

The quarterly newsletter
of the District Grand
Lodge of the South Island

DEGREES SOUTH



APRIL 2011

DGM'S EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND TOPS \$200,000

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IMPORTANT DATES

- 9TH MAY AMBERLEY INSTALLATION
- 14TH MAY. ANNUAL COMMUNICATIONS HOSTED BY THE LODGE OF ST JOHN IN TIMARU
- 11TH JUNE. PHOENIX INSTALLATION
- 26TH JUNE. WINCHESTER INSTALLATION



RW Bro Geoff Rowe and W Bro Ian Allport, President of the Board, presenting a cheque for \$80,000 to Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker

The District Grand Master's Earthquake Relief Fund has passed \$200,000 and still the money is coming in.

With the presentation of a cheque for \$80,000 to Mayor Bob Parker on 19th April, this fund is now being directly applied to the relief of the residents of the City and those most affected by the quake. The District Grand Master is hopeful that, during his attendance at the Grand Installation later this month, he will be able to increase the awareness of the problems being faced by the City of Christchurch and how any further relief forthcoming from London might be applied.

FROM THE DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

Greetings Brethren,

Communications are almost upon us and I want to take this opportunity of thanking the Lodge of St John for all their efforts in preparing the way for another successful meeting of our District.

This year I want to see as many of our Master Masons as possible attend the meeting on Saturday morning which will be conducted by Worshipful Brother Peter Sheriff. This meeting is open to all brethren with the exception of the District Grand Lodge Executive and it is here that I hope you will "open up" and discuss with each other where you think we are going, what we should be doing and how we can improve. I don't want this to turn into a witch hunt but good, constructive criticism is always welcome and I encourage as much participation as possible. Towards the end of the session I will be available to answer any questions or misgivings you may have. Let's make this a positive step forward for our District and for Freemasonry.

The recent traumatic events in Canterbury have created a few problems for our Lodges especially on accommodation and missed/postponed meeting dates. Please be assured that we are doing everything possible to bring a successful solution to our challenges - we will keep you all informed as well as we can.

I want to take this opportunity of extending the grateful thanks of the affected Brethren for the support and assistance given by our Lodges in conjunction with Grand Lodge, The Irish Lodges both Provincial and Craft and other District Lodges from around the world. This support has been nothing short of astounding and has seen the District Grand Masters Earthquake Relief Fund amount to more than \$200,000. This fund will be used initially to assist those of our Brethren in need and then the balance will be split amongst the 3 Mayoralties in Christchurch vis. Christchurch, Waimakiriri and Selwyn for the

relief of the less fortunate in Canterbury.

During the latter part of April I, in company with Bev, will be in England. I will be attending a meeting with the Grand Charity then the Grand Installation following which will be the Grand Convocation for Supreme Grand Chapter. I will be speaking to all concerned re the problems/challenges we have ahead of us and I am ever hopeful that I will have something worthwhile to report at this year's Communications.

Until then I wish each and every one of you and your families the very best of good health and good fortune - please keep up our traditions of looking after your fellow man - it is one of the three basic tenets on which Freemasonry is founded and makes us such a great organisation.

Yours fraternally

Geoffrey W Rowe
District Grand Master

FROM ADGM W BRO KEN BORLAND

There is no doubt that 2011 has gotten away to a shaky start and one can only feel extremely saddened by the destruction and loss of life suffered, both in Christchurch and Japan.

Many of the images shown on television rather resembled scenes from a science fiction movie rather than reality.

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to the West Coast to attend both the Greymouth and Phoenix Lodge meetings in Febru-

ary. To be present when the members of Greymouth Lodge spoke with so much passion, sympathy and heartfelt support for, not only the Pike River miners and their families, but more importantly, for the fine people of the West Coast in general, was extremely moving and certainly stirred my emotions. Their caring views will ever remain close to my heart.

I would like to thank all the Lodges in the West Coast, Nelson and Marlborough area for

the support, kindness and hospitality extended to Barbara and I during the past 3 Years, It really was appreciated. I would like to wish Dave Stenning well during his term and I know that you will offer Dave and Fran similar courtesies in the future.

I am looking forward to enjoying everyone's company at the Communications in Timaru - see you there.

Cheers,
Ken Borland ADGM

STATUS OF LODGE BUILDINGS - 1ST APRIL, 2011

The extent of the damage to the various Lodge Rooms in Christchurch has now been assessed and the following describes the situation as of the first of this month.

Cashmere Masonic Hall

Minor damage to interior wall cladding - Inspected and cleared for use.

Riccarton Masonic Hall

Moderate damage and partial failure of brick exterior wall and some minor internal plaster cladding cracking. Inspected and cleared for use.

Brighton Masonic Hall

Very minor damage - Inspected and cleared for use.

Lincoln Masonic Hall

Minor damage and cleared for use.

Malvern, Amberley, Oxford and Akaroa

All have no damage.

Shirley Masonic Hall

To be demolished

Idris Road Masonic Hall

Moderate damage to structure and cracking to internal walls. Has been inspected and requires strengthening to NE wall & ceiling. The building will be available when this is completed and cleared for use.

Ferrymead Park Masonic Hall

Building structurally sound, but extensive failure of ceiling plaster that will require inspec-

tion and repair. At this stage this building is not available for occupation.

Lyttelton Masonic Hall

Building damage extensive and this building is not available for occupation.

Rangiora Masonic Hall

Building damage with the lodge room red stickered and refectory yellow stickered. Outcome and future use of the building is to be determined. Not available for use.

Kaiapoi Masonic Hall

The building is substantially damaged and red stickered. Outcome and future use of the building is to be determined. Not available for use.

*Seen in Church...
At the Evening
Service tonight the
sermon topic will be
"What is Hell?"
(Come early and
listen to our choir
practice)*

*"When Mason
Brother Mason
meets, And each the
other warmly
greet,
Joy seems an
overflowing cup,
When hand meets
hand in Brother's
Grip..."*



This dramatic picture was taken from the Port Hills the moment the earthquake hit

ASHBURTON SUPPORT THEIR LOCAL FIRE SERVICE



Chief Fire Officer Donald Dunlea pictured with Ashburton WM Gavin Jamieson and W Bro Ken Borland

Ashburton Lodge no 1811 recently presented a 50" plasma TV to the members of the Ashburton Fire Service. Ashburton's Master, W Bro Gavin Jamieson and

treasurer, W Bro Ken Borland, went along to present the TV and to meet members of the Brigade.

Both Gavin and Ken were able to personally thank the Fire Service members for the amount of time and effort that they had contributed, both locally and in Christchurch since the earthquake struck. The TV will predominantly be used for watching training videos.

(Editor: I think perhaps the gentleman on the right of the picture is wondering what time the rugby starts?)

WINCHESTER'S CHEESE, WINE AND STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Winchester Lodge's fourth annual Wine, Cheese and Strawberry event got underway on January 22nd with the tables at the Victoria Hall heaving under the weight of assorted cheeses, strawberries, cherries, excellent wines and a chocolate fountain. Over sixty

attendees were entertained during the evening by W Bro David and Jean White and W Bro Jim Annear with Jenny Sherry.

Although an extremely informal event, RW Bro Geoff Rowe DGM and VW Bro Allen Glasston DGM Midland District and their partners were welcomed by Winchester's WM, W Bro Russell Stocker. Such is the informality of the event that RW Bro Geoff commented that he had spent most of the morning topping the strawberries in preparation. The 2012 Festival will be on January 21st. Please make a note in your diaries and contact the Editor for more details and tickets.



Winchester's WM Russell Stocker and partner Elaine Dover enjoying the evening

MASONIC POETRY

The International Masonic Poetry Society was founded in 1993 by W Bro Bill Shorto and they produce a 24 page Quarterly Journal where members may have their poetry published. It is produced as an A5 sized booklet so that it may fit in a pocket and therefore always handy should you be asked to say a few words at a meeting and feel a little lost for words.

Perhaps you would like to communicate your thoughts, feelings or experiences of Freemasonry in verse or you just like to read poetry and would like to communicate with like minded Masons, if so you may wish to consider joining. Let's not forget that many famous poets were Freemasons and have added verse to our rituals. Contact details for the Society are:

W Bro Andy Waters
44, Lamberhurst Green,
Gillingham,
Kent, ME8 6LE, UK
or
editorimps@blueyonder.co.uk

Whilst on the subject of Masonic Poetry W Bro Doug Stapleton recently sent Degrees South a letter relating how Greymouth Lodge came into possession of a number of Masonic papers formerly the property of the late Christopher Grieve Turnbull Alison who had been a member of that lodge in 1959. His many certificates showed that he had earlier been very active in the Craft and other orders whilst living in Scotland and amongst the papers was a 25 verse, Scots dialect poem entitled The Candidates Dream. Unfortunately

we do not have enough space to reprint the entire piece but have included the first few verses for our readers approbation. It was in fact written by William Haldane of Lodge Clydesdale No 556, of which he was the Master in 1918/19. *(If you are curious as to what the candidate dreamt, please contact the editor for a copy of the complete poem)*

The Candidates Dream

By

William Haldane, Lodge Clydesdale No 556

*When Mason Brother Mason meets, And each the other warmly greets,
Joy seems an overflowing cup, When hand meets hand in Brother's Grip,
And one the question asks the other About the age o' that one's Mother.*

It matters not from whence he come, So longs he's acting on the Plumb:

Position counts for little there, For all are level on the Square.

For hours on end they'll talk together – Each crowns one story wi' anither:

Though women in this sphere surpasses, Men sometimes can out-talk the lassies.

The talk o' Lodges where they've been, O' things they've heard and things they've seen,

Compare their ain Lodge wi' the rest - Their Mither aye, of course, is best –

Then syne amidst their cheery chaff There's something said that mak's a laugh:

Someone perchance makes observation On the subject o' Initiation;

Then each can here a story tell' The victim o' which is himsel',

For Mason all, though old and grey, Aye minds o' that momentous day:

A' else he learned may be forgot, But no' the nicht he rode the goat!

COMMUNICATIONS 2011

MASTER MASONS/WARDENS FORUM

It is critical that Freemasons communicate with each other, especially so for newer brethren who may still feel a little awed or overpowered by the depth and immensity of our Masonic traditions and ritual. Don't worry all Freemasons, no matter how senior, have been there.

It is also important that the officers emplaced to guide the Masonic 'ship', as it were, understand the brethren at large, their questions and their aspirations so that we may continue to be a strong and cohesive organisation. To assist with this the District Grand Master last year created a slot within the 'Communications' weekend for a forum where views and questions may be aired.

It is equally important therefore that all first time Master Masons, Wardens and brethren attend this forum to voice any queries, misgivings or suggestions. The Forum will start as a question and answer session and we'll just see where it goes. I will make a note of all important issues and points raised and then later in the year produce a report which will be put before the District Grand Master and his officers for them to take on board and act upon should they think it necessary. The report mentions no names so that all at the Forum can raise any view or concern. So I would ask all of those brethren who qualify to try and make a special effort to attend this once-a-year occasion to not only voice their views but have a bloody good weekend as well!

W Bro Peter Sheriff

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Deadlines:

June 21st for the July edition (Editor going overseas!)

September 30th for the October edition

December 31st for the January 2012 edition

March 31st for the April 2012 edition

A DAILY ADVANCEMENT IN MASONIC KNOWLEDGE

EMULATION LODGE OF IMPROVEMENT

emulation [ˌɛmjʊˈleɪʃən] *n*

1. the act of emulating or imitating
2. the effort or desire to equal or surpass another or others
3. *Archaic* jealous rivalry

The term emulation is one that has been adopted amongst Masons - with a slight twist on its true origins. When Lodges have no degree to be worked, they will often rehearse a 1st, 2nd or 3rd Degree but call it "Emulation". In fact this may have little in common with the work carried out by the Emulation Lodge of Improvement, or the Emulation Ritual produced by that august and ancient Lodge.

The use of catechisms has been known in Masonry from the earliest records that exist. They first appeared as methods of examination and might well have been used as methods of instruction also.

William Preston's system of Lectures, using catechisms, developed from 1772 onwards and John Browne's *Master Key*, published in 1801 were the first publications to reveal the Lectures becoming a complete instructional system in Masonry. With the amalgamation of the

two former Grand Lodges in 1813, attempts were made to standardise a Lecture system. A new ritual system had been worked out by the Lodge of Reconciliation (1813-16) for use in the United Grand Lodge and it was necessary to fit into this a Lecture system, for the purpose of instruction in these new procedures. In the event the system worked out for use in the regular demonstrations at the Public Nights of the Grand Steward's Lodge became generally accepted.

The Emulation Lodge of Improvement for Master Masons was formed in 1823 and from its commencement gave its instruction by working the Grand Stewards Lodge system of Lectures. It has continued to work them ever since, although, certainly since 1840, rehearsal of the ceremonies has been the prior work. When the Public Nights of the Grand Stewards Lodge ceased in the 1860's, the Emulation Lodge of Improvement became the leading body to regularly work the Lectures.

To this day the Lectures are worked, unchanged, at the regular Friday meetings of the Emulation Lodge of Improvement at Freemason's Hall.

Note from the Editor

The third issue of Degrees South comes hard on the heels of the disastrous earthquake that none of us expected ever to experience. It is nevertheless encouraging to see and hear of the many, many examples of Cantabrians actively soothing the afflictions and relieving the necessities of neighbours and genuinely exercising benevolence and charity. Whilst most of these good people are not Freemasons, it does cause one to reflect on how insightful were those first few Masons who were able to articulate these principals so well and hand them on to all of us through our degree workings.

THIS ISSUE'S COMPETITION - IDENTIFY THE CYCLIST

In a press cutting from the Nelson Weekly for Tuesday 15th March the following quote was attributed to one of our English Constitution Brethren:

"Moving from a small school in Central Otago with 40 kids at it, to a school in Invercargill with 600. I never knew there were so many bikes in the world!"

A bottle of wine to the first reader to correctly identify this personality.

(Sadly the reader who sent in the press cutting is exempt)

JANUARY'S CAPTION COMPETITION

Congratulations to Frank Cartwright of Southern Star Lodge for his winning caption

"I know perfectly well 'who giveth this woman away' but where in Hades is the groom?"

Frank has generously asked that his prize be donated to a lodge raffle, which Winchester was happy to accommodate on 28th March.

Well done Frank!



CONYER'S INSTALLATION - AN AWAY FIXTURE



Bro, now W. Bro, Robert Pethig finally installed as master of Conyer's Lodge

With their Idris Road premises temporarily out of action Conyer's Lodge took a leaf from the Crusader's book and hit the road for their (delayed) Installation meeting on 14th April.

W Bro John Soper of Ashburton Lodge, for whom Conyer's is his Mother Lodge, had suggested that the Ashburton Masonic Centre be used for the Installation of Brother Robert Pethig.

Consequently, to a packed Ashburton Lodge room, the ceremony of Installation was conducted by RW Bro Geoff Rowe, ably assisted by

the officers of District Grand Lodge and Brother Pethig's father, Neil (address to the Master) and elder brother Gareth (1st Degree working tools), both Conyer's members also.

Gareth had, in fact, travelled from Queensland, where he is a member of Mt Pleasant Lodge No 361 (UGLQ) in Brisbane, especially for the ceremony. The Pethig family's association with Conyer's extends back to 1979 when father Neil was initiated at the Centenary celebrations of the Lodge. Exactly 25 years later Robert was initiated at the 125th celebrations, as a 20 year old Lewis.

At the Festive Board later in the evening the new WM was joined by his mother, Ginnette, and father at the top table to enjoy a magnificent supper catered by the Ashburton Lionesses.

Scottish, Irish and New Zealand constitutions were all represented on the evening and, in his response to the toast to these constitutions, RW Bro Merv Gilkinson, DGM for the Grand Lodge of Scotland, sincerely thanked Conyer's Lodge for moving their ceremony just a little closer to Dunedin, thereby reducing his journey home significantly.

All present wished Robert a very successful year as Master.