



## Deputy Grand Master's New Year's Message

RWBro Gordon Berard, DGM, Grand Lodge of Alberta

Christmas is over, and hopefully it was a time to relax with friends and family—quality time with those closest to us is never enough.

To those who may be facing challenges, which unfortunately never take a holiday, may you once again be in a happier state, and I offer a special prayer to our Brethren and their loved ones facing adversity.

This last year tested the mettle of the Brethren and their families from Fort McMurray, first with the fires and then the flood. This was, unfortunately, one of the biggest news events in Canada in 2016. It was a test of human resilience and a lesson to us all to see how people coped with this adversity. Those who

have had an opportunity to visit our Fort McMurray Brethren report their hospitality hasn't waned.

A new year lies ahead, which should be greeted with anticipation and hope. However, given the current economic environment in Alberta, some may not agree and face the new year with trepidation. Some of us have faced this situation in the past and we managed to get through it. Things will improve, and the economy will adjust to change.

During previous economic downturns, I found attending Lodge helped to relieve the day-to-day stress. When in Lodge I dwelt less on what was happening outside the door. I even took a yoga class, which was so relaxing I could fall

asleep while in the "sponge" position at the end of the class.

Many people promise to change something in their lives—diet or exercise being the more common pledges. Just be happy in your own skin. Change slowly, if that is your desire, and don't get stressed over it. Besides, we like you the way you are.

A special thank-you to all who serve Grand Lodge, be they officers or (especially) those who serve quietly in the background on the Board and/or its various committees. It is a labour of love and it is greatly appreciated.

Martha and I wish you and all our Brethren and their families a Happy and (more especially), a Healthy New Year.

## A Special Gathering of Masons

RWBro Garry Hedberg, DDGM, Yellowhead District

On 11 February 2016 a special gathering of Alberta Masons took place at Drayton Valley Lodge No. 182: their 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Crazy Tie Event. This year's event was bigger and much more successful with 62 Masons in attendance representing 16 Lodges and six Districts. The Grand Master and his entourage, sitting and past DDGMs, Worshipful Masters, and Masons were all in attendance.

Humour was abundant, resulting in tremendous joy and laughter by all. Dress participation was 100 per cent, with everyone striving to win the most coveted trophy in Masonry: the BBT (the Big Bow Tie).

The imagination and creativity of the Brethren was astounding, but the three judges carried out their responsibility with professionalism, then declared the winners. This year's proud winner of the Trophy was Bro Tim Young, Drayton Valley Lodge, with a very close second going to VWBro George Lawton of Whitecourt Lodge No. 153.

A new event this year was the Badge of Recognition. RWBro Kenn Culbertson was the first recipient for his shoeless episode, which he carried off beautifully.

Lochern Lodge No. 151 once again held their meeting in conjunction with Drayton Valley, making for a great gathering of Masonic fellowship, with everyone going home very happy and promising to win next year.

The 2017 Crazy Tie Event planning is well underway, and Drayton Valley looks forward to seeing as many Masons as possible at 1300h on Saturday, 11 February 2017, at the Drayton Valley Masonic Hall. So wear your wildest, weirdest, wackiest and/or ugliest tie! Bring your sense of humour and enjoy a splendid day. Be prepared to be entertained, along with enjoying great hospitality.



**Above:** Winner Bro Tim Young, Drayton Valley Lodge and RWBro Garry Hedberg. **Below:** (l to r) RWBro Bob Cantwell; MWBro John Slade; MWBro Chris Batty; RWBro Will Leano; VWBro Wes Bush; RWBro Kenn Culbertson



# Gold in Them Thar Words

MWBro Vern S. Wertz, Past Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Oregon, The Short Talk Bulletin, Vol 93: No. 4, April 2015, The Masonic Service Association of North America.

Gold! Gold! That cry has echoed across the ages. It started migrations across oceans and continents. Men have killed for gold, dug for it, hoarded it, and it just may have some meaning for Freemasons.

What is gold? It is a basic substance, an element, one of 92 [or so] naturally occurring substances that can't be broken down into anything else.

Gold is prized for its beauty, usefulness, and rarity. For centuries, men have searched for gold. In fact, gold jewelry has been found that dates to 3500 BC in Mesopotamia.

It has some very unique properties. It can be hammered into sheets so thin that they are transparent. One ounce of gold can be drawn into a wire 50 miles long. It doesn't corrode, rust or tarnish.

Well now, all of that is interesting, but what is gold's connection to Freemasonry? As a yellow metal, none! I'll be honest, to make a connection, you need to make use of a bit of imagination. You also need to understand that words can have more than one meaning, and gold is an example of that, as it can be used as a synonym for rare, valuable, and meaningful.

So I am not shouting, "There's gold in them thar hills!" I am, however, going to proclaim, "There's gold in them thar words!"

The words I want to dig up are found buried in our Masonic ritual. What I seek is not always obvious. It tends to be hidden away, easily passed over, and you have to go deep to find the meaning hidden within the words.

I am always amazed at the beauty in our work. The simple truth is that no author, poet, or writer of plays was more talented with words than the Brothers who originally penned our ritual. Much to the benefit of untold millions, they buried in the strata of Freemasonry sparkling bits of light that are a golden treasury

of the human mind.

Please join me in this search.

Freemasonry stresses the passing from youth into manhood, and that concept is an ingot of pure intellectual beauty. Consider the Brother who is just starting a profoundly significant journey, and is told: "Now you must pray for yourself." Prior to hearing those words, the Brother was a Masonic youth and he received a lot of support. Now manhood beckons, and the time for standing on his own two feet has arrived. His Brothers are not abandoning him. Rather, they want him to recognize the importance of a man making and then acting on his own decisions. It is a subtle lesson, but it is there and, like much of Freemasonry's teaching, it is a rare flake of pure gold.

At one point, a soon-to-be Brother is told, "Follow your conductor and fear no danger." The message, although not at all obscure, may be one of the great lessons in Freemasonry. I read it thus: The candidate can trust a Brother to not lead him into danger, nor allow him to stray from the path that leads to light, or fail to finally stand before the world as a just and upright man and Mason. The strength of Brotherly love and guidance given to the candidate by his conductor is a vein of pure gold, and is the immutable example all Brothers should follow.

An Entered Apprentice, when being instructed about King Solomon's Temple, hears that "Each part fitted with such exact nicety..." Today, we would probably say, "It went together okay." The second is a bland nothingness, while the first is a nugget of rare beauty and wealth of meaning.

How does one get things to fit together with exact nicety? I was trained as a scientist, so my answer would tend to stray from the useful rules of architecture. My Dad was a carpenter, and he would have had a ready, crystal-clear answer.

I think he would have said, "Well, it involves a lengthy apprenticeship, a set of blueprints, and a devotion to excellence in each detail of the crafting of every piece, every part of the building."

Now, I don't want to belabour the obvious, but I believe that is exactly how Freemasonry teaches a man to construct himself. Did I earlier mention a "nugget?" I think that I may not have enough facility with the English language to adequately, or fully, describe how rich of a mother lode is buried in the concept of parts fitting with exact nicety.

I have always thought that one of the most remarkable bits of buried treasure are these words spoken to an Entered Apprentice, "...and be it known to you that no Atheist can ever become a Mason."

Does this mean that no Atheist has ever joined a Lodge, taken the obligations, paid his dues? I think not! I also think that, by themselves, those things do not make a man a Mason. Since an Atheist rejects a belief in God, it is impossible for him to complete the journey that changes a man into a Freemason.

Is there any greater lesson than that Freemasonry is a progressive science and, in order to arrive at Journey's end, each step MUST be completed? In simplest of terms, a paid-up dues card does not make a Mason. There really is a very large difference between being a member and being a Mason. And that is a golden truth well worth mining.

Consider the three Fellowcraft Masons, who are discussing the men whose voices they have just heard. Two of them were concerned about the risks involved in the capture of these ruffians. The third was a bit of a hero. His attitude was "let's get at it" because "our cause is just." Those four words are what is called a major strike and we are talking about pure gold.

I think that here is a clear message that a Freemason must opt for that which

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is right and decent and honourable — a just cause! But more than that, a Mason must take action. I find nothing in Freemasonry that teaches or encourages its votaries to sit on the sidelines. There is, I think, much that tells him to enter the fray on the side of truth, honour, and that which is just.

I believe that Freemasonry is a treasure trove of ideas that can enrich a man's life. Some of them are in plain sight, some are buried deep. All are worth the effort of discovery and, when found, they all emit a golden light that illuminates our way and makes it easier to travel on that rocky road that we call life. The searching, the struggle to understand, the sharing of what is unearthed and the certain knowledge that there is yet more

to discover, gives an entirely new meaning to the term "gold digger."

I have described to you a few of the things I have found in many years of roaming the pages of my ritual. I do not claim that my thoughts are in some way special, exclusive to me, or that they represent some ultimate truth. I do claim that it was, and is, a grand adventure uncovering them and then sharing the light found within.

One final point: Why is so much of Freemasonry hidden? Why is so much knowledge veiled in allegory, concealed in symbols, and hidden among all the words in our ritual? The answer is an elemental Masonic truth: The hidden beauties and the "secrets" (read that as knowledge, or understanding) of Free-

masonry are, in fact, reserved for those who are willing to diligently search for meaning in all those allegories, symbols and words.

Are you fearful that your search may lead you astray, or cause you to interpret the work wrongly? Relax! There is no correct interpretation, for there is no one authority on the meaning of our ritual. Understanding Freemasonry is truly a thing of the individual, and the correct interpretation of Masonic ritual, so far as an individual Brother is concerned, is the one he finds. And that, I sometimes think, is the thing I most love about this gentle Craft that so affects so many men; and to me that is more precious than all the gold in the world.

## ***At the Cornerstone Ceremony:***

# **Dedication of the San Francisco Masonic Temple, 1860**

Grand Orator, Sir Henry M. Gray

Beneath the blue dome of this wide, unpillared firmament, and under the magnificent roof of a temple "not made with hands," we are met in joyful assemblage, upon a day sacred to the ancient memories of our Craft, to lay with appropriate and impressive ceremonies the foundation stone of a temple, henceforth and forever to be sacredly dedicated to the mysteries and work of Masonry.

In due form and manner the corn, wine, and oil poured forth upon that stone, have symbolized the great end and object of Masonic life; the swell of joyous music with its exultant harmony, has awakened in our breasts the responsive echo; the light in a thousand earnest eyes, and the quickened throb of a thousand loving hearts, have told how deeply this scene and this hour have impressed themselves upon our very souls; and, finally, the invocation of the blessing of Almighty God, to direct and prosper this undertaking to its successful completion, has, while it humbly acknowledges our dependence upon His powerful aid, given us the trustful hope that His paternal blessing shall be vouchsafed to us.

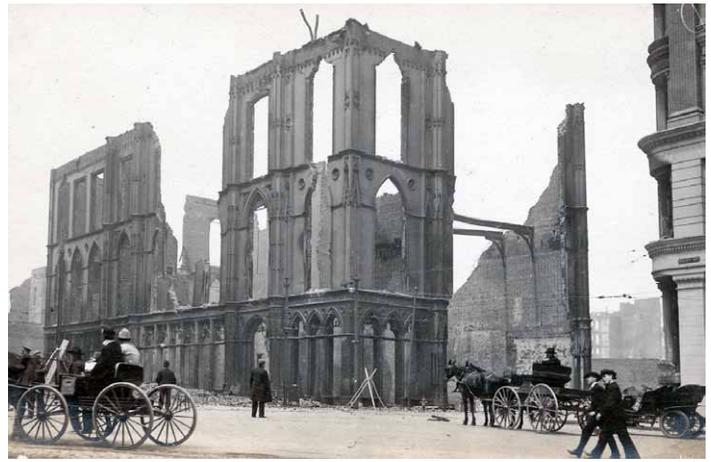
Brethren, the work is done! In the deep foundations of this structure you have placed your memorial. For the first time on the western shores of this continent, you have set up the pillars of your faith in enduring stone. In the generations yet to come, who shall gaze with pride upon this noble pile, and who shall under its secure shelter prosecute

the glorious mission which Masonry has entrusted to their keeping, your labors will not be forgotten. They will recall, with proud and glowing retrospect, the memory of this day. They will pay due homage to the loyal faith, the loving interest, and the deathless attachment which you held to the great work of Masonry and which prompted you, in the very infancy of our State, thus to lay broad and deep the imperishable foundations of a Temple, which, while it should be one of the. Most conspicuous adornments of our city, should also serve as a perpetual record of that faith which, in all ages and in all countries, has, in its "outward visible form," illustrated itself to the world in all the grand triumphs of architectural glory, as, in the manifestations of its inner life has been the pioneer in the vanguard of civilization, charity, peace, brotherly kindness, and good will to men. If ever the light burns dim upon our altars, or the hearts of the faithful fail them "because of fear", if the doubter or the skeptic ask, "The Fathers, where are they?"—then shall this Masonic temple answer: "The same faith that animated their hearts still survives in their descendants. This goodly Tabernacle, which the ancient craftsmen builded, yet stands in its pristine strength and beauty, a sacred heritage to be sacredly guarded and preserved by us and by those who shall come after us. So, evermore, shall the faithful remembrance of our brethren yet to be, preserve our memory green."



*Dr. Henry M. Gray (1821–1863) was a noted orator of his day, but the "Dedication..." was the only oration to be preserved in print.*

All creeds and faiths have their festal occasions. The State has its days of patriotic jubilee, the Church its seasons of rejoicing. On commemorative days, due homage is paid to all who, in every rank and in every good work, have adorned the age they illustrated. Thus religion, art, science, heroism, virtue, wherever their votaries have ennobled life by grand achievements, have claimed the ready homage of the world. They who have died on the bloody fields of battle for the liberties of their country, where thousands in the joyous, rush of death go down—they who in the fires of martyrdom have yielded up their lives a sacrifice to principle—they who in toilsome solitude have worked out the



Left: San Francisco Masonic Temple, erected in the years 1860 & 1861 by the Masonic Hall Association of the City of San Francisco. Above: It was destroyed on 18 April 1906 by fire caused by the 7.8 point earthquake that destroyed much of San Francisco.

great problems of science, and given language and interpretation to the mute voices of nature—they who with strong hands and pure ambitions have guided the evolving destinies of nations—they who, as the apostles of divinest charity, have devoted life, substance, influence, all to the amelioration of human wrong or suffering, are alike canonized in the world's great heart, and compel the homage of the world's wide sympathy.

This is our festal day, my brethren; to us, a day of joy in a two-fold sense. This happy hour is witness of a ceremony of no small import to the future of Masonry in this State and on this coast. We have come up together, with one accord, to aid in the laying of the corner-stone of the first Masonic Temple erected within the limits of our national confederation, on the westward slopes of the dividing mountains. For a brief space we have forsaken our usual avocations; and from fields of waving grain, from workshops of daily toil, from the quiet retreats of scientific pursuits, from the busy marts of commerce, from the sacred chancels of religion, we have come with "one heart, and one mind," to swell the pomp of this festive hour. Hallowed by our prayers and benedictions, we have placed the token of our affection to Masonry in the keeping of our mountain granite. Our loves, our hopes, our aspirations, we place beside those memorials: as soon may the one perish as the others. Not until the solid rock shall melt in the consuming fires of the final conflagration, shall die out in our hearts the noble teachings of

our Order. Not even when the elements themselves shall yield to the inevitable laws of decay and dissolution, shall the pure, eternal, imperishable principles upon which our faith is based, perish or be lost.

There is no eternity to matter. The adamant walls of earth themselves must crumble into dust; and no work of man's hand can withstand the silent tooth of time. The mighty monuments of the forgotten past reveal themselves to us only in dim traditions or in almost undistinguishable fragments, puzzling the lore of the antiquarian and baffling the light of science. They leave us like mariners on the wrecking midnight sea, looking—and oh, how hopelessly—for the coming light. But principles cannot die. Truth is eternal. Justice, equality,

fraternal love, charity, faith, hope, are all invulnerable, and immortal all. They are but the emanations of the eternal good — sparks from the eternal fire — drops from the ever-flowing river of immortal life. Like the deathless source from which they sprang, they also (albeit in clouded manifestation) must claim the high prerogatives of immortality. So, brethren, with the inner life of Masonry. It cannot die. Its temples may totter to the dust, and its visible tokens be utterly lost, but IT will survive. Its spirit is the spirit of the "All-working Good"—its work is the practical embodiment of all-working benevolence—its mission on this earth is but the reflection and exemplification of that divinest of all virtues—Charity!

## MHEBF Raffle in Yellowhead District

By supporting a purpose that means a great deal to the District Deputy Grand Master of Yellowhead District, RWBro Garry Hedberg, cutting boards inscribed with the name of each Lodge in the District are raffled off during the official visit. The proceeds raised are being directed to the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund in the name of the Lodge. Additionally, a cutting board for the Yellowhead District meeting will be available for an appropriate contribution.

The goal is to improve visitation, support a cause that the DDGM has a close affinity with, raise the profile of the MHEBF and

ensure each Lodge in the Yellowhead District is recognized for supporting such a worthy endeavour.

(L to R) RWBro Garry Hedberg, DDGM; WBro Fred La Forge, Winner; WBro Sid Smith, WM, Jasper Park Lodge No. 143.



# Evolution of a Ritual

RWBro Mason Jardine, *Masonry in Manitoba*, Summer Edition, 2016

Where did we get that glorious charge starting with the words “Brethren, such is the nature of our institution...” that we hear at the Grand Lodge Installation and all other Installations?

Many Lodges, as well as the Grand Lodge, install officers on a date near St. John the Baptist’s day in June, while others have chosen St. John the Evangelist’s day in December. Anciently, Lodge Officers were installed on both, as they were elected for a six-month term.

The ceremony for Installation of Lodge Officers can be traced to Anderson’s Constitutions of 1723, in which the ceremony of instituting a new Lodge, including the installation of its officers, was described. The Brother to be installed as Master is presented to the Grand Master who asks if he is “well skill’d in the noble science and royal art.” In response, the Master-Elect is said to be one “whom I know to be of good morals and great skill, true and trusty and a lover of the whole fraternity, wheresoe’er dispersed over the face of the earth.” Certain charges are read to the Master-Elect and he is asked “Do you submit to these charges, as Masters have done in all ages?”

A more complete ritual is found in the Illustrations of Masonry by that

master ritualist William Preston, first printed in 1792. In Preston’s ritual six regulations were added to the nine charges. We also find that the Master, being installed, then himself installed his appointed officers (the Wardens, Secretary, Deacons and Stewards) in words very similar to those we now use, including the charge to the Wardens. The Brethren were also charged with the first paragraph of the final charge. Even by the end of the nineteenth century, however, the ceremony was primarily thought of as being associated with the formation of new Lodges, as shown at the Consecration of Hiram Abiff Lodge No. 191, GLM.

Enter Thomas Smith Webb, the greatest American ritualist. Webb composed the Charge to the Master we now use, and also the last paragraph of the final charge around 1808. Both of these were adopted for use in English Lodges.

The secret installation of the Master had been a part of the ceremony for many years, but was not conducted separately and in the absence of those who were not Installed Masters until the



MWBro Otto Klotz, 1886.

Lodge of Reconciliation had it split away in 1827. Its form was exactly as we now have it by 1880.

By the late nineteenth century, English installation rituals closely resembled ours except that the new Master still installed his officers, and the Working Tool lectures of each of the degrees were delivered in full to the new Master as the tools were presented to him.

However, by this time, the Grand Lodge of Canada had become independent, and in 1874 formed a committee to regularize the ceremony. This committee deleted the long working tool lectures and revised the final charge. This was the work of the great Canadian ritualist, VWBro Otto Klotz<sup>1</sup>. Klotz inserted ten new paragraphs between Preston’s and Webb’s, the last eight of which were his own composition, including all of “the ideal of a Freemason.” The result is the beautiful and uniquely Canadian long charge as we know it today. Thus our ceremony is the work of four great ritualists, two English, one American and one Canadian: Anderson, Preston, Webb and Klotz.

<sup>1</sup> MWBro Otto Klotz was given the honorary rank of Past Grand Master in 1885.

## Your DDGMs 2016–2017

*We are pleased to introduce to our readers the District Deputy Grand Masters serving the Craft in Alberta during the 2016–2017 term. This concludes the series.*

### Palliser District

**RWBro Dale Mark Luchuck** was born in 1953 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. In 1979 he moved to Calgary, and did various jobs until ending up in Bassano in 2000. During 2003, while in discussion with Bro Morley Day, the question of “How does one become a Mason” came up, and the rest is history.

RWBro Luchuck was initiated 13 March 2003, passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft 10 April 2003 and raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on 21 June 2003. He continued his Masonic journey by being exalted to the supreme degree of a Royal Arch Mason on 27 September 2006. RWBro Luchuck became Worshipful Master of Bassano Lodge No. 55 in 2010 and took on the Secretary’s chair that same year. In 2014 he was asked by MWBro John Slade to become a Grand Steward, and was invested for the 2014–2015 year. In years 2015–2016, he assisted then DDGM RWBro Scot Bell as his Secretary and on 11 June 2016 VWBro Luchuck



became DDGM of Palliser District, with RWBro Scot Bell assisting as Secretary.

### Battle River District

**RWBro Mitchell Elhard** was born in 1964 in Castor, Alberta. The attending doctor was his great uncle, WBro Dr. Russell Cousineau, a member of Beaver Lodge No. 56 in Castor. Mitchell attended Gus Wetter High School in Castor and graduated in 1982. Following graduation, he attended Olds College in the Agricultural Mechanics program and then returned home to the family farm. He farmed with his father Richard, and is the 4<sup>th</sup> generation of his family to steward the land. Mitchell is also employed with the County of Paintearth, operating heavy equipment and as a relief utility operator. He is the proud father of three sons, Brandon, Jesse and Kyle, who are graduated from high school and enrolled in the trades apprenticeship program.



Over the years he has served on the Castor Economic

Development Board, as 4H East Central District President and with Castor Little Theatre, as well as coaching minor hockey (he was an avid hockey and ball player in his younger years). Car restoration is also a passion of his, and he currently has two projects under way.

Mitchell began his Masonic journey in 1998, when he was initiated into Beaver Lodge, being raised to the Master Mason Degree in March of 1999. His maternal grandfather, Harry Cousineau, was a long-time member of Beaver Lodge, and Mitchell proudly wears his Masonic ring to honour him. He has served as Worshipful Master of his Lodge on two different occasions. Mitchell particularly enjoys Ritual work and the conferring of Degrees, and is always willing to assist other Lodges.

## Chinookarch District

**RWBro Dave Rogers** was born in Barrie Ontario in 1955, and grew up at CFB Kingston. He went to the University of Guelph, after graduating early from high school, and at University he met the love of his life, Lexie, who he has been married to for 38 years. Dave has two sons: Trevor, 34, and Samuel, 32. Samuel is also a member of North Star Lodge No.4, as a Master Mason.

Dave graduated University with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and then worked at various research jobs in Guelph. He went west in 1980 to work in a swine breeding facility at Acme, Alberta, and from Acme went to Olds, Alberta, as a swine technician, teaching animal husbandry.

It was in Olds that he was introduced to Masonry and to Mountain View Lodge No 16. He was initiated in February 1983, passed April 1983 and raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason in May 1983. He Affiliated with North Star Lodge No. 4 in June 2005 and was Master of North Star 2010-2011.

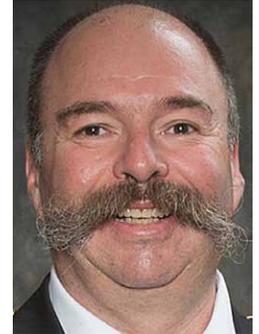
Dave is a member of Shekinah Chapter No. 6, RAM; Alberta Council No. 5 Cryptic Rite; Royal Ark Mariners; Acre Preceptory No. 66 Knights Templar and Diversity York Rite College No. 202. He is also a Past Patron four times of Maple Leaf Chapter 7, Order of the Eastern Star, and is completing his two-year term as Grand Representative of West Virginia in Alberta.



Dave is currently employed with Lethbridge Family Services doing in-home care for men, and is occasionally employed by the Canadian Corp of Commissionaires in Security work. He and his wife own Purely Ideal Weight Loss, a weight management business in Lethbridge.

## Phoenix District

**RWBro Roger Matas** was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1957, and spent many years as a broadcast journalist in Winnipeg. He also wrote a syndicated political column in Manitoba and produced many other published materials. He served as Press Secretary in the Gary Filmon provincial government before starting his own public relations business working with clients in western Canada and the U.S. Roger and Irene



moved to Calgary in 2006 and he accepted a position as a departmental communications manager at The City of Calgary.

He is a Past Master of King George Lodge in Calgary and of Mt. Sinai Lodge in Winnipeg.

He has served as a public relations advisor to Grand Lodge and wrote many articles for the Masonic Mentor. He previously served as Junior Grand Deacon in Alberta and is also Grand Secretary of Scottish Rite in Calgary and a Past Most Wise Sovereign.

Roger and Irene are the founders of the Alberta Wish Ride ([albertawishride.ca](http://albertawishride.ca)) which, in its 8 years, has donated over to \$350,000 to the Children's Wish Foundation of Canada. They were nominated this year as Volunteer of the Year by the Foundation. This year they stepped down from running these events, but they hope the legacy continues. Roger also volunteers with the Calgary Stampede promotions committee stage crew, is transportation committee chair for the ATB Classic golf tournament and a transportation volunteer for the Shaw Charity Classic. He also volunteers at D'Arcy Ranch Golf Course and at Ronald McDonald House in Calgary.

Roger enjoys spending time on his Honda Goldwing. He is the local Chapter Education Coordinator for the GoldWing Road Riders Association and also looks after the chapter web site. Roger and Irene enjoy spending time in Arizona, where Roger regularly visits several Lodges in the east valley.

