Is Masonic Ignorance a CRIME?
From the Editor

A slightly different (and old) Robbie Burns story....

It was in one of those new suburban districts where row upon row of “wartime” houses had been built. The Parish Priest decided one day, he wanted to get acquainted with those newly moved in people, so he started off to visit house after house. Most of them were occupied by returned soldiers who, somehow, did not seem to be very devout. In fact the priest’s reception had been rather cool. Finally, almost discouraged, he reached a house where, through the open window, he could see on the wall of the living room one of those elaborately framed pictures of Pope Leo XIII, in his papal robes, tiara and all. Surely this was one place where he would be well received! So he knocked at the door, certain of a favorable reaction to his religious admonitions. To his surprise the door was opened by a tall Scot who seemed rather surprised to see him and said: “Well, what do you want with me?” -I’m your Parish priest and I’ve come to make your acquaintance. -Pleased to meet you . . . but I’m no parishioner of yours, sir.

-How’s that, you are a good Catholic. -Nothing of the kind, I’m a Presbyterian! -Then why have you got the Pope’s picture on your wall? -There’s no pope’s picture here, sir. -Why, yes there is, said the priest, pointing at the chromolithographed picture in the living room. -That’s not the pope! -Sure it is. -Are you sure? -Of course I am, that is His Holiness Pope Leo XIII of sainted memory. -Oh! the darn peddler!

-He was no peddler. He was a count at the court of Italy before he joined the church. -It’s not him I mean . . . I mean the peddler who sold me that framed picture by telling me it was one of Bobbie Burns in full Masonic regalia!

This stained glass window from Canterbury Cathedral in England was presented by the Masons of Kent. The lower panels show the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and the upper panels the coronation of her father, King George VI.
THE GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the elected and appointed officers and the Brethren of this great Jurisdiction for their dedication and continued support that was shown to me during my term as Grand Master. I am so very proud of the seriousness in which you have demonstrated your commitment to the Craft.

During the upcoming months, I will be attending as many installations as possible. Parade season is quickly approaching, beginning with the Apple Blossom parade in May, 2014. Additional information about this parade will be sent to the Lodge secretaries and will also be posted on the Grand Lodge website. I am looking forward to a very exciting and active summer being out in the community. Please contact the Chairman of the Public Relations Committee to advise if your Lodge is planning to invite the community to a public barbeque.

As you may be aware a contingent of Brothers and their partners travelled to Cuba and were well received by one of the Lodges that was close to their resort. They were provided a tour of the Grand Lodge building, in Havanna. I was unable to attend this tour with them as installations delay our trip. During our visit to Cuba, I was able to attend their Grand Session and was also well received by the Grand Master and the Brethren. Fraternal greetings were exchanged and I was given an opportunity to speak to the Brethren, which was a great honor.

I attended the All Canadian Conference in Winnipeg where I met Grand Masters or their representatives from all across Canada. This conference is well worth attending. Discussions of similar issues such as: members’ retention, suspensions and demits; public relations to heighten our awareness and visibility in the community and to promote freemasonry along with the numerous charities that we support, demonstrate that jurisdictions all across Canada continue to address the same issues.

I continue to enjoy my term as Grand Master and have been overwhelmed at times, by the fellowship. You, The Brethren, have made my year as Grand Master and I thank you all. This jurisdiction of Nova Scotia will prosper and grow as we have the momentum and enthusiasm. Let’s not stop now and let’s keep it going. I intend to participate in as many activities throughout our jurisdiction as possible throughout the summer. I am only a phone call or an email away.

In closing may the Great Architect of the Universe shine down upon our jurisdiction and protect our love ones and keep us strong so we can strengthen our Lodges by working together.

George A. Grant
The Most Worshipful The Grand Master
Our Masonic journey to Cuba began at 3:20 am on Saturday March 15th when the Limo Service provided by WB Vern Miller arrived to take us to the airport for our 6 am departure.

We met the group from Nova Scotia before boarding our SunWing flight, and 4½ hours later we arrived in sunny Cuba, quickly forgetting the long hard winter in NS.

After relaxing for a few days we hired a bus, on Tuesday, to take us and our wives to Havana for the day. Our first stop was at the Grand Lodge of Cuba where the MW Grand Master Raimundo Gomez and his entourage greeted us in front of the Masonic building. Following hand shakes we were led into the building for a well organized tour. The Lodge room, capable of seating 400, was theatre in size with a balcony in the West. After many pictures were taken we moved into the Masonic Museum where we saw a number of Masonic Memorabilia. The Grand Master talked about a replica of the Grand Lodge building with all the names of the Lodges engraved around the base.

The Masonic significance of the Cuban Flag was then explained to us. Designed by a Mason, Bro. Lopez, we were told the meaning behind the flag and its colours. Masonically they include the 3, 5, and 7, steps found in our lecture of the 2nd Degree. The colours represent: Blue -Military Rule; White - Purity and Justice; the equilateral triangle represents Faith in God; the five point star represents Fellowship under God.

The all seeing eye was originally supposed to go where the 5 point star is today, however, Bro. Lopez realized that it would be too difficult to work it in silk and bunting.

Following our visit to Grand Lodge our bus took us to Revolution Plaza to visit the spot where Castro talked to a large crowd for many hours straight. After another short bus trip we enjoyed lunch and then walked through the streets of Old Havana which brought back many memories to me of Old Quebec city here in Canada.

On Wednesday we stayed at the resort, enjoying the beach and high waves produced by the Nor’easter that took place the day before. Tragically the day ended with a drowning that occurred right in front of us. A young man and his son had gone out too far and only the son could be saved. The young man and his family were scheduled to return to Ottawa the next day. A very sad experience that one does not wish to ever have to witness again.

On Thursday, another sunny day, we claimed an area by the pool and proudly flew the NS flag. That evening we hired a bus to take us to a lodge meeting in Matanzas at “Obreros Del Progresso Logia” translated means “Lodge Works of Progress”. Again once the bus arrived the Worshipful Master and his officers met the bus outside the lodge, greeting all of us and leading us into the lodge hall. The Lodge room was old but solid, the marble steps leading to the main officers of the lodge, with engraved words on the risers were 3 steps for the Jr. Warden, 5 steps for the Sr. Warden and 7 steps for the Master, as described in the lecture of the Fellowcraft Degree.

The Lodge meeting was in Spanish with an interpreter for our benefit. The historian gave a short talk on the history of their lodge. Following the closing of Lodge, the historian, who also has his own music school where he teaches, invited some of his students to play their instruments and sing for us. It was an excellent presentation.

Brotherly Love prevails in Cuba with over 30,000 Masons and close to 400 Lodges with 111 of these lodges in Havana alone.

In closing I would like to mention that throughout the visit I was acknowledged as being a mason once they noticed my ring and language was no longer a barrier. We were brothers!
As you all know, being seen working is almost as important as the work itself. To that end, your Public Relations Committee would like to draw your attention to its most current efforts.

One of these projects has been the creation of a series of vignettes, much like the “Heritage Minutes” we used to see on TV.

Our first one is entitled “Since 1738” and is an historical account of the creation of the first Grand Lodge in Nova Scotia. The second is “Coffee Shop Conversation” and features two high school buddies who meet up years later and one learns the other is a freemason. The third is “The Bluenose Connection” and tells the tale of the designing, building and crewing of this famous ship by Freemasons.

Our current project is “Ambushing Alexander”, where we learn how this famous man, Alexander Keith, was more than just a brew master and what part the Craft played in his life.

Upcoming projects being discussed include whether or not there is a Masonic connection to Oak Island, why people associate the Knights Templar with Freemasonry and maybe a video tour of the average lodge explaining some of the key offices and tenents. Other vignettes such as Sir Sanford Fleming and the Invention of Time Zones are in progress.

As you can well imagine, many hundreds of hours have been spent on these vignettes and we wish them to receive as wide a viewing as possible. So we ask all lodges to share our YouTube channel “GLNS Video” in your newsletters and if you have it, your lodges webpage. For those brothers using social media (Facebook etc…) we ask that you watch our efforts and “share” them so as many possible people can see them.

We often complain that we wished the public knew what the Craft was really about, now is YOUR chance to help make that happen. We’re counting on you!”

Peter Foote
Valley Lodge #90, Berwick
PR Committee on Vignettes
All Masons naturally seek for “more light.” If they love the principles of Freemasonry, they cherish a desire to learn more of the history and literature of such a noble Order, and become acquainted with the law, usages, and jurisprudence governing Freemasonry at the present day.

They desire to give information to their less informed brethren, who have just been obligated on its holy altars.

As “education makes the man,” so it also makes the Mason. The obligation taken on the holy altar does not virtually make a man a Mason. The Masonic world acknowledges him as such, but if he has no knowledge of Masonry; and does not seek to obtain any, he is simply a fraud upon the Craft, and has no rights that Masons are bound to respect. He is a living monument of the folly, so common at the present day, of making Masons of all applicants, without regarding their mental qualifications. A wide distinction should be made between candidates for Masonry and the idiotic asylum.

Mr. Pointless makes application to be made a Mason, because he finds that Masonry is very popular, and he thinks he will be able to sell more cabbages in the market. A correct prognosis would make very little difference between his head and the cabbage heads he sells in the market. Both are harmless specimens of verdancy, unequalled in the vegetable kingdom.

Mr. Pointless never had an idea above an oyster in all his life. Two distinct ideas never crept into that head at the same time, because it would cause an explosion. The boiler would burst, like any other boiler. It was a wise provision of nature that such boilers should burst.

He fully realizes that:
“The wise are happy, nature to explore; The fool is happy that he knows no more.”

The committee call upon Mr. Pointless, and find him an honest, truthful, upright man, with no bad habits, and an exemplary member of Rev. Mr. Blowhard’s church. The committee make a favorable report, and Mr. Pointless is made a Mason in due and ancient form.

No one could measure his appreciation of the degrees by the quart or gallon. As years roll by, his knowledge of Masonry is just about the same as that he possesses of the differential calculus, of Socrates, or Hippocrates. He cannot be stimulated to learn anything, because he invariably says he “has no larnin’.” He dies in good standing, without ever having been able to prove himself a Mason, or even give the passwords.

The question arises, when Mr. Pointless dies, did Masonry make him a better man, or make him serve his fellow-men as the Bible teaches? All must reply in the negative. Mr. Pointless did not profit by the valuable lessons taught in Masonry, because he knew nothing about them, and was too ignorant to learn them. But can he be blamed for his ignorance? Most assuredly; for in this country schools are free, and education flows like the mountain streamlet, and he who refuses to drink at its fountain is a criminal.

The ignorance of such a man casts a stain upon Masonry. No such person can be considered a worthy candidate. His life was not only a blank to Masonry, but an actual disgrace. The dangerous classes are always ignorant men. Mobs and riots originate among these classes. Ignorant men are dangerous to Masonry. They must be kept out. In the dark days of anti-masonry, it was the ignorant men in the Craft who rose up and took the life of our beloved Order. If dark days come again, the same class will do the same thing. We can only judge the future by the past. Antimasonic conventions have been held the past year in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; Syracuse, New York; Worcester, Massachusetts; and in various other places. The cloud is now no larger than a man’s hand, but it may increase, until it bursts into a storm that will sweep all before; it, as it did
forty years ago. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

There are too many drones in the Masonic hive, whose negligence is only surpassed by their ignorance. They have passed through all the degrees, but never visit their Lodges, Chapters, Councils, or Commanderries. They howl once a year, when they pay their dues to the secretary, otherwise they do not disturb the harmony of the Craft. As they joined Masonry in order to benefit themselves, they never give a dollar for charity. They look upon Masonry as a popular Order, but should a storm arise and its popularity be shaken, these men would be the first to leave the ship. Then they would declare that they never had a good opinion of it. Such hypocrites are always ignorant men, and their ignorance is a crime in Masonry.

We have also a class of sincere and enthusiastic Masons, who are not ignorant in one sense, yet they are in another. They have committed to memory the ritual, so they can confer almost any degree, and yet they know so little of the history, literature, and jurisprudence of Masonry, that any profane would make them blush for shame if he asked them very common questions. Their senseless gabble over the ritual makes the Craft call them “Parrot Masons,” because they learn Masonry as the parrot learns a language. Darwin would say that their origin could be traced back to a parrot. With contracted and narrow ideas about Masonry, they oppose the publication of anything on Masonry in newspapers or periodicals, and have a cold chill whenever they see a word in print about Masonry. They have an idea that Masonry is something like a black coal-hole, in which no light should enter. They foster ignorance, by opposing everybody in the Order whose ideas are not as narrow as their own. They oppose Masonic books and papers, because they educate Masons to know more than they ever hope to possess. All their long lives they have been “Dropping buckets into empty wells,

And growing old in drawing nothing up.”

Some of the most ignorant even go so far as to oppose the calling of Masonic meetings through the daily newspapers, or the simple announcements what degrees would be worked. They can give no reason for such foolish and ridiculous assurances, and only refer to the fact, that King Solomon did not publish such notices, as no newspapers then existed! If they followed King Solomon in other things as closely as in this, they would each possess more wives than Brigham Young. Would that be Masonic also?

“Where ignorance is bliss ‘Tis folly to be wise.”

All the above-named classes need “more light,” in accordance with the strict meaning of that term in Masonry. This light is simply more knowledge. The great question to meet now, face to face, is how this Masonic information can be imparted. It is, perhaps, the most important question now discussed by learned Masons all over the world.

A diagnosis of this disease in Masonry has been made, the prognosis given, and now the remedy must be applied. There is a specific that stands ready to cure ignorance in any form, no matter how virulent. It is reading, study, and thinking. If Masons will only do their own thinking, and not hire it, done by the job, there will be a radical change. If they will study Masonry as a science, they will glean rich gems from her precious mines. If they will read the history and literature of Masonry, they will be astonished to find so rich a harvest. Well-informed Masons often say that Masonry has no literature. The proceedings of Grand Lodges, Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies all over the world, the different Masonic events that are celebrated by addresses, orations, poems, etc., all furnish a rich current literature of Freemasonry.

The reports on foreign correspondence, in all the Grand Bodies in the United States, compare favorably with our best magazine literature. Here is a rich field, in which to gather information, and to obtain all the
Masonic news in every State. And yet how few Masons carefully peruse them! The writer reads annually over three thousand pages of proceedings of Grand Bodies, and two thousand pages of Masonic addresses, poems, and newly published books on Masonry, and yet feels ashamed that he only has time to read these five thousand pages.

The other sources of Masonic information are all good, but cannot compare with a monthly magazine. This is unquestionably the best. Such varied information is obtained, that any Mason who takes a monthly or weekly Masonic publication, and reads it carefully, is generally the best educated on all Masonic subjects, and knows also what is being done by his fraters abroad. He finds answers to all the questions that naturally occur to an inquiring mind, and finds it his best Masonic companion. In Freemasonry, the quest of the Absolute, I take it, is the search for those ideals and the perfection of existence, which can only be found and is embodied in the Deity Himself.

BY JOHN EDWIN MASON, M. D.
National Freemason - 1872

A WHALE OF A TALE

On Thursday, On Dec. 14, 2005, the front-page of the San Francisco Chronicle reported that two days before a female humpback whale had been found. She had been entangled in a spider web of crab traps and lines and would die. A fisherman spotted her a few miles outside the Golden Gate bridge and called in an environmental group for help. Within a few hours, the rescue team arrived and determined that she was so bad off that the only way to save her was to dive in and untangle her. This was a very dangerous proposition as one slap of the tail could kill a rescuer.

Hundreds of pounds of traps that caused her to struggle to stay afloat weighted her down. She also had hundreds of yards of line rope wrapped around her body, her tail and her torso, and a line tugging in her mouth. The team worked for hours with curved knives and eventually freed her. When she was free, the divers say she swam in what seemed like joyous circles. She then came back to each and every diver, one at a time, and nudged them, pushed them gently around and thanked them. Some said it was the most incredibly beautiful experience of their lives. The person who cut the rope out of her mouth says her eye was following him the entire time, and he will never ever be the same.

We as Masons are blessed and fortunate to be surrounded by Brothers who will help us get untangled from the things that are binding us. Things like depression, alcoholism, envy, lust, self-indulgence, greed, et cetera. May you always know the joy of giving and receiving gratitude and love.
INSTALLATION AND PRESENTATIONS AT AD ASTRA

Ad Astra Worshipful Master Guillermo Gomez conducted the Lodge’s 55th Installation of Officers Ceremonies in Freemasons Hall, Fairview on February 19th, in a most exemplary manner. Most Worshipful Brother George Grant, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia and visiting Worshipful Masters of Halifax Districts 1 and 2 participated in the ceremonies. The Grand Master was accompanied by RW Brothers Paul Frank Deputy Grand Master, Peter Ponsford Senior Grand Warden, Everald Armstrong District Deputy Grand Master Halifax District No.1 and other Grand Lodge Officers.

Following the Installation Ceremonies the Grand Master presented Ad Astra Brothers Earl Banks and Reo Day with bars to their Long Service Jewels denoting 65 years as members and service in the Masonic Fraternity, and to VWor Bro. Carson Baxter the 50 Year Long Service Jewel. Ad Astra VWor Bro. Richard Hollies who now lives in New Brunswick requested that the Lodge keep his 50 Year Jewel until he has an opportunity to visit as receiving it in his home Lodge "would mean far more to me than in the mail or a lodge here in NB". Ad Astra Immediate Past Master WBro Emile Saad was presented with the Past Master's Jewel by RW Bro. Everald Armstrong.

Grand Master MWBro. George Grant presents 65 year bars to RWBro. Earl Banks and Bro. Reo Day and presents VWBro. Carson Baxter with his 50 Year Long Service Jewel (top right).

RWBro. Everald Armstrong DDGM Halifax District No.1 presents WBro. Emile Saad with the Past Master’s Jewel
WHO IS A MASTER MASON?

BY REV. BRO. J. K. FULLER, GRAND ORATOR
GRAND LODGE OF IOWA. Masonic Monthly - 1864

LATITUDE and longitude on the earth’s surface, are measured by degrees, minutes, and seconds, and the smaller divisions, the minutes and seconds, are estimated to be equally important with the degrees, and absolutely indispensable to the perfection of measurement. So that he, who placing undue emphasis on the degree, is unmindful of the minutes, will be regarded as unskillful and defective in his calculus. And so brethren, in computing our Masonic latitude and longitude, it is to be feared too great stress has been laid upon the degrees, as such, while too little importance has been attached to the minutes and seconds, or what Masonry enjoins upon us between the degrees. It is to this defection, this criminal want of attention to what have been falsely called the little things of Masonry, that such false estimates have been made as to the character of our institution, and that profanes have sometimes said, Masons are no better than other people, whereas, Masons should so exemplify their principles in their lives, as to constrain others to desire admission to our rights, lights, and benefits.

But I hasten to the consideration, who is a Master Mason? I hear a brother say, be is one who is regularly initiated, passed and raised, according to the due and ancient form. But does this really make a Master Mason? I answer unhesitatingly, no. Masonry, as you are aware, is a great moral science, and in strictness he only is a Master Mason, who has succeeded in mastering the whole subject in all its parts, whether speculative, perceptive, or practical. He who has simply graduated on the third degree in Masonry, has only entered the vestibule of our glorious old temple, having not yet penetrated far enough to become familiar with its sublime mysteries. If to live in a christian country, to profess the christian religion, and join a christian church necessarily makes a man a christian, then to have taken the third degree in Masonry, makes a man a genuine Mason; but the premise being false the conclusion is of course untrue; still farther, a person may take upon him the solemn obligations of christianity, and still have done nothing more than “stolen the livery of Heaven, to serve the devil in.” So if you were to ask a brother what makes him a Mason, and he were to answer, my obligation, he would have but half answered your question, because his obligation only makes him a Mason nominally; not de facto. It is the working out of that obligation into the life that makes him such in reality; it is profession and practice, married faith and works, as cause and effect, that illustrate Masonry, as well as christianity.

I have already suggested that Masonry is a fountain of light; allow me now to recur to one of the first questions propounded after a lodge of E. A. has been alarmed, and also to the answer. Here is an admission, whatever may have been his prior advantages for mental culture, that he is then in darkness, and blind as compared with what he expects to enjoy by admission to our mysteries. What comest thou hither to do? The answer indicates that sometimes at least he finds his passions controlled by self, that unclean demoniac spirit which humanity imbibed at the fall; and he comes to our altars that selfishness which has forcibly inaugurated itself on the throne of the soul, may be deposed; self, which makes man a slave to ambition, lust, pride, and all that viperous brood of nestling demons which ambush in the corrupted heart; self, which like an incubus settles with its fearful atmosphere of gloom upon the spirit, crushing out every elevating emotion, and stifling every heavenward aspiration; self, which like an unclean bird builds its nest in our passions and shelters its fledgelings amid the clustering branches of our affections, and by the bewitching music of its song, lulls us into a
lethargic repose, upon the very verge of some engulfing maelstrom of destruction. And so he presents himself at our altar, and enters our consecrated Temple, that he may learn how to subdue these selfish passions, how to curb this inclination to gratify the sensual appetites, and how to repel all these importunities to deviate from the path of holy right.

His name is John. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans and no shoes.

This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He was the top of his class. Kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Mason recently while attending college. After moving to his new town, he finds that down the street from his new apartment is a well-dressed, very conservative Lodge. One day John decides to go there after work. He walks in with shoes, jeans, his work shirt, and long hair. The Lodge has already started and so John starts looking for a seat.

The Lodge is completely packed and he can’t find a seat. By now the Brethren are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. John gets closer and closer to the East and, when he realizes there are no seats, he squats down right on the carpet.

(Although perfectly acceptable behavior at a college fellowship, trust me, this had never happened in this Lodge before!) By now the Brethren are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick. About this time, the Secretary realizes that from way at the back of the Lodge, a Past Master is slowly making his way toward John. Now the Past Master is in his eighties, has silver-gray hair, and a three-piece suit. A good man, very elegant, very dignified, and very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is saying to themselves that you can’t blame him for what he’s going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid in the Lodge? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy.

The Lodge is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man’s cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can’t even hear anyone breathing. The Secretary can’t even continue with the “Minutes” until the Past Master does what he has to do. And now the Lodge watches as this elderly man drops his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to John and welcomes him so he won’t be alone.

When the Secretary gains control, he says, “What I’m about to say, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget.”

“Be careful how you live. You may be the only Mason some people will ever meet.”
A VISIT FROM THE SCOUTS

On February 3, 2013, the First Clayton Park Cub Pack visited the Bedford Masonic Building and they were hosted by the Brethren of John Albro Lodge #122. This was to satisfy a requirement of their Purple Star to visit an organization in their community.

They began their visit in the usual tradition and opening their meeting with the Grand Howl. Then after the inspection, they were escorted upstairs where Most Worshipful Bro. Owen Walton gave an overview of Masonry and answered some very good questions the Cubs, Leaders, and parents had as for most, it was their first time being in a Masonic Lodge.

Worshipful Master, Jim Davison talked about comparisons between Masonry and Scouting noting they both have a handshake, are a global organization, have an opening and closing ceremony, make promises to be good people, as well that the symbols are recognized around the world. Right Worshipful Brother Gerry Mandy relived some of his Scouting days and taught the youth the bowline knot.

Bro. Gerald Settle described the idea of equality and our ideal of “being on the level” which was very well received. A ballot was cast with a favorable result to have a treasure hunt that ended with refreshments in the basement. It was especially pleasing to see such interest in Masonry by the Cubs and to connect in this way with another group in our community is an added bonus. There is no doubt that more of these opportunities are available to improve awareness of Masonry and to work towards being a better understood member of our communities.

Jim Davison
WM John Albro Lodge #122
A CONTRACT - H.L. HAYWOOD

The two paragraphs quoted below are from "Henry Malden's Account of Early Freemasons" a book in the vaults of the Iowa Masonic Library, published in Cambridge, England, in 1769, entitled "An Account of King's College-Chapel." At page 73 the author reproduces an indenture, or contract, made between King Henry VIII and certain Freemasons; the paragraphs here given are part of an author's footnote to that chapter:

A set of Foreigners, who called themselves FreeMasons (because none were acquainted with the secrets of their trade, except such as were Free and Accepted Members of their Society) are said to have introduced the art of building with stone into England, about the middle of the seventh century. These were formerly divided into parties or companies. Each company was subject to a Master, a Warden, and other inferior Officers: (names retained among FreeMasons to this day.) They assembled in one common room (called a Lodge), where they consulted about carrying on the works which their Master and Warden had undertaken: for they were chiefly employed in raising Cathedrals, Chapels, and other buildings of the like kind. A company of FreeMasons (as I am led to conclude from the second and third Indentures) to their immortal honour, contracted for building different parts of the Chapel. They have left, I am told, in the course of their work, certain marks very well known to all adepts of their Society. What these monuments of Masonry may be, I am unable to declare: but refer my reader, if he is learned in the secrets of the fraternity, to an inspection of every mysterious token about the Building. One thing, however, I shall mention, which has often been observed—that in the South-Porch of the Chapel, there are THREE Steps; at the West Door FIVE; and in the North-Porch SEVEN. These are numbers, with the mystery or at least with the sound of which, FreeMasons are said to be particularly well acquainted.

It is observable that, notwithstanding the encouragement FreeMasons received from Henry VI by being employed in erecting his magnificent Chapel an act passed, in the third year of his reign, for the suppressing their assembling, or holding chapters in any part of his dominions: it being the prevailing opinion of those times, that their meetings were held for the sake of making an extravagant addition to the wages of the Working-Masons. But a favourable report being made to his Majesty by some of his Nobility, who had been admitted into the Brotherhood, he afterwards received them into his favour, and shewed them marks of a particular respect. The act itself remains, I believe, as yet unrepealed. It is, however, probable, that the person who was Architect of the Chapel, was a member of that Fraternity.
We learn from the first degree lecture, that “there are three lights in a Lodge... There is none in the North”. In “King Solomon’s Temple... the sun and moon... could dart no ray of light into the North part thereof. The North, therefore, we Masonically term a place of darkness”.

The Sun, while progressing through the ecliptic, never reaches farther than 23 degrees and 28 minutes north of the Equator. Therefore, a building that is erected further north than this would receive the sun, at its meridian height, only on its south side.

Similar references to darkness in the North can be found in the Bible. For example in Jeremiah 1:13-14 we find: “What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething pot; and the face thereof is toward the north. Then the Lord said unto me, out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land”. Again, in Jeremiah 46:20: “destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north”.

As it is said that the Lord will rise again in the East, the east side of a church is always regarded as the most sacred. Indeed it was common practice for the dead to be buried with their feet towards to East, so that they could meet Him. In Wales, for example, a wind coming from the east, is referred to as “The wind of the dead man’s feet”. In a Lodge too, the East, the place of the Worshipful Master, where the Sun rises, is the most important.

Next is the south, then the west, and finally the north - this from the belief that the dead would rise in this order. Felons, therefore, were frequently buried in the north side of the churchyard. The east is considered God’s side, where His throne is set; the west, man’s side, the Galilee of the Gentiles; the south, the side of the “spirits made just” and angels, where the sun shines in her strength; the north, the devil’s side, where Satan and his legion lurk to catch the unwary.

Some churches have still a “devil’s door” in the north wall, which is opened at baptisms and communions to let the devil out. Another passage in the Bible, shows that the North is also associated with other forms of death, such as sacrifices. In Leviticus 1:11, we read “He is to slaughter it at the north side of the altar before the Lord, and Aaron’s sons the priests shall sprinkle its blood against the altar on all sides”.

In ancient Central American cultures, where directions have a permanent symbolic importance, North is the place the living come from and the dead return to, a country of cold, hunger, night. The eagle, symbol of war, resides in the North, because it is the territory of hunting and combat. The colour of north is black. Ancient Mongols, when making toasts, spilled their cups to the South to honour Fire, to the East to honour Air, to the West to honour Water, and to the North to honour the dead.

Perhaps partly based on this Mongol tradition, in the ancient Japanese sport of Sumo, there are 4 colored tassels hanging above the ring where the Japanese wrestling takes place. Each represents a direction, and a season. A black tassel is representative of the North, and winter. The Japanese strongly believe that sleeping with ones head towards the north is bad luck.

During the Middle Ages, an accused person would stand facing his judges to the north. According to the book of Bahir (one of the oldest Kabalistic texts), the north is the abode of evil, and Satan comes from the north.
RWB Tony Szucs introduces the Grand Master of Masons in Nova Scotia MWB George A. Grant

MWB George Grant with Mr. Paul Wrocienski and WB Kelly Hancock

Visitors/Ladies/Brothers at the Levee

WB James McKay and his family also paid a visit to the Grand Master and line officers
Toasts are a very important part of protocol and etiquette. They are a means of extending thanks and respect to certain persons.

To be asked to propose or respond to a toast is an extreme honour and one that should not be taken lightly. The proposers and respondents should be contacted well in advance to permit ample research and preparation in order to provide a meaningful toast. The Worshipful Master who does not provide this advance notice, but calls a brother at the very last minute, shows a lack of organization and appreciation for the toast. Toasts should be brief, sincere and reflect the occasion. After a few introductory comments and the toast has been delivered, the correct wording to signify the time for all to drink to the toast in unison is:

1. The Queen and the Craft;
3. The Visitors;
4. The Newly Initiated (Passed or Raised) Brother, Brother John J. Doe;
5. The Newly Installed and Invested Officers.

Only those toasts numbered 2 to 5 require a response. Following the toast to the Craft a toast to a foreign Head of State may be drunk if nationals of that country are present. No response to the Royal Toast nor to a foreign Head of State is required. The practice of giving a toast to Absent Brethren is common in many Masonic jurisdictions and is growing in Nova Scotia. No response is possible.

On the occasion when a present Grand Lodge Officer is not in attendance, the toast to “The Grand Master, The Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia” would not need a response. The toast to “The Visitors” should always warrant a response. From the viewpoint of etiquette it is an important toast. It is a means of showing courtesy and friendship to guests. It is considered improper in replying to the toast to “The Visitors” to request the visitors to rise and drink a toast to their hosts. When proposing the toast to “The Grand Master, the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia”, it is usual to offer a few brief, well chosen and pertinent comments.

It is unnecessary for the proposer to ask the brethren to “charge their glasses”, and the glasses should never be touched together. Glasses are simply raised to about chin level prior to giving the toast. It is unusual for a Present or Past Grand Lodge Officer to be asked to propose this toast. Present Grand Lodge Officers remain seated when the toast to Grand Lodge is given.

The response to the toast to Grand Lodge varies with the occasion. On the official visit the response must be made by the most senior Grand Lodge Officer. He may, of course, delegate the response to another Grand Lodge Officer. It is as well for the W. M. to ask the senior Grand Lodge Officer what he would prefer to do.

The newly initiated candidate should be forewarned that he may be called upon to reply to a toast. Suggestions should be made to him as a guide to what he could say: thank his sponsors, thank the members for accepting him, and indicate his impressions of the ceremony. The important point is not to spring the reply upon the candidate without warning. A major aim in Masonry is to make everyone feel comfortable and, if we can help the candidate to surmount his first speaking hurdle with success, he will feel confident enough to speak in the future.

Always ensure that a beverage is in the glasses before the toasts are to be given. The Worshipful Master should remind the Junior Warden to make certain this is done prior to the banquet.

There is no dignity in an occasion where, when the first toast is being proposed, the members are searching the table for bottle openers and rushing to fill their glasses. At installations, it is becoming more frequent to have an informal buffet lunch afterwards.
The 2014 Grand Lodge “Broom & Gavel” Curling Bonspiel was held at the Brookfield Curling Club on February 21st to 23rd. Sixteen lodge teams from Amherst, Truro area, Berwick, Sheet Harbour, Stewiacke area, and Halifax area attended this year’s event. All teams played one game on Friday evening, three games on Saturday with the Championship games on Sunday. Each team was guaranteed four games with a chance to advance into the finals for trophies and “Bragging Rights”.

A “Players Banquet” was held Saturday evening for team members and guests with a roast beef dinner followed by a mini auction. All teams were then introduced and proceeded to choose a prize for their curling efforts. Many great prizes were donated this year by the participating sponsors.

MWBro. George A. Grant, Grand Master of Nova Scotia threw out the ceremonial “First Rock” on Saturday morning accompanied by the Deputy Grand Master, Senior and Junior Grand Wardens. The Grand Lodge team then played an end against both Wentworth and Acacia lodges. The Grand Master was later piped into the Players Banquet where as Guest Speaker, he brought words of praise and encouragement for the bonspiel and fellowship demonstrated amongst the curlers.

The Broom and Gavel Bonspiel was opened to non-masons for the first time encouraging brethren to invite their friends to participate. A “Closest to the Button” competition saw VWB Ted Dietrich take home the prize. 50/50 draws, lots of food and fellowship added to the weekend of fellowship and curling.

Final Team standings:
Division “A” Winners: Fellowship #112; Runner-up, Royal Sussex #6
Division “B” Winners: Valley #90; Runner-up, Truro #43
Division “C” Winners: Acacia #8-Team 1; Runner-up, Elm #115
Division “D” Winners: John Albro #122; Runner-up, CW Saunders #125-Team 2
Division “E” Winners: CW Saunders #125-Team 1; Runner-up, Stewiacke #98
Fellowship Trophy: Stewiacke #98; Best Dressed Team Trophy: Truro #43

Phil Randall,
Curling Chairman,
Wentworth Lodge #108
Conventions are the rules which society makes for itself, without the force of law, by which its members live together with the least friction. It is not a sin to eat with one's knife or to keep one's hat on in the house. But these are not "good form" or good manners.

Masonry has developed its own conventions, by which its members act in lodge and the anteroom. Not to proceed according to their dictates is not a Masonic offense; it is merely a lack of Masonic manners.

As you passed through the Third Degree you received instructions in the Ritual and the obligation. You were carefully taught those essential things which a man must know in order to be a Mason. But unless you belong to a most unusual lodge, or had a most wise brother for a mentor, it is doubtful if you were told much about these little niceties of lodge conduct. You are supposed to attend your lodge and learn by observation.

Not all brethren are observing, however. It is not uncommon to see some brother, old enough in Masonry to know better, crossing the lodge room between the Altar and the East. He might have observed that his brethren did not do it; but it is more difficult to note the absence of an act than to take cognizance of something done.

Brethren do not pass between the Altar and the East in lodge. It is a convention; there is no penalty for its infraction. It is a courtesy offered the Master. It is rooted in the theory that, as the Great Lights and the Charter of the lodge are essential to the regularity of the meeting, as these are the particular care of the Master, and as their place is upon the Altar, the Master should never be interrupted in his plain view of them, even for an instant.

Well informed brethren do not take seats in the East without invitation. All brethren within the tiled door are equal; the officers are the servants of their brethren and not their superiors. All seats, then, might well be considered open to all. But Masonry exacts long services of her officers; Past Masters have worked hard and long for the lodge they love. The Master recognizes their devotion and their loyalty with a special word of welcome, and an invitation to them to occupy a seat with him, in the East where they once sat. From this pretty custom has developed the invitation to a "seat in the East" to any distinguished visitor, or some member the Master wishes especially to honor. If all in the lodge helped themselves to seats in the East there would be no opportunity for the Master to offer that courtesy.

Brethren who respect the formalities of their lodge will not enter it undressed; that is, without their apron, or while putting that apron on. The spectacle of a brother walking up to the Altar, tying the strings and adjusting his apron while the Master waits for his salute, is not a pretty one. A man who entered church putting on his collar and tying his necktie could hardly be arrested, but he would surely receive unflattering comment. The strangeness of the new badge of a Mason and unfamiliarity with its meaning cause many to forget that it is as important to a Mason in lodge as clean linen, properly adjusted, is to the man in the street.

The Worshipful Master in the East occupies the most exalted position in the gift of the lodge. A lodge which does not honor its Master, not because of what he himself may be, but on account of the honor given him, is lacking in Masonic courtesy. The position he occupies, not the man, must be given the utmost respect, if the traditions of the Fraternity are to be observed.

It is, therefore, to the Master, not to John Smith who happens to be the Master, that you offer a salute when you enter or retire from lodge. Like any other salute, this may be done courteously and as if you meant it, or perfunctorily as if you did not care. The man who puts one finger to his hat brim when he speaks to a woman on the street compares poorly with his well brought up neighbor who lifts his hat. Taking the hat off is the modern
remains of the ancient custom of knights who removed their helmets in the presence of those they felt their friends, and thus, before those they wished to honor by showing that they trusted them. A man removes his hat before a woman to show his respect. Touching the brim is but a perfunctory salute. Similarly, the salute to the Master is your renewed pledge of fealty and service, your public recognition before all men, of your obligation. It is performed before the Master and the Altar to show him your veneration for his authority, your respect for all that for which he stands. To offer your salute as if you were in a hurry, too lazy properly to make it, or bored with its offering, is to be, Masonically, a boor.

A man in lodge is the servant of his brethren, if he engages in any lodge activity. Servants stand in the presence of their superiors. Therefore, no Mason sits while speaking, whether he addresses an officer or another brother. This does not refer to conversation on the benches during refreshment, but to discussion on the floor during business meeting.

During the refreshment the Master relinquishes the gavel to the Junior Warden in the South, which thus becomes, for the time being, constructively the East. All that has been said about the respect due the Master in the East applies now to the Junior Warden in the South. It is illegal to enter or leave the room during a ballot; it is discourteous to leave during a speech, or during a degree, except at the several natural periods which end one section and begin another.

Smoking is permitted in some lodge rooms during the business meeting. Alas, there are some which do not interdict it during a degree! You will, of course, be governed here by the custom of your own lodge, although it is to be hoped you will never lend the weight of your opinion toward establishing the custom of smoking during the solemn ceremonies of a degree, unless, indeed, you would like to smoke in church!

A courteous brother does not refuse a request made in the name of the lodge. There are three duties which devolve upon the membership which are too often “the other fellow’s business.” Every lodge at some time has a knock upon the door from some visiting brother. This requires the services of two brethren from the lodge on the examination committee. Someone has to do that work. To decline it, on any ground whatever, is discourteous to the Master, to whom you have said, in effect, “I don’t want to do my share; let George do it. I just want to sit here and enjoy myself while the other fellows do the work.”

A degree cannot well be put on without the services of conductors. When you are assigned such a piece of work, it is not Masonic courtesy to refuse, for the same reasons given above. And if you are selected as a member of the Fellowcraft ‘team in the Master Mason degree, the only reason for not accepting is that of physical disability. Like other matters herein spoken of, refusal here is not a Masonic offense. Neither is it a legal offense to drink from a finger bowl, seat yourself at table before your hostess, or spit on your host’s parlor floor! But the convention of good manners is what makes society pleasant, and Masonic good manners make lodge meetings pleasant.

One does not talk in church. God’s House is not for social conversation; it is for worship and the learning of the lesson of the day. A good Mason does not talk during the conferring of a degree. The lodge room is then a Temple of the Great Architect of the Universe, with the brethren working therein doing their humble best to make better stones for His spiritual Temple. Good manners as well as reverence dictate silence and attention during the work; officers and degree workers cannot do their best if distracted by conversation, and the irreverence cannot help but be distressing to candidates.
There is a special lodge courtesy to be observed in all debates to any motion. One speaks to the Master; the Master is the lodge. One does not turn one's back on him to address the lodge without permission from him. One stands to order when addressing the chair; customs differ in various jurisdictions as to the method of salute, but some salute should always be given when addressing the Master. The spectacle of two brethren on their feet at the same time, arguing over a motion, facing each other and ignoring the Master, is not one which any Master should permit. But it is also one which no Master should have to prevent!

Failure to obey the gavel at once is a grave discourtesy. The Master is all powerful in the lodge. He can put or refuse to put any motion. He can rule any brother out of order on any subject at any time. He can say what he will, and what he will not, permit to be discussed. Brethren who think him unfair, arbitrary, unjust, or acting illegally, have redress; the Grand Lodge can be appealed to on any such matter. But in the lodge, the gavel, emblem of authority, is supreme. When a brother is rapped down, he should at once obey, without further discussion. It is very bad manners to do otherwise; indeed, it is close to the line between bad manners and a Masonic offense.

Failure to vote on a petition is so common in many jurisdictions that it may be considered stretching the list to include it under a heading of lodge discourtesies. In smaller lodges the Master probably requires the satisfaction of the law which provides that all brethren present vote. In larger ones, where there is much business, and many petitions, he may, and often does, declare the ballot closed after having asked, “Have all the brethren voted?” Even though he knows quite well that they have not all voted. This is not the place to discuss whether the Master is right or wrong in such action. But the brother who does not vote, because too lazy, or too indifferent, or for any other reason, is discourteous because he injures the ballot, its secrecy, its importance, and its value. Few brethren would be so thoughtless as to remain seated, or stand by their chairs, when a candidate is brought to light. Yet indifference to one’s part in this solemn ceremony is less bad manners than indifference to the ballot; the former injures only a ceremony; the latter may injure the lodge, and by that injury, the fraternity.

It is a courtesy to the Master to advise him beforehand that you intend to offer thus and such a motion, or wish to bring up thus and such a matter for discussion. You have the right to do it without apprising him in advance, just as he has the right to rule you out of order. But the Master may have plans of his own for that meeting, into which your proposed motion or discourse does not fit.

Therefore, it is a courtesy to him, to ask him privately if you may be recognized for your purpose, and thus save him the disagreeable necessity of seeming arbitrary in a public refusal.

Lodge courtesies, like those of the profane world, are founded wholly in the Golden Rule. They oil the Masonic wheels and enable them to revolve without creaking. They smooth the path of all in the lodge, and prove to all and sundry the truth of the ritualistic explanation of that “more noble and glorious purpose” to which we are taught to put the trowel.
TMWTGM was a guest of King Solomon Lodge No.54, Digby, at the celebration of the opening of the time capsule of Digby Academy on January 1st.

In this picture from Left to Right: RWB Bob Eisener, RWB Cliff Thompson, VWB Larry Black, MWTGM George Grant, RWB Serge Demchenko, VWB Richard Haynes, Bro. Gunter Achatz, Back Row RWB Tony Szucs, VWB Jack Whalley, Bro. Andrew Arnold, WB Robert Purdy.

VWB Larry Black, Mayor Ben Cleveland and MWGM George Grant smile as they cut the cake.

Mayor Ben Cleveland, MWGM George Grant and Bro. Richard Parry pose with the Time Capsule Items. in the foreground a beautiful decorated cake of the “Old Digby Academy” that held the corner stone with the GLNS Proceedings Book dated 1890.
GDC RWB Tony Szucs leads the Grand Master and Brethren into East Preston United Baptist Church

Some of the Brethren from Halifax District 1 & 2 enjoying the Church Service

RWB Tony Szucs, Minister Debbie Simmonds, Special Guest Speaker Dr. Afuna Cooper, MWBTGM George Grant, Pastor LeQuita Porter, Ms. Quanda Johnson

Pastor LeQuita H Porter welcomes the congregation of East Preston United Baptist Church
Wentworth Lodge Installation
St. Andrew's Lodge Installation
Welsford Lodge Installation
ANNEPOLIS VALLEY SCOTTISH RITE CLUB

Invitation to all Master Masons

March 17th 2014

Brethren,

A “Master Mason Nite” will be hosted by The Annapolis Valley Scottish Rite Club on Saturday, May 24, 2014, starting at 4 PM, at the Kentville Masonic Hall.

We invite all Master Masons to join us and witness a performance of the 6th Degree of Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Freemasonry. This event is held each year to enable Master Masons to witness the portrayal of a modified Scottish Rite degree in costume, with “no strings attached”.

A chowder dinner is also a part of this evening and, since it’s tradition that visiting Masons are our guests, there will be no charge. (For Scottish Rite members, a free will offering will be accepted to help offset the costs)

The dress for the evening is “smart casual” and no aprons are required.

Come join us for an evening of Freemasonry and Fellowship!

Fraternally,
Illustrious Brother Kirk MacLennan, 32°
President
Annapolis Valley Scottish Rite Club

If you’d like to attend, please RSVP to Ill. Bro. Kelly W. Hancock, 32°
902.472.2776 or kelwh Hancock@gmail.com
May it be their portion to bear those words
“Well done, thou good and faithful servant”