



Who Was Hiram Abiff?

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

Those of you old enough to remember the radio version of the “Lone Ranger” may remember the famous tag line at the end of almost every show: “Who was that masked man?” The question was always asked by someone who had been rescued from dire circumstances by the Lone Ranger – whose identity was kept a closely guarded secret from those he helped.

In a similar way, Masons may ask, “Who was Hiram Abiff?” We know a little about him from our Masonic degrees — but not a lot. In fact, we do not know much more about where he came from and how he got to his position of prominence in Masonry than we know about where the Lone Ranger came from, and how he got to be the famous rescuer of those in trouble on the Western frontier.

The name Hiram first appears in the Bible in 1 Kings 7:13 [*Oxford Annotated Bible*]. There we find that:

Now King Solomon invited and received Hiram from Tyre. He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, whose father, a man of Tyre, had been an artisan in bronze; he was full of skill, intelligence, and knowledge in working bronze. He came to King Solomon, and did all his work.

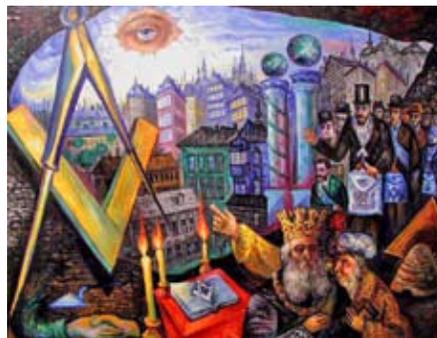
He is not called Hiram Abiff in this passage, and it is only in the Book of Second Chronicles that we learn that his name was Abiff (or something similar to that), and that he was sent to King Solomon by another Hiram — King Hiram of Tyre. Here is what is written in 2 Chronicles 2:11–14:

Then King Hiram of Tyre, answered in a letter that he sent to Solomon, ... I have dispatched Hiram-abi, a skilled artisan, endowed with understanding, the son of one of the Danite women, his father a Tyrian. He is trained to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and wood, and in purple, blue, and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and to do all sorts of engraving and execute any design that may be assigned to him, with your artisans, the artisans

of my lord, your father David.

From these meager biblical sources, the Masonic legend of Hiram Abiff has been created. There is no mention in the Bible that he was the Architect of King Solomon’s Temple. That is a Masonic invention. However, he is depicted as a skilled worker in various media—metal, wood and stone, as well as fabrics. He was also an engraver, and good at artistic designs. It was from these references that he was transformed in our legend to become the Architect of the Temple at Jerusalem, “well skilled in arts and sciences.” It looks as if we took an ordinary craftsman and made him into something else. Or did we? There is another story here that needs to be told.

Freemasonry teaches by symbol and allegory. The concept of a “symbol” is easy; the concept of an “allegory” is more difficult. We can all understand the



“King Solomon’s Vision” by Ari Roussimoff depicts Hiram Abiff helping King Solomon achieve his vision for the Temple. The painting is displayed at the Robert R. Livingston Library and Museum in New York City. In the detail below, Hiram Abiff counsels King Solomon.



symbol of the Twenty-four Inch Gauge. That measuring tool, used by stonemasons to measure and lay out their work, represents time — the irreducible minimum of 24 hours which is given to each of us every day. We can have no more, and we have no less. What we do with those 24 hours makes a difference, and Freemasonry helps us to understand why it is important for God, and our family, to get a share of that time, as well as “our usual vocations” and our “refreshment and repose.”

The Legend of Hiram Abiff is an allegory. It is not about a real human being who was the Architect of the Temple, even though the story is based on the real “Hiram Abiff” found in the Bible. Instead, it is about someone who takes the talents that God has given him, and makes a difference. In our allegory, Hiram Abiff is a man “endowed with understanding” to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. We depict him as someone who knew how to take common stone and craft it into a magnificent building — perhaps the most magnificent that has ever been built. He is a man “full of skill, intelligence, and knowledge” (the words from the Bible) who could build for eternity. He is a man whose devotion to duty, and to the promises he has made, make him an example worthy of all emulation. We remind the newly raised Master Mason that Hiram Abiff is someone to imitate, and that, therefore, he should never let any motive cause him to swerve from his duty, violate his vows, or betray a trust. If he “gets it,” then, like Hiram Abiff, he will be someone who will make a difference.

Hiram Abiff is pictured in our allegory as a man and a Mason who made a difference — not because of what he possessed, but because of what he did with that which he possessed. You can do that, too, with what you possess. You, too, can make a difference — just like Hiram Abiff!

Who was Hiram Abiff? He was someone who made a difference.

Closure of the *Centre for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism*

Dr. Andreas Önnersfors

Some of you might have observed that the *Centre for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism* at the University of Sheffield not has issued a newsletter since February this year. Newsletter 46 (2010:2) was the last disseminated during my directorship. During 2009 the CRFF failed to capture substantial grants that would have allowed the continuation of our activities. Furthermore a promised donation has not materialized. As a consequence the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Sheffield has decided to suspend the activities of the CRFF for the time being. The website has switched into hibernation and is not updated anymore. I will leave the university at the end of June 2010 and have currently no other position or engagement beyond that date.

For university-based academic research into Freemasonry and fraternalism in Europe there are challenging times ahead. We had hoped to reorganize some of our activities at the Chair for Research into Freemasonry at Leiden University, but the tragic death of Professor Malcolm Davies earlier this year has prevented such a move. It is currently uncertain when and if the chair will be advertised again.

When we finally launched our *Journal for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism* last year we discussed the option to form an Academic Society for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism. A constitution was drafted and a circle of pro tempore board members appointed — with Malcolm Davies as chairman. We are now discussing the future of this organization. The Journal is, however, the first tangible outcome of truly international scholarly cooperation in the field and Issue 1 was finally published in January this year. We were surprised that the University of Sheffield didn't want to take credit of this initiative and have since then

been very cautious to make any further connections between activities in the research area and the University. This has also prompted us to draw a clear line between the society, the journal and the University of Sheffield. We are looking into different solutions to diffuse this newsletter in the future and have created a temporary website for the society and everybody interested in the progress of the research area as an academic topic, <http://asrff.blogspot.com> (which will be updated on a regular basis). Please link to this website and remove all previous links to freemasonry.dept.shef.ac.uk.

We are looking into options to retain some of the features of the old website. Lane's and Draffen's digital list of Lodges will be hosted in coordination with the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London. The library of the CRFF will be relocated to Tipton Masonic Hall in Sheffield thanks to a generous donation from UGLE Prestonian Lecturer and RWM of QC-Lodge No. 2076, Dr John Wade. The remainder of our publication series "Sheffield Lectures on the

News from the Grand East of the Netherlands

RWBro B.G.T. van Helden, Grand Representative

At the June Grand Lodge Communication a new Grand Master will be elected to succeed MWBro Diederik van Rossum, for a term of eight years. Three candidates are running for this office, including two past Grand Secretaries. Each candidate has submitted his answers to a set of questions in the recent publication of *Ken U Zelve (Know thy Self)*, one full page for each candidate.

A new Masonic Centre (including the Grand Lodge Office, library and museum) is proposed to be built, but there still seems to be a dispute on where in Holland it will be located.

History of Freemasonry and Fraternalism" is still for sale. To order Vol. 1 on *Freemasonry and Fraternalism in the Middle East* (2009); Vol. 2 on *Freemasonry and Fraternalism in Eighteenth century Russia* (2009) and Vol. 3 *Researching British Freemasonry 1717-2017* (2010) please contact j.p.banham@sheffield.ac.uk +441142229890, HRI 34 Gell Street, S3 7QY Sheffield, United Kingdom.

Long-Term Sponsorship

VWBro Murray Pay, St Mark's No. 118

Being a friend and Brother sometimes means stepping aside and letting someone else do the honours. That's what happened on 12 April 2010, at St. Mark's Lodge No. 118. RWBro William (Bill) Campbell Sr. received his Fifty-Year Jewel for service to the Craft from his son, Bro William (Bill) Campbell Jr. with long-time friend, VWBro Ben Niven, proudly standing by.

Bill Sr. and Ben have a long Masonic history together. Ben sponsored Bill Sr. into the Craft, raised him in 1960 and placed him into King Solomon's chair in December 1966. Bill is particularly proud of the fact that all three of his Degrees were transmitted mouth to ear (no written text to memorize) by Ben. Even the jewels Bill is wearing in the photo were each presented by his good friend and mentor, Ben. But this was the time to let Junior have the honour.

To have a sponsor be there for every step of his candidate's Mason journey over a period of 50 years is a real milestone.



VWBro Ben Niven, Past Grand Steward, 1994-95; RWBro William (Bill) Campbell, DDGM, District No. 1 1983-84, and Bro William (Bill) Campbell, Jr.

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Best Lodge Practices — A Progress Report, April, 2010

VWBro Glenn McConnell — Education Chairman, Alpha District

The Best Practices Workshop, October, 2009

In late 2008, Bro. David Mapplebeck, then president of the Masters', Wardens' and Deacons' Association — Calgary and District, determined that a major officer training workshop should be developed and presented in Calgary. As planning began in 2009, the "best practices" plan for Masonic Lodges was introduced by MWBro Brian Shimmons and relayed to the DDGMs enlisting district support for this initiative. It was subsequently determined that Alpha District, under the leadership of its DDGM, RWBro Keng-Wei Chiew, would join with MWD — Calgary to co-produce a training workshop focusing on "best practices" to be presented on 30 October 2009.

Concurrent with final workshop planning, an "Introduction to Best Lodge Practices" together with workshop promotion, was presented to Alpha District Lodges by RWBro Chiew and VWBro Glenn McConnell, District Education Chairman, during the DDGM's official visits. This was also done in Phoenix District by RWBro Allan Long, DDGM, and VWBro Andy Pokolinski, District Education Chairman. E-mail addresses were assembled for the officers of all Lodges in Alpha, Phoenix, Calgary-Highwood and Dinosaur Districts in order to provide workshop flyers directly to them. Consequently, registration was brisk and fifty-five officers and Brethren ultimately attended the workshop. Participant feedback was extremely positive with requests for follow-up sessions.

This response, together with many Lodge-based discussions, plans and initiatives, are clear indications of increased enthusiasm and interest in Lodge development demonstrated by officers and Brethren. An important instance of this was revealed in Ashlar Lodge No. 28 where then WM, WBro Allan Dickson, had worked diligently to obtain a copy of a new Lodge management handbook from New Zealand¹ which provides comprehensive management information to a new WM.

As planning for workshop program content proceeded, it became clear that only a limited number of the ten best practices could be effectively dealt with and four were selected that were viewed as the most complicated and might therefore offer the greatest

potential benefits. The four chosen were investigations, mentoring, education and planning.² Taken together, these topics were presented in the context of building membership, improving attendance and strengthening Lodge programs. In the months following the workshop, considerable attention has turned to candidate selection, Masonic instruction, general education and degree time frames.

Past and Current Practice — Candidate Assessment and Selection

In past decades, with membership declining, the tendency has been to perform a superficial petitioner interview and accept him based on his sponsors' endorsements.³ This has been followed by degree ceremonies scheduled in rapid succession and a lack of Masonic instruction. This approach contributes directly to weak attendance and increased demit rates varying from 30 to 70 per cent among newer members within their first three years of membership.⁴ Where 50 per cent of initiates are lost, it follows that 50 per cent of the time and energy expended in degree presentations has been, in all probability, wasted. Additionally, those who leave early in their Masonic experience will, no doubt, make a less than positive contribution to the community image of Freemasonry. Some jurisdictions in other parts of the world have never experienced this problem and others have moved to successfully address it. We can learn from them.

Best Practice – Candidate Assessment And Selection

The would-be sponsor has initial responsibility of providing adequate information about Freemasonry **before** the interested individual decides to petition for initiation.⁵ This may be undertaken by lending a copy of the DVD "The Freemasons, The Mystery, Myth and Truth"⁶ and a copy of "The Brotherhood"⁷ to the enquirer and referring him to the document "Are You Considering Becoming A Mason?"⁸ with the explanation that if, after reviewing these materials, his interest holds, he may be introduced to other Masons at lodge social functions to further explore **mutual interests and expectations.**⁹

As the sponsor becomes better ac-

quainted with the enquirer and seeks to identify those interests which help to predict a successful Masonic experience, he should remember that the ideal candidate will be in pursuit of **personal development** which is directly related to certain interests and expectations:

- fraternal connections
- family involvement
- learning opportunities
- leadership opportunities
- charitable activities
- spiritual development

The goal is to match these interests and expectations to those of the Lodge. Where a petitioner brings all — or most — of these expectations to the Lodge, and the Lodge strives to satisfy them,¹⁰ he is more likely to remain in Freemasonry.

The function of the Investigation Committee is to confirm the sponsor's assessment of the petitioner.¹¹

Mentoring and Degree Ceremony Timing

The perception of mentoring is shifting from preparation of the candidate for his next degree ceremony at the earliest possible date to:

- a. effective Masonic instruction for the candidate,¹²
- b. general education and discussion for all members¹³; and
- c. training for Lodge officers.¹⁴

This involves re-thinking our priorities. To provide long periods of time between degrees — as is done with considerable success in other Masonic jurisdictions — allows more time for socializing, mentoring, practices and planning to take place. The emphasis is thereby placed on quality Lodge programming and member satisfaction rather than on frequent initiation ceremonies with the attendant — and unnecessary — stress on both officers and candidates.¹⁵

General Education and Degree Ceremony Timing

Historically, education, instruction and discussion were the great strengths of a Lodge and attraction to meetings. When longer periods of time are placed between degree ceremonies, more attention is given to preparation and presentation of a variety of Masonic

and non-Masonic topics — in addition to mentoring, training, etc., mentioned above — together with stimulating discussion. Such sessions may be conducted at a regular meeting or during an Emergent meeting when no degree ceremony is scheduled. They might be preceded by dinner or a wine and cheese offering. They also provide the best opportunity to introduce friends and acquaintances to Freemasonry as alluded to earlier.

Several Lodges in the Calgary area are giving consideration to these ideas and some have definite plans to experiment with changes in priorities and emphasis. Lodge officers are clear about both the time and energy committed to degree ceremonies while continuing to experience poor retention of initiates. They are welcoming information and ideas from around the world which may help locally while, at the same time, enthusiastically generating their own plans. The initiative taken by MWBro Brian Shimmons in 2009 opened the door for Masons in our jurisdiction to plan, communicate and implement changes which they feel may serve to strengthen our Lodges and Alberta Freemasonry in the future.

(Endnotes)

¹ The Grand Lodge of New Zealand recently undertook several renewal and development measures including the restructuring of its governing board to include eight persons,

thereby joining the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario and the Grand Lodge of Newfoundland and Labrador in either downsizing or otherwise maintaining a governing board of reasonable size.

² The workshop presentation slides are available at www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org.

³ Compare this with the application process in Costa Rica where the applicant submits a colour photograph, CV, police and credit reports. A notice containing these documents is placed in every Lodge for one year and, if removed, the process stops. If not removed, an investigation committee is formed and takes one year to report. Wyndham Lodge No. 688 newsletter, Guelph, Spring, 2010, p 14.

⁴ Google Search: "Iowa Grand Master membership retention - 2" This is one of many presentations and articles which confirm poor retention among newer members and evaluate its causes. The approach has also promoted confusion over what a Lodge should do regarding absent members. In fact, some portion of those who do not attend Lodge meetings never possessed suitable interests in, or expectations of, Freemasonry.

⁵ See brochure "Freemasonry In Canada — Making Good Men Better." Available at www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org. Useful for initial contact.

⁶ Available at www.freemasonsfilm.com; \$14.95 US.

⁷ Didopulos, Tim. *The Brotherhood — Inside The Secret World Of The Freemasons*. Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2006. There are several

other books also suitable for this purpose.

⁸ See www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org. This document helps the enquirer determine whether he is suited to Freemasonry.

⁹ Zetland Lodge No. 83 emphasizes this aspect of selection by inviting potential petitioners to several "information nights."

¹⁰ See "Self-Assessment For Craft Lodges" at www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org. This management tool assists with the identification of Lodge strengths and weaknesses.

¹¹ See "Petitioner Investigations — A Guide" at www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org.

¹² There are three education courses available for the three degrees and also "A Lodge Mentoring Guide" available at www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org. See also three booklets by Carl Claudy "Introduction To Freemasonry I, II, III." Available from the Grand Lodge office.

¹³ See "Masonic Renewal Guideline No. 3 — Education" and "Program Components For Masonic Instruction" found at www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org.

¹⁴ See "Masonic Renewal Guidelines" 1–8 at www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org; "Lodge Officers' Manual — A Guide To Duties, Responsibilities and Procedures." Grand Lodge of Alberta, 2006; "Foundation for the Future — From Paper Plans To Action." Grand Lodge Of Alberta, 1998; and *The Master's Book* by Carl Claudy.

¹⁵ A Brother has remarked that the Lodge is "a place of fellowship, respite and learning, not a degree factory." It has also been pointed out that too frequent degree presentations devalue the lessons of the ceremonies.

Masonic Social Networking Experiment Leaves Fairview

MWBro Brian Shimmons

In early 2010, the Brethren of Fairview's Northland Lodge No. 147 had a unique idea to encourage Masonic Brotherhood through visitation with a variation on the Travelling Gavel. Rather than one Brother or Lodge being responsible for the Gavel, it was decided to release the Gavel into the world of Freemasonry.



WBro Jason Casselman and Bro Carl Ball present Northland Lodge's Travelling Gavel to MWBro Shimmons

The hope is that this Gavel will visit a Lodge, and then be left for another Mason to take to a different Lodge, strengthening the bonds of Freemasonry through visitation amongst Brothers.

On 16 March 2010 the Travelling Gavel left Fairview in the hands of Most Worshipful Brother Brian Shimmons, Grand Master of Alberta. The gavel was delivered to the Grand Master of Sas-

katchewan on 20 March and then to the District Grand Master of Newfoundland (Scottish Constitution) on 27 March.

To follow the travels of this instrument of Brotherhood, a Facebook page has been started. To follow the Travelling Gavel, or to post photos or comments, simply log into Facebook, and search "Northern Alberta Travelling Gavel." Comments can be made or photos posted by anyone. Any technical questions can be directed to the Brethren of Northland Lodge through the website http://www.mightypeace.ca/northland_lodge.htm

Musings from the Past

The most beautiful system of the Sun, planets, and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.

Sir Isaac Newton (1643–1727)
Physicist

Alberta Miscellany

Thoughts from the summonses, selected by Bro Trevor Morris

Redwood Lodge No. 193

More than once I have listened to fellow Masons, with the sincerest of intentions, attempt to articulate what Freemasonry is and what it means to them, and as many times I have found myself perplexed as well. Perhaps a better way of articulating Freemasonry is by examining what it offers.

Freemasonry reminds men of their responsibilities and of their understanding that our first duty is to our family and our next is to our neighbour and fellow man. To truly love another is to practice true charity. One could say that love and charity are interchangeable words and that possessing the tools to execute that duty of charity is indeed the practice of moral excellence or virtue.

Freemasonry encourages us to grow as men and to continually strive toward that which is more perfect. Our ritual and symbols surround us with the encouragement to improve ourselves, one bit at a time, and to always remember that life and living is a work in progress.

Equality among all people is a fundamental tenet of the Craft. Our understanding of this lesson is the avenue for dignity, kindness and respect to all those whose paths we encounter.

We are taught in Lodge that it is a divine gift from the Great Architect that allows us to be self aware and to reason, and with that gift comes the

responsibility to choose a life of our own decisions, after careful reflection and contemplation. Our freedom of choice and self determination affords us great potential to affect those around us in a positive way.

The Craft allows men to contextualize their lives, by allowing them to put their spiritual beliefs into practical execution. Personal fulfillment, meaning and peace are added to one's life when he feels he is on the "right track" and closer to his Creator.

And finally, while the practice of Freemasonry may be only for those who have been regularly Initiated into a Lodge, the *message* of Freemasonry is for all of mankind. The message of Freemasonry can be found in what gifts it offers its practitioners.

Brethren, I ask you to consider what gifts the Craft has offered you.

Stantton Pallister, WM

Calgary Lodge No. 23

What exactly is integrity? Some would be willing to say that it is an outdated notion, that it is a relic of days gone by. As Masons, we strive to keep the notion of integrity alive. We carry the ideals of taking responsibility for our actions, honour and honesty into an era where excuses can be found for doing everything — except doing what is right.

What is honesty? In *All's Well That*

Ends Well, William Shakespeare stated that "No legacy is so rich as honesty." It is a fairly simple idea — we are remembered for who we are and how we treat those we deal with. People tend to have a longer memory of the slights rather than honest dealings. That is why it is so important we remember that damage that could be done with an errant action.

A Chinese proverb says "To starve to death is a small thing, but to lose one's integrity is a great one." Integrity has to do with consistency of actions, values, methods, measures and principles. As Masons, we have committed ourselves to living lives exemplifying integrity. People look to the Craft expecting to meet two types of people — those who are good and honest, or a dedicated shadowy body looking to take over the world. Through our actions let's seek to show them that we are the former, and leave the latter to those who want to sell poorly written books!

Honour is another trait that has been weathering tough seas in our current society. In days long gone, a man valued his honour above any possession. Sadly, this shift in values seems to be an accelerating process. As Masons, we stand as a bulwark against the waves and hail of the temporal world. Fortunately, as Brothers we are willing to stand in support of each other and together there is no storm we cannot outlast.

Colin Van Duyn, WM

Introduction to Freemasonry: Entered Apprentice — Initiation¹

Carl H. Claudy

*"Initiation is an analogy of man's advent from prenatal darkness into the light of human fellowship, moral truth, and spiritual faith."*²

"From the Latin *initium*; a beginning, a birth, a coming into being. It is a very common human experience. We are initiated into a new world when we first go to school; adolescence is initiation into manhood or womanhood; we undergo an initiation when we plunge into business or our professions; marriage is an initiation into a new experience, a new way of living, a new outlook on life; the acceptance of a religious experience is an initiation; a new book may initiate us into a new interest. Initiation is everywhere and in one or another form comes to every man.

"Masonic initiation may, but does not necessarily, come to those who seek, are

accepted, and receive the degrees.

"Many refuse the results of initiation. The school-boy who will not study, the man who will not work, the reader who is not interested in his book, the churchgoer to whom the service is but an empty form to be gone through once a week because "it is the thing to do" — these gain nothing from such initiations. The candidate who sees in the Masonic initiation of the Entered Apprentice Degree only a formal and dignified ceremony designed to take up an evening and push him one step forward toward membership in the Order refuses to accept his initiation.

"Neither lodge nor brethren can help this. If a man will not accept what is offered, if his understanding is so dull, his mind so sodden, his imagination so dead that he cannot glimpse the substance behind the form, both he and the lodge

are unlucky. That the majority of initiates do receive and take to themselves this opportunity for spiritual rebirth is obvious, otherwise the Order would not live and grow, could not have lived through hundreds — in some form, thousands — of years.

"He is a wise initiate who will read and study that he may receive *all* of that for which he has asked. The lodge puts before him the bread of truth, the wine of belief, the staff of power, and sets his feet upon the path that leads to Light... but it is for him to eat and drink and travel the winding path of initiation which at long last leads to the symbolic East."

(Endnotes)

1 Claudy, Carl H. Washington, DC: The Temple Publisher, pp 26–27.

2 MWBro Howard R. Cruse, Grand Master of New Jersey in 1927.

Sustainable growth: The right push for membership

WBro Andre Fettermann, *Freemason Magazine* (United Grand Lodge of NSW and ACT) October 2007

Freemasonry in Australia faces an important crossroad. Numbers are still diminishing and we speculate about the right strategy to increase our membership. The message is loud and clear. But, is a desperate push for recruitment what we really need or would a healthy membership be the natural result of productive Lodges?

Before we analyze what we should be doing, let us look at what is happening to prosperous young Lodges. There are Lodges in NSW that took the challenge and, with the important aid of the MAS (UGL Membership Assistance Scheme), are attracting a large number of candidates. Some Lodges grew 300 per cent in a few years. Apart from dress code, catering and multiple candidates, these Lodges operate in similar ways to traditional Lodges.

However, despite the impressive numbers of initiates, these Lodges have poor retention and participation rates. It is the undesirable “revolving door” effect. This occurs when young men, full of expectations, join a Lodge but after several months of repetitive meetings gradually lose interest and drop out.

The million dollar question isn’t “Why are these members leaving?” or “How can we attract more candidates?” but “What are we doing to keep these members motivated?” We need to divert our attention from membership strategies to the product. A Masonic Lodge should never be seen as a business, nor should candidates be perceived as prospective clients, but we should employ business concepts and analysis to better understand how to build healthy lodges.

The main purpose of Freemasonry — or its core product — is to make good men better. This is achieved by providing a “system of morality, veiled etc...” The expression “Make good men better” implies three important concepts:

Make — It is up to us and our Lodges to do something as opposed to letting the candidates learn and grow by themselves. **We** need to **make** it happen.

Good Men — We have to make **good** men better and not just **any** man better. How many candidates has your Lodge denied membership? How many candidates has MAS refused? Are the candidate interviews a mere protocol? They shouldn’t be. When a man joins Freemasonry he joins for life and this decision is important. The

candidate has to meet the members of the Lodge properly (not just share a south meal) and to understand what will be demanded of him. He should also be familiar with the concepts and principles of Freemasonry before he joins. The decision to join shouldn’t be driven by impulse nor should the candidate be pushed into joining. And finally, he should demonstrate a genuine interest and commitment.

Better — What does it mean to be a better man and how do we do it? The answer is in our ritual. It explicitly tells us to dedicate ourselves to study several arts and sciences, to practice tolerance, charity and meditation and also to share what we learn with our Brethren. But how many actually take the challenge the ritual places upon us? In the same way that a robe won’t make a man a monk, attending an initiation ceremony and wearing an apron won’t make a man a Mason.

We are in the middle of the Information Revolution. At eight years of age a child will receive the same volume of information that their grandparents did in 80 years. The Internet has changed the

profile of the candidates we are getting. While some men still join because they found the apron of their late grandfather, others read books and websites about Freemasonry before they join. These candidates are invariably very humble in respect of their knowledge and expect Lodges to fill the gaps in their research.

The key to improve our product and make our Lodge more attractive to the new well-informed generation is to add quality of variety to meetings. We need to become a source of knowledge and self development by finding the right balance between good ritual and other activities such as selective talks, lectures and discussions on topics of interest. All Lodge members should be encouraged to participate by stating their views, proposing and researching topics.

Once we manage to achieve a good level of ritual, instruction, participation and fun, brethren will have a sense of achievement and contentment which will create the right environment to maintain and start a proper and sustainable membership growth.

First of July Parade in Drumheller

The July 1st Parade in Drumheller this year will include an entry from Symbol Lodge No. 93 and Drumheller Lodge No. 146. The Parade Theme this year is “Celebrating 25 Years of The Royal Tyrell Museum in Drumheller.” Our two Lodges are participating because it was named after Bro Joseph Burr Tyrell, a Freemason with strong connections to Drumheller.

We encourage all Masons to join us, either walking the two mile route or riding on our float.

You will need to be here by 09 00 h. The float is to be judged at 09 00 h. The parade begins at 10 30 h, travels the two miles in about an hour and 45 minutes and is viewed by approximately 7,000 people.

The dress code for Masons will be light-coloured full-length pants (gray, white or beige); blue, one-colour, golf-shirt style shirts (with collar and buttons), preferably the colour of our Lodge aprons. Wear a hat for sun protection and bring sunglasses and water bottle. Be prepared for inclement weather.

We must know who will join with

us that day, whether walking or riding. Please reply either as a Lodge (including number of participants walking and riding) or as an individual, walking or riding. In either case please include your return address information. Mail to:

July 1st Parade Masons
Box 1571, Drumheller AB T0J 0Y0
or reply by e-mail to l2ew1@telus.net
with the subject July 1st Masons.

We request a response as soon as possible (not later than June 15). We will have provisions for fellowship following, which will be dependent on the number of responses.

Thank you for considering joining us. Please wish us well in our endeavours.

WBro Doug Wade

Grand Master’s Itinerary June

3–5 Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba; Victoria Inn, Winnipeg, MB
11–12 Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Alberta; Deerfoot Inn and Casino, Calgary, AB