



A QUARTER CENTURY OF FREEMASONRY

1946 - 1971



King George Lodge

A.F. & A.M.

No. 129, G.R.B.C.

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KING GEORGE LODGE No. 129 A.F. & A.M.

B.C.R.

At the end of the second war, several brethren who had served or were still serving in the armed forces — either resident or stationed on the west coast — near Vancouver, finding themselves at a loss for the fellowship enjoyed in uniform, decided to form a lodge of Freemasons in Vancouver, for the purpose of contributing their many talents to the service of mankind.

Many of the brethren were members of the Craft, hailing from lodges throughout Canada and the British Empire. While stationed near Vancouver, they had taken an active part in the degree teams, created in the services, to demonstrate the various degrees in the lodges here. They were chiefly personnel from the RCAF and RAF bases in the area. These teams consisted of Officers and other ranks in true democratic spirit.

On September 27, 1946 the first meeting was held in the Georgia Hotel Vancouver, at which 10 brethren were in attendance. The meeting was called by W. Bro. H. E. Freeman-Smith, P.M., Burrard Lodge No. 50, North Vancouver. They opened with an invocation to the G.A.O.T.U. for his guidance in all their proceedings.

The first Principal Officers were set up provisionally. For W.M. - H. E. Freeman-Smith, for S.W. - Bro. Darold W. Davis and for J. W. - Bro. Thomas McW. Ford.

A petition for dispensation dated November 8, 1946, was drawn up and signed by 64 brethren from eight Grand Jurisdictions; 3 from England; 5 from Scotland; 2 from New Brunswick; 8 from Ontario; 7 from Saskatchewan; 6 from Alberta and 25 from British Columbia. Most were from the Air Forces — many still serving.

The dispensation was presented to the Grand Lodge and granted on December 17, 1946, by M.W. Bro. K. K. Reid, O.B.E., Grand Master. The Lodge was instituted on this date by M.W. Bro. Reid, assisted by four past Grand Masters and the Deputy Grand Master, Rt. Wor. Bro. M. A. R. Howard, of District No. 16, as well as several other Grand Lodge officers.

The first regular meeting of the lodge was on January 6, 1947 in the Freemasons Hall at 692 Seymour Street, with 41 members and 11 visitors attending. During the life of the dispensation, 13 applicants were initiated, 11 passed and 9 raised to the S.D. of MM.

At the 76th annual communication of the Grand Lodge of B.C. the dispensation was surrendered and a warrant issued to King George Lodge No. 129, BCR practising the work known as the Canadian ritual.

On August 8, 1947 the lodge was constituted and consecrated by Most Wor. Bro. G. Roy Long, Grand Master, according to the ancient usages and customs of the Craft. At the Banquet which followed, the reply to the toast to the visitors was given by Rt. Wor. Bro. Andrew Davidson, a former Mayor of Calgary, Alberta; representing the only other lodge in the Empire with the name King George; No. 59 on the roll of the Grand Lodge of Alberta.

The program of constitution features a British Postage Stamp of a special issue, approved by King George VI, which has many Masonic symbols or emblems printed therein. This stamp has quite an appeal to

many of the Initiates of this lodge. One of the early resolutions of the lodge was to present to every brother raised — a copy of the V.S.L. — many have taken their MM obligation on their own Bible. Some of the early brethren raised in the lodge, have this stamp affixed within the fly leaf of their Bible. The V.S.L. is a special Masonic issue and is highly prized by most of the members.

Over the years the lodge has received many gifts — some of historical significance and inestimable value. On the Altar is a large Union Jack; a constant memorial to the brethren of the lodge who served in the armed forces in many areas of the earth.

Resting on this Flag is a Volume of the Sacred Law. This V.S.L. is always open while the lodge is at labor. Within this volume is a folio of parchment containing many historical facts pertaining to the origin of the lodge. It is signed by all the Grand Lodge Officers who took part at the beginning. It also contains the signatures of the first officers of the lodge, and is signed by every candidate raised therein.

The folio is inscribed in beautiful medieval artistry by one of the charter members — Bro. John Girvan — Raised in the Thistle and Rose Lodge No. 73 Glasgow. on the roll of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. The frontispiece of the lodge notice was designed by this same brother.

Three gavels were presented to the lodge by one of the charter members, but on one occasion, the Worshipful Master, in trying to emphasize a point, used too much of his right arm and broke the gavel. W. Bro. Earl Thomas of Service Lodge No. 255, Seattle, Washington, was present at the time and made a new gavel of a black walnut burl, grown on the estate of W. Bro. George Washington at Mount Vernon in the state of Virginia. It is an exact replica of the one used by the first President of the U.S.A. when he was the Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22 G. R. Virginia. Between Service Lodge No. 255 Seattle and King George Lodge, exists a very strong bond of mutual affection and esteem, indeed, some of the members are Honorary members of both lodges. One of the Past Masters of the Seattle Lodge received his masonic rebirth in King George Lodge. This is a natural reaction as both lodges were formed by men who wore the military uniforms of both countries. Worshipful Bro. Earl Thomas presented this gavel for the Master, it has a small plate fixed in the base of the date of the presentation.

King George Lodge No. 129 is known throughout the English speaking nations in consequence of the reception of those brethren whose careers are on the high seas, whether naval or merchantmen. This began in 1947 when the Battleship "IOWA" USN visited Vancouver. The Masonic brethren on board were entertained during their stay here. This form of reception has continued through the efforts of the first Wor. Master of the lodge; Wor. Bro. H. E. Freeman-Smith who seems to have a hotline into the wardroom of vessels while still a long way from Vancouver, and when they arrive here everything is ready to meet and show them the sights and have them visit a lodge. Among the many ships whose crews have been entertained by King George Lodge brethren are as follows:

KENYA, SHEFFIELD, SUPERB, FIFE AND GLAMORGAN,
RN - - KING, VANCOUVER, BLACK, CHEVALIER, USN - -
HMCS MACKENZIE, YUKON, ST. CROIX, QU'APPELLE,
COLUMBIA - - RAN MELBOURNE, also AORANGI and

ORONSAY both are Australian Registry.

There are others but this is all that are on record. This now becomes a tradition with King George Lodge.

At the time of writing — of the 64 charter members whose signatures appear on the charter — only 22 are still members of the lodge — 9 of whom are actively engaged in the duties and work within the lodge.

The two ashlar displayed at all communications are the gift of a brother named Vernon Whitworth and donated to the lodge through Wor. Bro. Charles Hunsley. They are from the quarries of Most Wor. Bro. Ditmars, a Past Grand Master of B.C. They are located on Nelson Island and are of the finest British Columbia Granite.

When the dispensation was first issued, the lodge was placed in district No. 16 during the time Rt. Wor. Bro. M. A. R. Howard was District Deputy of the Grand Master. The lodge remained in the district until the next communication of the Grand Lodge, when a new district was created numbered 20. King George Lodge became an important adjunct to that district for twenty years; many friendships were made and are still continued. In 1959 M.W. Bro. M. A. R. Howard was installed as Grand Master of B.C. He retained his interest in the lodge and was made an honorary member the same year. He was a regular attendant and took part in the work of the lodge until his death on April 21, 1971. In 1967 King George left district twenty and became the senior lodge in a new district, numbered 26, where it remains at present.

One item of interest is the fact that of the 64 members who signed the original charter, 10 were installed as Masters of the lodge in the early years. Three became District Deputy Grand Masters, Rt. Wor. Bro. Darold W. Davis, Rt. Wor. Bro. H. E. Freeman-Smith, and Rt. Wor. Bro. Eric Begg, all while still in district 20.

The lodge has been blessed since its beginning by the G.A.O.T.U. until the present day. Twenty-five brethren have been installed in the Masters chair. All are still very much alive. They are of various ages, but all have had the interests of the lodge in every action. Very few of the lodges are so fortunate. The only one to be claimed by the reaper is our first IPM, Wor. Bro. Dr. D. Fraser Murray who is still remembered with affection by all who knew him.

King George has on its membership lists, 27 Past Masters. Two brethren of the lodge journeyed to other countries, where their talents were appreciated. Wor. Bro. George Bordewick was raised in the lodge and is a Past Master of Service Lodge No. 255 in Seattle, Wor. Bro. Matthew Salmond while serving with the RCAF in France was elected to the office in Adoration Lodge No. 45 National G.L. of France. W. Bro. Salmond was the last Master of the lodge which went dark on December 31, 1966.

From 1946 until 1956 all meetings of the lodge were held in the Freemasons Hall at 692 Seymour Street. The last meeting held there was the installation of Wor. Bro. Chas. Holden. The date was September 22, 1956. On October 10, 1956 the lodge was opened at the Marpole Masonic Hall. Wor. Bro. Holden was the last of the founder members to sit in the chair of the Master. Since then all but two of the past masters have been initiated, passed and raised in King George Lodge No. 129. The two affiliated Past Masters are Wor. Bro. Ronald Begg, brother of Rt. Wor. Bro. Eric Begg and Wor. Bro. Alexander McCutcheon. Wor. Bro. Ron Begg was initiated

in Scotland. He was passed and raised in King George Lodge to which lodge he affiliated within a very short time later. Wor. Bro. McCutcheon received his degrees in Saskatchewan.

A re-capitulation of the work of the lodge from 1946 to 1971 is as follows:

Raised	186	10 as a courtesy to lodges in Canada and the U.K.	
Demitted ..	68	Affiliated	58
Died	44	Suspended NPD	22
		Reinstated	3

This is a very good record of operation.

Of the 186 raised — 87 brethren were raised by the founding Master, Rt. Wor. Bro. Freeman-Smith. His devotion to this lodge is well known. He is held in high esteem by all those whom he raised.

An international flavor is evident at all installations of the lodge. The Flags of Canada and the U.S.A. are placed in the east in an impressive ceremony. The Canadian Flag was presented to the lodge by Wor. Bro. Oliver Holm and the American Flag by Wor. Bro. Earl Thomas of Service Lodge No. 255 Seattle. They are paraded into the lodge in a manner reminiscent of similar ceremonies in wartime. The stand for the American Flag was made from a 2" shell casing from HMS "WARSPITE" in 1941 when she was re-fitted in Washington State at the Bremerton Navy Yard. This was also made by Wor. Bro. Thomas, who is an honorary member of King George Lodge; also Walter Meier, No. 281 Research Lodge in Seattle of which he is a P.M. The two flags are large size and of the finest quality.

On the 6th of May, 1961, King George Lodge was honored by a visit from Most Wor. Bro. Al Ring — Grand Master of Masons in Washington State. He was accompanied by several members of that Grand Lodge, as well as many brethren from Service Lodge No. 255 of which he is a past master. Many times over the years he has been in attendance at our installations.

There have been quite a few special events in the lodge since its beginning. January, 1963 and again in 1967 — the R.C.M.P. degree team, in full dress, scarlet and gold, exemplified the work to the delight of all members and the visitors. June 26, 1963 the Seaforth Highlanders, in Highland dress, conferred a degree with Wor. Bro. Eric Begg as Worshipful Master. The piper on that occasion was Bro. Ron. Begg. He rendered many selections, appreciated even by those not of Scottish birth. The many ex-service men present were taken back to their days in the forces by the military precision of both units.

King George Lodge No. 129 has had several of its brethren with over 50 years in craft masonry. On the occasion of the arrival at that plateau by Rt. Wor. Bro. Freeman-Smith the lodge had a memorable evening at which he received a frame encircling Canadian silver coins commemorating the event. Many tributes were paid on that night. Also for his wedding the brethren presented him with a silver tray; but the thing he probably remembers most is the ball and chain and the rolling pin. This may be Greek to non members but on anything as dry as histories, no one should object to humor.

In trying to write history, many items are either not recorded or have

been forgotten, but the brethren of this lodge have a lot to be proud of. Several brethren have been honoured for bravery and service to both King and Country. Some of the older members have served in two wars, and to them we can only say "SALUTE". They are a credit to the community in which they live and also to Freemasonry.

The lodge is in good financial condition; this is due to the many brethren who have served on the committees since the beginning of the lodge. The general fund is in good shape as is the benevolent fund. This lodge is fortunate in this respect as we have not had too many calls for benevolence. The finance committee has invested the revenue in good securities and keep a close watch on expenditures.

Under these conditions the lodge can look forward to the next step — the fiftieth anniversary — with confidence. Some of the members present in the lodge now will be here on that occasion, perhaps still in office or serving in other capacities. To them we say — Keep King George Lodge No. 129 in the vanguard of Freemasonry in British Columbia. Maintain a steadfast belief in the three great Principles — Brotherly Love; Relief and Truth. By so doing you will have many more years of fellowship and happiness in your lodge. Remember always the charge in the E.A. degree — be particularly careful not to recommend any person for initiation, unless you are sure he will conform to our rules. This will eliminate any dissension or unhappiness and assure Peace, Love and Harmony among the brethren of the lodge.

MAY THE LODGE CONTINUE TO FLOURISH
UNDER YOUR GUIDANCE.

S. M. I. B.

The Officers presiding at the institution of the lodge, 1946 —

Worshipful Master	— W. Bro. H. E. Freeman-Smith
Senior Warden	— Bro. Darold W. Davis
Junior Warden	— Bro. T. McW. Ford
Treasurer	— W. Bro. Myer Potter
Secretary	— Rt. W. Bro. Wm. F. Eve
Chaplain	— W. Bro. C. P. Hare
Senior Deacon	— Bro. Roy Boyes
Junior Deacon	— Bro. Wm. G. Chapman
D. of C.	— Rt. Wor. Bro. W. Butterworth
Organist	— W. Bro. J. J. Wilkinson
Inner Guard	— Bro. A. Watson
Senior Steward	— Bro. Eric G. Begg
Junior Steward	— Bro. Olaf Nelsen
Tyler	— Bro. C. J. Creswell (non-member)
I. P. M.	— Wor. Bro. D. Fraser Murray

The Past Masters in order of installations since 1946 —

1946-48 R.W. Bro. H. E. Freeman-Smith	1956-60 W. Bro. Stanley R. Yates
1948-49 R.W. Bro. Darold W. Davis	1960-61 W. Bro. Hugh Cameron
1949-50 W. Bro. Thomas McW. Ford	1961-62 W. Bro. Ian A. McKinnon
1950-51 W. Bro. Roy Boyes	1962-63 W. Bro. Thomas S. Watson
1951-52 W. Bro. Wm. G. Chapman	1963-64 W. Bro. Jack Chapman
1952-53 W. Bro. Alex. J. Watson	1964-65 W. Bro. Ronald J. Begg
1953-54 R.W. Bro. Eric G. Begg	1965-66 W. Bro. Herbert R. Karras
1954-55 W. Bro. Olaf Nelsen	1966-67 W. Bro. Oliver S. Holm
1955-56 W. Bro. Charles Hunsley	1967-68 W. Bro. Orlando Kroeker
1956-57 W. Bro. Charles M. Holden	1968-69 W. Bro. William B. Taylor
1957-58 W. Bro. Fred A. Knights	1969-70 W. Bro. Ernest Bednard
1958-59 W. Bro. Alex. L. Crozier	1970-71 W. Bro. Alex McCutcheon

Brethren of King George Lodge No. 129 who have been initiated, passed and raised in the lodge and are Past Masters of lodges in other jurisdictions —

Wor. Bro. George S. Bordewick P.M.

Service Lodge No. 255, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

Wor. Bro. Matthew McK. Salmond P.M.

Adoration Lodge No. 45, Metz, France (Military)



F. Caird Inglis]

[Edinburgh

HIS LATE MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI.

Initiated in the Navy Lodge, No. 2612, E.C., on 2nd December 1919.

Affiliated to Lodge Glamis, No. 99, Forfarshire, Scotland, on 2nd June 1936.

Installed as Grand Master Mason of Scotland at the Bi-Centenary Communication of Grand Lodge on 30th November 1936.