



What some current members say:

"It was a genuine surprise when I first saw the inner rooms of the Odd Fellows Hall. It was like entering into another era, a grander one. I still find it a bit exhilarating every time I come up the stairs."

Jerome

"The reason why I joined is found in its motto: Friendship, Love, Truth. It can't get any better or simpler than that. Odd Fellows gives me the greatest opportunity to contribute the best that I have to the community."

Terry

"I joined Odd Fellows when I first moved to Victoria to find a sense of camaraderie, tradition, and a spirit of giving. I found it, abundantly."

Carol

"The Lodge is a place where someone knows your name, and in a way that makes you want to return and share. It's a place you can call home."

Diane

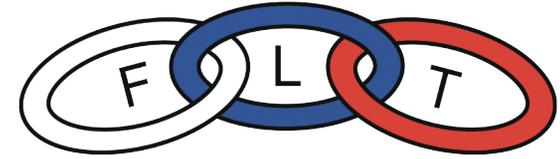
"At a time when the beauty of meaningful ritual has all but disappeared in our culture, I find it a respectful and refreshing bond as practiced in the Odd Fellows lodge."

Richard

If you are interested in joining the Odd Fellows and want further information, please contact:

Any current member of Victoria Lodge #1 or Columbia Lodge #2,
or email victoriaoddfellows1@gmail.com

**Odd Fellows Hall
1315 Douglas St.
Victoria BC V8W 2E9**



The **INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS** began in 18th century England as a non-sectarian group of gentlemen coming together to provide material assistance to "widows and orphans" at a time when public social assistance was non-existent. We have continued in that spirit, providing help to charities in communities with lodges found around the globe. The Odd Fellows has been in Victoria since 1864 and in our classic building since 1879.

Our motto is direct. We believe in "**Friendship, Love, and Truth**".

The Odd Fellows Today

Men and women who are members continue to find meaning in the plain but powerful human values that the traditions of Odd Fellowship encourage. Although social issues in the 21st century may seem different from previous times, we find that reverence to universal brotherhood and sisterhood remains an essential cornerstone. We are a non-sectarian organization committed to gender equality and honouring all belief systems that respect freedom of the individual. Like many societies, our values take a symbolic shape in some traditional rituals.

During the latter part of the 20th century, fraternal organizations—Odd Fellows included—have experienced an inevitable, generational shift in membership numbers. In the last decade however there has been a renewed and vigorous interest from men and women of all ages, but particularly younger people, in becoming Odd Fellows.

The coming generation is rediscovering new forms of community in the old.



What We Do

The IOOF lodges in 29 countries throughout the world have basic values in common—and they turn them into action:

- **By improving and elevating the condition of humankind**, advancing the time-honoured principles of friendship, love, truth, faith, hope, charity and universal justice. These ideals are built into the very nature of our Order. In the Victoria Lodges, these ideals are continually expressed in mutual caring and warm camaraderie, but especially by giving aid to fellow members in times of need. We are always looking for new projects and effective ways to better serve our community.
- **By organizing charitable projects and activities** that benefit the less fortunate, the youth, the elderly, the environment, and the community. Our SOS Children's Village provides a caring home for orphaned children in more than 100 countries around the world. Among other beneficiaries funded are the Arthritis Foundation, the Visual Research Foundation, and Living Legacy, a group that enhances the environment by planting trees. Locally, our Educational Foundation each year provides substantial grants to students for higher education. The Victoria Lodges also support Mustard Seed, Our Place, Lifecycles, Little League, the Victoria Symphony, and many other worthy local organizations.
- **By promoting good will and harmony** among peoples and nations through the principle of universal fraternity, holding the belief that all men and women—regardless of race, nationality, religion, social status, gender, rank and station—are brothers and sisters. One of our special projects is the United Nations Pilgrimage for Youth, sponsoring students for an educational trip to the United Nations in New York City.

The Odd Fellows in North America

Thomas Wildey (1782–1861) was the founder of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in North America. He was born in London, England where he grew up as an orphan child before being taken in by his uncle. Young Wildey apprenticed as a maker of coach springs and brought those skills to America when he immigrated in 1817. He had been a member of the British Oddfellows, and now living in Baltimore, he missed the warm companionship of that group. Sensing that there might be others in the city, Wildey advertised a local newspaper inquiring of any other Odd Fellows. Wildey and four men met at the Seven Stars Inn on April 26, 1819 and the Odd Fellows in North America was born. Reflecting Wildey's boyhood experiences, the Order dedicated itself to philanthropic goals, with special concern for orphans. Caught up in spirited dedication, Wildey traveled throughout his adopted country, bringing together others to form lodges in burgeoning cities and ever-expanding Western settlements. By the time Wildey died in 1861, there were Odd Fellows lodges in 42 states and in early 20th century, now flourishing in Canada, it was the largest fraternal order in North America with over two million members.

What's In a Name? Why "Odd Fellows"?

One reason for our curious name was that at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution our original lodges opened their doors to those in the working class who did not ordinarily belong to traditional guilds. They were therefore considered 'odd'. Also, in the 18th century it was rather odd to find a group of people who claimed and followed such noble values as benevolence, charity, and fraternity. Although traditionally most of our members have been drawn from the working class, over the years such random notables as Wyatt Earp, Charlie Chaplin, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Canada's first prime minister, John A. Macdonald, and political visionary Tommy Douglas were Odd Fellows.