



August 2020

Brethren:

I trust that all of you are adjusting to the seemingly constant stream of uncertain news and information, while we hope that this isn't the new norm as some have suggested! I particularly miss shaking my brothers hand in greeting or congratulations. This also spills over to my work life where a handshake has always concluded the deal. I believe this to be one of the actions Freemasons miss the most, and I look forward to the day we are back to performing that pleasurable duty.

During our GP Committee meeting with Grand Lodge earlier this month, it was evident that the participants are getting better using online meeting technology and fewer participants are forgetting to mute themselves when not "holding the gavel". The meetings are reasonably efficient and a pleasure to take part in. Our own R.W. Bro's Brian Koivu and Robert Fleming did an excellent job with their presentations and their respective duties throughout the year despite the adversity they experienced. We should be proud of the positions entrusted to them by our Grand Lodge and the professional manner in which they have and continue to carry themselves!

The short term direction of our jurisdiction was discussed at this meeting and subsequent announcements from the Grand Master indicate we are in no rush to get back to mingling if the only business we can conduct are the standard operations of the lodge and I very much agree with this approach. Recent news in Sudbury shows how quickly things can turn badly and I don't think any of us want to be responsible for spreading Covid to another brother. So, we make the best of what we have, stay positive and pitch in to help one another when needed.

If any lodge has attempted online meetings but have struggled to make it worth while, send me or John Reynolds and email and we will do what can to assist. Some have been quite enjoyable and a great way to see each other and say hello.

Take care my brethren,

Robert J. Lipic
District Deputy Grand Master 2019-20
Sudbury Manitoulin District





District Chaplain's Observations

R.W. Bro. Clair Bracken
District Chaplain

Alexa, Amazon's voice-controlled device, has an interesting feature. It can erase everything you say. What ever you have asked Alexa to do, what ever information you have asked Alexa to retrieve, one simple sentence {"Delete everything I said today"} sweeps it all clean, as if it never happened.

It is too bad that the rest of our life doesn't have this capability. Every misspoken word, every disgraceful act, every moment we wish we could erase – we'd just speak the command, and the entire mess would disappear.

There is good news though. God does offer each of us a clean start. Only He goes far further that merely deleting our mistakes or bad behaviour. God provides redemption, a deep healing that transforms us and makes us new.

"Return to me He says," "I have redeemed you". {Isaiah 44:22} Even though Israel rebelled and disobeyed, God reached out to them with lavish mercy. He "swept away their offences like a cloud, their sins like the morning mist" {vs.22}. He gathered all their shame and failures and washed them away with His wide sweeping grace.

God will do the same with our sin and blunders. There are no mistakes He can't mend, no wound He can't heal. God's mercy heals and redeems the most painful places in our soul – even the ones we have hidden for so very long. His mercy sweeps away all our guilt, washes away every regret.

Winn Collier

So many regrets, so many things we would do differently. We can't change the start, but we can certainly change the end.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you! {Luke 6:31}

No man is a true believe unless he desires for his brother that, what he desires for himself.



***No Masonic, Concordant Body or Shrine
in-person meetings are presently scheduled
for July .***

***Some groups are holding virtual meetings via
mediums such as Zoom***

Please refer to your group for instructions



Mentor's Minute

W. Bro. Robert Tailleur

Mentor / Education Lead



I was talking to a senior member of a lodge recently and he mentioned to me that, even though we are not able to meet in the lodge, every day he takes out his book of the work and practices a part of the degrees. It keeps his mind sharp.

There is no silver lining to this COVID-19 situation but if there were one it would be that this is an ideal time to commit the book of the work to memory. We are under no pressure, no timeline to be prepared to deliver any piece of the work and we are allowed to meet as individuals to run through work we are learning...using safety protocols.

This pandemic does not absolve us of our duty to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge. In point of fact honouring the commitments we've made to our fellow human beings, our families, our lodges and lodge brethren is even more important now than ever.

Stay safe.

Stay healthy.

We will meet in lodge again in the future so prepare now for that day.

Robert Tailleur





Did You Know?



GRAND LODGE OF
A.F. AND A.M. OF CANADA
IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

GRAND MASTER

363 KING STREET WEST
HAMILTON, ONTARIO
L8P 1B4

Fax: 905-528-6979
Tel: 905-528-8644
Email: office@grandlodge.on.ca

July 28, 2020

Brethren,

As the province starts to open up again from the pandemic, I have been thinking a lot about lodges re-opening, so here are some thoughts. I was asked what category do I think lodge meetings fall into? My first response was that there really is no category that we fall neatly into. In some ways we are like churches and other places of worship, but Masonry is not a religion and our rites and ceremonies are nowhere near as important as that. So we're not in that category which is high on the list of places to re-open sooner. No, we're more like amateur sports events. We have a small group of people who come in close physical contact and a larger group who sit on the sides and watch. And yet there are important differences. One is that we generally meet inside. But more significantly, our demographic is older. A recent analysis of a small sample of lodges showed that 28% were over 80, 23% in their seventies, and 19% in their sixties. Without even counting those with chronic medical conditions, that puts 70% of our members in the high risk group. We're not in the same risk category as Little League baseball.

The push to re-open has been mostly driven by economics. People need to earn a living to feed their families. Nobody depends on Masonry to earn their living. Well, our COO and staff do, but they have been working from home to hold things together. Whether lodges meet does not impact people's financial well-being. But it does carry all the risks of transmission.

The Ontario government has announced Stage 3 of re-opening in much of the province. Indoor gatherings of up to 50 people are allowed. But that is just the headline. The framework document <https://files.ontario.ca/mof-framework-reopening-province-stage-3-en-2020-07-13.pdf> puts many conditions on that. This 20 page document contains the phrase "physical distancing" 33 times. It also lists wearing a mask, frequent hand washing, cleaning parameters, and working remotely as much as possible. And recording each attendee's name and contact information to support effective contact tracing in case there is an outbreak.

The framework document refers you to other docs for more guidance in safe opening. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/develop-your-covid-19-workplace-safety-plan#hierarchy-of-controls> is one that is for re-opening workplaces. An interesting exercise is to download this and use your word-processing program to replace "workplace" with "lodge", and "worker" with "member". Reading it then is an eye-opener! I suggest you try it.

It outlines a hierarchy of controls, from most effective to least effective. The most effective is to have everyone stay home.

It then goes on to list other measures, in decreasing effectiveness, from engineering controls like modifications to the building, to limiting attendance numbers and instituting cleaning protocols, and lastly, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). However, it goes on to say, that while wearing masks is recommended, they are not a substitute for physical distancing. They also note that gloves do not provide any more protection than hand washing or using hand sanitizer.

Res quondam resque futuris



Since lodge meetings are in no way a must activity, we ought to follow point 1 and do the most effective thing to prevent our members becoming infected by the virus.

We do, however, recognize the importance of the brethren maintaining a relationship with their lodges.

So I ask you to picture this: if we were to go through all the safety points (ignoring the most effective, that is, staying home) what would a lodge meeting look like? We cannot do any ritual that involves contact, so that excludes all degrees and installations. (We will not be watering down the Ritual.) So, we open. The brethren are spread out around the room all with masks on. Most of the senior members self-select to not come. Some brethren cannot get in because there is not enough room. We do the business. (This can be done virtually.) We have Masonic education. (This can be done virtually.) We close and go home. (No banquets allowed.) Someone thoroughly cleans the room, halls, bathrooms, doorknobs, etc..

There is no benefit to meeting in person this way, and our membership is put at risk, 70% at high risk. Is it worth it?

When we do re-open, it will be in phases. In order to PREPARE for the first phase, Lodge and Temple leaders should now be reviewing the government guidelines above

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/develop-your-covid-19-workplace-safety-plan>) along with a few extra points specific to Masonry which are identified below.

Lodge specific requirements for the First phase:

All local and provincial guidelines must be followed.

In the first phase of reopening the following restrictions will apply:

- No visitors from other lodges
- No physical contact including shaking hands
- No ritual will be performed (except that required to open and close the meeting)
- No Installations and Investitures will be allowed
- No degree work will be permitted (EA, FC or MM)
- No fourth degrees/festive boards (no preparation or serving of food or beverages of any kind)
- No singing (including the National Anthem)
- No Masonic Memorial Services permitted
- No official visits by the DDGM

In addition to the restrictions, everyone who attends a Lodge meeting must provide his name and contact information to be stored with the Lodge Secretary in case there is an outbreak and contacts need to be traced. Membership lists will only be shared with public health if a potential exposure occurs on site.

Remember that these points are the EXTRA things. You must also do the things in the government document.

No lodge will be required to open if they do not feel it is safe for their members.

Note that we are still in Lockdown mode and are not moving to the First Phase yet. And the way things are unfolding, it is looking less and less likely that we can safely open in September.



So, it is suggested that, while waiting to be able to re-open, lodges consider having virtual education sessions on their regular lodge night, followed by a social chat on-line. They could continue with separate virtual GP meetings as well to discuss the business or roll them into one. If this is technically too much for an individual lodge, perhaps districts could do it. And pay extra attention to keeping in contact with those elderly or ill brethren who continue to self-isolate.

Brethren, we were all taught to be cautious. Masonry has been through times when we were unable to meet in lodge before. And Freemasonry came back stronger than ever.

We will watch what happens, keep reading the government bulletins, and will keep in touch.

David J. Cameron
Grand Master





For your browsing pleasure....

Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario Website

<https://grandlodge.on.ca>

Sudbury – Manitoulin District Website

<http://www.smmasons.com>

Sudbury – Manitoulin District Blog

<http://sudburymanitoulinmasons.blogspot.com>

Nickel Lodge Website

<http://www.nickellodge.ca>

Sudbury Shrine Club Blog

<http://sudburyshriners.blogspot.com>



The District & Beyond

Brethren, this is the spot reserved for pictures and commentaries on what's happening in the District.

Why not send a picture of you and, if you'd like, friends or Family at a BBQ, on the beach, out camping, etc. etc. etc.??



Meanwhile...back at Belrock....



OK, OK, OK ...You order the pizza and I'll get the materials !!



I think the wall is supposed to be vertical ???





a insulating we will go... a insulating we will go....





A thing of beauty.. built with Fellowcraft tools





I thought he said shiny side out?? .. or was it in???



I thought I said shiny side in?? .. or was it out??



**THE MASONIC FOUNDATION OF
ONTARIO**

**R. W. Bro. R. J Lipic's
2019 – 2020 District Charity
is the Neo Kids Foundation
located at Health Sciences
North serving the Region**

Please contact W. Bro. John Mischczak
Masonic Foundation Representative
for information.
cell (705) 507-6969
email jm.mischczak@hotmail.ca.



**Sudbury and Manitoulin
District
DDGM Charity 2019-2020
No. 2679**

WHY DONATE

Your donations to NEO Kids Foundation directly contribute to existing programs and services currently provided by NEO Kids. Your donation will also help us in achieving our ultimate goal, of building a bigger home to accommodate the growing needs for the children in Northeastern Ontario.

Children are not small adults. Just like them, their health care needs are unique. Your donation will help to purchase vital pieces of equipment, conduct life-changing research and increase awareness for children's health needs.

For Masons giving to a cause.

**We request your donation to this
worthy charity supporting our
DDGM.**

Please make cheques payable to:
"The Masonic Foundation of Ontario"
Memo section: DDGM Project No. 2679



Editor's Note:

Article submissions, pictures and ideas for content are always welcomed.

Please submit your article in Word format if possible.

Submissions should be sent to:

robfanfleming@sympatico.ca

Thank you.



**Scientists have found that
one dog year does not
equal 7 human years.**

**In fact, the only thing
that equals 7 human years
is 2020.**