

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

# DEGREES SOUTH



NOVEMBER 2015

## A MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY

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### IMPORTANT DATES

- **Saturday 28th November** - Meeting of the Boards
- **Sunday 31st January** - Pacific Lodge of Hokitika 150th Celebrations in Christchurch.
- **Monday 1st February** - Pacific Lodge of Hokitika Installation at Shirley
- **Thursday 3rd March** - Canterbury Lodge Installation.

At the installation meeting of the Lodge of St John in September a resolution was passed to send greetings to Her Majesty on achieving her record breaking reign.

Lodge of St John secretary, W. Bro Ray Bennett, sent the following message:

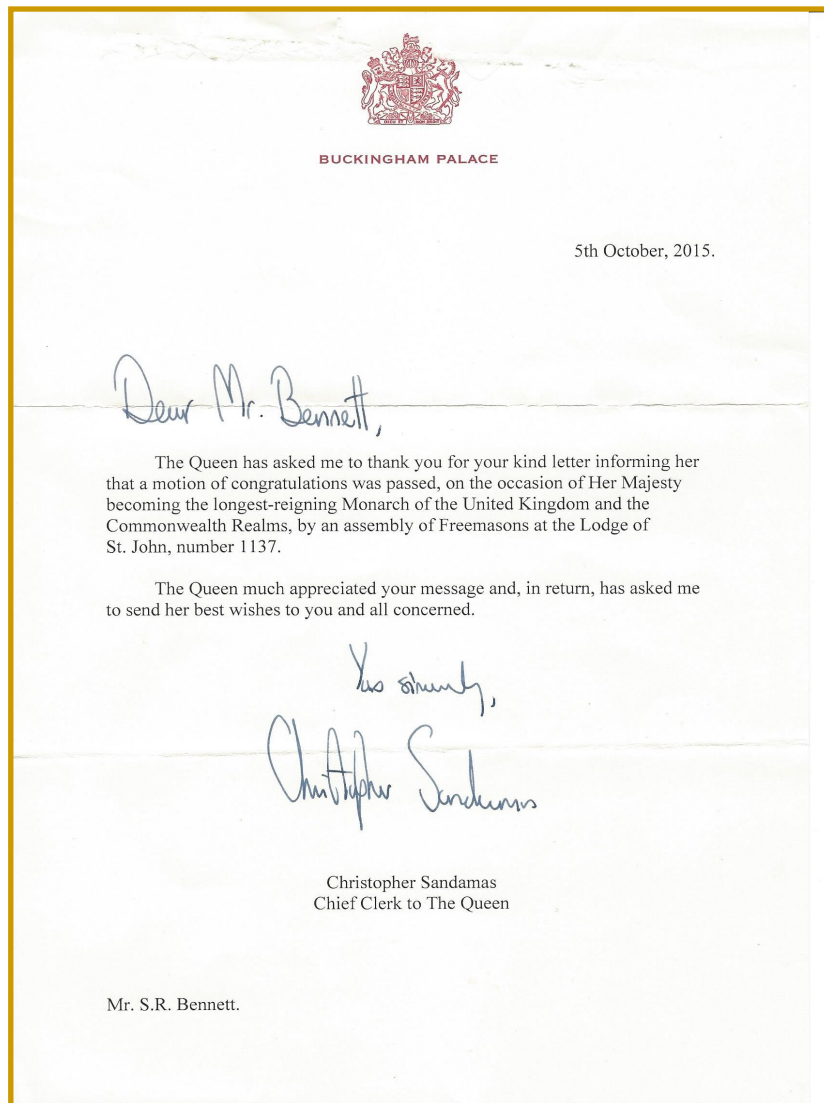
Majesty,

*At the Installation of the 151st Worshipful Master, attended by over 100 Freemasons from all parts of New Zealand, a motion offering congratulations on your*

*achieving a record reign, was carried by acclamation. The text of the motion was*

*"That this assembly of Freemasons convey to Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, sincere greetings and congratulations on achieving a record reign. We renew our allegiance to Her Glorious Office and the Crown, and wish her a long and illustrious continuance to reign over us"*

The reply from the Chief Clerk to the Queen is reproduced below.



Mr. S.R. Bennett.

## HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI

Following service with the Royal Navy in the First World War, he was initiated in December 1919 into Navy Lodge, No. 2612, of which his grandfather King Edward VII had been founding Master. On that occasion he noted: 'I have always wished to become a Freemason, but owing to the war I have had no opportunity before this of joining the Craft'. From that moment he became a most dedicated and active Freemason. He was invested as Duke of York in 1920 and the following year installed as permanent Master of Navy Lodge. He joined other lodges and degrees and was appointed Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge in 1923.

George V died in January 1936 and was succeeded by his eldest son Edward, who had been initiated (also in 1919) into the Household Brigade Lodge, No. 2614. But before the year was out Edward had abdicated. Of the moment of change King George VI wrote, 'On entering the room I bowed to him as King... when [he] and I said goodbye we kissed, parted as Freemasons and he bowed to me as his King.'

Protocol required George to resign his masonic affiliations, however when it was suggested a new position of Past Grand Master be created especially for him, he immediately accepted, declaring, 'Today the pinnacle of my masonic life has been reached.'

After the Second World War, King George wrote



that 'Freemasonry has been one of the strongest influences on my life' and in collaboration with engraver Reynolds Stone helped create a postage stamp, part of the '1946 Victory Issue,' which is filled with masonic symbolism.

The 3d Victory Stamp was widely praised for the 'strength and simplicity of the design'. It depicts the King's head in the East, his eyes firmly fixed on illustrations of a dove carrying an olive branch (representing peace and guidance), the square and compasses (in the second degree configuration) and a trowel and bricks (the sign of a Master spreading the cement that binds mankind in brotherly love).

The letter reproduced below from the King to the new Grand Master, the Earl of Scarborough, was probably circulated to all members of the craft after the King's death, three months after it was written. Our District Grand Secretary came across a copy and passed it on to Degrees South.

*"...Today the pinnacle of my masonic life has been reached."*

### A Message

FROM THE LATE MOST WORSHIPFUL BROTHER  
HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI.  
TO THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER  
THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SCARBROUGH,  
K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., T.D.

*"As long ago as last March, I promised to instal you as Grand Master on November 6th. I had much looked forward to doing this, and to the opportunity of again meeting in Grand Lodge a great representative gathering of Freemasons. I am very sorry that my illness has prevented me from carrying out that intention.*

*I send you, M.W. Grand Master, my fraternal good wishes. You will realise that you have been elected to fill an exalted but onerous position, which will call for the display of many qualities, the most important of which is leadership. I pray to the Great Architect of the Universe that under your guidance the Craft will continue to maintain that beneficial influence which has characterised it in the past.*

*The world to-day does require spiritual and moral regeneration. I have no doubt, after many years as a member of our Order, that Freemasonry can play a most important part in this vital need.*

*I send my greetings to all assembled in Grand Lodge, and particularly to those from overseas who have made long journeys to be present.*

*May prosperity, happiness and peace attend you and all my Brethren.*

GEORGE R.

5TH NOVEMBER, 1951.



## FROM THE DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

Greetings to all Brethren and their families.

We are now into November and Christmas is just around the corner – this year seems to have flown by.

For those of you that don't already know Bev and I have shifted house after nearly five years of living in a property that was badly damaged in the earthquakes of 2011. We have now shifted out to Rolleston – 7 Shillingford Boulevard if you are passing this way – always welcome. Phone no. is (03) 347-9116.

It has been a very busy time Masonically with visits to a number of our lodges with a highlight being the Installation ceremony at Lodge of St John with almost 100 in the refectory. This was reminiscent of the past days of Installations and it was great to have a full Lodge room for the occasion.

It seems as though we have hardly been home over the past 2 months with trips to Milton, Nelson (twice) and Auckland. This latter was for the Installation of the new Provincial Grand Master for New Zealand, Grand Lodge of Ireland – Right Worshipful Brother Andrew McGregor. The outgoing Provincial Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Roland Whyte had served the office for 15 years and had been a great friend to English Freemasonry and myself in particular so it was not without a twinge of regret that I witnessed his departure.

Brethren, we have our last Board meeting for the year on the 28th so if there is anything that you or your lodge would like us to consider please let your contact know in time to bring it to the meeting.

I note that the "rumour mill" is still at full strength so I think it only right that I let you know who is going to replace Worshipful Brother Ken Borland on his retirement. I have decided in consultation with others that Worshipful Brother Richard Taylor will take over as Assistant District Grand Master at our Communications meeting in May – I'm sure you will all join with me in wishing Richard well in this new role.

I have been asked by a number of our Brethren about the 300th Anniversary in 2017 and what plans are being made. At this time we are still waiting for UGLE to advise us of our allocated numbers which I will pass on as soon as it comes to hand. In the meantime we are making plans for our own celebration which we are hoping will take place at our Communications in 2017.

As this will be the final Degrees South for the year I take this opportunity on behalf of both of us to wish you all well for the forthcoming festive season and look forward to meeting up again in the new year.

Geoffrey W Rowe, District Grand Master

## FROM THE DEP. DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

With my term as DDGM starting to draw to a close, the last three months have been particularly memorable in many different ways. Firstly the annual excursion over the hill to the Greymouth Installation was again very enjoyable and great to have a full lodge rooms at Shantytown. Next was the Installation of Wor bro Tony Mansfield into the chair of the Lodge of St John in Timaru. This was a special occasion for the lodge as Tony's great grandfather was the very first master of this lodge. A large number of visitors, many coming from Auckland to support Tony filled the lodge room to capacity. A special night for us all.

Then it was off to Nelson to catch up with many of our family, grandchildren and old friends and to sample the odd bottle of wine!! The main purpose for my visit however was to install my good friend and former workmate Bro Mark Nichols into the chair of Southern Star lodge (my Mother lodge). This being my last full installation and to have 7 members of Southern Star who took part in my initiation ceremony in 1986 in attendance meant that my emotions were on full alert. What a great day it was and enjoyed by all those who attended. Three days later it was back home for dry bread and vegemite to prepare for my last installation as your DDGM. This in my mind was going to be a "piece of cake" as all I had to do was to proclaim Wor Bro Jim Donlan as master of 1811 as he was continuing in office. What a shock I got when I saw the number of visitors in attendance. All three sister constitutions were present with visitors from as far afield as from Milton and Dunedin in the south, the West Coast and all points in between. That was when it hit me that this was really my last installation as the installing officer. My sincere thanks to all those who attended, tendered apologies and sent personal messages. The very kind words spoken in the refectory were very flattering and certainly played havoc with my emotions. Thank you all. It's a night I won't forget.

At Labour Weekend I had the pleasure along with the DGM to attend the Ara Lodge (I C) in Auckland to witness Rt Wor bro Andrew McGregor being installed as the new Grand Master of the Irish Constitution lodges in NZ. We wish Andrew well for the future. He knows he has big shoes to fill as for the past 15 years Wor Bro Rolly Whyte has lead the Irish Constitution lodges with dignity decorum and common sense. It is a real pleasure to enjoy Rolly's company and I sincerely thank him for his friendship and cooperation.

Best wishes and a happy festive season to all brethren and their families from both of us.

Cheers Ken

*"...a highlight being the Installation ceremony at Lodge of St John with almost 100 in the refectory. This was reminiscent of the past days of Installations and it was great to have a full Lodge room for the occasion."*



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### Degrees South Deadlines:

Jan 30th for the February edition

April 30th for the May edition

July 31st for the August edition

Oct 31st for the November edition

### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I find it hard to believe that this issue of Degrees South marks the start of my sixth year as your editor. I remember remarking to the Board, when I volunteered to take on this role, that I would probably regret holding up my hand. Nothing could be further from the truth and I have derived a huge amount of personal satisfaction and enjoyment from editing this newsletter.

This has been mainly due to the many, many positive comments and notes that I have received from both within New Zealand and beyond.

My thanks to all of you for your support and, from Elaine and I, we wish you a very restful and enjoyable Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2016. - Ed

### ...AND FROM THE COAST

Freemasons Hall, Shantytown on a rather gloomy wet Saturday morning.....maybe there are far better places to be at.

By the time the lodge called on at 12:30pm the rain had set in, temperatures had dropped and the promise of fresh snow on the Southern Alps was coming to fruition.

Thankfully the annual bus passengers from east of the Alps had arrived mid Friday afternoon, and spent a couple of happy hours at the old Union Hotel, being both fed and watered.

Deputy District Grand Master, Ken Borland, takes everything in his rather large stride and was as surprised, as were Greymouth members, at the late call advising that District Grand Master was not attending. Ken led his District, Past Dis-

trict and Grand Lodge Officers into the Lodge, received New Zealand Constitution District Grand Master and Grand Lodge Officers, before demonstrating the Quade Cooper trick of tossing the gavel and control of the afternoon to Assistant District Grand Master Dave Stenning who conducted the installation of Wor. Bro George Crossley into the chair. A head count revealed 58 mason attended although 56 signed the attendance register.

Another very good installation day, Greymouth is most appreciative for the year by year support of Brethren from all over the country...Auckland to Timaru, and even South Korea.

For such a small lodge we continue to punch above our weight.

W Bro Doug Stapleton

### KIRKPATRICK HOUSE FOR SALE

Nelson's historic Kirkpatrick House has housed students, cars, and most recently a family and its next dweller is now being sought. The historic house, built in the early 1900s, will be listed for sale this week. Its current owners Megan Savageau (pictured) and Gavin Stott are hoping another family will bring just as much life to the building as they have.



The house on Mount St formerly belonged to Nelson business owner Samuel Kirkpatrick. According to website The Prow, he left the house to the Freemasons after he died in 1925, it was used as a home for daughters of deceased Freemasons under the name The Kirkpatrick Masonic Institute while they attended high school.

"It's had a lot of visitors of all ages, and there were hundreds of women that have lived here," said Savageau.

She confirmed the house was used as a girls home until the 1990s. It

was later used for car storage until the pair purchased the property in 2011. At the time of purchasing, the house was not suitable for living, she said.

"We were living overseas at the time but it was the view and the staircase and the history. We fell in love with it right away," she said.

They hope its next owners are just as passionate about the house as they were.

A timely reminder to all Lodges to keep regular donations to Kilpatrick House high on their list of priorities.

### PACIFIC LODGE OF HOKITIKA 150TH CELEBRATIONS

The arrangements for the 150th anniversary celebrations of the formation of the Pacific Lodge of Hokitika No 1229 are well under way and details are now available.

Sunday 31st January will see a celebration banquet take place at the Shirley Masonic Centre, getting underway at 5:30pm. There will be 100 places available so you are advised to act promptly. The cost per head will be \$40, to include refreshments as well as a substan-

tial meal.

Entertainment will be provided by that well known "wizard of the ivories" W Bro Bill Grubb and the organising committee have emphasised that this is as much an event for friends, families and non-masons, being an opportunity to introduce more people to Masonry.

Tickets from W Bro Warren Price, 8a Strowan Road, Bryndwr, Christchurch, 8052 on a first come, first served basis. Be quick!



Three senior Freemasons bring a touch of sobriety to the proceedings at Greymouth.