



**Shuniah Lodge A.F. & A.M.**

**No. 287, G. R. C.**

**ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY  
1872 - 1997**

Symbolism has ever played a predominant role in Freemasonry. It is therefore but fitting that our commemorative plaque should bear, as it does, certain etched figures symbolically representative of the celebration of 125 of Craft Masonry in the District of Thunder Bay.

The basalt columns of the Sidley Peninsula, resembling a recumbent warrior, and known as the "Sleeping Giant", play a major role in the formation of the harbour, and dominate the spectacular view from the city. Rising in the east are the Square and Compasses, the universal symbols of our Craft. The name Shuniah is derived from the Ojibwa word for silver, a mineral which has played a major role in the development of the area.

In Lake Superior, on a tiny outcrop of rock a short distance from the shoreline where the left hand of the "Giant" would rest, there can be found traces of one of the richest silver mines ever known in North America. The vastly important part played by mining is represented by the head frame and hoist cables at the head of the figure.

The birch bark canoe with the crew of voyageurs is indicative of the earliest form of transport of men and materials between Eastern and Western Canada, through Canadian territory. Each year, the Northwest Company of Montreal, known as the "Concern", would send their "agents" west with supplies for their "wintering partners" who would bring in fur from the Athabasca region. Meeting at the half-way point, Fort William, they would exchange cargoes and discuss plans for the coming year.

Simon Macgillivray, (1775 – 1840), a younger brother of William MacGillivray and partner in the "Concern", was sent out to Canada, and over the following five years, travelled the country to the tune of over 4,400 miles, BY CANOE! Simon had been appointed, in England, Provincial Grand Master for Upper Canada. The introduction and diffusion, in Ontario, of the "Canadian Working" of the post-union Ritual was almost certainly due to this Brother. A portrait of Simon MacGillivray, in his regalia as Provincial Grand Master hangs in the Great Hall in the restored version of Fort William.

It was at the Shuniah Silver Mine, located about three miles north and east of Prince Arthur's Landing, in the Fall of 1871, that our charter Master, W. Bro. J. F. Clarke, medical officer and sheriff, conceived the idea of a Masonic Lodge. Bro. Clarke had gathered with a small group of miners in the bunkhouse after supper, and through discussion discovered that there were a great many Masons throughout the area, including both Canadian and American Brethren. In 1872, dispensation was granted to Shuniah Lodge by Most Worshipful Brother William Mercer Wilson, our first Grand Master. With assistance and guidance from the membership of Palestine Lodge No. 79, Duluth, Minnesota, Shuniah Lodge No. 287 G. G. C. of the Masonic District of Algoma came into being. We have moved ahead, hand-in-hand, since that day.

Document found in the regalia of: V. W. Bro. Ross A. Wilson  
125th Shuniah Anniversary Committee Chaired by: R. W. Bro. Marvin Salmi