

# D.D.G.M. COMMUNIQUE

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## *From the Grand Master . . .*

The month of February has two ‘unofficial’ observances with special significance for us as Freemasons: **Valentine’s Day** on the 14<sup>th</sup> and **Flag Day** on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Valentine was a third century bishop of Terni in central Italy. Historians inform us that he is associated by ‘historical accident’ with the custom of sending ‘valentines’ to those we love. Valentine’s Day should remind us of the immense debt of gratitude we owe to our ladies for their continuing support, encouragement, patience, and understanding that allow us to enjoy our Masonic activities to the fullest. A Freemason’s Lady is an integral part of the extended Masonic family. Take this opportunity to show your appreciation to your special Lady.

Canada’s distinctive National Flag was raised for the first time on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on February 15, 1965. The words delivered by the Speaker of the Senate, Maurice Bourget, on that occasion have significance for all Canadians and especially Freemasons: “*The flag is the symbol of the nation’s unity, for it, beyond any doubt, represents all the citizens of Canada without distinction of race, language, belief or opinion.*” We recall the key role that our esteemed Brother, the Hon. John Ross Matheson played in the national debate that was resolved in the adoption of the Maple Leaf Flag. Brother Matheson, who is a recipient of the William Mercer Wilson Medal and seventy years a Mason, cites the words of Revelation 22:2 – “*the leaves of the trees serve for the healing of the nations*”— as the inspiration for the design. The red Maple Leaf surmounted by the gold Square and Compasses was adopted as the official pin of our Grand Lodge. It is worn, both in and out of lodge to indicate that we are proud to be a Canadian and proud to be a Freemason.

### **Cornerstone Project**

Last year the Cornerstone Project was launched in selected Districts with great response and much success. This year the project was extended to other Districts, and forty-one lodges have already registered. The deadline for registration as a Cornerstone Lodge is **February 28**. A little promotional encouragement might stimulate further interest and enrolment.

### **Looking Ahead**

As February is upon us, and the hours of daylight gradually lengthen, we realize that we are midway through the winter season, and the vernal equinox marking spring is just over two months away. It is a good time to make plans for ‘sprucing up’ the physical appearance of the lodge building. Do you have the standardized signage recommended by Grand Lodge to identify your building as a Masonic meeting place in the community? Do you have the Canadian Maple Leaf Flag flying to proclaim that Masons are proud Canadians and good citizens? Does the flag need replacing after the ravages of winter storms? Do you have a volunteer clean-up crew ready to tidy up the grounds

when the snow melts leaving detritus behind? Have you considered planting a few shrubs and flowers to enhance the outside appearance? What image of Freemasonry does your building advertise to the community where you are located?

### **A Special Request for Your Assistance**

You are aware that the amendment passed at the last Annual Communication in July 2010 to Section 50(b) of the Constitution requires a candidate for the office of D.D.G.M. or Grand Registrar “*to be in possession of a certificate of completion of the course for prospective District Deputy Grand Masters as offered by the College of Freemasonry.*” In accordance with this constitutional prerequisite, the Grand Master cannot confirm the election of anyone who has not fulfilled the requirements. As I requested at the D.D.G.M. Mid-term Reporting Session last month, to verify the records of the College and to ensure that each candidate for the office is duly and legally qualified, **please contact each aspirant in your District** to ascertain that he is in possession of the required certificate and thereby confirm his eligibility for election at the District Meeting in July. Please email the list of those so qualified with the date the certificate was issued to **R.W. Bro. Thomas Siemiernik**, Chairman of the D.D.G.M Orientation Committee [tom.siemiernik@sympatico.ca](mailto:tom.siemiernik@sympatico.ca)

### **District Receptions for the Grand Master**

During the coming months several Districts around the Grand Jurisdiction have scheduled receptions for the Grand Master. I look forward to enjoying the festive evening with you. The prime purpose of these gala events is to provide an opportunity for the Grand Master to meet and interact with the brethren in the District. I would much appreciate meeting personally with the Worshipful Masters of the Lodges in the District, and (if the ladies have been included) with their Ladies, prior to the formal banquet program. We must always bear in mind that Freemasonry exists – flourishes or fails – in the constituent lodges. The Worshipful Masters hold the key leadership role on which success depends.

As we go about attending to our duties and responsibilities as Grand Lodge Officers elected and appointed to serve the Brethren, the words of Bro. Robert Burns, whose memory was recently celebrated in many lodges, remind us that: “*The rank is but the guinea’s stamp, The man’s the gowd for a’ that.*”

Raymond S. J. Daniels

Grand Master’s full itinerary at –  
[www.grandlodge.on.ca](http://www.grandlodge.on.ca) UNDER EVENTS CALENDAR

## ***From the Deputy Grand Master. . .***

R.W. Sirs, Last month we asked ourselves to see what knowledge could be gained by a retrospect of our first half year as District and Grand Lodge leaders. Now, armed with that knowledge we can step fully up to the plate, make course corrections if required, and propel ourselves forward with renewed enthusiasm, working for the betterment of Freemasonry and doing our little bit towards –  
*“Ensuring the timeless vitality of Freemasonry in Ontario.”*

**Condition of Masonry Reports:** Feb through April are usually busy months for official visits. R.W. Bro. Hay has indicated that our on-time submission rate fell slightly last month, but that individual situations are being rectified. Please try and keep current with your reports because once you get behind, it's a tough task to claw your way back.

**D.D.G.M. Correspondence Course:** Our Grand Master mentioned the importance of this work to your successors on page 1. I encourage you to flip back to page 1 and read the reminder again. No candidate should be allowed to place his name on the ballot at the District meeting if he has not completed the course.

**D.D.G.M. Mid Term Sessions:** Thanks to all who were able to attend the session on January 8<sup>th</sup>. We appreciated your diligence in gathering the requested statistics and valued your participation in the break out sessions. As promised, the full report of the session will be distributed to you shortly.

**Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Canada Strategic Plan:** Many of you commented favourably on the inclusion of the Craft Stewardship strategic initiative from our Grand Lodge strategic plan in the last issue. The second of the five strategic initiatives is **Membership**.

**Strategic Initiative: Membership:** We recognize that our Membership and their families represent the heart of Freemasonry in Ontario and that the culmination of our efforts are intended to result in a richer experience for all our members and their families.

**Strategic Goal 5:** Better understand, serve and support the needs of our current members and their families.

**Strategic Goal 6:** Ensure that a vital membership continues to grow and expand in Ontario.

**Strategic Goal 7:** Enhance the spirit of fraternalism by

emphasizing that one aspect of Freemasonry is to have fun and to enjoy one another's company.

### **Rationale:**

- New members are frustrated that their expectations of Masonry are not being met.
- New members are not receiving the Masonic education they were promised.
- New and older Masons find Lodge meetings are generally tedious and unproductive, even boring.
- New Masons expected the Craft to provide a more social environment which would extend into their family and community lives.
- Due to a decline in the leadership pool, new Masons are feeling pressured to advance through the chairs too quickly and to join and actively participate in other Masonic bodies.
- Visitation, one of the core values of the fraternity, has been allowed to decline and fraternal relationships have suffered because of it.

To learn more about our **Grand Lodge 2010-2016 Strategic Plan**, please contact the chairman of Long Range Planning, R.W. Bro. Wes Libbey ([w.libbey@unb.ca](mailto:w.libbey@unb.ca)) for information.

### **Resource Required: Grand Lodge Communications Team: Microsoft Sharepoint Server**

If you are a Mason with MS Sharepoint experience and have some time to volunteer, we can use your services. The Grand Lodge Technology team requires expertise in configuring and managing a central document repository in Sharepoint for the storage of all documents, spreadsheets and powerpoint files created and managed by Grand Lodge committees. If you are interested, please submit a resume to the Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. Garry Dowling at [gdowling@sympatico.ca](mailto:gdowling@sympatico.ca) or Team Leader, R.W. Bro. Bill Thompson at [gsw94@rogers.com](mailto:gsw94@rogers.com).

### **Change?:**

The difficulties in accepting cultural change and moving us out of the status quo might cause us to reflect on the fact that, “To write with a broken pencil is pointless!”

D. Garry Dowling

## ***From the desk of the Grand Secretary. . .***

Would the D.D.G.M.s of the following, ensure the noted lodge Semi-annual Return is completed and submitted to the Grand Lodge office expeditiously. Please confirm your contact with the respective lodge by email to [office@grandlodge.on.ca](mailto:office@grandlodge.on.ca) (As per list below by District):

Algoma East  
412 Keystone

Frontenac  
621 Frontenac

Hamilton A  
663 Brant

London West  
358 Delaware Valley

Ottawa 2  
564 Ashlar

St. Thomas  
94 St. Marks

Sarnia  
238 Havelock

Don Valley  
316 Doric  
367 St. George  
592 Fairbank  
676 Kroy  
696 Harry L. Martyn

Humber Valley  
65 Rehoboam  
537 Ulster  
547 Victory  
664 Sunnylea

Toronto West  
566 King Hiram  
727 Mount Moriah  
738 Chinguacousy

Victoria  
354 Brock

Waterloo  
279 Mystic Tie

Wilson North  
250 Thistle

Wilson South  
181 Oriental

Windsor  
642 St. Andrews

York  
23 Richmond  
220 Zeredatha  
481 Corinthian

Heritage Lodge No. 730

