



The Home of the Muses

Bro John L. Cooper III, Grand Secretary, *California Freemason*, Spring 2007, Grand Lodge F&AM of California

The term “museum” is commonly used to describe a place where historical and artistic treasures are housed. However, there is a Masonic connection with the word itself, and the lecture of the Fellowcraft Degree speaks of the importance of preserving the most important treasures of the past. Let’s take a closer look.

The most famous temple to the Muses, from which our current word is derived, was built by Ptolemy II of Egypt in the Third Century before the Common Era. It was built at Alexandria, Egypt, the city founded by Alexander the Great. Ptolemy I had been one of Alexander’s generals, and after Alexander’s death, he became Pharaoh of Egypt, founding the Ptolemaic Dynasty, the last of whom was the famous Cleopatra. Around the *musaion*, or temple of the Muses, a great library was built — the Royal Library of Alexandria. In its time it was one of the greatest intellectual institutions in the world, for it was not only a library, but a great university and teaching institution. Until its destruction at the end of the fourth century, it housed the greatest collection of books the world had ever seen. Its destruction meant the irretrievable loss of much of the learning of the ancient world — books by famous authors whose works are now known only by their titles.

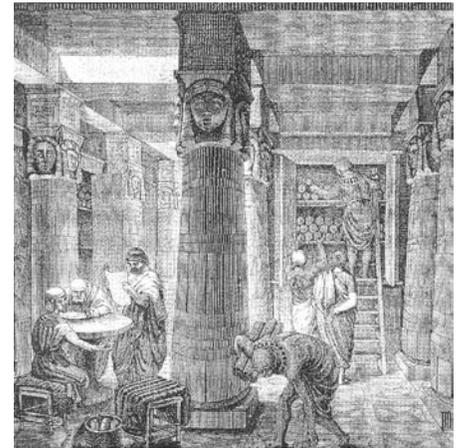
This great loss was even more keenly

felt during the Renaissance, when Europe once more discovered the learning of the classical world and mourned the loss to learning that could never be recovered. The impact of this event may well have influenced the wording in the lecture of the Fellowcraft Degree, which also speaks of a great loss to the Craft. Listen to the words from that lecture:

The lapse of time, the ruthless hand of ignorance, and the devastations of war, have laid waste and destroyed many valuable monuments of antiquity on which the utmost exertions of human genius were employed. Even the Temple of Solomon, so spacious and magnificent, and constructed by so many celebrated artists, escaped not the unsparing ravages of barbarous force. Freemasonry, notwithstanding, has still survived. The attentive ear receives the sound from the instructive tongue, and the mysteries of Masonry are safely lodged in the repository of faithful breasts. Tools and implements of architecture most

expressive are selected by the Fraternity to imprint upon the memory wise and serious truths; and thus, through the succession of ages, are transmitted unimpaired the most excellent tenets of our Institution.

We commonly interpret this passage as referring to great buildings of antiquity, an interpretation encouraged by the reference to the Temple of Solomon. However it is equally likely that the authors of



A 19th century engraving of “The Great Library of Alexandria” by O. Von Corven whose rendering is partly based on archeological evidence.

this passage had in mind the great loss of learning occasioned by the destruction of books and artifacts at the end

of the classical age, symbolized by the destruction of the Royal Library and Museum at Alexandria. The reference to the mysteries of Freemasonry being saved by being handed down “mouth

to ear,” so to speak, tells us that some things are so precious that their protection can only be confided to those who possess the three precious “jewels” of a Fellowcraft Mason: the attentive ear, the instructive tongue and the faithful breast.

Museums and libraries are important to the preservation of treasures of the past. More important is the preservation of the essence of the past when the past itself cannot be recovered. In his science fiction novel *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury posits a world in the future in which books are banned. The only way that the great literature of the past can be preserved is by memorizing books.

See **Muses**, page 2.

Editor’s Note: While the quotations in this article and in “The Beauty of the Ritual” (page 4) refer to the versions of the ritual used in California and New York, the underlying sentiments still apply.



From the painting “Apollo and the Nine Muses” by the Flemish painter Hendrick van Balen.

Things are Seldom What They Seem

VWBro Rev Peter Kilkeary, Grand Chaplain

Freemason, July 2007, United Grand Lodge of NSW and ACT

...Recently I received a telephone enquiry from a Masonic friend who had been asked by a candidate in his Lodge where in the Bible he would find the story of Hiram Abif. It was a good question, for our Ritual contains much detail about this man. However, you will search in vain for that detail in the Biblical account.

Two passages from the ancient historical books refer to Hiram:

And King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre.



Carving on a Master's Chair at the Detroit Masonic Temple depicts (l to r) Hiram Abif, King Solomon and Hiram King of Tyre. (Photo by Bro. Mitchell Ozog)

He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to King Solomon, and wrought all his work.

1 Kings 7:13-14

We learn from this passage that Hiram's father was a man of Tyre, his mother was a widow and that he was skilled at working in brass. Kings goes on to describe some of his brass creations, including the two pillars for the porch of the temple, named Boaz and Jachin. These were eighteen cubits high — approximately nine metres. On top of them was extensive brass work designed and executed by Hiram. We also read of gold objects manufactured for the temple, but Hiram's name is not associated with these.

The other reference to Hiram is found in Chronicles. Solomon asked the King of Tyre for assistance in building the Temple:

Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in

silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that are with me...

II Chronicles 2:7

That was quite a job description!

The unnamed man sent by the King of Tyre was deemed proficient in all of the above. We are informed that his mother was a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre. Solomon's construction of the Temple, and any part played by Hiram, is not detailed in Chronicles, which passes quickly to the wonderful prayer of dedication by Solomon after its completion.

What we learn from the Biblical account is that Hiram was a highly skilled metalworker and engraver; that he played a prominent part in construction of the temple; but we do not find evidence which would justify the title of architect.

What do I tell my friend who asks me about Hiram Abif in the light of this evidence? I remember some words from my early days as a Mason: "veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." There is in the Biblical text historical basis for Masonic legend which has been extrapolated from the original story. It would be improper for me to discuss the details of this legend here. We learn those details at the appropriate time as we progress in the Craft. Hiram Abif is important to us as Masons, not because we know much about his history, but because we have used the historical foundation to weave Masonic teaching which will guide us on the journey of life.

At this point, somebody is sure to object, "Do you mean it isn't really true?" The question is neither relevant nor valid. We do not ask, "Is it true?" but rather, "Is it truth?" The Masonic legend has important truths to teach us and the question of historical veracity is unimportant — as unimportant as asking whether there really was a Good Samaritan — another story which contains truth whether or not it is true.

Muses, from page 1.

Men and women in his story choose a book to memorize, and they become that "book" — the only transmission possible in a world that has burnt all the books themselves. But the books are not lost, for younger disciples are taught to memorize the books by the older men and women who have already memorized them, handing on to posterity the wisdom of the past. It is an intriguing story. And one with a very Masonic lesson.

Freemasonry has survived because Freemasons have learned the lessons that Freemasonry has to teach. They have made them a part of their lives; they

have become living "books" on Freemasonry. If there ever comes a day when every library, every museum, every historical treasure is destroyed, it would be a great tragedy for humanity. But if there ever comes a time when humanity forgets the teachings of Freemasonry, the tragedy would be even greater. The former loss may be recovered, or at least partly recovered, as we have gradually recovered much of the wisdom of ancient times. But if Brotherly Love, Relief, Truth, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice perish from the earth, our loss is a loss indeed. The greatest "museum" that Freemasonry has is you. Think about it.

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Alberta Miscellany

Thoughts from the summonses, selected by Bro Trevor Morris

Redwood Lodge No. 193

Most men who find their way to our Fraternity are already guided by their own moral compass and possess the intellect and rectitude to understand and decide for themselves what is right and just and what is not. When presented before a Masonic Lodge for consideration of membership, one of the factors that validate a candidate's potential is whether or not he is of sound moral character. If he is deemed so, after investigation, thought and deliberation by the Lodge and its members, then one must ask himself "Why should moral lessons be conveyed in our Ritual work when it seems these ideals are taught and reinforced to us all from the youngest age, and most certainly by the time a man reaches our Lodge doorstep?"

The answer is several-fold. One of the reasons, I believe, is that the ideals and morality conveyed in our Ritual extend beyond the 'Golden Rule.' They are a clue to a much deeper and larger picture of our Craft, which is that simple ideas and concepts, when combined, construct a more complicated and complete system that affords its worthy practitioner the ability to find harmony with family, community and the Great Architect.

Concepts such as personal liberty and pluralism and taking responsibility for one's own actions are at the heart of the larger picture that Freemasonry presents to its members, and allow the believer and practitioner of these highly held principles to be freed of the persuasion of the thinking of others and the petty prejudices that encroach our communities and society, and allow us to live our lives as men, reaching for our own true potential as brothers, fathers, sons and neighbours.

Putting together all of the smaller pieces of the Masonic puzzle is the challenge of every Mason. The secrets and hidden mysteries contained in our Ritual are not there by accident. Rather, they are designed with purpose, like a trail of breadcrumbs which are designed to lead us along a path of self examination, exploration and fulfillment.

I challenge you to look for a common thread in our Work, and try to connect the dots and to discuss your ideas with another Brother of our Fraternity. Try to look for a deeper meaning and a larger picture from what is conveyed in our

Ritual and share your thoughts and opinions and revelations with others.

WBro Stantton Pallister, WM

Calgary Lodge No. 23

In the beginning...

Every history begins at some point in time, even if we don't know exactly when — some point when "is not" becomes "is," some point when what "could be," becomes "what is." Some points are pretty easy to identify — the first day of school for example. Others are more difficult to pinpoint, such as in revolutions that tend to start with small almost unnoticed acts. But even those have a defining moment when they make the transition from obscurity to mainstream, some threshold where a single act causes them to change from just another "could be" to "being."

Life itself expresses this, even in our own species. No matter what your particular beliefs are, there can be no doubt that somewhere along the line of time representing pregnancy, small scraps of genetic material become another human being. Where once there was only possibility comes the reality of sentience. Even life itself had a beginning and whether or not one subscribes to creation or evolution doesn't make any difference. We were not and now we are.

But how do we differentiate between the circumstances that conspired to make a particular situation or consciousness possible and the results? Should we believe that a butterfly flapping its wings does start a chain of events that results in a hurricane, or apply some arbitrary limit instead, like sustained wind speeds of more than "X." The former suggests that the most insignificant act of the present can have huge repercussions in the future, whereas the latter suggests that some defining point is necessary to separate that something from all of the other some things. These points often become accepted as the de facto point of origin.

So it is in Masonry as well. We can all point to the date when we were initiated into the Craft, sometimes even to the day when we first asked a Brother what it was all about. What individual events or sequence of events first inspired you to seek out Masonry? What desires led you to the place where you could

answer the question, "Where were you first prepared to be made a Mason?" What were your expectations? What were you hoping for?

It is unlikely that any have joined the Craft by mere happenstance or coincidence, as it does take overt and deliberate actions to join. Since peer pressure is specifically prohibited, there must be something else that causes men not just to join, but rather to live as a Mason. There are those with a need to join because they perceive some kind of advantages or status in being able to say that they are a Mason, but are they truly Masons? Or do they have their own agenda?

Masonry isn't about office or rank, or purple and gold braid. It is about becoming the kind of man who will stand in front of his Creator for judgment, not trembling with fear but with serene gratitude for the gift of his very existence. Yes, that man's journey began with a single step but first he had to learn to walk.

In the beginning...

WBro Barry Gurnsey, WM

Masonic Toastmasters Club

Any Brother who would like to improve his speaking and leadership skills is welcome to participate in the formation of a Masonic Toastmasters Club. Meetings have already started on Tuesdays at 19 00 h at King George Masonic Hall, Calgary. For more information contact WBro Chuck Rose at crose7@shaw.ca

Grand Master's Itinerary February

- 2 Aidrie-Wildrose No. 2001 Annual Burns Night; Crossfield Masonic Hall; 19 00 h.
- 4 Westlock No. 114 Annual Mac's Bean Supper; Memorial Hall, Westlock; 18 00 h
- 12–18 Winter Olympics at Whistler, BC
- 20–23 Annual Grand Masters of North America Conference being held at Arlington, Virginia, accompanied by the Deputy Grand Master. The Grand Secretary is at the Grand Secretaries of North America Conference (he is second vice-president), same time and location.
- 26 Annual Buffalo Roast organized by Prince Albert Masons; Masonic Hall, Prince Albert Saskatchewan; 18 00 h

The Beauty of the Ritual (Part 1)

RWBro Richard C. Friedman, Chairman, Custodians of the Work, and Bro Peter Kermani

The Empire State Mason, Summer 2008, Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York

In the First Degree Historical Lecture, we hear that

...a Lodge is supported by three great pillars, denominated Wisdom, Strength and Beauty: for there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.

The visual beauty that lies at the centre of a Masonic Lodge is there for all to see. The re-creation of the Middle Chamber of King Solomon's Temple, the soaring symbols upon the walls, floors and furniture of the Lodge, hold obvious beauty. Yet in the words of the great R&B song "beauty's only skin deep."

In order to turn the man into the Freemason, and keep the Freemason on the right path, we need to make more obvious the beauty that adorns our Ritual. Displaying the ritual's beauty should be the focus of every individual Lodge, District and State where Freemasonry exists. More importantly, it should be the absolute mission of every individual Freemason who has been exposed to the overarching lessons of our Ritual to explain the beauty that lies within. It is the glue that binds us, as taught in the lesson of the Trowel. It is fair to say that sharing the beauty of the Ritual is as great and important an undertaking as any in Freemasonry — well worth the support of each of the three great pillars, especially beauty. At every gathering of Freemasons at work in the quarries we hear these words:

Most Holy and glorious Lord God, the Great Architect of the Universe, the Giver of all good gifts and graces. Thou has promised that where two or three are gathered in Thy name, Thou will be in their midst and bless them. In Thy name we have assembled and in Thy name we desire to proceed in all our doings.

These words are a striking example of the beauty contained in our Ritual. God is most holy and glorious as well as the giver of all good gifts and graces. He is the Great Architect of the Universe. How beautifully expressive are these phrases.

When our Ritual is rendered with emotion and care, its beauty is as spectacular as the Grand Canyon. Listen carefully to the words and you will

understand. That is the exact reason why we must hold each other to the highest standards possible in rendering the Ritual. It is just too important to Freemasonry's survival to ever accept mediocre work.

In the Third Degree Historical Lecture we are told, "the three great pillars were explained in a preceding degree, and there represented Wisdom, Strength and Beauty." Here they are more fully explained. Hiram Abiff, the widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali by whose incredible workmanship the Temple was so beautifully adorned, this time, represents the pillar beauty.

Just as our ancient operative Brethren made the Temple a beautiful thing to behold, our Masonic forefathers with equally incredible workmanship made the Ritual a beautiful thing to behold. As our Brethren worked so hard to beautifully adorn the Temple, so we must work hard to beautifully adorn our Ritual.

Wisdom, Strength and Beauty: the three great pillars of a Lodge. Did you ever wonder why exactly it is that we are hoodwinked in all three degrees? Beyond the obvious need to conceal the Lodge room before a man or Brother is entitled to witness it, our forefathers must have believed that beauty in Freemasonry is not something that is just seen, it is heard as well. By taking away the human sense of sight, we are forced to enhance the human sense of hearing.

The harder we are willing to work at making the sounds of the Ritual beautiful, the more powerfully they are communicated.

At the end of our labour in Lodge the Ritual admonishes us to carry the meaning of the words we have heard in our hearts as we re-enter our daily lives:

*Teach us O God, to realize the beauties of the principles of our time-honored Institution, **not only while in the Lodge, but when abroad in the world.** Subdue every discordant passion within us, and enable us to love one another in the bonds of union and friendship. May the blessing of Heaven rest upon us and all regular Masons, may Brotherly love prevail and every moral and social virtue cement us. Amen*

These are such beautiful words.

One of the greatest beauties of our time honoured Institution is its language. Consider the following excerpt and try to grasp how revolutionary these ideas were at the time they were first spoken. In a world that was divided, in a world where wars were waged over differences in creed, and in a world that espoused anything but universal brotherhood the language of Freemasonry was a beacon for all. The language of Freemasonry outlined concepts that even in 2008, the world is struggling to grasp:

Freemasonry is far removed from all that is trivial, selfish and ungodly. Its structure is built upon the ever-lasting foundation of that God-given law, the brotherhood of man in the family whose father is God. Our ancient and honorable Fraternity welcomes to its doors and admits to its privileges worthy men of all creeds, and of every race, yet it insists that all men shall stand upon an exact equality and receive its instruction in a spirit of due humility, emphasizing, in demeanor, in conduct, in ceremony and in language, the helpless groping nature of man at his birth and his need of reliance upon Divine guidance throughout life.

These are the instructions the candidate receives as he stands behind the inner door before he begins his travels in Freemasonry. The beauty of these words heard by all of us early in our Masonic careers represent another "beauty of our time honoured Institution," and show once again that our Ritual truly is a great and important undertaking.

Freemasonry demands its members pledge themselves to a much harder life than those without its walls. We are to put aside prejudice of all kinds, racism, classism and all the other "isms" that often interfere with men living up to their best instincts. Our Ritual DEMANDS that we act in a way that lives up to the words we hold dear. The sounds that enter the "attentive ear" are not empty or hollow. They outline a way of life that says don't cheat, don't steal, don't cut corners in quality, and always do the right thing, even when no one is looking. This is a far tougher road to walk than allowing ourselves to embrace "selfish individualism."

The Volume of the Sacred Law

Making those pieces of history last the distance

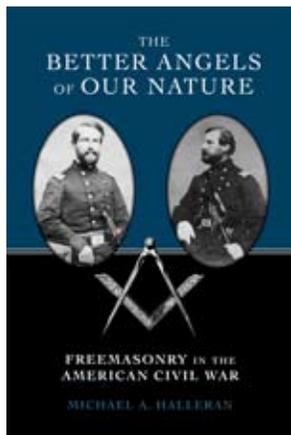
Bro Peter F. Godwin, *NZ Freemason*, Volume 35, Issue 1, 2007,
Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand

During the 20 or so years I have been a member of the Craft, I have observed in Lodges all around the world many distressing occasions of the opening and closing of the Volume of the Sacred Law. Many of these books were produced during the latter half of the Victorian era, and by now are showing signs of wear and tear due to their age. As a bookbinder I am called upon to make repairs to these books from Lodges in the area in which I live, and I can only assume that in the wider field other volumes are in a similar condition. A recent volume I had to repair and rebind took 18 hours, and though in this case it was a "gratis" job, a paying customer would have been looking at having to pay the best part of \$1,000 for the work. There are so few skilled tradespeople around to undertake restoration work, so it is in everyone's best interests to take care of what books we have.

I offer the following points to assist

Freemasonry in War

A new academic history about Civil War Freemasons entitled *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Freemasonry in the American Civil War* by Bro Michael Halleran (Emporia Lodge No. 12, Emporia, Kansas) is attracting favourable reviews even before it is in distribution. The



book, published by the University of Alabama Press, provides an overview of 19th century American Freemasonry in general and Masonry in the armies of both North and South in particular, along with examples of how Masonic brotherhood worked in practice during those turbulent years.

<<http://www.uapress.ua.edu/product/Better-Angels-of-Our-Nature.4729.aspx>>

the care and preservation of these books, as to make repairs is a costly exercise and a drain on Lodge resources.

- When not in use store the book in a box before putting it away. This prevents other items damaging it, as most storage cupboards are packed tight with other furniture.
- When opening the book use **TWO**

Enlightenment: Revolution and Way of Life

Margaret Jacob has identified with populist causes all her life. This distinguished professor of history at the University of California at Los Angeles is known for her unconventional approach to studying *The Enlightenment*, that era in Western Europe when superstition gave way to science and prominent intellectuals challenged the divine right of kings.

"The traditional way to study *The Enlightenment* was to look at a few great thinkers," Jacob says. "I see *The Enlightenment* as a

much more complex process of interactions among a variety of people. The publishers, booksellers, journalists, and anonymous writers of that time were in many ways just as important in creating momentum as were great philosophers such as Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau."

A significant theme of hers has been that early modern Europeans viewed science, politics, and religion as being interconnected. "They saw knowledge about nature generated through systematic inquiry as having a religious meaning," she says. "For them, nature gave signals; it had ways of showing human beings how to practice morality and conduct the state. That kind of interplay between the moral, the human, and the natural was very much in the minds of the Europeans."

"In the course of the 18th century, these relationships remained," Jacob says, "but they became more abstract, so science became a model for the way in which all human inquiry should be conducted."

hands. Many pages are torn by trying to open the book one-handed. First open the front board of the cover then the pages are more readily available and flexible to turn to the required passage of scripture.

- **NEVER** store the book with the Square and Compasses still inside. Metal and paper do not mix, and to leave bulky items within the pages puts stress on the sewing.
- To close, close pages followed by the cover and then the metal clasps if present.

Intriguing to Jacob is the cultural shift toward the secular in Western Europe during the 18th century, "when for large numbers of people, religion became a separate compartment and didn't permeate their lives as it once had."



Dr. Margaret C. Jacob, Keynote Speaker at the 2010 Spring Workshop

Much of her work looks at the relationship between radicalism and the American, French, and Dutch revolutions. She's particularly well-known for uncovering the role played by the Masonic fraternal organization in spreading secularist concepts first promoted by such 17th-century giants as Sir Isaac Newton.

Her 1991 book *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth Century Europe* explores the role of Masonic Lodges of the 17th and 18th centuries in spreading such democratic ideas as the right of free assembly and representative government.

All that may sound lofty, but Jacob doesn't come across that way. She is a great raconteur with an infectious laugh. Her ability to boil difficult concepts down to easily understood and vivid terms has made her a darling at the *Los Angeles Times* Book Review Section and a popular teacher among undergraduates.

Dr Jacob will be the Keynote Speaker at the 2010 Masonic Spring Workshop, 23-25 April 2010 at the Delta Lodge at Kananaskis.

Register before March 1 and be eligible for the Early Bird Draw, a weekend for two at the Delta Lodge at Kananaskis. For more information visit www.masonicspringworkshop.ab.ca.

And a Good Time Was Had by All

RWBro Keng-Wei Chiew, DDGM, Alpha District

The Alpha District's annual Christmas get together on 27 November 2009 at the Glenmore Inn was considered a smashing success by all who attended. Although the roads were terrible, the pristine blanket of fresh snow put everyone in the right mood to enjoy the festive evening. While the drive in may have been a challenge, those attending were rewarded with an evening of warmth, camaraderie and fellowship, shared with their Brethren, their families and friends, giving all the opportunity to exchange holiday greetings and rejoice in the joys of the season.

The traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings was delicious, and the live entertainment provided by "Aces

High," with a very appropriate music selection, kept members and guests on their feet dancing until midnight. The bar service, wine on the tables and over one thousand dollars in door prizes being given away kept the full house attendance of Brethren, family members and guests in a festive mood throughout the event. MC WBro Don Mitchell kept things flowing smoothly, and we were honoured by the attendance of RWBro Gerald Waldern, the Deputy Grand Master, MWBro John Hart, the Immediate Past Grand Master and their ladies and RWBro Jerry Kopp, the Grand Secretary.

The District would like to thank members of the organizing committee for their hard work and effort in the planning. We also thank those who attended for their participation and enthusiasm. It is your participation that ensures the success of events like this one. We truly appreciate your support.

Two New Lodges Consecrated



MWBro Brian Shimmons, Grand Master (r), passes the signed Charter to the Worshipful Master of Portage Lodge No. 200, WBro Leo Raessler, at the Elks Hall in Lac La Biche last 22 August, as the Grand Secretary, RWBro Jerry Kopp looks on.



Seated (l to r): MWBro John Hart, IPGM; Marilyn Hart; Pam Waldern; RWBro Gerald Waldern, DGM; RWBro Don Gillies. Standing (l to r): RWBro Jerry Kopp, GSec; WBro Gary James; RWBro Keng-Wei Chiew, DDGM Alpha District.



Signing the Charter for Aurora Borealis Lodge No. 201 which took place in Fort McMurray, 29 August 2009. This is the third Lodge in that Northeastern City. — Seated: RWBro Jerry Kopp, GSec. Standing, (l to r): RWBro David Roth, JGW; RWBro Peter Dunlop, SGW; RWBro Gerald Waldern, DGM and MWBro Brian Shimmons, GM.

Edmonton Freemasons' Hall Gala 2010 Saturday, 27 March 2010

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Dinner 7:00 PM

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