



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

RWBro Ken Cheel

Over the last few days, I have been contemplating what message I should write for the Brethren, one that I hope would bring them inspiration and contentment. But alas, I'm not that great of a writer and most assuredly not one to inflame men to be better than they are and to fulfill their dreams to the fullest.

That said, what I *can* write about is the joy of being with family at Christmas time, and the arguments or disagreements which always seem to happen when siblings get together — the peace and contentment of having people around you who know you so well you can communicate without verbalizing anything, and the flip side, with having people around you who know you so well that every word they utter is like a sharp stick poking you. In both instances, the people and the intent are likely the same: showing the person you are with how much you care for them.

Lodges can be very similar to a family. Going to Lodge to meet with Brethren can be filled with peace and contentment and be very inspirational and joyful. The flipside here is that situations may arise where Brethren act without proper discourse and cause disharmony and contention. While the intention, when going to Lodge, is never to cause disharmony, on occasion it does happen and, like family, the good and the bad may coexist. The good typically far outweighs the bad. And yes, sometimes we have to respectfully correct and provide discipline to each other. Those actions shouldn't prevent each and every Brother from acting courteously toward the other.

This year, Daphne and I will be travelling to Ontario to spend Christmas with my mother, siblings and one of my daughters. While there I will be visiting two Lodges: Royal Arthur Lodge in Peterborough (my Mother Lodge) and Faithful Brethren Lodge in Lindsay, my Grandfather's. While these visits will bring me great pleasure, I also have an obligation to perform: the return to these

Lodges of my Uncle's and Grandfather's regalia. As each Mason is aware, we receive our regalia from the Lodge, but no one tells us what to do with it after we are done with it. In many cases, it is left to the family to look after. With luck, some of us can leave it to the sons to handle. Unfortunately, I have no sons and my cousins have shown no interest in joining the Craft. So, I will be taking aprons, jewels and pins back to their respective Mother Lodges so some other very lucky individual will be able to have the history of their Lodge proudly displayed during their Masonic career.

The New Year is a time of the unknown, of hope and aspiration. My hopes and aspirations for 2019 are many:

- In my personal life, that it will continue to be smooth, with only good things for my wife and myself for the foreseeable future.
- For Freemasonry, which deserves the best from its leaders now and in the future, as we are told in the General Charge: "while some must of necessary rule and teach, so others must

of course learn to submit and obey. Humility in both is an essential duty." May I have the humility needed to do both.

- For the Brethren, that my messages may provide insight and inspiration as you move forward on your Masonic journey and help you to become better men.
- For my own journey, that my openness and patience continue to grow, so that I achieve a fuller understanding of how you, the Brethren in this Jurisdiction, wish to be governed as we journey into the future together.
- And lastly, for each and every brother, now and in the future, that you allow the tenets and principals of Freemasonry to work within, so you can fulfill your dream of becoming a better person.

In closing, Freemasonry is an ideal that we are to live 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Not just in Lodge, but wherever we are and with whomever we meet.

May your New Year be educational and fulfilling.

## Do the Good Act

During the last few years RWBro Tom Davies, DDGM Athabasca District, has started a number of initiatives to support the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund (MHEBF).

First, and soon after his retirement from CHED Radio, Tom found he had enough time on his hands to join a bicycle group and pedal across the Rockies. Tom requested any pledges to be provided to the MHEBF. This year as DDGM for Athabasca District, Tom decided to raffle off a beautiful Swiss Watch, which he won at a raffle at Tawatinaw Lodge No. 71. Tickets were raffled off during his Official Visits and the draw that took place during his District Meeting accumulated a donation of over \$2016.

The watch was won by Bro Todd Hansen, and RWBro Davies submitted the proceeds to the MHEBF through the ATB



RWBro Tom Davies presents a watch he raffled to the winner, Bro Todd Hansen.



Cares website, receiving an additional 295\$ from the ATB Cares Program. (The ATB Cares website offers a 15 per cent bonus to donations submitted through the site.

RWBro Tom went on to provide the following information to all the Lodges in his district.

The **ATB Cares website** offers an easy way to make donations to Charities, specifically the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund. The following are the required entries that you need

to follow to get there quickly.

*ATB will match 15% of every dollar donated to Alberta-based, non-religious charities through this site, up to \$20,000 per month and \$240,000 per fiscal year. Note this amount is to all charities and is reset at the first of each month.*

*ATB covers the transaction and credit card fees on all donations made through [atbcares.com](http://atbcares.com) so your charity of choice will receive 100% of your donation. Automatic tax receipts are issued to donors through the Canadian Online Giving Foundation.*

Simply go to <https://www.atbcares.com/donate> and enter Grand Lodge of Alberta where it says "Enter the cause

name or keywords."

A drop-down menu presents you with four choices:

- the Higher Education Bursary Fund;
- I.O.O.F. Bursary Fund;
- Masonic Foundation of Alberta; and
- Grande Spirit Foundation.

Choose one and another drop-down gives you the opportunity to enter your donation amount and also to write a comment.

Tom encouraged his Lodges and their members to choose the MHEBF.

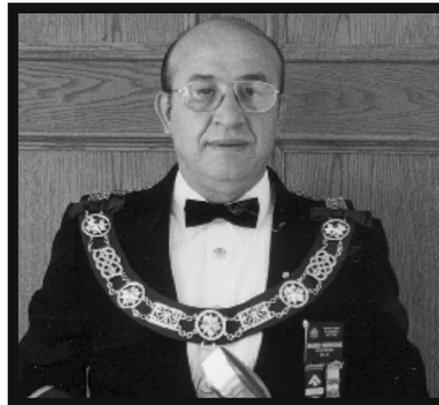
Thank you RWBro Tom Davies, for your innovative and ongoing support of the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Program.

## In Memoriam

### MWBro Basile Costouros, 1947–2018

It is with great sadness we bring you news of the passing of MWBro Basile Costouros on 4 December 2018 at the age of 71. He is survived by his wife, Eugenia; his son, Georgio; his grandchildren, Arissa and Carsyn; as well as numerous relatives, Masonic Brethren and dear friends. Basile was predeceased by his parents, Georgio and Lemonia Costouros.

MWBro Costouros was born in Greece in 1947. He received his early education in his native country. At the age of 16, he travelled to West Germany for higher education, starting out in architecture but switching to aeronautical engineering. Upon graduation, his father discouraged a return to Greece for military duty because of the unsettled political situation and, instead, assisted him to emigrate to Toronto where he had family. After rising through the ranks in his chosen profession, it was time to move on. Fluent in four languages, he joined the RCMP Intelligence Division and served four years, during which time he came to Edmonton. An interest in real estate prompted him to become licensed as a



### MWBro Basile Costouros Grand Master of Alberta 1996/1997

Realtor and Insurance Broker. He was also president of a fast food franchisee company (pizzas) with several outlets.

Basile's Masonic career started in 1977 when he was initiated, passed and raised in Jasper Lodge No. 14. He served as WM in 1984, was DDGM of District 12 (Northern Lights) in 1990/91. He was also: Charter member of Ye Olde Craft Lodge No. 196; member of Fiat Lux

Lodge of Research No. 1980; Honorary Life Member of Star of the West Lodge No. 34 and of Dynamic Lodge No. 96; Honorary Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Greece and of the Grand Lodge of Colorado; and Governor of the Order of AHEPA in 1978/79.

Basile joined the A&ASR Lodge of Perfection in 1978, followed by the Mizpah Chapter Rose Croix and Alberta Consistory. He served as Thrice Puissant GM in 1991, directed the 31° for several years and received the 33° in 1996.

Other concordant memberships include: Norwood Chapter No. 18, RAM; Life Member Zohar Council No. 4, Cryptic Rite; Life Member Edmonton Preceptory, Knights Templar; High Priesthood, the Grand Registry of England; Taylor Conclave No. 5, Order of the Red Cross of Constantine; Life Member York Rite College (Alberta Rose); and a Charter Member of Al Shamal, AAONMS.

His love for the Fraternity, his generosity in the community and his ability to protect his family when the need arose testifies as to the stature of our Brother.

He will indeed be missed.

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

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# Stepping into the Light

Brother John Mooney

A Paper Presented to the Brethren of Templum Fidelis Lodge No. 746, Bath, ON  
In *Reflections*, Vol. 31: 3, Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario.

Worshipful Master, Right Worshipful the District Deputy Grand Master and Brethren, I came to Freemasonry through my friendship with a Mason. This friendship developed outside of Masonry, and in fact I think it was some time before I even realized he was a Mason. As our friendship developed, my interest in Freemasonry grew. For a time, I consciously avoided asking too many questions about Masonry out of a concern that “prying” might damage our friendship. Over time however, I became acquainted with more Masons and eventually heard the tag line, “making good men better.” Finally, my own curiosity got the better of me and I began to ask questions, soon realizing that I wanted to know more. While I was living in a state of darkness with respect to Freemasonry, I could sense a glow and was drawn toward it. More than that however, I believe that I had truly reached a point of reflection in my own life that was spurring me on to look for more from life. Simply put, I believe I was ready to become a Freemason.

It is certainly a fair observation that I was truly in a state of darkness with respect to knowledge of Freemasonry. I was not biased in any fashion by solicitations from either my sponsors or the investigation committee, but believe I really did come to Freemasonry of my own free will and based on a favourable opinion preconceived of the institution, as the work prescribes. At my initiation, the Worshipful Master asked me to declare on my honour that I was prompted to seek admittance to the mysteries and privileges of Freemasonry through a general desire for knowledge, and a sincere wish to render myself more extensively serviceable to my fellow creatures. This question was posed early in my initiation and for some time was buried in the totality of my initiation experience. However, as I have been reviewing the work, it has increasingly come to the forefront of my thoughts as one of the key components of Freemasonry and, I believe, a component of the “more from life” that has been knocking about in the back of my mind. I believe these assertions speak to the very notion of making good men better, and will circle back to them to explain the fullness of this statement in due course.

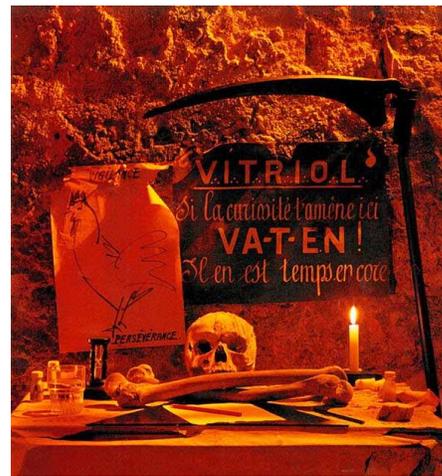
At this point, I would like to return to

the idea that candidates to Freemasonry solicit entry from a state of darkness both literally and figuratively, being both hoodwinked during the initiation process and not having had any of the secrets or mysteries of Freemasonry revealed until after the obligation has been sworn. The effects on me of being literally placed in a state of darkness through hoodwinking were profound. Having one’s sight taken away and having to rely on Brother Junior Deacon to guide me, did much to produce in my mind a state of humility as well as a little anxiety.

I believe however, that it is important to note that anxiety and humility were not fear. My sponsor, in response to the question of what I should do to prepare for the initiation, had given me simple instructions — someone will take good care of you and try to take in the whole experience. Truer words and better advice could not have been given, for they helped establish the state of “perfect freedom of inclination” within my mind that the work calls for as candidates seek out the mysteries of Freemasonry. Being hoodwinked and guided served to clear my mind of the physical world around me while focusing my attention clearly on what was being asked of me and the instructions I was receiving.

The return to a state of material light after the obligation was equally important. The return to material light is sudden, and given that light by its nature travels in all directions at once, almost overwhelming. I say this in the sense that my surroundings being completely unfamiliar to me, I was trying to take in everything at once and make sense of it, when in reality I had virtually no context upon which to construct my understanding. In the literal sense, it takes time for your eyes to adjust to the light and for your mind to place what you are observing into context. At first exposure I saw everything, but understood nothing.

In a figurative sense, exactly the same can be said of my understanding of Freemasonry. During my initiation, the allegorical veil covering Freemasonry was pulled back for the first time as I was guided through my floor work and instructed in the first degree of Freemasonry. But like the return to material light after having been hoodwinked, the



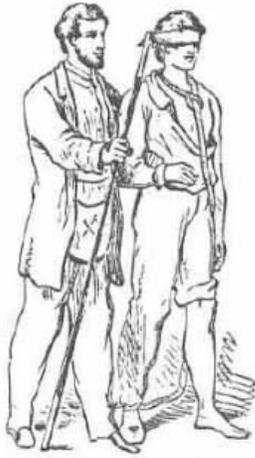
totality of what I experienced was overwhelming and lacking in context. This made it very difficult to understand what it was that I was experiencing. I really did not know where to look or what to think. In a sense, I was blinded by the very light that I so desired. In retrospect, I am sure that this is very much the intended impact, however at the time it can be quite unnerving. The task ahead; trying to make meaning of what I was seeing and experiencing, trying to learn the work and frankly just participating in regular Lodge seem daunting as everyone around me is so well versed — it does feel odd to be in the position of being an apprentice at the age of 52. At the same time, I cannot deny that being in this position has been invigorating, because it does feel like I am beginning a very important journey that I believe will help bring greater fulfillment to my life.

As my eyes have adjusted to the light around me, I have been repeatedly drawn back to the questions that will be put to me by the Worshipful Master before I am passed to the Second Degree, as I believe they cut to the heart of my understanding of Freemasonry in the First Degree. The very first question seeks to affirm one’s motivation for seeking to become a Mason. I believe that I can now fully see the importance of first being prepared to become a Freemason in the heart. It is from the heart that we draw inspiration and motivation. Feelings derived from the heart are the purest, most sustained and these feelings have served to draw me fully into Masonry in a manner which I still cannot fully comprehend, but which I fully embrace. The simplest description seems to be that my in heart there was a desire to find and experience more meaning in life, as well as a belief that there was more than I could comprehend on my own. In my heart, I feel that Freemasonry can

help me construct that greater meaning.

The next several questions require the recollection of the physical preparation for initiation. These questions are important, I believe, because the physical elements of my initiation played a major role in establishing the necessary state of mind needed for me to enter Freemasonry. The Chamber of Reflection, a convenient room next to Lodge, was so much more than just a room. While I did not realize it at the time, the nature of my surroundings and the questions put to me therein served to strip the outside world from my mind and really cause me to reflect on many of the core beliefs concerning my place and responsibilities within the world, both physically and spiritually. The task of answering the questions put to me was much more difficult than I first imagined, because I don't believe that I have ever been asked to articulate them in a coherent stream of thought before. More importantly, they brought forward in my mind the very clear feeling that I could not really "answer" these questions completely, because I did not have the "answers" — only a partially formed set of beliefs that in many ways felt less complete the longer I thought about them. The experience served to affirm in my mind that I lacked the knowledge to truly answer these questions.

The mode of preparation — being deprived of all metal, and hoodwinked, with my right arm, left breast, and left knee made bare, and my right heel slipshod with a cable tow around my neck, served to strip away the security of station and identity, which I believe all of us stand behind. We present an image of ourselves to the world and consciously, or unconsciously, expect people to draw conclusions about us based on that image. The outward physical appearance of success and confidence can mask many of our insecurities, and at times lead us to believe that we are different, dare I say better than others. The mode of our preparation to enter Freemasonry, strips all of that away, exposing our hearts, leaving us neither naked nor clothed, depriving our senses, and putting in us in a most physically and psychologically vulnerable position. While quite unset-



ting at the time, I believe the mode of preparation served to bring about in me the state of humility needed to enter Freemasonry, understanding that at my core I am a man, simply a man, no different or in any way more powerful, entitled or gifted than any other. The trappings of society can create a false sense of power, security and entitlement that can quickly be stripped from

any of us. It is important to recall that physically, we are all essentially the same and live within the same basic physical bounds that define humanity.

That we understand that we are made Freemasons when the sun is at its meridian, and that the sun is always at its meridian with respect to Masonry is to me the first step towards knowing that the light of Masonry is a constant — always there, always at its full strength, no matter where we find ourselves, either physically or literally. I am learning to draw comfort from the idea that I will have the privileges and mysteries of Freemasonry, as well as the support of my fraternal Brothers and Masonry available to me at all times to draw upon. Equally important, the omnipresent light of Freemasonry means that there will be no place to hide from the obligations I have sworn or the responsibilities I have undertaken to myself, my fraternal Brothers or Freemasonry as a whole. Early on in my initiation I was asked to declare my sincere wish to render myself more extensively serviceable to my fellow creatures, and I was cautioned to take heed upon what I had entered into. The clear corollary being, that with the revelation of the mysteries and the granting of the privileges of Freemasonry comes equally important and serious moral obligations.

For these reasons, I early on made a commitment to use the light to explore and experience all that I could within Freemasonry by being an active Mason. In fact, I believe it is my responsibility to do so, as I was the one who sought admission to the secrets and mysteries. The revelation of those secrets and mysteries requires effort on my part, and I am quite confident that they are not simply handed over, and should not be bestowed for simply showing up or by

simply memorizing the work. Although the notion borders on cliché, nothing worthwhile is derived without sustained effort and serious reflection. The work certainly supports these ideas. The rough ashlar, which is for the Entered Apprentice to work, mark and indent on, has an irregular surface that can represent the peaks and valleys of my own Masonic knowledge, which requires regular application effort and perseverance to continue to smooth and fashion so that the "rude material" receives its finish. Even then, the perfect ashlar remains for the "more expert" workman to try and adjust his jewels on. I find the idea that a Mason's development is never complete, that one never becomes fully accomplished, but only more expert, an important idea as it means that there will always be more to learn and discover in Freemasonry. While it would certainly be possible to take the negative view — my work will never be complete, I much prefer the more positive perspective of seeing the unending opportunity to learn, improve and to continue to have an impact for the better on the world around me. I am further inspired in this by the idea that through Freemasonry, this journey and these opportunities will not be undertaken alone, but rather as part of this fraternal organization. An organization that recognizes that we will all have times of plenty and times of need, and one whose membership has made a commitment to share in all those times.

Within all the points of light in the First Degree, the brightest for me shines on the response to the question, "What is Freemasonry?" and the question's corresponding answer, "A Beautiful system of morality..." It is this straightforward statement that for me defines the most important elements of learning in the First Degree. Our Lodges, which represent the beautiful system of morality, are built upon the base of our three grand principles, namely: Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Brotherly Love comes about through common experience — all Masons pass through the same Degrees and complete the same work. In addition, we share the same obligations and privileges. We are bound together by common experience and beliefs as men and Brothers in the same unique family. Relief recognizes that we must all labour and bear our share of the load in building the system, but none should

See, **Stepping Concluded** on page 6.

# Your DDGMs 2018–2019

We are pleased to introduce to our readers the District Deputy Grand Masters serving the Craft in Alberta during the 2018–2019 term. This concludes the series.

## Mighty Peace District

**RWBro Tony Taylor**

No biography available.



## Palliser District

**RWBro Stuart Hardiker** was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1973 and raised in the village of Loanhead, which is the neighbouring village of Roslin, and spent most of his summers playing and camping around the forest and River Esk, below the now famous Roslyn Chapel.

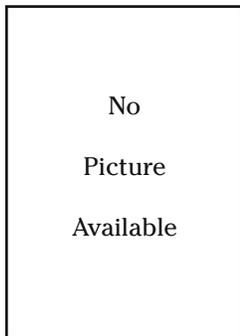
Stuart joined the military in 1989 at 16 years of age, and served in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots — The Royal Regiment and the oldest Regiment of Foot in the British army — until he met his now wife Theresa whilst stationed at Suffield, married and immigrated to Canada in 1996. Stuart joined the Canadian Army Reserves in 1997 and served with the Princess Louise's Fusiliers in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and later in the South Alberta Light Horse, serving 13 years and receiving the Canadian Decoration Medal for his service to Canada.

In 1997 he moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta where he soon started his career with Newsco Canada. In 1999 he transferred to the international division of BJ Service, after the acquisition of Newsco. Stuart worked in multiple roles, from Field Service Supervisor to Region Training and Competency Manager, Station & Offshore Manager, and Country Operation Manager for 17 years, in places such as Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, India, Libya, Nigeria, Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, Angola, Congo, South Africa and Australia, just to mention a few. Stuart has visited in excess of 50 Lodges in five continents and cherishes the memories of each of them, including being honourably raised in his local Lodge in Scotland, St Leonard's 580 of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Stuart was entered into the Craft, passed to Fellowcraft and raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason in Mizpah Lodge No. 35 in Medicine Hat, becoming its Worshipful Master on 21 February 2003 and serving for the years 2014 to 2016.

Stuart is also a member of concordant bodies of the Craft, including Royal Arch Masons and The Sovereign Great Priory of Canada.

Stuart still lives in Medicine Hat with his wife of 22 years



and his two children, Timora (aged 20) and Lachlan (aged 17).

Stuart is currently employed as a Conductor for Canadian Pacific Railways, allowing him to be closer to home and spend more time with his family. Stuart enjoys hunting, golf, camping, boating, home DIY and volunteering for local charities with his wife, and is honoured to serve as the DDGM for Palliser District.

## Phoenix District

**RWBRO Ken Inel** was born in November 1950 and raised in a small farming community in southern Saskatchewan. He moved to Calgary in 1969 and started an apprenticeship as an electrician. He has a son Chad and a daughter Carly from his first marriage in 1971 and is has been married to his wife Carol since 1997. In 1977 he became a Master Electrician and started his own company in Airdrie. He sold the electrical company in 1993 after purchasing a commercial construction company in 1990, which he still operates today. Alberta has been very good to him — 49 years ago he came here with one thousand dollars and today he still has most of it left.

He became a member of Crossfield Lodge No. 48 in 2005, joined the Royal Arch Masons in 2009 and became a member of the Knights Templar in 2011.

He was Worshipful Master of Crossfield Lodge No. 48 in 2013, a Grand Steward of the Grand Lodge of Alberta 2015/2016 and First Principal of Strathmore Chapter No. 21 in 2016 and 2017. He is currently the Treasurer of Crossfield Lodge No. 48 and a member of the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine, as well as a member of the Order of the High Priesthood.

His spare time is spent fishing, making sausage and beef jerky, and taking care of his acreage in Water Valley.



## Yellowhead District

**RWBRO George W Stamp** was born in Prince George in April of 1961. He has been married to Charlene for 25 years and they have three children and six grandchildren. He was a Locomotive Engineer for many years, retiring from CNR after 35 years service.

He was initiated in Avon Glenn Lodge No 170 in 1992, and served as Worshipful Master of Hinton Lodge No. 178 for 2003–2004 and Jasper Lodge No. 143 for 2006–2008.

He is also an Al Shamal Shriner and a member of the Widow's Sons.



## Stepping Concluded, from page 4.

bear more than he can. When we approach that point, our Brothers will offer assistance so that no Mason is overcome, thus maintaining the foundation of our system. Finally, the principle of truth. Truth endures all trials and without it, our system of morality would be fatally flawed. It keeps our focus on doing what is right, rather than on being right. These principles promote harmony and the betterment of the individual and Freemasonry in particular, as well as all mankind in general.

On the foundation of our grand principles stand the three great pillars of Freemasonry: Wisdom, Strength and Beauty. Freemasonry helps us develop the moral wisdom we need to conduct ourselves in a morally correct manner. The working tools instruct us on apportioning out our days to their proper measures of prayer, labour, refreshment and sleep; reaffirm that labour is the lot of man, and that little will be accomplished without focused effort; and finally, that we must persevere and be indefatigable in our pursuit of moral betterment.

To support us under the weight of all our moral difficulties, we have the pillar of strength. Our strength is derived from the men and material which compose our Lodge. The strength of our men is represented in the movable Jewels which

are worn by our Master and his Wardens, their installation in these positions being based on their demonstrated merit and ability to lead the Lodge. The immovable Jewels are fixed and ever present that we may moralize and recall that all Masons move from the rough to the perfect ashlar, and that our moral tools, regardless of how polished, always require adjustment. The material of our Lodge is composed of ornaments and furniture: ornaments to remind us of the uncertainty of all things in our material life and furniture to govern our faith, regulate our lives and actions and to keep us within due bounds with all mankind for we are after all just men. Our strength lies in recognizing the uncertainty which pervades our material lives and challenges our morality while having constructed a system of morality which overcomes these circumstances without separating us from the rest of humanity.

The inward moral adornment of each Mason comes about through our desire and efforts to arrive at the summit of Masonry by climbing on the staves of faith, hope, and charity on our moral ladder. Our moral adornment being inspired as we ascend each staff. Within the work, I believe we are given guidance to help us along the path through pursuit of the four cardinal virtues represented by the

four tassels pendent to the four corners of the Lodge: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice, as well as by the distinguishing characteristics of every Freemason, namely: Virtue, Honour and Mercy.

Taken in total, the three Grand Principles upon which our system of morality is based and the three Great Pillars of Freemasonry which support it speak undeniably to its beauty. The beauty of the Masonic system of morality for me is derived from the fact that it exists within the bounds of humanity, and seeks to raise up all of humanity through moral lives lived by Masons and the example that provides. By striving to live our lives within this system of morality, and by dedicating our hearts and minds to becoming better Masons, we help create a better society. We do this without public fanfare or the desire for public recognition. As a Mason, I believe that we do this because we have come to believe and understand through our work that it is the right thing to do and the right way to live our lives. I look forward with great anticipation to taking the next step in my Masonic journey, to seeing and understanding what the light of Freemasonry may next reveal to me so that I may become a more expert Mason and thus render myself more extensively serviceable to my fellow creatures.

