



Yellowknife Lodge No. 162 has a Special Installation

WBro Luke Ootes, WM Yellowknife Lodge No. 162

The second Saturday of January is the annual Installation of Officers at Yellowknife Lodge No. 162 (Northern Lights District), in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. This is also the Official Visit of the DDGM and every year we are blessed to have southern guests to enjoy our meeting and banquet. This year was different. On the weekend of 8–10 January, twenty Brethren and twelve wives/partners descended upon Yellowknife and our Lodge. Our guests included new and old friends and represented twelve different Lodges, including 70 per cent of our sister Lodges in the Northern Lights District. In attendance were Master Masons, Past Masters, the Worshipful Master of West Edmonton Lodge No. 101, five past DDGMs, the DDGM-Elect, WBro Lawrie Bruton, and our DDGM, RWBro Jack McBride. The group also included a Past Grand Deacon, the Grand Piper – North, the Grand Standard Bearer, a Grand Steward, the Senior Grand Warden, and the Grand Master, MWBro Brian Shimmons.

In the past, our Installation meeting has consisted of an afternoon meeting, followed by a banquet, commonly referred to as Ladies' Night. This year our Installation meeting and banquet turned into a weekend event. Temperatures outside were blessedly mild, around -15°C, as it is generally -30° or colder at that time of year. On Friday, a number of the Brethren and their ladies enjoyed dogsled "races," local tours provided by local Brethren, dinner at Bullock's Bistro, then practice for the following day's Installation ceremony. This was topped off with a nightcap at the Officers Mess at the Department of National Defence. Saturday morning our visiting Brethren agreed to put on a Master Mason Degree for two of our Brethren. What a degree! After a quick lunch we were back to the Installation of Officers, followed by our regular January meeting. One of our members pointed out that our Lodge had not been that full since Yellowknife Lodge No. 162's 50th anniversary. While this was happening the ladies happily spread their money in what was dubbed "the Yellowknife economic stimulus plan."

Installation was followed by drinks and fraternity at our IPM WBro Wayne Guy's home, then off to Ladies' Night, which was packed with 80 Masons and their spouses and guests. Entertainment and dancing followed a great dinner, and they closed the place down before we

could leave. The Grand Piper finished the evening by piping an entourage to the Black Knight Pub, playing four tunes to a packed pub, having a "dram" or two and piping them off to the hotel. It was -20° and he was in his kilt walking down the street playing his pipes. It was so interesting the local newspaper published a short article with an accompanying photograph. [See "Masonic music" below.]

Sunday morning included our annual brunch, which was also well-attended. Impromptu local tours of the city followed, including the ice road to Dettah, Bush Pilots Monument, etc.

The Brethren of Yellowknife Lodge No. 162 helped plan the event, and many participated over the weekend. This included convoys of vehicles shuttling people here and there (including guidance to the best shops for the ladies), billeting guests, and tours of our city. While we were thanked over and over, it is we who are thankful. We do not receive a lot of visitors and really enjoy it when we do. We have a vibrant Lodge with a dynamic and growing group of Brethren, but that weekend was truly what Freemasonry is all about — friendship and Brotherly love.

A special thank you to RWBro Ken Cheel for making this happen and thank you to all the Brethren and their spouses who joined us. We sure hope this is an annual event on your calendar.



Bagpiper Angus Campbell, a Freemason from Fort McMurray, AB, leads a procession out of the Black Knight on Saturday evening. About 30 Freemasons and spouses visited from Alberta on the weekend to take part in the annual celebration held by Yellowknife's Masonic Lodge. — Daron Letts/NNSL photo

Masonic music

Brethren gather for Northern celebration

Daron Letts, Northern News Services, Wednesday, January 13, 2010

SOMBA K'E/YELLOWKNIFE — Freemasons made merry at the Black Knight on Saturday evening, sharing tunes on the bagpipes with fellow pub patrons at the end of Jim Taylor's weekly maritime kitchen party performance.

The Freemasons and their spouses stopped by the bar after their annual

banquet a block away at the officer's mess in the Department of National Defence. The event was open to non-member guests. Big Ethyl provided the live entertainment. The fraternity installed seven new officers over the weekend, including John Himmelman, who became a Freemason a decade ago in

Ontario. He joined the Yellowknife Lodge after moving North five years ago.

"You have a pre-setup network," he said, referring to the benefits of moving to a new community with a lodge. "It's a great group so you automatically have an affiliation with people."

Known as Masonic Lodge No. 162 on the Grand Registry of Alberta, the Yellowknife fraternity began in 1946 and is part of a district that includes

Alberta.

A few Alberta brethren and their spouses visit from Alberta to attend the installation banquet each year, Himmelman said.

"They had such a good time last year that word spread and they wanted to take part in the event this year, meet some of the other brethren and get a tour around Yellowknife," he said.

The Freemasons and their families

went dog sledding with guides from Beck's Kennels, visited the museum and photographed wildlife, such as the ptarmigan at Sissons Court. They filled Bullock's Bistro for a meal on Friday night. On Sunday they ended their tour with a visit to the ice road.

"It was a lot of fun," said Ken Glazenbrook, a Freemason who visited from Edmonton. "It was a whole weekend worth of events."

Dog Sled Mail Run

WBro Richard Trippel, PM of Jasper Park Lodge No. 143, took part in the annual Gold Rush Dog Sled Mail Run again this year [see also The Alberta Freemason June 2009] and sent this report.

For those of you who don't know, once a year we take the mail from Quesnel to Cottonwood to Stanley to Barkerville to Wells and then into the Canada Post system, a three-day trip. This year we had 31 teams, some from as far as Seattle and Yellowknife. Last year we were the kick-off event for the BC150 celebrations and we had teams from Alaska to California, all four western provinces, all three territories, and as far away as New Zealand and Minnesota.

We have shipped letters to 57 different countries some years. It is the only place in the world that you can mail something, have it carried by dogsled and delivered to any address in the world. For those of you that have con-

cerns, we are sworn in as Canada Post Letter Carriers, punishable by the same laws. We have never lost an item—ever. This year a special letter was sent to every Canadian Athlete at the Olympics in Vancouver. (I know that I had Sidney Crosby's.) It will be there waiting for them on Wednesday.

My team was a special one on Sunday as one of the dogs was blind. He pulled great — his harness was hooked into the gang line by a tug line and a neck line and as long as I kept the gang line taut, he was guided by its direction. If I did my job, he could do his. It was so special that as long as he is able, he will always have a place with me.



WBro Richard Trippel (r) hands over his consignment of mail at the end of his run to Canada Post Superintendent Ron Potter before heading to the Olympics.

And furthermore...



Further to the article, "How Freemasonry Came to China," on Zetland Hall in the January issue of *The Alberta Freemason*, VWBro Murray Pay has pointed out that on 10 November 2008, MWBro John Hart (then Grand Master) led 22 Alberta Masons into Zetland Lodge No. 525 (EC) for a fraternal visit and to witness the conferring of a Third Degree. This was the first fraternal visit from this jurisdiction to a Lodge in Hong Kong. The picture, taken inside the historic Lodge hall, shows Brethren present from both groups.



WBro Trippel with Stevie, the blind wonder dog.

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Honour Roll

Recognition Through Long Service Awards — January to December 2009

The following Brethren were awarded the indicated jewel or bar, and are to be applauded for their many years of loyalty and their contributions to their Lodges and to Freemasonry. Should you see one of these Brethren, be sure to congratulate him.

70-Year Bars

Jones, W.S. Avon Glen Lodge No 170

60-Year Bars

Bowes, A.G. Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2
Brown, D.V. Balmoral Lodge No. 185
Brown, J.H.S. Astra Lodge No. 179
Brown, R.W. Acme Lodge No. 60
Code, J.F. Acme Lodge No. 60
Duguid, S. King George Lodge No. 69
Dyson, C.H. Ashlar Lodge No. 28
Foster, J.P. North Star Lodge No. 4
Gibson, A.G. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Hazell, W.D. Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2
Head, G.C. Crescent Lodge No. 87
Knowles, E.D. Cascade Lodge No. 5
Manery, R.G. North Star Lodge No. 4
McCullum, W.J. Commercial Lodge No. 81
McDowell, K.G. Cairo Lodge No. 32
Moses, A.R. Foothills-Kelvingrove Lodge No. 174
Peers, K.P. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Penfold, E.J. Dominion Lodge No. 117
Robinson, W.G. Cascade Lodge No. 5
Rooke, W.E. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Skjenna, O.M. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Starkman, B.A. Dominion Lodge No. 117
Toney, R.T. Chinook-Spitzie Lodge No. 6
Torie, A.G. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Weir, G.R. Ashlar Lodge No. 28

50-Year Past Master Jewels

Atkinson, J.A. Cairo Lodge No. 32
Hansen, H.P. Vulcan Lodge No. 74

50-Year Jewels

Bagg, J.W. Jasper Park Lodge No. 143
Bates, R.D. Acme Lodge No. 60
Block, W. Jasper Park Lodge No. 143
Brewer, H.K. Eureka Lodge No. 10
Brown, A.G. Excelsior Lodge No. 80
Brown, K.W. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Caithness, T.J. Commercial Lodge No. 81
Caskey, C.G. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Channon, J.R. Avon Glen Lodge No. 170
Christensen, G.D.S. Norwood Lodge No. 90
Clemens, R.W. Camrose Lodge No. 37
Dennis, G.A. Camrose Lodge No. 37
Dennis, V.H. Chinook-Spitzie Lodge No. 6
Dingwall, R.A. Dominion Lodge No. 117
Disler, B.E. Patricia Lodge No. 91
Dungate, S.E. Jasper Park Lodge No. 143
Evans, R.P. Cornerstone Lodge No. 19
Feather, R.M. Meridian Lodge No. 129
Flagler, J.R. Buffalo Park Lodge No. 44
Forsdick, J.E. Norwood Lodge No. 90
French, K.W. Camrose Lodge No. 37
Gibson, H. Acme Lodge No. 60
Gorehickman, F.G. North Star Lodge No. 4
Gow, W.L. Mystic Tie Lodge No. 188
Grover, A.R. Lochearn Lodge No. 151
Hallett, T.A. Dominion Lodge No. 117
Harris, R.S. Alberta Lodge No. 3

Harte, J.E. Acme Lodge No. 60
Herron, M.J. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Hubbard, T.D.F. Concord Lodge No. 124
King, G.T. Gleichen Lodge No. 36
Kinsman, J.A.S. Buffalo Park Lodge No. 44
Kitt, W.A. Star of the West Lodge No. 34
Leskewich, J.K. Patricia Lodge No. 91
Lund, P.A. Red Deer Lodge No. 12
McCracken, J.A. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
McKeever, G.A. Jasper Park Lodge No. 143
McNeely, E.L. Zetland Lodge No. 83
Meers, M.M. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Milligan, J.I. Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2
Moses, E.A. Mosaic Lodge No. 176
Paravantes, E. Jasper Park Lodge No. 143
Radke, E.R. Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2
Redgwell, W.H. Mountain View Lodge No. 16
Ross, J.K. Perfection Lodge No. 9
Sales, R.A. Perfection Lodge No. 9
Semotiuk, N.J. Edmonton Lodge No. 7
Shier, F.A. Fort McMurray Lodge No. 195
Strachan, W.K. West Edmonton Lodge No. 101
Sugden, T.C. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Vance, R.L. Patricia Lodge No. 91
Vandersluys, R.J. Alberta Lodge No. 3
Wells, A. Sentinel Lodge No. 26
Wheaton, L.H. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No. 82
Wheeler, W.T.C. Perfection Lodge No. 9
White, J.N. Concord Lodge No. 124
Wilbraham, R.A. Wetaskiwin Lodge No. 15
Woodward, D. Cascade Lodge No. 5

Grand Chaplain's Easter Message

VWBro Louis Fradette

Easter is the most important Christian festival, a time when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This took place around the time of the Jewish festival of Passover. As a result, Christians do not observe Easter on a set date, but on a Sunday in Spring after the first full moon after the Spring equinox.

Prior to the fourth century, Christians observed *Pascha*, Christian Passover, in the Spring of the year. Adapted from Jewish Passover, *Pascha* was a festival of redemption and commemorated both the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus as the vehicle for God's grace. While historical records are not clear, it is likely that early Jewish Christians observed both Passover (*Pesach*) and *Pascha*. However, many Gentile converts were hesitant to adopt the Jewish festival, especially since the Jerusalem Council had decided that Gentile converts to

Christianity did not have to observe Jewish religious practices (Acts 15). Gradually by the fourth century, with an increasing emphasis on Holy Week and Good Friday, Easter moved into a distinctively Christian celebration of the Resurrection, with Good Friday commemorating Jesus' crucifixion and death.

Easter, like Passover, is a movable feast. That is, the date of Easter (and Passover) is not fixed but is determined by a system based on a lunar calendar adapted from a formula decided by the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.

Even before Christian times, many people celebrated Spring in a special way. It is the season when trees sprout leaves again, when nature is reborn after the deadness of Winter — just as Jesus rose from the dead. People held Spring festivals, and many of their traditions carried over into the Christian Easter.

Different cultures and different faiths use their own calendars to document the cycle of the year and to name each year within recorded or remembered history. They too have a calendar of festivals based on their religious year rather than on the Western calendar.

Festivals strengthen the brotherhood and communal harmony among various sections of society. Let Easter resurrect in us the noblest virtues that will make us endure as Brothers and as true Masons. These are qualities of love for our neighbours, peace for the troubled, strength for the weak, help for the needy and unity to enable us to live and work together.

Correction

The photo in the March issue of the Jasper Park Lodge No. 143 Robbie Burns Night shows WBro Bev Bentley, WBro Harry Home, WM Jasper Park Lodge No. 143, WBro Ed Chilton and Bro Frank Leong.

Taking Lessons From Art

Bro Thomas M. Savini, Chancellor Robert R. Livingston Masonic Library

The Empire State Mason, Winter 2007, Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York

The Tracing Board

A previous issue of the Empire State Mason examined the differences between the Trestleboard, a vehicle for instruction, and the Tracing Board, a medium for displaying the symbols of the Craft. The cover of this issue illustrated an example of how the Tracing Board served as a visual presentation of the symbols taught through Masonic Ritual. [Editor]

It has often been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. This adage is taken literally when symbols are incorporated into a system of education. Symbols become the means by which concepts, lessons and principles are translated into a visual shorthand, a single image (or set of images) that leaves an impression upon the student, and becomes easier to recall, easier to remember, and therefore, easier to learn. Tracing Boards function as visual shorthand when teaching new Brothers the Masonic Ritual.

Reading, Writing and 'Rithmetic

When we were children, everything was new, and our minds were largely blank slates. We learned some new things by the process of trial and error. We learned that fire was hot by painful experience. We learned that misbehaving led to punishment. We learned that our families were people we could love and trust.

Children learn in fascinating ways. Any of us who have taught in a classroom know that most children are easy to teach, because their minds are open books. They are eager to learn new things and absorb new information like sponges. As children learn, their brains are creating new compartments to store new knowledge; they often create links between these compartments, so that new information becomes more meaningful and easier to recall by linking it to information already stored in their brains.

By the time adolescence sets in (and for the rest of our lives), people generally start to learn in a different way. New knowledge is not so easy to incorporate and compartmentalize; it is more common for new information and concepts to be measured against information already stored in the brain, and for the learner to try to fit the new concept into some variation of already-

stored information. We compare new music to old favorite songs stored in our memories; we associate new faces with old familiar friends and relatives. It's one reason why so many of us call new Brothers by the wrong names. It's also one of the reasons why so many Past Masters mourn for the good ol' days.

When our not-so-ancient Brethren of the late 17th century were developing speculative Freemasonry, they knew that one of their goals was the transmission of lessons in character and behaviour, or what we can simply call ethics. They also knew that a large portion of the population was illiterate, and had no access to formal educational systems like schools or universities. To teach the lessons of Freemasonry they needed to incorporate a method that would introduce what might be new or unfamiliar concepts in a way that addressed the learning styles of the typical late 17th century adult male. They chose to use a system of symbols and legends as their method of education. We call it the Ritual.

Letters in the Sand

The Ritual uses a series of lectures to convey lessons in character and ethics. These principles are embodied in symbols, many drawn from the tools of the operative stonemasons of the Middle Ages. Other symbols were drawn from various traditions of religious and esoteric beliefs. Masonic symbols serve the purpose that symbols in general perform: they are, as written above, visual shorthand, a way of conveying an idea, a concept, or a principle not with words, but instead with images.

In the late 17th and 18th centuries it was important to have a system of education that did not depend on the printed word. In contemporary society, we take for granted that a large majority of the population can read. The literacy rate was much lower at the time of the founding of Freemasonry; this was more of an issue as one travelled east from England across continental Europe. Our traditions of keeping the Ritual secret and in code may be rooted in mystery and esoteric backgrounds; there may also be a practical root, one having more to do with the fact that some early Brothers were not able to read the printed word. As with all things

Masonic, there are likely a number of different factors at play.

Early Masonic Monitors, compilations of lectures, included charts showing different collections of Masonic symbols. By using these charts, Master Masons could teach new Brothers what the individual symbols looked like. By reproducing these symbols from these charts, the instruction could be performed as the ceremony was occurring. In 18th and early 19th century Lodges it was most common for the symbols to be reproduced in some impermanent medium, often traced into a box of sand or drawn on a slate with a piece of chalk or charcoal. When the meeting was concluded, it was simple to obliterate all traces of the Masonic symbols by brushing over the sand or by erasing the designs from the slate.

As literacy increased, the visual display of symbols no doubt served to reinforce the lessons of the Ritual. We humans, then as now, learn new information on many different levels. We learn by what we hear; we learn by what we read; and we learn by what we see, and by what we appreciate from an aesthetic standard. When we read something from a book that has print that is legible, printed on pages that are not too bright or glaring, our reading experience is enhanced because it is a visual pleasure to read the information. That pleasant experience may make us more inclined to associate positive memories with the information we're reading, and possibly make the information easier to recall. When Masonic Ritual is attached to "pretty pictures," or pleasing or intriguing representations of the symbols, perhaps the lessons of Freemasonry become easier for the individual Mason to remember.

When Masonic Lodges began to own their own buildings, Tracing Boards became more permanent fixtures. Lodges were no longer renting rooms in taverns, inns, and common areas; no longer needed to worry about removing the symbols when their meetings concluded. Tracing Boards began to be painted in oils, either on canvas, or directly onto the walls of Lodge rooms. Often the work was performed by an uncredited Brother, an artist who was not concerned with acclaim or glory,

See **Art**, page 5.

Book Reviews

My Book, My Opinion! or Thoughts Garnered on my Masonic Journey

By Hugh Young; ISBN: 978-0-98117-808; published by Linshaw Enterprises Inc.; <http://www.linshaw.ca>

Reviewed by Bro John L Palmer in *Knights Templar Magazine* (USA) Volume LVI No. 1 and online at <http://issuu.com/gektusa/docs/0110>

Hugh Young is a Past Grand Master of Alberta, Canada and a former police inspector. In this book he offers a variety of his opinions on a number of Masonic subjects without the least regard to whether you agree with him or not. Interestingly, I agreed with him almost 100 per cent of the time. He has a humorous view of the absurd things we sometimes do in the Fraternity and is not bashful about making fun of them. I found the chapter on Past Masters to be hilarious and great advice for anyone who is an immediate Past Master. Did you know that "...the most important attribute for a Past Master is silence...?" Sure you did. It's just that nobody wants to say that out loud.

Interspersed in the book are little boxes containing jewels of wisdom such as "80 per cent of the Master's involvement in Lodge affairs should occur outside the Lodge meeting" or quotes like this one from Ezra Loomis Pound: "Real education must ultimately be limited to men who insist on knowing — the rest is mere sheep-herding." This book is entertaining, educational, and to a large degree, profoundly wise.

I would highly recommend this little paperback to anyone who is a current or aspiring Lodge officer. Included are appendices containing a sample Lodge calendar, a sample Lodge meeting plan, a quiz of sorts, and a reading list.

For a new Mason wanting to know about the practical side of the Fraternity as opposed to the esoteric, this

Art, from page 4.

but one who simply wanted to serve his Lodge.

The words of the Ritual can inspire a wide variety of mental images, pictures that run through our minds when we hear Ritual presented. How awesome it is to see that inspiration brought to reality in the hands of talented artists, who create their impressions of the symbols of Freemasonry, and construct Tracing Boards to teach and inspire the Craft, and to beautify our Lodges and buildings!

is the book for you. Masters, I recommend that you issue one of these to every new Brother that is raised in your Lodge. Sometimes we get so involved in ritual and sometimes in the study of the symbolism that we forget how to "Dwell together in harmony." This is a great little primer on that aspect of the Fraternity and how we can make our Lodges prosper and even flourish.

PS: Don't bother to write him and disagree with what he has written — it's his book, his opinion!

Reviewed by Bro Martyn Green on *The Masonic Art Exchange* website, at <http://masonic-ae.com/maec.html>

This is an absolute little gem of a book. Hugh Young has used his 40-plus years in Freemasonry to amass a knowledge which he releases here in a tidal wave of common sense. *My Book, My Opinion* is more than just a helpful guide for new Masons. This book is carefully crafted for anyone who is interested in the future of not only their own Lodge but the Craft at large.

This wonderfully refreshing book demonstrates, through Hugh's ability to break things down, plenty of positive changes we can make in our own Lodges that will help guarantee a bright future for our Fraternity. With analysis becoming of Freud, Hugh takes various aspects of the Lodge and its members and shows how with a can do attitude and some planning we can make a difference.

As a relatively new member of the

Craft, and as I head to the Master's Chair next year, I found this book inspiring and quite invaluable as a resource. With chapters as diverse as planning meetings and to how to deal with ageing Brethren, it really is a master-class on Lodge affairs.

His opinions will no doubt lead to debate; I happen to think that is a good thing.

Grand Master's Itinerary

April

- 6 Elbow Lodge No. 180, 50-Year Jewel presentation; Bowmont Masonic Hall, Calgary; 19 30 h
- 7 Granite Lodge No. 127, Annual Oyster Night, Masonic Hall, Blackie; 19 30 h
- 10 West Edmonton Lodge No. 101, Wine, Cheese & Art; Edmonton Freemasons' Hall; Dinner 18 00 h
- 18 Sakarra Temple No. 115, Daughters of the Nile, Ceremonial Banquet; Al Azhar Temple, Calgary; 17 00 h
- 19 Brooks Lodge No. 73, Fraternal visit; Masonic Hall, Brooks, AB; 19 30 h
- 21 Bow River Lodge No. 1, 50-Year Jewel presentations; Calgary Freemasons' Hall; Dinner 18 00 h; Tyle 19 30 h
- 22 Acacia Lodge No. 11, St George's Night; Acacia Hall, Edmonton; Cocktails 18 00 h; Fish & Chips 18 30 h; Entertainment 19 15 h
- 23–25 45th Annual Masonic Spring Workshop; Theme — *Enlightenment: The Soul of Freemasonry*; Keynote Speaker Prof Margaret C Jacob; Delta Lodge at Kananaskis.

News from The Centre for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism

The first issue of the *Journal for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism* is now available. The online version can be accessed on the publisher's website <http://www.equinoxjournals.com/ojs/index.php/JRFF/issue/current>. The editorials and book reviews are free, but the articles must be purchased individually (some are in languages other than English).

For those of you who feel the need to purchase every book written on Freemasonry, Dr. Róbert Péter has compiled a database of recently published titles (in many languages). The list is not comprehensive and will be continuously updated: <http://www.refworks.com/refshare?site=051541216267200000/RWWS2A1326230/JRFF>

The third International Conference on the History of Freemasonry will take place in Alexandria, Virginia 27–29 May 2011. The ICHF public announcement is available at http://www.grandlodgescotland.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=464&Itemid=115

Alberta Miscellany

Thoughts from the summonses, selected by Bro Trevor Morris

Redwood Lodge No. 193

Ritual is an important part of our Fraternity. It is something that within our Lodge room encompasses much of what we do, and hopefully when we leave our Lodges we take some of what our ritual offers us out into our day-to-day lives.

Some Brethren, out of curiosity, may question the reason behind our ritual and even perhaps its need. This is of course, a natural thing to do. To a newcomer within the Craft, our meetings' openings and closings may appear to be somewhat static and repetitive. However, ritual within our work provides many benefits to our Lodge meetings, our members and our Craft as a whole.

Firstly, our ritual provides continuity and what may be considered an "organized outline" to the practice of Freemasonry. The continual, unwavering reminder of our obligations, our duties to each other in the presence of the GAOTU and our roles and responsibilities in Lodge allow us to focus on being creative and constructive in our meetings. Our ritual also provides us with much of the foundation for our moral or spiritual teachings found in Freemasonry.

Secondly, the ritual we practice in order to open and close the Lodge has a mystical purpose. It prepares our minds and our hearts for a sacred event: our Lodge meeting. Think of our opening ritual much in the same way the musicians in a symphony warm up their instruments before a performance, or how an athlete warms up his muscles before a competition. In the same way, our opening ritual warms our minds and hearts so that we may invoke the blessing of the GAOTU and allow His presence to provide us with a mystic tie with

Letter from Dan Brown

Author of *The Lost Symbol* and other novels

As reported in *Focus*, a communication of the Masonic Service Association of North America, Volume 16, Issue 4, December 2009

Author Dan Brown was invited to address the guests attending the 2009 Supreme Council Session of the Southern Jurisdiction Scottish Rite, but was unable to attend. He did, however, send a letter explaining his attraction to Freemasonry:

Guests of the Southern Jurisdiction,

*It is my great honor to be invited to greet you via this letter. I had hoped I might be able to join you in person tonight, but the launch of my novel *The Lost Symbol* has me far from Washington.*

In the past few weeks, as you might imagine, I have been repeatedly asked what attracted me to the Masons so strongly as to make it a central point of my new book. My reply is always the same: "In a world where men do battle over whose definition of God is most accurate, I cannot adequately express the deep respect and admiration I feel toward an organization in which men of differing faiths are able to 'break bread together' in a bond of brotherhood."

*Please accept my humble thanks for the noble example you set for humankind. It is my sincere hope that the Masonic community recognizes *The Lost Symbol* for what it truly is... an earnest attempt to reverentially explore the history and beauty of Masonic Philosophy.*

Dan Brown

one another. Many Masons whom I have talked to over the years speak of an energized feeling or natural high they feel, sometimes for hours, after a great night at Lodge. I don't think this feeling is an accident or coincidence.

Finally, our ritual ensures that the moral and spiritual lessons and message of Freemasonry are communicated from one generation to the next without being tainted by current events, views, or popular or "in vogue" thinking. The knowledge that is passed on to members of our Fraternity truly transcends the passage of time, which is partial evidence of the perfection of the foundation of our Craft.

As a new year dawns, I encourage all of you to join me in a resolution: ***Be it resolved that I commit myself to a daily allotment of time to consider and explore my views on Freemasonry and a weekly allotment of time to further advance my knowledge of the Craft.***

WBro Stanton Pallister, WM

EMPIRE LODGE No. 63 *presents*

THE EMPIRE VICTORY BALL



Empire Lodge No. 63 cordially invites our fellow Brothers, friends and family to celebrate VE Day and enjoy a fine banquet and live swing music of the 1940s.

Menu of Fine English Cuisine

*prime rib of beef w/ Yorkshire pudding & au jus
grilled chicken breasts
accompaniments of tossed greens, vegetable pasta, steamed vegetables
& roasted potatoes
English trifle and fresh fruit
(vegetarian meals upon request)*

19 00 h, Saturday, 8 May 2010 Freemasons' Hall Ballroom

Dress: Tuxedo/Fine Evening Wear

Tickets: \$40.00

{Phone Bro Don Stannard 780-554-9444 or info@empirelodge63.com}