

## But we have always done it this way

Brethren let me state from the start this short nugget is not meant to upset or disrupt any of our Lodge meetings and what we as Masons try to achieve in our 'Daily Advancement' a phrase we hear a lot about, which according to the dictionary Advancement means 'a development or improvement or move forward'. So ask yourself this question Brethren when moving forward there has got to have been a past and Masonry's past goes back a lot further than you and me.

We have got to admit to ourselves by nature we are all creatures of habit, we probably go about our daily lives doing things in the same order in the same way and at the same time. In this manner you might even ask yourself are we all autistic, Yes it is true some of us do not like change and find it difficult to adapt

sadly this seems to be the case with our Lodge meetings. But is it true to say 'But we have always done it this way' this could be true to individual brethren who's Lodge has never altered whilst they have been a member, but especially with the much older Lodges if you go back to their roots the answer is probably untrue. For an example back in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was common practice to eat and drink whilst the meeting was in progress, unlike today where we hold our meeting and then retire to the festive board. Not sure when this change happened, some brethren might be thinking not all changes are for the better. I know at our social board these days the Master, his Wardens and D.C. do have a set place but isn't it strange how we all tend to sit at the same place (Because we always do it this way) It's like when you enter a Working Man's Club you may as well have names on the chairs. Why not mix it up a little go and sit with your visitors make them feel welcome by action not just words so when they are on their way home they are left thinking that was different they don't usually do it that way. Even the wording of our rituals have changed without losing the solemnity by which they are performed. Always try and keep an open mind to any changes, if they don't seem to be working you can always change them back to the way they were before with no lasting harm done. Personally I think the reason why visiting other or new Lodges is so enjoyable is because it's completely different New Surroundings, Differences in Ritual, and a change of company now can you honestly say with all this going for the meeting that you don't like change. Perhaps you might even introduce a few of the differences into your own Lodges schedule. Why not give it a try remember like I said earlier you can always change back to the way things were before if the changes don't appear to be working.

We all as Freemasons have to look to the future obviously not forgetting our past so instead of the statement 'But we have always done it this way' perhaps we should be saying 'Go on why not give it a try' you never know it might make an improvement to your meetings.

Just on a serious point for a minute I truly believe when a brother attains the chair of King Solomon

Especially if it is his first time he should be given the opportunity if he wishes to do so, to perform the ceremonies of the three degrees in Freemasonry. Most Lodges meet about 8 times a year Why? 'because we have always have done', so there could be 5 meetings or more so lets make them as interesting as possible, there are no set rules to my knowledge where the subjects in the Lodge room have to be directly connected to Freemasonry, It would be great If there was a link but it is not essential 'But it always has been' in the past I hear you say, the operative word being PAST, this is now and Freemasonry's future. So don't be afraid to do something different get it on your district web sites in order to advertise what your Lodges are doing at their next meeting you might be pleasantly surprised that the Brethren who don't like change might even come along to support you in what you are trying to do to maintain our future even if it's not 'what they have always done'

If when Brethren say they don't want to change remind them of what we have just been through probably the biggest changes in our life time that we will ever see due to the Corona virus, but please let us all take the positives from the awful situation we all found ourselves in. The

principles and standards which we as Masons already possessed before the epidemic seems to have been readily adopted by many of the public who are not Masons and probably are not aware of what we stand for. Perhaps this is a great opportunity to home in on those new found principles that the general public now possess because I am sure this sort of calibre in a person is what we are looking for in a perspective new candidate. 'Haven't we always done it that way' you may be asking yourselves the answer is YES we have, but what has changed is the opportunity which arises now as never before and God willing will never arise again.

Always keep in mind what our Provincial Grand Master said 'Enjoy your Freemasonry' may I also add not just today but in the future as we advance or change together.

I hope you have enjoyed this short nugget and got you all thinking about our future.

THANK YOU (sorry but I always end that way)

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