

Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario

EDUCATION MONTHLY



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GET KNOWLEDGE – GET WISDOM – GET UNDERSTANDING

BUILDING UPON A FOUNDATION THAT IS 300 YEARS OLD



UNITED GRAND LODGE
OF ENGLAND

A Conversation With The UGLE Improvement Delivery Group

Their goal is supporting Lodges as they build a strong & sustainable future for Freemasonry

The Autumn 2016 issue of Freemasonry Today <http://www.freemasonrytoday.com/magazine> contains some insight into the future of Freemasonry in England (pages 36 – 39). This conversation speaks of cultural change in Lodges, sharing of best practices, and focusing on people rather than ceremony routine.



BOOK SALES

R.W. Bro. George Warner – Book Sales Team Leader



Brethren, quite often the Book Sales Team is asked, “What books should I buy”?

This question usually comes from newly initiated Brethren. There are two sets of publications that Grand Lodge offers for sale. The primary one is Grand Lodge publications, which is the focus of this brief outline.

The publications established or prepared by Grand Lodge not only provide interesting reading material they also provide information to enhance our knowledge, provide guidance in Ritual work, they outline administrative procedures in running of a Lodge and other information to sustain Masonic principles that this fraternal body was founded upon.

There are a number of Grand Lodge publications every Brother should have on hand, while they are in pursuit of higher Masonic learning. These publications are written and prepared by Ontario Masons, for Ontario Masons. In most instances these Brethren have taken on the great responsibility to provide important information for potential leaders.

The following publications provide the background for the building of Craft Lodges and these include; **Towards the Square, Masonic Manual, Beyond the Pillars, Meeting the Challenge, Whence Come We? - Volume 1 and Penetrating the Veil.**

There are others, which are just as important and should become part of your personal Masonic Library; **Question and Answers, and Whence Come We? - Volume 2.**

The publications listed above are available directly from the Grand Lodge office, as well as through your Lodge Secretary or your District Librarian. There are a limited number Non-Grand Lodge publications that are available through the Grand Lodge office. A list is available on Grand Lodge web site. However, these non-Grand Lodge publications are also available by direct contact with Books Galore at booksgalore@powergate.ca , Amazon or Chapters.

The Lost History of the Freemasons

From BBC Travel by Amanda Rugger - December 13th, 2016

With its cobblestone paving and Georgian façades, tranquil Hill Street is a haven in Edinburgh's busy New Town. Compared to the Scottish capital's looming castle or eerie closes, it doesn't seem like a street with a secret.



Tranquil and historic, Edinburgh's Hill Street attracts few tourists (Credit: Amanda Ruggeri)

Walk slowly, though, and you might notice something odd. Written in gold gilt above a door framed by two baby-blue columns are the words, "The Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) No 1". Further up the wall, carved into the sandstone, is a six-pointed star detailed with what seem – at least to non-initiates – like strange symbols and numbers.

Located at number 19 Hill Street, **Mary's Chapel** isn't a place of worship. It's a Masonic lodge. And, dating back to at least 1599, it's the oldest Masonic lodge still in existence anywhere in the world.



At 19 Hill Street, look up to see this six-pointed star, a Masonic symbol (Credit: Amanda Ruggeri)

That might come as a surprise to some people. Ask most enthusiasts when modern Freemasonry began, and they'd point to a much later date: 1717, the year of the foundation of what would become known as the Grand Lodge of England. But in many ways, Freemasonry as we know it today is as Scottish as haggis or Harris tweed.

From the Middle Ages, associations of stonemasons existed in both England and Scotland. It was in Scotland, though, that the first evidence appears of associations – or lodges – being regularly used. By the late 1500s, there were at least 13 established lodges across Scotland, from Edinburgh to Perth. But it wasn't until the turn of the 16th Century that those medieval guilds gained an institutional structure – the point which many consider to be the birth of modern Freemasonry.

Take, for example, the earliest meeting records, usually considered to be the best evidence of a lodge having any real organisation. The oldest minutes in the world, which date to January 1599, is from Lodge Aitchison's Haven in East Lothian, Scotland, which closed in 1852. Just six months later, in July 1599, the lodge of Mary's Chapel in Edinburgh started to keep minutes, too. As far as we can tell, there are no administrative records from England dating from this time.

"This is, really, when things begin," said Robert Cooper, curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and author of the book **Cracking the Freemason's Code**. "[Lodges] were a fixed feature of the country. And what is more, we now know it was a national network. So Edinburgh began it, if you like."



The Grand Lodge of Scotland, also known as Freemasons Hall, stands in the heart of Edinburgh's New Town (Credit: Amanda Ruggeri)

I met Cooper in his office: a wood-paneled, book-stuffed room in the **Grand Lodge of Scotland** at 96 George Street, Edinburgh – just around the corner from Mary's Chapel. Here and there were cardboard boxes, the kind you'd use for a move, each heaped full with dusty books and records. Since its founding in 1736, this lodge has received the records and minutes of every other official Scottish Masonic lodge in existence. It is also meant to have received every record of membership, possibly upwards of four million names in total.

That makes the sheer number of documents to wade through daunting. But it's also fruitful, like when the Grand Lodge got wind of the Aitchison's Haven minutes, which were going for auction in London in the late 1970s. Another came more recently when Cooper found the 115-year-old membership roll book of a Scottish Masonic lodge in Nagasaki, Japan.

"There's an old saying that wherever Scots went in numbers, the first thing they did was build a kirk [church], then they would build a bank, then they would build a pub. And the fourth thing was always a lodge," Cooper said, chuckling.

That internationalism was on full display in the Grand Lodge of Scotland's museum, which is open to the public. It was full of flotsam and jetsam from around the world: a green pennant embroidered with the "District Grand Lodge of Scottish Freemasonry in North China"; some 30 Masonic "jewels" – or, to non-Masons, medals – from Czechoslovakia alone.

Of course, conspiracy theorists find that kind of reach foreboding. Some say Freemasonry is a cult with links to the Illuminati. Others believe it to be a global network that's had a secret hand in everything from the design of the US dollar bill to the French Revolution. Like most other historians, Cooper shakes his head at this.

"If we're a secret society, how do you know about us?" he asked. "This is a public building; we've got a website, a Facebook page, Twitter. We even advertise things in the press. But we're still a 'secret society' running the world! A real secret society is the Mafia, the Chinese triads. They are real secret societies. They don't have a public library. They don't have a museum you can wander into."

Some of the mythology about Freemasonry stems from the mystery of its early origins. One fantastical theory goes back to the Knights Templar; after being crushed by King Philip of France in 1307, the story goes, some fled to Argyll in western Scotland, and remade themselves as a new organisation called the Freemasons.

Others – including Freemasons themselves – trace their lineage back to none other than King Solomon, whose temple, it's said, was built with a secret knowledge that was transferred from one generation of stonemason to the next.

A more likely story is that Freemasonry's early origins stem from medieval associations of tradesmen, similar to guilds. "All of these organisations were based on trades," said Cooper. "At one time, it would have been, 'Oh, you're a Freemason – I'm a Free Gardener, he's a Free Carpenter, he's a Free Potter'."

For all of the tradesmen, having some sort of organisation was a way not only to make contacts, but also to pass on tricks of the trade – and to keep outsiders out.

But there was a significant difference between the tradesmen. Those who fished or gardened, for example, would usually stay put, working in the same community day in, day out.

Not so with stonemasons. Particularly with the rush to build more and more massive, intricate churches throughout Britain in the Middle Ages, they would be called to specific – often huge – projects, often far from home.

They might labour there for months, even years. Thrown into that kind of situation, where you depended on strangers to have the same skills and to get along, how could you be sure everyone knew the trade and could be trusted? By forming an organisation. How could you prove that you were a member of that organisation when you turned up? By creating a code known by insiders only – like a handshake.



Edinburgh's Lodge of Journeyman Masons No. 8 was founded in 1578; this lodge was built for it on Blackfriars Street in 1870. (Credit: Amanda Ruggier)

Even if lodges existed earlier, though, the effort to organise the Freemason movement dates back to the late 1500s. A man named William Schaw was the Master of Works for King James VI of Scotland (later also James I of England), which meant he oversaw the construction and maintenance of the monarch's castles, palaces and other properties. In other words, he oversaw Britain's stonemasons. And, while they already had traditions, Schaw decided that they needed a more formalised structure – one with by-laws covering everything from how apprenticeships worked to the promise that they would “live charitably together as becomes sworn brethren”.

In 1598, he sent these statutes out to every Scottish lodge in existence. One of his rules? A notary be hired as each lodge's clerk. Shortly after, lodges began to keep their first minutes. “It's because of William Schaw's influence that things start to spread across the whole country. We can see connections between lodges in different parts of Scotland – talking to each other, communicating in different ways, travelling from one place to another,” Cooper said.



This oil painting at the Grand Lodge of Scotland shows Robert Burns' inauguration at Lodge Canongate Kilwinning No. 2, which was founded in 1677 (Credit: Amanda Ruggier)

Scotland's influence was soon overshadowed. With the founding of England's Grand Lodge, the English edged out in front of the movement's development. And in the centuries since, Freemasonry's Scottish origins have been largely forgotten.

“The fact that England can claim the first move towards national organisation through grand lodges, and that this was copied subsequently by Ireland (c 1725) and Scotland (1736), has led to many English Masonic historians simply taking it for granted that Freemasonry originated in England, which it then gave to the rest of the world,” writes David Stevenson in his book **The Origins of Freemasonry**.

Cooper agrees. “It is in some ways a bit bizarre when you think of the fact that we have written records, and therefore membership details, and all the plethora of stuff that goes with that, for almost 420 years of Scottish history,” he said. “For that to remain untouched as a source – a primary source – of history is really rather odd.”

One way in which most people associate Freemasonry and Scotland, meanwhile, is **Rosslyn Chapel**, the medieval church resplendent with carvings and sculptures that, in the wake of Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code*, many guides have explained as Masonic. But **the building's links to Masonry are tenuous**. Even a chapel handbook published in 1774 makes no mention of any Masonic connections.

Scotland's true Masonic history, it turns out, is more hidden than the church that Dan Brown made famous. It's just hidden in plain sight: in the Grand Lodge and museum that opens its doors to visitors; in the archivist eager for more people to look at the organisation's historical records; and in the lodges themselves, tucked into corners and alleyways throughout Edinburgh and Scotland's other cities.

Their doors may often be closed to non-members, but their addresses, and existence, are anything but secret.

THE SEVEN LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

Official Visit presentation by R.W. Bro. Charles A. Sankey at St. George's Lodge No. 15 on December 12th, 1967.



Prior to this year (1967), the last previous change in our ritual was many years ago when the presentation of the working tools in the second degree was expanded from an abbreviated form to that then specified for the ceremony of installation. What a difference resulted~ A brief summary was given life and substance.

Listen to it carefully next time, and savour every word as the magnificent charge is delivered, I hope slowly. I am mentioning this because our second degree, presented tonight, is still

lacking in meat.

The skeleton, the bones are there, but the muscle is often missing. I suppose I am unusually conscious of this and unusually critical because my profession is in science and many of my inclinations are in the arts. I simply cannot avoid being aware of the discrepancies.

Tonight, in continuing my theme of Masonic things we live by, I want to add (and the addition is primarily from Masonic sources, I assure you) some muscle to a part of the Senior Warden's lecture. He referred to the seven liberal arts and sciences and then he told you what these were in eight words no explanation, no elaboration, and much worse, no time to think about it before he was talking about something else. Without consulting your neighbours will you see if you can remember the seven. I shall not embarrass you by taking a poll but, unless you have personally given the Senior Warden's lecture, I would be agreeably surprised if any of you can name the seven right off.

Our era is an era of specialization. The mass of information available to the human race has become so enormous that each human mind often tries to grasp too much detail. We are increasingly approaching the old *reductio ad absurdum* of knowing more and more about less and less until we know everything about nothing. The ancient classification of the seven liberal arts and sciences is an antidote for this colossus of detail.

The first of the liberal arts and sciences is **Grammar**, properly defined as the science which teaches us to express our ideas in appropriate words. Grammar is no mere compendium of rigid rules. It is the format of a living and therefore dynamically changing language.

The second is **Rhetoric**. Today this word carries with it more than a hint of empty eloquence. But the liberal art and science of Rhetoric is not empty. It beautifies and adorns the words we use, giving them sound and speech.

Third comes **Logic** which instructs us to think and reason with propriety and to make language subordinate to thought. Logic is at once a format for truth and a scourge for demagogues. The first three liberal arts and sciences comprise a trinity to promote right communication between men.

The fourth liberal art and science is **Arithmetic**, defined as the science of computing numbers. The possibilities of this science are only now being realized. Calculations which would have taken thousands of manhours in my university days are being done today in seconds by machines with unthinking but unforgetting memories. The significant happening, however, lies in the programming of these machines so that they make choices, so that they select preferred paths, so that they don't repeat mistakes; in other words so that they think. Computers (let me coin a name - Arithmeticers) of the future will be, and I use the words advisedly, highly educated individuals in a highly automated society.

The fifth liberal art and science is **Geometry**, defined as the application of arithmetic to sensible quantities and by means of which we are enabled to measure and survey. In a real sense this is the art and science on which our Masonic order is based.

Astronomy, the seventh liberal art and science, properly comes next, being the extension of geometry to the contemplation and measurement of the heavenly bodies. The contemplation and the measurement are, in the Masonic sense, inseparable.

Music, the sixth of the liberal arts and sciences, is the science and appreciation of harmony and of all good sounds. How badly we need the Attentive Ear as well as the Instructive Tongue!. Of the liberal arts and sciences I am happy to confess that I love music more than any of the others.

If I suggest the seven liberal arts and sciences as a Masonic thing to live by, you may say that this is far too much at one time. Each liberal art and science has been, for many men, a life's work to obtain even a glimpse of its extent. All this I recognize and, because of my training and inclination, probably better than most of you. My object is quite different. It is to point out riches in our Ritual that have been substantially lost by attrition. It is, in a very real sense, to observe a due medium between avarice and profusion. It is to challenge and expand your appreciation of what Masonry has to offer.

So, as a Masonic-thing-to-live-by, I do give you the liberal arts and sciences, all seven of them, and bid you, as does the Ritual, extend your researches into their hidden mysteries. You will never regret a moment spent in this endeavour in search of wisdom. You will never cease to wonder at their beauty and their truth.



Charles A. Sankey Lecture in Masonic Studies



Lecturer:
Almee E. Newell
Executive Director
Luzerne County Historical Society
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Sunday, March 26, 2017 at 3 p.m.
Sean O'Sullivan Theatre,
Brock University

"The Badge of a Freemason: New Stories from Old Aprons"

This event is free, but tickets are required. To reserve your tickets online,
please go to sankeylectures.ca and click the TICKETS link.



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*Master Mason Apron, ca. 1860, unid. maker, probably Kentucky, collection
of the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library. Photo by David Bohl.*



Masonic Essay Contest 2017



Education & Training Committee announce the Annual Masonic Essay Contest



Open to all Masons of the jurisdiction, who are members in good standing
Those ineligible include: Current Grand Lodge Officers and Members of GL Committees & Teams

Essay Contest Theme:

“After enduring 300 years of time, has Freemasonry evolved enough to still be relevant to young men in 2017? Explain.”

- Essays to be submitted to The College of Freemasonry at masonic.college@gmail.com
- Only essays submitted in **doc** or **docx** formats will be accepted.
- The essay length is a maximum of 1200 words.
- All quoted sources must be identified in an included bibliography.
- The bibliography will not count towards the word count.
- Submissions will be accepted from March 1, 2017 until midnight on March 31, 2017.

Top 3 essays will be published in The Ontario Mason Magazine & posted on Grand Lodge website.

1st Place Prize:

- The author will be entitled to complete The College of Freemasonry “Masonic Arts & Sciences” course at no cost. – or he may give his prize to another brother.
- Receive a copy of the Masonic Manual autographed by the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master.
- Essay will be published in The Ontario Mason Magazine.

2nd Place Prize:

- The author will be entitled to complete The College of Freemasonry “Masonic Arts & Sciences” course at no cost. – or he may give his prize to another brother.
- Receive a copy of the Masonic Manual autographed by the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master.
- Essay will be published in the Ontario Mason Magazine.

3rd Place Prize:

- The author will be entitled to complete either The College of Freemasonry “Past Master’s” course or “Aspiring Worshipful Master’s” course at no cost. – or he may give his prize to another brother.
- Receive a copy of the Masonic Manual autographed by the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master.
- Essay will be published in the Ontario Mason Magazine.

For more information contact: masonic.college@gmail.com