



MWBro Kenn Culbertson

Inaugural Address

Brethren, I greet you as a Brother.

My humble thanks to the men who have encouraged me in this journey. VWBro Nick Wengreniuk and RWBro Stan Bembridge first interviewed me and then sponsored my petition into Freemasonry. Thank you to the Brothers of Evergreen Lodge No. 166, my Mother Lodge; Baseline Lodge No. 198, my Affiliate Lodge and Patricia Lodge No. 91, my Honorary Lodge, for excellent examples of Freemasonry at every level. Thanks, too, to all the members of Northern Lights District who supported my elevation to District Deputy Grand Master and thank you to the Brethren of the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Alberta for my election to the Grand Line in 2015. Thank you all.

My father was a Freemason and a hard working, faithful and devoted man. He quietly set about his life, never exclaiming what he had done, would do, or could do, but ever so gently performing all his duties as a husband and father. Once I was made a Mason, I came to realize that his personality and demeanour displayed most or all the Masonic qualities that are in the General Charge regarding the ideal of a Freemason. Because of my father, I lived the life of a Freemason without those qualities ever being explicitly mentioned. I truly believe my father to have been a Freemason who learned his life lessons from his father who was also a Freemason. Although I never had the honour of meeting my Grandfather, Bro Fred Culbertson of West Edmonton Lodge No. 101, I feel in every bone in my body that through his influence I was taught to live my own life as a Freemason. When I became a Mason, I realized just how lucky and privileged I was to be raised in a Masonic family. I hope my children's children will continue to be raised in the family of Freemasonry, until time shall be no more.

That has been my journey until now. But, Brethren, thanks to your confidence in me by electing me to the Grand Line, my journey is now our shared journey.

I am aware — keenly aware — of tensions among us in this Jurisdiction, and it will be part of my task to ease those tensions. It is important for all of us to realize, however, that little good can



**Grand Master of Alberta
2018–2019**

come if we do not look forward and build on future vision. Freemasonry is the stone that makes up both the rough and the perfect ashlar, and just as each Brother must learn to move from rough to perfect, so we as a Craft in general and this Jurisdiction in particular must knock the rough edges from the stone that is our core. That takes planning, skill, confidence and a team that includes every Brother.

Allow me to suggest three observations that, if made part of our lives both in Lodge and out of it, will assist us in our shared journey.

Engage

We are a Fraternity that offers engagement at many, many levels. We offer the esoteric, the hidden mysteries that are revealed in the symbols of the tracing board and within the Lodge itself. We offer the opportunity of leadership that ranges from chairing a Lodge committee to “going through the chairs,” to seeking a position with Grand Lodge. And, of course, we also offer the fellowship of a hand freely offered and the shared Brotherhood of the Festive Board.

We are also a Fraternity with many opportunities that can, and should, include the whole family, such as the joy of witnessing your thirteen-

year-old grandson becoming a second degree DeMolay with perfect adherence to their regulations or having a daughter engage in the activities of Job's Daughters. Then there is the Daughters of the Nile, in which my dear wife and best friend, Phyllis holds membership. And let us not overlook the Order of the Eastern Star. So, not only do the Lodges of Freemasonry offer rewards to their members, there is engagement available for every member of the family.

Educate

Our first wish as newly obligated Masons is for light, a reasonable wish since most of us probably joined the Fraternity to find such light. Later, we are charged with making a daily advancement in our Masonic education. This is, my Brothers, a distinct way of reminding us to be a better man each and every day of our lives as we journey through these earthly demonstrations of such things as floorwork. All of these are educational, and provide interest in bland meetings.

Enjoy

My Brothers, again we are reminded that the chief point that can be attained in Freemasonry is to endeavour to be happy ourselves and communicate that happiness to others. Such happiness derives not from the pursuit of pleasure for pleasure's sake, but rather from the growth that we can see in ourselves and from the trust that we can place in our fellow Brethren. Freemasonry teaches us the true enjoyment of both learning to give, and learning to receive what others would give us.

For each Mason there must be hours dedicated to work, family, prayer and sleep, but time must also be allowed for personal growth. And that is where we as a Fraternity can help to build a better man. Learning to live by the virtues contained in our ritual will lead to the enjoyment of a life of quiet satisfaction. Then, for each of us as a Brother and as a man, the mirror will reflect all that can be achieved in Freemasonry.

In this Jurisdiction, the working tool the Trowel is unique to the Ancient York Rite Master Mason. We are taught to make use of the trowel "for the more noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of Brotherly Love and Affection." That is the "cement which unites us into one sacred band or society of friends and Brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist save that... of who best can work and best agree." I wish to make this tool the symbol of my year, bringing Brothers together in the common goal of making our Lodges places of sanctuary from the outside world where we can go trusting that "I will uphold your good name in your absence as well as your presence."

To be a Freemason a man must travel with, converse with, take education from and emulate men of quality — and by that I mean other Freemasons. To read and study the books about Freemasonry can give you an understanding of allegory and symbols, but in order to move to that place of higher destiny, we must devote time to our Masonic

Temples and Lodges, those places that contain the Brethren of Freemasonry.

Brethren, I suggest to you that as leaders in the communities, we as Freemasons are taught to extend our knowledge, learn by experience and uphold right. Leaders require support and I would like to bring you a message in that vein.

A leader is one who guides, influences or inspires another person or a group of persons to think and act. It is very necessary for a leader in any organization to fully acquaint himself with the limits of his authority. Every Masonic Lodge has our book of Constitution and Regulations as well as the Bylaws of that Lodge. These are drawn up and presented to the Brethren from time to time for their approval. They are the rule and guide

to our gentle Craft and are there for all — including those in authority — from the Grand Master on down. No one is exempt from these rules.

The next year I am asking you, the Brethren in this Grand Jurisdiction, including those of us who constitute Grand Lodge, to commit to enriching Freemasonry through involvement in making each Lodge an educational, engaging and enjoyable meeting place. Socialize, commiserate and visit with members, with widows and with those who are no longer a part of monthly meetings. And more personally, be active in bringing Freemasonry to your everyday life.

I will give you my very best! I hope you and every Freemason will do the same, to create a better Craft and a better world for us all to enjoy.

MWBro Kenn Culbertson — Biography

Kenn Culbertson is a third generation Mason, as his Grandfather and Father were both members of West Edmonton Lodge No. 101. He began his working career with Canadian National Railway in 1971, and in May 1974 he qualified as a Locomotive Engineer. Kenn held this position for 32 years at Canadian National, then transferred to VIA Rail Canada, where he retired in 2008.

Kenn was made a Mason on 19 June 2005 in Evergreen Lodge No. 166. He is also an Affiliated member of Baseline Lodge No. 198 and an Honorary member of Patricia Lodge No. 91.

On 13 June 2015 he was successful in being elected Junior Grand Warden, where he served under MWBro Chris Batty. The educational opportunities were invaluable to his future service

to the Craft. On 12 June 2016 Kenn was invested as the Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Alberta, serving under MWBro James Ratchford and on 10 June 2017 he was invested as the Deputy Grand Master, serving with MWBro Gordon Berard.

Masonry was extremely important in filling the void that came after Kenn's retirement. It was the fellowship and visitation cornerstones of our Fraternity that were the inspiration for Kenn's wholehearted involvement in the Craft.

Kenn is married to Phyllis, and their family includes four children and four wonderful grandchildren.

Outside of Freemasonry, Kenn also enjoys golf, travelling and volunteering as a driver for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Communications Committee Opportunity

Brethren, we require a qualified member with expertise and experience in public relations, journalism, advertising, social media and/or marketing to aid and assist in representing the future membership of this Jurisdiction. Please submit your resume along with a cover letter to the Grand Secretary —

grandsecretary@freemasons.ab.ca

Provided to Freemasons of Alberta and the Northwest Territories west of the 4th Meridian who are members of

The Grand Lodge of Alberta, A.F. & A.M.

Ste 210 2816 11 Street NE, Calgary, AB T2E 7S7
Tel 403-262-1140

www.freemasons.ab.ca

Grand Master	MWBro Kenn Culbertson
Deputy Grand Master	RWBro Ken Cheel
Senior Grand Warden	RWBro Reg Karbonik
Junior Grand Warden	RWBro Terry Murray
Grand Secretary	RWBro Bill Kostenuk


Published each month except July and August by

The Grand Lodge of Alberta, A.F. & A.M.

Editor: RWBro George Tapley

339 Whitefield Dr NE, Calgary, AB T1Y 5S2

Tel 403-280-6776

e-mail: editor@freemasons.ab.ca

The Alberta Freemason

Editor: RWBro George Tapley
Design & Production: VWBro Garth Cochran

Submissions and photos for publication from all Brethren are welcome.

Deadline for copy is the 1st day of the month prior to the month of issue.

The Editor reserves the right to accept, reject and re-write material submitted for publication.

Republication rights are granted to other Masonic Jurisdictions, but acknowledgement is requested.

All Canada Conference

26–28 April 2018, Winnipeg, Manitoba

RWBro Ken Cheel, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Alberta

The All Canada Conference (ACC) is a Conference of Grand Masters and Deputies from all the Jurisdictions of Canada. It is held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, as the most central spot for everyone to attend. The Conference is designed to bring everyone up to date with things happening within the various Jurisdictions, discuss challenges and issues facing Freemasonry and render possible solutions.

The first day is a travel day for everyone, with a get-together in the evening to re-establish friendships and meet the new people who are attending. This year, the Deputy Grand Master of Manitoba, RWBro Andy McLennan, invited a few of us to attend Lodge and witness a Third Degree. The [then current] Grand Master, MWBro Berard and I accompanied the DGM of Manitoba to Stony Mountain Stonewall Lodge No. 12. The Degree was very similar to ours, however Manitoba has removed a few sections of the ritual. This change allowed for a lively debate on the return trip to our hotel.

The next morning, we started off with some general housekeeping duties: selecting the nominating committees for President and Treasurer and the President's opening remarks. It was explained the minutes of the previous meetings were not available for approval, as the secretary from last year passed away suddenly and the minutes for the last two years had not been transcribed.

The first order of business was a round table discussion regarding the Conference of Grand Masters of North America (CGMNA). A consensus was reached and a letter from the ACC was to be sent to CGMNA outlining the concern the ACC members had:

1. That most of the breakout groups were held only once during the conference. This format didn't allow a member to take in more than one of the sessions.
2. Given that most of the attendees are from the United States, the content heavily pertains to US concerns and tends not to be as relevant to Canada and Mexico.

The next order of business was a presentation from MWBro John Cody, the Grand Master of Nova Scotia, on the Widows' Sons. MWBro Cody's presentation included the Annual Report, the

Membership Pledge and the By-Laws of the Widows' Sons Chapter in NS. It also contained the Edict from the Grand Lodge of New York prohibiting the Widows' Sons from "assembling, attending, and/or conducting business of any kind on, in or at any Masonic Lodge..." in the State of New York. MWBro Cody concluded his remarks with the observation that Widows' Sons raise a great deal of money for charity and he and the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia have no problems with the Widows' Sons if they act as Masons first and motorcyclists second. He also mentioned there are only 11 members of the Widows' Sons in Nova Scotia.

A round table discussion concerning the Widows' Sons was then conducted, with input from the other Jurisdictions. Most of the discussion centred around the perception of a motorcycle "gang" and Masonry. While most of those taking part in the discussion agreed the Sons do a wonderful job of raising funds for worthwhile causes, some Jurisdictions didn't want anything to do with them. The Jurisdictions with a strong Hell's Angels presence or problems with motorcycle gangs didn't want Masonry to be perceived as having anything to do with "gangs" while those jurisdictions which have not had the exposure to the negative media were more willing to be tolerant of the Widows' Sons. Another area of contention was where the members of the Widows' Sons wanted to be a riding association before being Masons. Manitoba just removed amity with the Widows' Sons. Ontario just came to an agreement with their Widows' Sons chapters which required the Square & Compass patch (which is a registered Trademark, owned by the Grand Lodge in Ontario), be removed from the front of the Sons' vests and there would no longer be "Widows' Sons degree teams." There could be degree teams with Widows' Sons in them.

The third order of business, the cornerstone of the Conference, focused on the individual Jurisdictional reports and the discussions arising from areas of common interest, the most common being:

1. Communications with the Brethren.
2. Social Media.
3. Public awareness of Freemasonry.

4. Impact of decreasing membership on Grand Lodge governance.

Communications with the Brethren continues to be a difficult area with the various Jurisdictions. Specific challenges include:

1. Some Lodge Secretaries continue to refuse to use computers resulting in uneven distribution of messages. ,
2. Communications through Lodges continue to only reach a small portion of the membership.
3. Websites require continual updates and upgrades which cost money, and some of the membership doesn't use them and can't see the value in them.

Social Media has proven to be a two-sided sword — with both benefits and challenges. The benefits include:

1. Ease of use
2. Everyone with a computer/ smart phone has access to the program
3. Little or no cost.

The downsides to using Social Media are:

1. Numerous members hide behind the anonymity of security to post updates that may be profane, derogatory or untrue.
2. Members don't stand up and say the posts go against our Masonic teachings. Members are relying on the administrators or auditors to do the job.
3. Posts might not be checked for accuracy.

Each Grand Lodge has a policy on Social Media, whether it is written or unwritten. Social Media is a tool. If used correctly, it can be very helpful to the craft. If used incorrectly can bring hurtful and scornful recognition to the craft.

The methods used by the various Grand Lodges to raise awareness within the public and membership is very diverse. One Jurisdiction is restoring old tombstones. Two other Jurisdictions have partnered with the Canadian Cancer Society to transport people who need Cancer treatments. They also help purchase the vans for the volunteers to drive. Another Jurisdiction is helping create courses in association with one of the established Universities. The last major area for public awareness was education. Numerous Lodges and Jurisdictions provide scholarships/ bursaries to students continuing to higher education, while not to the same extent as Alberta. All the Grand Lodges are aware of the need for help with tuition.

With the decrease in membership,

Grand Lodges are going through a period of retraction which has each Jurisdiction trying to find ways to do more with fewer people and resources. Most of the Grand Lodges are trying to decrease the size of their Board of General Purposes with varying success. One GL just removed all the honorary members on the Board, another removed all the DDGMs. Ontario just removed ten members from their Board and only allow chairmen of committees to serve two years, they then must move to another committee.

There were also a few interesting announcements. PEI was represented for

the first time in several years and they, together with NS and NB, are planning to start an Eastern Canada Conference, similar to our Western Canada Conference. There are also several Grand Lodges holding their 150th anniversaries over the next few years, starting with the District Grand Lodge of Scotland for Newfoundland and Labrador (already past), The Grand Lodge of Quebec in 2019 and the Grand Lodge of British Columbia & Yukon in 2021.

The last order of business was to election the President, Treasurer and Secretary for the 2019 conference;

President — MWBro Don Ford (Saskatchewan).

Treasurer — MWBro Richard Brown (Saskatchewan).

Secretary — MWBro Steven Kane (Manitoba).

Overall, my perception of the All Canada conference is that it provides a worthwhile forum for fraternity and discussions on topics which span all the jurisdictions. Masonic observers are welcome. If you have an interest in what is going on in Freemasonry across Canada, please come and join us. It is informative.

2018 Ross Sheppard Memorial Bursary Recipient Bailey Jones

I am so honoured to be representing all the Bursary recipients for the 60th anniversary of the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund.

Because of the Freemasons of Alberta, all of the awarded bursaries (MHEBF, Lauraine Douchet Masonic Bursary and the Mathews Kenschak Trust Masonic Bursary) have helped students continue their valued education.

I am currently going into my last year of nursing at Red Deer College, and I never knew how expensive education could be. My parents always told me to save some of my birthday money and 4H earnings for University and, sadly, I never listened.

The cost of going to college is astounding. I have the cost of tuition, supplies and super expensive nursing textbook. After paying for my post-secondary education and these supplies, I have to worry about the ever-rising cost of living. For me personally, it all adds up to be considerably high and the only option is to try and work a part time job or to potentially be awarded student loans.

In speaking with the MHEBF Chairman, VWBro Don Stannard, I learned of the MHEBF's 60-year history and understood that over the past few years the bursary went from giving \$2,000.00 to \$5,000.00 because the MHEBF Committee felt (due to the rise in educational costs) this increase was highly warranted. I can honestly tell you with

this \$5,000.00 bursary I will, in fact, be able to pay off my full tuition and that is because of the help of the Alberta Freemasons. Simply because of your generous donations along with public donations to the MHEBF, I do not need



to ask my parents for financial help, for which I am so grateful. And now, many of the awarded students, especially myself, can go and pursue their educational and life dreams, and also give back to society rather than having to just study and work all the time.

It is because of you that students have become doctors, nurses, teachers, police officers, accountants, mechanics,

and the list goes on. I cannot thank you enough for all your help from the past, present and future recipients of the MHEBF. We thank you for everything you have done for us from working with our schedules for interviews, giving us advice when asked and again personally donating to the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund.

Thank you!

Photo: (l to r) MWBro John Batty, Bailey Jones, RWBro Don Stannard.

Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund

VWBro Don Stannard, Chairman, address to the 2018 Annual Communication

In 1957, at the Grand Lodge of Alberta's Annual Communication, the Freemasons of Alberta instituted the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund. And now, more than six decades since those first four bursaries were given, I am very proud to announce, on behalf of all Freemasons in Alberta, that we provided 60 bursaries this year to dignified, intelligent and remarkable young women and men, in this, the Masonic Higher Education Bursary's 60th anniversary!

In total, through our three bursaries — the MHEBF, the Lauraine Douchet

Masonic Bursary and the Mathews Kenschak Trust Masonic Bursary — \$306,450.72 was provided to students across Masonic Districts in Alberta.

In the Mighty Peace District, 15 bursaries have been provided to students, courtesy of our Brother George Mathews whose belief in education was so strong he willed his entire estate of over two million dollars to the Bursary Fund to pay for high school graduates to get a post-secondary education. In his words, "The future of this country will belong to those who are educated to do something about it. And there is

one important thing education gives you: self-discipline.”

While George Mathews supported the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund to the highest level, I do wish to thank all the Lodges across Alberta and every Bursary representative of each Lodge, along with the District Deputy Grand Masters, for their efforts in promoting the Bursary Fund and visiting each student who applied, as

well as the countless members of the Fraternity, far and wide, who donated their time and/or personal funds to achieve what we have this past year. To the Masonic Higher Education Committee members, of which there are nine, along with the Grand Lodge officers and Grand Lodge administrative staff, I thank you personally from my heart for your commitment and duty to each student who applies and that the

bursary funds are so carefully looked after, that many generations will benefit from the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund.

Please continue to do the good act, not for yourself, but for the cause of good and donate today to the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund. Donations may be made online at www.MHEBF.com or to the Grand Lodge of Alberta administration.

Alberta Freemasons in London, England

Al Perry, PM King George No. 59 and Internet Lodge of Research



Canada Lodge 3527 (UGLE) in London, England conducted a Third Degree on 26 June 2018, raising a young man who was born in Canada (but only lived there for a few months). However, three of the four senior officers, shown in the attached picture, are from Alberta, and

the fourth is from Ontario.

From left to right they are:

- WBro Shawn Christie, AGSec, UGLE — Senior Warden, from Barrie Ontario
- WBro Graham Weir, LGR — Worshipful Master, from Ivanhoe Lodge No. 142 in Edmonton

- Bro Sam Humphreys — Junior Warden, from Red Deer Lodge No. 12 in Red Deer
- WBro Alan Perry LGR — Immediate Past Master; from King George Lodge No. 59 in Calgary.

It is also interesting to note that the Worshipful Master is holding a gavel that is part of a set presented by the Grand Lodge of Alberta on the 50th Anniversary of Canada Lodge in 1961. The gavels were fashioned from timber from the old building of the Hudson's Bay Company in Edmonton. Traditionally we only use them when a Canadian Mason is the Master of the Lodge.

Canada Lodge 3527 meets four times per year in Freemasons Hall, on Great Queen Street in London (located near Covent Garden tube station). We are a small Lodge but our door is always open. We would particularly love to meet Masons from Alberta and the rest of Canada, be they be visiting, travelling through or possibly moving to London.

Our meeting dates are the 3rd Tuesday in October (Installation) and the 4th Tuesdays in February, April and June. You can always reach us via email: aperry33@gmail.com

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Al Perry

Part Two

To Await A Time With Patience: Explaining The Chamber of Reflection

WBro Andrew Hammer, Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22

Revised in part from unpublished notes for 'Observing the Craft'

[Ed. In part one, WBro Hammer discussed the purpose and setting up of a chamber of reflection and its use in preparing the candidate for the initiation he was about to take. We continue...]

As for the preparation of the room itself, the question arises as to how to recreate such a space in a temple that has totally lost any notion of the practice, and therefore might not have an idea how to implement it. There are two important aspects of creating that space: the space itself, and what is going

on outside of it. Finding the actual space is the easy part. Yet a common concern among Brethren who are desirous of restoring this ceremony is that they do not have a room that is isolated enough to provide the candidate true silence, as the Brethren of the Lodge will be arriving and talking and laughing, and

generally clanging about in preparation for the degree. This is perhaps the first obstacle to overcome.

The Brethren of the Lodge should observe proper decorum in preparation for an initiation. First, because the behaviour of the Brethren is the very first impression that the candidate

will have of the Lodge, and second, because it is simply courteous to the candidate himself as he readies himself for the experience. The Brethren should conduct themselves with a solemnity that makes any part of the temple a contemplative space. With that as the guiding philosophy for the evening, the question of where the candidate will be becomes much easier to answer.

In a practical sense, the modern preparation room as one finds it may not be suitable as a chamber of reflection. In many Lodges, it has been designed to be a larger space, to accommodate the practice of initiating multiple candidates, or other purposes, and it doesn't really afford the intimacy that is intended. In such a situation, each Lodge will have to determine for itself if such a space can be found on the premises. Most Lodges will have some other suitable room that may be used. If not, it may be possible to build either a permanent or temporary enclosure that can be set up within the existing spaces of the Lodge.

With the history, method, and atmospheric aspects of a chamber of reflection being addressed, this brings us back to the question of why Lodges should do this at all.

The Entered Apprentice degree is not an afterthought. It is no mere stepping-stone on the way from something to something else. It is the essential foundation on which the symbolic Temple of Solomon is built. It is the place where one learns the first lessons on what it means to be a Mason; it is the cornerstone from which every Mason is built. But in so many American Lodges today, the Entered Apprentice degree is almost viewed as an inconvenient but necessary hurdle, hastily arranged and executed, with the dismissive advice given to the new Mason that he doesn't need to 'worry' about anything until he is raised a Master Mason. He doesn't even

have to 'worry' about attending Lodge, because the stated communications are only held on the third degree anyway. In some jurisdictions, even the proficiency tests have been abandoned, meaning that the apprentice need do nothing more than wait for time to pass, until the Lodge can confer the next degree.

In no other profession would an apprentice be dismissed from work immediately after being hired. It would be impossible, as he would then be totally unable to learn that profession. But somehow, in too many areas of the Craft, just as in too many areas of our lives today, we have become fixated only on the end rewards of a pursuit, totally disregarding the character and knowledge-building process involved in obtaining those rewards. We have discarded the journey itself, as well as the intrinsic reward of learning on that journey, for the sake of an absurdly rapid ascent to titles and trinkets. We have allowed this situation to continue for too long, and we need to remedy it.

The impact of the Entered Apprentice degree on the initiate must be restored, and this preparation ceremony, restored to its proper place, helps to accomplish that. It instantly conveys a sense of full earnestness to the candidate, in every way consistent with our own teachings about our degrees and our institution. It provides one of the few opportunities in modern life for a man to contemplate his purpose and his intentions, even if only for a few minutes, and in so doing reinforces the idea that Masonry asks him to do this continuously in his own way from this moment on, throughout his Masonic as well as his personal life.

Opposition to a chamber of reflection as an 'innovation' would not only be incorrect, but also somewhat disingenuous, as its existence is not unknown to many Masons today. A chamber of reflection is currently used before the degrees of Templary, a separate fraternal order

which is strictly limited to Christian Masons. But this ceremony was taken from the Craft at some point and moved to that order. The confusing impression that is given by such an act is that only Christian Masons are worthy of being afforded such reflection. Given that this ceremony is a preparation for initiation, its absence from the Symbolic Lodge sends an equally confusing message throughout the fraternity and beyond, that one is not really initiated, i.e. not a 'true Mason', until and unless one becomes a Christian. Here again, this is not as it should be, as it is clearly not what was intended by an organisation that is not a religion, professes no particular religion, and asks only the universal requirement that a man affirm a belief in deity. If the practice is to be considered valid for those Masons who seek to join an external body, then it cannot be deemed invalid for any man who is to be made a Mason. The chamber of reflection belongs to the Craft.

When we consider the meaning of the chamber, its valid place in the history of our Craft ritual, and the profound effect it has on the Brethren who experience it, we would be foolish indeed not to restore this practice to our Lodges. It has precedent, it helps restore awe to our ceremonies, and it is a missing part of our body of practice that should be received back into our Lodges with the same sense of joy we have when finding a long-lost heirloom. At a time when Grand Lodges everywhere are seeking to express why Masonry is and should be meaningful, this simple ceremony of introspection is the ideal precursor to establish that initial meaning and sincerity in everything we do as Masons.

[WBro Hammer's book, *Observing the Craft: The Pursuit of Excellence in Masonic Labour and Observance*, is available from observingthecraft.com, and mindhive-books.com]

