

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

DEGREES SOUTH



OCTOBER 2011

LODGES DIG DEEP FOR CHARITY

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The District Grand Master's Earthquake Relief Fund recently granted payments of \$20,000 each to the Waimakariri and Selwyn Districts to help with their earthquake relief work. RW Bro Rowe accompanied the Board's Vice President, W Bro John Woolcott, at the presentation of the cheques to the respective mayors of Christchurch's neighbouring districts. W Bro Woolcott told Degrees South "We had previously donated \$80,000 to The Mayoral earthquake fund in Christchurch but as all parts of Canterbury, particularly Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts, had received considerable damage we wanted to do our bit as Freemasons to assist where we could. Although millions of dollars have been donated by large businesses it must



be remembered that the money given to the respective Mayors consists of freemason's donations from our District Lodges as well as English Constitution Lodges overseas. As a lot of our members are elderly and not all affluent the charity provided is greatly appreciated." W Bro Woolcott and RW Bro Rowe are pictured with Selwyn Mayor Kelvin Coe and Waimakariri Mayor David Ayers. Notwithstanding the huge efforts from the South Island Lodges to alleviate the effects of earthquakes and the hardships of the Pike River families, many other charities have been supported during one of the most challenging years since Freemasonry arrived on these shores.

At the August meeting of the Board of the South Island English Masonic District Charitable Trust \$5,550 was granted, to be added to the \$4850 raised by the Lodges. Grants were made across the District to Diabetes South Canterbury, Helen Anderson Trust, Amberley Primary School, Marlborough Community Garden, St John Youth Group (Opawa), Ashburton College and the Nelson School of Music.

President of the Board, W Bro Ian Allport, agreed that it had been a difficult year for the Charity saying "We have had great support from UGLE, other English Districts in Asia and our sister constitutions which has enabled us to meet the challenge of these unexpected disasters, whilst at the same time acknowledging the fact that small charitable organisations still have to meet their everyday expenses."

IMPORTANT DATES

- 15TH NOVEMBER, COMBINED ENGLISH MEETING AT ASHBURTON
- 9TH DECEMBER, MIDLAND MASONIC BOWLS TOURNAMENT AT TEMUKA
- 28TH JANUARY, WINCHES-TER'S CHEESE, WINE AND STRAWBERRY EVENING

FREEMASONRY AND RUGBY

In 1863, meetings were held to form a Football Association at the Freemasons Tavern, attached to Freemasons' Hall. It was split between supporters of the version of the game played at Rugby in Warwickshire, in which almost any violence was acceptable, and the Cambridge rules, which banned catching the ball and hacking your opponents.

'It would do away with all the courage and pluck from the game,' said Francis Maude Campbell, of the Blackheath club. So, rugby and football parted.

Rugby remains the more manly – some might say thuggish – game. Peter Larter, a former second row forward who played 24 times for England, as well as touring South Africa with the 1968 Lions, has seen enough violence to qualify

him to sit on the citing panel for this year's World Cup, as he did in 2007. Larter was initiated into Freemasonry in 1977, when he was stationed in Germany with the RAF, joining Saxony Lodge. Through the late Don White, the former England flanker and, from 1969 to 1971, the first England national coach, he was encouraged to join Cumtun Lodge in Northamptonshire. In 2001, White and Larter were founder members of William Webb Ellis Lodge, which, like the World Cup trophy, is named after the schoolboy who, 'with a fine disregard for the rules of football... first took the ball in his arms and ran with it'.

The lodge meets in Rugby, just 250 yards from the field where

Webb Ellis played, twice a year, with the December installation always coinciding with a home match played by Rugby Lions – the National League Three Midlands team who recently appointed Neil Back, the former England flanker, as head coach. The meeting, which starts at 9.30am, is concluded in good time for lunch, followed by an afternoon watching rugby. Conviviality remains something sacred to rugby and Freemasonry.

'In rugby, as in Freemasonry, you make friends for life,' Larter says. The same spirit inspired the foundation of Rugby Football Lodge six years ago in Huddersfield, the town where rugby league split from rugby union at a meeting in 1895. (Reprinted from *Freemasonry Today*—Patrick Kidd)

FROM THE DEPUTY DISTRICT GM

Oh my how the year is speeding past - only 2 months until Christmas!!

For my part the installations of St Patrick's Irish Constitution and the Scottish Lodge of St John in Milton were very special as I was afforded the privilege of participating in their ceremonies.

Both the Winchester No 1737 and Lodge of St John No 1137 installations went off very well with two genuine Englishmen at the helm of these lodges, all bodes well for the future. It was very pleasing to welcome Dave Stenning and David Marsh to the Lodge of St John and I hope you both enjoyed your stay.

For me personally, the next few weeks will be very busy with the installations of Southern Star 735, Ashburton 1811 and St Albans 2597 punctuated by the opening of the fishing season and the Millers Flat 125th school jubilee where both Barbara and I attended.

Recently Barbara and I paid a social call to a good Masonic friend. Being a good host he kindly offered

to quench our thirst. Unfortunately he had great difficulty in taking the screw cap off the bottle of St Remy and finally in desperation asked me to assist. Imagine my surprise to discover my friend was trying to unscrew the threaded glass neck off the bottle - no lid in sight!! He shall remain anonymous but wont be allowed to forget it.

Once again the pilgrimage across the Alps on the Trans Scenic to the Greymouth Installation was thoroughly enjoyed by all of the 22 who participated. The installation went off very well and we wish Ginger and his team a successful year. We thank him most sincerely for the assistance in providing transport for us. It was really appreciated. The dinner at the hotel with all the brethren and their wives was a great innovation and a splendid way to complete the day.

To cap off the weekend we were able to celebrate Bruce Russell's 70th birthday on the journey home which really finished off the weekend in style

Ken Borland, *Deputy District Grand Master*



DEPUTY GRAND MASTER'S ADDRESS - SEPTEMBER

Extracted from the Quarterly Communications of 14th September 2011...

"Organised Freemasonry, from its beginnings in the late 17th and early 18th Centuries, a time of religious intolerance, was always concerned with teaching and encouraging morality. Our forefathers were very aware of human nature and its flaws, particularly those of self-absorption and selfishness. The Craft sought to encourage men to be loyal to their country, to obey the law, to try to be better behaved, to consider their relations with others and to make themselves more extensively serviceable to their fellow men, that is to say their wider communities. In other words, to pursue a moral life. The ceremonies were used as the main means of teaching and illustrating the principles of the Craft: they were, and still very much are, a dramatic and effective set of morality plays.

The Craft, as a secular organisation, remains just as concerned today to encourage these ideals. I suggest that, in today's language, we could articulate the fundamental principles to which our members subscribe as integrity, honesty, fairness, kindness and tolerance. These are principles of which we should be very proud and we should not hesitate to articulate them, when appropriate opportunities present themselves, to our family, friends and, indeed, the wider community in which we live. We should also make it very clear that we very much enjoy ourselves and what we do. I have no doubt our principles will appeal to those who are not masons, if they are aware of them. Once it is clearly understood that the nature of our ritual, often written in an elegant older style of language, is that of a morality play, many of the genuine misunderstandings will fall away.

The future of the Craft is obviously dependent on attracting and retaining good quality candidates. Our principles, I believe, should be attractive to many men of good reputation and integrity. It is very important that we all only recommend to our Lodges men who we know subscribe to our principles, who we believe will enjoy being members of the Craft and who will mix happily with the other members of their individual Lodge.

The other side of this coin is that we should be careful in our choice of candidates. This is something every new Mason is told in the Charge after Initiation and for a very good reason. Unsuitable candidates are likely to damage the Craft in general and their own Lodges in particular.

Every one of us has an important part to play in articulating clearly what the Craft is and encouraging appropriately qualified candidates to be members. To support this, our soon to be announced strategic communications direction, together with the results from the working party on mentoring, will go a long way to help us to speak openly, and in an informed way, about Freemasonry. Our success will help to ensure Freemasonry's long term future."

"Every one of us has an important part to play in articulating clearly what the Craft is and encouraging appropriately qualified candidates to be members."

**Winchester Lodge's
Annual Cheese, Wine
and Strawberry Evening**

SATURDAY 28TH JANUARY, 2012
WINCHESTER HALL, AVENEL ST, WINCHESTER



TICKET PRICE \$20 PER PERSON INCLUSIVE
Proceeds to the Winchester Lodge Benevolent Fund

6:30pm (Dress Informal)
Great food, wine, raffle and entertainment

Tickets from Richard Taylor 03 693 9111

MY INTRODUCTION INTO BECOMING ADGM

"How goes it so far?" you may ask, "I mean as Assistant District Grand Master?". Well!!!

It all started at Communications in Nelson May 2010, when the DGM asked me if I would be willing to accept the position of ADGM, and as Fran my wife would say "he will volunteer for anything", I said yes.

As you can well imagine I was absolutely overjoyed, extremely excited and bursting to share the news with some of my closest friends, which I just had to. In the meantime I started gathering information and advice on my new duties. The biggest problem was understanding the correct ritual and methods to use as there were various versions used by my predecessors. However the Nelson/West Coast version was the one I was advised to use for the "Top of the South" Lodges. It's use dating back to the very early years of Freemasonry in this area. So from that point on it was head down to get learning, spending many hours quietly reciting to myself. This resulted in either feeling good at the great success and satisfaction at my progress or sheer depression and the thought of "I'll never be able to learn and recite all of this" But with great determination, help and encouragement of two PDDGM's Wor Bro's Bill Moffatt and Graeme Gibbons and of course the ever encouraging DGSec Wor Bro Ron Sutherland, it started to come right, my confidence beginning to build.

The big day arrived in May 2011 at Communications in Timaru, the day of my appointment. It went with such a blur that I don't recall much of the ceremony, (just like your first installation as a Worshipful Master into the chair of your Lodge). After a tiring weekend - I was pleased to get home. With the euphoria of the appointment ceremony having worn off, it was a sudden realisation that the Phoenix Lodge installation, my first duty was only a few weeks away. Hell, was I ready???

Once again with much help and encouragement from those who have been there before and the

huge amount of practice time spent with my DC, Wor Bro David Marsh, drawing on his huge amount of experience, I was ready for my maiden ceremony. July 2nd arrived and I made my way to the Phoenix Lodge rooms in plenty of time for the start of the ceremony. As the start time was approaching I had an uneasy feeling that quite a number of Brethren were missing. I then found out that a letter sent out by the District Grand Secretary stated a much later start time than the Lodge had advised. After discussions with the DGM a revised start time was decided upon, to allow for the late arrivals.

Once all the receptions and pleasantries were over and the DGM handed me the Gavel, that was it, there was no turning back now so I had to do my thing in front of all that brass. After a few nervous gulps I introduced myself to the quietly assembled Brethren, explaining my speech foibles and put my trust fully in Wor Bro Peter Sheriff as the official prompt for the ceremony. My first few instructions to my DC sounded quite authoritative and made me feel good, and my nervous jangling was rapidly ebbing, all was going well. With a very few minor stumblings the new, apprehensive Master was placed well and truly into the chair of his Lodge and we were through the major part of the ceremony. Call off and time to relax with a stiff whisky that was thrust into my hand by some kind congratulating Brother which I very much appreciated. It was now time to get the second part underway which was going to be easier, with most of the work being done by other brethren. I felt quite calm and relaxed for the remainder of the ceremony which went well and made me feel quite proud of myself with what I had achieved.

After the ceremony and during Dinner there were many accolades of congratulations which I really appreciated. A most enjoyable and satisfying afternoon and evening, after all.

W Bro David Stenning ADGM



"With a very few minor stumblings the new, apprehensive Master was placed well and truly into the chair of his Lodge ..."

MEANWHILE...

Little did I know of the intense nervous state of my husband at Westport prior to officiating at his first Installation. However my wifely neglect didn't prevent me from being very proud of the man when he emerged from the Lodge room after the ceremony was completed.

The afternoon planned for the ladies by Vivianne Slee turned out to be a bus trip taking in many of the lovely areas in and around Westport. From Charlestown we were driven to a nearby Luxury B&B, Birds Ferry Lodge, where an afternoon tea had been arranged and on arrival it was obvious that we were in for some scrumptious fare, prepared for us by host Alison Gygax. Unfortunately, it was also quite obvious as we entered, that the atmosphere in the room was somewhat smoky. Alison had a welcoming fire roaring for us, and apologising that she had let it get too hot, was in the process of damping it down.

It wasn't long before we all became aware that we had a chimney fire on our hands - and I mean literally on OUR hands. Alison's husband Andre was

away for the weekend and we were at least 20 mins from the nearest volunteer Fire Brigade. Things went from bad to worse as the timber surrounding the chimney at ceiling level burst into flames. Something had to be done, and done it was! In spite of the "posh gear" and high heels, several of us ladies, ably lead by Bev Rowe and Ronnie Martin began moving furniture, isolating the electrical supply, and locating a fire extinguisher played it to where it was needed most. Obviously it was a terrible shock for Alison who was undertaking some strenuous and risky activities herself. This in spite of suffering from MS. We were all very concerned about her.

When the Brigade finally arrived, we left them to it, and were driven off to find an alternative location for afternoon tea. There were some who opted for something stronger! It was pleasing to get news the next morning that the damage had been restricted to charring of the roofing timbers, and most importantly that Alison hadn't done herself any medical damage. What news we had for the men on our return. The ADGM wasn't the only one who had a memorable day.

Fran Stenning

"In spite of the "posh gear" and high heels, several of us ladies...began moving furniture"

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THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION
OF THE DISTRICT GRAND
LODGE OF THE SOUTH ISLAND

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THIS ISSUE'S CAPTION COMPETITION

The picture shows your editor being chauffeured from the Southern Star Installation by the Deputy District Grand Director of Ceremonies in his BMW Isetta "Bubble Car". The smile is one of relief that the journey homeward would at least be under cover of darkness. Captions please! *(As ever, Editor's decision final - if approved by "her indoors")*



CONYER'S CAPTION CONTEST-RESULT

Deadlines:

December 31st for the January 2012 edition

March 31st for the April 2012 edition

June 30th for the July 2012 edition

September 30th for the October 2012 edition

For Sale: 3 piece Dress Suit in excellent condition. Jacket 42", inside leg 32" and waist 41". \$250 or offer. W Bro Geoff Taylor 03 615 7295 (Temuka)



Yes - sometimes the truth is funnier than fiction. This month we've had to make an exception and allow the entry from our picture's subject. W Bro Wooster claims that he was not sending a text to the Junior Deacon but simply reflecting on what fun it would be to drive Wor Bro Neil Pethig's ride on mower. Bottle of wine to W Bro Len for making us laugh and for his "honesty"!

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As I go visiting during my year as WM I find that much is being said about the lack of new members joining our Ancient Institution, dire warnings of its impending demise and a general wringing of hands over this challenging issue. I am reminded of a local shopkeeper who, like most others in our town, is finding these recessionary times difficult in which to trade. His somewhat misguided strategy leads him to rebuke the community for not shopping in his store, warning them that if they don't shop locally the town high street will eventually be boarded up and then "we'll all be sorry". As any Marketing Graduate will tell you, if the proposition that you are taking to market is not attractive, enticing and irresistible to your target market...maybe you've got it wrong.

They will go on to talk about the four **P's** of marketing:

Product - What is Freemasonry. Is it the right Product? What drives the demand for such an organization?

Packaging - How are we portraying Freemasonry? How do we make it attractive and enticing?

Price - Not just our dues but the commitment we're asking these young men to make.

Promotion - How are we "selling" the concept of Freemasonry? What are we doing to raise our visibility in our communities? Are we effectively managing our Public Relations?

Remember we are often competing for these men with Lions, Rotary, Probus and Golf Clubs etc. but mostly we are competing for that ever decreasing window of time that they can afford to invest away from their families and work commitments. We have to make that as attractive an investment opportunity as possible. Thinking caps on all round and let's debate this issue. Meanwhile have a wonderful Holiday Season from all of us at Degrees South.

A DAILY ADVANCEMENT IN MASONIC KNOWLEDGE - ROYAL ARCH

The Royal Arch is the continuation of Craft Freemasonry. Its members, called Companions, meet in Chapters under a Grand Chapter. Chapters are ruled over by three Principals, who rule conjointly, and the Grand Chapter is ruled over by three Grand Principals, with a Pro First Grand Principal when the First Grand Principal is a Royal Prince. Chapters at home are grouped as a Metropolitan area or Provinces (based on the old Counties) and Chapters overseas are grouped in Districts. Metropolitan, Provincial and District Grand Chapters are ruled over by a Grand Superintendent who is appointed by the First Grand Principal as his personal representative for the particular area.

In England the Royal Arch has four ceremonies: the exaltation ceremony to bring in new members and an installation ceremony for each of the three Principals. The exaltation ceremony is in two parts: a rather dramatic presentation of the principles of the Order followed by three Lectures in which the history, symbolism and principles of the Royal Arch are further explained. Like Craft Freemasonry, the Royal Arch is open to men of all faiths.

The allegory of the exaltation ceremony is based on the Old Testament telling of the return to Jerusalem from the Baby-

lonish captivity to rebuild the city and temple. In clearing the ground of the original temple for the foundations of the second temple, the candidate makes a number of discoveries which emphasise the centrality of God to man's life and existence and, without transgressing the bounds of religion, lead the candidate to a consideration of the nature of God and his personal relationship with Him, whatever his religion might be.

In England, the Royal Arch is considered to be the completion of "pure ancient Masonry". In the Craft the candidate is presented with a series of eminently practical principles and tenets which if he practises them he may hope to live a life pleasing to his God, however he worships him, and of service to his fellow man. But man is not simply a practical being, he has an essential spiritual aspect to his nature. That spiritual aspect is introduced in the Third Degree, in which the candidate is led to a contemplation of man's inevitable destiny, and becomes the central message of the Royal Arch. In that sense, "pure ancient Masonry" can be seen as a journey of self - knowledge and discovery with the Royal Arch completing the practical lessons of the Craft by a contemplation of man's spiritual nature, not replacing but reinforcing and supporting what he has learned from his religion.

(For further information speak with your Lodge Mentoring Coordinator, Secretary or anyone you know to be a Royal Arch Mason).