

D.D.G.M. COMMUNIQUE

2011 / 2012-12

October 2011

Published by
Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario

From the Grand Master . . .

The fall season is always one of the most inspiring, with the colours of the leaves changing, the harvesting about to begin and Masonry returning to full swing after the quieter summer months. It has been a pleasure to be able to be with so many of the DDGM.s over the last few weeks. We appreciate the hospitality received in each of your Districts and look forward to our continued travels around the jurisdiction to be with many more of you.

Our congratulations are extended to the many elected and appointed Grand Lodge Officers who are being invested with their regalia in their own Lodges. May you wear that regalia with pride and honour. Always remember that others are now looking up to you as a representative of our Grand Lodge. One of the accountabilities of a Grand Lodge Officer is to stay current with respect to the performance of our rites and ceremonies. I assume you take this accountability seriously, work only from the current versions of our publications and consider attending a local Lodge of Instruction as a refresher.

The District Trestleboards and Lodge Summons District the beginning of the Official Visits for the fall season and are also a reminder of the follow up reporting that is required after each visit. R.W. Bro. Hay and his Committee are all set to start processing your submissions and if you have any questions on the reports, please give John a shout at jhay@nexicom.net.

Housekeeping Items:

I would ask for your support with the following matters:
(1) Ontario Mason Magazine: A tremendous fall issue is in the works. However, utilizing the present address file that we have, only a small portion of Masons in this jurisdiction will receive the magazine. We have made repeated requests to the Lodge Secretaries to forward a copy of their Lodge member mailing list to R.W. Bro. Bruce Miller and to date only about 250 lodges have done so. ONLY those members that Bruce has in the file will receive the magazine. Please encourage the Lodges in your District to send in a mailing list to Bruce so that all can enjoy this wonderful publication. Bruce can be reached at wbmiller@sympatico.ca.

(2) D.D.G.M. Official Visits: D.D.G.M.s are reminded that, on the occasion of an Official Visit, they are to be received last and alone, under the wands.

Looking Ahead:

This fall we are privileged to share with the following Lodges in their anniversary celebrations: 150 Anniversary celebrations for Mississippi Lodge No. 147, Almonte; Malahide Lodge No. 140, Aylmer; Lebanon Lodge No. 139 Oshawa; Burns' Lodge No. 153, Wyoming; Grand

River Lodge No. 151, Waterloo; Tecumseh Lodge No. 144, Stratford and Prince of Wales Lodge No. 146, Napanee. We will also journey to Thunder Bay to share in the celebrations as Port Arthur Lodge No. 499 joins the 100 year club.

These are wonderful times of both celebration and reflection as we look, first to the past with a sense of awe and admiration for our founding Masonic fathers, second, to the present, to celebrate the legacy that we have inherited, and finally, to the future and the vision we have for how Freemasonry will be practiced in our Lodges and communities in the years to come.

Brethren, wandering aimlessly down an unknown Masonic road is not an option for us. I quote from our strategic plan: "Today, we enjoy our Masonic privileges in Ontario thanks to the many dedicated brethren who have diligently shouldered . . . responsibilities for *more than 150 years* and because of all the brethren in the Province of Ontario who continue the tradition of committing personal time and resources to the betterment of the Craft."

Our **Vision** is to: "**Ensure that timeless Vitality of Freemasonry in Ontario.**" The best time to plan for the future is now, when we are pumped and excited about celebrating the past. I encourage those Lodges that are presently celebrating their anniversaries to take a moment, think seriously about the stake you are about to put in the ground. That stake represents a defining symbol in the life of your Lodge and will act as a springboard for the future.

Again, I quote from our Strategic Plan: "Our timeless vitality is not dependant on wealth, power or physical presence. We need only one thing to sustain vitality: for "good men who prize honour and virtue above the external advantages of rank and fortune" to experience and embrace the powerful message found within the Craft. We foster vitality when we exhibit the courage to embrace Masonry's message and translate it into a lifestyle, both in and out of the Lodge room."

And what is that lifestyle? I believe that what the non-mason sees in us today is our timeless message of freedom, ethics, tolerance and democracy. During such economic, moral and political uneasiness, it is that lifestyle that is enticing to him and reflects what he wants to be a part of.

Our Vision has been stated. Let's **Believe** it and make it happen!

D. Garry Dowling
Grand Master

Grand Master's full itinerary at –
www.grandlodge.on.ca UNDER EVENTS CALENDAR

From the Deputy Grand Master. . .

At our Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, the brethren directed the Board of General Purposes, which includes all D.D.G.M.s, to focus our attention to the Yearly Tactical Plan 2011–2012. The Yearly Tactical Plan prioritizes our work for the coming year. One of the top priorities is our Grand Lodge Website.

Our new Masons grew up in the digital age. They are far more tech-savvy than we are. Grand Lodge communication systems need to be updated to serve the brethren in the 21st century. The website is the primary communication tool for all members and we are fully aware our current site needs improvement.

We envision a website that will be among the best Masonic websites in North America, one that, not only provides quality information to our membership, but provides accurate information to non Masons seeking admission to the Craft.

R.W. Bros. Norm McCarthy, Chairman, Communications Committee and Website Team Leader, Richard Kaufman, gave a three phase presentation to Management Committee, who unanimously financially supported Phase 1. The Website Management Team now has sufficient funds to commence immediately and includes the necessary time lines for completion.

Phase 1: Public Site. The public site will include, re-designed home page, lodge locator, target audience, comparable functionality to current website and improve style continuity, navigation, content organization and clarity of purpose. Target date for completion: December 31, 2011.

Phase 2: Members Site. The member's site will include a secured area for Ontario Masons that will allow Districts and Lodges to enter events, officer and lodge meeting information, and posting of the Lodge Summons. Target date for completion: July 2012.

From the desk of the Grand Secretary. . .



The Grand Lodge office staff: Gail Nickerson, Stacey Birks, Rose Blandin, Angela Schmidt, and myself wish you a healthy and enjoyable Thanksgiving.

Terence Shand
Grand Secretary

Phase 3: Future Development. The foundation of our new website will be built to accommodate future expansion, such as, membership renewals, mobile applications and style harmonization.

Finance Advisory: The Lodge Finance Advisory Committee name has been changed to Finance Advisory Committee to reflect their current duties. This committee is now a Standing Committee and their mandate is published in the 2011 Book of Constitution, Section 136(g). This committee has a CD that provides step by step procedures on the financial administration of a lodge which deals with budget concerns, such as, establishing budgets and providing financial direction. They have lots of material at their disposal and are willing to assist if called upon. It is important to note that not only Lodges, but Temple Corporations may receive practical assistance from this Committee.

Brethren, financial concerns are prevalent. Issues such as unpaid dues need to be addressed before those concerns turn into financial crisis.

Benevolence: The Benevolence Committee is separate and distinct from the Masonic Foundation of Ontario (M.F.O.). The Benevolence Committee works internally within our Fraternity, while the M.F.O. is our external charitable arm. Many financial requests for benevolence assistance either fail or are delayed because of lack of proper paperwork submitted to Grand Lodge. The brethren in your District, who are responsible to carry out the work of benevolence for their Lodge, are encouraged to contact the Grand Secretary, Supervisor of Benevolence, or Mrs. Stacey Birks, prior to submitting any written documents to the Grand Lodge office to prevent any undue delays.

Donald A. Campbell
Deputy Grand Master