

The R.A.M. Glaucoma Fund

for

Research - Treatment - Education

*A Charitable Program of Benevolence
initiated and promoted by*



*The Grand Chapter of
Royal Arch Masons of
Nova Scotia*

(with Prince Edward Island)

*A designated
fund in the
Queen
Elizabeth II
Health
Sciences
Centre
Foundation*



*To the MEHPs and Companions of the
Jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Royal
Arch Masons of Nova Scotia.*

It has been said that a person does not realize how valuable something is until it has been lost, and one's eyesight is probably a prime example of the importance of that statement. We tend to take our sight for granted and seldom are we prepared for the unthinkable.

A number of years ago, Most Excellent Companion Harold Weiland found out he was experiencing the beginnings of the disease of the eyes known as Glaucoma. Most Excellent Companion Weiland also became very aware as he received what treatment was available, that there was no cure for Glaucoma and it could only be somewhat treated through current practice and procedure. The hope for a cure therefore could only be realized through research and development.

Through discussions with the Eye Care Centre at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre, it was determined that a partner to aid the research of this disease would be most welcome, and Most Excellent Companion Weiland felt that this would be an excellent initiative for the Royal Arch Masons of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island to contribute to as their Charity of Choice.

In 1996, the Board of General Purposes accepted Most Excellent Companion Weiland's proposal to partner with the QE II Foundation Authority to establish the Royal Arch Mason

Glaucoma Fund as a Registered Charity in support of Glaucoma Research at the QE II Health Sciences Centre. This proposal was subsequently ratified at the May Convocation of the Grand Chapter in that year.

To that end, a sub-committee of the Committee on Benevolence under the Chairmanship of Most Excellent Companion Weiland was stood up with the mandate to promote this important work within the Jurisdiction, and eventually generate enough funding for Research to help eradicate, or at least find positive advances in the treatment of this disease.

Since that time, unfortunately Most Excellent Companion Weiland has lost his battle with the disease and is now almost totally blind. It is therefore up to us to continue this important work that he had begun nearly twenty years. Over these past years substantial gains have been made in the amount of money earned through the efforts of the Royal Arch Masons of the Jurisdiction and the interest is now being used for its intended purpose, Research. The battle however has not yet been won and we must continue our efforts in the hope that someday this disease may no longer take control of the lives of future generations. We as Royal Arch Masons should be proud that we have taken on a challenge that, though difficult, may one day make a significant difference for Society.

What Is Glaucoma?

Glaucoma is an eye disease that permanently damages the optic nerve. Glaucoma is a disease which leads to loss of visual field, beginning with side vision. It is one of the most common causes of blindness. It is a disease affecting one (1) of every ten (10) Canadians over forty years of age. Although associated with increased age, glaucoma may develop at any age from infancy on.

What Causes Glaucoma?

The basic cause is unknown, but a number of risk factors have been identified. These include age, myopia (short sightedness), heredity, general disease such as early heart attack and stroke, and raised intraocular pressure (IOP). By the time you notice visual loss from glaucoma it is already well advanced. This becomes one reason for our research project.

Raised IOP is found in most types of glaucoma and is the main target for control of the disease. Raised IOP occurs when fluid outflow is obstructed. Visual loss in glaucoma is thought to be caused by raised IOP and other influences on the optic nerve. The gradual loss of nerve function causes loss of peripheral, or side, vision painlessly and without notice.

Can Glaucoma Be Treated?

Tests for glaucoma are painless and take little time. The IOP is measured with a tonometer, and the optic nerve is viewed through the pupil with an ophthalmoscope. Treatment is begun with eyedrops but MUST be monitored to ensure the best treatment. If detected and treated in time glaucoma can be controlled.

How To Detect Glaucoma?

Be aware of the possibility of glaucoma AND be tested by qualified professionals. Inform your doctor of medication you use. Some drugs, such as cortisone (steroid) drops, can cause glaucoma.

What is Open-Angle Glaucoma?

Open-angle glaucoma is the most common form of glaucoma. Patients rarely notice any symptoms until the disease is well advanced; it is truly a "silent blinding disease". Those affected can drive read and perform most tasks because the visual loss is not a black cloud or a blurring of the vision. Because this loss is permanent, early detection and treatment are necessary to preserving remaining vision.

What Is Needed?

To Give Leadership to Meet the Need, "The Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons of Nova Scotia (with Prince Edward Island) will make Glaucoma Research, Treatment and Public Education the major portion of its PROGRAMME OF BENEVOLENCE."

RESEARCH - Research is needed into the causes of Glaucoma and the means of early detection.

TREATMENT - Research will lead to the discovery of new and improved "Ways to Treat Glaucoma."

EDUCATION - Promotion and support of Glaucoma Research, in co-operation with other concerned groups, will broaden our understanding.

FUNDING - Regular and ongoing financial support of this programme will enable the funding base to grow and the interest income to provide for the accomplishing of our purposes. Please consider the various means to make this possible.

WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE.

- 1. Yearly Donations - Give a gift each year.*
- 2. Memorial Gifts - Honour the memory of deceased friends / relatives with a Memorial Gift - make your choice a donation to the R.A.M. GLAUCOMA FUND.*

3. Planned Giving - Set a specific goal for yourself and give a set portion each month or year until you reach your objective.

4. Bequests - Provide for a major gift to the Fund as part of your Will.

5. Living Bequest - Give a major gift to the Fund with the proviso that you receive the interest as income during your life time.

6. Give a major gift - now.

7. Insurance Policy - Take out a Policy

a. Naming "The Fund" as beneficiary, or

b. Arrange with the Glaucoma Fund to take out a policy in their own name and you pay the Premiums during your life time. The premium is a tax exempt gift.

8. Fund Raising - Join with others in some project and send the proceeds to the Fund.

9. Automatic Deductions - Authorize the Fund to make regular withdrawals of a set amount from your Bank Account.

Your contribution can be made by Cheque or Money Order made payable to the RAM Glaucoma Fund - QE II Foundation, through your Chapter to the Grand Secretary, after which a tax receipt will be issued for any gift of \$10.00 or more. Should you prefer to pay using Credit Card, Contact the QE II Foundation directly at 902 473 7932 and specify your donation for the RAM Glaucoma Fund - T690.

"Think Glaucoma"