



PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE ESSENTIALS

Prepared by the Grand Lodge P. & E. Committee
Issue No. 20 – First Issued December 2012 – Revised May 2020

Season’s Greetings from Your P. & E. Committee

Welcome to the latest issue of “*P&E Essentials*”. It is anticipated that these informative and easy-to-read newsletters will be published several times a year.

“*P&E Essentials*” is intended to be an interactive instrument, designed to help you make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge. The Committee welcomes questions and/or suggestions for topics that could be addressed in future issues. Questions or suggestions not related to Protocol and Etiquette will be forwarded to the appropriate Grand Lodge Committee for response.

Committee Members

The current Protocol & Etiquette Committee members are:

Gordon Crutcher (*Chairman*); Steven Armstrong; William Elliott; Saliem Khoury; Michael Litvak; George McCowan; Bryan Middleton; Richard Morreau; James Pearson; George Pohle; David Purvis (*Secretary*); Brian Seabourn; David Stevens; and Terrance Van Horne.

With appropriate advance notice – and subject to travel constraints – any member of the Committee would be happy to make a presentation about P&E in your Lodge, or at a District Meeting.

BANQUET HALL PROTOCOL – Part 2

In our last newsletter, (#19, in June 2012), we discussed who should be seated at a Head Table and how to arrange the proper seating of those Head Table guests.

This issue will focus on **how to introduce** those seated at a Head Table and also **how to address** the guests at a Head Table when you are proposing or responding to a toast.

INTRODUCING A HEAD TABLE

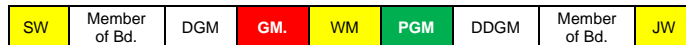
A Head Table is the table where the presiding officer, chief speaker and main guests of honour are seated at a formal dinner. It is indeed a place of honour and usually is the focus of attention for everyone present.

Please note that the WM could act as the Master of Ceremonies at the banquet, or he could delegate this responsibility to another member of his lodge, such as the Director of Ceremonies.

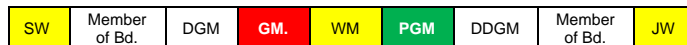
1. When introducing the main Head Table guests, remember that the goal is to introduce the highest ranking Grand Lodge Officer (or guest of honour) last.

REPEAT: The highest ranking Grand Lodge Officer, (not the WM), is to be introduced last!

2. In order to accomplish this, the Master of Ceremonies will begin his introductions **at the extreme left** of the WM, (i.e. with the JW). Then everyone seated to the right of the JW will be introduced consecutively, **up to and including the WM.**



3. After introducing the WM, the M.C. will next introduce the brother sitting at the extreme right of the WM, (i.e. the SW). After introducing everyone seated to the left of the SW, in consecutive order, he will finish with the most senior GLO present, (or the guest of honour, or the principal speaker, as the case may be).



4. The Head Table guests should be asked to remain standing, and the brethren requested to withhold their applause, until the entire Head Table has been introduced.

INTRODUCING A SECONDARY HEAD TABLE

1. Introduce, (and then seat), the brethren at the main Head Table before you introduce any secondary Head Table(s).

Please share this newsletter with other members of your Lodge – and your Masonic friends

1. You may have to deal with two different situations where special guests, other than those seated at the Head Table, are to be introduced.
2. **FIRST SITUATION:** All these other brethren are **seated together** at a secondary Head Table, in front of (or near) the main Head Table.

Ideally, it would be preferable to arrange to seat these brethren in order of rank. (Perhaps you could use place cards to designate everyone's seat.) Then they could be introduced in ascending order of rank, as well as in consecutive order.

However, even if they are **not** seated in order of rank, it would still be preferable for the introductions to occur in whatever order the brethren are seated. The goal is to have an orderly progression of introductions, rather than have the brethren pop up all over the place. Just begin the introductions at one end of the table, (or if they are seated at a round table, start at a particular seat), and introduce everyone in consecutive order.

Therefore, in the situation described above, whether the brethren at a secondary Head Table are seated in order of rank or not, start the introductions at one end and finish at the other.

3. **SECOND SITUATION:** There is also the situation where the other brethren to be introduced are **scattered throughout the room**, sitting at tables with people who will not be introduced.

When this occurs, you should introduce them in ASCENDING order of rank and/or seniority, as per the list provided by Grand Lodge. (*This is the list established by the Grand Master for making introductions in lodge. It is posted on the GL and various District web sites.*) End up introducing the highest rank and/or seniority last.

4. As was the case with the main Head Table, the additional brethren being introduced should be asked to remain standing (and any applause withheld) until everyone is introduced.
5. When all the secondary Head Table brethren have been introduced, remember to ask them to be seated.

ADDRESSING A HEAD TABLE

As mentioned in the penultimate Issue, the only GLOs who **MUST** be seated at the main Head Table are those who are entitled, by their rank, to assume the gavel in lodge: *i.e. the Grand Master, any Past Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, and the District Deputy Grand Master in his own District.*

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When addressing the guests at a Head Table, prior to proposing or responding to a toast, it is only necessary to make a general reference to those particular individuals. (You do not have to mention them by name, only by their rank.)

1. It is improper protocol to name all the other ranks (e.g. any other R.W., V.W. or Worshipful brethren) seated at the Head Table, as part of your introduction.
2. The protocol in this Grand Jurisdiction is to only recognise (in this order):
 - The W.M. (*he takes precedence, as he is the person in charge, whether he is the M.C. or not*);
 - **Any GLO entitled to assume the gavel**;
 - Perhaps the Head Table guests collectively;
 - Possibly mention a brother who is being especially honoured on that occasion;
 - (Ladies, if present);
 - Then the brethren.
3. One example of how to address the Head Table is:

“Worshipful Master; Most Worshipful the Grand Master; Most Worshipful the Past Grand Master(s); Right Worshipful the Deputy Grand Master; Right Worshipful the District Deputy Grand Master; distinguished Head Table guests; (Ladies); and Brethren.”
4. Subsequent salutations, after the Toast to Grand Lodge has been made, could be abbreviated in a uniform manner – such as:

“Worshipful Master; Most Worshipful the Grand Master; distinguished Head Table guests; (Ladies); and Brethren.”
5. Note the reference above just to “**Brethren**”. Although it receives widespread usage, concluding with the words “**Brethren all**” is redundant. (The word “Brethren” is itself a plural reference to all the Masons present.)

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIAL

The P&E Committee has developed a complete guide to Banquet Hall Protocol and the Reception of Grand Lodge Officers. The latest version of this guide, (*dated September 1, 2019*), is posted on the Grand Lodge web site.

It can also be downloaded from several District web sites – including that of Toronto Don Valley District.

Simply copy and paste this address in your web browser:

<http://www.tdvmasons.org/resources/protocol-etiquette-essentials/>