

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

DEGREES SOUTH



MAY 2014

GRAND MASTER SETS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION AS KEY

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At the annual Craft Investiture the Grand Master used his address to remind newly invested or promoted Grand Officers that two of their key tasks should be the recruitment and retention of the membership. From research carried out by the newly formed Membership Focus Group he was concerned to learn that very few members recruit at all, and that there is an unacceptably high loss rate after each of the three degrees and indeed during the first ten years of membership.



The Membership Focus Group has been formed to analyse the statistics and to make proposals to stem the loss of members. The Grand Master went on to say that it is already clear that the Mentoring

Scheme will play a vital role going forward. It is therefore important that Lodge Mentors appoint appropriate personal mentors to look after each new candidate, rather than trying to do all the mentoring themselves.

...AND CLOCKS UP 50 YEARS A FREEMASON

His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent was initiated into Royal Alpha Lodge, No. 16, on Monday, 16 December 1963 at a meeting held at the Café Royal. The then Grand Master, the Earl of Scarborough, was his proposer and his seconder was Lord Cornwallis, Provincial Grand Master of Kent. Fifty years on, members celebrated the anniversary at the December 2013 installation meeting of Royal Alpha Lodge. Pro

Grand Master Peter Lowndes presented His Royal Highness with a framed collage of pictures of past royal Grand Masters surrounding a picture of the current Grand Master. The Pro Grand Master pointed out that Earl Cadogan, who was present when he was Viscount Chelsea, had acted as Junior Deacon at the ceremony. Also in attendance was Sir John Welch whose father had also been present on that day.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Saturday 17th May - Annual Communications at Ashburton
- Thursday 14th June - Phoenix Lodge Installation
- Monday 23rd June - Winchester Lodge Installation

CATCHING THE SMILE - ANOTHER INNOVATIVE EC LODGE



An interesting story from the UK. Some years ago the Masonic Fishing Charity was established with the aim to bring an interactive fishing and countryside experience to people with Special Needs.

This is far more than just a days fishing though! It enables mentally disabled people to gain in confidence, meet new challenges and achieve tangible results to take away; it helps disadvantaged people and those from harsh backgrounds to renew their confidence in meeting people and interacting with adults from outside their spheres; it helps physically disabled

people (including war heroes and stroke victims) to participate and experience something that may otherwise be unavailable to them and it enables our volunteers to give back to the community and have some fun along the way. The Charity is completely run by volunteers and is a non profit making enterprise.

From these activities the Lodge of Opportunity No 9777 was formed in 2004 and the idea caught on fast. The 30 founders became 34 and many new members have joined from the non-masonic fishermen and helpers who come along to the events. The Lodge and the idea is surely guaranteed to be successful.

FROM THE DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

Fraternal greetings to all Brethren and their families.

Well, it is that time again – Annual Communications is almost upon us and I encourage you all to attend this important meeting of our District, which, as it states is a time for communicating – meeting old friends and making new ones.

My thanks to the Ashburton Lodge who have taken on the organisational role of “hosting” the weekend. I am sure and I am assured that this will be a most enjoyable get together.

As with last year the Saturday morning meeting will be hosted by Wor. Bro. Peter Sherrif and all are welcome to attend. I would point out that the only part of the meeting from which Entered Apprentices & Fellowcrafts are excluded is the Communications Meeting itself as this is conducted in the Master Masons Degree. E.A.'s & F.C.'s are most welcome to attend the Friday night “Meet & Greet” and the morning meeting as well as the Evening Festivities.

Please be aware that should those not yet Master Masons attend the morning session then questions should be prepared so as not to broach the higher degree. If there are questions of this nature then I would expect those below the 3rd Degree to withdraw temporarily.

I would make one request of you all this year – please try to avoid forming up in cliques and mix and socialise with as many of our guests as is possible. I know that it is more comfortable to sit with those you know however, newcomers to our midst might find themselves on the periphery and not feel included in our family as a whole. After all, fraternising is what communications is about!

I look forward to seeing you all there – take it from me – if it is anything close to our 18th Century Degree weekend, it should be a great occasion!

Yours fraternally, Geoffrey W Rowe

“I encourage you all to attend this important meeting of our District, which, as it states is a time for communicating – meeting old friends and making new ones.”

FROM THE DEPUTY DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

Greetings Brethren,

The Masonic Year is nearing its end with the Annual Communications looming fast and I sincerely hope that everyone enjoys the weekend's entertainment and festivities.

Congratulations to the new District Officers. Enjoy your elevation and put your best foot forwards to support the District leadership over the coming twelve months.

The 18th Century Degree was really enjoyable to be a part of. Well done to all those involved and a special thanks to Marg and Bruce Russell for their tireless work in the months leading up to the event to make it all happen.

Barbara and I had a lovely break in Aussie with our families but unfortunately for me the Lodg-

es at both Port Macquarie and Dalby had met in the previous weeks—very inconsiderate I thought.

Ashburton was saddened by the passing to the Grand Lodge Above of W Bro Alex Davison. He was a great stalwart of the Lodge having served as treasurer for many years and also as a District Officer. Rest in peace my Brother. It was unfortunate that his family would not allow any Masonic input at his funeral.

Ashburton's June meeting will, once again, feature the “Salmon Fisher's Degree” so mark it in your diary—June 19th at 7:15pm

Fraternally Ken

A FRATERNAL TALE

One evening after a brother had been a guest at an installation, he had partaken of too much wine, and his host was very worried, as he did not want him to drive home in his present state which was some distance away, so insisted that he stay the night at his house, and travel home the next morning, and after much persuasion, this is what he did.

When he got home the next morning, his wife was furious with him because he had forgotten to phone, and she did not believe his story about staying with a brother because of the state he was in, but wondered if he had been with another women, however she pretended to believe him, by asking how the ceremony

had gone, and asked how many other brethren had been there and all the regular questions that wives do ask, and he told her that it had been an excellent Lodge meeting and that 65 brethren had turned up, etc.

However at the next Lodge meeting when the secretary rose to read out correspondence, he read a letter from the wife asking if the brother where her husband had stayed the night after the last lodge meeting would please write to her and confirm his story that he had stayed the night at his house because he was unfit to drive home.

The next day in the post she received 64 letters.

FROM THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

Brethren I greet you all well from the Top of the South, well actually I'm in Auckland with family for a few days before returning home at the end of the week, having just returned from Sydney after visiting our grand children. Whilst in Sydney I managed to visit the United Grand Lodge of NSW and ACT. What a wonderful modern building with beautiful Lodge meetings rooms, two of which Fran and I were shown around. We were then allowed to wander around a very well laid out Masonic Museum and Library with items dating back to the late 1700's. Of course very many photographs and paintings, old and relatively new and in the main hallway, portraits of all the Grand Masters dating back to the very first.

In my wanderings I came across a pamphlet with an article about 'Tubal-Cain' which I thought would be of interest and so here it is reproduced;

Tubal-cain.

We read about Tubal-cain in a brief but eloquent biographical sketch in Genesis 4, V.22...

"Tubal-cain an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron. " In other words he is the father of tool engineers and tool engineering education.

He was one of the sons of Lamech, the son of Methuselah. His mother was Zillah and his half brothers were Jubel and Jabal.

These three children, together with a sister, are said to have founded all the sciences in the world.

Tubal-cain watched his father hunt and shared with him and other members of the tribe the anxiety they all felt when one of their scarce, precious weapons broke or was carried away in the side of a wounded animal.

The whole tribe was defenceless and perhaps without food for days while a new weapon was being painstakingly fashioned of stone by hand. Their key to survival was production.



So Tubal-cain, while hardly more than a boy, studied the problems of production.

He studied and experimented with metals from foundry, to forge, to grinding, all processes of forming and shaping metals.

The same techniques that made arrowheads were gradually applied to spears, knives and shot swords. A continuous flow of weapons came from the production lines out behind old Lamech's hut.

Behind the wall of weapons in the field, Jubel's commerce and Jabal's arts were free to flourish and in Lamech's yard the music of Tubal-cain's forge made fitting background for the melody of Jabal's oaten pipes.



But restless Tubal-cain realised he had to press on for the future to be secured. So he called in his brothers, his cousins, their slaves and their children and he taught them those things that he knew, and they laboured together according to his abilities and his industry.

When the critical shortage of arms had been changed to an abounding surplus their lines



were converted to the implements of peace – to the production of brass bowls and lamps. Great light and prosperity ensued and settled on the land. Truly it can be said "There were giants on the earth in those days."

"There were giants on the earth in those days."



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THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION
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RETURN OF THE CAPTION CONTEST



You can take the man out of the building industry but you can't take the builder out of the man. Roly Vietch built this wonderful playhouse for his grandchildren and is seen here with Bruce Russell and Harry the dog giving it a final once over. What do you suppose Roly, Bruce or even Harry might be saying? Personally I thought Roly was heading over to the Coast for a season's white baiting!

A bottle of wine to the best caption as judged by 'er indoors.

Ed

LADIES FESTIVALS

What is a Ladies Festival?

Each year the Master and His Lady are entitled to hold a charity event called a Ladies Festival. The original idea being to thank the Ladies for letting the men go out to their meetings. It would have originally been held directly after one of the meetings and would have been instead of the usual Festive Board.

Gradually it evolved into a separate event and started to be used to raise charity money by inviting friends and family.

Today it is a formal "Black Tie" event which is usually held over a weekend. It is a chance for everyone to get together with friends and family and have an enjoyable weekend and an opportunity for everyone to dress up on the gala banquet night, normally held on the Saturday night with a live entertainment or a dance. Sometimes there will also be a dance or some other entertainment on the Friday night. A raffle is usually held and sometimes an auction or other "games" which all help to boost the Charity chest.

Sometimes the weekend will be at a seaside resort in a location far enough away from the Lodges hometown to make it interesting and warrant staying

away for the weekend. But, this is not always the case, some Lodges have a Ladies Night instead of a weekend, which is essentially the same but is held at a venue near to where the Lodge meets so that travel distances are kept to a minimum.

Whatever the Master and his Lady choose to do it is an ideal opportunity for those who are not freemasons to meet members of a lodge and see what Freemasons do for Charity, whilst still having a good time in a friendly environment.

So if your lodge is looking for a fun way to enjoy a get together and introduce non masons to masonry in a purely social environment, give a thought to holding a Ladies Festival.

At the same time you'll have the opportunity to add to the Lodge's Benevolent Fund and, most importantly make our lovely ladies feel a bit more special, have a chance to get 'glammed up' and be thanked for tolerating our many nights out with regalia case tucked underneath our arms.

Ed



Ladies Night in full swing at Wanneroo Lodge No 349 Western Australia