



JULY 2012

'THE FUTURE OF FREEMASONRY' REPORT IS PUBLISHED

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IMPORTANT DATES

- SATURDAY 18TH AUGUST DUNEDIN LODGE INSTALLATION
- SATURDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER. GREYMOUTH LODGE INSTALLATION
- MONDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER THE LODGE OF ST JOHN INSTALLATION
- TUESDAY 16TH OCTOBER ASHBURTON INSTALLATION
- SATURDAY 25TH AUGUST MEETING OF THE BOARDS
- THURSDAY 18TH OCTOBER ST ALBANS INSTALLATION

"The Future of Freemasonry" report is the first ever independent study conducted by a non-Masonic body, and was commissioned as part of the build-up to the United Grand Lodge of England's tercentenary in 2017.

Produced by the highly respected Social Issues Research Centre (SIRC), an independent, non-profit organisation based in Oxford UK, which conducts research on social and lifestyle issues, socio-cultural trends and provides insight into human behaviour and social relations, the report suggests that, contrary to some misleading commentary, Freemasonry actually demonstrates genuine openness and transparency and it concludes that it is arguably more relevant today than ever before.

In particular, the report highlights that Freemasonry acts as a 'constant', providing members with a unique combination of friendship, belonging and structure, with many Masons saying they have made valuable lifelong friendships.

The report also highlights the importance that Freemasonry places on charitable giving, the part that many Freemasons play in their local communities and the central role of the family. As well as instilling in its members a moral and ethical approach to life – including thoughtfulness for others, kindness in the community, honesty in business, courtesy in society and fairness in all things – Freemasons are the largest charitable givers after the National Lottery, and also make major contributions to international disaster relief funds.

The role of ritual is shown to be an important part of Freemasonry for many members, with the report concluding that it provides both structure and familiarity, in just the same way as the normal rituals of daily life do for many people.

Nigel Brown, who has been the Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England since 2007 and is leading the plans for the tercentenary celebrations, says:

"This is just one step in our ongoing efforts to demonstrate our openness and transparency, and to inform people about the role we play in society.

"The tercentenary is a significant milestone for Freemasonry and while we're keen to celebrate our first three hundred years, it's also crucial that we look forward to ensure that we remain relevant and continue to grow our membership over the next three hundred."

Peter Marsh, co-director of SIRC, said: "The "Future of Freemasonry" provides an insightful commentary, not just on the organisation, but also on modern society. Despite the many changes taking place – or perhaps because of them – our desire to be part of something and to help other people is undimmed. It's here that Freemasonry has an important part to play."

Nigel Brown concluded: "This report will form an important part of our discussions as to how best to ensure that Freemasonry continues to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of its members and also of wider society, while at the same time retaining the distinctive character and intrinsic values that have attracted members for centuries and continue to appeal to people today."

The full report can be read on-line at

http://issuu.com/freemasonrytoday/docs/the_future_of_freemasonry/1

AN UNUSUAL PRESENTATION



At last month's Winchester Installation meeting, prior to closing the Lodge, our District Grand Secretary was unexpectedly called forward to receive a presentation at the hands of the RW Bro Merv Gilkinson, District Grand Master for the Scottish Constitution, South Island NZ. On behalf of the Grand Lodge of Scotland W Bro Sutherland was presented with a jewel to commemorate his 50 years as a freemason.

W Bro Ron was initiated into Lodge St Fergus No 466 on 15th December 1959 and later became a life member of that Lodge. Lodge St Fergus is situated in Wick, in the far north of Scotland in the

Province of Caithness.

W Bro Ron commented afterwards that the presentation had taken him completely by surprise. "Last night highlighted the diversity of masonry in this part of the world, where an Irishman (RW Bro Gilkinson is, in fact, Irish) representing the Scottish Constitution presents a 50 year badge to a Scotsman who is a Grand officer of the English Constitution based in New Zealand." He further quipped "It's no wonder we need mentors!"

Congratulations to W Bro Ron from us all. Many thanks for the excellent work you carry out as District Grand Secretary and we wish you many more years in Freemasonry.

FROM THE GRAND MASTER'S ADDRESS - 25 APRIL

Brethren, today our concern must be for the future, especially with the approach of our three hundredth anniversary in 2017. In planning for this great anniversary, I believe these times demand innovation, and imaginative thinking, whilst retaining our principles. In this I make no apology for again reminding Brethren of the need truly to demonstrate transparency, and to work towards regaining our enviable reputation in society. To do this we have to show how and why we are relevant and to concentrate on the positive aspects of Freemasonry, in particular our generous tradition of giving to a wide variety of causes.

In regards to transparency we still have some way to go in dispelling the myths that remain 'deep rooted' in many people's minds, not least the media. Very considerable progress has been made in this direction already, but challenges remain, and there is still work to do to overcome prejudices and misconception.

I am very pleased that we have already achieved two firsts of some importance in tackling this challenge. The first of these was the commissioning of the first ever independent, third party report, written by non-Masons, on the future of Freemasonry. This Report has been highly successful and has itself acted as the catalyst for the second of our two innovations, namely the first media tour, conducted by the Grand Secretary, and which achieved a reach of more than 117 million people.

I recommend that you all take advantage of this active spirit of openness to talk with equal frankness to your family and friends. I think that if you



follow this advice, you may well be surprised by the positive reception you will gain.

Today's has been a memorable gathering and its undoubted success has been achieved by a great deal of careful planning and hard work, so that on your behalf, I want first of all to thank the Grand Director of Ceremonies and his Deputies for the skill and precision with which the ceremony has been conducted, and secondly the Grand Secretary and his staff for their long hours of planning which have 'borne fruit' so excellently this afternoon.

MW The Grand Master HRH The Duke of Kent, KG

"I make no apology for again reminding Brethren of the need truly to demonstrate transparency, and to work towards regaining our enviable reputation in society. "

Grand Master

IN BRIEF



If you are interested to know what motivated rock star and keyboard maestro Rick Wakeman to become a freemason there is a fascinating interview with him in the "On the Level" series featured on You Tube, where Andrew Selwyn-Crome talks to Rick in what turns out to be a from the heart discussion about his family, his masonic membership and what Freemasonry means to him. The interview is in two parts and for the first part go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1romNG-6ntM>

Winchester Lodge's new Secretary, W Bro Stewart Stott was awarded a Trust Power Timaru District Individual Community Award on July 2. The Geraldine Archery Club was formed in 2006 and Stewart has been president since 2008. He has coached many people in the sport, with all fees going to the archery club he helped found. For the past five years Stewart and another club member have taken the club trailer to Raincliff youth camp where they introduce primary school pupils from Gleniti School to the sport of archery. Past coaching courses have included members of Girl Guides, Scouts, Cubs, Young Farmers, the police force and high school groups.



E W GIFFORD BROWN JP PJGD

Gifford Brown was introduced to Freemasonry in 1963. He and his wife, Shirley, owned an apple orchard in Beaumont and from here he joined Lodge St. George, an English Constitution lodge, that held its meetings in the picturesque farming town of Lawrence. Gifford was a man of bearing, he possessed a powerful presence, and within a brief span he had become a noted member, rising steadily through the ranks to eventually become the Master of the Lodge.

Injuries sustained in a car accident in 1979 saw Gifford and Shirley relocate to Dunedin and, just as Masonic duties were his passion in Lawrence, they assisted the family's unexpected new start in Dunedin, helping to create a new circle of friends in the city where, in 1980, Gifford was appointed Church Officer of the magnificent First Church of Otago. He became involved with the three English Constitution lodges then operating - the Lodge of Otago, The Dunedin Lodge and Port Chalmers' Marine Lodge. Here his interest in Masonic development was aroused, and he joined other Masonic Orders. Firstly the Royal Arch Chapter of Otago, within which he climbed the ranks to become its 1st Principal. He bound himself to the Mark Lodge, rising to become Mark Master and, having come on board the Royal Ark Mariner Lodge, he progressed to become its Commander. His enthusiasm for Freemasonry, his dedication and attention to detail were noted both by District Grand Lodge (where he was

eventually appointed Deputy District Grand Master), and the United Grand Lodge of England who rewarded his efforts with Grand Rank.

In 2006 Gifford joined Lodge St. Patrick and, as was his wont, performed above and beyond the call. To the extent that, in 2011, he was awarded a Provincial Grand Rank within the Irish Constitution. And, as if these achievements were not enough, it was through the Dunedin Rose Croix Chapter (an Order into which he had been initiated in 1977) that he gained his 30th, 31st and 32nd degrees and, eventually, the 33rd.

Throughout his Masonic career Gifford always found time to speak to, and befriend, all the Masons that he met. It mattered not to him whether they were newly admitted Entered Apprentices or Provincial Grand Masters; all were treated with equal respect, and with friendship and assistance whenever there was a need. No task was ever "too much trouble" for this man.

Gifford always saw the best in everyone. He was quick to offer encouragement; or help and support when needed. He fully embraced the ethos of Masonry, and really was the epitome of what any Freemason should aspire to be. As Sir Robin Gray said of his dear friend, "Gifford Brown was a true gentleman".

E.W. Gifford Brown ceased labour on 29th April 2012.

Reprinted from the Lodge St. Patrick's tribute.



"Gifford Brown was a true gentleman"

- Sir Robin Gray

NEW BOOK ON THE LIFE OF JOHN LAZAR

As a result of a challenge by W Bro Peter van Zoggel, W Bro Doug Stapleton has written a new book on the life of John Lazar D.G.M. Westland 1871-1879.

His name was given to Lazar Lodge no. 1689. An actor, theatre manager and owner, local government politician, mayor, and freemason. He was during his life in New Zealand likely the most prominent freemason of his time. He led a fascinating life and gave much to many. He was small in stature yet large in life.

The book will be launched at 2pm Thursday 16th August 2012 at which Westland District Council Mayor, Maureen Pugh, shall attend. Copies of the book will be available at a cost of \$25 per copy or \$27.50 if posted anywhere in New Zealand, after 16th August from Doug Stapleton at 112 Stafford Street, Hokitika 7810 or e - mail frances@quik.co.nz. This will be a single print run of 200 so be quick or be disappointed.



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CAPTION COMPETITION RESULT

Firstly many thanks for such a lively response to this particular competition.

Having received a number of "Would you buy a used car from this man?" themed entries the fickle finger of fate fell a lot closer to home than usual. Runner up was Andrew Brown's "Two wise monkeys making a trunk call!" but the winning caption turned out to be...

"I don't care how much Bev wants it - I'm not driving around the streets of Christchurch looking like Mary Poppins!" And the author of this gem? None other than Mrs Rowe



herself. A bottle of wine will be presented to Bev at the earliest opportunity (We'll take a break from the caption contest this issue - Ed.)

Degrees South Deadlines:

September 30th
for the October 2012 edition
December 31st
for the January 2013 edition

March 31st
for the April 2013 edition
June 30th
for the July 2013 edition

WHAT HAPPENED TO APRIL'S ISSUE?

My apologies for the absence of April's issue, as some of you may have heard the Grim Reaper recently took a swipe at me ... and missed! There I was, working quite hard to open a new business whilst juggling two other businesses and a few other community responsibilities when, on taking a short walk of no more than 50 metres, I felt more than a little out of breath and uncomfortable in my chest. Three hours later I was in the back of an ambulance heading for Timaru as, after lunch, the discomfort had increased accompanied this time by a certain amount of sweating - but still no pain.

In Timaru Hospital I was hooked up to an ECG machine and blood test duly run, at the end of which the doctor came up to the ward and said "Well, the good news is that it's not your heart Mr. Taylor" - I was kept in overnight to investigate what was wrong.

At about midnight I was awakened by a vision of loveliness, purporting to be a doctor (no cracks about believing I was at the gates of Paradise please!). She approached the bed and whispered "We have had some more test results and it would appear that you've had a heart attack after all".

At 10:00am the next morning I was yet again in the back of an ambulance, this time heading for Christchurch. After many more tests, scans and monitoring galore the cardiac consultant stopped by and suggested that I be added to the list the next afternoon for angioplasty.

At the appointed hour I was wheeled down to a bunker beneath the hospital and placed on a table in front of an enormous flat screen display. An x-ray camera was then suspended above my chest and the whole room regaled with the image of my beating heart. The room was full of young people - very young people - reassuring me that I would be fine and that they were, in fact, highly trained nurses, technicians and surgeons. With their hip-hop music banging in the background I watched the screen intently as a catheter was inserted into an artery at my wrist and made its way toward my heart. In all five stents were inserted across all three coronary arteries. Then I was back to the ward for two days rest before being allowed home for more rest and recuperation.

In view of my family history I had always expected this event, eventually. But the important message I would like to pass on is that throughout the entire episode I felt no pain whatsoever. Apparently everyone feels heart pain differently; from the full blown TV examples of rolling around clutching one's breast, to my somewhat slight discomfort more akin to indigestion. It could be a pain in the neck, the jaw the left arm or even the hand. As with all of these things the sooner one seeks attention the better. Incidentally, on leaving the hospital I was presented with a booklet entitled "A Guide to Recovery After a Heart Attack" which has been invaluable as a source of understanding and reassurance since my return home. On the inside cover of this forty five page booklet are a square and compasses beside which is written "**This resource is supported by the English Freemasons in New Zealand**". Thank you for that Brethren - I'm enormously grateful. *Editor*

DISCUSSIONS ON "READING FROM THE BOOK"

At the 2012 Annual Communications at Westport W Bro Peter Sheriff, District Grand Mentor, facilitated a discussion on a perceived, increasing incidence of Brethren reading from the book during formal ritual. W Bro Sheriff's report on this discussion follows:

Whilst all acknowledged that it was not permitted to read from 'the book' some of the brethren tried to mitigate that they were on shift work or worked seven days a week and did not have time to learn.

Practices of ritual were often done as one whole degree per rehearsal cramming in all the necessary obligations and charges rather than breaking up a degree over several practice nights. It was felt that it would be better taking time having the various elements explained to them, thus not only encouraging understanding of the text but improving the overall feel which in turn might be conducive to the newer brethren in particular making that extra effort to learn the words rather

than making the learning of the words an obstacle or hurdle or worse still something to be feared.

Another thought raised by some was that they were being accelerated through the offices of the lodge too quickly thus resulting in having to learn too much, too rapidly bearing in mind that perambulation had to be learned as well.

Some were just overwhelmed or overawed.

Several brethren thought that the calibre of some new members was lacking (present company excepted!) and that the lodge elders should exercise better screening prior to a candidate being admitted as an Initiate.

There was a general feeling that not all lodge preceptors were strict or disciplined enough and nearly all agreed that preceptors should be better trained in both the delivery of ritual and 'man' management.

In all twenty-four Brethren attended the Forum made up of all ranks from new Master Mason to District Officers. This was an excellent turnout and exceeded that of last year's Forum held in Timaru.