

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

DEGREES SOUTH



AUGUST 2015

THE LODGE OF ST JOHN TO RETURN TO CARE OF FOUNDING MASTER'S FAMILY

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Saturday 4th September - Greymouth Lodge Installation
- Monday 14th September - Lodge of St John Installation
- Thursday 15th October - St Albans Lodge Installation
- Saturday 17th October - Southern Star Installation
- Tuesday 20th October - Ashburton Lodge Installation

On September 14th W Bro Tony Mansfield will be installed as Master of the Lodge of St John, 151 years and four months after his great, great grandfather, William Mansfield, was installed as its first master by W Bro W. Donald, the Deputy District Grand Master at that time.

It is very likely that this is a unique event in the story of English Freemasonry on the South Island and W Bro Tony, a member and Past Master of the Prince of Wales Lodge no 1338, is to be applauded for taking on this role despite being a resident of Auckland.

William Mansfield had been initiated into the Irish Constitution's Lodge of St John No 88 and went on to remain in office as Master of 1137 for three years and four months.



W Bro Tony at his Installation as WM of the Prince of Wales Lodge No 1338 in 2011

He started his working life in Dunedin and was then posted to Fiji. Subsequently his work took him to London, Abu Dhabi and Zambia before returning to these shores in 1993. He has lived and worked in Auckland since then, mainly in healthcare.

Tony was Initiated into Lodge Itawa No. 7072 in Ndola, Zambia in 1988, joined Falcon Lodge No. 7510 in 1990 when transferred to Lusaka, Zambia. On his return to New Zealand he joined the Prince of Wales Lodge No. 1338 in 2007, served as Master 2011/12. Appointed DGJD (North Island) 2014, he is also a member of Royal Arch, Rose Croix, Mark and Royal Ark Mariners.

The significance of this event is reflected by the planned attendance of the NI District Grand Master, District Officers and representatives from up to 14 NI English Lodges. In all some 26 Freemasons will be travelling to Timaru from across the Cook Strait that will also include members of the Scottish Constitution.

This Installation promises to be a rare event and one well worth travelling to visit. The Lodge of St John will make everyone extremely welcome, as ever.



W Bro William Mansfield at the Foundation Stone Ceremony for the first Masonic Temple at Timaru in 1866.

Tony was born in Wellington, schooled in Christchurch and attended university in Dunedin. He is an accountant by profession.

BOARD OF GENERAL PURPOSES

It was a criticism from some of the brethren who attended the Communications weekend Forum in May last that there has been no feedback or summary of the meeting of the Board of General Purposes. I pointed out that it was expected for Board members to report back to their respective lodges. At a previous meeting of the Board when a question was raised on this subject by Wor. Bro. Van Zoggel, the District Grand Master replied “...the members are not on the Board to represent their lodges but to represent the Board to their lodges.” So there is an onus on the Board attendees to report back.

However, I acknowledge that sometimes there is many a slip twixt cup and lip so I will summarise the meeting as follows but without the inclusion of general administration items:

WBro. Van Zoggel is still in the process of completing the Facebook project.

Provisional costs were presented the Treasurer for the 2017 visit to London for the 300th anniversary for those brethren who wish to attend. At the moment 30 brethren and/or partners have expressed a firm interest. If more decide to go then the cost could come down.

The Treasurer reported that the year-end accounts showed an approximate \$3000.00 overspend but that this an anomaly which occurs every two years or so and usually comes back on course the next year. These anomalies included a pledge to NZC for EC lodges supporting the Gallipoli 100th anniversary.

There was a letter and photograph from a Timaru family for the District’s tendered support for a special insulin machine for their grandson which, in the event, was paid for by the Health Department and our cheque returned.

W Bro Taylor reported that the new issue of Degrees South was available and he asked for contributions from lodges, together with photographs, for future issues.

In my past role now of DGMentor I presented a brochure including a DVD intended for prospective candidates and a package of these were given to a member of each lodge for return to the lodge secretary. Also included was a format recruiting poster to be used locally for and by each lodge.

I stated that District can no longer afford to ignore any apathy and a recruitment drive by all lodges must start now. At future Board meetings each lodge representative will be asked to report on their recruitment activities.

District Grand Lodge officers should wear ‘undress’ regalia when attending non-District events and to avoid extra cost in obtaining these we are requesting all lodges to check their store rooms to see if they have any in the old regalia cases or wherever.

I hope this satisfies those who had a query but I would say that if members have a particular question on the minutes then they should address it to a Board member who can extrapolate. I would also remind you that minutes constitute an historical record of our meetings for use at subsequent meetings and for future reference when required.

FROM THE DEPUTY DIST. GRAND MASTER

Greetings Brethren. The Masonic Year is well underway and Winter hopefully nearly over. The Winchester Lodge Installation went very well with all Constitutions represented. No doubt W. Bro Davies will have another successful year.

The Irish Installation (St. Patricks) in Dunedin was once again very enjoyable and thank you to the big team of District Officers who accompanied me and, like me, enjoyed the whole weekend activities. I’m sure that our ladies, who were extremely well entertained, have happy memories of the weekend—or maybe not!!!

There is a busy time ahead with several installations looming including, of course, our annual venture over the Alps to Greymouth.

Keep warm and take care of one and other.

Cheers Ken

ANYONE FOR GOLF?

It is proposed to run an Ambrose format golf tournament at the Hagley Golf Club 27th September 2015 tee off mid day. Note daylight saving starts this day.

Prior entry essential \$20.00 (CASH on the day) ensures 12 holes of golf and a prize with any proceeds going to the Canterbury Masonic Charitable Trust

Food and beverages available before during and after at “The Clubhouse Cafe” (at cafe prices). Non Golfers welcome at The Clubhouse Cafe or as caddies. The English Constitution versus NZ Constitution trophy will be in contention. Ambrose golf is fun for all abilities.

Entries close 20th September.

Contact Gerald Robertson thecrown-lodge@extra.co.nz Cell 021 1704 179



“...if members have a particular question on the minutes then they should address it to a Board member who can extrapolate.”

ASSISTANT DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

Brethren I greet you well. I have to report that Freemasonry in the Top of the South is thriving well.

Following on from a very successful article in one of our local newspapers we have a couple of new candidates and a joining member for Southern Star Lodge. All this came about from appointing Wor Bro Mac Mackay as the Lodge Press Officer, who has distinguished himself in this new position. Mac has made himself well known to some of the editors of the local press in the Nelson and Tasman area and consequently being able to negotiate some very good advertising deals. The Lodge will be continuing with occasional advertising in this way to show the outside world what Freemasonry is all about. We also have a series of flyers available which the Brethren have been placing on various community notice boards throughout the area. These are also being taken notice of and rewarding us with the interest that is being created.

For the May meeting of Southern Star Lodge, the Worshipful Master came up with a brilliant evening of entertainment. He arranged with the manager of Whisky Galore in Christchurch, to have a Whisky tasting evening. This proved to be an interesting event with wives and friends who learnt the intricacies of fine whiskies from the very knowledgeable presenter and at the same time enjoying the golden liquid.

The Phoenix Lodge once again hosted a most enjoyable weekend for the annual District Grand Lodge Communications 15/16 May. They also had the knack of selecting the perfect weather for the occasion with plenty of warm sunshine. This allowed the Ladies to have an interesting afternoon foraging around the old gold mining area of Charlestown, taking advantage of the old rail line for transport. Saturday evening we were all treated to a most enjoyable Buffet dinner in good company with plenty of food and drink.

Early in June I made a visit to the Greymouth Lodge by accompanying Wor Bro Peter Sheriff for the initiation of a Mr. Philip Brewer a locomotive engineer, of Greymouth. Congratulations must go to the Brethren of the Greymouth Lodge in the way they are encouraging new membership.

This was followed a couple of days later by another visit to the West Coast this time to the Phoenix Lodge for the installation of Wor Bro Dick Williams and his officers. A good crowd of Brethren attended from many of the Lodges in the Top of the South and a number from Canterbury. Once again all the visitors were well looked after by the Brethren of the Phoenix

Lodge after the ceremony.

Later in June we heard that the very well-known Rt Wor Bro Kevin Palmer, PPGM. NZC, was seriously ill, who subsequently passed away. A lodge of sorrow was held at the Motueka Bays Lodge on the 18th June followed by a funeral service in the afternoon. This funeral was so well attended that extra rooms were set up with electronic viewing made available.

As of Sunday 9th August, Fran and I will be heading for Kuala Lumpur for the installation of the Grand Superintendent of the District Grand Chapter of the Middle East which we are very much looking forward to. I will try to make a full report of the proceedings with some photos for the next Degrees South.

THANK YOU PHOENIX



The weather was great, the hospitality outstanding and the event memorable. Many thanks to all the Brethren of Phoenix Lodge who contributed to making this years Communications meeting such a success.

GREYMOUTH BECKONS

It's that time of year once more and we're all looking forward to the trip to Greymouth's Installation with eager anticipation.

For those of you who have not managed to attend in previous years I would urge you to give Doug Stapleton a call (03 755-6205) for details. A true West Coast welcome would await you at the fascinating Shantytown Lodge rooms (below) with afternoon tea afterwards, followed by a sumptuous meal at the Paroa Hotel.

The meeting will be held on Saturday 5th September with visitors being admitted at 12:45pm.



“The Lodge will be continuing with occasional advertising in this way to show the outside world what Freemasonry is all about.”

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Degrees South Deadlines:

Oct 31st for the November edition

Jan 30th for the February edition

April 30th for the May edition

July 31st for the August edition

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This month we welcome the return of W Bro Phil Jackson, now as a regular columnist in Degrees South. Everyone who knows Phil will agree that he can be relied upon to have a view and to speak up about all things Masonic.

I am very grateful to Phil for his input. I am only too aware that, after five years, the challenge will always be that of how to keep this newsletter vibrant, interesting and relevant to its readers and I am sure that Phil's column will go a long way to meeting that challenge.

If anyone out there fancies emulating Phil then please submit your ideas or submissions to me in good time for the deadlines listed above.

Many thanks. - Ed

RECRUITMENT FEEDBACK

At the May meeting of the Board of General Purposes the outgoing District Grand Mentor delivered an address summarising his time in the office. He commented that it was of concern to him, of the apathy that exists with many of our lodges, it is the greatest evil facing us, and there must be an improvement immediately.

It was therefore agreed that each Lodge will provide, via a Board Member, a report on recruitment activities. The Board meets in May, August and December and the Lodges are asked to prepare their reports in good time for the appropriate Board Member to present to the meeting. Would each Degrees South reader make a point of bringing this requirement to the attention of their Lodge Secretary.

MASONIC SPEED IN THE INSTANT AGE

Organised English Freemasonry is nearly 300 years old and has stood the test of quite a long time. But today everything has to be instant. It should be fast. Delays are unacceptable.

Let's look at different areas in Masonry where speed affects things, but not as you might suspect.

How fast should the ritual be delivered? Ritual delivery can be scary but if you remember that you are delivering the ritual to others then you will start to think of the correct answer. At the opening and closing, you are talking to the members of the Lodge, checking on the security of the Lodge, informing them of reasons for your position, and finally opening or closing by command of the Worshipful Master and in the name of the Great Architect of the Universe.

During a Degree ceremony generally the brethren delivering the ritual are being extended and may be out of their comfort zones; but again, remember that you are here to deliver the charge to the candidate. Delivering the charge at a speed which is best for the candidate is always the right speed.

Generally speaking, if you think you could slow down then you should. Usually you cannot talk too slowly.

What about the speed of the knocks? Does it matter? Only in that all things matter and add up to give an overall impression. I was fortunate enough to attend the Emulation Lodge of Improvement a few years ago, where every meeting is technically a practice. I kid you not;

they stopped the ceremony for 15 minutes while very learned brethren debated the speed at which the knocks should be given.

The agreed answer is at a medium pace. Whatever speed the master uses for the knocks should be repeated by the other officers and the pause between the WM and the SW should be repeated by the JW, IG, and Tyler. Definitely not a staccato burst of bangs.

What about the speed of the candidate's progress? On this topic I favour the old school thinking of taking time to ensure the candidate has learnt each degree and is not rushed. It is not the candidate's problem that the Master wants to perform all three degrees. But the Lodge does owe it to the candidate to progress him at the appropriate pace for that particular person. Far better to spend the right amount of time at the beginning to ensure a lifelong member has a great start.

And once the Candidate is a Master Mason, how about letting him progress through each office on his way up the ladder? Why should he skip the position of Steward just because the Lodge is short of members to fill offices?

What about Refectory Speed? Refectory is also an important part of the meeting and here too speed is important. Toasts are a very important part of proceedings, but should be of appropriate length. The old adage; Stand up, Speak up, Shut up, usually stands you in good stead.

So what speed is best? It depends upon a lot of things. But whatever pace you decide is appropriate, speed is important.

By W Bro Phil Jackson, PDGTreas.

BOARDS PRESIDENT STEPS DOWN

At the May Communications it was announced that W Bro Ian Allport, President of the Boards, would step down after 5 years in that office. Ian has proved a worthy President over that time and had to face some considerable challenges. In particular the District had to move very quickly to raise and administer relief for the victims of the Christchurch earthquakes and of the Pike River Mine disaster.

On behalf of the whole District we extend our thanks to Ian for his tireless efforts over the last five years and his contribution to the District as a whole.

It was announced that W Bro Peter Sheriff will replace W Bro Ian as President of the Boards.

