



## ELECTIONS OF LODGE OFFICERS

### Just imagine if someone told you:

1. That you could **not** nominate a member of your Lodge for election as an Officer, (except for the Tyler).
2. That on Election Night, at any time, you could vote for any member of your Lodge that you wished, to fill any of the offices. (Only members who have served for twelve months as a Warden are eligible to be a W. M.)
3. That it was improper, before an election, to speak in the body of the Lodge for or against any candidate.
4. That some Officers are elected simply by an open vote in Lodge. Others must be by a written ballot.
5. That you cannot be a Lodge Officer unless you have proved your proficiency in the Master Mason Degree, in open Lodge.
6. That without written permission from the Grand Master, no one can hold two offices in the same Lodge at the same time, nor hold office in more than one Lodge at the same time.
7. That, with the exception of the W. M., the Constitution does not specify the order of rank and seniority of Lodge Officers.

Well, all the above statements are true.

*(All Brethren are encouraged to read Sections 217-229 and 291-293 of our Constitution for further enlightenment and to review any minor limitations which may be applicable.)*

If the number of questions received by the Protocol and Etiquette Committee is any indication, it seems that the protocols and practises pertaining to the election of Lodge Officers are not well understood by the Brethren. Perhaps the following explanations and comments will be useful.

Any member, regardless of his social, business, or economic position outside the Lodge Room, may aspire to be Master of his Lodge. This is usually accomplished by progressing through the various offices of the Lodge. Generally, this progression takes seven or more years.

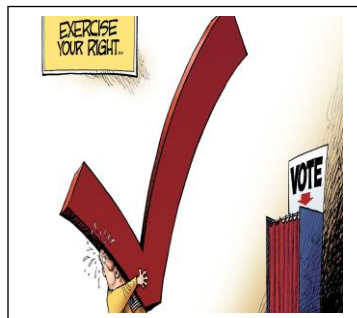
The term “*progressive office*” refers to a series of offices within the Lodge, culminating in the office of Worshipful Master. Ideally, a Mason starts in the most junior office and “*progresses*” to the next in line each year. However, bear in mind that each office is an elected one and while progression is common, it is not mandated.

The exact composition of the progressive officers can vary but will typically finish with the series: Junior Deacon, Senior Deacon, Junior Warden, Senior Warden, and Worshipful Master.

In accordance with each Lodge’s Bylaws, and depending upon the office, a Lodge office can be filled by either:

- Election by the members of the Lodge in a written, secret ballot; **or**
- Election by the members in an open vote; **or**
- Appointment by the Worshipful Master.

**(Continued on page 3)**



# FROM THE EDITOR

## ATTITUDE

One of the issues, among others, that keep Brethren away from Lodge, is best summed up in the word ATTITUDE, to be more precise, negative attitude instead of positive attitude. A Brother makes a suggestion to improve a situation and he hears those terrible words, "You can't do that" and when you ask "why" you get the universal answer "because".

My guess is that most Masons can relate to negative attitude deployed against them in Lodge or at a meeting. We all need to know that "positive attitude" creates more involvement by a member. Examples would be small parts in the Ritual which were perhaps designed to give a younger or a seasoned veteran member an opportunity to build his confidence on the floor of the Lodge.

Positive attitude with confidence creates Involvement and with more Involvement creates Commitment which then may lead to Leadership.

The key to positive Attitude is to Listen. Perhaps, the majority of Lodge problems could be resolved by listening to the new Mason and his ideas, to the Master and Officers with their concerns, to the senior members with their helpful ideas.

Comments like "Its too modern for our Lodge", "Its designed for big Lodges and we are small", and, of course, the granddaddy of them all, "We don't do it that way in this Lodge or Grand Lodge", takes away esteem, self-worth, and the desire to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.

How many times a day COULD YOU give positive re-enforcement to a member of the Craft, to a person or persons at work, and, more importantly, at home?

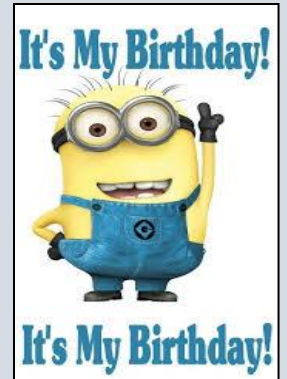
After all, my Brethren, is that not the essence of Freemasonry of being "positive"? We will then endeavour to be happy ourselves and then communicate that happiness to others.

-Excerpt from The Communique February 2019

**Contributed by M. W. Bro. Paul E. Todd  
Grand Master**

# BIRTHDAYS IN MAY

Bro. David Aryan  
Bro. Cale Brillinger  
Bro. Joel Bunag  
Bro. Michael Campbell  
Bro. Mike Galloway  
Bro. Camilo Sobrepena  
W. Bro. Danilo Vitto  
Bro. Rafael Zarris



Brethren,

Happy birthday! I hope all your birthday wishes and dreams come true.

## SECRETARY'S NOTE:

Forget the hasty, unkind word,  
Forget the slander you have heard.  
Forget the quarrel and the cause,  
Forget the whole affair, because,  
Forgetting is the only way.  
Forget the storm of yesterday.  
Forget the knocker, and the squeak,  
Forget the bad day of the week.  
Forget you're not a millionaire,  
Forget the grey streaks in your hair.  
Forget to even get the blues.  
But don't forget To Pay Your Dues!

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# ELECTION OF LODGE OFFICERS

(Continued from page 1)

No member has special authority when voting. There is no veto, nor weighted voting. Each vote is equal. Every member has but one vote - except when there is a tie vote. (In which case, the Master and the Wardens shall each cast a second ballot.) Every member present must cast a vote in an election. Voting is not optional. Each vote is a statement of support for a brother.

It is significant to elect by secret vote the executive Officers of the Lodge. It is a written vote, free of influence. The scrutineers proclaim the decision of the Lodge. A mandate is granted by the members to the Officer-elect. It is his to accept or decline. The vote is a statement of support, encouragement, trust and respect in the Officer-elect.

Lodge Officers are elected and/or appointed to their positions annually. Typically, an Officer appointed as a Chaplain or Inner Guard will progress through the other appointed Officer ranks. However, Lodges can be flexible in this, as circumstances dictate.

If eventually elected as a Deacon, a Brother will likely

progress to the offices of Junior and Senior Warden, and then to Worshipful Master.

The offices of Secretary and Treasurer are not part of any progression. They are elected based on the interest and skill of the member. The same is often true for the appointed offices of Director of Ceremonies, Organist, and Historian. The Tyler, Auditors and Trustees are usually elected by open vote.

The sole requirement for anyone to become an Officer, (save where a member must have held the office of Warden before he is eligible to be elected as the Worshipful Master), is his fitness and ability for leadership.

The Lodge, (often with some input from the Worshipful Master and the Past Masters), must be the sole judge as to the member's fitness, so that neither the brother nor his friends should take offence at the action, nor should there be any ill feeling when our greater loyalty to the Lodge is exercised, by dropping an Officer from the line. There is no such thing in Freemasonry as "**advancement to a higher office by right.**" No one is automatically advanced to the next office.

*-Excerpt from Protocol & Etiquette Vol. 18*



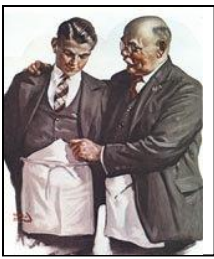
By-Laws of Richmond Lodge No.23 (2015)

(Regarding Elections)



## IV. Officers

2. Annually, at the regular meeting in May, the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Senior Deacon, Junior Deacon, Treasurer, Secretary, and three (3) Trustees of the Lodge shall be elected by separate written ballot. The Auditors, Tyler, Assistant Secretary and the Examining Board shall be elected by an open vote of the Lodge.
3. Annually, at the regular meeting held on the Festival of St. John the Baptist, after the installation of the Worshipful Master, the following Officers shall be appointed by the Worshipful Master. Director of Ceremonies, Senior Steward, Junior Steward, Chaplin, Inner Guard and Historian. They shall be invested together with the elected Officers. The Chairmen of the following committees shall also be named at the same meeting: Committee to Visit the Sick, Masonic Education Committee, and Blood Donor Committee.



# Masonic Etiquette

## Learn the Do's and Don'ts of Masonic Etiquette

*Masonic Etiquette, for the most part, is merely good manners and respect for your lodge, its members, its Worshipful Master and the convention of Freemasonry, in general.*

Unfortunately, Masonic Etiquette ...or Blue Lodge Etiquette, (as it is called in the United States) is largely unpublished as well as unspoken, therefore, up until now, it has been more difficult to learn its rules and nuances.

You may study ritual work, degree work, floor work and know all Masonry's glorious history, Masonic symbols, jewels, etc. but there is very little written about how to comport yourself so you do not look foolish or be regarded as disrespectful.

Some are small things, and some are not, but your Lodge conduct is continually on display.

Few Masonic mentors include a list of proper Lodge behavior, as they have learned it, themselves, incident-by-incident, and usually learned by them after their having made an error and being kindly informed by another member as to the correct Masonic etiquette of the situation.

### CONFORMING TO MASONIC ETIQUETTE

Over time, and by watching others, members conform themselves to exhibit proper Masonic etiquette behavior to learn lodge customs.

As a newly Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason, it is expected that you will exhibit the proper decorum and propriety in observance of the formal requirements which govern behavior in polite societies... BEFORE someone takes you aside to explain your errors...or you wouldn't be reading

### RULES OF MASONIC ETIQUETTE

#### 10. BALLOTING:

Do not enter or leave the lodge room during a ballot.

**Why?** It is discourteous to leave the lodge room during a speech, during a degree, etc. There are several natural periods, such as at the end of one section and before the next begins, or when the Master puts the lodge at ease until the sound of the gavel. Then, and only then, you may leave the lodge without being considered rude.

It is Masonic Etiquette that all brethren are expected to vote when requested to do so.

Failure to cast your ballot not only results in your failure to share in your duties, but is in direct disobedience of the Master's request.

#### 11. VOTING IS MANDATORY:

When an issue is put to a vote, all brethren should vote.

**Why?** A brother who does not vote is discourteous because he skews the ballot. He becomes the weak link in a strong chain.

No matter what the reason of his non-vote, he injures the lodge's ballot, its value and its secrecy. Failure to vote can injure a lodge's feeling of brotherhood, and by that injury, can injure the Masonic fraternity.

No matter what reason you may privately hold about voting, it is poor Masonic Etiquette to fail to vote when requested to do so by the Master.

***(Masonic Etiquette to be continued in future issues of the Lodestar)***