

# The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

## In this Issue

Viewpoint on Freemasonry	2
Personal note to a potential Candidate	3
Past Master	4
Hele & Three Great Lights	5
Old Tiler Talk	6
First Degree Terms	8
Three Hundred Years—a poem	9
Humour	10

## Greetings Brethren,

This month we have another varied assortments or your consideration.

Editor:

W. Bro. Alan Churchill PGStB

P.O. Box 235

Port Vila, Vanuatu

Tel: 678 55 64486

achurchill@vanuatu.com.vu

www.LOD8737.org

## Membership e-mail address list

A list of current members and their e-mail addresses is available on request.



## A View Point on Freemasonry

The majority of our membership derives its satisfaction by simply belonging. Most Masons do not feel a need to attend Lodge meetings or to be "active" in the life of our fraternity in order to reap the benefits of membership.

It is easy to conclude that this type of passive participation is a serious problem. We lament the fact that so few seem interested enough to attend meetings and even fewer are ready to take on leadership responsibilities.

At the same time we must never lose sight of the fact that the primary goal of Freemasonry in making Master Masons is to challenge men to achieve moral and ethical excellence in life and start him on his own Personal Spiritual Journey. This is why the Ceremonies of the degrees of Symbolic Masonry are the bedrock of Freemasonry.

By the time a man becomes a Master Mason, the vision and the expectations are (or should be) crystal clear! At that point, he is ushered to where he belongs – on the streets of life. It is there where his Masonry will make a difference. "In the long run," writes James Fallows, the author of *More Like Us*, "a society's strength depends on the way that ordinary people voluntarily behave."

This has been the message of Freemasonry down through the centuries. And it's our message to men today. It is what's inside a man that determines how he thinks and acts every day of his life, and that's what our fraternity is all about.

We must never allow ourselves to forget that it is the Masonic message, planted deep within a man that makes him a Mason. Not the attending of meetings; the holding of office; not having accolades piled upon him.

We are concerned about how he lives on Main Street, not how many times he attends lodge meetings. The power of Freemasonry rests in the mysterious fact that once a man has received the Light, he can never forget what is expected of him by, most importantly, himself!!

Of course we need to make our meetings more interesting & educational.

Of course we need to offer opportunities for Masonic service that make sense to our members.

Of course we need to foster more of a family atmosphere.

Of course we need to challenge men to shoulder the responsibilities of keeping our fraternity alive and active.

Nevertheless, it is the Masonic spirit in a man's heart and life that makes Masonry work. What does all this mean? Where is it taking us? We should be neither surprised nor shocked that a majority of our members achieve satisfaction from "simply belonging" to our fraternity. Their quiet pride and immense loyalty send a powerful message – Masonry is doing its work in their lives!

At the same time, our work is cut out and waiting for us: To make it possible for more men to discover the immense and profound mystery that is Freemasonry.

*From an Individual Masons Perspective adapted by V.W. Bro. Norman McEvoy from a paper by Francis G. Paul 33\* Northern Light, May 1990 Reproduced from Masonic Bulletin October 1990, Vol. LIII No. 2*

## A PERSONEL NOTE TO A POTENTIAL CANDIDATE

I understand that you would like to explore your interest in Freemasonry. I was hoping that we might arrange a personal chat, but time and circumstances seem to make that a long-term goal. And so I will revert to this means. First let me hope that you are settling in after graduation to life in the real world using the skill and ability that you possess in such ample form. Above all, that you are enjoying life.

Like many serious-minded, well-educated, well-read young men of your generation, many have expressed a curiosity and an interest in what Freemasonry is all about. I expect that you have explored some of the vast amount of information posted on the World Wide Web — both positive and negative — and probably discussed it with your friends. It is a matter not to be entered into lightly. Being a thoughtful young man with superior intelligence, you will have many questions. That fact, in itself, qualifies you as a potential candidate.

When I am asked what Freemasonry is about, the best answer I can give in simple terms is that it is a global fraternity — the oldest and largest in the world — an ancient institution rooted in tradition with modern relevance. In this sense it is a gentleman's philosophical society based on high standards of ethical behaviour and moral conduct. It provides a means of self-discovery through self-discipline: self-examination, self-analysis, self-realization, and self-fulfilment. As such it is personal and individual for every man engaged in his own quest for knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.

What do young men in the twenty-first century find attractive that draws them to the fraternity? Each year about 1300 candidates are initiated in Ontario. Having the privilege of meeting and talking with many of them, I have discovered that their motivation takes many forms, but falls into a relatively few categories: providing stability in a changing world, continuity in the midst of uncertainty, intellectual and spiritual stimulation, and male bonding. I feel certain that you would find many like-minded kindred spirits among the members of a Masonic lodge.

In our formative years we all need role models to inspire our own hopes and dreams. In modern society, these have become rather few and far between. There is scandal in government and business, sports figures are sullied by allegations of drug abuse or sexual indiscretion, respect for leaders in the church has been reduced by unacceptable moral behaviour, the family unit has disintegrated in the "me first" hedonistic atmosphere. Freemasons make serious promises to act according to the principles of virtue and morality that the Fraternity is based upon. No, none of us are gods or heroes, but there are role models among us worthy of emulation as men in society.

One of the first serious questions that concerns most young men is about religious belief. One of the great glories of Freemasonry is its universality. It professes no dogma, neither does it demand conformity to the specific belief of any religion. It does require what we term "a belief in a supreme being" — in other words, a greater power than mere mortals possess. This is left to each individual to define for himself. There are religious aspects to our Rites and Ceremonies, but the emphasis is on the spiritual rather than any established religion.

Unlike the established religions, each of which is based upon a prescribed body of dogmatic beliefs, which makes them exclusive, we are inclusive. The language of Freemasonry is careful to avoid a definition of God — preferring to use descriptive attributes: "Supreme Being," "Great Architect," "Grand Geometrician," "Most High." All discussion of sectarian religion and party politics is strictly forbidden in the lodge.

If you happened to read Dan Brown's latest novel, *The Secret Symbol*, he makes the point: "In a world where people are killing each other over whose definition of God is better, perhaps the Masons have it right." Brown is not a Freemason, but it could not have been said better. Our members include Jews, Christians, Muslims, Pagans, and every other degree and shade of belief, respecting each other in the universal brotherhood of man.

There is a long term commitment required to realize the benefits I have outlined. Freemasonry is known as a 'progressive science.' Its principal purpose is 'the cultivation and improvement of the human mind.' That is a life-long process. There are also certain financial obligations — initiation fee and annual dues. Members of the lodge are required to observe a dress code, usually a dark business suit. Formal dress is worn by the officers.

Having said all this, and based on a lifetime of involvement, and despite giving many speeches and writing many articles on the subject, I must admit that mere words cannot really explain the profound meaning of Masonry. It must be experienced to be understood and appreciated fully. Obviously, I would encourage you to pursue your interest, and I would feel privileged to discuss further any questions you might have.

Freemasonry has played a major role in my life. I truly believe that, with all my inadequacies as a person, it has contributed to making me a better man than I would otherwise have been. I have learned so much from the fraternal affection and example of the good and great men in the fraternity that I have been associated with now for more than a half century.

I look forward to hearing from you. I wish health, happiness, and satisfaction.

*From The Wandering Mason*

---



### **PAST MASTER**

As defined in the Book of Constitutions, the term Past Master means every brother regularly installed as a Master of the Lodge who has served in that capacity until the installation of his successor in office.

In the absence of the Master at a lodge meeting, the chair of Master shall be taken by the Immediate Past Master, or in his absence, the senior Past Master present.

The apron and jewel of a Past Master are the same as Master.

## HELE

The word 'hele' appearing in each of the 3 degrees obligations is derived from the Saxon word, 'helan' meaning to cover up or to hide. It is still used in some parts of England in a restricted way, the putting on of roofs being still called healing.

It is likely that 'hele' is used in addition to 'conceal and never reveal' for purposes of placing emphasis on the serious nature of Masonic obligations, with the further thought that it may have been introduced to form a sequence, called a rhyming assonance, which might be expected to make a special impression on the minds of the candidates.

The use of this word does, of course, help to attach a sense of antiquity to the ceremonies.

While the pronunciation of 'hele' in olden times was 'hail', modern day Masonic practice is to pronounce it as 'heel', rhyming with 'conceal' and 'reveal' as referred to above.

---

## LIGHTS, THREE GREAT

The 3 great lights in Freemasonry are the Volume of the Sacred Law, the square and the compasses.

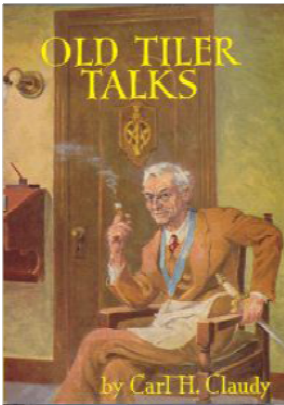
Masonic candidates have their attention drawn to these lights immediately after they have taken their obligation in the 1<sup>st</sup> degree when they are informed that 'the sacred writings are to rule and govern our faith, the square to regulate our actions and the compasses to keep us in due bounds with all mankind, particularly our brethren in Freemasonry'.

While the word 'light' has a number of interpretations, the great (and lesser lights) of Masonry are intended as emblematical guides. One dictionary meaning assists in this regard with 'light' defined as a keyword helping towards understanding.

For some years in early speculative times, only 3 lights (illuminated candles) were in general use. They had no specific title but Masonic authorities are agreed that they represented what are the present-day lesser lights.

The Bible, square and compasses were probably used at the same time but they had no formal status. It appears that the great and the lesser lights were not officially recognised as such until approximately the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.





## Old Tiler Talks— MASONIC TALK

"I'm seeking a little light," said the New Brother, sitting down by the Old Tiler and reaching for his cigar case.

"I think I have a match-" the Old Tiler felt in his pocket.

"I get you!" grinned the New Brother, "But that's not the light I am looking for. I want light on a Masonic subject."

"I don't pretend to be the only Masonic illuminant," answered the Old Tiler, "but if I have what you want, be sure I'll let it shine."

"Every now and then," began the New Brother, "I hear Masonic talk in public places. At a poker game in a club where I was recently, I heard one man say, 'Them you have passed, but me I shall not pass!' Lots of men say they will do this or that on the square or on the level. I run across 'and govern yourself accordingly' in print every now and then. Are such public quotations from Masonic work against good Masonic practice?"

"It seems to me your question isn't very complete," answered the Old Tiler.

"Why not?"

"It takes no account of motives. If you hear a man say that the stream rose and his house and his children were in danger, but a tree fell across the rushing waters, so that in His mercy God damned the stream, you have heard testimony to His glory. And if you hear some man couple the name of Deity with the word which begins with D, you listen to profanity. Same sounds in each case; the difference is, the motive, the meaning.

"If I declare that I will do what I say I will do 'on the square,' any one understands that I mean I will act honestly. If any hearer knows the expression is Masonic, surely the fraternity has not been injured. But if I say to a stranger, or within a stranger's hearing, 'these are certain Masonic words, and we use them in the degrees' and then repeat various phrases, I skirt dangerously close to breaking my obligation, and by the very fact that I seem to be careless with Masonic business, I am doing it harm!"

"That's very plain, said the New Brother. "Suppose some man wants to learn if I am a Mason? Suppose I meet a man with a Masonic pin and want to examine him Masonically? What about that?"

"You shouldn't want to do things which can't be done!" laughed the Old Tiler. You might, indeed, put the stranger through an examination as to what Masonry he knew, but it wouldn't be Masonic.

You have no right to constitute yourself an examining committee. That is the Master's prerogative. "Suppose he wants to talk Masonic secrets with me?"

"No Mason wants to talk Masonic secrets with any man he doesn't know to be a Mason! The man who wants to talk secrets, without having sat in lodge with you, or being vouched for to you, is either very new or a very poor Mason or no Mason at all!"

"But surely one can talk Masonry with strangers; if they wear the pin and have a card they are probably Masons, and-"

"Talk all the Masonry you want! But make sure it is the Masonic talk you could utter in the presence of your wife. Your true Mason won't want you to talk any other kind in public. Not long ago I was on a train, and behind me two men, neither of them Masons, arguing about Masonry. The things they knew which were not so wonderful! But I never opened my mouth. And the conductor, whom I have known for years as a Mason, heard them, and all he did was wink at me. We knew the truth; they didn't. What was the use of stirring up an argument?"

"What about giving some sign or word in a mixed company, so I can let the other fellows know I am a Mason?" asked the New Brother.

"Oh!" cried the Old Tiler. "You've been reading novels! You have an idea that when you go to a card party you should wiggle your ears or something, so that other Masons will know you are one, too! Nothing to that! Masonic recognitions are not for pleasure, but for need and use. You have been taught how to let others know, if you need to. You know how to recognize a Mason when he lets you know. But these are not for social gatherings, and the man who lards his speech with Masonic expressions is merely showing off."

"I asked for light; we could substitute you for one of the Lesser Lights," said the New Brother.

"If you mean that for a joke," the Old Tiler answered slowly, "I shall think my words were wasted."

"I didn't," protested the New Brother. "I was only trying to say, perhaps clumsily, that I thought you'd make a good Master!"

### **Many writers and thinkers have tried to define Freemasonry**

Many writers and thinkers have tried to define Freemasonry but it really defeats definition. It is too complex, too profound in conception, to easily expressed in words. Perhaps the simplest and best definition of all is the phrase "the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God." Our Masonic forefathers had an understanding of human needs and human aspirations. They may never have dreamed of the mindless computer which governs our lives, or the fission of matter which threatens our lives, but they understood human nature and what motivates the spirit of man. Thus from a simple process of using stone and mortar for building they progressed to the most important of life's functions, the building of character. -Louis L. Williams

## Explanation of some First Degree Terms

### POINARD

A **poniard** or **poignard** (Fr.) is a long, lightweight thrusting knife with a continuously tapering, acutely pointed blade and cross guard, historically worn by the upper class, noblemen, or the **knighthood**. Similar in design to a **parrying dagger**, the poniard emerged during the **Middle Ages** and was used during the **Renaissance** in Western Europe, particularly in France, Switzerland, and Italy.



### THE CABLE TOW



The Cable Tow is a symbol of the First Degree and represents the candidates bond to his guide. In some esoteric circles it represents the umbilical cord.

- **Source: MasonicDictionary.com**



### CABLE TOW'S LENGTH

Gädieke says that, "according to the ancient laws of Freemasonry, every brother must attend his Lodge if he is within the length of his cable tow." The old writers define the length of a cable tow, which they sometimes called a cable's length, to be three miles for an Entered Apprentice. But the expression is really symbolic, and as it was defined by the Baltimore Convention in 1842, means the scope of a man's reasonable ability.

- **Source: Mackey's Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry**

#### About 600 feet

A fathom is 6 feet, the length of rope a man can extend from open arm to open arm. The rope was lowered into the sea to measure depth. A cable length is the length of a ship's cable, **about 600 feet**. A nautical mile is 10 cable lengths, or 6,076 feet.



### *Three Hundred Years*

*Our Brethren of yesteryear went forth and led the way  
They laid a firm foundation that brought us to this day  
For here we stand three hundred years in joy and strong resolve  
Looking to the future and to how we may evolve  
Throughout time by fortunes grace good men themselves availed  
To forge a bond of fellowship, where others may have failed.  
Upright men of vision well chosen by their peers  
The cornerstones of Masonry that have lead us through the years  
Our strength is one another as history has shown  
By Brotherly love relief and truth our fraternity has grown  
Be you Nobleman or Craftsman be you rich or of despair  
All men are treated equal when meeting on the square  
This year of celebration is a time to contemplate  
And look toward to the future as worldwide we celebrate  
So let us all with one accord as we united stand  
Go forth and face tomorrow and extend a welcome hand  
May the mystery of the unsaid word and the tokens we bestow  
And the guarded privileges that we share everywhere we go  
Be the template that we follow and to which all of us adheres  
So our brethren of tomorrow may hail another hundred years.*

Written by W. Bro. Joe Bau

#### **Lodge Birthdays**

<b>Ross McDonald</b>	<b>35 (J)</b>
<b>Jean-Luc Bador</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Maurice Masuino</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Geoff Elvy</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Dan Garrigan</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Ollie McArthur</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Calvin Fitzpatrick</b>	<b>1</b>

#### **News from the South**

All quiet on the Southern front this month!

We are well-versed in Initiation ceremonies by now with, all being well in September, we will have 5 EAs sitting on the benches. When did that last happen?

## Humour

### **EATING IN THE FIFTIES and SIXTIES**

Pasta was not eaten in Australia.

Curry was a surname.

A takeaway was a mathematical problem.

A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.

All potato crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not.

Rice was only eaten as a milk pudding.

Calamari was called squid and we used it as fish bait.

A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining.

Brown bread was something only poor people ate.

Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking.

Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green.

Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold. Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.

Fish didn't have fingers in those days.

Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi.

None of us had ever heard of yogurt.

Healthy food consisted of anything edible.

People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy.

Indian restaurants were only found in India.

Cooking outside was called camping.