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# Declaration of principles

by MW Bro. Isaac Brock Brower-Berkhoven

*Freemasonry as a society is:*

Charitable—devoted to the welfare and happiness of mankind.

Benevolent—teaching that the good of others is of primary concern.

Communal—recognizing that society is made up of individuals, it impresses upon its members the principles of personal righteousness and responsibility, enlightens them in those things which make for human welfare; and inspires those feelings of charity and goodwill toward all mankind leading to practical application of those cherished principles.

Educational—its authorized ceremonials teach a system of morality and brotherhood based upon Sacred Law.

Religious—it acknowledges a one and caring Deity. Neither secular nor theological, reverence for a Supreme Being is ever present in its ceremonials. The volume of Sacred

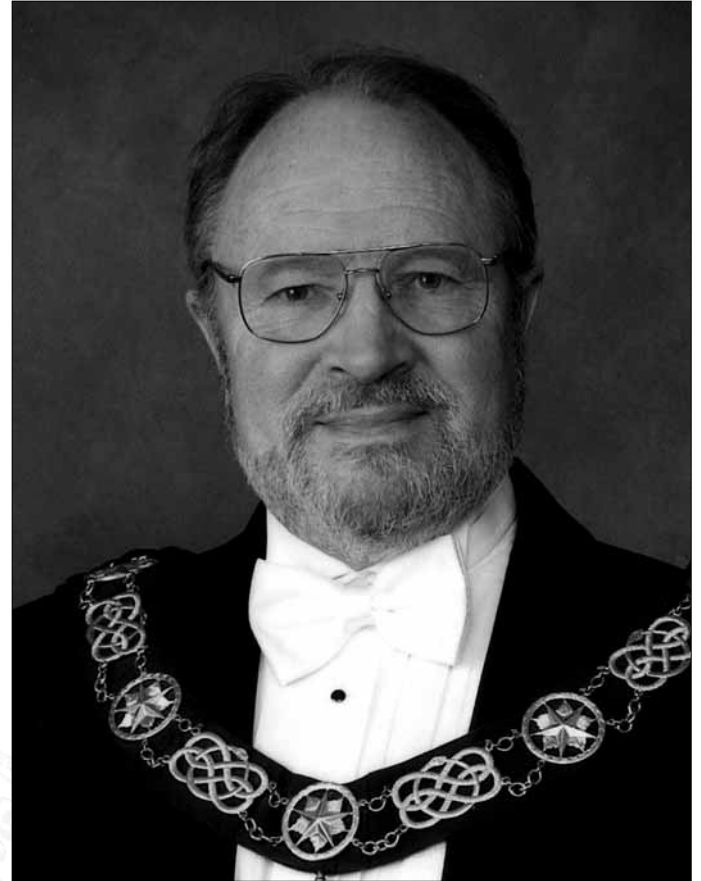
Law, appropriate to its members, is open upon its altars whenever a lodge is in session.

Social—in so far as it encourages the meeting together of men for the purpose of its primary objectives: education, fellowship and charity.

To these several ends it teaches—and stands for—the individual's worship of a Supreme Being; truth and justice; fraternity and philanthropy; enlightenment and liberty, civil, religious and intellectual.

It charges each of its members to be true and loyal to the government of the country to which he owes allegiance, and to be obedient to the laws of any state in which he may reside.

It believes that the attainment of these objectives is best accomplished by laying a broad basis of principle upon which men of every race, country, sect



M. W. Bro. Isaac Brock Brower-Berkhoven, Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

and opinion may unite, rather than by setting up a restricted platform upon which only those of certain races, creeds and opinions can assemble.

Holding these beliefs and in the knowledge that the true freemason will act in civil life according to his individual judgments and the dictates of his conscience, this Grand Lodge affirms:

—Its continued adherence to that ancient and approved rule of Freemasonry which forbids the discussion in masonic meetings of creeds, politics or other topics likely to

excite personal animosities. —Its dedication to those basic masonic principles of brotherly love, relief and truth; and by their consistent practice, the lessening of the aggregate of human suffering and the promotion of the true and lasting happiness of mankind. —its conviction that it is not only contrary to the fundamental principles of Freemasonry, but dangerous to its united strength, usefulness and welfare, for masonic bodies to take action or attempt to exercise pressure or influence

*continued on page 2*



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## Masonic principles from page one

for or against any legislation, or in any way attempt to procure the election or appointment of government officials, or to influence them—whether or not members of the fraternity—in the performance of their official duties.

### What is Freemasonry

Freemasonry is a way of life. It is fraternal in organization, religious in character, based on the belief in the Fatherhood of God, Brotherhood of man, and immortality of the soul.

Freemasonry is *not* a secret society as many surmise. It is a voluntary association wherein the interested one comes of his own free will and accord.

Freemasonry is *not* a religion as many claim it to be.

Freemasonry, in its every effort and purpose, strives to do charitable work within its membership and for society and, through its teachings, seeks to make good men better men. The lessons conveyed by our ritual are based on the Golden Rule.

Freemasonry is a band of men bound together in the bonds of brotherly love and affection that extends throughout the world.

Freemasonry is kindness in the home, honesty in business, courtesy in society, fairness in work, resistance toward the wicked, pity and concern for the unfortunate, help for the weak, trust in the strong, forgiveness for the penitent, and, above all, love for one another and reverence and love for God. Freemasonry is a way of life. ■

## Nota bene

In our October issue we detailed the history of that unfortunate expression, “riding the goat”. Although the closing paragraph noted the inappropriateness of using the expression within hearing of a candidate, it is perhaps

necessary to further stress how potentially damaging this or other unthinking remarks can be, no matter how humourously intended.

Our degrees of initiation are solemn undertakings of deep spiritual import, not frat-house hazings for the entertainment of unthinking brethren.

Both our Grand Master and his Deputy have stressed to your editor that they will not tolerate such remarks. ■

## Help!

### Where are all the freemasons?

The most visible masonic charity that Freemasonry has in British Columbia is in danger. Not of a financial kind but from a danger that is far more serious and one that is far easier to cure. It's called manpower. Unless the freemasons who live in the Lower Mainland are ready to step forward and help with the Cancer Car Project, the flagship charity of Freemasonry in BC cannot continue.

There are some fifty-nine lodges in the Lower Mainland within a reasonable driving distance of the Cancer Clinic. Surely there must be at least one member from each lodge that could drive one of the cancer car vehicles, or input the computer, or dispatch the cars. All that is required is one morning or afternoon a week: around five hours of your time. About half of those now working on the programme are non-masons, including several women. Why is it that non-masons volunteer to work on a masonic project but we cannot get our members to work on their own charity? Is it that we would rather just pay our assessment to the programme and let someone else do the work, or is that we are not interested in one of the great masonic virtues, that of charity?

If this programme is to continue, it needs your help. Since 1989, freemasons have

been transporting cancer patients to and from their treatment. We have boasted loudly to all and sundry about what a great programme this is.

Are we now to allow this vital project to close down because the freemasons of the Lower Mainland cannot find half a day a week to work on it? It's your programme, and it desperately needs your help. Please give this serious problem some thought.

Call W Bro. Don FitzPatrick at 604-465-0987 or the cancer car office at 604-872-2034. ■

## Plenty

The *pomegranate*, as a symbol, was known to and highly esteemed by the nations of antiquity. In the description of the pillars which stood at the porch of the Temple (see I Kings 7:15), it is said that the artificer “made two chapiters of molten brass to set upon the tops of the pillars.” Now the Hebrew word *capthorim*, which has been translated chapiters and for which, in Amos 6:1, the word *lintel* has been incorrectly substituted, though the marginal reading corrects the error, signifies an *artificial large pomegranate* or *globe*. The original meaning is not preserved in the *Septuagint*, nor in the Vulgate, which uses *sphaerula*, both meaning simply a *round ball*. But Josephus, in his *Antiquities*, has kept to the literal Hebrew.

It was customary to place such ornaments upon the tops or heads of columns, and in other situations. The skirt of Aaron's robe was ordered to be decorated with golden bells and pomegranates, and they were among the ornaments fixed upon the golden candelabra. There seems, therefore, to have been attached to this fruit some mystic signification, to which it is indebted for the veneration thus paid to it. If so, this mystic meaning should be traced into spurious Freemasonry; for

there, after all, if there be any antiquity in our Order, we shall find the parallel of all its rites and ceremonies.

The Syrians at Damascus worshiped an idol which they called *Rimmon*. This was the same idol that was worshiped by Naaman before his conversion, as recorded in the Second Book of Kings. The learned have not been able to agree as to the nature of this idol, whether he was a representation of Helios or the Sun, the god of the Phoenicians, or of Venus, or according to Grotius, in his Commentary on the passage in Kings, of Saturn, or what, according to Statius, seems more probable, of Jupiter Cassius. But it is sufficient for the present purpose to know that *Rimmon* is the Hebrew and Syrian for *pomegranate*.

Cumberland, the learned Bishop of Peterborough (*Origines gentium antiquissimae, or Attempts for discovering the Times of the First Planting of Nations*, p. 60), quotes Achilles Statius, a converted pagan, and Bishop of Alexandria, as saying that on Mount Cassius, which Bochart places between Canaan and Egypt, there was a temple wherein Jupiter's image held a pomegranate in his hand, which Statius goes on to say, “had a mystical meaning.” Sanconiathon thinks this temple was built by the descendants of the Cabiri. Cumberland attempts to explain this mystery thus: “Agreeably hereunto I guess that the pomegranate in the hand of Jupiter or Juno, because, when it is opened, it discloses a great number of seeds, signified only, that those deities were, being long-lived, the parents of a great many children, and families that soon grew into nations, which they planted in large possessions, when the world was newly begun to be peopled, by giving them laws and other useful inventions to make their lives comfortable.” Pausanias

(*Corinthia*, p. 59) says he saw, not far from the ruins of Mycenae, an image of Juno holding in one hand a scepter, and in the other a pomegranate; but he likewise declines assigning any explanation of the emblem, merely declaring that it was a Greek expression meaning a *forbidden mystery*. That is, one which was forbidden by the Cabiri to be divulged.

In the Festival of the Thesmophoria, observed in honour of the goddess Ceres, it was held unlawful for the celebrants who were women to eat the pomegranate. Clemens Alexandrinus assigns as a reason, that it was supposed that this fruit sprang from the blood of Bacchus.

Bryant (*Analysis of Ancient Mythology iii*, p. 237) says that the Ark was looked upon as the mother of mankind, and on this account it was figured under the semblance of a pomegranate; for as this fruit abounds with seeds, it was thought no improper emblem of the Ark, which contained the rudiments of the future world. In fact, few plants had among the ancients a more mythical history than the pomegranate.

From the Hebrews, who used it mystically at the Temple, it passed over to the freemasons, who adopted it as the symbol of plenty, for which it is well adapted by its swelling and seed-abounding fruit.

*Excerpted from Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences by Albert G. Mackey.*

## Stats

We note with some pleasure that although our sister jurisdictions in the United States have suffered a combined drop in membership of roughly ten percent in 2005, there are a handful that have only lost a small number while two jurisdictions, Hawaii and New Jersey have actually, albeit fractionally, increased their numbers.

Their total membership for the same year was 1.5 million, roughly half the numbers for 1924. This is not the first time their numbers dropped. Before their numbers peaked at 4.1 million in 1959, they sunk to 2.4 in 1941, a number passed in the wrong direction in 1991.

Perhaps the membership has reached a nadir and we are about to see a regrowth. ■

## Promotion

### *Square and Compasses Day*

This past October, the masonic jurisdictions of both Maine and Massachusetts organized what they called a "Square and Compasses Day". This was a statewide open house, where all Craft lodgehalls were opened to the public. Activities included tours, blood drives, special events, public installations, movie viewings, and the like.

Concordant and appendant bodies also participated in promoting their organizations. Started last year, the programme is supported by the respective Grand Lodges, through statewide radio announcements, DVD hand outs, pamphlets and help with local lodge advertising. Details can be found at [askafreemason.org](http://askafreemason.org).

### *Men's Health - no more secrets*

Freemasons throughout Australia and New Zealand enthusiastically committed to raising the awareness of Men's health throughout this past October.

As one of Australia's largest men's organisations—the freemasons currently boast 71,000 members in Australia and New Zealand—this highly symbolic and traditional group is putting a modern spin on an ancient problem: men's apathy towards seeking medical advice. Through a series of relaxed and informative seminars, men's health and health-related issues will be

brought out into the open.

The campaign, which consists of some 900 men's health seminars held at community venues was sponsored by the freemasons of Australia, beyondblue: the national depression initiative and Andrology Australia.

Freemasonry has the structure, the community focus, and the demographically located meeting places and volunteers to make the project happen. Andrology Australia has the expertise in men's health and beyondblue is providing information vital to raising awareness of the "silent stalker" of men: depression. ■

## Best o' the season

Your Grand Master, MW Bro. Isaac Brower-Berkhoven, extends to all the brethren and those they hold most dear a joyful and enjoyable festive season. ■

## Heads up!

Are you in the line to serve as Master of your lodge? Are you going to be an officer in the next couple of years? Are you in other positions of responsibility and leadership? Do you want to augment the valuable leadership tools you're given at regional workshops? Is your lady committed to supporting you as you progress through the chairs?

Then we have news for you! *Mark your calendars!* In Kamloops, in just over a year from now, on the first weekend of March, 2008, (29 February, 1-2 March), Grand Lodge will put on its first-ever province-wide Leadership Conference.

Targeted for all who seek responsibility in our lodges, and especially our Deacons and Wardens gearing up for their year in the East, this will be an intense, high-quality weekend for both men and their ladies. It will be specifically designed to

<http://freemasonry-bcy.ca>

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## The History of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia

1971-1996

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## Turn over a new leaf

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*The Library at Grand Lodge*

work hand-in-hand with the regional workshops already in place, and will involve our Grand Lodge officers, experts from around the jurisdiction, and special guests.

Watch in the new year for more news of this Leadership Conference for our Jurisdiction. This is for all of us—leadership is everybody's business!

For more details, contact RW Bro. Jon Broadberry at jbbroadberry@sd73.bc.ca or 1-250-579-8576. ■

## Chaplain's Corner

In this time of good will to all men we look at how freemasonry attempts to give purpose and meaning to the central human issue of "futility".

We all know the sombre quote starting, "Remember now thy Creator" from Chapter 12 (the last chapter) of Ecclesiastes. The first Chapter of Ecclesiastes is notoriously gloomy and cynical.

If I may paraphrase from the first chapter; verse 5 says the sun comes up, the sun goes down—no big deal. Verse 17 and 18 say that you shouldn't waste your time learning and become wise because increased knowledge just brings sorrow.

Freemasonry has a specific response to the challenge of this cranky theology. Next time you are in lodge, listen carefully to the opening where not only the Wardens' and Master's positions in the lodge are described but also how their jobs are described. We don't think the daily transit of the sun is "no big deal", we celebrate it.

Our lodges are always at "high twelve". The Senior Warden closes the lodge because he represents the location of the setting sun. The Master is in the east to illuminate us as does the sun, but not only to bring light of day but to illuminate by teaching;

his job is to identify the purpose and meaning inculcated in the ritual and lectures to promote self-knowledge and knowledge of the better way to live one's life. We don't see knowledge as leading to sadness, but rather leading to happiness.

Promoting happiness is the job of the Master, as outlined in the first two paragraphs of the *Address to the Brethren*.

My brethren, look well to the east. This article is dedicated to my friend and predecessor as Grand Chaplain, VW Bro. Ian Paton who Passed to the Grand Lodge Above on 16 September 2006. ■

## Worst enemies

Freemasons can be their own worst enemies. It's not as if anti-masons need the help, but freemasons certainly seem to give it to them.

Anti-masons accuse freemasons of initiating members by making them ride a goat; they accuse them of wanting to rebuild Solomon's Temple; they accuse them of manipulating the American government.

They accuse them of worshipping Lucifer. And then they quote freemasons.

Riding the goat appears to have originated as an unfortunate masonic joke, not an anti-masonic attack, but that's what it has become.

It would be the rare freemason who would imagine that the number thirteen has any masonic significance, but it only took one. Two, if you include the editor of the Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction's magazine, *The New Age* in April 1960. A short article in that issue, quickly forgotten, details the "masonic symbols" of the thirteen olive leaves, stars, arrows, feathers, stones, and other items found on the American Great Seal and the one dollar bill. This single unsupported interpreta-



## Grand Master's Itinerary DECEMBER 2006

1	Fri	District No. 17	Burrard No. 50	North Vancouver
2	Sat	Education Day		North Vancouver
4	Mon	District No. 18	Mt. Hope No. 139	Hope
6	Wed	Installation	Lodge of Perfection	Langley
9	Sat	Installation of Officers		Nakusp
10-11	S-M	Biannual evaluation: Principal Officers Retreat		Nakusp

tion of symbols has been widely quoted by anti-masons and conspiracy theorists as "proof" that Freemasonry reveals its control over the American government by including its symbols in the American Great Seal; as "proof" that the number thirteen is a sacred number to freemasons—a number that is popularly considered to be unlucky or evil; and as "proof" that Freemasonry originates with the mediaeval Knights Templar, arrested on Friday, 13 October, 1307.

Are freemasons planning to rebuild the Temple? It has yet to be confirmed that a naïve group of Boston freemasons seriously proposed a plan to rebuild King Solomon's Temple. But so it was reported in *The Illustrated London News* in 1909. The announcement of the project came as something of a surprise to the editor of the *Masonic Standard* in New York, who responded with: "The London picture paper is evidently unfamiliar with American humor." Some years later, in 1923, masonic author Frank C. Higgins wrote, "there have been actually several associations formed in the United States" promoting such a project. Thus it appears that the roots of yet another anti-masonic attack can be traced—albeit distorted and out of context—to freemasons.

And the completely unreasonable accusation that

freemasons worship Satan? Look to W Bro. Manly P. Hall who wrote in 1923, that for the freemason who "...has learned the mystery of his Craft. The seething energies of Lucifer are in his hands...." It's a quote taken out of context that doesn't refer to Satan but is a classical, poetic reference to a knowledge of technology and science. But anti-masons use it to claim that freemasons "in their own words" admit that they worship Satan.

There was an earlier time when freemasons were enjoined not to discuss Freemasonry with non-masons. In today's more open atmosphere we tend to assume this was an unrealistic attempt to protect some perceived secrets of Freemasonry.

But perhaps it was just simple common sense. If we can't be trusted to discuss Freemasonry intelligently and knowledgeably, perhaps we should be prohibited from discussing it at all. This is of course unrealistic. Secrecy begets suspicion. And it is contrary to our stated support of knowledge and education. So, what do we do?

We must commit ourselves to a daily advancement in masonic knowledge, and make the liberal arts and sciences our study. The light of Freemasonry is the light of knowledge. Do not forget that we are dedicated to spreading that light. ■