



The Overy Papers

Number 23 - Take it to the Limit

Fraternal Greetings Brethren,

I must thank our Grand Master Most Worshipful Brother Ian Bowman for the inspiration of this paper and his words are in **BOLD RED**.

On the 18 June this year of 2016 our new Grand Master gave his Installation Address. Two hundred and ninety nine years earlier four small Masonic Lodges got together in London and decided to form the first Grand Lodge and this was the start of organized Freemasonry that we know today.

Many years have passed between the two occasions and the tide of our fraternity has ebbed and flowed with good times and lean times but by standing by our Landmarks we have survived.

Today our lodge has the opportunity to move forward. We have 14 new members plus a few more that have affiliated with us. As you all know myself and another brother have been tasked by the Worshipful Master to create a "**Committee of Lodge Development**" and to try and bring back a bit of the life force Abbotsford Lodge had a good few years ago.

So let us strive to get to the top of that mountain that the Grand Master has symbolically pointed us to.

To Quote the Grand Masters address:

"While some may soar to reach the summit, others will have to climb. It matters not, for once there; the view is just the same."

I feel that my brother is the one who will fly to the top and I will be the one that takes the longer route.

Not that it matters but it does recall that old joke "I may be slower with my feet on the ground but at least I won't get sucked into the engine of a Boeing 747 either." But I digress.

One of our older brothers, RWBro. Con Neudorf, said we should revitalize the Lodge committees to make sure we hold onto the new members by making the lodge more active and keep the members more interested in taking part in our lodge. So with the support of the Worshipful Master we have formed a Committee of Lodge Development. We plan to list the Committees on a "Trestle Board Style" monthly Notice and prepare a Job Description for each of the Committees.

We have started with the "**Prospective Candidate Committee**" who will make the initial contact with a person who has shown an interest and they will report back to the Lodge on completion.

We plan to use the Six Steps to Initiation to make sure all prospective members fully understand who we are and what our aspirations are. This way we only get the applicants that understand what we do and what we aspire to be. It is important only those who are really interested in having a lifetime commitment in our fraternity are chosen.

This will lead to the "**Membership, Candidate Coaching and Mentoring Committee**" who will carry out the next interview using two sponsors. If the applicant is acceptable they will ensure that after his successful vote that the new applicant is provided with a Mentor. This mentor will be his guide and support as he passes through the three degrees.

To use the Grand Masters comment:

"This will mean lodges once again, though fewer in number, will be more evenly populated, based on quality and a newly inspired renaissance of pride, interest and compassion."

This brings me to those members we already have that are no longer active. We realize that age, distance and similar problems often exist and we would like to help with an active "**Transport Committee**", if you want to help please, just ask.

I also know that some members could be embarrassed because they are worried that making a mistake with the signs for example, will be frowned upon. They cannot remember them and do not wish to make a fool of themselves.

In that case please sit near me and we will do them together, just don't copy me as I still have problems with the due guard, as I am frequently reminded.

Maybe you could come to the Lodge practices and use it as an Aide Memoir, that's French you know to those who did not know we are bi-lingual. or what about we have a special practice called The Rusty Gavel. We are open to ideas.

"This will not happen on its own, and it will not happen by chance. It will happen through a consolidated effort by all the members of our Lodge.

To quote the Grand Master once more.

"This will though, come at a cost. This will require us to look at our "brand". In the words of Robert Burns, "to see ourselves as others see us." To see ourselves as the public sees us and our appearance in public in the twenty-first century".

So on November 11 at 3:30 we will be doing the ceremony of the Empty Chair at the Reach Gallery Museum in Abbotsford. This is our chance to let our City know that we are still here as we have been through two World Wars. Come and join us for a short hour and let us remember those members, who will be joining us only in spirit only, because they gave their all. Surely it is not a lot to ask.

As we work down the list of Committees we hope it will encourage everyone do his bit. We do need the help of everyone to make this work. We are not asking much just what was explained to you at your initiation.

Of course some things may need to be changed and some may not be happy with them all but **"It is do-able, brethren and remember, a bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make the turn.** Let's not fail to make that turn especially if it is in the best interest of our lodge.

It will not be done overnight and it definitely will not be done by just us two but we will make every effort to make it work and that means every member of the Lodge must join in, even, if like RWBro. Con Neudorf and RWBro. Dick Savage, it is just with encouragement. Let us face it those two keep reminding us how many Brothers travelled South to our sister lodge in years gone by. I feel that is an indication of what our lodge was like and what our goal should be. By the way our next meeting is at our sister Lodge, Burlington United located in Sedrow Whoolley, Washington so get planning and let us make a splash.

And finally in the Grand Masters Words, **lets have fun along the way.**

Thank you and whatever I say may we continue in peace and harmony.

Bro. Bill Overy

Member of the Education Committee of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon.