

MANUAL FOR CHAPTER OFFICERS

PURPOSE

This Manual is not intended to be the complete and authoritative statement of all the law governing the conduct of the Officers of our constituent Chapters. It is a collection of suggestions and is a general guide, which it is hoped will assist them in the discharge of their duties in a proper and pleasing manner, and lead them to further search in an effort to add to their Masonic proficiency and knowledge.

If in this way anything has been done to encourage the orderly, expeditious and impressive conduct of the business and ceremonies of our Constituent Chapters, much will have been accomplished.

It is again emphasized, that the success of Royal Arch Masonry in each Chapter, depends upon a zealous and intelligent membership, led and inspired, by efficient enthusiastic and well informed Officers

The Holy Royal Arch

Capitular Masonry provides the ceremonies which complete the Master Mason's Degree and together with the three degrees of the Symbolic Lodge, constitute Ancient Freemasonry.

Royal Arch Masonry, by precept and example, and through the medium of its beautiful ceremonies and lectures, directs the thoughts of men to a higher plane. It promotes tolerance and the spirit of goodwill, encourages generosity and kindness and throughout its ceremonies pays due reverence to the Deity, upon whose Holy Word the whole structure of Freemasonry has been erected.

The importance of the Royal Arch Degree in Freemasonry is clearly set forth in Article 2. of the "Articles of Union" between the two Grand Lodges of England in 1813, as follows:

"It is declared and pronounced that pure ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more; Namely, those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch."

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Royal Arch Mason are clearly set forth in the lessons we endeavour to teach.

In each Companion, regardless of his rank or station, there is need for recognition of these responsibilities.

The man who merits the title of "Royal Arch Mason" will know what is expected of him:

kindness to his fellow men, the rendering of generous assistance where most needed, and the leading of an exemplary life by inspiring others to join with him in upholding the principles of the Holy Royal Arch.

A Companion selected to serve as an Officer must be prepared to assume the obligation and responsibilities of Masonic preferment. No man who is unqualified or unwilling to properly and fully perform his duties should accept office, or be elected or appointed to Office in a Chapter.
Government

The government of Royal Arch Masonry in this jurisdiction is vested in the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Saskatchewan. Grand Chapter is composed of its Grand Officers, Past Grand Officers, Past First Principals, First, Second, and Third Principals of all Chapters on the Grand Chapter Register.

The Grand Chapter meets at an Annual Convocation and elects and appoints its Officers to carry out the duties of Grand Chapter. The Grand Chapter enacts all laws, rules and regulations for the government of the Royal Craft and these are promulgated in the Constitution.

The Grand Chapter sets the ritualistic work and all ceremonies permitted in this Jurisdiction, and is the highest court of appeal. Its decisions are final, according to the provisions of the Constitution as authorized by Grand Chapter

Each constituent Chapter is empowered to pass By-laws to direct its own government, provided that these do not conflict with the requirements of the Constitution. By -laws and Amendments thereto must be recommended by the Grand Superintendent before being submitted to the Grand First Principal for approval.

Duties

The duties of each office are set forth in the Constitution, Installation Ceremonies, and The Work.

Each Officer is required to be proficient in the ritualistic ceremonies and to be versed in the Constitutional requirements insofar as they relate to his office.

It is incumbent on each Officer that he be prompt in his attendance. Regular and prompt attendance, as well as ability and seniority, and a conscientious discharge of his duties, ought to be the qualifications for promotion

If an Officer finds that, due to circumstances beyond his control, he will be unable to attend the approaching Convocation, he should communicate with the First Principal, in order that arrangements may be made for a replacement to carry out his work for that evening.

An Officer, who, without adequate reason, fails in the discharge of his duties, should not be promoted.

Past Principals

As in most organizations of a similar nature, it is desirable that the Past Principals be encouraged to continue their interest and attendance. Past Principals in a Chapter should be given every encouragement to assist the First Principal, not just in ritualistic work, but also in the matter of administration.

Their advice, based upon years of experience, will be found helpful and, while it is not expected that they will dominate a Chapter, the members should not be unmindful that these Excellent Companions have devoted many years to the Royal Craft and the Chapter should ever be appreciative of the service they have and continue to render.

The active management of the Chapter is the responsibility of the First Principal and his Officers, but the course of wisdom will dictate to the First Principal that there is much benefit to be derived from consultation with his Past Principals. This also is true, and to a greater extent, should a Past Principal hold Past or Active rank in Grand Chapter.

His experience in Grand Chapter provides a wider range of Masonic vision and his assistance and advice should be a great benefit to his constituent Chapter. Keep the Past Principals interested and active and they will do much to encourage the younger members, thereby contributing greatly to the success of the Chapter.

First Principal

The government of the Chapter is vested in the First Principal, who is responsible for all official acts and activities of the Chapter. He appoints all Committees and is an ex-officio member.

He presides at all Convocations. He, not the Scribe Ezra, is responsible for the monthly Summons.

In the governing of his Chapter, he will find a knowledge of Parliamentary procedure (Roberts Rules) most helpful.

The First Principal should, either, personally or through an Officer or Committee, instruct and train his Officers and Companions.

He should consult freely with his Officers, so as to prepare them for greater tasks and responsibilities. He must be impartial in all his acts. No Companion can be elected First Principal until he has served one year as Second Principal, nor Second Principal until he has served one year as Third Principal, except by Dispensation, granted by the Grand First Principal.

No Companion below the rank of a First Principal may administer an Obligation or install or invest an elected or appointed Officer.

No Chapter may open, transact business, or confer degrees, unless there be present a quorum of nine Companions.

The First Principal should appoint an active Membership Committee, to undertake a systematic and organized effort to encourage and recommend suitable "material for the Temple". He should also appoint a Committee on Education and Instruction, not confined to Past Principals or Officers, and allot this Committee a short period at each regular Convocation. Much can be accomplished in even five minutes.

He must apply through the Grand Scribe Ezra to the Grand First Principal for dispensation for all proposed social functions.

Second Principal

The Second Principal acts as Chairman of the Executive Committee. He should be regular in attendance and, by assisting the First Principal., become acquainted with the duties of the presiding Officer.

He may confer the degrees of M.M.M. and M.E.M., but cannot administer the OB. The Second Principal may not assume the chair of the First Principal.

Third Principal

The Third Principal has superintendence of the Chapter at Refreshment. He is responsible for the safe-keeping of the Chapter's furnishings and paraphernalia. An inventory of Chapter properties should be made by him on assuming office and passed on to his successor on his relinquishing the office of Third Principal. He makes the necessary arrangements for the refreshments and the Stewards are responsible to him during the hours of Refreshment.

Ir. the absence of the Second Principal, he shall act as Chairman of the Executive Committee. He may confer the degrees of M.M.M. and M.E.M., but cannot administer the OB. The Third Principal may not assume the chairs of either the First or Second Principals.

Treasurer

To the Treasurer the funds of the Chapter are entrusted and careful account of the same must be kept. Payments are made only on the authorization of the Chapter, and all cheques must be signed by two signators of which one can be the Treasurer.

Scribe Ezra

The Scribe Ezra is an Executive Officer, whose duties are many and varied. He should have administrative ability and experience. Be well-skilled in the Royal Craft and fully conversant with the Constitution, By-laws and the usages and customs of Royal Arch Masonry.

His duties include the recording of all Chapter proceedings, issuing the Monthly Summons, collection of all monies due the Chapter and making and submitting all reports to Grand Chapter.

He can also be a signatory to cheque signing, after authorization by the Chapter.

His prompt and regular attendance is most necessary.

The Outer Guard

It is his duty to see that every member and visitor signs his name in the attendance book and is properly clothed before entering the Chapter.

Convocations

Regular Convocations are called as provided for in the by-laws, or held at least FOUR Convocations each year.

Emergent meetings may be called, at any time, by the First Principal. The purpose for such meetings must be stated on the Summons and no other business may be transacted at that meeting. A Summons must be issued and delivered to the membership, seven clear days before the date of the upcoming Convocation.

No Chapter shall be opened or held except by nine Royal Arch Masons. All of whom shall be members of the Chapter, (one of whom shall be a First Principal or Past First Principal). If in the absence of the First Principal and no Past Principal is present, the Second Principal, or in his absence the Third Principal, may open the Chapter for the transaction of business properly before it. but no Degree may be conferred.

Whenever a Chapter is opened, there must be displayed the Royal Arch Banners, the Word, and the Warrant, or Dispensation if the Chapter be under Dispensation. The Chapter shall be set-up in accordance with the form and requirements detailed in the diagram "Form of a Royal Arch Chapter" in "The Work" except the Veils need not be erected if the R.A. Degree is not being conferred.

All business must be transacted in the Royal Arch Degree, except the conferring of the prerequisite degrees of M.M.M., M.E.M. or lodge of Instruction.

The degrees of M.M.M. and M.E.M. may be conferred at the same meeting, but no degree can be conferred at the same Convocation as the Holy Royal Arch Degree, except in case of emergent necessity, for which a Dispensation shall be obtained from the Grand First Principal, before the degrees are conferred.

Lodges of Mark Master and Most Excellent Master may be opened and worked at an Emergent Meeting without the Chapter being first opened.

Order of Business

The reading of the Minutes of the previous meeting should be the first order of business. The remaining items on the agenda are fixed by the by-laws of the individual Chapter. However, the second-to last order of business shall be "Balloting for Candidates" and the final order "Conferring Degrees" Election or Installation.

It is desirable that, as far as possible, discussions on matters of business take place at the Executive Committee meeting, thus conserving time at the regular Convocation.

It is advisable that, as far as may be possible, discussions and debates be governed by Parliamentary procedure. (Roberts Rules)

Reports are received and, if acceptable, adopted.

Reports are received and, if acceptable, adopted. When the adoption of a Report requires the expenditure of money, it is required that a specific motion to that effect be Moved and Seconded and adopted by the Companions.

When a Chapter is called from Labour to Refreshment, the First Principal should announce the specific reason. If, however, he desires also to set a specified time, this is quite in order.

Minutes

Minutes are a record of the last of previous Regular and any subsequent Emergent Convocations.

Minutes are confirmed, not adopted.

If any Companion detects an error in the record, he should bring it to the attention of the Chapter for correction. When the error has been proved, the Minutes are confirmed "as corrected". The Scribe Ezra signs the Minutes before they are read. The First Principal signs them immediately upon confirmation.

The Minutes should be clear, concise, and sufficiently comprehensive, to serve as material for the writing of a history of the Chapter, and should be carefully preserved.

Petitions - Applications

A Petition is the official request of a Master Mason to be received and exalted as a Royal Arch Mason and may be presented at any time after he has received his Master Mason's Degree.

A Brother who has been Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason and who is, and remains to be, in good standing in any Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons within the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Saskatchewan, A.F.& A.M. or within the Jurisdiction of any other Grand Lodge recognized and in fraternal communication within the first mentioned Grand

Lodge, resident in Saskatchewan for at least one year is a fit person to be a Candidate for the Degrees of Royal Arch Masonry.

The name of the petitioner must be regularly proposed at one Convocation. If, on a Motion it is received, the First Principal shall refer it to a Committee of the members appointed to enquire into his character.

Notification of his proposal, particularly the name, date of birth, occupation and residence of the Candidate, his mother lodge or the lodge of which he is a member, the date of his raising and the names of the two Companions of the Chapter who are recommending him, shall then be sent to all members of the Chapter in the Summons for the next Regular Convocation to be Balloted upon. When this has been done, if the report of the Committee is favourable, he may be balloted for and, if approved, admitted.

If the report of the Investigating Committee be unfavourable, he shall be deemed a rejected candidate, if rejected by ballot; he cannot be proposed or balloted for in that, or any other Chapter, within twelve months of his rejection.

An Affiliation application is the request of a Companion to be received as an affiliated member. Such applications may be received from any Royal Arch Mason who produces evidence of good standing in any Jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons of Saskatchewan.

Should any applicant for affiliation have his Application rejected, he may renew his Application to the same or any other Chapter in the Jurisdiction at any time.

Balloting

All balloting must take place in the Royal Arch Degree at a Regular Convocation.

When the ballot is about to be taken, the announcement shall also be made in the ante-room, so that any Companions desiring to enter may do so.

The First Principal, after he has examined the ballot, but before he has made a declaration, may, if he feels that there has been some error or misunderstanding, order another ballot. Once the result of the ballot has been declared, there can be no reconsideration.

A collective Ballot may be taken. By unanimous consent, the Ballot may be passed for two or more applicants at the same time, but if it should turn out to be adverse, it must be taken for each applicant separately.

After the ballot has been taken, it is examined by the Principals and then exposed on the steps at the foot of the dais for the examination of any Companion who so chooses, after which the First Principal makes the official declaration.

No petitioner shall be admitted if more than one black ball appears against him. The Chapter may, by By-law, require a unanimous ballot.

It is a Masonic offense to violate the secrecy of the ballot.

At Work

Rehearsals are essential to a proper and impressive rendition of the work. Floor work should be marked by precision and dignity. Special attention should be given to correct pronunciation of words and names, clear enunciation and proper projection of the voice. This is essential if the candidate is to hear, understand and appreciate.

Each Officer or Companion participating in any part of the work should be well-versed and proficient.

The work has been laid down for the guidance of the Officers and should at all times be rendered impressively and delivered with a clarity that will appeal to the candidate and those who are witnessing it.

Music as prescribed in the Musical Service, adds a great deal to the impressiveness of the several degrees and is strongly recommended.

Elections

The Elections are held annually, at the time prescribed in the Chapter By-laws

The First Principal, Second Principal, Third Principal, Treasurer, Scribe Ezra, Scribe Nehemiah and Principal Sojourner shall be elected by written ballot; the Outer Guard, two Auditors and the Examining Board by open vote.

A Chapter may, by By-law, in addition to the Officers mentioned in the preceding paragraph, require that all or any of its Officers be elected by written ballot.

The ballots are placed in the specified receptacle and counted by the Scrutineers appointed by the First Principal. The Companion who has received the vote of the majority of all members present and voting shall be declared elected.

Each elective office must be balloted for separately and individually. The newly Installed First Principal appoints the non-elective Officers and all Standing and Special Committees.

Installation

Installation is usually held in the month of January of each year, but may be held at a time set forth in the Chapter By-laws.

Installation is a rite or ceremony by which a Companion is placed in an office and in which ceremony there are certain secrets communicated. The three Principals are installed, as these are the only officers which have secrets restricted to them.

No one beneath the rank of First Principal may Install or Invest an Officer.

Before being Installed, the three Principals must have passed a satisfactory examination before an Examining Board elected by open vote on the night of Election. This Board shall consist of three Past Principals, of whom the retiring First Principal may be one.

Investiture is the clothing of a Companion with the regalia and Insignia of his office in the Chapter. The Principals are Installed and Invested, other Officers are Invested only.

Amendment to By-Laws

When an amendment to a Chapter By-law is desired, it must be by a "Notice of Motion" at a previous regular Convocation, giving full information as to the portion deleted and the portion to be substituted stating the Section and page number.

Two copies of certified extracts from the Minutes, signed by the First Principal and Scribe Ezra, with the imprint of the seal thereon, must be submitted, both of the Convocation at which the Notice of Motion was received and the Convocation at which the Motion was carried or rejected.

To the above must be attached a copy of the Summons and a copy of the former By-laws, and all forwarded to the Grand Superintendent for his remarks and are to be signed by him and then forwarded to the Grand Scribe Ezra., for presentation to the Grand First Principal for his final approval.

No by-law or amendment shall be valid until so submitted and approved.

Rules of Procedure

A Companion desiring to speak, or submit a motion, shall rise and remain standing, respectfully addressing the First Principal. He shall confine his remarks to the question, observe due order and decorum, and shall not be interrupted, except on a point of order. No Motion may be open for discussion until it has been regularly moved and seconded, and so stated by the First Principal.

Except as provided for in the Constitution, or in the By-Laws, all motions shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present and voting, each member having one vote, the First Principal having the casting vote in case of a tie.

Whenever a question has been submitted, it cannot be withdrawn without the consent of the Chapter.

A motion that is not seconded cannot be discussed and must be declared lost for want of a Secunder.

A motion to "lay on the table", "to refer", "that the question be now put", or "to postpone" may be made at any time and is not subject to debate.

A resolution once disposed of by a Chapter cannot be reconsidered or rescinded without notice thereof being given at a preceding Convocation and included in the Summons to the members.

No Companion shall speak twice to the same question without the permission of the First Principal, unless in explanation, or as the mover in reply.

An amendment must be germane. One that changes the subject, or is a direct negative, cannot be considered.

No motion to amend shall be in order while two previous motions to amend remain undisposed of, nor shall a motion for the "previous question" be in order at any time.

There shall be no debate of any question after it has been put by the First Principal.

All voting in a Chapter shall be by a show of hands, except in cases where the Constitution requires a ballot, or where the Chapter shall, by show of hands taken without debate, decide that a ballot be taken.

On a point of order being raised whilst a Companion is speaking, or when a Companion is called to order by the First Principal, such Companion shall immediately take his seat. The point of order shall then be stated and the First Principal shall decide without debate.

No notice of motion shall be received unless submitted in writing, signed by the Mover, and is not subject to debate.

If the First Principal indicates a desire to speak whilst a Companion is on the floor, that Companion shall immediately take his seat, in order that the First Principal may be heard.

If any Companion behaves in such a manner as to disturb the harmony of the Chapter, he shall be admonished by the First Principal and if he should persist in his irregular conduct, the First Principal may order him to leave the Chapter and may suspend him if he disobeys such order.

If his offence, in the opinion of the First Principal, justifies suspension. Such suspension, with the reason therefore, shall be forthwith reported by the First Principal to the Grand Superintendent of the District and shall last only until action is taken by him.

At Refreshment

The Chapter is called from Labour to Refreshment that profit and pleasure may be the result.

Profit is primarily derived from the Chapter ceremonies, pleasure from the Partaking of refreshments is a rite of ceremony of great significance. It means the breaking of bread as an evidence of fellowship and brotherly love, and this should be done in a spirit of joyousness and happiness. It is a very ancient custom.

The Stewards should see that the visitors are properly placed, and especially that visitors and members be intermixed.

The first toast is "The Queen and Royal Arch Masonry", usually proposed by the Presiding Officer or Chairman and may be followed by the singing of "God Save the Queen". The second toast is, "The Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada in the Province of Ontario" and is proposed in recognition of the sovereignty of the Grand Chapter. If the Grand First Principal is present, the Toast proposed is to "The Grand First Principal of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada in the Province of Ontario".

Those who are expected to propose or respond to a toast should be warned in sufficient time to allow some preparation. It is only by due planning by the First Principal that the time spent at refreshment can be enjoyable and interesting.

Dress

The matter of the dress of Chapter Officers, whether formal or informal, is left entirely to the discretion of the individual Chapter. Subordinate Officers should be clothed in the same manner as is the Presiding Officer. (Tuxedo is preferred but, a dark Business suit is acceptable).

Presenting Distinguished Visitors

A Companion to whom is entrusted the duty of presenting distinguished visitors should be careful always to use proper titles and the correct names and initials of his guests. It is well, unless he is thoroughly familiar with their names and titles, to write them out and, if necessary, read them.

Grand Honours

Grand Honours may be given in no other than the established manner, nor in any other place than open Chapter or Lodge.

They shall always, unless otherwise directed by them, be extended to the Grand First Principal, Past Grand First Principals, Grand Second Principal, Grand Third Principal, the Grand Superintendent, the Grand Master, and to a Grand Officer holding the proxy of the Grand First Principal. At the discretion of the Presiding Officer, they may be given to other Grand Officers. Grand Honours shall not be extended to anyone after they have been given to the Grand First Principal, or his proxy, unless he shall direct that it be done.

Officers are admitted in inverse order of their rank, that is, the highest ranking Officer last.

Officers, other than the Grand First Principal., or his proxy, or the Grand Master, may be received in groups, if the Presiding Officer so desires.

The Grand Master, if he be present, shall be presented immediately after the Grand First Principal, or his proxy. Grand Honours may be extended in a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons or in a Lodge of Mark Master Masons or Most Excellent Masters.

Reception of the Grand First Principal and Other Visiting Officers

On being apprised of the presence of the Grand First Principal, the First Principal shall direct a Companion (usually the highest ranking Companion present, but it may be any Past Principal.) to repair to the ante-room to ascertain his wishes. If he wishes to enter, he shall be immediately received. (The Grand First Principal never asks permission to enter. All other Officers must obtain such permission).

The First Principal calls the Companions to their feet and they remain standing during the ceremonies of reception. After a few words of welcome, Grand Honours are given, then the First Principal directs that the Grand First Principal be conducted to the East, where he is tendered the Sceptre. The First Principal will stand at attention to the left of his station until the Sceptre is returned to him, or he is otherwise directed by the Grand First Principal.

The Sceptre is not extended to any Officer, other than the Grand First Principal, Past Grand First Principals, Grand Second Principal, Grand Third Principal, and the Grand Superintendent, during his term of office. Only such Grand Chapter Officers are entitled to be received under the Wands.

Selection of Officers

The standing and accomplishments of a Chapter are in no small measure dependent upon the Officers whom it selects to govern it. With a few exceptions, they are elected by the members, the others being appointed by the First Principal. Requirements for election or appointment should include high character, high of the Order, willingness to render a devoted service, and ability. No man lacking these qualities should aspire to office and without them no Chapter or Presiding Officer is justified in selecting him.

The fact that a Companion is elected or appointed to an office, carries with it no implication that he is entitled to be advanced unless the quality of his work justifies it. Seniority in service is not the test. In the absence of qualifications it should not be considered. If an Officer willfully or negligently fails in his duty and he is holding an elective office, he should be asked to resign, or if he is an appointed officer his appointment should be cancelled, regardless of the position he has attained. Selection and advancement should be founded on merit alone.

Instruction of Candidates

It is strongly recommended that in every Chapter steps be taken to see that Candidates are instructed before, between and after their Degrees. The best time for instruction is right after the

evening of the Degree and, when their knowledge of the Degree ritual is still fresh.

Long Service Awards

The Grand Chapter may present to a Past First Principal of Twenty-five years of standing in a Chapter or Chapters within the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, a Twenty-five year Past First Principal's Jewel or Bar. (Twenty-five years from date of Installation). If a Past First Principal has Fifty years standing as a Past First Principal of any Chapter or Chapters within the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, Grand Chapter may present him with a Fifty year Bar (fifty years from date of Installation).

Fifty Year Jewel

Grand Chapter may present to a Companions who has been a member for Fifty years, in good standing in any Chapter or Chapters within the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, a Fifty year Royal Arch Mason's Jewel or Fifty Year Bar.

Twenty-five Year Lapel Pin

A Chapter may present to a Companion who has been a member for Twenty-five years in good standing, in any Chapter within the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, a Twenty-five year Lapel Pin. Each Chapter, through their Scribe Ezra, should apply to the Grand Scribe Ezra for these Jewels when due, on the proper form furnished by him.

Sixty and Seventy Year Awards

Grand Chapter may also present to any Royal Arch Mason who has been in good standing for Sixty (60) or Seventy (70) years, respectively, in any Chapter or Chapters within the jurisdiction of this Grand Chapter, the numeral "(60)" or "(70)" for attachment to his Fifty (50) year Jewel or his Chapter Jewel.

The Distinguished Service Medal

General Grand Chapter awards this special Medal, accompanied by a Certificate and Citation, in recognition of distinguished service to Capitular Masonry in this Grand Jurisdiction, and only to one who has not been and, is never likely to be, a First Principal of a Chapter.

A questionnaire is available on request to the Grand Chapter office, and when duly completed must accompany a preliminary request for this award. The questionnaire shall be signed by the First Principal and Scribe Ezra of the Chapter

This Award is authorized under the conditions of the Grand Chapter Constitution - Section-
"THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD"