

THE GRAND EAST

MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER

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Achieving Harmony In Diversity

VOLUME 2
ISSUE 2
JUL 2025

Grand Master's Message

Brethren,

It has been a month since my installation as Grand Master, and it has been an incredible experience so far. Alongside the Grand Line, we had the privilege of representing the Grand Lodge of Manitoba at the Annual Communications of the Grand Lodges of Alberta, North Dakota, British Columbia and Yukon, and Saskatchewan.

These travels have been both enriching and inspiring. I witnessed firsthand the unwavering dedication and engagement of our fellow Brethren in these Jurisdictions. One presentation, in particular, left a lasting impression on me — a heartfelt reflection on civility.

The Brother who delivered it spoke of how civility is sadly fading from modern society. The virtues of gallantry, cordiality, courtesy, and respect — once foundational moral values — are increasingly overshadowed by self-interest, personal gain, and glorification. He reminded us that the world needs Freemasonry now more than ever.

As Freemasons, we must be beacons of justness, equality, dignity, and respect. Through our Craft, we have the tools to reignite the flickering light of humanity. We are taught the purest principles of morality and virtue — and we must live them, both inside and outside the Lodge.

Brethren, let us not be content with merely increasing our numbers. Let us instead strive for membership of the highest standard. Let our Lodges be places where civility is not only practiced but lived — and let that spirit radiate outward into the world around us.

May you all enjoy a restful and meaningful summer with your families. I look forward to seeing you again in September.

Fraternally,
MWB Rey Galapon
Grand Master 2025–2026
Grand Lodge of Manitoba

Achieving Harmony in Diversity



Grand Lodge Officers and District Deputy Grand Masters 2025-2026

Elected Officers

Grand Master	MW Bro. Rey Galapon (136)
IPGM	MW Bro. Emad Bisharat (3)
Deputy Grand Master	RW Bro. Gord Greasley (3)
Sr. Grand Warden	RW Bro. Tim Klassen (154)
Jr. Grand Warden	RW Bro. Jeff Chartrand (180/189)
Grand Treasurer	RW Bro. Rey Laferriere (12)
Grand D of C	RW Bro. Villarico Villarin (136)

Temporarily Appointed by the GM

Grand Secretary	MW Bro. Kris Goodmanson (136)
Grand Librarian	RW Bro. Brian Rountree (174)
Grand Archivist	W Bro. Trevor Millar (1) *GM Appointed
Grand Chaplain	RW Bro. Dennis Henney (182)
Grand Historian	RW Bro. Ted Yorke (183)

Appointed by the Grand Master

Grand Lodge Education Officer	VW Bro. Jeff Price (186)
JRC Evans Lecturer	VW Bro. Michael Hall (136)
Sr. Grand Deacon	VW Bro. Carlos Alt (25)
Jr. Grand Deacon	VW Bro. Donico Estanislao (68)
Grand Organist	VW Bro. Gordon MacDonald (4)
Sr. Grand Stewart	VW Bro. Mark Mariano (168)
Jr. Grand Stewart	VW Bro. Josel Sta. Ana (154)
Gr. Sword Bearer	VW Bro. Rolan Tan (154/145/192)
Gr. Standard Bearer	VW Bro. Cocoy Borja (168)
Grand Pursuivant	VW Bro. Roland Mendez (192)
Grand Piper	VW Bro. Troy Blair (1)
Grand Tyler	VW Bro. Brian Pareja (62)

District Deputy Grand Masters

First Masonic District	RW Bro. John Drew (145)
Tenth Masonic District	RW Bro. David Corder (112)
Thirteenth Masonic District	RW Bro. Jose Casares (111/192)
Assiniboine Masonic District	RW Bro. Elmar Quitiong (168)
Parkland Masonic District	RW Bro. Ryan McKay (14)
Unity Masonic District	RW Bro. Victor Lopes (127)
Grand Master's Area	RW Bro. Bryan Cruda (174)

Grand Master's Itinerary 2025-2026

DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT	LODGE/ORG	LOCATION
Jul 5, 2025	Sat	10:00 AM	DDGM Training Session	GLM	Boardroom MMT
Jul 12, 2025	Sat	10:00 AM	Selkirk Biz Parade		Selkirk MB
Jul 15 - 17, 2025	Tues/Thurs		GL CAN/ON - ANCOM	GL CAN/ON	Toronto ON
Jul 24 - 27, 2025	Tues/Thurs		Austin Thresherman (Parade Sat)	GLM	Austin MB
Jul 30, 2025	Wed	10:30 AM	Tuscan Lodge	GLM	MMT - 420 Corydon
Aug 2, 2025	Sat	9:00 AM	Dauphin Parade		Dauphin MB
Aug 4, 2025	Mon	9:00 AM	Gimli (Parade - Islandigadaran)		Gimli MB
Aug 5, 2025	Tues	5:30/6:00	Sphinx Temple - Supreme Queen - Dinner	Sphinx	MMT - 420 Corydon
Aug 9, 2025	Sat		Peace Garden - Hands/Border		Boissevain MB
		1:00 PM	Prince of Wales / Meet & BBQ	P/Wales #14	Minnedosa MB
Aug 16 - 17, 2025	Sat/Sun		Filipino Street Festival		Maples Community Club
Aug 23, 2025	Sat		Morden Parade		Morden MB
			Corn/Apple Festival Parade		
Sept 13 - 14, 2025			Northern Manitoba Trip		
Sept 18 - 20, 2025	Thur/Fr/Sat		GL IOWA - ANCOM	GL IOWA	Sioux City, IA
Sept 27, 2025	Sat		Grand Master Golf Tournament		KP Golf Course
Oct 6, 2025	Mon	7:00 PM	Sturgeon Creek Lodge #145	SCL#145	Sturgeon Creek Lodge
Oct 18, 2025	Sat		Potentate's Ball	Khartum	TBD
Oct 23 - 25, 2025	Thur/Sun		GL California - ANCOM	GL Cal	San Francisco CA
Nov 1, 2025	Sat		Hands Across the Border		Brandon MB
Nov 28, 2025	Fri	7:00 PM	Fil-Can Cabletow Lodge #189	FCCL#189	EKMT - 205 Kimberly
Dec 14, 2025	Sun	1-4:00 PM	GM/GLM Christmas Gathering	GLM	MMT - 420 Corydon
Feb 12 - 18, 2025			Conf. GMs & G/Sec		Chicago, USA
Apr 10 - 11, 2025	Fri/Sat		All Canada Conference	GLM	TBD
Apr 12 - 24, 2025			GL Philippines - ANCOM & Visit	GL - Phils.	Philippines

The Cremation of Sam McGee

By Robert W. Service

*There are strange things done in the midnight sun
By the men who toil for gold;
The Arctic trails have their secret tales
That would make your blood run cold;
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,
But the queerest they ever did see
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebargie
I cremated Sam McGee.*

Now Sam McGee was from Tennessee, where the cotton blooms and blows.
Why he left his home in the South to roam 'round the Pole, God only knows.
He was always cold, but the land of gold seemed to hold him like a spell;
Though he'd often say in his homely way that "he'd sooner live in hell."

On a Christmas Day we were mushing our way over the Dawson trail.
Talk of your cold! through the parka's fold it stabbed like a driven nail.
If our eyes we'd close, then the lashes froze till sometimes we couldn't see;
It wasn't much fun, but the only one to whimper was Sam McGee.

And that very night, as we lay packed tight in our robes beneath the snow,
And the dogs were fed, and the stars o'erhead were dancing heel and toe,
He turned to me, and "Cap," says he, "I'll cash in this trip, I guess;
And if I do, I'm asking that you won't refuse my last request."

Well, he seemed so low that I couldn't say no; then he says with a sort of moan:
"It's the cursed cold, and it's got right hold till I'm chilled clean through to the bone.
Yet 'tain't being dead—it's my awful dread of the icy grave that pains;
So I want you to swear that, foul or fair, you'll cremate my last remains."

A pal's last need is a thing to heed, so I swore I would not fail;
And we started on at the streak of dawn; but God! he looked ghastly pale.
He crouched on the sleigh, and he raved all day of his home in Tennessee;
And before nightfall a corpse was all that was left of Sam McGee.

There wasn't a breath in that land of death, and I hurried, horror-driven,
With a corpse half hid that I couldn't get rid, because of a promise given;
It was lashed to the sleigh, and it seemed to say: "You may tax your brawn and brains,
But you promised true, and it's up to you to cremate those last remains."

Now a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has its own stern code.
In the days to come, though my lips were dumb, in my heart how I cursed that load.
In the long, long night, by the lone firelight, while the huskies, round in a ring,
Howled out their woes to the homeless snows— O God! how I loathed the thing.

And every day that quiet clay seemed to heavy and heavier grow;
And on I went, though the dogs were spent and the grub was getting low;
The trail was bad, and I felt half mad, but I swore I would not give in;
And I'd often sing to the hateful thing, and it hearkened with a grin.

Till I came to the marge of Lake Lebarge, and a derelict there lay;
It was jammed in the ice, but I saw in a trice it was called the "Alice May."
And I looked at it, and I thought a bit, and I looked at my frozen chum;
Then "Here," said I, with a sudden cry, "is my cre-ma-tor-eum."

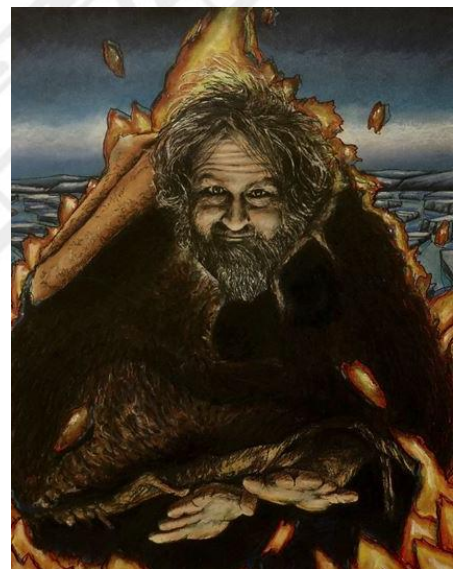
Some planks I tore from the cabin floor, and I lit the boiler fire;
Some coal I found that was lying around, and I heaped the fuel higher;
The flames just soared, and the furnace roared—such a blaze you seldom see;
And I burrowed a hole in the glowing coal, and I stuffed in Sam McGee.

Then I made a hike, for I didn't like to hear him sizzle so;
And the heavens scowled, and the huskies howled, and the wind began to blow.
It was icy cold, but the hot sweat rolled down my cheeks, and I don't know why;
And the greasy smoke in an inky cloak went streaking down the sky.

I do not know how long in the snow I wrestled with grisly fear;
But the stars came out and they danced about ere again I ventured near;
I was sick with dread, but I bravely said: "I'll just take a peep inside.
I guess he's cooked, and it's time I looked"; ... then the door I opened wide.

And there sat Sam, looking cool and calm, in the heart of the furnace roar;
And he wore a smile you could see a mile, and he said: "Please close that door.
It's fine in here, but I greatly fear you'll let in the cold and storm—
Since I left Plumtree, down in Tennessee, it's the first time I've been warm."

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Innovation in Freemasonry

Source: Today in Masonic History (author unknown)

Additions in BLUE by V.W. Bro. Barry D. Thom

Innovation within Freemasonry can be something of a dirty word. It conjures up thoughts of changing how a lodge functions from the comfortable, and often ineffective, processes the lodge has been using for generations. Quite often someone will point out "it is in no man's power to make innovations in the system of Freemasonry".

The truth is Freemasonry has been undergoing innovations for centuries and it is those innovations which kept the fraternity alive and moving forward. Although no one is 100% sure how Speculative Freemasonry began, the most commonly held belief is it came from the Guilds of the middle ages.

It seems that there were two levels of lodges around that time. There were Quarry lodges and Guild lodges. The English civil war lasted for 9 years and ended in 1651. The people now had time to look for social outlets, thus came the 'age of enlightenment'. Gentlemen of nobility, wealth and knowledge were attracted to the Guild lodges with their fascination of architectural structures. In my opinion, I doubt that the illiterate stone Mason would be welcomed in a Guild lodge? But the Master Mason (employer) would be?

Making the assumption this is true, the fact Speculative Freemasonry arose, is in itself an innovation. Looking back we begin to see the first signs of Speculative Masons coming into existence around the late 16th, early 17th century. At the same time there was a fundamental shift in the world. As the Enlightenment began education started to be more common. It was no longer just for the clergy or the elite, more people began to learn mathematics and reading. This put the guilds, who were a source of education for those lucky few, in a position where they could be losing their influence. What appears to happen is the lodges of the time innovated, they brought in non-operative masons into their lodges. Probably many were patrons who had ordered buildings constructed.

Now this is pure speculation used only to illustrate the idea of innovation, the change from the norm, can be healthy and effective for the fraternity and still not damage the 'system of Freemasonry'. Even the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717 was an innovation. Up to its creation the idea of a Grand Lodge had not taken shape.

The key to any innovation in the fraternity is that any changes made are done within the Landmarks of the Fraternity. The Landmarks give us borders within which innovation is allowed and should even be encouraged. Innovations, creative new ways of thinking about how we conduct the business of the fraternity, is critical. Too often in Freemasonry we want to stick with how it was in the "good old days" or "just how it has always been done". There is a difference between changing the 'system of Freemasonry', for example deciding to no longer obligate new masons changes the system of Freemasonry, and changing how we conduct our business, for example sending meeting minutes out to members ahead of the meeting so the secretary doesn't have to read the minutes.

Changes to how we do business can be uncomfortable to some. This is not a problem with the Masonic Fraternity only, it is human nature to dislike change. It becomes uncomfortable to think things are no longer going to "be the same." Still if it were not for innovative individuals within the history of Freemasonry, we might not be here to object to Innovations?

In my opinion, change for the sake of change, serves no purpose, other than somebody wishes to make his mark on the wall? Change must always be positive. A good example is as the J.W. has control over the main entrance, and if the Master allows him that power, he can allow Officers/Brothers to enter without having to ask the Master for permission. A JW knows when he must ask the Master for direction. So now much time has been saved and nothing has been lost in the mechanics?

Thought for the Day

“Appreciation is a wonderful thing: it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well”

—Voltaire

Events & Announcements

Grand Lodge of Alberta – June 12 to 14, 2025



GL of BC and Yukon, Grand Master's Banquet honouring MWB Mark Forster – June 19 to 21, 2025



Events & Announcements

Lady Prima with the distinguished ladies from Alberta, Saskatchewan and California



MWB Will Leano's GM Banquet



VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED!



Help cancer patients in your community



Canadian
Cancer
Society

**WHEELS
OF HOPE**

For more information

Email volunteer@cancer.ca
or call 1-888-939-3333



WHEELS OF HOPE TESTIMONIAL

I just wanted to drop you a line saying how helpful and wonderful the Wheels of Hope program is! I had seen the vans around, but it never really clicked in how essential they would be until I started going through my treatments. Especially during radiation, I noticed JUST how many people it is helping! Watching van, after vehicle picking up so many people in the loop outside the hospital, it's really overwhelming how much love people have to give.

All of the drivers are so kind, and it was really interesting learning about their stories and how they became volunteers. Cancer is so consuming, and they decided to give back. I love that. In particular, there was an absolute wonderful driver I had named Trevor. His wife had battled breast cancer twice, and was doing well. He is a gem of a human being. Super funny, always with a fun anecdote about what he had done on the weekend. Open with his wife's battle, and just so so kind.

Trevor always made my day better. Made me realize that there is hope, that if his wife could do it, so could I. That there's still no reason not to smile, and be kind toward others.

Cancer can be super lonely, and until you are in the thick of it, you don't realize what a gift just seeing a smiling face can be.

Holly Thiessen

Articles published in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinion of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba or any of its officers or members, but are solely those of the writer. Freemasonry is the world's oldest and largest fraternity. It is comprised of adult men (18+) of good character from every country, religion, race, age, income, education, and opinion. Its body of knowledge and system of ethics is based on the belief that each man has a responsibility to improve himself while being devoted to his family, his faith, his country, and his fraternity.

For submissions/requests and inquiries please contact:

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Deadline of submission(s) and request(s) for the Aug issue is on July 31

