



PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE and RITUAL WORKSHOP



- **Openings and Closings**
 - A lodge should open at the time stated in its Summons. (Otherwise you would be in contravention of your own By-laws.)
 - The WM should manage the evening so it doesn't end too late. Be considerate of brethren who have to rise early the next morning.
 - Assuming it is the IPM in your lodge who adjusts the G.Ls. in the Openings, the IPM leaves the E. to do so after the WM has declared the lodge Open and before the WM knocks.
 - In the Closings, the IPM leaves the E. to adjust the G.Ls. after the WM has knocked. (The IPM does not adjust the G.Ls. until the return of the Tyler's knocks.)
 - Closing in the Third Degree is very complicated and is often done incorrectly. You need to read the instructions in the *Book of the Work* very carefully – and the WM and Wardens need to practise their respective parts in the Closing of the Third Degree. (*Refer to the handout.*)
 - The WM should keep an eye on the SS (or whoever adjusts the W.Ts. in your lodge) to ensure that he does it right. (He may need help.)
 - The W.Ts. are displayed when the WM declares the lodge Open and are covered **when the SW declares the lodge Closed**. (Note how this differs from when the IPM leaves the E. to adjust the G.Ls.)
 - Neither of the Wardens, nor the IPM, nor the IG, should pause in their ritual to wait for the SS to finish adjusting the W.Ts. The ritual brings forth a nice cadence with all these respective pronouncements. The natural flow and beauty of the ritual should not be interrupted by a pause.
 - **IMPORTANT: Follow the instructions in paragraph #7 on page 5 of the 2014 edition of the "Red Book", (i.e. the "Guidelines for Lodge Officers in The Mechanics of The Work").**
 - It is up to the WM to withhold his k. to seat the brethren (if need be) until the W.Ts. are properly displayed. (If necessary, the WM can ask a senior brother to assist the SS.)
- **Business Portion of a Lodge Meeting**
 - The WM must be familiar with the *Order of Business* adopted by your lodge. (It is usually specified in your lodge By-laws.) Also know WHEN and HOW lodge business is conducted.
 - Business can be conducted in less than five minutes if you are properly prepared. (*See the handout.*)
 - As per Section 288 of the Constitution, in all cases and under all circumstances, the lodge must be opened in the First Degree and, in this degree, all the ordinary business of the lodge is to be transacted.
 - As per Section 335 of the Constitution, balloting shall be the last order of business except for the conferring of degrees (and/or Masonic education).

- **Dress Codes**

- Within the bounds of propriety, our lodges can determine the dress code to be followed by its officers, which is usually “Black Tie” or Semi-Formal, i.e.

- a black tuxedo,
- with a white shirt ,
- a black bow tie,
- a black cummerbund or black vest,
- black shirt studs and cuff links
- black socks,
- and black shoes



In the interest of good order and regularity, all lodge officers should be in identical attire.

- This uniformity in dress and appearance would also apply to gloves. Gloves can only be worn by a lodge officer if all the other officers also wear gloves.
- All lodge officers (who are not Past GLOs) should wear similar aprons. (This also applies to a brother from another Jurisdiction, when he is serving as a lodge officer in this Jurisdiction.)
- For information about what apron a Past GLO should wear both in his lodge and when he visits another lodge – after he has been elected again as a WM – refer to Q34 in the Installation and Investiture section of the 2013 *Questions & Answers* booklet.

- **Preparing The Lodge**

- Note that the Steward who prepares the lodge does not report that the lodge is properly prepared. Everyone has watched him do so.
- Only the Steward who prepares the (?) makes such a report. That is because we did not see what took place in the anteroom.
- The Steward who prepares the lodge can use a checklist. (*See the handout.*)

- **Candidate’s Name**

- The WM must know how to PRONOUNCE each (?’s) name.
- If necessary, ask the (?) how his name should be pronounced. He won’t be offended.

- Write down his name phonetically so you won’t forget, e.g.

<p style="text-align: center;">Erhan Altayoglu (“Air – han Alt – A – Yoo – Glue”</p>

- It is more important that a WM and his officers are able to PRONOUNCE a (?’s) name than for them to be able to spell it correctly. (It is the Lodge Secretary who always knows how to properly spell everyone’s name. 😊)
- The Tyler, IG, Deacon, and Wardens also have to know how to pronounce the (?’s) name.
- Our degrees are designed to help introduce a brother to the rest of the membership.

- For example, in the First Degree, the (?’s) name is mentioned:
 - As “Mr.” – a total of **12** times.
 - As “Brother” – a total of **6** times, with the WM usually saying his name again for the 7th time at the conclusion of the Degree.
- **Obligations**
- Remember, the WM **MUST** know the (?’s) name. Each Ob. calls for the WM to say these words:

“Repeat after me: I, (?’s) name, in the presence of . . .”

***** The (?) does not SAY his own name; he REPEATS it *****

- The WM must know and give the penalties correctly. (*See the handout.*)
- Know the Grand Lodge guidelines concerning the use of alternative VOTSL.
- **Name of our Grand Master**
 - Do you know the first name and surname of our current G.M.?
 - Actually, don’t worry if you don’t – because you should never use it.
 - During his term as G.M., as far as Masons are concerned, the G.M. does not have a personal name.
 - When you are speaking with him, you always address him as “Grand Master”, whether in a lodge room, or even when the two of you are alone and no one else is within earshot.
 - Examples of situations where this could occur: You and the GM are travelling in a car just by yourselves; or you are speaking with him on the telephone; or you happen to meet him on the street.
 - The same protocol applies to our Deputy Grand Master. Address him as “Deputy Grand Master”.
- **Salutes**
 - Make all salutes properly. Sloppy salutes set a poor example. (*See the handout.*)
 - Examples of improper salutes include:
 - The “Tom Cruise”, or “shoo-fly” salute.
 - The “droopy elbow” salute.
 - The “limp wrist” salute.
 - The “short stroke” salute.
 - The WM **SHOULD** return all salutes.
 - However, if the WM is saluted mistakenly (e.g. by a brother for the second time, after he has finished speaking, or by a visitor while you are welcoming him), it is suggested that the WM does not return that salute. The WM would only be compounding the error.
- **Saluting**
 - All Masons should know **WHY** we salute, **WHO** to salute, **WHEN** to salute, and when **NOT** to salute.

- We salute to show our respect for the OFFICE of the presiding officer.
- Does a Warden salute a Warden? Does a JW salute an IG? Does a Deacon salute a Deacon? No. We only salute the WM, (or an Installed Master who has assumed the gavel).
- Remember: Salutes are only given one way – upward.
- The WM is saluted:
 - o When you enter lodge;
 - o When you leave lodge;
 - o When you are addressing the WM; and
 - o When called for in the ritual.
- Don't hold a salute. Simply do it. Complete your salute and drop your arm. A brother does not wait for the WM to acknowledge his salute before that brother drops his arm.
- If you stand there, holding a salute, what is it called?
- It is called the "Coming to Order" sign, which is certainly not a salute.
- Wardens do NOT salute the WM:
 - o When responding to instructions from the WM, (unless called for in the ritual).
 - o After the WM has given them a command, e.g.:
 - *"Brother JW, ascertain the cause of the alarm."*
 - *"Brother SW, our labours in this D. being ended, you have my command to close this lodge."*
- There is no need to acknowledge any of the WM's instructions by saluting him.
- You do not salute after completing some ritual or some floorwork.
- You do not salute the WM again after you have finished speaking and before you sit down. (*We call this the dreaded "second salute".*)
- You do not salute the WM should he extend a personal welcome to you, while you are being received into lodge. (Recall what your DDGM does in this situation. He neither salutes, nor gives the S of F. He "responds" to, or "acknowledges" the WM's welcome by a court bow – which is a nod of his head.)
- You do not salute when proving yourself in any of the degrees, e.g. *"Where were you first prepared to be made a Mason"?*
- During the Openings and Closings, the Wardens do not salute the WM after every question.
- Are you aware that except for when proving themselves, or when demonstrating the signs, or during the Opening in the First Degree:
 - o The JW only salutes **twice** during each Opening and Closing, and
 - o The SW salutes **twice** during each Opening but **only once** during the Closings.

- No additional salutes are given by the Wardens during the remainder of their interchanges with the WM when Opening or Closing lodge.
 - **The “To Order” direction**
 - The same words can have different meanings:
 - o “B., to order in the first D.”
 - o “B., to order in the second D.”
 - o “B., to order in the third D.”
 - Different responses are required, depending upon whether the VOTSL is open or closed.
 - **Signs**
 - Always take a step BEFORE giving any sign.
 - The WM and his Wardens need to **drop the sign** before giving any knocks during the Openings and Closings, particularly in the Second Degree.
 - Important: Do NOT complete the sign – simply drop it, give the knocks, then resume the sign without also giving the P.S.
 - **First degree:** Know the difference between Coming To Order and the P.S. of an E.A.
 - **Second degree:** Remember that the 3-F.S. of a F.C. is ONE SIGN. (*“I acknowledge the correctness of that S.”*)
 - When asked to prove yourself a C. by Ss., you will be standing to order as a Mason.
 - Do NOT give the P.S. of an E.A. Simply drop your R.H.
 - Move your feet from the E.A. step to the F.C. step.
 - Now give the 3-F.S. of a F.C.
- ➔ It is ONE SIGN in all the Degrees, except the Third, where it is three signs. ←**
- **Third degree:** Now it is THREE SIGNS. (*“I acknowledge the correctness of those Ss.”*)
 - When Called to Order in the Third Degree, (or when asked to prove yourself a M.M. by Ss.), start from the H.S. of a F.C. (You do NOT give the P.S. of a F.C.)
 - Do not rush. Give each sign independently. Do not “blend” them together.
 - From the H.S. of a F.C., first give the S. of H.; then the S. of S.; and finally the P.S. of a M.M.
 - Move your feet from the F.C. step to the M.M. step while giving the S. of H.
 - When exemplifying the F.Ps. of F. with the SW, do NOT combine B. to B. with H.O.B. They are separate and distinct!
 - The Ws. are given only one way – upward.
 - The WM does not participate when the brethren exclaim: *“With gratitude to our Master we bend.”* (See p. 31 of the *Book of the Work*.) He simply stands there while everyone bends toward him.
 - But the WM does participate in the next item – the **Grand and Royal Sign!**

- The Ws. in the Third Degree can only be exchanged on the F.Ps. of F. – and in a whisper.
- Your DDGM will have been given the Ws. by the Custodian of the Work. Your DDGM will give them to each WM in his District. Each WM is then responsible to give them to the members of his lodge.
- Note that no signs are given while the VOTSL is closed.

- **Titles**
 - We have several official titles in Masonry.
 - “Worshipful Master” is one. Your WM is entitled to be addressed in this manner and not as Worshipful Sir – unless called for in the ritual.
 - “Brother” is also a title.
 - A man does not attend his lodge in his capacity as a private individual. He is not John Smith or Robert Jones. He is there in his capacity as a Master Mason – a Brother.
 - He should always be addressed as such in open lodge, e.g. Brother Smith or Brother Robert Jones.
 - Also, Masonic titles stand alone. They should not be mixed with ecclesiastical, medical, military or academic titles. The highest title that we can receive is that of brother.
 - Freemasonry connotes equality.

- **How to receive visitors**
 - Visitors can usually be brought into lodge in just two groups (except on an O.V.):
 - o “General Visitors”, including visiting Masters from other lodges, Past GLOs and William Mercer Wilson Medal recipients; and
 - o Current GLOs.

 - Obtain a copy of the P&E Committee’s educational guidelines, entitled “*Receiving Grand Lodge Visitors*”.
 - Get a copy of the *Order of Introduction* list for current GLOs from the P&E Committee.
 - Know which GLOs are entitled to assume the gavel.
 - Know which GLOs speak first when assuming the gavel. (Descending order of rank.)
 - Know which GLOs speak last during Closing. (Ascending order of rank.)
 - The WM should not single out only a couple of visitors for a personal greeting when they enter lodge. It would seem to be impolite to only recognize some of the visitors and not the rest.
 - If time permits, the WM can invite all visitors to the E. for a personal welcome.

- **Announcing Visitors**
 - Special protocol applies when announcing current Grand Lodge Officers, especially those entitled to assume the gavel.
 - The Tyler, IG, and JW should all make identical announcements.
 - Make sure they know this and are prepared to do so.
 - Prior to the meeting, the WM (or the D of C) should create an announcement card for them to use. (*See examples of various announcements on the handout.*)

- **“Ascertain the cause of the alarm”**
 - The WM should beware of adding the following words when he instructs the JW to ascertain the cause of the alarm: *“and if it is _____, you will admit him”*.
 - To whom are you giving this authority? The JW? Or the IG?
 - This instruction can be confusing. It is often misunderstood. Why say something where your intention could be interpreted in two different ways?
 - Also, how much time is actually saved? 10 seconds? 20 seconds? And what if the alarm was sounded for another reason?
 - It will add to the time otherwise required when you have to deal with unexpected situations, such as a brother who has arrived late.

- **Wands**
 - The WM should know when to request the Deacons to attend the entrance of the lodge with their wands.
 - When used in conjunction with receiving visitors, wands are used for one special purpose only.
 - To form an arch over a visiting dignitary while escorting him into lodge.
 - That special protocol applies only to visitors who, by their rank, are entitled to assume the gavel.
 - A wand is a Steward’s and a Deacon’s “badge of office”. He should always pick it up prior to moving about the lodge room. *(Exception: The Deacons do not need their wands when distributing and collecting a ballot.)*
 - The wand is grasped about one third from the top and **placed snugly under your left arm** at an angle of 45 degrees. The emblem should be in profile and the dove always flies forward. *(Exception: When the ritual calls for a Deacon to be on the right side of a (?), his wand is then carried in his right hand.)*

- **Swords**
 - The IG and the Tyler always carry their swords in their R.H. and in the upright position.
 - The only times when a salute is required whilst the sword is being carried are:
 - o After the I.G. and the T. have been invested and before they are escorted to their chairs.
 - o After the T. has been invested and conducted to the A., before he is allowed to retire.
 - They salute in the following manner:
 - o Transfer the sword to the L.H. in the upright position.
 - o Take the step of an E.A.
 - o Salute, then return the R.H. to the side.
 - o Change back from the step.
 - o Return the sword to the R.H. in the upright position.
 - The IG only uses his sword in the First Degree.

- After being told to ascertain the cause of the alarm, the IG picks up his sword and carries it to the anteroom door.
- Once he arrives at the anteroom, he puts down his sword at the side of the door.
- Only when the WM instructs the IG to admit the (?) in due form, does he take up his sword again.
- The IG should permit the JD and the (?) to enter well into the lodge room before proceeding to apply the sword. Steady the tip with the left hand with the finger over the point until the proper moment.
- The IG needs to be alert to advance with the sword at the proper time during the floor work.
- Rest the hilt of the sword on the left arm when presenting it.
- There is no need for the IG to touch his sword in the Second and Third Degrees, or during the Openings and Closings, or when admitting members and visitors.
- The sword ought to be taken in hand ONLY when the WM directs that the (?) be admitted in the First Degree

- **Moving About The Lodge Room and Squaring The Lodge**

- The general rule is to move about the lodge room CLOCKWISE.
- It is an established custom in our Jurisdiction that the brethren should “square” the lodge, in a clockwise direction.
- The reason why our lines of travel are at right angles within the lodge is explained by Bro. Harry Carr in *The Freemason at Work*, Question 16, pp. 34-35.
- See also the excellent comments in a Lodge of Education posting about Masonic Tracing Boards and Why Freemasons Square the Lodge Room at <http://www.masonic-lodge-of-education.com/trestle-board.html>
- It is important that this practise NOT be exaggerated or carried to the extreme. Not only would that be a waste of valuable time, it would detract from our ceremonies.



- **Excessive and/or Unnecessary Circumambulation**

- While circumambulating (“walking all round”) the lodge room is indeed a Masonic custom, it should not be overdone. Use your common sense to minimize the need to do so.
- If you will be participating in a degree or ceremony, endeavour to sit near the spot where you will be delivering your part.
- If you remain with a few feet of your seat (e.g. say 6 to 12 feet), you can return directly to your seat without having to circumambulate the lodge room.

- **What Do These Circumstances Have In Common?**

- When the lodge is being Opened or Closed and if the Chaplain is the PM designated to adjust the GLs, “it is not necessary that he circle the A in returning to his station”.
- When Closing in the T.D., after the JW has communicated the CSs., Ts. and Ws. to the SW, the JW steps to the A, salutes, and returns directly to his place in the S.
- After delivering each Ob., the WM typically returns directly to his chair.

- After the SW has completed his lecture in the S.D., it is the SD who conducts the (?) to the E. The SW remains W of the A, returning directly to his chair. (*A hint follows.*)



- **Director of Ceremonies**

- The WM should liaise with the D of C prior to each meeting, particularly prior to OVs and Installations. Make sure you both have a common understanding how visitors will be brought into lodge.
- When the D of C presents/introduces a visitor by name, it is recommended that the WM arrange with him for the D of C to pause after each name so the WM can then welcome that visitor personally. (It is very difficult for a WM to have to remember everyone's name after several brethren have been introduced as a group. It is much easier to remember them just one at a time.)
- When a large number of visitors are expected, the WM can assign an Assistant D of C to help ascertain the names of current GLOs and to help the D of C to line everyone up properly.

- **Visits by your DDGM**

- He enters lodge formally, (i.e. under the wands, etc.) on his FIRST visit to a lodge. Any other current GLOs who may be present will enter at the same time, with the DDGM.
- On his OFFICIAL VISIT to a lodge, the DDGM still enters lodge formally. However on this occasion, he must enter LAST and ALONE. Any other current GLOS who may be present must enter lodge prior to the DDGM being escorted in.
- On all other visits to a lodge, the DDGM may enter the lodge without ceremony.
- No higher ranking GLO will be in the lodge room when a DDGM makes an OV to a lodge.
- On his first and Official visits, your DDGM:
 - Must be brought in under the wands.
 - Must be PRESENTED.
 - Must be accorded the Grand Honours seven times.
 - Must be offered the gavel.

- **Visits by DDGMs from other Districts**

- They have no powers outside of their own District.
- They are "just" a current GLO when visiting your lodge.
- They are not entitled to assume the gavel in your lodge.
- They are not received under the wands.
- They are INTRODUCED by the D of C.
- While optional, the WM should accord them the Grand Honours seven times – and invite them to sit in the E.
- During the Openings and Closings, they rise and sit with the brethren, (not the WM).
- If they are present at the "In-District's" DDGM's Official Visit, the "Out-Of-District" DDGM must enter lodge prior to the "In-District" DDGM being escorted in.
- The "Out-Of-District" DDGM must also participate in according the Grand Honours to the "In-District" DDGM, with the other brethren.

- **Visits by other current Grand Lodge Officers**
 - Those who can assume the gavel (e.g. the GM, a Past GM, and the DGM) are presented.
 - Those who cannot assume the gavel are introduced.
 - The WM must accord the Grand Honours to those current GLOs who are presented.
 - While optional, the WM should also accord the Grand Honours to those current GLOs who are introduced.
 - The WM should invite all current GLOs to sit in the East, (provided there is room).

- **Grand Wardens**
 - When a Grand Warden(s) is in attendance, as a courtesy, the WM should formally invite him to assume “his” chair in the lodge.
 - He would do so while individually welcoming the Grand Warden.
 - However, unless this has been arranged and agreed to in advance, the Grand Warden will politely decline the honour.

- **Past Grand Lodge Officers**
 - A wonderful resource.
 - They maintain their rank for life.
 - However, no special protocol applies to them.
 - They enter with the “General Visitors” at regular lodge meetings.
 - They are not automatically entitled to the Grand Honours.

- **William Mercer Wilson Medal Recipients**
 - They are not current GLOs.
 - They do not enter lodge with current GLOs.
 - They have no automatic right to sit in the East, (and actually may be uncomfortable if invited to do so).
 - They are only specifically accorded the Grand Honours on the occasion when they are presented with their medal. [See Section 15 (f) of the Constitution.]

- **Grand Master’s Meritorious Service Award Recipients**
 - Very similar protocol applies as with William Mercer Wilson Medal recipients.
 - However, as a GM’s MSA recipient could also be a current Grand Lodge Officer, be alert to see if this or any other protocol may apply.

- **Visiting Shriners**
 - All Shriners are Masons, of course. Sometimes a Shriner visits a Craft Lodge in his capacity as a Shriner.
 - The proper protocol under these circumstances is that any visiting Shrine Mason must be clothed in his Craft Lodge regalia to enter the lodge room, once it has been opened.
 - A Shrine Fez must NOT be worn in open lodge, even by the Potentate himself.

- **Gavel Etiquette**
 - The WM should know how the proper way to exchange the gavel.
 - Don’t overuse it, or knock unduly hard (and end up giving everyone a headache).

- **Who Can Sit In The East**
 - Those with an automatic right are the WM, the IPM, the GM, a PGM, the DGM, and your District's DDGM.
 - **Only by invitation of the WM: any Mason.**

- **The Grand Honours**
 - Know the "prime rule" – *the Grand Honours are always accorded to the highest ranking brother in the group of visitors being received.*
 - The WM always stands and always participates in giving the G.H.
 - Don't overdo giving the G.H. to visitors simply because of local traditions. (One evening a lodge brought its visitors into lodge in five different groups – and accorded the G.H. to each of the five groups. It unduly lengthened the evening. It also detracts from the significance of this form of recognition.)
 - Know when the G.H. are mandatory and when they are optional.
 - Know the code. (See Section 15 of the Constitution.)

- **Congratulating the Candidate**
 - Is it proper for a brother to congratulate the candidate after he has completed his assigned floorwork?
 - **No, this opportunity is typically afforded to all the brethren once the entire degree has been completed** (e.g. by everyone applauding, at the direction of the WM).
 - Consider this – what if the W.M. conducted the entire degree by himself. Would he shake the candidate's hand after each section of the floorwork?
 - And why should only a handful of brethren (i.e. those assigned some work) have the opportunity of congratulating the candidate while all the "side benchers" do not?
 - Interestingly, the Grand Lodge of Idaho specifically prohibits anyone shaking the hand of a candidate either prior to delivering a lecture to him, or immediately after.

- **Conducting a Ballot**
 - See *P&E Essentials*, Issues #7 and #8.
 - See Sections 335 to 368 of the Constitution.
 - See *Meeting The Challenge*, pp. 96 – 97.
 - Section 349 of the Constitution states two or more black balls will render a ballot unfavourable. Your lodge by-laws may reduce this number to one.
 - Balloting is an official act by each member.
 - It is sanctioned by our Constitution.
 - A ballot is secret, sacred, and inviolable.
 - Except for the VOTSL, the ballot is the most sacred thing in a lodge.
 - The outcome of the ballot can have a momentous impact on the (?) – and also on his sponsors.
 - It can thus be of great significance for the lodge.
 - Etiquette demands silence while a ballot is being conducted.

- **Worshipful Master's Collar**
 - No one else should ever wear the WM's collar.

- It is never worn by a Past Master, or transferred to the Master of a visiting degree team when he occupies the chair.
- The WM should know when he **should wear** his collar and when he **does not**.
- As indicated in *The Masonic Manual*, the WM only wears his collar:
 - Within his own lodge;
 - When CONDUCTING a Divine Service;
 - When CONDUCTING a Memorial Service;
 - When attending a Grand Lodge Communication;
 - When attending an Official Visit with the DDGM in his District; and
 - When attending a Divine Service conducted by the DDGM.
- It is improper for visiting Worshipful Masters to wear their collars at the Installations of other WMs, or at a Masonic Memorial Service which is conducted by another WM.
- **Freedom of the Lodge**
 - What does that mean? The brethren cannot leave the room. (The lodge is still tyled !!!!)
 - The WM should try to avoid giving the brethren “Freedom of the Lodge”.
 - It is a perfect opportunity for some short Masonic education.
- **Voting**
 - What is the “usual Masonic Sign of Voting? Which hand do you use? *(Right)*
 - Do you hold your arm straight out? Or up? *(Straight out)*
 - Is your palm facing down, or up? *(Down)*
 - What is the position of your thumb? *(Our GL doesn't specify)*
- **Redundancies to be avoided**
 - What does “brother” mean? (An individual member)
 - What does “brethren” mean? (The plural of brother; all the members)
 - What does “brethren all” mean? (Nothing! It is a redundant term!)

 - What does “any”(or “anyone”) mean? (All; everyone; any person; anybody)
 - Why then, when a WM is closing lodge in the First Degree, after he says: “*Has **any** brother anything to propose for the good of ry in general and of this [] in particular?*”, would he then eventually ask:
 - ❖ “Bro. Secretary, do you have anything?”
 - ❖ “Bro. S.W., do you have anything?”
 - ❖ “Bro. J.W., do you have anything?”

It is again totally redundant to ask this question of any individual brother after having first asked if **any** brother has anything to propose.
- **Sign of Fidelity**
 - When should the S of F be used and NOT be used?
 - The Sign has specific and limited uses, namely:
 - It is used when the VOTSL is being attended;

- It is used during obligations;
 - It is given during ritual prayers, in ceremonies;
 - Including those in the Masonic Memorial Service in the Funeral Home, (when the WM says: “*Let Us Pray*” and “*O Lord, support us . . .*”);
 - During the closing of lodge in the First Degree, when saying F.F.F.;
 - By the SW when presenting a (?);
 - When receiving the Grand Honours, or when accompanying a brother who is receiving them;
 - As directed in the Installation Ceremony, when the Master Elect is assenting to the Ancient Charges and Regulations.
- The Sign is NOT given:
- When you have completed an assigned piece of work;
 - In the Banquet Room;
 - When acknowledging greetings from the WM;
 - By the WM when receiving visitors.
 - If you are not wearing Masonic regalia.
 - Suppose a Grace is offered in the lodge room, before the brethren leave for any refreshments. The brethren are still wearing their Masonic regalia. In such circumstances, the S of F is **NOT** used, as the VOTSL is closed.
 - No signs are given when the VOTSL is closed.
- **Open Ritual Books in Lodge**
- One question which seems to be asked a lot is whether it is acceptable to have your copy of the *Book of the Work* open while sitting in lodge.
 - The answer can be summed up in seven words:
NO! NO! NO! Absolutely not! Definitely not!
 - There are supposed to be only two books open when a lodge is at work.
 - The first is the VOTSL.
 - The other is the prompter’s copy of the *Book of the Work*.
 - It is a mandate from the Custodian, the Grand Master, and the Ritual Committee that you are not to have a ritual book open in lodge.
 - Extenuating Circumstances. Are there any? Let’s say you are going to be doing a part that evening and you have momentarily forgotten a word. Personally I see nothing wrong with discretely opening your *Book of the Work*, refreshing your memory just as quickly as you can, and then CLOSING YOUR BOOK.
 - Here’s a big question for you to think about. Let’s say a brother doesn’t know his work.
 - Since our goal is to make the Degree as memorable and as impressive as we can for the (?), is it permissible for that brother to read his part – rather than the (?) hear the work done twice – once by the prompter and then for a second time by the brother who doesn’t know his work?
 - The answer is, of course, still the same. NO!

- Why? Well, such an approach would solve the problem at tonight's meeting. But what about next month, when that brother still doesn't know his work? Shall he read his part again, for the second time? What about the third time?
- You know the old maxim. After something has been done wrong twice in a lodge, it then becomes a "lodge tradition".
- It is your responsibility to know your work, to become proficient in any work you have been assigned, or volunteered to perform.

- **Toast to Grand Lodge**
 - Note the correct name. It is the "Toast to Grand Lodge". It is **not** the "Toast to the Grand Master".
 - While consisting of only 14 words, it's the most muddled toast in Masonry.
 - Those 14 words are: *"The Grand Master and the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario"*.

- **Private Conversations in Lodge**
 - No brother should ever engage in private conversations or discussions on the sidelines in the lodge. Save your talk for the banquet room.
 - One of the most irritating and disconcerting times during any Masonic meeting is when two or more brethren on the sidelines get into a sotto voce discussion. It's even worse when one of them is hard of hearing.
 - When this happens during degree work, it can throw off even the best of ritualists.
 - It is a distraction from the solemnity of the ritual. It is discourteous to the degree team.
 - It robs the (?) of the benefit of what should be a meaningful experience.
 - It is insulting to the brethren who are trying to hear.

- **Personal Demeanor of the WM and his Officers**
 - The behaviour of the WM and the lodge officers – and their posture – should be an example for others to follow.
 - They should sit upright in your chair. Do not slouch.
 - Try to keep your feet flat on the floor at all times, (i.e. do not cross your legs).
 - Alcohol: When attending Masonic meetings and events, it is preferable to abstain, or consume alcohol in moderation.

- **Photographs**
 - Are not permitted inside the lodge room at any time when the VOTSL is open.
 - Never take a photograph of the Third Degree tracing board.

- **"Step Up" Night**
 - Many of our lodges hold a "step up" night at a meeting prior to their annual elections.
 - With the exception of the WM, most/all of the other Officers step up to the position to which they aspire in the following year.

 - What collars do the Officers wear on "step up" night? They wear the collars with which they are presently invested, (i.e. the Officers retain their existing collars for "step up" night).

- Where does the Master Elect sit on “step up” night? See Q. 23 on page 10 of the 2013 edition of the *Questions and Answers* booklet.
- Who returns salutes on “step up” night? See Q. 21 on page 10 of the 2013 edition of the *Questions and Answers* booklet.
- Who takes possession of the gavel on “step up” night? See Q. 22 on page 10 of the 2013 edition of the *Questions and Answers* booklet.
- Can the Master Elect remain seated and stand with the WM during the Openings and Closings on “step up” night? See Q. 24 on page 11 of the 2013 edition of the *Questions and Answers* booklet.
- When the lodge is being closed in the Third Degree on “step up” night, can the Master Elect receive the C.S., T. and W. from the SW? Can he do so under the wands? The answer to both questions is NO. The Worshipful Master must step down to the floor and the wands must be crossed over **him** (not the Master Elect). It is the WM who must accept the casual signs, tokens and words from the S.W. under the wands. The WM is also the one to make the declaration found on page 30 of the Book of the Work (2013).

- **Personal Reference Library**
 - Essential Grand Lodge publications that should be in your personal Masonic reference library:
 - o Book of the Work (2013)
 - o Guidelines for Lodge Officers in The Mechanics of The Work (2014)
 - o Constitution of the Grand Lodge (2014)
 - o Questions and Answers (2013)
 - o The Masonic Manual (2014)
 - o Meeting The Challenge (2007)
 - o Ceremony of Installation and Investiture (2012) [For Installed Masters only]
 - These publications are typically revised and updated each time they are reprinted.
 - Always obtain and use the latest edition.
 - Dispose of all former editions. They are no longer of use to you or to anyone else.

BANQUET PROTOCOL

- The Masonic protocols which apply in lodge are not all identical to those which apply at a banquet. Know the differences.
- The WM and his officers should know how to set up a Head Table, how many seats are available for guests to use, who should sit there, who sits where, and how guests at a Head Table are to be introduced.
- The WM and his officers should be very familiar with the typical banquet program.
- It is recommended that the WM appoint a “Master of Ceremonies” to conduct the formalities at a banquet. (It could be the D of C, or someone else.)
- The brethren should know how to address Head Table guests, prior to giving or responding to a Toast.
- Obtain a copy of the P&E Committee’s educational handout: *“Receiving Grand Lodge Officers and Banquet Hall Protocol”*.

MASONIC MEMORIAL SERVICES

- Plan. Prepare. Practice.
- Be prepared to hold a Service at any time – sometimes with less than 24 hours notice!
- Read the P&E Committee’s educational material about how to conduct a Masonic Memorial Service.
- The WM and each officer should keep a personal copy of the *Masonic Memorial Services* booklet in their apron cases.