



Grand Lodge Bulletin

APRIL

18, 19, & 20,

1975



BANFF
SCHOOL
OF
FINE
ARTS

THEME – Masonry, the Mason, and the permissive society.

- A separate **SCHOOL FOR ORGANISTS** will be conducted by V.W. Bro. Harry Farmer.
- The serving of **MEALS** has been **STREAMLINED** (There is an extra meal this year). Everything will be cafeteria style to iron out a few of the past wrinkles.
- **ADVANCE REGISTRATION** means that there will be no delay for paper work upon your arrival. You simply pick up your key and walk in.
- **REGISTRATIONS** are acceptable at any time . . . the sooner the better. The \$32 (for six meals and two nights) is completely refundable and transferable at any time. The Registration fee of \$5 is also refundable up to 20th of March.
- The **ACCOMMODATION FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS** is much improved by the use of the newly designed for private music cabins. Some 38 of these little cabins are clustered conveniently about the main building; – just steps away.
- The weekend is a **BARGAIN**. Because the costs have been held in line, it is now **CHEAPER TO ATTEND** than to stay at home.
- Please note somewhere on your **REGISTRATION CARD** if you don't need sleeping accommodation at the school. Otherwise the Committee will be holding an un-used room in your name while overflow visitors may find themselves bunked downtown.
- Many of those difficult-to-find **BOOKS ON FREEMASONRY** will be available at the bookstore, and others conveniently ordered for you.
- **UPCOMING OFFICERS PARTICULARLY** are reminded that this school for officers is designed largely to help them with their job ahead.
- The **THEME** – "Masonry, the Mason and the Permissive Society" could hardly be more **TIMELY** in this period of social unrest. It may provide some answers for those pointed questions we are all being asked today.
- The **THEME SPEAKERS** – M.W. Bro. J. S. Wood and W. Bro. Hugh Young were chosen not for their experience and service alone, but for their ability to convey a message that will be of real value to us all.

MASONIC SPRING WORKSHOP WEEK-END AGENDA

FRIDAY, APRIL 18th, 1975

3:00 P.M. onwards —

Registration, Locate Discussion Rooms and get acquainted at the Books and Sales in the Auditorium of the Administration Building.

6:30 P.M. —

Supper (Cafeteria Style)

8:45 P.M. —

Announcements — Eric Harvey Theatre

9:00 P.M. —

Theme Address — Eric Harvey Theatre

9:45 - 10:30 P.M. —

Bookstore — Administration Building Auditorium
Coffee will be served.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19th, 1975

7:00 A.M. —

Breakfast (Cafeteria Style)

9:00 - 10:00 A.M. —

Discussion Groups

10:15 - 11:30 A.M. —

Schools of Instruction

11:45 A.M. —

Lunch

2:00 - 3:15 P.M. —

Schools of Instruction

3:30 - 4:30 P.M. —

Public Speaking School — Eric Harvey Theatre

5:30 P.M. —

Supper

7:30 P.M. —

Theme Address

8:45 P.M. —

Discussion Groups

9:45 P.M. —

Bookstore — Auditorium, Administration Building
Coffee will be served.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20th, 1975

8:00 A.M. —

Breakfast

9:45 A.M. —

Final Announcements

10:00 A.M. —

Devotional Service (Rev. Philip W. Mayfield)

11:00 A.M. —

Lunch

THEME SPEAKERS

JAMES SUTHERLAND WOODS

James Sutherland Woods was born in Edmonton, Alberta, on January 2nd, 1921. He received his education in Edmonton. Before completing his course for a B.A. Degree he joined the Canadian Army and served with the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in the United Kingdom and the Mediterranean theatre. On his discharge from military service he completed his B.A. and then studied law, obtaining his LL.B. in 1950. He was married to Jennie Kathleen Salamandick of Vegreville, Alberta in 1948 and they have four children. He is now a partner in its successor firm, Saucier, Jones, and Associates.

M.W. Bro. Woods was initiated into masonry in Zetland Lodge No. 83 G.R.A. on September 20th, 1956. He became the Worshipful Master of Zetland Lodge in 1962. He served the Grand Lodge of Alberta on a variety of committees over the years and in 1968 was elected

HUGH YOUNG

Hugh Young born 14th November, 1944 at Motherwell, Scotland.

Initiated into Masonry in Lodge St. Clair, No. 427, Grand Lodge of Scotland, in 1965.

Came to Canada December, 1966 and affiliated with Concord Lodge No. 124, G.R.A.

Is Worshipful Master of Concord Lodge.

Is a Sergeant in Calgary City Police working in the Planning and Development Section.

Married Margaret 1966.

2 Daughters, Sharon 4, Tanya 2.

Junior Grand Warden. He was installed as Grand Master of Masons in Alberta in 1971.

SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION

Instructors for the Schools of Instruction are, this year, from Lethbridge and District, the first time they have been selected from other than Calgary or Edmonton.

Six Schools of Instruction will outline the duties and responsibilities of the following:

1. Past Masters and Masters
2. Wardens
3. Secretary-Treasurers and Registrars
4. Deacons
5. Appointed Officers, other than Deacons
6. Master Mason

One of the two instructional periods in each school will use overhead projectors to illustrate the suggested forms for planning any officers year.

Because of interest and demand the School on Public Speaking will be repeated. Brothers Ralph Beckoff and Bob Dickey have kindly consented to continue the excellent job they started last year.

A. S. Hovan

Chairman, Schools of Instruction

DISCUSSION GROUPS

One of the primary reasons for the enormous, continuing success of our famous Workshop in beautiful Banff is the enjoyment of discussing Masonic matters with Brethren from widely dispersed Lodges, uninhibited. We bring out our "peculiar" problems only to find them "prevalent" problems and usually put together enough ideas to go back to our Lodges with greater hope of solving them or at least improving the situation.

For that reason it is felt that the discussion group sessions should not be restricted to the subject of the Theme Speaker's addresses.

This year, new facilities are available for almost all discussion groups. Individual cabins conveniently arranged around the Eric Harvey Theatre will provide a rustic, intimate atmosphere to accommodate groups of about ten for private, uninterrupted conversation.

Instead of the usual Friday evening discussion groups this period will be devoted to fellowship over

coffee and dough-nuts around the book store.

I am indeed fortunate to have three capable Area Leaders who are recruiting discussion group leaders to train and organize. If you wish to offer your services for this or future years, please contact one of the following Brethren: Bob Campbell, Edmonton 455-6682; Curly Foster, Olds 226-6080; Ron Powell, Calgary 271-6286. They will be delighted to record your name, as will I, Myron Lusk, Edmonton 489-8649.

We are all looking forward to meeting you in April!

LET'S TRY FREEMASONRY

G. R. Sterling, Grand Master

Whither are we travelling? is a question we often hear asked about FREEMASONRY.

Masonry, to me, does not have to have the new bright ideas advocated today. If we have strayed from the traditional path, and I believe in many cases we have, it is time we were moving back to the main line while yet there's time. We must restore the prestige and respect, the interest, loyalty and devotion that once was ours.

It has been said that the Masonic Gimick Manufacturing Company Unlimited is working overtime devising stunts to "modernize" Freemasonry, to put it in line with ten thousand other organizations that clamour for attention.

Such as - Abandon the "free will and accord" rule which placed our Craft far above the mine run of societies, and permit outright solicitation.

Ape the service clubs, get busy on "projects" galore.

Go into the organized do-good business in a big way. Find an area of the human body that has not been exploited. Exploit it. Set a quota, have a kickoff dinner, ring door bells.

Hire press agents to tell the world, like little Jack Horner, what great boys we are. ("Masonry is not getting its proper share of publicity", it is heard said even by Grand Masters).

Imitate Hollywood. Stage an extravaganza. Bring in all the groups that ever fancied themselves remotely related to Freemasonry.

Let Freemasonry, "take a position" on public issues of the day. Stand up and be counted (assuming of course, that the position our Craft takes is in line with our pet prejudices).

Go out for materialism. Raise money, spend it. Build Temples, institutions, subsidize, endow, whatever can be had by writing a cheque, get it.

Centralize, centralize, centralize. Pattern Freemasonry after bureaucracy. Let nothing be done modestly by an individual or a Lodge; do everything on a Provincial or national level, in the super-duper way. Make a great to-do about local self-government, but accept no local self-responsibility.

BRETHREN, I believe we have suggested and tried everything, but what Freemasonry really is. Why does not someone suggest we try FREEMASONRY.

Looking at the overall picture of Freemasonry candidly and thoughtfully the greatest single need for our Craft today is a membership with a better understanding of what our Fraternity

is, and especially what it is not.

What then is Freemasonry? What are its aims and objectives? What does it do?

Probably we could look for the answer in the Book of Books that lies open on our Altar. You remember in the book of Kings, Elijah was languishing in a Cave, and was beginning to believe that he was the only one who had remained faithful to his trust. By DIVINE command he was told to stand on the top of the mountain and the story tells us, in the First Book of Kings, what happened: "And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice." What does this mean to us today? I believe that this story teaches us that Freemasonry erects its Temples within the hearts of men. Even though we may not understand all we are saying when we declare our Masonic principles.

Our direction is not to the mass of people in our degrees, but to the Mason being initiated. Not a word is said about mass action, or pressure groups. There are no great undertakings to cure the ills of the world by making everyone over to fit a pattern of our own design.

More than anything else today, the world yearns for that same kind of gentle, healing influence at work in the hearts of men. The Masonic Institution, which sometimes is looked upon with scorn because it does not operate in the conventional manner, is prepared to bear witness to the fact that the conventional way of our age leaves much to be desired, and stand upon its own majestic affirmation that the way to change human systems is to change human lives.

The wise and venerable ROSCOE POUND, one of our most recent scholars of Masonic Jurisprudence and for many years Dean of Law in Harvard University, a noted authority on everything Masonic, put it this way, "FREEMASONRY HAS MORE TO OFFER THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, THAN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY HAS TO OFFER FREEMASONRY".

WHITHER THEN ARE WE TRAVELLING?

My faith in the masonic worth of the Ancient Craft is unshaken. I am convinced the solution to Freemasonry's problem is FREEMASONRY.

WHY NOT TRY IT?

MASONIC PHILOSOPHY: AN OVERVIEW

W. Bro. R. G. Aberdeen (63)

(IN TWO PARTS)

PART 1: Understanding Philosophy

"... consider yourself called upon to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge."

- Charge to Newly Initiated Candidate Masonic knowledge is "... veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." To advance in Masonic knowledge, then, one might think that all he has to do is come to understand the meanings of our allegories and symbols. Most Masons can understand the general interpretations of our symbols that are set forth in our rituals, the Mentor Plan and our vast collection of books, papers and articles. Many of our members see no need to go any further, but Bro. H. L. Haywood, a distinguished Masonic writer, tells us emphatically that:

"One of the greatest purposes of Freemasonry is to set a man to the task of understanding these symbols for himself."

You see, brethren, the symbols can be interpreted for you by others, but no one can understand them for you - you have to understand them for yourself.

The Ashlars "... lie open in the Lodge for the brethren to moralize on." One definition of 'moralize' is 'philosophize'. The dictionary defines a philosopher as "a lover of wisdom"; "one who studies philosophy, or lives according to its rules". This indicates that the specific concern of the individual member should be with the value he can derive as a man and a Mason by developing from the philosophy of Freemasonry a personal code by which to guide the course of his life.

What is the philosophy of Masonry? The Masonic Bible published by Holman contains this description:

"... The philosophical basis of Masonry ... involves the history of its origin, an inquiry into the ideas that lie at its base, an investigation of its peculiar form, an analytical study of its several degrees, and a development of the ideas which are illustrated by its ritualistic emblems, myths and veiled allegories and which speak through its sublime system of symbols."

You see, philosophy is largely a matter of meanings and the analysis of meanings — it insists, therefore, that we learn to view all alternatives.

Many philosophers of renown have tried to explain more clearly the objectives, methods of inquiry and scope of philosophy. Although they disagree on many aspects, most do agree that philosophy does have the task of explaining the meaning of the major concepts we use in understanding our experiences and clarifying the conditions of responsible moral judgement. Philosophers have tried many definitions of philosophy: "the study of the universe and man's place in it"; the quest for knowledge of the first or ultimate principles of things"; here's one in a different style, "a stubborn attempt to think clearly"; and another which is particularly meaningful, "a questioning of answers rather than an answering of questions". In the Lodge Plan for Masonic Education we read that Masonry's teaching method (symbolism) "... makes a Mason study and learn for himself, forces him to search out the truth, ... so that the very act of learning is in itself of great educational value." Philosophy, then, has come to mean the search for truth, not merely the possession of knowledge.

Truth, of course, is one of our fundamental principles, but what exactly do we mean by truth? Truth consists in stating the actual fact. When we search for ultimate truth, in the philosophical sense, we must distinguish between reality and dogmas and opinions. We tend to call our firm beliefs 'truths' without knowing if they are, in fact, the case. We may believe with absolute conviction that a thing is true, but what we believe may be wrong. How do we prove that our belief is true? To determine whether a thing is true or false we must apply certain tests. Physical objects can be identified with a high degree of certainty, things that we can see, touch, smell, hear and taste. Combining these tests with our previous experience, we may be able to conclude that what we believe the object to be is actually the case. This seems obvious but how do you prove the truth of a religious belief? How do you prove that your personal standard of morality is the only right one?

We rely heavily on the sense of sight to provide the basic evidence for truth in those things with which we come in daily contact. Perhaps it's because of this that we often say we are seeking for light. To illumine the mind is to perceive truth. We find it said that "light comes from God." Can we now read new meaning into the phrase, "And God said, 'Let there be light' — and there was light." Light has become synonymous with truth and knowledge, and darkness with falsehood and ignorance. It is, therefore, a fundamental symbol of Freemasonry, and contains within itself the very essence of the speculative science. Search for truth and you become a philosopher.

There are several branches of philosophy but the two which seem to encompass what we call Masonic philosophy are Metaphysical (or Spiritual) and Moral Philosophy. In the twelfth paper of The Lodge Plan for Masonic Education, our 'Little Brown Book', the teachings of Masonry are discussed briefly. We are reminded that Masonry is dedicated to the Great Architect of the Universe and that:

"... this philosophy of Masonry, like all else in its teaching, is not set forth in written creeds or in any other form of words; the Mason must come upon it for himself and put it in such form as will satisfy his own mind."

With our vast libraries of thousands of Masonic books and papers, how can we say that Masonic philosophy and teachings are "... not set forth in ... words?"

Language is the instrument we use in the formation and communication of ideas. Words and language are the tools of philosophers. Wittgenstein, an influential philosopher who died only about twenty years ago, put forward what some people considered to be a radical thesis. He said:

"The problems of philosophers arise in consequence of fundamental errors in the use of language".

The difficulty is that when you transmit a thought, you use words which seem clear to you but which may not hold exactly the same meaning for your listener. The words we use in communicating thoughts, ideas, feelings, are imperfect tools and are often vague or uncertain in meaning. Every philosopher since the days of Plato and Socrates has struggled with the problem of the precise meanings and definitions of words, which we call 'semantics'.

The authors of the rituals which we use probably chose their words and phrases with great care in order to convey their meanings with utmost clarity. Certainly the rituals have been brought up to date from time to time, but still many Masons of today have difficulty in comprehending what our forefathers found so obvious. When we begin to learn the Work, many passages seem difficult and lacking in continuity. But as the original meanings sink in, they become clear and fluid. The principles of Freemasonry are there, in words and symbols. It only remains for us to study them, to view them from all angles, to categorize them and put them in usable form: to come to understand them for ourselves.

When the candidate comes to our door he already holds general views on the universe which guide his actions, but those views may be based on assumptions and beliefs of uncertain validity. By a careful study of Masonic principles his views and values may be improved and because of this, we hope, he will become a better person. To discover the real meaning of Masonry, the secret of the Masonic Art, the dedicated Mason must philosophize on its teachings, that is, he must question, examine and assess the application to his own life of the principles which Masonry presents.

The teachings of Masonry seem to be primarily concerned with the guiding influence of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul, and with the necessity of morality. In PART 2: A Questioning of Answers, we will examine those aspects of Masonic philosophy more closely.