



A message from the Grand Chaplain  
VWBro Lorne Ruskowsky

**The Light Shines in the  
darkness , and the darkness  
cannot overcome it.**

**John 1:5**

**The Advent and Christmas season can be  
looked at as a series of down to earth  
spiritual practices that shake us from our  
defaults and warm our hearts.**

Once December hits we begin to move the furniture around. This seems mundane but it is amazing how our relationship to our home changes when we move it around to make room for an illuminating guest – the Christmas tree. There are small trees and big trees, fake trees and real trees, but whatever the shape or size of our space, we are compelled to put something up in the house. And then, through out the days of Christmas and the weeks leading up, we have the chance to look at the decorations, remembering the stories they carry, to stack gifts and look forward to seeing the people who will receive them, and at the end of a busy day we can sit in the quiet of the night and marvel at how the light of the tree shines in the darkness of winter. The physical reorientation, the stories, the wonder all make this a great spiritual practice.

Light in the darkness is the key metaphor of John's Christmas message.

John writes...“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness could not overcome it. Merry Christmas!”

Have you ever been in a cave? In the darkest of caves, the kind of place so pitch black that the darkness almost presses in...and then a little candle is lit, effortlessly pushing the darkness back. It leaves

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me wondering, did the darkness go away, or was it just filled with light? Lighting a candle doesn't make the darkness disappear...but it sure seems to help.

This is the good news of Christmas for John. No matter how dark the world, light can fill it.

Fact - It is in cooperating with photosynthesis, the capture of light, that we will make the most headway in our numerous environmental crisis. Light shines in the darkness. It is in shining light on the painful spots in our communities that we will be awakened to grow up and act for justice. It is in lightening up, and taking ourselves less seriously that we will bridge the widening culture gap between right and left wing politics. Light! Light! Light!

If you want some advice for a merry Christmas, keep the conversation light. Meaning, let your presence shine warmth on the people around you. Let your care and attention to others disarm them. Let your Christmas tree remind you to be ready to make room in your house for an illuminating guest.

You might say, God makes room for our darkness and at the same time sends light to shine and warm us into a people of hope. This is the Spiritual work of Christmas!

And so John continues to inspire the generations with his Christmas message, ‘The Light shines in the darkness , and the darkness cannot overcome it.’

Page 1 It was. It is. It shall be so. Let there be Light!  
Amen

Brethren,

May You and Yours be filled with health, happiness and contentment in the year to come.

*Ed' I must thank our Grand Chaplain for submitting his article two weeks ago, his message is very important in the situation we find ourselves this year. Put up that tree or whatever your personal beliefs mark this time of year, you can bring some light into your lives over the holiday and show a beacon to those around you.*

## Around the world

### A New Paradigm For Masonry

R.W. Bro. Mason D. Jardine, S.G.W., G.R.M.

I want to take you back three centuries and more to the earliest period of Masonry in Europe. When Masonry began to spread in the 17th century, it consisted of a small number of men who endorsed and practised a number of ideas which were not the majority opinion, such as religious tolerance or the acceptance of scientific ideas. As such it attracted a number of members who were interested in being the engines of change. Throughout the eighteenth century, especially in continental Europe, it attracted men interested in intellectual change and the advancement of new ideas, people like Voltaire. It attracted people who wanted to change the established patterns of colonialism, like George Washington and Simon Bolivar. Into the nineteenth century it became part of the force that led men like Benito Juarez, Dr. José Rizal, and Giuseppe Garibaldi, on three completely different continents no less, to oppose the power of institutionalized religion in the political lives of their respective countries.

The paradigm used during this period was that of an

organization which questioned the establishment and built up relationships between men one at a time creating a tightly bonded social group. It was this paradigm which was feared by the established order, especially where freedom of thought and lack of social conformity was harmful to that order's agenda.

But after the second world war, especially in the English-speaking world, that paradigm changed. Masonry became part of the establishment, not an élite dedicated to questioning it. Yes, we could celebrate the efforts of past Masons, but we defeated Hitler, didn't we, and everyone in the English-speaking world was endorsing all of those Masonic values our heroes fought for. Masons were mainstream. Masonry stopped being an élite which gave the example for social change and became the "organization of choice" for those who wanted to improve their social status. Membership skyrocketed, but Masons stopped being leaders and became followers. So when McCarthyism reared its ugly head in the United States, it was not the Freemasons who fought it. They supported it.

And being followers meant adopting the paradigm of followers: bowing to social pressure, worrying about being the majority, and hence about numbers, and changing fundamental principles to conform with the majority opinion. The result is that we allowed the outside world to dictate to us, rather than dictating to ourselves.

And when you are followers, you cannot be ahead of the times; you must always be behind the times. Almost instantly, Masonry began to be an "old boys' club". In the 1960s, with a generation challenging the post-war establishment, Masonry was ridiculed as being pompous, old-fashioned and ineffectual. And within the Craft, there were also those who realized that something had gone wrong. In 1961 the Past Grand Master of Indiana, M.W. Bro. Dwight Smith, a journalist, wrote a series of articles, anthologized as "Whither Are We Travelling?" questioning the entire paradigm of American Masonry in his day. Sixty years later, his criticisms resonate; he has influenced many Indiana Masons, including Chris Hodapp. Smith criticized the Lodge for the automatic... [Page 5](#)

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## From the editor

Brethren, here we are at the December edition of the AF, and, all I can say is “what a year that was!”. I, like all of you, did not expect to be in the situation we find ourselves. Last December, I remarked, “.we keep Freemasonry alive in the Province”, there is no way I could have predicted that a year later I would again be saying a big “Thank you” to all the brethren in Alberta and beyond for “keeping Freemasonry alive”.

As I was getting this issue together, I was asking myself, will 2020 be the year to remember or forget? I am sure you are asking yourselves the same question. At first, I think the latter could be a knee-jerk reaction, putting behind us the difficulties, both physical and mental, that the past nine months have had us endure. However, we should be sure to remember what this year has been. If you kept a journal, don't throw it away when we eventually emerge from this. If you have photos, perhaps place them with your journal in a separate album. This time will be significant in our children & grandchildren's lives, their challenges, being separated from friends, their schoolroom and playground will not and should not be forgotten. They will have built up some resilience and self-motivation,

innovation and experimentation; perhaps they were introduced to some games, discussions and family stories that they have never heard before. These things need to be remembered and not forgotten; they will rekindle memories that can continue down the generations.

It is the same for the lodge; our new methods of connecting with brethren have allowed us to bring together brethren who have not attended a meeting in years with members they would never have met if things hadn't changed so much. We must ensure that details of lodge activities, both online and in-person, are documented for the brethren in the future to use as a reference, should they need it.

I would like to thank a member of my team who has been there for me in the background at the drop of an email, Bro Robin Carson. At my request or his inclination, he has taken articles and produced copy. I know you all appreciate as I do. Thank you, Bro Robin; as we enter another year, I am so thankful that you reached out and answered my call.

To those brethren who submitted articles, your hard work and research is appreciated by all the brethren who have had the pleasure of reading it. May your pen or keyboard continue to work in harmony.

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***Here is a definition of a word found within Masonic ritual that is not common outside of our Lodge rooms.***

Assiduity. One might hear the word assiduity in great oratory: Thomas Jefferson and Winston Churchill have used it. Masons hear it during an annual ceremony, where it is part of an instruction. Assiduity is an obscure word with the several meanings of ‘constant diligence’, and ‘close personal attention or care of a person’. These are traits we expect in those who lead us; that they will always focus on being a leader, and be aware of the needs of the Lodge. Learning from the example of the esteemed Brethren who have gone before us, and demonstrating those abilities to others, is how leadership in our Fraternity offers a path for good men to become better.

*Provided for your daily advancement in Masonic knowledge from the Sarnia District Masonic Library.*

*WBro Marshall Kern, Librarian & Historian. My blog is at :*

<https://masterseblem.wordpress.com/>



*Ed' WBro Kern, has been a staunch supplier of his word definitions for some time now and I look forward to many more in the future. It is brethren such as these who take the time to furnish publications like the AF that makes the work of an editor a pleasure. Thank you again Wbro Kern!*

# Alberta education

## Meet Me On The Level

You would have to be completely oblivious to miss the glaring differences that have been used to differentiate people, now as in the past. Being focused on these differences we continue to incur great costs, and miss opportunities to build on our common ground. What needs to change?

Human beings display countless physical variations, from their colour to the many components of their physique. They are also broadly differentiated by aspects of their personal power, wealth, status, aptitude, education, and character traits. Invariably, these differences attract attention, with mixed results. On the one hand, these dissimilarities may result in admiration, and the desire by one person to resemble or associate with another; on the other hand, they may induce targeted humiliation, derision, or even violence against a person deemed to be “different”.

People are attracted to others who they believe possess something that they lack, but find desirable and wish to have. This desire has often generated a struggle, with the potential to be productive such as when motivating a person to work harder and achieve a desired goal – education, wealth, power, and so on. However, it has also proven to be extremely destructive. In fact, history is replete with examples of the tug-of-war between the “haves” and the “have nots”, and the terrible bloodshed or destruction it has generated.

We may never completely eliminate such tug-of-war of expectations and conflicts. However, if for no other reason than their punishing cost, we need to address them by reducing (or leveling) some of the existing or perceived differences. The solution is obviously complex, and requires more than the often-suggested reallocation of resources. Throwing more money at the imbalance will not, in and of itself, produce the necessary balance. What is there instead, to guide us?

In this case, Nature provides us an excellent analogy. As with people, Nature’s countless elements reflect incredible diversity in its unique colour schemes, shapes, textures, smells, sounds, and goings-on. Often, we are also struck by Nature’s constant trans-

formation through its ever-present clash of opposites, and extremes.

Clearly, our natural environment consists of many unique elements, species, and forces. Nevertheless, it is a single, unified entity, and a closed system, with all its part being interconnected and interdependent. When one aspect or element is affected, it invariably generates ripples of change that continue until they reach a state of homeostasis, defined as “a relatively stable equilibrium between interdependent elements”.

Viewed collectively, human beings also represent a single entity and a closed system. As with Nature, they too are bound by a common force – the notion of humanity, which recognizes that all human beings, regardless of their differences, have a number of inherently common factors. These include shared early ancestors, similar basic needs, as well as common aspirations and hopes. Human beings continue to exist on a single and common platform – Earth, and as in the natural environment, are increasingly interconnected and interdependent across a seemingly ever-shrinking world. Furthermore, despite their differing worldview – spiritual, religious, scientific, or just awestruck - human beings cannot completely avoid being impacted by the aspirations or actions of others, or achieve complete self-sufficiency. In fact, as we become increasingly interconnected, the notion of homeostasis, or stability, becomes more critical. In short, we need to firm up the foundation of our society, both locally and globally.

A long-held wisdom when building any structure, is that it must have a level and solid foundation. With but one classic exception, the leaning Tower of Pisa, no edifice is stable unless its foundation is level. Being levelled, means being on the same horizontal plane, on a surface of equal height. It is as equally important to the strength of human interactions as it is for the strength of buildings. Hence, the origin of the often-used term “level with me”, which means to be honest, fair, and to treat me as an equal. That, is the fundamental requirement underlying any effort to address or rebalance human differences or expectations.

How we perceive and treat others is a critical start. We need to treat others as an integral part of humanity as a whole, of which we too are a part. In similar vein, we should not treat “the others” as disposable and worthless sub-humans, or prey upon them. All people deserve our respect as fellow human beings, and should be treated honestly and fairly. Consequently, all of us need to stand on level ground before the scales of justice, and have access to the same opportunities [Page 5](#)

### **Grand Masters itinerary - December 2020**

<https://freemasons.ab.ca/index.php/grand-masters-schedule/>

**Always double check the timings with the lodge as there may be local changes during the month.**

As I close my final comments for this edition and 2020, I send you all best wishes from my family to yours, near or far. May you find ways to be together while separated, using whatever electronic methods you can muster. And may the New Year bring you peace, good health and prosperity, and whatever else you are seeking.

Steve  
Editor AF

[page 2](#) promotion of officers, lowered standards in examining candidates, cheap initiation fees, lodges so large they are "an impersonal aggregation of strangers", obsession with Masonic clubs and concordant bodies, impersonal institutionalized charity, joyless socializing, and lack of education. Sound familiar?

And because we are perpetuating the paradigm which led to all the problems Smith listed, these continue to be problems. "Renewal" programs and membership improvement programs dedicated to returning us to the way things were in 1955 fail because they strengthen rather than weaken the paradigm which is the source of our problems.

A change of paradigm is long overdue. Let's face the reality that our organization was never meant to have the number of members it once did. It was intended to be an élite, consisting only of men who were fired by the desire for fellowship, true gentlemanliness, and moral truth no matter what the establishment felt about it. It was intended to consist of men who were intimately bonded with other men who were fired by the same desire.

Is there a need for such an organization? God, yes. Part of the problem with the paradigm we have been saddled with is that it focuses us on numbers, which means that keeping those massive numbers of men around we used to have is more important than getting a few newer and younger members. But members over 50 years of age (I include myself in this) are less important than the members under 50. In twenty years time, if there is to be Freemasonry at all, it will be these men who will be running it, not us. That is why I try my hardest to listen to what new candidates have to say and what they want. A few years ago a 25-year old Mason from Hamilton Ontario called Christopher Coome wrote about what Masonry had to offer to men of his age. Listen to this:

"As young men, we are part of a generation dominated by an addiction to video games and the lewder parts of the internet. We are a generation of men that has fallen so far

as those we wish for ourselves and our loved ones. Anything less than that will only continue to promote social tensions and strife, and keep us from that equilibrium we call Peace.

I hope to meet you on the level. Be well.

Bro Ron Kuban

*Ed' at this time of year it behooves us to look further than ourselves and families. Bro Ron your words give us a starting point. This year we should make an extra effort as there are a whole bunch of people who find themselves alone this year due to the restrictions in their particular area, they may not be able to be with their families or friends. Brethren, now is the time to reach out to your family, friends, brethren that you know, and take a minute to wish anyone you meet your seasons greetings.*

behind our female counterparts in academia, that there are now councils being organized to see what is wrong. In sum, we are one of the most lost generations of men in Western history. . . . We as a generation, have so little to hold on to, and so little to understand. And how do we find our way out of this? Most of our generation, young men, would rather focus on their fleeting distractions than finding a way to transcend them. . . .When you see an entire family glued to their cellphones, rather than talking to each other, I offer you an institution where men meet the way they have for centuries, to talk, to fraternize, and to learn to be better. I offer you the very quintessence of human interaction, free from computer screens and the intoxicating buzzings of a million whining gadgets. I offer you an experience that will change your life."

What Coome finds in Masonry is an escape from video games, internet porn, being glued to cellphones, computer screens and electronic gadgets. It means freedom from the virtual world and encountering reality. Social distancing has been coming on for years, you know; COVID only pushed it to ridiculous lengths, which people are prepared to accept because they were already half way there. If you want something, don't go to the store—buy it on Amazon. If you want something to eat, don't go to a restaurant—call Skip the Dishes. If you want to learn something, don't find a teacher—go to YouTube. If you want friendships, don't get to know anyone—subscribe.. [Page 7](#)

## Letter to the Editor

### Seasons Greetings

#### From the Staff of the Grand Lodge of Alberta

We at the Grand Lodge Office wish to say thank you to all those who have worked closely (social distanced, of course) this year. We thank you for the time you so willingly gave to your Lodge and to the Grand Lodge Office. We also want to extend Seasons' Greetings to your families, for without their support and understanding, we would not have the dedication and commitment of so many of you.

We wish you all a safe Christmas and may the happiness and good cheer of the Holiday Season be yours throughout the New Year.

Nicole McCoy & Bill Kostenuk

The Grand Lodge Office will be closed from Friday, December 18 until Sunday, January 3, reopening on Monday January 4.

The JGW RWBro Kyle Scott sent me the below photograph.

Brethren during these very interesting times where photographs are open for anyone to find and remark on. If you are going to publish anything showing the attendance of the meeting then please follow the example below and taken at the Mighty Peace District meeting and space yourselves accordingly.

Well done brethren,



[Page 5](#) to Facebook. If you want sex, don't go out to meet a partner—dial up a porn site. (Did you know that.. one reason given for Japan's plummeting birthrate is that Japanese young men in droves have internet sex partners?) All of these things keep people from leaving their houses and meeting any real people. If you are able to work from home, as it is predicted a larger number of people will do as time goes on since it is cheaper for businesses, then you can live your whole life without ever leaving your tiny little room, and many people do. I know someone who does. This is living in the Matrix, and he has taken the blue pill. But for those who want the red pill, the red pill is Freemasonry. Or it can be.

What will our new paradigm for Masonry look like? What will it have to offer the select few who know what they need and cannot find it elsewhere?

First, we need to discard the idea that bigger is better. Smaller is better. A meeting of a dozen people is a party; a meeting of a thousand people is a rally. In a rally the individual is swallowed up in a corporate identity. When Lodges are having meetings of more than a couple dozen people they should be thinking of creating a new Lodge.

This is not a new idea. T.M. Spence, Grand Master of Saskatchewan, said in 1966, over 50 years ago:

Masonry thrives best in a Lodge whose members form a small compact company in which compatibility and group consciousness are overriding considerations.

Once we accept that smaller is better, it is easier to focus on quality rather than quantity. Distilling wine into brandy reduces the amount you have but makes it more potent. If we adopt this paradigm we can learn to guard the west gate better, because we can accept that not every petitioner will make the cut. Some people are not cut out for Masonry.

We can also raise our expectations of the behaviour of our brethren. My favourite line from the movie *The Incredibles* is "if everyone is super, no-one is." We need our brothers to know that we have chosen them, that their membership in the Lodge is a privilege and an honour which is not given indiscriminately, but conferred according to merit and ability. If the activities of your Lodge are special, the members will go out of their way to make them special, by putting on their best clothing, the clothing that they save for Lodge, (and this does not mean wearing clothing mandated for them by others), and by going out of their way to go the extra mile. When it is my turn to make lunch for the Lodge meeting I consider it my job to turn something out that the brethren will talk about when they get home.

And it also means making the time in your life for Masonry. I ask myself sometimes why young Masons sometimes claim that they have no time. After all, everyone has precisely 24 hours in every day and always have had. The lesson of the 24-inch gauge teaches us that those hours are to be allocated to their proper uses. We are inundated by gadgets, apps and services which are supposed to save time for us in order to spend less time on those things we do not want to, and yet people say that they have no time to do the things that they do want to, when people in the past always seemed to have plenty of time to do so. As a theory, I am going to suggest that these people may be unaware of what they are actually spending their time on, and that they are using time unproductively because they have not thought about how they are allocating it. (Hence the 24-inch gauge.)

Some also have no control over their time. Shift workers, for example, are tied to rhythms which do not correspond with those which govern Lodge meetings. Of course shift work is not new, but there seems to be a lot of it about and it seems to be more unpredictable. But shift workers still have some time under their control. People who are on call all the time have none at all. For some, this is the condition of their employment. For others, they have made it a condition of being self-employed. And in some cases their entire life is under the control of their boss, their shareholders, their demanding customers. They are not free to commit themselves to anything.

Freemasonry by definition requires us to be free and not be slaves. We have to be free to make promises and to keep them. Masons rarely think about how central to our system the idea of making promises is, but what is an obligation if not a promise? And what did Hiram Abiff teach us if not that we should rather die than break our word? Yet society has been drifting along accepting more and more that we don't need to keep our promises, and because of the follower paradigm we have been drifting along with it. This goes hand in hand with surrendering control of your time, so that promising to do something or be somewhere at a particular time is always liable to be overruled by something else. Just imagine what we could accomplish if we adjusted our paradigm to one where we always keep our promises!

A Lodge meeting, as has often been noted, takes place in "a temple of peace, harmony and brotherly love", where "nothing is allowed to enter which has the remotest tendency to disturb the quietude of its pursuit"—a different world from the Matrix full of "the intoxicating buzzings of a million whining gadgets". We create that different world by sealing the Lodge room off both literally and symbolically. That

is what tiling is all about. I cannot count the number of young men (not older ones, mind you) who have told me that they find joy in Lodge because of this feeling that we are in a different, more peaceful, less frenetic world than the one outside.

But this amazing and wonderful experience is being threatened by the paradigm that we need to be like everyone else in order to be the mainstream club we imagine we ought to be. Part of that paradigm is the idea that we need to be inclusive all the time. Therefore we have meetings where the door is not guarded at all, and anyone can walk in, because we do not want the Tyler to be excluded from the meeting. That is why I have been in a Lodge where a pizza deliveryman burst into the Lodge room in the middle of the meeting asking if anyone had ordered a pizza. It is also threatened by having members with electronic devices buzzing away in their pockets or other connections to electronic communication. I have seen Lodges open Zoom links during the Lodge meeting, so as to be more inclusive and include people who are not there. But in the process we not only open our meeting to anyone who can hack these easily hackable communication devices but damage or destroy the different world that a tyled Lodge represents.

This is not about new technology. A hundred years ago, they had the technology which would allow the interruption of a Lodge meeting to allow messages to come from the outside. They had the technology which would allow them to include in some way the brothers that were not there. They only had to install a telephone in the Lodge room. They never did. They accepted that all communication with the outside should be mediated through a Tyler, and that if you could not be at the meeting physically, you could not partake in that special space which a Lodge creates.

There is a deep meaning for this, just as there is a deep meaning behind why we talk about and experience a special bond of friendship, and have traditions and rituals in which handshakes and getting into the personal space of other men feature prominently. "Hand to hand, I greet you like a brother"; the handshake is essential to the bond of brotherhood, and is one of the hallmarks of Masonry, one which has been imitated in other organizations—the scouting movement, for example. This is no coincidence. Physical contact with other people causes the release of a hormone called oxytocin. What does oxytocin do? Among other things, it is called the "trust hormone", and increases trust, bonding, empathy, generosity and social cohesion with the people you touch and share food with. The bond between parent and child so essential to the child's development, the bond between

husband and wife, and the bond between Brothers are all strengthened by the release of this hormone.

Looking at pictures doesn't do it. You don't get a shot of oxytocin from watching TV, or Zoom meetings, or conferences over the internet. You need to touch other people. Handshakes are not a curious but dispensable part of our Craft. They are essential to its continued existence.

And they are essential in society generally, for two reasons. One is that the drift toward living in the Matrix has created a true and very dangerous pandemic of loneliness in our society. That loneliness, the lack of human contact, can and does bring on depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and in some cases insanity. There is a reason why the introduction of social distancing was followed by a massive increase in drug overdoses. There is a reason why that people who go on killing sprees usually turn out to be loners with no close friends.

The second reason is that handshakes cause oxytocin release and that makes you both more trusting and more trustworthy with the people you shake hands with. Dr. Eric Uslander of the University of Maryland says,

Trust as a moral resource leads us to look beyond our own kind. It means that we downplay bad experiences and cooperate, even when we are not sure that others will oblige. . . . It leads people to take active roles in their community, to behave morally, and to compromise.

People who trust others aren't quite so ready to dismiss ideas they disagree with.

Part of the drive towards inclusiveness is that in the past fifty years there has been a continuous social pressure to eliminate all-male organizations of all kinds. We are now at a point that the only place a man can enjoy the exclusive company of other men apart from a Masonic Lodge is in a men's sports league or in prison. At the same time, masculinity is characterized as toxic, violent, and cruel. Yet the vast majority of men are masculine and are not violent or cruel but kind, loving and helpful. Masonry provides a forum to discuss life from a masculine viewpoint and encourage us to live like a gentlemen, with courtesy and honour. With a new paradigm we will not feel that we can sacrifice this almost unique quality of our organization—its devotion to the masculine viewpoint—on the altar of following the crowd, or the hope that we can get more members by destroying who we are.

Following the paradigm of bigness led us to dilute all our principles. The very first man I raised asked me, "We don't really have to believe in all this morality shit, do we?", and I realized with horror the terrible mistake we made in not blackballing him. When my son was thinking about joining the Craft, but was unsure if he really could pass the requirement of a belief in a Supreme Being, an older Mason told him, "Oh, just say you do. It doesn't matter." This made him question whether he wanted to join an organization where he was encouraged to lie. Indeed, finding that there is a discrepancy between what is said and what is done is one of the most significant factors I have found in the disenchantment of some younger Masons with the Craft.

Even Charity, so fundamental a principle to Masons, becomes diluted when we expect it to be big. Many charitable initiatives were started many years ago with the thought that the huge membership would voluntarily contribute funds to support them, but as the membership dwindled, the cart has begun pulling the horse. Rather than letting our desire for charity drive us to create charitable projects, the desire to maintain the charitable projects results in our doing anything to keep them going. So, we try to draw our funds from non-Masons, and make up for the lack of volunteers by hiring non-Masons to do our work, so that eventually Masons have very little to do with Masonic charities. Yet at the same time, I see groups of younger Masons starting new charitable initiatives which are small-scale, involve only Masons, and which are very

satisfactory to donors and recipients both.

So, let's abandon the paradigm which has done so much harm to our organization. Before the twentieth century Masonry made no bones about being an élite organization which was not part of the mainstream. Masonry has not been a part of the mainstream of our society for fifty years and more, yet we continue to act on a paradigm that is based on the illusion that it is so. Let us adopt instead a paradigm where our Lodges consist of a small number of committed, active, younger members, where our charity is at a scale appropriate to our memberships, and rises from our perception of need, not our desire to preserve an institution. Let us focus on what Masonry has to offer to the world: unusual if not unique things which men can't get anywhere else, and are desperately desired by young men right now, if they only knew where to find them: a haven from the outside world, the closely bonded fellowship of brothers who are closer than mere friends and the pursuit of gentlemanliness and right conduct.

*Ed' I am indebted to the JGW RWBro Uchman for contacting RWBro Jardine of the GL of Manitoba. This paper was presented at the Western Canada Conference, I am always waxing lyrical about how good well-researched papers should always see the light of day more than once.*

*RWBro Jardine, I should like to invite you to furnish me with any other papers that you have done and also any other articles you will compile in the future.*

