

# The Square and Compasses.

A newsletter for the Grand Lodge of South Africa. No. 51 April 2016



Most Worshipful Brother Geoff Edwards OSM.

## Being an Optimist is a Matter of Choice!

Brethren, as many of you will be very aware, I am and always have been an unashamed optimist. This does not mean that I always have perfect experiences or that everything always works out as planned, just that I always expect it to. I've always held the view that, even if the pessimist's forecast of the eventual outcome proves right, the optimist has a heck of a lot more fun while finding out, so why be a pessimist?

Anyway, a couple of weeks ago we had our now annual Chain's Conference in Bloemfontein - and I'm now feeling very optimistic about our Grand Lodge's future and the direction we are taking. Don't let me mislead you on this. There's still an enormous amount of work to be done, but we are making some real progress and really are having a great deal of fun.

The theme of the Conference was "Building on our Successes" and we examined the attributes of some of our more successful Lodges in an effort to identify common patterns which we could introduce throughout our structures. Without exception, top performing Lodges have properly developed goals and plans and focus on consistently providing a Quality experience to their candidates and members alike. This encompasses high standard ritual workings, organising meaningful charity / social events and a genuine effort to address the educational needs of the newer members in particular. The members of these Lodges are proud to belong to them, enjoy sharing their experiences and make a genuine effort to recruit new Brethren.

This pattern stood out as we reviewed the factors which contributed to the success enjoyed by Burleigh Lodge in Australia and then listened to our own Brethren as they described the experiences of such Lodges as Koh-i-Nor, de Goede Hoop, Tolerance,

Flaming Star, Westerford, Peace and Harmony and First United. While these Lodges are not unique, they are all very good examples of what can be achieved by GLSA Lodges who are applying these basic principles.

Anyway, if these are the ingredients which tend to make our Lodges successful, then Grand Lodge must focus its efforts on doing what we can to assist our Lodges to best implement them - so let me update you on just a small sample of our current projects.

**Membership Management:** We are very aware of the extreme importance of having a really effective national database of our members. As a result we are in the process of implementing an American software solution that will not only streamline administrative tasks but will also provide our members with services that we could previously only have dreamed about.

We are currently populating the database (a major project in itself) and, as soon as this has reached an advanced enough stage, we'll provide access to all of our Lodges and Brethren. Once this is in place our members will be able to maintain their own personal details and will also have access to a wide variety of material related to the GLSA and our Lodges. This will encompass documentation control, administration and education support. It will change our Masonic lives!

**Education:** The "Masonic Book of Life" is now given out to every new member joining the GLSA and is updated as he passes through his Craft degrees. It provides him with material related to Freemasonry and the GLSA as well as articles pertinent to each degree and also incorporates the Constitution and Laws. With our new Membership database system, we will now be able to offer still more educational material in line with each Brother's degree level. As the "Masonic Book of Life" will be available electronically through the database, every GLSA member will have access to it.

**Ritual Excellence Program:** This has been introduced to encourage our Brethren to learn the ritual and it recognises and rewards those who achieve a meaningful standard. It has been successfully launched by the Northern Division team and will be introduced in other Divisions over the coming months.

**Masonic Growth:** In total terms, the GLSA comprises far more than 3 craft degrees. While these are the foundation on which to build any Masonic career, our organisation also offers a full range of Royal Arch and Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite degrees. Once a Brother has been raised to Master Mason, the allied degrees are immediately accessible to him and he is encouraged to explore them further, and enjoy them, in line with his own Masonic interests.

MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM  
Grand Master

## Participating in the World's biggest Cycle Race

With 35,000 cyclists, the Cape Town Cycle Tour's final day around the Cape Peninsula is the largest cycling event in the world. The backbone of this major cycle race are the volunteer Marshals, who are all stationed along the 109 km route. The Brethren from Southern Division form part of these volunteers and, by doing so, generate funds for such charities as the PGL Benevolent Fund.

32 Masons assisted at this year's tour. We were on Sector 8 (Beach Road, Sea Point) and ensured the safety of spectators and participants alike. The Organiser's highly commended the Brethren on their performance and noted that the "Team Leader" Louis van der Linde section was managed "without incident".



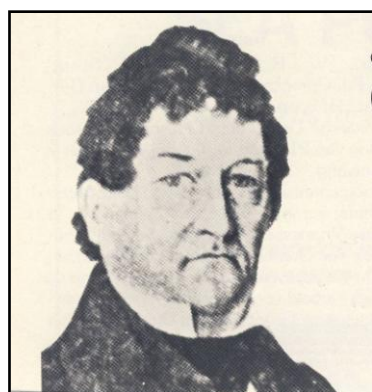
Dan Korn & Morris Rozen

As one of the Brethren remarked "You think the race is tough, try running up and down for 10 hours as a Marshal" - but it was great fun and for a very good cause, so we'll all be back next year!"

## Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr- a much loved Brother

The 4th Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlands was, as were all of his predecessors, a Brother with a legal background and a distinguished member of the Lodge de Goede Hoop.

In 1874, Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr was appointed Deputy Grand Master, this being the same year that the Government appointed him as Master of the Supreme Court.



In the early years of his 18 year tenure, he opened 15 new Lodges, but the Depression of the 1880s saw Brethren moving from the towns to the cities and several Lodges being closed. Hofmeyr's professional duties precluded him from

the travel tendencies displayed by Sir Christofel Brand and, while he seems to have felt personally responsible at the loss of each Lodge, the reality is that the circumstances forced the situation and there is little that he could really have done to change events.

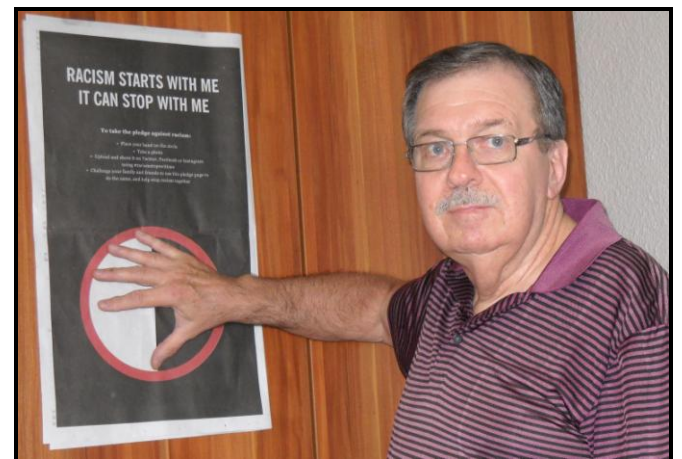
Hofmeyr was a reserved man, with a deep love of everything Masonic. In 1892, the "great fire" which

destroyed so much of the de Goede Hoop Temple had a profound effect on Hofmeyr, who died a few months thereafter. His photograph is to be found in our Masonic Museum, while the 3 statues so splendidly representing Wisdom, Strength and Beauty within the de Goede Hoop Temple, were all erected in Hofmeyr's honour after the Temple had been reconstructed.

Hofmeyr is not to be confused with "Onze Jan", his namesake and the father of Afrikaans, whose statue stands in Hofmeyr Square in Cape Town. "Onze Jan", according to the Dictionary of South African Biography, was one of Hofmeyr's 12 children.

**MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM  
Grand Master**

## The GLSA stands Against Racism!



Our country recently had a week-long campaign where people were encouraged to take a stand against racism in any form. Our local newspaper included a page where leading personalities were photographed with their hand on a common pledge and a selection of these pictures were included in the next edition.

In the light of this, it seems relevant to clearly define the GLSA's stand on Racism and to provide our members with something that they can proudly share with their family, friends and acquaintances.

We do not, as the Grand Lodge of South Africa, support racism in any form whatsoever. At his initiation, every Brother takes a solemn obligation, with his hands on his Volume of Sacred Law, that he will "only acknowledge perfect equality" - and this encompasses such differentiations as religion, political views, race, creed, wealth, sexual orientation, language or any other such superficial measures. We only ever measure a man based on his qualities as a man.

This promise, Brethren, is non-negotiable and any Brother not living by it is simply not behaving as a Freemason. As such, he is betraying our Grand Lodge, the Order and its principles and seriously undermines our efforts to create a better world through the example that we, as Freemasons, set for those around us.


**The Golden Rule** - the VSL of every single religion has one verse which is present in some or other form. It is included in our 1<sup>st</sup> degree obligation as:

**"Do unto others as you would they do unto you!"**

## Star of the West "Bleeds for the Community"

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, in conjunction with SA Blood Services, Lodge Star of the West organised a blood donor day.

On average the Service gets seven pints from each outing. Good publicity enabled us to organise a total of 22 pints - a very good effort indeed!



**STAR of the WEST and S.A.**  
**National Blood Service**  
**STAR of the WEST en S.A.**  
**Nasionale Bloeddiens**

**BIED AAN / PRESENT**

**'N BLOEDSKENK DAG /**  
**A BLOOD DONOR DAY**

**WOENSDAG / WEDNESDAY 23 Maart / March 2016**  
Hoek/Cr PLATAAN en/and MONICA Laan/Ave, FLAMWOOD  
09:00 am/vm tot/to 14:00 pm/nm

**ALMAL WELKOM! ALL WELCOME!**

Kom Skenk U bloed en kry 'n gratis sosatie en koeldrank!  
Donate your blood and receive a free sosatie and cooldrink!

Help voorkom 'n bloed tekort vir die komende Paasfees  
Help reduce the blood shortage this Easter Holiday.

Star of the West now challenges all Lodges in the Northern Division to hold a "Blood day".

Donors were rewarded with a sosatie and an ice cold beer or cooldrink as they chose! (We looked after the family that came with too!)

**RW Bro Nuno Calvet**



Wor Bros Calla de Jager (WM), Carl Stockit, Ronnie Horn

## In the Footsteps of Freemasonry, A Masonic Tour of Israel.

The itinerary for the tour has now been finalised and the details are included at the end of this Newsletter. This really is a great opportunity to experience for yourself some aspects of our Masonic history and derive a better understanding of where our various traditions and customs originated.

## Ritual Excellence Program (REP)

Lodge Prins Frederick hosted a REP presentation evening on Tuesday 22 March 2016. 4 of our Brethren performed workings in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree

The PGM, RW Bro Alan van der Vyver congratulates the Brethren who are making so much effort to improve their ritual work and looks forward to them continuing on this journey of excellence.

A special word of congratulation is extended to Bro Wesley Welthagen for being the first qualifier for the "Ritualist" award.

The standard of ritual on the evening was extremely high and the judges very demanding. After the adjudication process was completed, the following Brethren had accumulated credits on the program:

Bro G Nguessy-Guibinga (Flaming Star) 17 credits;

Bro W Welthagen (Prins Frederik) 11 credits,

(now has 25 credits in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree).

Bro CJ Cornelius, (Koh-In-Nor) 6 credits.

Bro D Onyango, (Alpha) 2 credits.

*(The evening was attended by a senior member of a Sister Constitution who commented afterwards that "he was blown away by the quality of the workings given by young Brethren and the enthusiasm shown in the performance of their work. This formal program's striving for excellence can only be good for the future of the GLSA. Editor).*

## Lodge Star of the West performs a "Double"

On Tuesday 29 March, the Lodge commenced their labours early so that they could perform 2 initiation ceremonies in a single evening. Brothers Dewald Labuschagne and Percy Booth each enjoyed an excellent working in which the PGM, RW Bro Alan van der Vyver, was invited to take the chair.

The Lodge members rose to the occasion and, in a long meeting, performed their charges with great aplomb. The ambiance in the Lodge was warm and this facilitated a wonderful evening being shared by all those Brethren fortunate enough to be present.



Centre front: WM: Wor Bro Calla de Jager, on his left Bro Dewald Labuschagne and on his right, Bro Percy Booth.

The Lodge is recovering from a prolonged period of decline and is now growing rapidly under the direction of Wor Bro Calla de Jager. 4 Brethren have been initiated recently and there are 5 more waiting in the wings. This growth performance has been generated by an active "attraction" program which has included personal approaches as well as positive publicity from the activities of the Lodge in the

community. The “Blood Day” and the recent “Mompooer Festival” are just two examples of the Lodge using involvement to attract interest.

The Lodge really is a “success story” in how growth and rejuvenation can be achieved when you put your mind to it. Klerksdorp had been written off as a dying area due to mine closures etc and yet, with a little bit of research, this has been found to be far from the truth. The Town now has a dynamic Lodge with a great future and it makes quite certain that it promotes an image of being relevant within its community.

### RW Bro Bernard Neuhaus honoured by Grand Lodge of Mauritius



Freemasonry is universal and, while it is perhaps unusual, the GLSA does have members who also belong to other Grand Lodges. On the 12<sup>th</sup> March one such Brother, RW Bro Bernard Neuhaus (Alpha) was honoured at the AGM of the Grand Lodge of Mauritius with the Order of Service to Masonry (OSM) for

his services to their Grand Lodge. Bernard is an Assistant Grand Master with Mauritius and often represents them at foreign Grand Lodge meetings.

Congratulations go to RW Bro Bernard on having received this prestigious honour.

### The Blind Men and the Elephant.

A long time ago, a king asked six blind men to discern what an elephant looked like by feeling different parts of its body.

The blind man who felt its leg decided that the elephant was like a pillar.

Another felt its tail and surmised that the elephant was like a rope.

The one who felt its trunk suggested that it was like a branch of a tree.

The man who felt its ear said the elephant was like a hand fan.

Feeling the elephant’s belly, another blind man sagely replied that the elephant was like a wall.

Finally, the one who felt its tusk said it was like a solid pipe.

The king acknowledged that they were all right, but only partially so. He explained that each blind man



had touched a different part of the elephant but, in fact, the elephant was the sum of all of the parts. Each part had its own role to play and the elephant was only effective when all the parts worked together.

A Masonic Lodge, Brethren, is pretty much the same. It incorporates the individual skills and attributes of a range of diverse Brethren, but is really only effective when these work in harmony with each other.

There is a story of a man who once stood before God, his heart breaking from the pain and injustice in the world.

“Dear God,” he cried, “look at all the suffering, the anguish and distress in the world. Why don’t you send help?”

God responded, “I did send help. I sent you.” *David Wolfe*

### Almoner’s Corner.

It is with much sadness that we have to report the passing of Wor Bro Arrie Meiring (Losie Senekal), GLSA Grand Sword Bearer, to the Eternal East on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2016. Arrie was active in his Division and a great supporter of our Grand Lodge. We offer our deepest condolences to his family and friends as we mourn the loss of a good Brother.

Wor Bro Eugene Steenkamp (Losie Brits) has his wife Sarie in hospital undergoing a by-pass operation and Bro Jano Olivier (Lodge De Goede Trouw) has his baby son in hospital under observation. The wife of Wor Bro Louis Wolsink (Royal Protea) is not well at the moment and under constant medical care. We ask you to remember them all in your prayers and hope that they have a speedy recovery and a safe return to good health.

### Grand Almoner

Brethren, the Grand Almoner is only as effective as the information he receives. Please, if anything is known about a Brother in distress, be sure to phone RW Bro Neville Klein OSM at 071 4148869 or send him an email to:

[kleinneville@gmail.com](mailto:kleinneville@gmail.com)



### GRAND LODGE REGALIA ITEMS

*“Wear them with pride”.*

The following items of regalia of the Grand Lodge of South Africa are currently available from the Grand Lodge Office.

The price of the tie is R100.

The cufflinks cost R140.

Both of these items are only available whilst the current stocks last.



HeynekeTours 

Registration Number: 2002 / 031211 / 23

### Masonic Tour to Israel

*“In the Footsteps of Freemasonry”*

Join the Grand Master on this wonderful tour during September 2016 - Cost is R30,934 pp sharing

Please contact Henda Heyneke on +27 (0) 11 764 2783, Cell: +27 (0) 83 256 6682 or on [heyneketours@telkomsa.net](mailto:heyneketours@telkomsa.net) for more information on this tour and other arrangements.