

D.D.G.M. COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master . . .

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise, be thankful unto Him and bless His name.
Psalm 100

As Freemasons in Canada we have much for which we ought to be thankful. In ‘the true north strong and free’ we have the freedom to meet in our Lodges and disclose our membership in the Craft without fear of interference or obstruction by subversive dictatorships in totalitarian regimes. This is a privilege that we take for granted, but it is one that many of our Brethren in other parts of the world do not enjoy. In some countries, they must meet in secret, and any disclosure or admission of Masonic membership could lead to imprisonment or execution.

As Canadians we remember with gratitude the valiant men and women, especially our Masonic Brethren in the Armed Forces serving in Afghanistan to defend and protect us here at home by fighting terrorism at its source. We pray for their safe return.

*He who thanks but with the lips
Thanks but in part.
The full, the true Thanksgiving
Come from the heart.*

J.A. Stubbs

Our Grand Lodge had its birth here in Hamilton when delegates representing 41 of the 83 Lodges that then existed in Canada East and Canada West met on October 10, 1855, and passed a resolution stating: “*it is expedient, right, and our bounden duty to form a Grand Lodge of Canada.*” This month we celebrate the 155th anniversary of that bold, courageous and historic decision. The Minutes Record that it was then declared that: “*the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Canada, be, and is hereby formed upon the ancient charges and constitution of Masonry.*” The new and independent Grand Lodge of Canada was consecrated on November 2, 1855, when M.W. Bro. William Mercer Wilson was installed as the first Grand Master. The qualification, “*in the Province of Ontario*” was added to the style and title of Grand Lodge in 1887 after Confederation when other provinces formed their own Grand Lodges.

We must be ever grateful for vision, determination, perseverance, and bold leadership that the founding members of this Grand Lodge provided in the establishment of the heritage we enjoy today. We must admire the great wisdom and foresight evident in the first Constitution they forged as the first item of business in 1855. It remains to this day as the solid foundation, the rule and guide of our fraternity.

We give thanks for those good men, just and upright men, who have passed on the true spirit of Freemasonry

from generation to generation to keep the light of Freemasonry burning brightly to illumine the hearts and minds of those they initiated into our ancient mysteries and privileges. They sowed seeds from which today we reap the abundant harvest.

E. P. Powell reminds us that, “*Thanksgiving Day is a jewel, to set in the hearts of honest men, but be careful that you do not take the day and leave out the gratitude.*”

During the first months of the Masonic year it has been my privilege and honour to be the Guest of Honour at gala anniversary celebrations of those Lodges observing 50, 100, and 150 years of continuous service in the community. A Masonic Lodge is a community within a community – apart from, yet a part of the community it serves. Few other institutions can boast of such longevity. Few appreciate the impact Freemasonry has had in shaping the history of the villages, towns, and cities where these Lodges are located. The social, cultural, and political life of these communities has been quietly influenced by generations of men making a difference. This heritage and tradition of public service is ours to enhance and pass along to the next generation. During several recent fraternal visits, I have witnessed the Initiation, Passing, and Raising of some excellent candidates. There is no greater privilege afforded to the Grand Master than to be present on these occasions when we admit a keen, serious, young man into the mysteries and privileges of our Gentle Craft, or to watch his progress through the succeeding Degrees. We are, first and foremost, an initiatory Order dedicated to changing men’s lives. Important as the Degrees are, it is what happens after they are conferred that is of even greater importance. It takes less than an hour to make a man a member – it takes a lifetime of thoughtful study, focused introspection, and profound reflection to make a man a Mason. Every senior member of the Lodge has a duty and responsibility to support, encourage, mentor and instruct these new Brethren. On them depends the future of the Fraternity.

Get **Knowledge** – get **Wisdom** – but with all thy getting, get **Understanding**. Understanding can only be achieved through education. Every Worshipful Master should ensure that there is a learning opportunity provided in the agenda at every meeting of the Lodge. Give every member a reason for coming to Lodge.

Raymond S. J. Daniels

From the Deputy Grand Master. . .

R.W. Sirs:

October sees the end of summer and the start of the fall season. By now you should be an old hand at leading your District. We assume you have settled in and that things are running smoothly. I remind you that if you need any assistance or support from any of the Grand Lodge Committees, please feel free to contact the chairmen.

As you get into your official visits, please be diligent in sending your reports, completed in full, to R.W. Bro. John Hay at jhay@nexicom.net within 14 days.

You should have received communication from the Masonic Education Committee that we are seeking your assistance in ensuring that every candidate for D.D.G.M. in your District understands the mandatory requirement to take the D.D.G.M. course prior to his election next year. Remember the phrase "...**and** until a successor." It will indeed be in your best interest to promote this new constitutional requirement.

Many of our fall initiatives have or are getting underway, including the Lodge Resources sessions, L.O.I. sessions offered by the Custodian of the Work and his team and the D.D.G.M. Orientation sessions. Please encourage your membership to take advantage of these opportunities. They are **not** just for past G.L.O.s and Officers.

In relation to our attempts to 'keep the bar high', a couple of items seem to be cropping up on a more frequent basis that bear mentioning. First, the Masonic Manual, under Protocol and Etiquette indicates that 'business dress' is appropriate for lodge members attending a Regular or Emergent meeting – business dress meaning at a minimum, jacket and tie. Many summons' make reference inappropriately, to 'casual attire' being permissible on certain special occasions. Second, the trend towards Installation teams composed almost completely of Brethren outside the Lodge appears to be increasing. While this may be a necessity in a one-time situation, will we soon have some Lodges that cannot perform their own Installation? We would ask that you consider mentioning these items in your travels.

At the Regional meetings you received a wallet card showing some of the key points in our Grand Lodge Strategic Plan. The project initiatives for 2010-2011 as listed on that card are now taking shape as the appropriate committees are putting together their deliverables and their plans for implementation. We do encourage you to mention the existence of the strategic plan at your visits and to draw the attention of the Brethren to our **Vision – "To Ensure The Timeless Vitality of Freemasonry in Ontario."**

Two strategic plan projects are starting to take shape – these are both in the area of communications.

First, the members of Grand Lodge are delighted to be following the Grand Master to Ottawa for an Especial Communication of Grand Lodge on October 15, 2010. This represents a continuation of the direction established last fall by the Grand Master to bring Grand Lodge to its constituents, to make the work of Grand Lodge more visible and particularly to allow your Grand Lodge officers to hear the issues, concerns and good things that the Brethren of the Ottawa area have to offer to our Grand Lodge. As mentioned above, communication is a cornerstone in our Strategic Plan and, recognizing that much communication follows an outbound path from Grand Lodge, this offers an opportunity for us to turn that around and be 'listeners'.

A second area of focus for us this year will be the revamping of the Grand Lodge website. We are working at keeping the existing site current while at the same time laying plans for our 'next generation' website.

Note to subscribers of 'Reflections': due to unexpected difficulties the fall issue will be late.

As you continue your work in the service of our Grand Master, I remind you of an old saying, "*You will do foolish things, but do them with enthusiasm!*"

D. Garry Dowling

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