

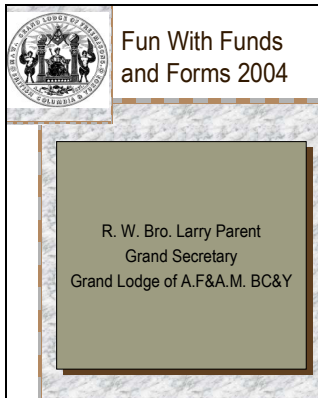
Victoria Lodge of Education and Research

650 Fisgard St, Victoria, B.C. Canada

FUN WITH FUNDS AND FORMS 2004

On Tuesday, March 16 the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research was pleased to have R. W. Bro. Larry Parent, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, as their guest speaker.

R. W. Bro. Parent gave his presentation using Power Point computerized slides. Following is an outline of his slide show and the accompanying notes for each slide.

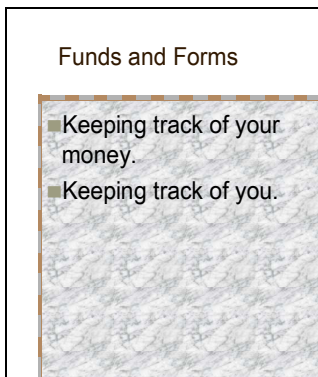


This talk is in 'layman's language' so should be easy to understand but may also be imprecise.

There seems to be a lot of confusion concerning the Grand Lodge funds and various forms. Today I hope to clarify some of that confusion - or perhaps add to it. I have heard a brother say "Why is the Per Capita so high if we have \$10,000.00 in the bank?" Half of the answer is we don't have \$10,000.00 in the bank. The other half of the answer is we are not allowed to spend the principal - only the interest earned by the principal may be spent.

The totals mentioned in this talk are to be found in the 2003 Proceedings.

* So let's take a look at the funds and a few of the forms of Grand Lodge.



The two main activities of the Grand Lodge Office are to keep track of your money and to keep track of the membership.



Your money is kept in several funds.

Here they are, listed here in alphabetical order

The principal of most of the funds cannot be spent.

Only the interest may be used.

Donations to some of them are tax deductible. Others are not.

Revenue from some of them is limited to the Masonic Family. Others are not.

Let's take a look at each one.

Benevolence Fund

- Forms are available from the Grand Lodge
- The forms are a financial assessment of the recipient.
- Payment may be a one-time occurrence or it may be monthly allocation.
- Cheques are sent to secretaries.
- Recipients are re-assessed yearly
- It is not a registered charity.

In order for benevolence to be awarded, the Lodge is asked to do its homework by investigating the need and informing the Grand Lodge Office on the correct forms. Those forms are sent to the chairman of the Benevolence Committee and the committee assesses the need, considers the funds available and recommends a payment. Cheques are then sent to Lodge Secretaries. The Lodges deposit those cheques and issue their own cheques to the recipients.

Every year each Lodge is asked to reassess the need and to advise the Grand Lodge Office. The amount paid to the recipient is then modified, if necessary. The Grand Secretary has observed that the Benevolence Committee does not give your money away without a great deal of study and consideration.

Unfortunately, the tax laws prevent us from having it declared a registered charity. The law states that members must not benefit from a charity.

As of April 30, 2003 the Benevolence Fund Totaled \$1,447,621.00 and during the 2002-2003 year it provided \$57,674.00 to needy brethren, widows and orphans.

\$10 is expected to be requested from every newly raised Master Mason, but all donations are gratefully received.

Building Fund

- Up to \$25,000.00 is available to Lodge Holding Societies for renovations and repairs.
- Grand Lodge must hold the first mortgage.

As of April 30, 2002 the Building Fund was \$259,785.00 which is primarily investments in Lodge buildings.

If a Masonic building needs repair, a numbered company of Grand Lodge can provide up to \$25,000 for renovations.

Again the proper forms must be filled in and Grand Lodge must hold the first mortgage. The Constituent Lodges repay the mortgage monthly.

Bursary Fund

- It is intended for needy students.
- First year students are given preference.
- Forms are available from Grand Lodge Office.
- A Freemason must sponsor the student.
- A letter is required from the Lodge Secretary.
- The form return deadline May 15th
- Awards vary between \$500.00 and \$750.00.

It is a bursary - based on need - not a scholarship which is based on marks -although the committee usually comments on the high grades listed on the forms. Secondary school graduates have two months less to earn money in the summer than university or college students, so first year students are more likely to be more needy.

The student does not need to be related to a Mason but he or she must be sponsored by a Mason.

The letter from a Lodge secretary indicates that the sponsor is in good standing. There is no extension of the deadline. The chairman is usually in the office before closing time on May 15th.

Last year the committee reported it awarded \$66,250.00

As of April 30, 2003 the Bursary Fund totaled \$1,391,195.00.

Several Lodges have made significant donations to the fund and bequests have also helped. You might consider including the fund in your will.

A recent bequest will add well over to \$200,00.00 to the Fund.

Community Charities Fund

- The Cancer Car Project
- We Can Help programme
 - The assessment is calculated the same as the Per Capita.
 - The assessment is a minor part of the budget.
 - Most of the money comes from donations and bequests.
 - It is a registered charity

Regulation 23(h) describes how the Per Capita is calculated. Regulation 23(i) describes how the Community Charities Fund is calculated. The wording is almost identical so every Lodge is required to pay an amount for every member on its roll.

The \$6.00 assessment provided approximately \$74,268.00 in 2002 while the total expenditure for that year by April 30, 2003 was \$238,573.00.

As of April 30, 2003 the invested fund totaled \$1,088,431.00.

Some Lodges are amending their by-laws and separating Dues from the Community Charities Fund Assessment and Per Capita Fee. This must be worded very carefully because you can only be suspended for not paying your Dues. If Grand Lodge costs are not called 'Dues' then their payment becomes optional for the member.

It is very important that completed receipt books are returned to the Grand Lodge Office for audit by Revenue Canada because it is a registered charity. Constituent Lodges could have problems if the receipts issued by their Lodge secretaries do not add up to the receipts claimed as tax deductions.

Let's take a closer look.

The Cancer Car Project

- Initiated in 1988 with a 15 year agreement.
- Originally 3 cars served the Vancouver Clinic.
- 16 vehicles now serve the Vancouver, Kelowna and Victoria Clinics.
- The budget for 2003 was \$195,579.00.
- We now have a written agreement to continue the programme until 2009.

Sedans or station wagons are used in Vancouver and Vans are used in other areas. By the end of 2002, the programme had recorded 290,045 patient rides and a total of 5,731,525 kilometres travelled by our drivers since the programme began.

New volunteers are encouraged to get involved as computer operators, dispatchers as well as drivers.

The agreement was recently extended to 2009 but the Principal Officers meet with the Canadian Cancer Society several times per year and the agreement is reviewed once per year

We Can Help Programme

- It began in 1995 with a budget of \$20,000.00.
- St. John Ambulance provides teaching materials to Grade 4 teachers on request.
- Several students are alive today because of those life-saving techniques.
- The present budget of \$35,000.00 comes from investment interest.

The budget in recent years has been limited to \$35,000 which is derived from investment income.

Individual teachers decide their annual need and inform St. John Ambulance. St. John ambulance delivers the materials and you pay for it.

DDGMs have been asked to appoint a spokesman to approach individual schools to make them aware of the offer.

Participation is better in small school districts than large large ones.

Approximately \$270,000.00 has been spent since 1995 and we have reports of as many as 9 kids alive today who owe their lives to the course. That works out to \$30, 000.00 per child.

How much is a child's life worth? You decide if the programme is worth funding.

Contingency Fund

- The Fund is an accumulation of surplus funds over many years.
- It will be capped at \$400,000.00.
- The investment income will be used to offset the Per Capita charges.
- The capitol is available for "unforeseen" emergencies.

By April 30, 2003 the fund totaled \$396,716.00.

Interest from the fund will be used to offset the Per Capita charges.

It may also be used as an emergency fund.

The General Fund covers the operation of Grand Lodge Salaries are paid to the Grand Secretary, 2 full time employees, 1 part time employee, a bookkeeper who comes in for a few hours every week and an on-call computer consultant.

General Fund

- Salaries and Honorariums
- Grand Lodge Communication Expenses
- Monthly Bulletin
- Rent for Grand Lodge Offices
- Office Expenses
- Grand Master's Project
- Conference Expenses
- Inventory

The Grand Master, The Grand Treasurer and the Grand Historian receive small honorariums. The Grand Secretary and the Senior officers also have small travel expense accounts.

The cost of holding Grand Lodge and hosting VIPs is included.

Every Bulletin costs \$18. \$.07 is paid by the Lodge and \$.11 is paid by the per capita. Every 1000 copies increase the Per Capita \$121.00 per month. Lodges presently order 1000 copies more than we have members.

Grand Lodge does not own the Vancouver Masonic Centre building.

Office Expenses included are the Library, Archives, web site, insurance, office supplies, telephone, postage, equipment repair and replacement and the audit fees.

MWB Carter had the pictures of PGMs hung in the Grand Lodge hallway.

Conferences include the All Canada Conference, the Western Canada Conference and the Educational Seminars.

Inventory items include pins, Constitutions, Forms and Ceremonies, Rituals, etc. The cost depends on the member's age, and his present Dues.

The Book of Constitution lists the calculation of costs and benefits under Regulation 37

As of April 30, 2003 the fund totaled \$116,791.00 and it paid out \$11,378.00. to the Lodges involved

The interest from the fund is dispersed to the Lodges involved, in proportion to the amounts invested by their members.

The fund will continue to pay to the Lodge the appropriate amount as long as the Lodge shall exist. It does not cease with the death of the member. It may more accurately be called the Perpetuity Fund.

Life Membership Fund

- Members may invest in the Grand Lodge Fund.
- Income from investments are calculated annually.
- The income is paid to the Lodges "pro rata".
- The income will continue to be paid to the Lodge in perpetuity.

Masonic Foundation Fund

- The Fund was generated by many years of donations, bequests, etc.
- Interest from the investments provide funds for major annual donations.
- By law we must spend a calculated amount every year.
- Grand Master chooses beneficiaries annually based on appropriate advice

This is a complicated one - It includes several small funds - for instance:

The Francis J. Burd Fund - 1/6 of the income from the funds held in trust, are to be used for educational, benevolent and charitable activities of Acacia Lodge No. 22.

The Boyd Robinson Trust Fund provides one scholarship to one school in Vancouver.

The Edwina Marsh Memorial Fund provides one scholarship, to one UBC Forestry student, from the interior, who is in the second year.

Last year the income from the fund was also dispersed to:

\$10,000.00 - Victoria Quadra Hillside Centre

\$5000.00 - Canuck Place Children's Hospital

\$10,000.00 - St. Paul's Heart Centre

\$10,000.00 - Women and Victim Services

\$10,000.00 - Nova Transition House

\$10,000.00 - Yukon Hospice Society

\$10,000.00 - Hospice Association of the Okanagan

\$10,000.00 - Kaslo and Area Hospice

\$2500.00 - Juvenile Diabetes Foundation

\$2500.00 - Hearing Impaired Kids Equipment endowment

Grand Lodge Forms

- Form 3 - Recommending a new District Deputy Grand Master
- Form 12 - District Deputy Grand Master Report on a Lodge
- Form 55 - Annual Return
- Form 64 - Elected Lodge Officers Form

Grand Lodge has a lot of forms and most of them concern Masonic Trials so are quite specialized. I won't mention them.

According to the recent survey of all the brethren it is obvious that there is a great deal of confusion concerning the appointment of Grand Lodge Officers so we will look at that one.

There is less confusion regarding the DDGM's report on a Lodge.

Only Secretaries are really concerned with form 55s but understanding what your secretary is doing behind the scenes is useful.

The Elected Officers Form is becoming very important due to the use of computers in the office.

Form 3 - Recommending a new DDGM

- The D.D.G.M. calls the Past District Deputies to a meeting sometime in December.
- They recommend three names for the rank of R.W.B. and two names for the rank of V.W.B.
- Form 3 is sent to the Deputy Grand Master through the Grand Secretary
- The D.G.M. may accept them or not
- The D.G.M. assembles his team in Jan - Feb
- The good of the Craft is paramount

Many brethren have no idea how DDGMs are appointed. Let me explain the procedure.

The present DDGM calls a meeting of the PDDGMs and those P DDGMs suggest the names of Past Masters in the District for consideration. At least one PGM has said "There will be no rotation in this jurisdiction" yet many districts still insist on recommending a Past Master from the next Lodge in the rotation, even if there is a better candidate in another Lodge.

The DDGM fills in the form and sends it to the Grand Secretary clearly marked "Personal and Confidential". This Grand Secretary does not wear his glasses when he opens those envelopes and files the forms in a folder for the DGM. Sometimes it pays to be ignorant.

The Grand Master-Elect has the prerogative to choose his officers. He normally follows the recommendations of the PDDGMs and contacts the Bother listed first on the form. If the brother does not accept the position the DGM usually contacts the next name etc. on the list.

Form 12 - D.D.G. M. Report on a Lodge

- The DDGM is required to officially visit each of his Lodges at least once during his term.
- He must submit a report on each Lodge by May 1st.
- The reports are analysed and summarised by a committee of Past Grand Masters.
- The reports are read by the Committee on Warranted Lodges to offer assistance if needed or requested.

The form provides details of each Lodge such as finances, ritual, meeting place condition, regalia condition, the minutes and other aspects.

The reports are sent to a committee that is usually composed of Past Grand Masters who create a summary which they present at Grand Lodge in June. This summary could be called the 'State of the Craft Report'.

The Warranted Lodges Committee also uses the reports to assist weak Lodges that request assistance, by providing suggestions and educational materials.

Unfortunately, many weak Lodges are composed of men who would rather have the Lodge die than admit a weakness.

Lodges should not get too excited about one critical report from a DDGM - but if several DDGMs see a problem with your Lodge - you probably do have a problem and it is up to the Lodge to solve it.

Form 55 - Annual Return

- It includes a list of the members, the Charities Fund Assessment and Per Capita invoices.
- Secretaries submit the names and addresses of the officers, etc.
- Late reports are subject to a \$1 per day fine.
- Members may not vote at Grand Lodge if Form 55 is not returned.
- The forms are bound in hard cover for the archives and referenced often.

This is the one that really stresses secretaries.

There is also a form 56 which secretaries submit every month. Wise secretaries use copies of that form to fill in the form 55.

Every change to the Lodge roll must be entered and tallied and the tally must agree with the previous Annual Return. Secretaries are expected to account for every EA, FC, MM, Affiliate, Demits Suspension, Expulsion, Death, Lodge Life Member, Grand Lodge Life Member, Honorary Member, Remitted Member, Etc. *etc. etc.* This is a trying time for secretaries - It is wise to not bother them.

March 1st is the deadline otherwise a daily fine is levied as stated in the Constitution. It is apparent that many secretaries are not aware of what happens to their reports. Some submissions are so messy as to be an embarrassment to the Lodge so are returned to the secretary for correction.

Form 64 - Elected Lodge Officers Guide

- It must be returned to the Grand Secretary's office immediately after an installation
- It lists the full names and contact details
- Past Lodge officer details are archived from the present Grand Lodge files.
- It is becoming important that the Grand Lodge Office has an E-mail contact with every Lodge - it does not have to be the secretary

This form is the newest and has been necessitated because of the use of computers.

On the anniversary of the installation of a Lodge, all the outgoing officers are placed into a 'Past Officer File' in the Grand Lodge database. This allows the Grand Lodge Office to keep a permanent record of the brethren who filled each Lodge office. New officers are expected to fill the 'Present Officers File'.

Grand Lodge does not keep any more information on you than necessary. We only need your contact information if you are an officer of a Lodge, a Grand Lodge Officer or a committee member. Only your Lodge secretary has access to most members contact information.

E-mail has proved to be a very efficient, money saving technology. Most Lodges, but not all, have an e-mail address. Postage and telephone in the Grand Lodge Office cost you about \$15,000.00 per year. If every Lodge, Grand Lodge Officer and Committee Chairman had an e-mail address we could cut that dramatically even though postage costs increase every year. Every certificate now costs \$5.00 to mail.

The primary purposes of the Grand Lodge Office

- Keeping track of your money.
- Keeping track of you.

Every bill that is paid is checked by the Grand Secretary. It is then confirmed as reasonable by the bookkeeper, who cuts a cheque and a Grand Lodge warrant. The warrants are reviewed and with the cheques, are signed by the Grand Secretary. A signing officer of the Finance Committee later visits the office to examine the cheques and bills before signing the warrants. In the case of the Cancer Car Project, the Chairman also signs the warrants. The Grand Treasurer drops in and reviews the entire procedure and if he is not satisfied he asks very pointed questions which this Grand Secretary must be able to answer satisfactorily before the Grand Treasurer will add his signature to the cheque.

The Grand Lodge Office guards your information very carefully. There is a lawyer in this jurisdiction who wants to charge various Supreme Court Judges with judicial malfeasance and he suspects that they are Freemasons. He originally asked if certain judges were Masons and I told him I didn't know. He later decided that we must be incorporated as societies and the names of society members are public knowledge so he wanted the list of all your names. I told him the Lodges were not incorporated. To terminate the communication I finally explained that there are approximately 4,000,000 Masons in the world and they are free to visit and participate in Lodge activities and the Grand Secretary's Office would have no record of most of them. The only way to ascertain if a man is a Freemason is to ask him. I haven't heard from him since.

We do not give out your information.