

Is There hope for the Future by Returning to the past?

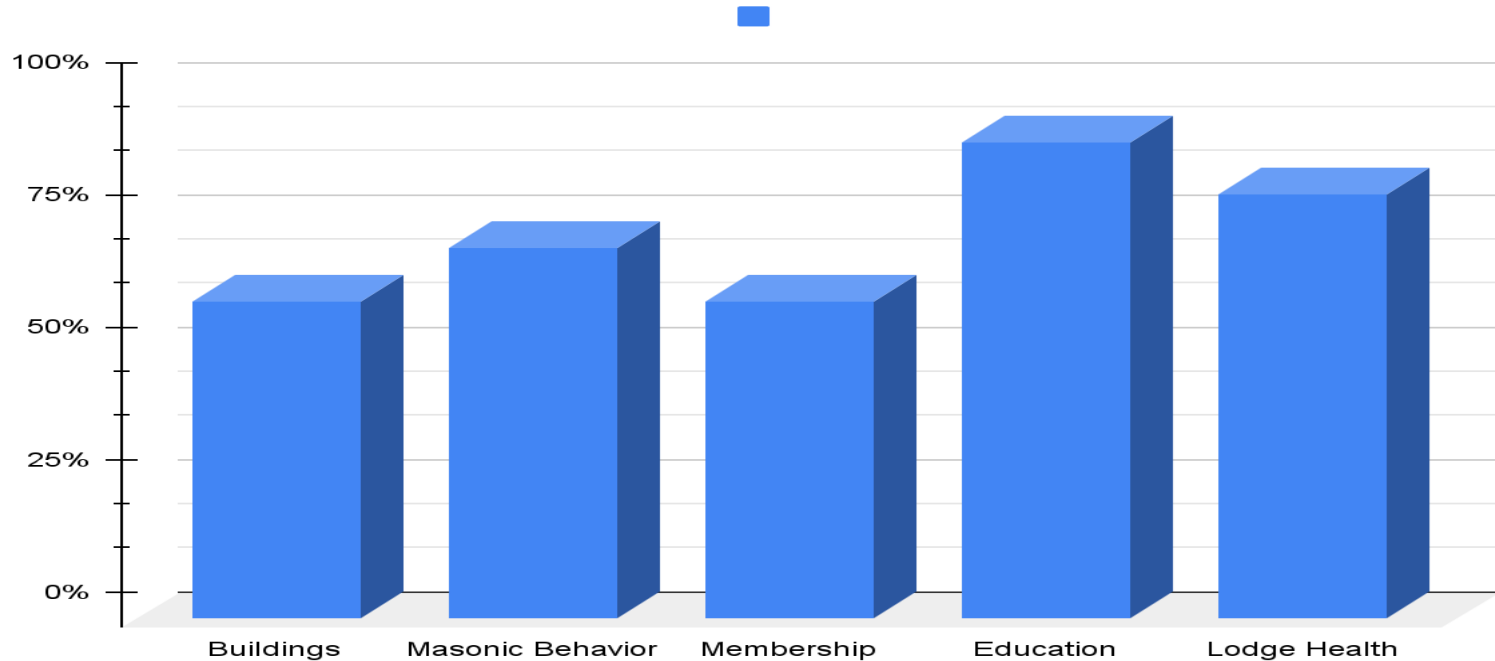


Utah Grand Lodge
Joey Sanders

R.G. Collingwood “The Idea of History”

History defined as Knowledge of Mind and the discovery of the outward expression of thought.

Challenges Facing the Jurisdictions during Past Grand Masters Year.



During your year as Grand Master what challenges did your jurisdiction face?

“Public battles over politics between masons on social media, misbehavior and criminal behavior by masons; lodge infighting that boiled over into the public eye; masons unwilling or unable to meet the requirements to ascend to the East and expecting me to waive the requirement or give them more time; functionally bankrupt lodges; Lodges with three to five past masters who were exhausted after years as the only members keeping the lodge open; mean, hard (often old) men who ran off new members with harsh and demeaning teaching and correcting..... Managing Grand Lodge Finances on a shrinking income; and appointed officers who “phoned it in” and ran for office rather than actually serving on committee, supporting conferences and assisting Lodges.”

What initiatives or programs did you implement to address or overcome these challenges?

“Regional leadership training coupled with group visitations; worked through the Land and Building Committee to affect incremental change in the worst buildings; individual meetings with the leadership of nonfunctioning lodges; counseling to get Lodges back on track, slashing costs at the Grand Lodge level, individual counseling with non performing Grand Lodge officers, speaking and teaching and even preaching good behavior, our masonic obligations, and our impact on our public reputation; and direct, sometimes abrupt counseling of our mean, hard and rude brothers as well as discipline brothers who were no longer reasonable or are in violation of the law and masonic law.”

What went well with your approach?

“Leadership training was well received by those who attended. Lodge counseling put a couple of lodges back on track. We staved off the inevitable in a few buildings - bought them a couple more years. Cost cutting yielded immediate results (and is ongoing).”

What Barriers did you encounter?

“Traditions that aren't true traditions. The Love of buildings that exceeds a masons love of masonry or his brothers. Angry men who enjoyed fights on social media more than they love their brothers, their obligation or masonry...”

How did you overcome these barriers?

“I largely did not, I put antiseptic and band aids on open wounds, made very small incremental changes that my successors have continued to add to and make some real improvement. I got rid of the worst three men in the jurisdiction. Our really bad real estate continues to be more important to men than masonry and brotherhood.

As an active Past Grand Master of your jurisdiction , what recommendations or advice would you offer to the Grand Lodge Officers of the Rocky Mountain Masonic Conference?

“Close non performing lodges. Get rid of those “historic buildings” that are no longer habitable. Get rid of the drones and politicians in your Grand Line. Build an effective Leadership training program that can be used by every member in your jurisdiction. Quickly discipline those men who are destroying our fraternity.

Social Media/Masonic Behavior Discussion

RMMC SOCIAL MEDIA STATEMENT & CODE

<http://www.grandlodgemontana.org/RMMC%20Social%20Media%20Statement.pdf>

Signed and outlined on February 12, 2014

Initiatives implemented by other Past Grand Masters.

“Study how the public perceived Masonry and if I thought it was relevant. Than talk to lodges about how they represent themselves as masons to the public.”

“Work on increasing awareness between the Masonic family and understanding the links If one body is doing poorly, then other bodies may follow. We should support each other.”

“I asked each lodge to appoint a lodge historian that would start going through lodge records and build a history of their lodge.”

“I focused on the core and on initiatives strengthening the experience of those who were engaged. Strengthen the core, and the lost will re engage. Strengthen the core,new engagements will occur...”

Discussion: What Programs in your Jurisdiction have been implemented in the past or improved upon to address any of the challenges faced by this Past Grand Master?

Discussion on buildings:

First Montana Masonic Meeting place near Mullen Pass,
September 23rd 1862



Past Grand Master recommendations to the Rocky Mountain Masonic conference

“Involve the craft in these conferences, Ignore PGM’s”

“Biggest thing to remember is that the higher the office you are elected to, the more service you owe to the craft. As GM, you work completely for the Masons you serve...they don't work for you, so everything should be geared around helping each and every lodge to be as successful as they can be..”

“First , always remember, a Master Mason and a Grand Master receive the same wages. Second, there is no personal benefit to receive from advancing in Masonic office. You are not here to make your mark. You’ve made your mark, this is why you are here. Your job is tediously singular: encourage, and enable others to make their mark.”

Discussion on Recommendations

Closing Remarks

Rethinking the Outward Expression of Past Thought and actions can lead to a rediscovery of Ideas that can be improved upon and bring Hope to the Future.

Directly document information during events and Learn from each others ideas and past actions to keep the craft moving forward.

Engage and Learn from our Former and Active Leaders, to provide you the capacity and understanding to Empower and nurture our Membership.