celebrate days as principal feasts which were once of a far different significance, is not in the power of any historian as yet. But the fitness of these two is obvious in our system if we consider the spiritual suggestion of their lives.

One theory is that in the Operative Masonry of the ancients, these days were celebrated as returning eras in the existence of the great source of light, and the object of their worship. Our ancient Brethren adopted the custom, while abandoning the idolatrous principles that were connected with these dates, and confining their celebrations exclusively to their astronomical importance. But as time passed, Christianity came to mingle its rays with the light of Masonry, and our Christian ancestors, finding that the church had appropriated two days near these solstice periods to the memory of two eminent saints, incorporated these festivals in the Masonic calendar, and adopted the Holy Saints John as patrons of our Order.

And, while our 18th century Brethren might have reflected on mankind’s past practices, there are probably few Freemasons today who reflect on primitive man's observances of a special day in winter and another in mid-summer. Those ancients had special reason to be happy. They had fire on the year's shortest day, and they were thankful for the benefits of the sun on the longest day of the year.

Another old theory of Masonic origins that is gaining momentum is the hypothesis that Freemasonry evolved from the Knights Templar. The Saints John are also commonly referred to in Templar records and we know their festival days were of importance to the Templars. It is interesting to note that one of the charges of “heresy” brought against the Templars was that they had become followers of Gnostic Christianity and had in many ways left behind the more traditional Roman Catholic teachings. The basis of much Gnostic thought is the Gospel and Epistles of Saint John the Evangelist. In effect, the “crimes” of the Templars may have been that they venerated the theology of Saint John the Evangelist more than that of Saint Paul or Saint Peter, important saints in the Roman Catholic Church.

We see that while we can find no real answers to the question of why the Saints John are our Patrons, the reasons for our dedication is clear.

According to the Bible, as men we are bound to certain frailties and failures. This keeps us all from becoming ideal men and Masons, no matter how hard we may try. We should hold the Holy Saints John as examples of the perfect form or ideal
of Masons. Although we know they were not Freemasons, what we know of them shows them to be perfect examples of what a Freemason should be. Kind, righteous, loving and above all faithful unto death to the trust reposed in them. They are the perfect example of the Freemason, never to be achieved, but always to be emulated.

St. John the Baptist was a stern and just man; intolerant of sham, of pretense, of weakness; a man of strength and fire, uncompromising with evil or expediency, and yet courageous, humble, sincere, magnanimous. A character at once heroic and of rugged nobility, of him the Greatest of Teachers said: “Among them that are born of woman, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.”

Of St. John the Evangelist, the disciple whom Jesus loved, a thousand books have been written, and student has vied with minister, teacher with historian, to find words fitly to describe the character of the gentle writer of the Fourth Gospel. No attempt at rivalry will here be made; suffice it that St. John the Evangelist is recognized the world over as the apostle of love and light, the bringer of comfort to the grief-stricken, of courage to the weak, of help to the helpless, of strength to the falling. It is not too difficult to imagine the similarities of St. John the Evangelist’s principles and those of Freemasonry.

December 27th is the Feast of St. John the Evangelist, frequently referred to as “the Beloved Disciple” in the Gospels. He was one of the first disciples called by Christ and is considered the author of the Gospel of John, at least the first of the Epistles of John and the Book of Revelation.

He first became a disciple of John the Baptist, and then of Jesus of Nazareth, who made him an Apostle. He was the son of Zebedee, and the brother of St. James the Great, who together were known as the "sons of thunder." He came to be called the "beloved disciple," and he was the only one of the Twelve that did not forsake the Great Teacher at the hour of His death. It was there that Jesus made him the guardian of His Mother.

His later life was passed chiefly in Jerusalem and Ephesus. He founded many churches in Asia Minor, and later became the Patron Saint of Asia Minor. He lived to an extreme old age, surviving all his fellow apostles, and died about the year 101 A.D. The "beloved disciple" died at Ephesus, where a stately church was erected over his tomb. It was afterwards converted into a beautiful Muslim mosque.

In his Epistles, the Evangelist continues to work from the theme that the Word and the Light are inevitably linked and goes on to bring Truth and Love in as links of the same chain. The idea and practice of Brotherly Love and Fellowship is explored more thoroughly by the Evangelist than by any other New Testament writer.

When we stop to consider that each of the Jesus of Nazareth’s 12 original apostles carried a slightly different message to the world, and all were martyred, with the single exception of the Evangelist and his simple message of Brotherly Love, should we accept that as an omen or sign of what the Great Architect of the Universe really wanted mankind to know, to understand and to practice? Is the importance of that message so strong that it has served as the very footstone of Freemasonry for all of these countless centuries?

Our Patron St. John the Evangelist, who tells us: “I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”

Each Freemason must find his own answer to those important questions - but in your search for answers, Brethren, remember the Worshipful Master’s benediction at the closing of every Masonic Lodge: "May Brotherly Love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us."

That sounds very much like a message that St. John the Evangelist would impart to our Masonic Brethren.

James Forrest
Albion Lodge No. 5
W.Bro. Robert Frank
Evangeline Lodge No.94

V.W.Bro. Ching
Cornwallis Lodge No.95

R.W.Bro. Greg King
Virgin No.3

Bro. William Edgar “Ed” Murphy
Poyntz Lodge No.44

R.W.Bro. Ken Crook
Valley Lodge No.90

Bro. Ernest O. Simpson
Albion No.5

May it be their portion to hear those words “Well done, thou good and faithful servant”

In and around the many graveyards in Halifax can be seen markers denoting Masonic affiliation. In the Old Burial Grounds in Halifax is one such stone dedicated to Abner Stowell who died when he was 35. The stone was erected by his Masonic Lodge, Virgin No.2, and is covered with the symbols of masonry.

One can see the two pillars supporting the Royal Arch and the Keystone, Jacob’s Ladder, the Anchor, Incense burner, the Hour Glass, the Ark as well as the three Lesser Lights and the Great Lights of Masonry. There are a number of other items as well as the signature of the stone mason - David Kinnear. He carved the coat-of-arms in the pediment.

The Stowell stone is signed by the carver, David Kinnear. He carved the coat-of-arms in the pediment over the main entrance of the Provincial Building in 1818.
King George Lodge # 123 has installed a chair in the North East Corner of our lodge which is decorated with a collar without jewel, a white leathern apron, a sprig of acacia, and some working tools. The purpose of this chair is to establish a visual reminder to all brothers, of our brothers who have passed to the Grand Lodge above. They have also developed a "Empty Chair Ceremony" which will be performed each time that a brother passes.

RWB. Darrell Thurber was well supported at the Halifax District 1 Meeting hosted by Keith Lodge No.17 at Freemasons' Hall. The DGM, RWBro. George Grant and JGW, RWBro. Peter Ponsford were in attendance as well as other Grand Lodge officers. The meeting included a lecture on one Mason's Travels across the country.

R.W.Bro. Donald Grant, D.D.G.M. made his official visit to Queens No. 34 in Sherbrooke, and below at Eastern Light No. 72.

The Antigonish-Guysborough District travelling gavel was presented on Dec 7th to W.M. Ralph England of Temple 57 in Mulgrave by D.D.G.M. Donald Grant, representing W.M. Darroch Fagan of Eastern light 72 in Guysborough.
Western Star No.50 in Westville. 5 members of Eastern Light No.72 paid an official visit. Posing in this photo are: RWBro. Ed Grant, PDDGM, Ant-Guys; RWBro. Donald Grant, DDGM, Ant-Guys; RWBro. Paul MacCracken, Pictou County DDGM; Bro. Darryl Grant S.W. at 72; RWBro. Ira Corkum, PDDGM; Bro Wayne Simpson J.W. at 72; and RWBro. Harvey Ford, W.M. of No.50 and also PDDGM Ant-Guys.


Pictured below at the Installation Ceremony conducted at Norwood Lodge on February 17, 2012 (L to R): V.W.Bro. Haldon Reeves, PDGDC; V.W.Bro. Frank Turner, PDGC; W.Bro. Jachin Turner, newly installed Worshipful Master; R.W.Bro. Ashton Reeves, PDDGM, Installing Officer; and R.W.Bro. George Grant, SGW.

On Saturday, November 17, 2012, the Widows of Departed Brethren of St. Margaret's Lodge, No. 118, were honoured at a Tea social at “The Trellis Cafe”, in Hubbards. There were six honoured ladies in attendance, hosted by several members of the Lodge and their ladies. A musical quartet provided soothing background music, suitable for the occasion. The ladies were chauffeured to and from the event and from all reports thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.
October the 6th saw the unveiling and presentation of a work of art, given to the masons and their widows throughout Nova Scotia. Located to the left of the main entrance of the newly renovated Halifax Temple, this granite relief causes one to pause and reflect and bow one's head. The Master, V.W.Bro. Rami Saaloukeh and Bro. Kevin Robertson together with the officers and members of Royal Sussex No.6 had worked on this for almost 2 years to bring it to life. As a result of a bequest from Marian Rockwell and some of their own funds, the lodge proceeded down that long road of a plan to fulfilment. It involved working with Freemasons Hall Ltd. your Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer, the Public Relations Chairman, Heritage Memorials, designers, researchers, historians, and contractor. Who was to know that at the end of the day columns of such specialized granite coming from the mountains in a sacred area of ancient China would now glisten in the sun and weep in the rain on Coronation Street in Halifax. The Master and his lodge have taken their $12,000.00 budget and turned over a $42,000.00 jewel of affection for our Masonic widows and our ladies who we do not herald enough. When you go to the Temple in Halifax, take a moment at the Broken Column Memorial. Please pause and give a thought - it is the right ting to do. If you ever see a brother thank him for the effort of his lodge over the past two years for such a wonderful contribution.

We have been notified that Royal Sussex Lodge No.6 may be nominated for a major masonic award for their due diligence, steadfastness and outstanding effort for the masons, their wives, their widows, and those who will come in the future; an outstanding achievement by Royal Sussex Lodge No.6 AF & AM of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia.

Roy E. Lively
PR Chairman

18 MONTHS OF PLANNING