

THE DEAD LODGE

(From *The New Age*)

By P.G.M. Robert D. Rinhart

The Grand Master of one of our sister jurisdictions was both surprised and distressed to learn that one of his subordinate Lodges, when filing their annual return, had made a notation on the return that the Lodge was Dead. There had been no new candidates entered for more than five years, and all three elected chairs were being occupied by Past Masters. Interest and attendance in the activities of the Lodge were non-existent.

To the surprise of the Lodge, they received a letter from the Grand Master stating that he would personally visit the Lodge and make an official determination as to whether or not the Lodge was truly dead. When he arrived for his official visitation there were a total of four Brethren present, and after examining the records, he declared that the Lodge was in fact, truly and officially DEAD.

As is our custom on the death of one of our members, the Grand Master stated that memorial services for the Lodge would be held in one week and all members were to be so notified.

When the Brethren assembled at the Lodge on the night of the scheduled memorial service, they found a draped coffin situated between the altar and the west, and on the top, was the Lodge charter.

After offering the eulogy for the deceased Lodge, the Grand Master suggested that the Brethren pass by the coffin as a token of respect for their dead Lodge. All available seats were occupied that evening with many Brethren waiting beyond the outer door. As each passed by the now open coffin, they paused to gaze at the death of their Lodge.

This wise Grand Master had lined the bottom of the coffin with mirrors.

My Brethren, it is not me or he that makes our Lodge what it is and should be, it is YOU! Only YOU can change the pattern or course that your Lodge takes in its work or activities. YOUR Lodge is people. It is not a building, or a place, it is YOU.

Your Worshipful Master can draw the most elaborate plans in all the Fraternity upon the trestleboard of the Lodge, but he cannot carry them to successful fruition without YOUR assistance and support. They may appear to succeed for a brief period, but without your continuing support, they are doomed to ultimate failure. The Master of my own Lodge asked for program suggestions from the Brethren, and to the best of my knowledge, he received not one single response. In many cases, even our ladies nights would often be failures if it were not for the support of non-masons.

When I was Master of my Lodge, I often heard how shift-work prevented the Brother from attending Lodge. Now we have a Lodge in our local jurisdiction that meets only during the daylight hours so that shift-workers, who wish, may attend a regular blue Lodge. Sometime ask the members of this Daylight Lodge how much attendance they have at their communications.

What I'm truly afraid of my Brethren, is that we have men who want to belong to our great fraternity, and wear the outward signs of membership. Too often, however, it is left to a few dedicated masons to chart and steer the destiny of the Lodge. Remember – the Lodge is people – and YOU are the most important one.

SOMEBODY ELSE

Adapted from:
Saskatoon Cosmopolitan Club

There's a guy in your Lodge called SOMEBODY ELSE.
There's nothing this fellow can't do.
He's busy from morning 'til late every night
Just substituting for you.

You're asked to do this or you're asked to do that,
And what is your frequent reply Get SOMEBODY ELSE Worshipful
He'll do it much better than I.

There's so much to do in our Organization,
So much, and the workers so few,
And SOMEBODY ELSE is getting weary and worn,
Just substituting for you.