

MW Bro. Peter J Dunlop's  
Inaugural Address  
June 11<sup>th</sup> 2011

First and foremost I want to thank those of you who have travelled such long distances to join us here today. Your dedication to our Craft is both admirable and inspiring. Several important people in my life have exhibited great "Fraternal Feelings of Brotherly Love" by their attendance here today. I won't try to name anyone, but you know who you are, you are my Brothers from near and far.

I will not forget your kindness.

"Thank You", to the Brethren of Alberta for affording me the privilege of serving as your Grand Master in the coming year. I will promote Masonry in Alberta and represent this Grand Lodge, and all of you, to the best of my skill and ability.

To all of the elected and appointed Grand Lodge Officers, I'm very pleased to have your participation here today.

On behalf of the Grand Line Officers we welcome you and hope you will enjoy the journey during the next 12 months.

This year I'm asking the Masons of Alberta to search for their "Path to Success".

Whether it is by improving our Lodges or improving ourselves, we must take on **the** most important job in Freemasonry – that is, to Participate in our Lodges by Mentoring and Caring for our Brethren thereby leading them to their individual "Path to Success".

Success in any field doesn't just happen. You must first set a goal, decide what skills you need to achieve this goal, and then acquire and practice those skills to make yourself proficient in them. There is a theory, from an article I read in McLeans magazine, by Malcolm Gladwell, author of the best-selling book "The Tipping Point," stating that it takes 10,000 hours of work to become a professional in a given field. Some examples given were Bill Gates working on computers throughout his schooling and the Beatles perfecting their music by playing in cabarets in Germany with little pay, for many years while perfecting their musical style.

In some sense we must try to be professional as Masons and Mentors.

It is often said that we learn the most by teaching others. Mentors may be defined as experienced and trusted guides or advisors. In the ranks of Alberta Masons we have hundreds, maybe thousands, of such men. Many of you my friends, are mentors to Brothers like myself in our Craft and also to men and women outside the Craft. You set an example of ethical conduct and honest caring for your family, your workplace, your communities, to our country, and to society in general.

Mentoring begins at the first meeting with a potential candidate. When someone expresses an interest in the Craft, we need to be able to tell him how membership in Freemasonry can be of some relevance in his life. Any potential members need to feel that they will benefit in some form that is important to them, whether feeling better about themselves, being more confident, finding new friends, or learning new skills. They need to feel that they are spending their time and talents for some useful purpose.

But Masonry should require a win-win situation. Masonry itself must benefit from each new candidate that is proposed. We must be vigilant in ensuring that each candidate is suitable to be a Mason and that he is directed to a Lodge that will meet his needs.

I am very much in favour of:

- Lodge breakfasts or dinners to get to know candidates
- Asking a prospective candidate to your Lodge Festive Boards
- Asking prospective candidates to come to Lodge social events

We must ensure that our candidates are fit and proper persons to be made Masons and I agree that slowing down the process of accepting a candidate may well be necessary. We cannot slow the process for the purpose duration of time alone, we must make profitable use of this time to get to know our candidates better.

When a man becomes a Brother, we need to remember that the ceremony of Initiation does not make a man a Mason. Our degrees are necessary to teach lessons, but we must study and understand those lessons to fully comprehend their meaning. There is “no light without understanding”.

Every Brother must be a mentor, and every Brother must be mentored and given proper instruction for his labours.

We must mentor according to the needs of each man.

Every man is different from the next and his wants and needs have to be met.

Yes I do agree that there is much material that should be common to any educational programs in our Lodges, but if we wish to hold a man’s interest in the long term we must fulfill his wants.

It takes all kinds of men with varied abilities to build a Lodge. The performance of Floor Work is reasonably easy to teach and absorb, but the knowledge and performance of Ritual is much more difficult to perfect. Ritual skills are built slowly and are similar to learning acting. This may not suit the character of every Brother.

If the man is interested in Social and Organizational skills have him work along side the Junior Warden’s committee to organize Banquets, Ladies Nights, Golf or Curling or other sporting activities.

If the man is interested in the Esoteric side of Masonry direct him to a person or a Lodge where he can find it.

Discuss books, movies, web-sites, etc. etc. but give the man what HE NEEDS.

In this vein I strongly recommend that we stop forcing people into Officers duties until those Brothers are ready. This was a number one comment made to me by new Masons. Even the simple act of asking, “would you be willing to” instead of “You’re going to be the new ....” avoids placing pressure on a new Brother to immediately take an office.

Set our Brethren on a path to success.

We Must, Recognize our Brother’s efforts and make him understand, that as stated by John Ruskin, ”The highest

reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it."

We want to get absent members to return to the Lodge, retain our members, reduce demits, and reduce suspensions.

First of all we cannot use the length of our cable-tow as an excuse for absence or non-participation in our Lodge.

Having said that,

I do understand the responsibility we have to family, and work but please don't forget that your Lodge and your Brethren need you too. We owe our Lodge "Participation", when we are able.

We must "Prepare our Brethren and our Lodges for Success".

So here's my little piece of Mentoring:

Brethren the time has come to keep our Brothers closer to us. Some have drifted away from our Lodges. We must be in regular contact with all of our members. If we truly wish to address the problem of demits from our Lodges, we must keep our Brethren in our closer care.

We must re-learn the art of effective communication.

There is an old adage that says, "you are not learning when your mouth is moving".

For the most part I believe this is true.

While I'm standing here delivering my thoughts, I'm not learning I'm telling.

This is one-way communication.

When I send an e-mail this may be a one-way communication. Surely most people would admit that 2-way communication is much more effective.

We need effective communications in our Lodges.

In our Canadian Rite 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Charge we are told, "You are now permitted to discuss such topics ....., but we seldom seem to have those discussions.

Healthy 2-way communication is one of the most productive forms of communication.

That takes personal contact and exchange of ideas.

For our members who do not attend you must make personal contact and have a productive 2-way communication. Find out why they don't attend and encourage them to return to the Lodge. Ask what we can do to help.

For our absent members, recognize their absence and welcome them on their return. Make personal contact with 2-way communication.

In the case of demits, recognize that you have options on how to handle demits. Again make personal contact and have an effective 2-way communication. Do what's right for your Brother.

As for SNPDs:

Sending an e-mail, or putting a note in the Summons will seldom resolve the issue.

Make personal contact and have an effective 2-way communication.

Find out if there is a problem and make an attempt to resolve the problem.

You have a finance committee that can be used to investigate delinquent dues. The collection of delinquent dues should not be dumped on the shoulders of the Secretary, this is not the Secretary's job. Use or form an appropriate committee.

For me, the "Path to Success" for our Lodges and our members consists of Mentoring, Participation, and Caring for every Mason.

"Labour is the lot of man" and "Perseverance" will bring success. Let us each prepare our "Path to Success"

Thank You for your attention, my Brothers