

# B 2 B FaciliFacts

Presented by the Brother 2 Brother Committee of Grand Lodge

JUNE 2007



## The B2B Tool Kit – Resource Manual “Let’s Look A Little Closer At ...”

### 4.8 THE IMPORTANCE, PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF LODGE VISITATIONS

#### 4.8.1 Importance and Purpose

What wizardry lies in visitation? What will transform a traveler from a faceless person behind the wheel of an automobile, into a man of specific merit and deserving of favour? Masonic membership and the privilege of visitation are yours and mine. The Mason who travels often is no stranger to this privilege. Many depend upon visitation to relieve the boredom of ongoing activities within his mother lodge and in time to establish firm friendships in the lodges where he has visited.

***One of the most obvious ways to involve new Masons immediately is in the area of Lodge Visitation. Not much expertise is required and there is a fabulous opportunity for the Brother to gain valuable experience.***

Every Lodge reflects a vast range of ages and conditions among its members. Ages range from twenty-one in most Jurisdictions, to more than one hundred. Any Mason in good standing may visit any recognized lodge in the district, province, and country or abroad, subject at all times to regulations of his own and the visited jurisdiction. To the Visitor, the Masonic world has made available the facilities of lodges, the assistance, companionship, and hospitality of its members, all when he presents himself at the lodge portal. The cold exterior of a strange community and the indifferent manner of its citizens disappear upon his acceptance with the friendly and fraternal handshake.

### The Handshake...



The Handshake is one of the most powerful gestures between people. In business it symbolizes closure, affirmation and a contract. ***It also symbolizes warmth, friendship, trust, and honor.***

Members of the Masonic fraternity have stretched forth their hands to all men, using the handshake as an act of brotherly love, relief, truth and a general concern for others.

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#### EDITOR'S CLARIFICATION

##### HOLDING A FESTIVE BOARD

In the May issue, it was not the intent of the B2B Committee to dictate whether lodge's hold their Festive Board prior to or after the lodge meeting. Right across our Grand Jurisdiction it is scheduled both ways.

The real issue is to remember that each lodge should have a time for fellowship and when it is scheduled should be flexible and meet the needs of the individual lodge.



## **“Let’s Look A Little Closer At ...”** cont’d.

### **4.8.1 Importance and Purpose** cont’d.

The word “privilege” has been mentioned frequently. One might ask why visitation is not a “right”, especially since some by-laws refer to it in this manner. It is a right only so far as each Mason has the same chance, meets the same requirements and is greeted as are all other Masons upon visiting another lodge. However, restrictions are placed upon the indiscriminate visitation of lodges in much the same manner as a man may regulate the traffic through his own home. Any member present in lodge at the time a visitor presents himself, may object to the Master, and our traveler must remain outside the tiled door. If already sitting in lodge, he must retire. The lodge is the member's fraternal home, so it is for him as well as any other member, to select those from other lodges to sit with him in his own.

The visiting Mason should avoid meetings at which election of officers and lodge audits are discussed, as well as when any topic of a strictly local and unpleasant nature is to be aired. He may not be present at Masonic trials unless he is on official business in connection with such trial. Only upon express invitation of the lodge should any visitor presume to appear for admission under these circumstances, otherwise he may encounter an embarrassing "impasse" leaving an unpleasant memory of his visit.

### **4.8.2 How Do I Visit Another Lodge?**

Many of us do not actually know the procedure of visiting another lodge. The method to gain admission is in most jurisdictions basically the same. ***A member in good standing who has been personally vouched for by a brother in good standing or who has passed a satisfactory examination by a Board of Trial may visit a lodge at the discretion of their Worshipful Master.***

Many brethren have been careless of this in the past. A card may fall into unscrupulous hands, and might be used in an improper manner to beg money or other assistance, all in the name of the brother who forgot to sign and then lost his card.

If you are just “plain Johnny Mason”, one of the members who never studied the work and seldom attend meetings, it might do well to brush up on the principle grips and passwords with a member of your lodge. Now, fortified with all this, you are about to invade the precincts of the strange lodge.

### **4.8.3 How to Visit a Lodge?**

A Step by Step Answer.

- You have previously determined that the lodge is regular and recognized by our own Grand Lodge. You approach the Tyler and advise him of your desire to visit, introducing yourself. He will make the necessary arrangements while you remain with him.
- **A Board of Trial for a visitor shall be conducted by at least two Master Masons of the lodge, of whom one should be an Installed Master, appointed by the Master.**.. These brethren are entrusted with the task of satisfying themselves that you are a Mason in good standing. They may ask you to examine the register in the thought that a brother may be inside who could vouch for you and eliminate the examination.
- You know not a single brother present however, and are requested to exhibit the documentary evidence to which we have referred. If the lodge is out of Province, the committee will check the directory of lodges to ascertain the regularity of your own, unless they already know of it.

**“Let’s Look A Little Closer At ...”** cont’d.**4.8.3 How to Visit a Lodge?** cont’d.

- Having satisfied themselves in that regard, the committee will retire with you to a convenient place from which any and all other persons are excluded while the examination is being conducted.
- The necessary questions will be asked to assure the committee that you are in possession of the secrets with the necessary signs, grips and tokens of the Degrees. If you are a Master Mason, you might be required to **subscribe to the Tyler’s oath in accordance with Form 3 in the Constitution, or repeat it** while holding the Volume of the Sacred Law.
- Following satisfactory examination, the visitor shall enter his name, his Masonic rank and the name of his lodge in which he claims or last claimed membership, in the attendance book kept by each lodge for the purpose.
- After the committee have reported their findings to the Master, you will be properly clothed and conducted into the lodge by the appropriate officer. Here you will be introduced to the members present and led to a convenient seat next to brethren, if possible, so that you may be made to feel at ease quickly.
- If you are a Grand Lodge officer or hold any title in the fraternity, the Master may, at his discretion, invite you to the East for introduction and accorded a seat beside him.

**4.8.4 Conclusion**

Now, suppose one day you find conditions reversed and you are appointed to be part of a Board of Trial committee. You will act as described above, exercising tact and diplomacy in your greeting and the way in which you make the various requests of the visiting brother. Some suggestions along this line may be timely at this point.

By ascertaining whether the visitor has ever held office or has been a Grand Lodge Officer, you may decide just to what extent you will examine him. You would not expect a visitor who is only occasionally present in his own lodge to recite a long lecture or conduct a degree for you in the examination. Remember to give the visitor, at all times, the benefit of courtesy and friendliness.

Above all, put the visitor at ease. He may never have undergone this ceremony before. If you perceive that he is becoming "out of his depth" in replying to your questions, suggest to him that he relate what transpired in the degrees in his own words. This will often bring out the desired information from a brother who finds himself unable to recite a word of ritual in the proper manner. Always keep in mind that true Masonry lies far beyond the mere ability to recite its ritual and ceremony, or the act of doing lip service to its teachings.

***Visitation is a true privilege. It is a privilege in a greater sense as it enables a Mason to widen his scope of experience, his acquaintances, his fund of knowledge and his understanding of the complexities of human nature.***

We shall sometimes find a spiritual life and a renewal of our confidence in mankind's basic honesty and compassion. When men who were complete strangers only a short hour before, greet us with a warm and fraternal handshake, we realize that the fraternity is a collection of Grand Lodges, which in turn are collections of constituent lodges.

***Again, these lodges are made up of the individual man with a common meeting point of the mind and heart. Here are the "grassroots" of the Craft and with these qualities the newly initiated brother may well plan his Masonic beginnings.***

## ***B2B Jurisdiction News***

### **B2B PARTICIPANT SUGGESTIONS**

*The committee received this story from a B2B participant and thought it worthy of wider distribution. Please read it and consider it as a guide for your daily Masonic advancement.*

### **I AM FREEMASONRY**

I was born in antiquity, in the ancient days when men first dreamed of God.

I have been tried through the ages, and found true. The crossroads of the world bear the imprint of my feet, and the cathedrals of all nations mark the skill of my hands.

I strive for beauty and for symmetry. In my heart is wisdom, strength and courage for those who ask.

Upon my altars is the Book of Holy Writ, and my prayers are to the One Omnipotent God. My sons work and pray together, without rank or discord, in the public mart and in the inner chamber.

By signs and symbols I teach the lessons of life and of death and the relationship of man with God and of man with man. My arms are widespread to receive those of lawful age and good report who seek me of their own free will.

I accept them and teach them to use my tools in the building of men, and thereafter, find direction in their own quest for perfection so much desired and so difficult to attain.

I lift up the fallen and shelter the sick. I hark to the orphans' cry, the widows tears, the pain of the old and destitute. I am not church, nor party, nor school, yet my sons bear a full share of responsibility to God, to country, to neighbor and themselves.

They are freemen, tenacious of their liberties and alert to lurking danger. At the end I commit them as each one undertakes the journey beyond the vale into the glory of everlasting life.

I ponder the sand within the glass and think how small is a single life in the eternal universe. Always have I taught immortality, and even as I raise men from darkness into light, I am a way of life.

***I Am Freemasonry.***

*The Brethren are encouraged to submit their B2B Lodge or District News via e-mail to: [jdwaters@sympatico.ca](mailto:jdwaters@sympatico.ca)  
We would be pleased to include the news items in an upcoming edition.*

## ***B2B Committee - Activity Summary***

### **District Presentations**

- **Algoma District – Thunder Bay**

#### **For More Information**

**Contact the Grand Lodge B2B Committee**

*e-mail* **Dennis Hawman** – B2B Chairman

[dhawman@primus.ca](mailto:dhawman@primus.ca)

#### **For Your Personal Copy of the B2B FaciliFacts**

*Simply send your e-mail address to*

**Iain Wates** (Committee Member)

[jdwaters@sympatico.ca](mailto:jdwaters@sympatico.ca)