



Education Monthly

May 2012

Editorial: I received a paper recently from Bro Alex Easton of Georgina Lodge No.343 in Toronto. It addresses an important question for Masons. Space doesn't permit publication in its entirety but with Bro. Easton's permission, I have published below a short extract from it. Hopefully we can publish the entire article in our quarterly publication, "**Reflections**". If you are not already a subscriber to this excellent source of Masonic knowledge I'd highly recommend you become one. Its annual cost is only \$18 and you can to subscribe by sending \$18.00 to: "**Reflections**" c/o 870 Third Street, Gravenhurst, Ontario. P1P 1L8

R.W.Bro. John Forster, Chairman of the Committee on Masonic Education

Masonic Communication

By: Bro. Alex Easton of Georgina Lodge No. 343, Toronto

The spirit of modern Freemasonry dates back to ancient mystery schools. Academically it is established that both share a commonality, inherent in the psychology of the human condition. Initiatory societies, such as the ancient mysteries of Eleusis, lasted from about 500 BC until their disappearance in 400 AD. We still don't know much about what exactly they did in these schools, but like our modern freemasonry today, these ritualistic societies existed predominantly for the purpose of initiating members. Aristotle said that the purpose behind initiation into mystery schools was not premised on engaging new members to learn some hidden information or knowledge. It had another purpose: to experience metaphysical death and resurrection through the ritual of initiation, of which the consequence was a transformation. No sacred informational content is to be shared. Nothing important is to be conveyed. It is merely about experience that cannot be shared cognitively by words alone. This experience is to be considered incommunicable.

So the question remains "what secrets are we guarding?" Is the greatest secret of Freemasonry that it has no secret? Until we can at least think about, ask about, and not necessarily answer these questions, we possess little clarity regarding our purpose in lodge and beyond. In life as in masonry there will be those who have no such interest and there will be those who do. As was said of another esoteric order, "a sea with shallows in which a child may safely wade and depths in which even a giant must swim" (Annie Besant 1847-1933, the second International President of the Theosophical Society).

The symbolic testimony of the perfect and rough ashlar could not be more self-evident. Freemasonry does not ask us to succeed; it asks us to try. This is framed and emphasized by the four classical Aristotelian virtues, "prudence" (making wise choices), "temperance" (finding a moderate way) "fortitude" (hanging in there and trying) and "justice" (doing what is right), and never losing sight of reverence for mankind through true will, determination, and faith.

These don't always occur with each and every member, as all men are imperfect. But in freemasonry as in life, when this does happen - it is incommunicable.

Conference on Masonic Education, Ottawa, June 2, 2012

As so often happens with Masonic events people leave their plans until the last minute! The registration for our June conference is no exception. As there will be no registration on the day of the conference we would ask all of those intending to attend to send their registration form in as soon as possible. Every effort is being made to ensure that this will be an enjoyable, educational and memorable day

The conference themes are ***Education, Communication and Philosophy*** and the format will allow for in depth discussion to occur between conference delegates. At the end of the conference it is our objective to have raised your enthusiasm for Masonic education and be motivated to return to your lodge and district with many useful ideas on how to bring your learning to the floor of the lodge.

The format will be an initial plenary session with a distinguished Masonic speaker, eight seminars each repeated once (Participants will chose 4) and a wrap up plenary with conclusions from each group. There will be a distinguished speaker at the dinner following our last session. It is expected that the event will be over in time for personal activities with family if present. A registration form is attached below. Every attendee will receive a memory stick containing not only the proceedings of the conference but also a library of Masonic books and papers.

REGISTRATION FORM

MASONIC EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Theme: The Timeless Vitality of Masonry: Education, Communication and Philosophy

OTTAWA MASONIC CENTRE, 2140 WALKLEY ROAD, OTTAWA

SATURDAY, JUNE 2ND, 2012

Name _____

Address _____

e-mail _____

Lodge _____

Conference fee \$75. Includes morning coffee, lunch and dinner. The dinner will be a smorgasbord: vegetarian dishes will be included.

Please send cheque, payable to" Masonic Education Conference", to:-

Mr. Wayne Keech, 195 Barrow Cres. Kanata ON K2L 2K9

A conference hotel has been arranged and a special room rate of \$99 +tax is available for this conference. On booking mention your attendance at "Masonic Education Conference". Bookings will be accepted at: 2259 Prince of Wales Drive, Ottawa, ON., K2E 6Z8

You may reserve a room at: phone 1-800-565-1311 – or - <http://www.montereyinn.com>

A ladies program will be arranged should there be an expressed wish for one. If you are so interested please indicate Y/N

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Committee on Masonic Education

If you received this Bulletin by e-mail please pass it on to as many of your brethren as you are able.