

## YOUR MASONIC FOUNDATION OF ONTARIO

By R.W. Bro. Ronald Campbell, President, The Masonic foundation of Ontario

THANK YOU, Brethren - "HELP-2-HEAR" has surpassed the \$2 million mark!

If you have attended your lodge or read *the Ontario Mason* over the past two years, you are likely very familiar with the Millennium Project. But the Foundation was in existence for 35 years when HELP-2-HEAR was initiated. What else has the Foundation done? Perhaps now is the time to make you more fully aware of your Masonic Foundation.

For three hundred years, Freemasons have assisted those less fortunate than themselves. Much of this charity was directed to indigent Masons, their wives and children. With the advent of social programs in Canada, however, the need for direct benevolence to Masons and their families declined. A vehicle was needed so that the Craft's benevolent resources could be used for the benefit of the community at large. Grand Lodge decided to establish a foundation to attract financial resources and increase the interest and participation of the Craft in its benevolent outreach, having as its objectives: "*such educational, scientific and philanthropic purposes and objects as are charitable in law*".

Royal Assent was given in the Ontario Legislature on March 25, 1964, creating the Masonic Foundation of Ontario, and Grand Lodge turned over \$161,507 to form a capital base to undertake its charitable work.

Has the Foundation been successful in achieving the goals envisaged by Grand Lodge in 1964? Today, the capital fund is \$7 million. Since its inception 37 years ago, your Masonic Foundation has contributed over \$4.6 million to worthy causes throughout Ontario. In addition, the Foundation has worked in partnership with Districts and lodges on local projects that have raised over \$750,000 to address specific needs in the local communities.

The originally proposed thrusts of the Foundation to serve educational, scientific and philanthropic purposes form the key elements of today's operations.

To date, the Bursary Program has assisted over 2,800 students in the aggregate sum of \$1.8 million. In the

field of scientific research, \$1.2 million has been donated to the Auditory Science Laboratory since the inception of Project H.E.L.P. Over \$1 million generated by the "Help Nip Drugs in the Bud" Campaign have been given to PAD and CODA to conduct peer education programs on the dangers of substance abuse in the primary and secondary schools across Ontario.

The Foundation has contributed over \$225,000 to the VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children program since 1981 to expand VOICE Ontario's auditory-verbal outreach service; and approximately \$200,000 in grants have been presented to Kerry's Place to provide support to families with members suffering with Autism's Pervasive Development Disorder.

Youth organizations, such as Scouts Canada, Girl Guides, de Molay and 4-H, have received financial assistance over the years averaging \$9,000 in total annually.

The Foundation's budget to do charitable work this year is \$400,000, including \$65,000 for bursaries, \$105,000 for Help-2-Hear research, \$50,000 for other hearing research, \$95,000 for "Nip Drugs" and \$55,000 for VOICE, Autism and other youth programs.

What about the future? With the province-wide campaign ended, now is the time to focus on projects to address local needs. The Foundation will assist Districts and lodges to undertake local charitable projects, including providing financial contributions to these local initiatives. Requests for assistance with projects are to be submitted to the Foundation Office through the DDGM.

This, then, is your Masonic Foundation of Ontario – be proud of its many accomplishments and your involvement in making them possible, **for the cause of good.**

