

**GRAND LODGE A.F. & A.M. OF CANADA  
IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO**

**Fraternal Correspondence Committee**

**R.W. Bro. Iain D. Wates**

Committee Chairman

Box 123

Port Carling, Ontario P0B 1J0

705-764-1737 Fax: 705-764-0338

idwates@sympatico.ca



**R.W. Bro. Colin Heap**

**Proceedings Reviewer**

220 – 5 Salsbury Ave.

Cambridge, Ontario N1S 1K5

colinheap@rogers.com

**Fraternal Review**

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**GRAND LODGE of KENTUCKY**

212th Annual Communication, Louisville, Kentucky, October, 2011.

**400 Lodges**

**45,239 Members**

The Grand Secretary commented that **over the last couple of years** a compilation of the Annual Returns of Lodges has shown a **steady decline in the net loss of membership** suffered by the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, and is hopeful that the trend will continue to the point where the Jurisdiction would eventually get on the positive side of the equation. However, due to the net loss of 1235 members this year, it appears the corner has not yet been turned. This year, 124 Lodges or 31%, showed a gain in membership; the balance showed a decline or no activity at all. Demits and Suspensions cancel out Initiations almost on a one-for-one basis, thus off-setting all gains. *[Please note; here in Ontario, during 2011-12, 23% of our lodges experienced a gain in membership]*

However, there is still a **positive outlook** for Freemasonry in Kentucky. Many young men are joining the ranks and participating in all the labors and privileges. Grand Lodge has **streamlined** its **operations** by **eliminating** many unnecessary Special Committees. Several initiatives have been chosen and implemented, changes that will chart the direction of Kentucky Masonry for many years to come.

To **improve the skills and knowledge** of our Candidates, they **must** now **receive all Sections of all Degrees and return complete proficiencies**, all qualifications which will be essential for members who wish to attain the Master's chair.

**Most** of the **Districts** have a **Keeper of the Work**, assigned with the task of assisting Lodges in the District and finding Ritualists to perform the various sections and lectures of the Degree and to encourage all Lodges to confer all of them. They are also responsible for ensuring all Lodges have a

copy of the Kentucky Ritual and to encourage them, through communication and education, to begin transitioning to the Old Work as their primary Ritual. There are **currently three books used** for all Degree and monitorial work. The **Ritual Committee recommended** that the Grand Body recognize the need to **adopt a single uniform Ritual for the Jurisdiction**; that is the Kentucky Ritual only. The Lodge could continue to possess copies of all others authorized by Grand Lodge for reference only. This would **restore a tradition of excellence** in Degree work. This **recommendation was adopted**.

**Proficiency in Ritual** must also be **reinforced by Masonic Education**. All Lodges were encouraged to take advantage of the Masonic Education resources on hand at Grand Lodge, which can either be purchased directly or viewed on the [Grand Lodge of Kentucky website](#). **Ten Masonic Education Conferences were held during the year**. Committee members travelled across the Commonwealth to provide programs and assist subordinate Lodges in promoting and disseminating Masonic Education. This is a **program of high value**, encouraging the **Masters and Officers** of each Lodge to **take proficiency seriously** and support these Conferences in the future.

The Grand Treasurer concluded his Report with the words, "And when you thought that it could not get worse....guess what happened?" There has not been a great turnaround in the return on investments. Fixed **investments barely generate single digits**. Revenues are smaller due to fewer numbers than we once had and life expectancy has increased. This fact illustrates the **increased pressure** placed upon **Grand Lodge** and individual **Lodges** by now having more senior members of 50 years service and over in the Craft than at any time in its history. **One Lodge** in particular with **238 members** had **91 members with free membership**. The onus to correct this imbalance falls upon those who pay Dues and many Lodges find themselves struggling to keep afloat. We **recommend** that all subordinate **Lodges remove** from their By-Laws the **provision that 50 year members are not subject to Lodge Dues**, starting from the fiscal year July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015.

All members who attain 50 year status by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015 will be exempt from this change. This provision was instituted when the average life expectancy was 58 years of age and now it is 79. Grand Lodge will still grant members who attain 50 year status exemption from the Grand Lodge assessment.

The Lodge Dues structure in the Jurisdiction varies from a **low of \$30.00** to a **high of \$126.50**. The average is \$61.75. Each Lodge must respond positively to these facts and prepare its Budget and Dues structure accordingly.

The Grand Lodge continues to **bring** its **members** into the **electronic age**. Approximately **75%** of all Lodges are **reporting on-line** via the new computer system. In order to comply with a Resolution passed at the 2009 Communication, **all reports** are to be **submitted electronically** after June 30<sup>th</sup> 2012. **Lodge Secretaries** are **working closely** with the **Grand Lodge Office** to assist them in meeting the deadline.

The **Grand Master proposed a change to the Book of Constitution** regarding Petitions for Affiliation and Petitions for Degrees. A committee to whom a Petition for Affiliation is referred should take into consideration not only the moral and fitness of the applicant, but also the authenticity of his Demit or current status if for dual membership. No ballot shall be taken until the receipt of such a report.

A **committee** to whom a Petition for Degrees is referred **must verify** by whatever means that the **Petitioner is a good honest man**. They are to use "INFOCheckUSA" and the fee for that service

should be collected from the Petitioner in advance. This will resolve the problem of men being received into Lodges that should not have been allowed.

The **Grand Master summarized these changes** stating,

*“It is our task to decide the direction that Freemasonry in the Commonwealth of Kentucky is going to follow. Let us strive to do those things that are in the best interest of our Lodges and our Fraternity.”*