

Definition

A person employed by another, or appointed by a Society to deal with correspondence, or papers, to collect information, and prepare business.

Appointment To Office.

Usually chosen or selected according to merit and ability, and skills, BUT, so often placed in this position because there is no one else to fill in the vacancy which has been left by the resignation of the former Secretary, due to ill health, transfer, or that he wishes a change having felt he has performed his allotted task for long enough.

The Job.

Indeed, it is most interesting, covering every aspect of administration and it could be said, rightly or wrongly, the success or failure of the Society depends on the efficiency of the Secretary, whose duty it is, to attend and deal with all correspondence with the minimum of delay, fill in information to Grand, and D.G. Lodge, but more of this later. A secretary collects information for the society, be up to date with trends, changes, amendments to constitution, bye laws and should have to hand at a seconds notice, the answer to enquiries of past minutes, or records. This is quite a job... No wonder so many people decline to accept the office.

Correspondence.

It is important that the collection and replying to correspondence is done speedily, and in a business like manner. Keeping in mind the dignity of the recipient whose feelings must be considered at all costs. The letter of congratulations must be phrased with the same care as a letter of condolence, whilst a business letter must be to the point, and written with strict caution to uphold of the good name of the Society.

Filing.

An all important part of the secretarial duties, and so often neglected, as a wasteful, and not necessary, in fact it has been said ...futile... I can remember... He can, but what of the people who have to follow!?. This is not <sup>correct</sup> of course, true and accurate records have to be kept and preserved, for who knows, at some time, information maybe required and verbal information is not accepted, neither is it satisfactory. Authentic proof must be produced at all time

*A. Sec will say*

Collection of information

One of the many, but most important functions of a good secretary is the recording of the business during a meeting, the collection of mail, see it is collected regularly from the post box, who knows there may be some matters of importance which must be dealt with at once, in our case the W/Ms approval or signiture so that the business can be followed up to a conclusion without delay. Returns of the District should at all times be sent on time to ease the burden of the D.G. Secretary, on whose shoulders rest the Administration of all Lodges, and under the direction of the D.G. Ms direction, he has to keep all Lodges fully informed of the District requirements and directives of Grand Lodge. A true record of the proceedings have to be recorded in the minutes of each regular meeting, whilst the Assistant Secretary reports and records the standing committee. The importance of the latter office must be stressed, as the business of the lodge discussed by the managing body, often has to be reviewed from time to time.

Responsibility.

To Grand Lodge and the D.G. Secretary for the return of statistics to enable him to compile the Quarterly and Annual Communications in such detail that every master can see at a glance the affairs of his lodge and make a comparrission of the others should he so desire. There are nine of these forms which have to be dealt with during the year. For your guidance I will run through them briefly...

Form A.I.

List of all lodge members, to date, or of initiation, and joining. This must be returned at the end of the lodges financial year ending 31st<sup>M</sup> March, 30th June, 30th September or 31st December, as the case may be. Three copies must be sent one of which is returned with his assessment, theron - special remarks on this form

FORM A.2.

This is a continuation of the first sheet A.I. with the same applying

FORM /3

Return of the master, wardens, and past masters, being subscribing members of the Lodge., as before returned four times a year..... SPecial attention here in giving and quoting the correct addresses of the brethren entered on the return.

FORM A.4.

An installation return, must be returned immediately after the Master and Wardens have been installed. Two Copies are required, (I) one of which is

1/3 ONE OF WHICH IS SENT TO London. This is a fairly easy form to understand, the same cannot be said for some of the others.

FORM /5 Application for Grand Lodge certificates. This has to be done immediately after the candidate or applicant has been raised or accepted as a joining member.

FORM A/6 Registration of new members, the returns have to be made four times a year and three copies have to be made.

FORM A/7. This is the return of active past masters, by D. Grand to see that the <sup>shelf</sup> shelf, which often a past master thinks he will recline on for the rest of his masonic career <sup>is not</sup> a dusty shelf. They do not want him to get cluttered up, but remain healthy, alive etc. by virtue of his past experience, he has so much to give for the guidance and instruction of the new brethren. This is "The Looking Glass" of the Lodge if you like, any slacking is at once noticed. This is returned in November of each year.

PROSPOSAL FORMS.

Used as the name implies for candidates to be initiated, or for <sup>joining</sup> joining members. This has to be submitted immediately a candidate is initiated or ~~xxx~~ accepted as a joining member. Two copies one of which is sent to London, with the annual return. A Grand Lodge will not be issued until a Proposal form has been received.

LODGE STATISTICS. This must be completed by the end of February - Usually the D.G. Secretary sends a reminder to this effect, without the facts figures and information required on this form, the efforts of the other Lodges become of no avail and the D.G. Secretary is unable to present the final picture of the District to all member Lodges in the District

There is a wealth of information to be found in the Book of Constitutions which gives in detail all the do's and don't's NOW, I have given you the work which I have found to be interesting and these are my personal views, whether they be right or wrong is for you to decide, however I do feel, and you may agree so long as there is a yard stick, with which one can measure, the efficiency depends on the individual, his responsibility and concept of the job little so long as the work is carried out with dignity and decorum which befits the Society to which he is Secretary.

Brethren, I think I have covered all the points which I wish to make, and sincerely, hope, you have been able to gain a little more insight in the strange and mysterious workings of the job of a secretary, who lets face it... often come under barage for much criticism . THANK YOU!!!!!!