



2011 Masonic Spring Workshop Drawing Aside the Veil

The veil of allegory has been a feature of Freemasonry since its inception, obscuring its essence from the casual glance. But it is not the only veil. There are also veils of ignorance, of apathy and of misdirection, to name a few. The 2011 Masonic Spring Workshop seeks to draw aside these veils to give the Brethren an opportunity to expand their understanding of their Craft. To help do this are our keynote speaker, a featured author and several expert craftsmen to lead sessions.

The keynote speaker is a magician, mathematician and codebreaker who is also known as the “Sherlock Holmes” of Freemasonry — S Brent Morris, Editor of the *Scottish Rite Journal* and author of several books. He is interested in what, in addition to the “mason’s word,” did our ancient operative brethren considered to be secrets? What made it worth while for an apprentice to take seven years of his life to learn these secrets? Morris believes remnants of these still exist in our ritual but, as is the case with the “point within the circle,” the explanation seems contrived, artificial. There is evidence that this “point” is one of the important residues of operative secrets buried in the allegory of our rituals. Morris hopes to draw aside this veil to reveal a better connection to the operative masons than drawn by “some of the other silly stuff that’s coming out.”

Our featured author is Timothy Hogan, an owner and the education director of the Masonic website www.thesanctumsanctorum.com. He has lectured around the world on the mysteries of Freemasonry and has published several books and articles on Alchemy, Hermeticism, the Qabbalah and other esoterica. His presentation will focus on the Alchemical Mysteries of Freemasonry and will trace the



Bro S Brent Morris, Keynote speaker at the 2011 Masonic Spring Workshop in Kananaskis on 15–17 April.

origins of many of our symbols to their roots in earlier alchemical, qabbalistic, gnostic, and Hermetic sources. Bro Hogan will show how the symbolic degrees provide a secret instruction for operative alchemical transmutation and personal development.

Several other expert Craftsmen will make presentations this year. One of the oldest, if not actually the oldest, Masonic rituals in the world is Scottish. Bro Douglas Bewick will address the traceable path in the Scottish annals from the operative craft to speculative Freemasonry and visit the Scottish 1st degree section by section, highlighting similarities with the operative 1st degree ritual where and when they occur.

Bro David Roth’s session, *The Value of Myth in Freemasonry*, will explore



Bro Tim Hogan, an author with an esoteric bent,, will speak at the Workshop



15 – 17 April 2011

Delta Lodge at Kananaskis

the “Power of Myth” as explained by Joseph Campbell in both the TV series and the book published by that name in 1988. Using the concepts Campbell identifies, Roth will then explore the myths of Freemasonry and show how they are used to illuminate the fundamental truths about life.

Other presentations will lift different veils. There is:

- John Hayes’ presentation on *Masonic Influence in Literature*;
- Rod Ponech’s session on *Alberta’s Unique Masonic History*;
- Randy Williams on *Wordcraft*, how to write a good Masonic presentation;
- a panel discussion on *Clandestine & Masonic Communication*, what does “Communication” actually mean in our context; and
- a panel on *Reinventing Lodges from Within*. In addition, there will be sessions on mentoring, doing floor work, performing ritual, The DeMolay Degree, and a Secretary’s Clinic.

All this is only a prelude to the Masonry that occurs everywhere during the weekend. Join your Brethren for the best in Masonic contemplation and fraternity at the Masonic Spring Workshop, Delta Lodge at Kananaskis, 15 to 17 April 2011. For further information, the agenda and speaker bios, go to www.masonicspringworkshop.ab.ca. To register, go to the site and click on “Online Registration” in the header. Here you will find links to downloadable registration forms, and to register and pay online, or contact Garth Cochran, workshop Secretary, at 403-274-0563 or sgarthc@shaw.ca.

From Other Jurisdictions...

Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania

At the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania, held on 28 December 2009, the incoming RW Grand Master, Bro Thomas K. Sturgeon (who will serve a two-year term), announced in his Inaugural Address a sweeping overhaul of Freemasonry in Pennsylvania, under the umbrella title of *The 21st Century Masonic Renaissance*. His 30 decisions and proposed constitutional changes will affect all 432 lodges and 144,475 members in the jurisdiction. The following are some of the changes, with excerpts from the accompanying descriptions, listed in five categories

1. A renaissance in membership recruitment

- Members may selectively invite good men to join.
- Three black balls are now required to reject a candidate.
- One Day Masonic Journey... Grand Lodge will hold a One Day Masonic Journey in 13 locations across the state... approved candidates will be able to join Symbolic, Scottish Rite and Shrine Freemasonry in one day. An unlimited number of Freemasons can be made in one day.
- The restriction whereby only five Freemasons can be made in one day is hereby removed.
- Senior Recruitment Program... Any member who is age 60 or higher and who successfully recommends for membership two members who are less than 30 years old will be exempt from Lodge and Grand Lodge dues for life.

2. A renaissance in membership services

- Dues can now be paid by credit or debit card.
- ...all members will be encouraged to participate in an automatic withdrawal from their credit card each year for their dues.
- Lodge notices are to be distributed

electronically.

3. A renaissance in Masonic ritual

- Members may learn our ritual from printed manuals that will be monitored closely and never used in open lodge.
- This manual may **not** be used in an open meeting of the Lodge... for prompting during a degree... to read from during any degree.
- The material in this manual may **not** be copied or photocopied in any way.
- No Brother shall knowingly permit a non-Mason to look through this manual.
- The DDGM will audit rituals during his official visitation to assure they are properly cared for.
- Any Lodge that is found to be in violation of any of the above restrictions will have its Warrant of Constitution forfeited to the Grand Lodge.
- Opening and closing of meetings may be shortened

4. A renaissance in Grand Lodge governance

- DDGMs may now serve 10 years
- The dress code for Masonic meetings is relaxed to a more contemporary style whereby a necktie is not required. Any lesser dress code requirements will be established by the appropriate DDGM.

5. A renaissance in visibility and image

- Open installations of all symbolic Lodge officers
- In every instance, whether it be an open or closed installation, no Brother will be asked to leave the meeting.
- Masonic Villages Adopt-A-Resident Program... every lodge is encouraged and expected to adopt a person or couple from one of the Masonic Villages. The lodge should arrange for visits, take residents out to dinner or lunch, give gifts for birthdays and

holidays and look after their general needs.

- Lodges will conduct monthly community service... expected to do one local service initiative every month during the next two years.
- Members will commit a weekly random act of kindness
- Every Pennsylvania Freemason is to commit to at least one Random Act of Kindness every week for the next two years

The complete list, and other related material, can be found on the Grand Lodge's website at <http://www.pagrandlodge.org/home.html> or in the last issues of their on-line magazine at <http://www.pagrandlodge.org/freemason/index.html>

Zetland Lodge No. 83: Feeding the Hungry

On Thursday 18 February 2010 the Benevolence Committee of Zetland Lodge No. 43 hosted a fundraising dinner. There was Masonic education on the topic of charity, and Brethren were encouraged to make their fellow Brethren aware of any charitable work they were performing and how the Brethren could assist them. Half of all profits from this dinner were to go into the Zetland Benevolence Fund and half into a new Charity Fund, with the hope that the Lodge would be able to host a "feed the hungry" dinner in the fall of 2010.

On Sunday 3 October 2010 the Lodge *did* sponsor a dinner, with Calgary's "Feed the Hungry Program" at St. Mary's Cathedral. The "Feed the Hungry Program" is supported by dinner sponsors, general donations to the program and funds raised at the annual Catholic Charities golf tournament. Dinner sponsors are expected to provide a cash donation as well as volunteers.

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Deputy Grand Master & Grand Secretary
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In Memoriam

MWBro Walter Edward Foster, Grand Master 1980-1981

MWBro Walter Edward Foster, more affectionately known as "Curly," passed to the Grand Lodge above on 20 December 2010. He was born in Mansfield, Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire, England on 15 June 1920. He received his education at Mansfield Woodhouse and attended the County School of Art at Mansfield as part of his apprenticeship as a painter, decorator and sign writer. On enlisting in the Royal Air Force in 1940, and after serving in Europe, he served under the Commonwealth Air Training Plan at Penhold, Alberta where he met Josephine Simituk. They married in 1943. He later returned to England, being demobilized in 1945. After being employed in his trade as a journeyman he returned to Red Deer in December 1948 and continued his trade from that time onward. He became a Foreman Painter with the Provincial Government in 1952 and prior to his retirement he was at Olds College, where he instructed courses pertaining to his trade. He later took pride in producing intricate banners for Lodges around the District and in decorating the Masonic Temple in Red Deer.

His activities in the community included Scout Master, being instrumental in establishing the Senior Citizens Friendship Club in Red Deer, Past member of the Board of Gaetz United Church in Red Deer, Board of



Stewards of Olds United Church, Past Campaign Chairman of Olds Community Chest and Past President of Branches 14 and 10 of Civil Service Association. He took a very active and keen interest in various sports, as his trophy collection testified.

MWBro Foster was initiated, passed and raised in Kenilworth Lodge No. 29 in 1950, serving as Worshipful Master in 1958. Moving to Olds in 1964, he immediately affiliated with Mountain

View Lodge No. 16, serving as its Secretary-Treasurer for eight years. He was appointed Grand Steward in 1968 and elected as District Deputy Grand Master for District No. 4 in 1971. He served on several Grand Lodge Committees for many years, including the Board of General Purposes, Finance Committee and Fraternal Relations Committee (which he Chaired). He was appointed as Grand Representative near the Grand Lodge of Idaho in 1972 and held this appointment until his passing. He was elected as Junior Grand Warden at the 1977 Annual Communication and in June 1980 was elected and installed as Grand Master for the Grand Lodge of Alberta.

He was made a Life or Honorary Life Member of every Lodge in District No. 4. In April 2005 MWBro Foster was honoured by Kenilworth Lodge and the Craft in general with a night of tributes to him as a man and as Mason, in the presence of nearly 100 Masons from across the province. MWBro Foster once more assumed the chair of Master of the Lodge with 16 Past Grand Masters acting as his Officers.

MWBro Foster was predeceased by his wife Josephine and their son Walter Edward Jr. He is survived by their daughter Jacquie Swainson (Jack), two grand children and six great-grandchildren.

Call for 2011 Grand Lodge Nominations

As per the requirements of the Constitution and Regulations, R1.02 (R-3), I hereby notify all members of The Grand Lodge of Alberta that nominations for the following Offices, Boards and Committees are now being accepted for election at the 2011 Annual Communication:

- 1 *Deputy Grand Master
- 2 *Senior Grand Warden
- 3 *Junior Grand Warden
- 4 Grand Treasurer
- 5 Board of General Purposes (5 to be elected for a 3-year term)
- 6 Board of Benevolence (3 to be elected for a 2-year term) R1.7.3
- 7 Masonic Higher Education Bursary Committee (2 to be elected for a 3-year term) R1.7.7.3

*A Motion was passed at the 2005 Annual Communication requiring

nominees for Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden and Junior Grand Warden to prepare and have published an unedited article of approximately 1000 words, but not less than 500 words, outlining their vision for Freemasonry in this Grand Jurisdiction. Incumbents to the Grand Lodge Offices are exempt.

To obtain the Nomination Forms for the above, please go to www.freemasons.ab.ca "Official Forms."

Nominations may be made by any Brother "who is a resident in this Jurisdiction and who is a member of this Grand Lodge" and acceptance of that nomination must be signed by the qualified resident member nominated.

R.1.02.01 (R-3) of the Constitution and Regulations requires that all nominations **be in the hands of the Grand Secretary no later than 12**

o'clock noon on the last working day of February. LATE NOMINATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Remember Brethren, the determination of who will govern the Craft is in your hands. Choose carefully and wisely and always for the good of Freemasonry.

RWBro Jerry W. Kopp
Grand Secretary

Grand Master's Itinerary February

- 5 Job's Daughters Installation; King George Masonic Hall, Calgary; TBA
- 12 Bow River Lodge No. 1 Installation; Calgary Freemasons' Hall; TBA
- 19-22 Conference of Grand Masters of North America; Denver, CO
- 25 Kinistino Lodge No. 1, Buffalo Roast; Prince Albert, SK; 18 00 h
- 26 Eastgate Lodge No. 192 Annual Taste of the Orient; TBA

Grand Lodge of Alberta 105th Anniversary Presentation

VWBro Don Anderson, Grand Historian

Excerpt of presentation given 12 October 2010 at Crescent Lodge No. 87 by the Grand Historian, on the occasion of the 105th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Alberta. The material was selected from the History of the Grand Lodge of Alberta 1905–1980 by W. J. Collett, PGM.

12 October 2010 marked the 105th anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Alberta, but the fact is that Masonry has been alive and well in the “Alberta Territories” for some 128 years.

The Grand Lodge of Manitoba granted Saskatchewan Lodge No. 17 in Edmonton a dispensation in 1882. Unfortunately they had to return their Charter in 1888. Bow River Lodge No. 28 was granted a dispensation in 1888, again by the Grand Lodge of Manitoba. That Lodge, later to become Bow River Lodge No. 1, GRA, was very active, and sponsored many of the new Lodges that were organized not only in the North West Territories but also in the Province of Alberta following its establishment in 1905.

By the fall of 1905, the district of Alberta could boast that there were 18 Masonic Lodges operating within its boundaries. Thirteen of these were operating under the Ancient York Rite and five were using the Canadian Rite (Acacia Lodge practiced York Rite in 1905*). They covered the south from Medicine Hat on the east to Pincher Creek on the west, and from Fort Macleod through Calgary and Banff north to Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan — certainly a monument to the hard working Masons and to the energy and vision of

the Grand Lodge of Manitoba. From the very beginning in the early days in Edmonton, down to the present time there has been fraternal support from the Grand Lodge of Manitoba. Prior to 1905, the members of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba faithfully visited the district of Alberta despite the difficulties of travel and the Grand Lodge of Manitoba met in Banff in 1894, in Calgary in 1902 and in Edmonton in 1904.

The town of High River has the distinction of being the site of the first Lodge formed under the new Grand Lodge of Alberta. The ceremonies of Constitution and Consecration were held in High River on 25 November 1906, followed by ceremonies for Lodges at Carstairs, Didsbury, Okotoks and a third Lodge in Calgary.

Masonry in Alberta grew at a tremendous rate in the early years and by the end of 1918 there were 107 Lodges operating in Alberta. During the Great War years, the Grand Lodge of Alberta constituted 63 new Lodges. This growth continued through the 1920s before slowing down for the rest of the century. There were 135 Lodges constituted in the first 27 years of the Grand Lodge of Alberta but only 50 in the last 76 years. Masonry in Alberta continues to do well into the 21st century, as the Grand Lodge of Alberta has constituted four Lodges in the first decade and many Lodges have celebrated their 50th and 100th anniversaries. To date, 207 Lodges have been constituted, but unfortunately 81 of these either had to turn in their charters or amalgamate with nearby Lodges.

In the first decade of the 21st century there was a cornerstone dedication for Camrose Lodge No. 37 in 2001 and in 2005 the rededication of a cornerstone for the Cathedral Church of the Redeemer in Calgary that was originally laid in the early 1900s. Most recently MWBro Gerald Waldern hosted the Grand Master’s Roaming Outdoor Lodge in the Cypress Hills. Grand Lodge Officers and Brethren from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Montana were in attendance.

But history is more than a statement of beginnings or a compilation of facts. It should be a cornucopia of stories. Those stories need to remind us of the facts, but more importantly they need to paint for us a picture of the events that were taking place at the time. All too often our lodge histories consist of numbers of members and names of officers, numbers of new members, numbers of demitted members or the names of those members who have passed to the Grand Lodge above. Yet if you take the time to read the entries from the past they often tell the story, outlining important events, presentations and educational talks as well as those official facts that are also needed.

It is always interesting to learn how lodges settled on their names. In 1906, three years after the Frank Slide, Masons in the area decided to start a Lodge. The name “Frank” caused considerable difficulty and the DDGM suggested another name be chosen, because the new Lodge hoped to draw support from the surrounding towns. “The name Sentinel was decided upon to indicate that the towns stood as sentinels guarding the entrance to Crow’s Nest Pass.”

Centennial Lodge No. 194 in Edmonton took its name because it was created in 1967, Canada’s centennial year, although the actual consecration ceremonies did not take

Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite and the Al Azhar Shriners

Proudly Present the First Annual
Domino Mask Ball
Feb. 12, 2011
**Fourteenth Degree Reunion
& Valentines Celebration**
Cocktails 6pm & Dinner 7:00
Dancing & Music • Hors d'oeuvres
TICKETS
\$80 per Couple in advance
\$125 per Couple at the door
Dress Semi Formal
MORE INFO
clanmckinnon@shaw.ca or
secretary@aastrcalgary.ca
TO PURCHASE TICKETS - 403.239.0030
Mastercard or Visa
Masks & Dress Attire Required
Al Azhar Shrine Centre - 5225-101st Street NW

place until 1968.

Warner Lodge No. 100, constituted in 1918, decided to rename their Lodge "Century Lodge" to recognize their unique place in Alberta Freemasonry as the 100th Lodge to be consecrated by the Grand Lodge of Alberta. Unfortunately Century Lodge is one of many Lodges in smaller communities that no longer exist. Millennium Lodge No. 2000 was the first Lodge consecrated in the 21st Century and in fact the Brethren worked to ensure that the name was reserved many years before the time arrived.

I am also continually amazed at the lengths that Lodges would go to develop something unique for their Lodge: the wild game dinner in Vulcan, the moose dinner in Red Deer, the Zoo Cruise on Sylvan Lake and the bean supper in Westlock to mention a few.

One of the things that impressed me over and over again was the resourcefulness of the Brethren from the early lodges — the tenacity and determination to establish their Lodges and the lengths they would go to for a Brother. For example, "In December of the year 1927, Ionic Lodge No. 45 in Alex was prepared for the Installation Ceremonies of its Worshipful Master. Before the Lodge could get underway the Worshipful Master-elect was taken seriously ill and it was essential that he be taken to hospital in Camrose. Arrangements were made to hold the C.N.R. train at Mirror. The Brethren equipped with shovels decided to open the snow-drifted road between Alix and Mirror in order to get the Worshipful Master-elect to the train. It was a long and difficult trek through the snow and when the cavalcade arrived at Mirror the train had left. There was a Brother in Mirror who was the Section Foreman of the C.N.R. He located a locomotive and a caboose, which was driven to Camrose with the patient aboard. The Worshipful Master-elect received the emergency treatment that was necessary. Installation Ceremonies finally took place in February 1928 and the now fully recovered Worshipful Master was duly installed."

History informs us that it was common practice of men to record their daily thoughts in the form of journal writings. These journal writings have provided us with the record of man's discovery of his world and the Lodge histories of our ancestors were often written in this format, recording on

a yearly basis the important events of the world, the community and the Lodge itself. I encourage you to continue in their footsteps, because it is only through our journalistic efforts that the Lodges and the Grand Lodge of Alberta will have a history of more than facts and figures but a history of the stories

of our Lodges.

(A coil-bound reprint or a digital version of MWBro Collett's *History* is available at <http://www.naturescolours.ca/masonic%20books.htm>.)

**Collett mistakenly counted Acacia Lodge as being Canadian Rite in 1905, whereas the switch actually took place in 1907.*

Book Review

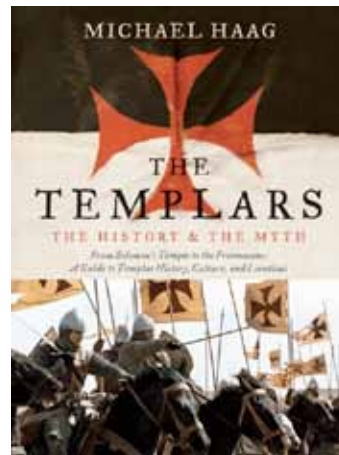
The Templars: The History and the Myth

By Michael Haag, HarperCollins, 2008, 384 pages; ISBN 9780061775932

This is the first history of the legendary Knights published since the Vatican released the records of their trial and exoneration (so states the large print on the back of the book). This book covers ground well-covered by other authors. However, the author does not display any preconceived negativity towards the Order as some authors have. The book opens with some historical background on King Solomon's Temple: it reviews Old Testament material on the history of King David, The Ark of the Covenant, the building of the Temple by Solomon, and the eventual destruction of the Temple.

The next sections of the book review the role of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the rise of Constantine and the role of the Byzantine Empire, along with the Persians and Jihad. This is followed by a history of the Order of Knights Templar. The rise to power in the Holy Land, the building of Crusader

castles, the development of the Knight's role as merchant bankers are all well documented in an open manner. The fall of the Knights, their dispersal and alleged involvement in conspiracies are all well covered.



The final section, Templarism, is very interesting. It includes a discussion of the various castles built to defend the Holy Land and the rise of the Templars in literature, novels, movies and other modern media. There is also a most interesting section on the Knights and Freemasonry.

The book is a good historical account of the Knights, as well as a good discussion of their impact on society today. It does not dwell on fanciful attachments of the Knights to conspiracy theories, nor to their involvement in heresies. It is a book well worth reading for those wanting a well rounded discussion of the role of the Knights Templar in history.

WBro Loren W. Kline

The Masonic Pilgrimage

Bro Fred J. Boyd, Grand Chaplain, Grand Lodge of Manitoba
Masonry in Manitoba Vol. 18, No. 7, September, 1961

Let us review this Masonic Pilgrimage. It may have been a long time ago; in fact we may have even forgotten that we were ever poor candidates in a state of darkness. Since we were ourselves in that condition, we have welcomed many such, and have taken great pride in leading them into the light.

But do we remember the helplessness — perhaps even fright — of that first night in the Lodge? Nervously we said that at such times we put our trust in

God. Then, after a period of mysterious activity, a question was put to us, "What is the predominant wish of your heart?" We were prompted to reply, "Light." We found ourselves in the blinding light of a strange place, surrounded by men, many of whom we had never seen before, but here and there a familiar face.

We had begun our journey from darkness to light. We soon discovered that there were Lights in Masonry other than the blinding electric lights above.

There were the three Great Lights, by which our lives were to be ruled and governed and our actions regulated, that we might live in due bounds with all mankind. There were also the Lesser Lights, among which was the Master of the Lodge, to whom we were to look for guidance and direction.

During the next three months, under the direction of the Master, more Light was shed upon our path. If we were seriously inclined, we began to grasp the idea that we had embarked upon a pilgrimage into the realm of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. Who will ever forget the harsh lesson on charity, as we stood, figuratively representing the Corner Stone of the Lodge? We remembered, for all time I hope, our own inability to give anything, and determined that should opportunity present itself, we would not ever refuse to assist in all worthy causes. I pause here for a moment to remind us of the need to practice charity. So often we complain of the many calls upon our purses, and we give so grudgingly. A truly generous man is rare indeed, and we are pledged to generosity. Who knows what light we may bring to some darkened path by a small donation? We, who have so much, must help those who have so little.

As we journeyed on, there were many

words and symbols and tools explained to us. Who could possibly remember all that we were given in those early months of our pilgrimage? Then came the time when we entered the darkness again, the purpose of which was to teach us to contemplate the fact of death. It was a deeply moving experience, all of which we appreciated later on, as we were instructed by our elders in the Craft. But the darkness did not last, and we lifted our eyes to the bright morning star whose rising gives peace and salvation to the faithful and obedient of the human race.

So let us think of ourselves as pilgrims on a journey through the shadows and sunshine — from darkness into light, into darkness again and finally into eternal day.

But Masonry is not for the Lodge room alone. These lessons must be taken from our work into life itself. In life we find the shadows and the sunshine; the darkness and the light; the joys and the sorrows. Who looks only for the light and joy of life, and expects nothing of the sorrows and the shadows, will be bitterly disappointed.

The ancient philosophers used to argue about which should be the goal of mankind, goodness or happiness. If happiness meant contentment, or harmony with man and God, or the peace

that comes with the knowledge of a full and useful place in life, I don't think there would be any argument. But happiness often means something else: a good time, an easy life, abundant possessions, freedom from petty annoyances. It would seem that true happiness and goodness are the same.

One must never expect an easy path. One must rejoice in overcoming obstacles and surmounting difficulties. One who knows great love must also expect to know great sorrow. Those who know darkness will more greatly appreciate the light. To him who knows great pain, relief from that pain will mean much.

Life is a series of troughs and swells — hills and valleys — the slough of despond and the mount of transfiguration. Our Masonic Pilgrimage should prepare us for life. As we who have passed through the experience help others along their way, so will we be prepared to lend a helping hand to those who, in life, are facing its trials. There is a strong emphasis upon fellowship in the Craft, and that means not only sharing in the joys of our fellows, but also standing by in the dark moments.

Let us walk together, supporting each other in the Pilgrimage, rejoicing in the high moments, supporting each other when the sun disappears behind the clouds.

Alberta Miscellany

Thoughts from the summonses, selected by Bro Trevor Morris

Exemplar Lodge No. 175

A cursory examination of the list of famous Freemasons provides us with an impressive group of men who were, if we are to accept history, driving forces in the study of the sciences, humanities and more. Relatively speaking, there was only a handful who lived to achieve greatness, but there were enough of them that the status and notoriety of our Order was advanced — is advanced — in the wake of the deeds of those few. Although we should be proud of their accomplishments, we have a tendency to embrace the concept that the level of fame borne by the individual somehow reflects the general worth of the organization to which he belongs — a simplistic notion that diminishes the Masonic principle of natural equality and mutual dependence among men. It may be more accurate to suggest that the man was better able to reach his potential through his affiliation with our Order rather than the other way around.

Within our ranks we find the luminary, revolutionary and legendary; high profile political activists, business leaders and artists. Their writings adorn countless library shelves, Masonic and otherwise, and their precepts and innovations endure through ongoing historical research and intelligent debate in the dim back rooms, hushed lecture halls and other places where free thinkers gather to exchange ideas. But they are famous because of their deeds, not because they were Masons. For most of us, we shall remain content that, although we may not sway history as some have done, we have become wiser men because we are Freemasons. To understand that those we meet on our Masonic journey are extraordinary men in their own right, we come to learn of the potential each has to accomplish great things.

Freemasonry is the great equalizer of men — a concept adopted by the institution far in advance of the tide of

political correctness that tugs and pulls at us today. This alone should be a great source of pride within our organization. We are taught to stand on the level with all who have come of their own free will and accord to take their obligation, and nothing a man does or will do will change that. His celebrity is his own, but so long as he abides by the lessons he has learned, he shall understand that he is equal to all.

Although it's amusing to bandy about the names of our famous Brethren, discuss their accomplishments and debate their philosophy, it is misguided to use their status as a means of maintaining relevance for the Brotherhood. We must understand that the most famous of Freemasons ranks equally to the one standing beside us in line at festive board, and that simple concept alone should bring all the honour and acclaim this organization could ever hope for.

Brightest Blessings,

WBro Daniel Boyco, IPM