

# THE KEYSTONE



Publication of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of British Columbia and Yukon

## *Grand First Principal's and Grand Chaplain's Christmas Messages*

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December 2009

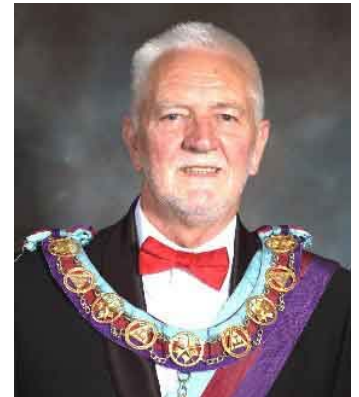
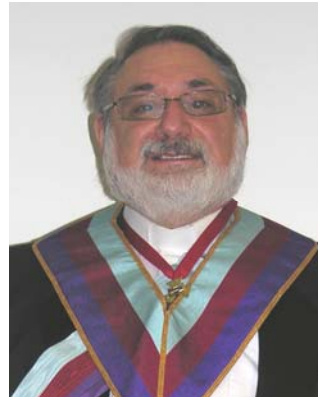
### **Companions,**

Once again we prepare ourselves to welcome our Saviour Jesus the Christ and to celebrate His birth. We all know how busy a time of year this is as we decorate our homes, seek out gifts for loved ones, plan baking and festive meals, organize for holiday guests and attend so many parties and functions. May I suggest that you occasionally pause from the busyness of these worldly activities to take some spiritual time to reflect on the awesome gift of Jesus to each of us and to all of humankind. Remember the meaning of Emmanuel – God is with us. The Incarnation of God in Jesus permits us to start “to trace Thee out in all Thy wondrous works...” Through Jesus’ words and actions recorded in the Gospels we begin to learn about the nature of the Great Architect of the Universe and His plan for us to be restored to full relationship with Him and with each other. As you enjoy this precious time with friends and family, keep safe and healthy.

The angels, shepherds and wise men praised God in thanksgiving with their adoration and gifts; consider how you might give thanks to God in prayer and charity for this wondrous gift. Recall the circumstances of His birth and remember those of today who, for whatever reasons, are faced with “no room at the inn”. Throughout the Holy Scriptures God speaks frequently about care of the widows, the orphans, the strangers and the poor. I ask that in your celebrations you remember those less fortunate, whether it be by giving a “living gift” for someone overseas, your local food bank or some other charity of your choice. Even better, invite some needy person to share with you.

May the God of infinite goodness brighten your holiday with holiness, and may you and yours enjoy a healthy and prosperous New Year.

**R.E.C. Alan Akehurst**  
**Grand Chaplain**



### **Companions,**

As we prepare to celebrate the Life & Birth of Jesus Christ or the Festival of Lights let us take a moment, in the bright lights of the Christmas tree or the Hanukia to remember those who have gone before us and those left behind: The widows, widowers and, at this time especially, the homeless. In the true spirit of the Masonic Family, let us reach out, if only with a smile and a warm greeting, to those less fortunate than ourselves. As we gather with family and loved ones, let us pause and remember all the members of the Armed forces; not only those in harms way, but their families who will celebrate this year without them. God grant them a safe return home.

My wife Libby and I wish all of you and your families a Merry Christmas, a Happy Chanukah and a healthy, prosperous New Year.

**M.E.C David Grange**  
**Grand First Principal**

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## The Celebration of Chanukah

Although it is unintentional, Freemasonry may seem to overlook other than Christian religions by the mere preponderance of Christian members. A significant number of our members belong to the Jewish faith, and celebrate a different religious holiday at this time of year than that of Christmas.

Chanukah, the Jewish festival of rededication the rededication of the Temple after the successful [Jewish revolt](#) against the [Seleucid](#) monarchy, also known as the festival of lights, is an eight day festival beginning on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Kislev. In the Gregorian calendar, that period corresponds (in 2009) to December 12-19.

Chanukah is probably one of the best known Jewish Holidays, not because of any great religious significance,



but because of its proximity to Christmas. Many non-Jews think of this holiday as the “Jewish Christmas”. It is ironic that this holiday, which has its roots in a revolution against the assimilation and suppression of Jewish religion, has become the most assimilated, secular holiday of the Jewish calendar.

To the Jewish people, the religious significance of Chanukah is far less than that of

[Rosh Hashanah](#), [Yom Kippur](#), [Sukkot](#), [Passover](#), and [Shavu'ot](#).

The only religious observance related to the holiday is the lighting of candles. The candles are arranged in a candelabrum called a Hanukia. Many people refer to the Hanukia incorrectly as a [menorah](#). The name [menorah](#) is used only to describe the seven-branched candelabrum that was housed in the Jewish Temple. The Hanukiah holds nine candles: one for each night, plus a shamash (servant) at a different height. On the first night, one candle is placed at the far right. The shamash candle is lit and three [berakhot](#) (blessings) are recited. Another candle is lit for each of the seven, successive nights

Sources:

[www.jewishvirtuallibrary.com](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.com)  
[www.chabad.org](http://www.chabad.org)  
[judaismabout.com](http://judaismabout.com)



## Spring Board of General Purposes April 10, 2009 - Nanaimo, B.C.

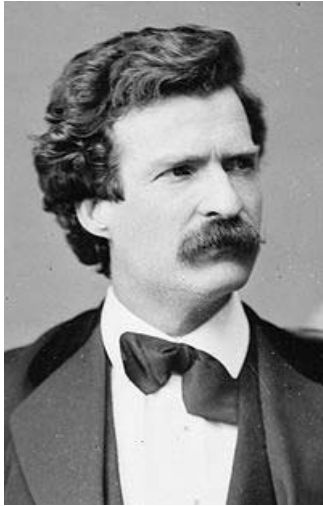
**Venue:** NANAIMO YACHT CLUB  
400 Newcastle Avenue

**Recommended Hotel:** Ramada Inn (Rooms \$92.50+tax, breakfast included)  
315 Rosehill Street  
Nanaimo, B.C. V9S 1E3  
250-716-2009 or [nanaimoramada@shawcable.com](mailto:nanaimoramada@shawcable.com)

**Other Hotels:** Coast Bastion (\$119+tax), Port-O-Call (\$76+tax)

**Registration:** Grand Chapter web site (Registration \$10, Lunch \$15, Dinner \$25)

## *Samuel Langhorne Clemens, Freemason*



Born on November 30, 1835 in Florida, Missouri, Sam moved with his family at the age of 4 to nearby Hannibal, a port village on the banks of the Mississippi River. It was there that he spent his childhood, swimming, fishing playing pirates and getting into all the trouble that small boys will.

His father died when

Sam was 12. They were never well off in the first place, so Sam took on a number of odd jobs while still pursuing his schooling, some of those jobs led him into journalism, publishing his first article in 1853. Sam Clemens spent 1857 and 1858 learning to be a riverboat pilot.

President Lincoln appointed Sam's older brother, Orion, territorial secretary of Nevada in 1861, and Sam went along. After failing to strike it rich in mining, Sam went back to journalism, joining the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise* in 1862. It was there, in 1863, that he began signing his name with the pseudonym, Mark Twain.

Samuel Clemens married Olivia Langdon of Elmira, New York in 1870, and they settled in Hartford, Connecticut, where he wrote many of the novels that made him famous.

Sam Clemens was a member of Polar Star Lodge No.70 in St. Louis, Missouri. He was initiated May 22, Passed June 12 and Raised July 10, 1861

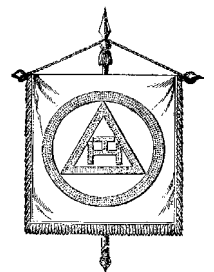
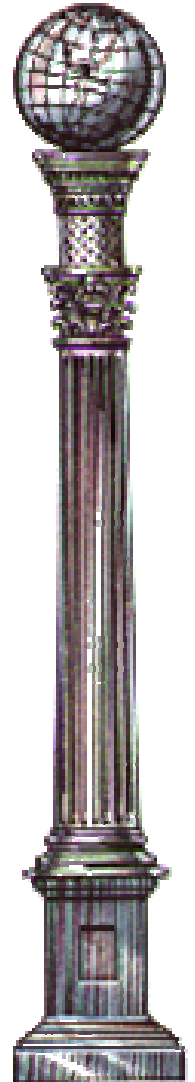
Sam Clemens died in Redding, Connecticut, on April 21, 1910, leaving behind a literary legacy that would reach world-wide.

Sources:

<http://classiclit.about.com>

<http://shs.umsystem.edu>

<http://en.wikipedia.org>



### **IRELAND TOUR May 12-26, 2010 with M.E.C. David Grange and his wife, Libby**

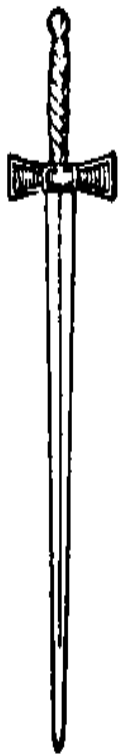
Approx cost \$3,199 sharing, \$3,649 single, including air fare from Vancouver, 13 nights hotel, 14 buffet breakfasts, 2 dinners and transfers.

Non-Masons are welcome.

Contact: MEC David Grange, phone 604-756-2205  
e-mail [davidgrange@telus.net](mailto:davidgrange@telus.net)

*Companions or businesses may purchase from Grand Scribe Ezra a business card ad (see page 4) , running for 3 issues of the Keystone at a cost of \$20. Please include an actual copy or electronic file of your card. To: Grand Scribe Ezra at the Grand-Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of BC and Yukon.*

## *Independent Order of Foresters*



This article is the ninth in a series describing some of the fraternal bodies and other groups which are often mistaken by the public for concordant bodies within the Masonic Fraternity.

The Independent Order of Foresters is a fraternal benefit society focusing on assisting its members and their families. Now active in Canada the United States and the United Kingdom, it had its beginning on June 17, 1974 in Newark, New Jersey. Colonel A.B. Caldwell originated the idea and became the first Supreme Chief Ranger.

The I.O.F. was introduced

into Canada in 1875. In 1878, a Canadian Mohawk, Oronhyatekha (christened Paul Martin), the first aboriginal physician in Canada, joined the I.O.F. He was quickly to become Supreme Chief Ranger (now called International Fraternal President) and to serve in that post for the next 26 years, during which time he would transform the organization from one of some 400 nearly bankrupt members into one of over 250,000 and a fund of over \$11 million.

The first aboriginal to receive a university degree in Canada, Oron-



hyatekha was known as a business man, physician and philanthropist. He died on March 3, 1907. More than 10,000 people paid their respects in Toronto.

Sources:

[www.foresters135.com](http://www.foresters135.com)

[www.biograpghpi.ca](http://www.biograpghpi.ca)

<http://en.wikipedia.org>

[www.cabbagetownpeople.ca](http://www.cabbagetownpeople.ca)

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