



Grand Lodge Bulletin

Vol. 62, No. 6

Editor: MWBro Robert E. Juthner

June 1997

Some Thoughts On The Universality Of The Craft

By MWBro Robert E. Juthner, PGM

(From a paper originally given October 3, 1987)

"Universality" ... what does it really mean, and what does it mean to us? As with so many of our terms used in Masonry, as also with so many terms to which we are accustomed in everyday language, they become part of our vocabulary while we hardly ever give them another thought. Regarding this particular term, we are ready to nod assent to its use as something typifying Freemasonry. Sure, we all agree that our brand of Masonry is universal, so let's go on with our business and talk about something more interesting. Like the festive board, or the chances the Oilers have, or the Flames, or the... NO! I say no because I am not so easily satisfied. I want to know what really matters to us as Masons, or what should. Right now, I want to know the meaning of "Universality". Let's look into the dictionary. The Oxford says, universal is what belongs to, is done or used by all persons (or things) in the world. So, what is universal allows no exceptions. Let us remember that, because it applies to anything, not just to what concerns us as Freemasons. This is what I want to deal with here and not "Universalism" which deals of the doctrine that all souls will eventually be saved and that good will triumph ultimately. I do not address myself to this as it is not my intention to enter into a theological discourse.

So, what is it that is universal in Freemasonry? We talk about the universality of the science and that Freemasonry is spread over all of the world's habitable surface. Theoretically, this is true, but in actuality we know that Lodges, as incorporated bodies, can only exist in countries of the Free World and that the spirit of Masonry is suppressed wherever human freedom is shackled. But let us admit, in philosophical terms, Freemasonry is everywhere and in everything; only geographically speaking, it is not. So much for universality in the tangible sense of organized Masonry in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia — New Zealand.

What goes hand in hand with the geographical distribution of Masonry, is in the area of language. Masons converse in many tongues, not just in English as we may be prone to assume, but in French, Italian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, in Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, Greek, in Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish and in Finnish, in the Slavic languages in whose home countries Freemasonry has been revived, in Chinese and Japanese and in so many more languages. Therefore, the host of languages in which Masonic rituals are worked and Masonic books are written, forms another aspect of the universality of the Craft.

Certainly, there is universality of races in Masonry, albeit this is denied in parts of our liberated and oh so fraternal world. Masons do not have to be white (or should we say "pink"?), they can be found among the black, the brown, the so-called yellow and the red, and if there were a purple race with green polka dots, as Masons we would consider them to be our Brothers. Or so we should.

There is an all-encompassing universality which embraces

men of diverse backgrounds, of differences in education and upbringing, of lines of work, certainly of level of wealth, men who entertain quite different interests in life in a score of ways: the whole, multicoloured patchwork of society, that society in which we live and from which, naturally, we draw our members.

What most Masons mean, however, when we talk about the universality of the Craft, has to do with freedom of thought and freedom of religion. Just as we do not arrange any of our members' political opinion, so as Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons we do not interfere with our Brother's religious creed. Note that I said distinctly: "Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons". There are some Grand Jurisdictions with whom we are in amity and who do not fit into this pattern, notably those that practise the "Swedish Rite" and style themselves the "Freemasons' Order". We find them in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Finland and in one of the five member grand lodges which form the United Grand Lodges of Germany. There to qualify for membership, one has to be Christian. Even close to home we find a few appendant organizations which call themselves "Masonic" and in which membership is limited, either by edict or by philosophical content, to Christians. They, however, do not belong with Ancient Craft Masonry and it is up to the individual member to reconcile his "Universality" in the main branch of Masonry with his "Exclusivity" in another. It is up to his own conscience how he can readily exchange hats — I do not intend to pass judgment on this anomaly at all. Instead, let me cite one example, in Craft Freemasonry, namely that of the Grand Lodge of the State of Israel, where Jews, Christians and Moslems can work together in harmony. A few years ago they had a Grand Master, by the name of Jamil Shalhoub, who was an Arab and a Christian.

To the altar of Freemasonry all men bring their offerings whether they receive their teachings from Zoroaster, Confucius, Moses, Mohammed, or the founders of the Christian religion — here they meet upon one common level in a universal brotherhood.

How did this come about? Not in operative times, we know that much. After all, the early Masons were pre-reformation Christians and knew no other than the Church of Rome. We must begin with 1717, the formation of the Premier Grand Lodge and with 1723, the year of promulgation of Anderson's Constitutions. The Charges of a Freemason, even though termed "Appendix B", are really the culminating part of our Book of Constitution and date back to the early time in our history. The first of those Charges, named "Concerning God and Religion" states, in part: "...Let a man's religion, or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the order, provided he believe in the Architect of heaven and earth and practice the sacred duties of morality. Masons unite with the virtuous of every persuasion in the firm and pleasing bond of fraternal love..."

Freemasonry is as universal as the Holy Word upon which it is founded. Not being a religion, nor a substitute for religion,

Grand Lodge Bulletin

Published each month except July and August by the
The Grand Lodge of Alberta, A. F. & A. M.
 330 – 12 Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta T2R 0H2
 403-262-1140 — Fax 403-290-0671

Annual subscription rate for non-members of the GLA
 is C\$10.00 plus mailing costs.

Republication rights are granted to other Masonic Jurisdictions,
 but acknowledgement of the source is requested.

Grand Master	MWBro Basile Costouros
Deputy Grand Master	RWBro Hugh Young
Senior Grand Warden	RWBro James W. Roberts
Junior Grand Warden	RWBro J. Art Jones
Grand Secretary	RWBro Gerald T. Webber

Editorial Committee

Editor: MWBro Robert E. Juthner, 403-483-5124, Fax 403-486-4512
 WBro Loren Kline; Bro Bob Millsap; Bro Trevor Morris;
 WBro Peter Proudlock; WBro Bev Snyder

Masonry has brought brotherhood and understanding to countless thousands throughout the years who, again in the words of the Charge, "...must otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance."

We speak of the book on our altar as the first of the Great Lights in Masonry. Our country, being built on Judaeo-Christian tradition and values, it is only natural that the Holy Bible, containing the Old and the New Testaments, should be that book. In more recent years some Lodges in Alberta have added to it a copy of the Holy Koran for their members of that faith. In countries such as India, all the Sacred Writings of their predominant faiths are found, side by side, in Masonic Lodges. Thus the term "Volume of the Sacred Law" gains true universality.

Let me ask this question now: are we, in reality, living up to the claim of universality or are we only paying lip service to it? Permit me to quote Henry Wilson Coil, from his Encyclopædia of 1961, page 664: "*It has been said times without number that Freemasonry is universal, open to all men and speaks of universal language... [but] we may as well admit that the progress made by the Fraternity in attaining or preserving univ ersality has over the past two centuries been nil if, indeed, it has not been in reverse.*" He seems to be referring to the Masonic excommunication of such bodies as the Grand Orient of France, when he goes on to say "...the rules of recognition have again and again been constricted and tightened so as practically to isolate half the world Masonically from the other half. This has largely been the result of religious dogma adopted one after another, all as innovations upon the fundamental Constitutions of Symbolic Freemasonry, that is, those of 1723. Every added item of religious doctrine operates to alienate some considerable group of Freemasons..." Coil has written another article, that on "The Holy Bible; Volume of the Sacred Law" (page 518) which those of our readers who are giving serious thought to this subject are well advised to read. For the purposes of this short article, I cannot possibly go into much more depth, hoping that the reader will find some food for thought, or better yet for action, in what was here said about the concept of the "Universality" of the Craft.

The reader is quite at liberty to draw his own conclusions, but I do challenge him to weigh the arguments for and against universality, uncoloured by any political, religious or social prejudices he may hold and solely governed by and in the light of the Masonic teachings he has so often promised to uphold.

How universal is this Freemasonry of ours?

Editorial

The True Mason Thinks

Exactly thirty years ago, in the Spring of 1967, the Grand Master MWBro (the Honourable) T. Gordon Towers held area meetings throughout this jurisdiction, at which papers were given by the four senior officers of Grand Lodge. The theme was *The True Mason Thinks* and it is felt that the statements made in 1967 are as valid today as they were then.

Charlie Pinnell, the Senior Grand Warden, reminded us that Freemasonry is a FORCE and not a FORM and as such "...needs fuel to keep it going. Our individual members must provide the fuel by their studies, by their discussions and their faithful interest and support of their Lodge... To avoid learning and reciting the work in a parrot-like fashion, it is desirable that he [the new Mason] have an enquiring mind; something to motivate him to seek the hidden truths and real meanings so carefully concealed in the allegories and symbolism of the Work." He calls for ever continuing education by knowledgeable Brethren and use of the Masonic Library, recognizing, however, the individual differences which naturally exist, saying: "...we must realize that all Master Masons do not fall into the same category and the Worshipful Master should be especially careful to recognize this. A Freemason's Lodge is a place where all men meet on the level — but this does not automatically imply that all are mentally equipped to make use of the same type of material. Our strength lies in the wide diversity of our members... Let us classify ourselves as TRUE MASONS now and THINK. Think how we can direct Freemasonry as a FORCE in our lives and in the lives of those around us." And he goes on to ask: "Why should men who have been received into our Lodges lose interest? It is because we fail to grasp the opportunity of making them THINK. Freemasonry does not consist of going to Lodge once or twice a month to hear the minutes and pass a few paltry bills. We must lift our sights — we are BUILDERS, or at least our forebears were and we can be builders now if we will all THINK and avail ourselves of the opportunities placed before us."

The Junior Grand Warden, Phil Kendall, whose task it was to point out the lack of thinking, speaking about the instruction of a new member, stated: "Some will say that the coach will have an opportunity to explain everything [in the ritual] fully, but what happens? Many coaches do not have their heart in the job at hand; all they see is the requirement for a parrot-like repetition of the words of the ritual. They miss the opportunity of a close study of the degree and an explanation of the wonderful meaning of it to the new member. In other cases, the coach is a new member of the Lodge and lacks the proper background for conveying the true meaning of the ritual to the candidate. It is important that the candidate's coach be well educated in the facts of Masonic life."

The Deputy Grand Master, Bernie Brown, summarized the preceding two papers, gaining from them the impression that the Grand Wardens "...are not at all satisfied that all Masons are TRUE Masons and THINKING Masons" and that "...it appears that too often, especially with new members, the FORCE or impact of our ritual becomes only a FORM of giving our degrees with little or no explanation of their meaning... We accept men from all walks of life into our Fraternity, many with little or no outward appearance of having anything in common [than the] desire to improve themselves and to be more useful to their God, their fellowman, their Community

and their Country. ...we must also have our new Brethren think for themselves and find their own answers in their heart. This a good Mason will do and he will then become a True Mason and a Thinking Mason. Our objective is to create the enthusiasm that will bring this about... The Officers of our Lodges must seek and use, more knowledge about the individual members of their Lodge. They must become more expert, more imaginative in carrying out the true functions of the Lodge to which they have obligated themselves."

The Grand Master, Gordon Towers, concluded asking: "Why is it that so many of our members fail to catch a true and real meaning of Freemasonry and therefore absent themselves from our Lodge meetings and many allow themselves to be suspended for non-payment of dues. My Brethren, before we

can teach others, or set ourselves up as an example, we must first decide exactly what we think... A man's mind becomes sharper and shinier with use but if it is not used it becomes dull and useless... You can fill his brain with obligations, teach him all the symbols and send him forth from the lodge room loaded with good intentions, but if he can't think he will blunder his way along the road of life, his accomplishments as far as Masonry is concerned will be nil. My Brethren, there are more ways than one of dying. Many men are dead, have been dead for many years before they are buried."

The Brethren are well advised to obtain the full text from which the above quotations are taken, by ordering the 20-page booklet, *THE TRUE MASON THINKS*, Publication No. 382 (formerly BT 7500) from the Grand Lodge office.

Rare Occasions

Fortunately, many of our Brethren are around to be honoured by their Lodges for the long service they have given to the Craft, for which reason we publish an annual honour roll (such as in the April 1997 *Bulletin*) because singling out only a few by special articles would be unfair to the majority of honourees for whom no report on the event had been submitted. However, now and then a rare, if not unique, celebration occurs, which the Bulletin Committee is happy to bring to the attention of the readers.

Family affairs are a case in point: to wit:

Concord Lodge No. 124



During the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of Concord Lodge, last September, Bro Mike Ross was presented with his 50-year Jewel, in the presence of his son and of his grandson. Shown in the picture are: l to r, grandson Bro Ian Ross, Senior Warden of Crossfield Lodge No. 48; Bro Mike Ross and VWBro Robbie Ross, Past Master of Crossfield Lodge. Indeed, a rare occasion!

Whitecourt Lodge No. 153

Another showing of family and friends took place during the installation of WBro Bill Locke, as WM, on January 9, 1997, when Brethren of his Mother Lodge, Beaver Lodge No. 83 GRC, had come all the way from Strathroy, Ontario, to participate in the ritual work. Pictured are, L to R, RWBro John Howden PDDGM, Sarnia District, Bro Doug Hoelzli of Beaver Lodge, a family friend, WBro Allan Locke, PM Beaver Lodge



(and brother of Bill), RWBro Reg Godwin, DDGM Northern Lights District, WBro Bill Locke, WM Whitecourt Lodge, WBro Bruce Locke, PM Beaver Lodge (and brother of Bill) and RWBro Art Jones, JGW, Grand Lodge of Alberta.

Honouring Bob Costigan

The evening was April 1st, but those assembling at Corinthian Lodge in Okotoks were no fools. Sixty-six Brethren, from almost a score of Lodges, assembled to honour three of their Brethren. Fifty-year jewels were presented to RWBro Fred Grout and Bro Hector Young. MWBro Costigan related many early vignettes of his and RWBro Grout's early careers together in Turner Valley.

Then, the entire assembly reconvened at the fully catered festive board and the accolades turned to one of Alberta's most beloved Past Grand Masters, MWBro Bob Costigan, who is affectionately known as "Hiram Abiff" by many, due to the similarity of experience and age (???)

He was both roasted and toasted and was "examined" on his proficiency regarding memory and all he has recorded in his well known and worn little date book, specifically on July 21st of this year: his good wife Lois seems to have divulged that he must be planning to be ill on that day, because it is the only one in 1997 for which our MWBro did not have something Masonic planned!

It was further determined that he belongs to most every conceivable Masonic, concordant and not-so-concordant body in existence and has served as leader of most of these, with the same humble brotherly love and grace as he did during his term as Grand Master and all of his Masonic career. From all the Masons of Alberta, congratulations and thank you, "Hiram".

Peter Proudlock, Canada Lodge No. 165

Our Planet

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all existing ratios remaining the same, it would look like this:

There would be 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere and 8 Africans. Fifty-one would be female, forty-nine male. Seventy would be non-white; seventy would be non-Christian. Half the wealth would be in the hands of only six people and all six would be citizens of the United States. Eighty would live in substandard housing. Seventy would be unable to read. Fifty would suffer from malnutrition. Only one person would have a college education... no one would own a computer.

Received via e-mail and submitted by
WBro Geoff D. Wilson, Unity Lodge No. 51

From the Lodge Summonses

Attention Brethren of the Stethoscope and Scalpel

In June, 1822, a young Canadian named Alexis St. Martin was accidentally wounded in the stomach by a shotgun at Mackinac, Michigan. Dr. William Beaumont, US Army surgeon, gave him aid. He watched over the patient for thirty-six hours, after he had cleaned the wound, and predicted that the patient would die. However, the patient survived, but an opening of two and a half inches would not heal. For eight years, while caring for the young man, Dr. Beaumont looked through this opening and watched the working of his patient's stomach. The medical world learned many things about our stomachs, when the doctor's observations were made known to the world, in 1833, in a famous book about this experience.

It is regarded as the greatest single contribution to our knowledge of gastric digestion. Dr. Beaumont was a member of Harmony Lodge, of Champlain, New York.

January 1997, Kitchener Lodge No. 95, GRA

Masonic Travels in the UK

Alan L. Verney, Managing Director of RV TOURS, invites Canadian Brethren, planning group visits to the UK, to take advantage of their organization, which will provide a choice of accommodations and transport within the UK, liaison for the purpose of Masonic visits, "musts" for sightseeing, alternative activities for spouses, when Brethren are in Lodge, etc., from the day of getting the visitors from Canada at the airport to the day of their departure. Any tour organizer interested may contact Mr. Verney, with anticipated numbers, possible dates, duration and expected itinerary, at:

RV WEEKEND LIMITED

TRADING AS RV TOURS

127 Broad Street, Chesham, Buckinghamshire, UK, HP5 3EF
Tel/Fax 011-44-1494-793316

(NOTE: This is not an advertisement but is inserted as a service to the Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Alberta. Ed.)

Correction

In the "Honour Roll" published in Vol 62, No. 4 of the *Bulletin* (April 1997), one name had been inadvertently missed, i.e., that of **Bro Richard T. Shillington**, Zetland Lodge No. 83. We apologize.

Summer Lodge Events

The following dates have been reported to the Bulletin Committee:

July 1, 1977 — 8:00 PM, **Excelsior Lodge No. 80**, Daysland
July 2, 1997 — 4:00 PM **Granite Lodge No. 127**, Blackie, Summer Meeting; followed by BBQ in the Community Hall at 5:30 PM.

July 3, 1977 — 8:00 PM, **Lake Saskatoon Lodge No. 106**, Wembley

July 3, 1977 — 7:30 PM, **Rockyford Lodge No. 123**

July 8, 1997 — **Vulcan Lodge No. 74** — Summer Meeting (no meetings in August and September).

July 10, 1977 — 7:30 PM, **Nanton Lodge No. 17**

July 19, 1997 — 2:00 PM, **Acacia Lodge No. 11**, "Klondike Lodge" at Acacia Hall, Edmonton, placing of Centennial Plaque; followed by open evening for families and friends at Convention Inn South: 5:30 PM - cocktails; 6:00 PM - supper; 6:45 PM - guest speaker MWBro David Bruce.

July 20, 1997 — **Acacia Lodge No. 11**, Church Parade, St. Luke's Anglican Church, followed by Open House at Acacia Hall. Dates in August are not yet confirmed, but Acacia Lodge No. 11 has been given permission from the Fringe Theatre Network to invite the general public to an informative overview of Freemasonry. It is proposed to prepare and present a skit on Freemasonry.

July 23, 1977 — 8:00 PM, **Forestburg-Alliance Lodge No. 128**, Forestburg

July 26, 1977 — 7:30 PM, **Redwood Lodge No. 193**, Edmonton

July 28, 1997 — **Eureka Lodge No. 10**, Lacombe, AB, part of Centennial celebration, 10:00 AM: Masonic Float and member participation in Lacombe Days Parade, followed by an Open House and Open Display. (A Reconsecration Ceremony is scheduled for October 4, 1997). For further information call Bro Wayne Armishaw (Sec) at 403-782-2895.

August 5, 1997 — 8:00 PM - **Edgerton Lodge No. 102**, Summer meeting (no meeting in July)

August 7, 1977 — 8:00 PM, **Excelsior Lodge No. 80**, Daysland

August 7, 1977 — 8:00 PM, **Lake Saskatoon Lodge No. 106**, Wembley

August 9, 1997 — **Symbol Lodge No. 93**, Drumheller, Open Air Lodge, casual dress. Meet downtown Rowley at 2:00 PM, travel to site. Supper with spouse approximately 4:30 PM. Phone WBro Michael or L. McKee 403-368-2276 to reserve supper seating.

August 26, 1977 — 8:00 PM, **Kitscoty Lodge No. 131**

August 27, 1977 — 8:00 PM, **Forestburg-Alliance Lodge No. 128**, Forestburg

Grand Master Elect's Itinerary

June

12-14 Annual Communication

16 Concord Lodge, Calgary

18 Alberta Lodge, Fort Macleod, Open Air Lodge

20-22 Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania

26 Ashlar Lodge, Calgary

27-29 Yellowknife Lodge, 50 Anniversary

July

7 Mighty Peace District Meeting, Peace River

19 Klondike Lodge & Banquet, Acacia Hall, Edmonton