Eleven Secret Herbs and Spices

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and there’s a New Lodge in town! p.5
From the Editor

The other day when surfing the net I came across an interesting article which I would like to share:

If you start with a cage containing five monkeys and inside the cage, hang a banana on a string from the top and then you place a set of stairs under the banana, before long a monkey will go to the stairs and climb toward the banana.

As soon as he touches the stairs, you spray all the other monkeys with cold water.

After a while another monkey makes an attempt with same result... all the other monkeys are sprayed with cold water. Pretty soon when another monkey tries to climb the stairs, the other monkeys will try to prevent it.

Now, put the cold water away.

Remove one monkey from the cage and replace it with a new one.

The new monkey sees the banana and attempts to climb the stairs. To his shock, all of the other monkeys beat the crap out of him. After another attempt and attack, he knows that if he tries to climb the stairs he will be assaulted.

Next, remove another of the original five monkeys, replacing it with a new one.

The newcomer goes to the stairs and is attacked. The previous newcomer takes part in the punishment... with enthusiasm, because he is now part of the "team".

Then, replace a third original monkey with a new one, followed by the fourth, then the fifth. Every time the newest monkey takes to the stairs, he is attacked.

Now, the monkeys that are beating him up have no idea why they were not permitted to climb the stairs. Neither do they know why they are participating in the beating of the newest monkey.

Finally, having replaced all of the original monkeys, none of the remaining monkeys will have ever been sprayed with cold water. Nevertheless, not one of the monkeys will try to climb the stairway for the banana.

Why, you ask? Because in their minds...that is the way it has always been!

This, my friends, is how Lodge operates... and this is why, from time to time:

ALL of the monkeys need to go to a Lodge of Instruction AT THE SAME TIME.
Brethren,

What a summer! I can’t tell you how happy and proud I am to be a Mason and of the Brethren of our Grand Jurisdiction. I have received numerous positive messages as a result of all of our hard work in raising the profile of our great organization. This would not have been possible without the tremendous support from you in carrying forward our theme of Communication and Public Relations. The amount of community parades and the Brothers who came out to support each others’ communities was wonderful to witness. Also impressive is the number of church services that the Masonic Order was a part of. Our active participation and the receptions which followed the church services provided us with an opportunity to engage in discussions with community members and to answer any questions and/or to provide additional information about our fraternity.

Since my installation, Lady Winnie and I have been privileged to attend the very special evenings which gave honor to the Ladies who also have been a major support in the Masonic Order. As was stated during the Ladies nights, I want to reiterate that Ladies, you are very special and thank you for your ongoing support.

I was also privileged to take part in many presentations since my installation. All of the Brethren who received honors were well deserving of them and I am humbled to have been asked to take part in these events; it was very rewarding.

November 11th, 2013, was a great day for Freemasonry in Nova Scotia and I want to personally thank those Brethren who had taken part in the various Remembrance Day ceremonies throughout our jurisdiction. Thank you for your commitment to our serving and retired Veterans and all that they have done for our freedom. Our presence meant a lot to our veterans and we have a tremendous amount of veterans belonging to the Craft.

I am fortunate to have a very competent Grand Director of Ceremonies. RWB Tony Szucs has performed his duties remarkably and has been a great support to me and the Craft. I would be remiss if I did not mention our photographer, Helen Szucs, who has tirelessly accompanied me on all the activities that have been mentioned above. Her commitment to the Craft has greatly assisted in the promotion of Freemasonry’s current theme of Communication and Public Relations. All of her photos can be viewed on the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia’s Website. Helen has also provided copies of the photos, as keepsakes, to each of the individuals who have requested a copy.

I am also fortunate to be supported by the DDGM’s who have provided positive reports about the activities that have been taking place in your districts. We cannot stop now, we must continue to build on what we started this year, that is to continue to build our great organization as we prepare for our upcoming installations.

In closing, I would like to personally thank the Brethren, Tony and Helen Szucs for their efforts in promoting this great fraternity.

George A. Grant
MWTGM
The MWTGM, MWBro. George Grant, and Grand Lodge Officers participated in the Remembrance Day Parade in Halifax on November 11th.
NEW LODGE UNDER DISPENSATION

On Friday October 11th in Truefel Hall, Truro, the Deputy Grand Master instituted a new lodge, Sophia Perennis (Perennial Wisdom).

The MWTGM graciously consented to issue a dispensation to a number of brothers who wished to form a lodge committed to the traditional values of Freemasonry, research and fellowship. This project has been in discussion for over three years and was voiced through articles in the Nova Scotia Freemason. Although not a registered “Traditional Observance Lodge” this new lodge will follow many of the precepts laid down by the movement. All business not prescribed by the Grand Lodge will be conducted at a business meeting prior to the opening of the lodge. The lodge meeting itself will be conducted in a solemn and reverential manner and concern itself with reflection, the Ritual and education. After each meeting the brethren will adjourn to a festive board for fellowship and discussion. As with all lodges visitors will be welcome but they will be asked to contact the Secretary before visiting so that dining arrangements can be made.

Like Loge la France this new lodge will be a special district lodge and will be meeting in different parts of the Province. Unlike Loge La France it will be able to initiate, pass and raise candidates into the Craft. It is hoped to provide each candidate with a meaningful initiatic experience and not rush candidates through the degrees in three months. It is hoped that before progressing to the next degree each brother fully understands the lessons of the preceding degree and is able to articulate those lessons in a personal way.

Each member of the lodge will be expected to contribute to the educational programme of the lodge and all the Charter members of the lodge were required to write a paper on Freemasonry to be shared with the Brethren.

The Lodge will meet only six times a year and although notices will be sent to members and the Grand Lodge office and officers, time and place of meetings will also be available through the lodge website and the Grand Lodge website.

Membership will be limited to around 25 so that all members will have an opportunity to participate in discussion on the educational topics each meeting. The aim is to provide an intimate and meaningful experience for each mason at each meeting.

At the instituting meeting the DGM, R.W.Bro. Paul Frank opened the lodge with the SGW and JGW as his wardens. The GD of C then escorted the charter members of the lodge into the lodge room. The Grand Secretary then read the Dispensation after which the first WM of Sophia Perennis, M.W.Bro. Barry Imber, was seated in the Chair of King Solomon and the Dispensation

The proposed Lodge Seal includes the Ouroboros which often symbolize self-reflexivity or cyclicality, especially in the sense of something constantly re-creating itself, the eternal return, and other things perceived as cycles that begin anew as soon as they end. It can also represent the idea of primordial unity related to something existing in or persisting from the beginning with such force or qualities it cannot be extinguished. Superimposed on the Square and Compasses is the lamp of learning.
was given into his charge.

The WM then directed his officers to take their stations and places. He then called for a period of silence and meditation to consider the important venture upon which they had all agreed.

After the lights were brought up he gave the following presentation:

“In a letter, dated July 1923, W.L. Wilmshurst had written:
’I cannot...point to any lodge under our constitution where the esoteric side of Masonry receives prominence. The conditions under which Masonry is at present conducted and the virtually indiscriminate admission of new members make it almost impossible for a lodge to be carried on upon ideal lines.'

He resolved to do something about this and laid the groundwork in his presidential address to the Huddersfield and District Installed Masters Association in November 1924 when he suggested that brethren who shared his ideal might meet: 'with the intention of conforming to it, and here and there even a small new lodge might be formed for that special purpose. Three years later, on 16th December 1927, The Lodge of Living Stones was consecrated in Leeds. Wilmshurst was installed as the first Master and outlined the purpose and aims of the lodge:

'This lodge has been formed to meet a demand that nowadays is increasingly heard in the Craft for a fuller understanding and realisation of the latent teachings of our Order than usually obtains. It is our design to try to meet the need of a growing minority of brethren who are not content with the routine formalities and social amenities of their lodges, but feel that the Craft was intended to mean more than this and who are eager to learn what that "more" is.'

“We are to speak of the fundamental philosophic secrets concealed within the Masonic system. These our system declares to be many and invaluable and to be kept by Masons in their hearts. They are therefore obviously to be distinguished from the merely formal secrets imparted ceremonially, which are kept in the head and are neither many nor of any value, though (as we shall see) they are deeply significant.

By these secrets, then, is not meant some definite precise information that can be imparted to or withheld from another person at will, but the arcane truths inherent in the system itself; truths needing to be extracted from it, like poetry or music from the printed page, by personal effort and that can be recognised as truths only by the inward responsiveness of the soul itself after deeply meditating and assimilating them.

Wilmhurst - Fundamental Philosophic Secrets within Freemasonry

‘....(T)he text of our rituals and lectures discloses a strange combination of two very different and easily distinguishable levels of teaching; a lower and common-place level which is simple and intelligible to everyone; and a higher and distinctly esoteric level relating to matters of advanced philosophic wisdom.

To the lower level belong the various charges and counsels to morality, and such matters as the simple explanations of the cardinal and other virtues and of the elementary symbolism of building tools. These are matters of no philosophic significance. They have nothing about them distinctive of a secret science or an Initiatory Order. They inculcate only what might be imparted to non-Masons. The ideals of conduct they proclaim are not higher or other than any uninitiated man of rectitude and good feeling normally acts upon, whilst their interpretations of symbolism are adapted to a quite puerile order of intelligence. Of themselves they do not justify the existence of a Secret Order and an elaborate organisation to perpetuate them, and their sole advantage is that they serve as
the foothills to the higher peaks of doctrine and provide a common basis of elementary understanding and conduct among the members of a Society the majority of whom do not look for or aspire to anything more than good fellowship and pleasant social relations, which could just as easily be found in the outside world.

To the higher level, however, belong matters of an entirely different order of instructiveness, matters drawn from and linking us directly with older and advanced systems of philosophic and experimental Mysticism beyond the mental horizon of the average Brother who for want of requisite preparation and instruction (for which also he too often has neither aptitude nor desire), is not only at a loss to understand the main features of our system, but is precluded from vitally benefiting from it. So he remains an initiate in name only, not in fact, whilst the Order instead of cultivating the secret science and royal art to which, nevertheless, it pays much empty lip-service, degenerates into a vast semi-public social and benevolent institution conducted upon the same lines and in the same spirit as characterise the outer world, against which our doors are theoretically meant to be shut and closely tiled."

And it is in the footsteps of Wilmhurst that this specific band of brothers has come together to pursue that search for the “more”. In 100 years it seems that the situation in the Craft remains the same - there is still a need and desire for more Light but a lack of venues to explore those aspects of Freemasonry identified as esoteric.

We might be open to charges of elitism but I for one have no problems with that opinion. Freemasonry has always been elitist. It only accepted those men who would contribute to the mission and harmony of the lodge. The ballot box and investigation committee have been the tools of acceptance and we will be extremely careful in the selection of men who will be invited to join our company. We hope to develop a specific culture for this lodge that will not be to the taste of all masons. We will practice Charity on an individual basis but not as a collective. We will not fund raise to operate the lodge programme nor for outside charities. There are many aspects to Freemasonry, all of which have merit, but this Lodge will allow us to follow our specific path.

As a new lodge we will take some time to develop our operations and conduct specific to our goals within the Constitution. As you have already observed, one of the inclusions into the lodge programme will be a time for reflection and meditation. We will not pay lip-service to, but demonstrate our commitment to keeping the lodge room a sanctified and spiritual place. Before the opening of the lodge we will censor the lodge room, an ancient practice signifying the cleansing and sanctifying of the space. Our lodge room will be a place for ritual, education and reflection and we will strive to make this place conducive to those aims.

Although Wilmshurst may seem dismissive of the surface elements of Freemasonry, they still have a great deal of importance. They may teach lessons at an elementary level but it is from that perspective we can delve into the most fundamental and enlightening meanings. As above, so below. It is through the microcosm that we can explore the macrocosm We are not a research lodge per se. Yes, there will be an emphasis on papers which will include the whole canon; philosophy, history, literature and science. but our search is one that hopefully will lead to self knowledge and enlightenment and achieve that goal of making a good man better.

Wilmshurst and the Masonic Renewal Movement have shown the direction but it is now up to us now to determine our own path. And I look forward to many evenings of
discussion that will hopefully enable us to assist each other in this personal journey.”

The SW, Bro. Leigh McConnell, then spoke to the brethren concerning his wishes for the future path of the lodge.

The DGM gave his best wishes to the lodge and the WM then closed the lodge. As part of their ongoing practice the brethren then moved to a local restaurant for the festive board. The presentation for the night being more of the nature of an address and a reiteration of the lodge’s aims rather than an educational topic, there was no specific topic of discussion at the table, rather an opportunity for fellowship.

The first full meeting was held at the Middleton Temple in November at which time W.Bro. Emile Saad gave a presentation on the use of Hebrew in our Ritual.

*Charter Members of Sophia Perennis U.D. at Middleton Temple*


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Any spare masonic equipment or lodge furniture?

As with the formation of any new lodge there is a need for everything from soup to nuts. So far Sophia Perennis had received a set of collars, a ballot box, white aprons and Bible markers. If you have in the back of your lodge closet anything gathering dust that you would like to loan or donate to the new lodge, please contact the lodge secretary, Bro. Kelly Hancock kwhancock@hotmail.com
New Grand Lodge Museum

Handy with a saw and a hammer?

Interested in volunteering a few hours?

Why not help out in refurbishing a few display cases and getting the new Grand Lodge Museum room at Freemason’s Hall up and running?

For more information contact the Grand Archivist, RW BRo. James Tirrul-Jones at the Grand Lodge office (902) 423-6149
I came across something of interest from the Grand lodge of British Columbia and the Yukon; although it is maybe not the field of the Grand Historian, it does make you rethink some age old masonic questions.

In his Inaugural address on June 23, 2012, the Grand Master of British Columbia, Most Worshipful Brother G. Murray Webster, directed the Vancouver and Victoria Lodges of Education and Research to select five papers--- which he styled "Classical Paper"--- to be distributed to the lodges of the Jurisdiction for discussion. The Classical Paper “Eleven Secret Herbs and Spices” follows for your reading and reflection.

Phil Randa
Grand Historian

Eleven Secret Herbs and Spices

Deep in a bank vault somewhere in Atlanta, Georgia there is a piece of paper with 17 or 18 common ingredients on it. Mix those items in the right proportions under the proper conditions, and you have recreated the world's most popular soft drink: Coca-Cola. Billions of people across the globe know the name, but rumor has it that only three or four company executives, including the company's chief chemist, know the exact formula from that piece of paper in that mysterious vault. Special undisclosed measures are taken to ensure the safety of these individuals, as if they were royalty. They rarely travel together, and when one dies, the others must approve his successor.

This is one example of the lengths to which multi-billion dollar food companies will go to protect the formulas that make their products unique and successful. And, since most of us have heard phrases like "secret blend of eleven herbs and spices" or "secret sauce" it's obvious these companies have also found they benefit from perpetuating the mystique surrounding their closely held confidential recipes. Asking a company spokesman about the location of that bank vault where the formula resides is like asking a security company how they keep a building secure. They're just not going to tell you.

In his book Big Secrets, William Poundstone's sources say the number of people who know the Coca-Cola formula is just two. He also discovered that the bank vault holding the secret formula is owned by the Trust Company of Georgia.

Just as mysterious as the secret formula for Coca-Cola are the eleven herbs and spices in KFC's famous fried chicken coating. The former Kentucky Fried Chicken has shortened its name to KFC, but the company claims the recipe has stayed the same for 40 years. According to KFC spokesperson Jean Litterst less than a handful of people know their multi-million dollar recipe.

Like Coca-Cola, KFC secures its recipe in a bank vault. This one is somewhere in Louisville, Kentucky. To ensure that spice vendors don't know the formula, the secret blend of eleven herbs and spices is mixed at two different locations and then combined elsewhere with the aid of an IBM processing system. All this technology, secrecy and security for a formula that used to be mixed by KFC's founder, Colonel Harland Sanders, on the concrete floor of his own backyard porch.

Orange Julius is another product whose 70-year old formula is also under lock and key. A company spokesperson says only three or four people know exactly what goes into the special powder added to orange juice, ice and sugar water that, when blended, magically turns the drink into a sweet, foamy Orange Julius.

All very interesting, you say, but what has any of this got to do with Freemasonry? Whether we want to admit it or not Freemasonry has always had an aura of mystery about it – the mystique of a "secret
society." We as Freemasons don't build on that - we prefer to use the old, time honoured, hackneyed mantra that we have expounded for so long: "we take a good man and make him better." But like it or not, we do seem to have an indissoluble link with the phrase "secret society." This is easily verified by ‘Googling’ the words "secret society" on the Internet and reading any of the multiple hits you will come up with. Here's an example: "By a secret society was formerly meant a society which was known to exist, but whose members and places of meetings were not publicly known. Today, we understand by a secret society, a society with secrets, having a ritual demanding an oath of allegiance and secrecy, prescribing ceremonies of a religious character, such as the use of the Bible, either by extracts therefrom, or by its being placed on an altar within a lodge room, by the use of prayers, of hymns, of religious signs and symbols, special funeral services, etc." (Rosen, The Catholic Church and Secret Societies, p. 2).

Catholic theologian Johann Michael Raich gives a more elaborate description: "Secret societies are those organizations which completely conceal their rules, corporate activity, the names of their members, their signs, passwords and usages from outsiders or the 'profane.' As a rule, the members of these societies are bound to the strictest secrecy concerning all the business of the association by oath or promise or word of honour, and often under the threat of severe punishment in case of its violation. If such secret society has higher and lower degrees, the members of the higher degree must be equally careful to conceal their secrets from their brethren of a lower degree. Secret societies were founded to promote certain ideal aims, to be obtained not by violent but by moral measures. By this, they are distinguished from conspiracies and secret plots which are formed to attain a particular object through violent means."

It's interesting that many of our brethren have adopted, by means of an explanation of "who we are and what we do," the phrase "we are not a secret society, we are a society with secrets" thinking that this rhetorical explanation will dispel all accusations of us being a "secret society." But after hearing these two preceding definitions one realizes that we are really fooling no one nor explaining anything by using these words because they are synonymous.

It has been my observation both as the secretary of a craft lodge as well as an active Freemason that an increasing number of inquiries concerning membership in our fraternity are coming from young men who are intrigued by the supposed secrecy of our organization (and thus perhaps its perceived elitism) and, to a lesser degree, with references to the Knights Templar rather than the more traditional values of associating with good men or joining an organization by which they may improve themselves. In my lodge, at least two recent candidates gave "wanting to become a Knight Templar" as one of their reasons for petitioning for membership. One candidate was rejected by the investigating committee due to his aggressive fixation with military swords and sword drills.

It is also my observation that our young candidates are better read than their Masonic predecessors of previous generations, but the books they are reading are those of a more esoteric nature. Almost every one of our recent candidates have read books such as Turning the Hiram Key, Turning the Solomon Key, Turning the Templar Key or The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail, The Invisible College, and The Temple and the Lodge. Many candidates have read these books and other books prior to petitioning for membership and are much more informed about Freemasonry that I was when I joined some thirty odd years ago. Yet they have not read nor are they even familiar with books that I would consider basic references in Freemasonry such as those by Bernard Jones, Henry Carr, Albert Mackey, Arthur Waite, John Robinson, Jasper Ridley or that time honoured favourite, Carl Claudy.
Likewise, I find our young Masons, particularly those who have been raised for only a few years, incredibly naïve or uniformed about what I would call the traditional or basic knowledge of our craft – its symbolism and allegory, the meaning of the degrees, and particularly protocol, parliamentary procedure and rules of order.

So what is it that is driving this curiosity about secret societies?

To find an answer I first looked (albeit in a somewhat cursory manner) at another topic popular today in Freemasonry and one on which there have been several Masonic papers written – the increasing differences in generations and what it is that distinguishes one from the other. The two categories of men from whom we are currently drawing the majority of our new members are "Generation X" and "Generation Y." Those in their early to mid thirties are part of Generation X (those born between 1964 -1982). The younger generation, currently in their twenties, is part of Generation Y (born between 1980 -1995). I had a quick look at the characteristics of both and I must confess that I did not at first see anything that would indicate to me that their "generation stereotype" is driving them to become Freemasons.

The one thing I did notice that these two groups have in common, however, is that they are technically savvy and do a lot of their research on the Internet. "Generation Y'ers" in particular can't live a day without the Internet or their Ipod and they're apt to put a wide-screen television in their bedroom. This group lives in a fast-paced world where communication is immediate through text messaging and email, which means they want all the information and the details served to them quickly.

This heavy reliance on the Internet can be both a good thing and a bad thing. The Internet is bursting with information (favourable and unfavourable, accurate and inaccurate) about Freemasonry and people are using it in staggering numbers. For example, the web page of the Grand Lodge of BC and Yukon receives an average of more than 3000 hits per day. That's right – 3000 hits per day! That's an average of about 125 hits per hour or close to two hits per minute. Obviously these hits are not all coming from our own members. And it would be erroneous to presuppose that all the surfing done on all the Internet web pages results in accurate and factual (or even understandable) information about Freemasonry. Those seeking information are bound to find some anti-Masonic sites as well as those of our detractors who suggest we are a secret society, a body of the occult, etc. Some may find this intriguing and pursue it further. But to avoid an unfair bias, I should in all fairness say that we are still getting an equal or perhaps larger group of men who tell us they are joining for the more traditional of self improvement, moral virtue and wanting to associate with men of good character. Despite the Internet, people still buy and read books. Books like The Da Vinci Code generated media coverage with headlines such as:

Mason Mania: Freemasons on the Rise Again
A 'Da Vinci Code' Connection Triggers Interest in Fraternal Group

The article goes on to say, "Like many fraternal organizations, the Freemasons have suffered from shrinking numbers for decades. But a controversial novel has suddenly made one fraternal group hip and is bringing in some new members." Dan Brown's book The Da Vinci Code was propelled by references to the Knights Templar – a group some Freemasons say has a connection to their group. "The short version of the story is that the Knights Templar were kicked out of France and went to England," says Brian Johnson, general lodge administrator in Burlington, New Jersey. "And there's no doubt there's a connection between the Knights Templar and the Freemasons."

"Some people are just curious about the Freemasons. But others who ask questions ultimately become Masons," Johnson said. And that may increase next year when Dan Brown
releases The Solomon Key, his follow-up book to The Da Vinci Code, reportedly a thriller centered around the Freemasons rather than the Templars and set in Washington, D.C.

"Modern-day people, especially younger people, just don't have as much time to devote to social and fraternal organizations," said Ward Guffey, president of the Masonic Temple Corporation which owns the Masonic temple in Dallas Texas. "At the same time, though, Masons do seem to be making a cultural splash. The release of the film version The Da Vinci Code has piqued interest in secret societies and ancient rituals." According to the media, many Masonic leaders see the spike in interest as an opportunity to re-energize Freemasonry. The fraternity has a lot of history on its side – and legend, precisely the kind that is so fascinating to eager consumers of tales like The Da Vinci Code. However, some religious groups, leery of the Masons' focus on rites, vows and rituals, warn their members to steer clear. In particular, the Roman Catholic Church which has famously objected to Masonry since the 1730's.

I should interject at this point that when the non-fictional book Holy Blood, Holy Grail was published in 1982, it too kindled both interest and controversy about Freemasonry. The Da Vinci Code is a much larger repeat. Judging from membership statistics, Holy Blood Holy Grail did not open the floodgates for new candidates. It remains to be seen what effect Dan Brown’s books will have on the number of petitions we receive, and more importantly, retain in the next few years.

Not only books but movies, too, have spotlighted Freemasonry in recent years and created more public awareness of our fraternity. Freemasonry figured prominently in the 2004 Nicolas Cage adventure film, National Treasure, even with its Hollywood tinted plot which the National Geographic News described as "absolutely preposterous." The 2001 movie From Hell, set in London of 1888, is based on the infamous Jack the Ripper case. It presents the allegation that "the Ripper" was actually a Freemason who worked with other Masons to murder and mutilate women who knew secrets about the British Royal family that could have caused the public to be upset with them and with the Freemasons who were in high government positions. Incidentally, this is one movie where Masonic rituals are shown in some detail.

In 2005 the epic film The Kingdom of Heaven was released, a movie set during the Crusades of the 12th century. The script is a heavily fictionalized but does have some allusion (albeit not historically correct) to the Knights Templar and their defense of the city of Jerusalem against the Muslim leader Saladin, who is battling to reclaim the city from the Christians.

One thing that books and movies do cause to occur is that when writers such as Dan Brown cook up a far-out plot under the license of fiction, or when movie directors take liberties with historical data for the sake of making a good movie, readers flock to religious and historical texts to learn more about what really happened, or go to the Internet, where they must again decide what is truth and what is fiction. So my premise is that perhaps this renewed search for information has created a new interest in Freemasonry, not for the traditional reasons of past generations, but as a consequence of a search for truth or enlightenment both about history and about society today and the groups that exist within it.

I would like to summarize these thoughts by going back to the topic of this paper and hopefully explain why I chose it for this presentation. When you read that I was going to talk about "eleven secret herbs and spices" I'm sure each and every one of you immediately thought of Kentucky Fried Chicken, or KFC as it is now known. Food companies such as Coca Cola, KFC, Orange Julius, and many others have found that the hype and mystique surrounding their secret recipe makes for a good marketing
tactic. Promoting the secrecy of that formula and the security surrounding it sends the message that we are getting something original and very special for our dollar; indeed something that we can get nowhere else. But how truly valuable are these corporate secret formulas that have become the heart and soul of these corporations?

Assume for a moment that you were able to get your hands on the actual herb blend for the original recipe from KFC. And for those of you who are fans of television shows such as CSI, it wouldn't be that hard to do if your name was Gilbert "Gil" Grissom or Horatio Caine and you had the right equipment available to you. How much would that recipe really be worth? What damage could that security leak do to KFC? If you think about it, probably not that much. A competitor such as Lee's or Church's or Chubby Chicken probably wouldn't be interested in the recipe. Their success depends on having a unique flavor all their own. They want their own special formulas that appeal to folks who crave a flavor and texture other than what is offered at KFC.

When you think about it, that "secret recipe" is really only an image. It is backed by a distribution and manufacturing network, and a logo that everyone recognizes and trusts – elements that KFC has worked for decades to establish. So those little secret formulas all locked up tight in those armored vaults aren't the real secret to the continuing success of KFC after all, are they? Those secret formulas they are protecting are not even close to as valuable as the company's reputation and marketing savvy. No bank vault contains a secret formula for that.

As you may or may not know, Harland "Colonel" Sanders was initiated into Freemasonry in 1917 and passed and raised in 1919. His gravestone displays the Masonic square and compasses, together with the logos of the Shriners and the Scottish Rite, of which he was a 33o. I mention Colonel Sanders' Masonic affiliation for a reason. The eleven secret herbs and spices associated with his name and his famous food product have a parallel in Freemasonry. In recent years our reputation for the mystique surrounding our secrets has aroused the public curiosity as much if not more so than has our reputation as being men of good character. But does this public curiosity include an awareness that the "secrecy" of our fraternity and the security surrounding it means that we have something original and very special to offer – indeed, something that is offered nowhere else?

Like market-leading products such as Coca Cola and Kentucky Fried Chicken, we too keep our secrets locked up – but not in a bank vault. We lock up our secrets in the safe and sacred repository of a faithful breast every time we close our lodge. But unlike market-leading products such as Coca-Cola and Kentucky Fried Chicken who jealously guard their secrets, we are willing to make our secrets known to anyone who shows that they are worthy of receiving them.

And that's what we must be cognizant of as Freemasons. Just as KFC and Coca-Cola, secrets notwithstanding, it is our reputation – what we stand for – not the mystique that will preserve our fraternity and keep it viable. And that's what we must jealously guard.

I mentioned previously that KFC and Coca-Cola have corporate logos that everyone recognizes and trusts. These are elements that they have worked on for decades to establish. The same should apply to Freemasonry. The square and compasses should be universally recognized. I recently read (and I apologize that I cannot find the source of this statement) that whereas some 60 to 80 years ago eighty percent of the population immediately recognized the square and compasses as a Masonic symbol, today that number has dropped to somewhere around three per cent. We need to ask ourselves why this is. Would Coca-Cola or KFC still be the corporate leaders they are today if only three percent of the population recognized their logo?
If I may again indulge you with the allegory I am attempting to develop, may I point out that the franchising of his product was a major source of Bro. Sanders’ success and wealth. And you can be sure that those to whom a franchise was granted were closely scrutinized and monitored to ensure that KFC’s reputation for quality was maintained. When you think about it, our individual Masonic lodges can be likened to a franchise. The franchise is granted when Grand Lodge constitutes a lodge and grants it a warrant. That warrant is presented to every incoming Worshipful Master at his installation and he is charged to guard it such that it may be transferred to his successor as pure and unsullied as it was when he received it. But who are the stewards of this cherished Masonic franchise? You can be sure that if a KFC franchise was not maintained to the exacting standards of the parent company, the franchise would be in jeopardy if not revoked. Can we say the same about our lodge warrants? I am sure all of us can think of at least one lodge where the franchisees should be taken to task for failing to maintain the corporate image. Not wanting to appear negative or overly critical, I will not expound further, preferring to leave this observation for your private contemplation.

Finally, we have all heard the standard definition from the Fellow Craft Degree: 
‘Freemasonry is a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.’ Unless properly explained, this is puzzling to the candidate and quite incomprehensible to anyone outside the Craft. We need a definition that is short, succinct, and understandable. Think of Coca-Cola: "It’s the real thing." Think of KFC: "Finger lickin’ good." Think of Staples Office Supplies: "That was easy!" How many of us could volunteer three, four, five or even ten, fifteen or twenty words that would immediately cause us to think of Freemasonry or succinctly identify our fraternity? But we must be careful. All too often, troubled companies think a new ad campaign will fix what ails them. As a matter of fact, it often makes things worse.

One last observation with respect to our "Masonic franchise," if I may coin such a phrase: we need to deliver a quality product. The report It’s About Time published by the Masonic Information Center contains several points that we as franchise holders should be not only be aware of but working to improve. One of these areas is the need for public awareness in claiming our Masonic identity. Another is a willingness to face the facts that society and lifestyles are changing, and although we cherish our time honoured traditions, we must at the same time make a few adjustments to steer us and our fraternity on a path consistent with the current social and work environment. We need to generate renewed energy and break out of our current patterns of lethargy. Freemasonry can be and is exciting. We need to rekindle that excitement for the benefit of our new as well as our existing members. We need to keep our Masonic franchise fine tuned so that it is constantly and consistently in tune with our Masonic goals and objectives, not to mention the wonderful precepts of our time honoured fraternity.

In short, brethren, what we need is some "finger lickin’ good" Freemasonry. Thank you for your attention.

REFERENCES:
"National Treasure": Freemasons, Fact, and Fiction Stefan Lovgren in Los Angeles for National Geographic News November 19, 2004 informationliberation webpage Assistant Features Editor John A. Zukowski contributed to this story.
The Rossyly Hoax by Robert Cooper Published June 2007
It’s About Time, Masonic Information Center, 2005
MASONIC FOUNDATION BURSARY PROGRAM

GOAL: To provide financial assistance to graduating Senior High School students with their education at the University level (Atlantic Provinces) or Nova Scotia Community Colleges.

METHOD OF APPLICATION: Students apply to a Lodge in their area. This is usually done through their local High School Guidance Department. Lodge Bursary Committee decides who receives the award.

CRITERIA: Bursary is given to a student with good academic standing, community involvement and financial need.

AMOUNT OF BURSARY: The amount given by the Lodge will be matched by the Masonic Foundation. Funds can be dispersed by the Masonic Foundation’s Bursary Administrator once all paper work is received from the sponsoring Lodge including a completed REGISTRATION FORM from the Institution the student is attending (Registration form is included in the Bursary Package the student receives).

MATCHED BURSARY FUNDING: Dalhousie University and St. Mary’s University have agreed to match the total Masonic Bursary Award provided the student maintains their academic standing for the First Semester. This matching is not automatic; all criteria must be met by the Student Recipient.

THE MASONIC FOUNDATION OF NOVA SCOTIA IS PROUD TO ASSIST OUR YOUTH IN THEIR EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON THE FOUNDATION WEBSITE at http://masonicfoundationofnovascotia.ca

Peter Ponsford, SGW
Vice Chairman Board of Directors

BAAL’S (BAAL’S) BRIDGE SQUARE

At the reconstruction of Baal’s Bridge in Limerack, Ireland, in 1830, a brass square was found in the foundations. This square known as the Baal’s Bridge Square is in the possession of Lodge No.13, Upper Munster, Ireland. The inscription can be seen in the picture of a rubbing of the square with the date 1507. The old bridge is referenced in materials dating back to 1558. For more information check out http://www.freemasonsnorthmunster.com/Baal’s_Bridge_Square.htm.
ACACIA, CHARITY & UNITY LODGE ANNUAL LADIES NIGHT

On September 21st TMWTGM with Lady Winnie Benton, attended the Lunenburg Ladies Night. This Annual event is always well attended and gives an opportunity to present Widow’s Pins and to acknowledge the support of the wives of the Craft.

MWB George Grant, related that the Grand Master’s Jewel is being placed on the Altar of each lodge on his official visit in memory of the brothers who have passed to the Grand Lodge Above.

Brother Calvin Carter not only was the Chef for the evening, he also served many ladies with a smile.

Brother Phillip Ott working his FIRST ladies event.

Lady Shirley Place (Charity Lodge # 69) receiving her Widows Pin from MWB George Grant. WB Kevin Ernst and RWB Tony Szucs look on.

M.W.Bro. Dave Waterbury and Lady Annie Mae.

Master of Ceremonies for the evening from Unity Lodge # 4 VWB Graham Schaffenburg.
In the mid 1800's the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts published a monthly magazine "Freemasons' Monthly Magazine". Here is an article from 1866

"Since the acquisition of Nova Scotia by Great Britain by the Peace of Paris in 1788, that Province, like all the other British Provinces, has been held to be within the concurrent jurisdiction of the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and we had supposed the relation was agreeable and profitable to all parties, allowing for some inconveniences incident to the secondary power to which the Lodge: in all the Provinces are necessarily subjected, and their great distance from the parent bodies. But however this may have been in times past, and however successfully the system of Provincial Grand Lodges may have worked, when the Lodges in the Province were few and the members not numerous, our brethren in Nova Scotia have recently come to the conclusion that they can best serve their own interests, and insure the future prosperity of the Order, by declaring their independence of their ancient mother, and "setting up an establishment" for themselves. They took this hint from their Canadian Brethren; and as secession worked well in that case, we do not know any reason why it should not prove equally successful in theirs. It is true that the Grand Lodge of Canada had to struggle hard for its existence, and our brethren in Nova Scotia may be subjected to the same trials. But such struggles and trials are incident to all new enterprises. We are not inclined to discuss the legality of the movement. We did that in the Canada case. An obvious good may be some apology for a doubtful proceeding. Cromwell and his followers thought so in their day, and so did our fathers in theirs. But this is a matter which will doubtless be amicably adjusted by the parties more immediately interested in it. In the meantime, we content ourselves by announcing the fact, that ten of the Lodges in Nova Scotia have united and organized an independent Grand Lodge in that Province, “in order,” they say, “to insure the rights and privileges which the growing interest of the craft imperatively demand; and having duly and regularly installed their officers according to ancient usage,” they respectfully and earnestly request the Grand Lodges of this country to recognize them, regarding such recognition as “essential to their future prosperity.” This is of course a request with which each Grand Lodge will comply or not, according to its own sense of propriety, and with a due regard to its own relations with the Grand Lodges of Great Britain. It is certainly desirable that those Grand Bodies should be heard in a matter of so much importance to them. The ten Lodges in question derived their existence from them; and they were bound to them by ties of allegiance and obligation. These, so far as we are informed, have been abnegated and severed by the act of one party only, and that the subordinate. Still, many of the Grand Lodges did not hesitate to recognize the Grand Lodge of Canada, when organized in exactly the same way and on the same principles; and they may not be indisposed to adopt a different course towards their brethren in Nova Scotia. The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, in the former case, thought that it was bound in good faith to await the action of the Grand Lodge of England. If it should determine to pursue the same policy in the present instance, it will not be from any want of kindness towards their brethren in Nova Scotia, but from a sense of duty to the great principle involved, and the respect which it can never cease to entertain for its venerable and honored parent.

The new Grand Lodge is held at Halifax; and its principal officers are William H. Davies, M.D., Grand Master; William Taylor, D. G. M.; Robert J. Romans, S. G. W.; A. K. Mackinley, J. G. W.; William Garvin, G. Tr.; C. J. Macdonald, G. Sec.”
IN AND AROUND THE JURISDICTION

RWBro. Ira Corkum receiving his 10 year Service Medal as Treasurer of Eastern Light #72 from 2002-12. Presenting the medal is RWBro. Sean Reid DDGM Antigonish-Guysborough District. He was making his first official visit to Eastern Light that evening.

RWBro. Everald Armstrong, DDGM Halifax 1, and a number of other brothers from Equity No.106 attended Mrs. Aleta Williams’ 90th birthday celebrations. She is the daughter of one of Equity’s #106 founding members and sister to Brother Noel Johnson, past secretary Equity #106.

VWB Ron Barkhouse receives Meritorious Service Award on Sunday September 29th, 2013. Seven Members from Norwood Lodge No. 135, along with M.Wor. Bro. Grant and Rt. Wor. Bro. Szucs attended the presentation.

MWB George Grant presents the plaque to VWB Stephen Veinotte (above) and VWB Dion McKay (below) in recognition of their Meritorious Service on behalf on the Brethren of Hillcrest Lodge.

Music was enjoyed by all in attendance.

RWB Randall Mitchell presented roses to the Widows.
The Colchester District Church Parade took place on October 20th. The MWTGM and Grand Wardens were present.

Volume of the Sacred Law being carried into First United Church.

VWB Alan McKay leads the way.
MWBro. Roy Lively, WB Wayne Hollis, Brother Tommy Barter and Brother Ray Simmons smile for the camera before getting their certificates for building the winning float in the Natal Day Parade.

MWB George Grant surrounded by some of the Grand Lodge Officers who attended the Dedication Ceremony of the refurbished pillars in Halifax on October 26th.

MWB George Grant reading the Second Lesson at the Pictou District Church
St. Andrews Presbyterian in Whycocomagh where DDGM Rev’d Andrew MacDonald presided over the Cape Breton North-South Masonic District Annual Church Service.

The Caledonian Orchestra played a concert in Amherst sponsored by the Cumberland District Masonic Association to benefit the Cumberland Early Intervention Programme.

Queens 34 in Sherbrooke showing the group of masons who gathered for an evening of fellowship along with the DDGM Sean p. Reid who was paying Queens 34 an official visit.
Rev. Dr. Randy Crossman and MWB George Grant along with Several Grand Lodge Officers at the Kings District Church Service.

Eastern Light 72 in Guysborough when the fourth member of the craft Bro. Justin Grant was presented his Lewis Jewel in an informal gathering in the temple. This is a 3 generation photo, l to r: R.W. Bro. Ed Grant, PDDGM Ant-Guysborough; Bro. Justin Grant, serving member of our Armed Forces; R.W. Bro. Donald Grant, PDDGM; and W.M. Bro. Darryl Grant, Master of Eastern Light 72.

R.W Bro. Jack Ronalds W.M. of Temple 57 presenting a cheque to Ms. Sonya Sauve, Principal of the Mulgrave Memorial Education Centre in the amount of $41,000.00 to be used in the schools' breakfast program. The money was from Temple 57 and the Masonic Foundation Shared Funds Program.
Cumberland District DDGM, R.W.Bro. George Anderson, is received in Wallace Lodge for the beginning of the District meeting on November 9th.

The Cape Breton North - South District meeting held at Framboise November 2nd
The WWII Annual Remembrance Church Service Association 43rd Anniversary St. Agnes Church Halifax, NS 8th November 2013

Altar at St Agnes Church with the Legion Honor Guard/Colors on both sides

R.W.Bro. Darrell Thurber
Keith Lodge No.17

R.W.Bro. Angus Hoddinott, Royal Albert
Lodge No.19

W.Bro. Donald Matheson
Sircom Lodge No.66

Bro. Dewey Franklyn Dauphinee
John Albrow Lodge No.122

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