

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

DEGREES SOUTH



MARCH 2019



THEY ARE US

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| SEARCHING FOR W BRO HINDMARSH | 2 |
| DEPUTY DGM | 3 |
| BOARD OF GENERAL PURPOSES | 4 |
| ROYAL ARCH | 4 |
| SOLOMON KNOWLEDGE RE-SOURCE | 4 |

“As I hope you would imagine we have been horrified by the happenings in Christchurch and know only too well the devastating effect such events have on the local community in particular, but nationwide and, indeed, worldwide as well. I think it has been particularly hard to take in a country such as yours where everybody has always assumed such things would not happen.”

MW Bro Peter Lowndes, Pro Grand Master

“Our thoughts are with the Brethren of your community. It is at times like this that we are to pull together and support our Brothers in what can only be described as a deeply distressing time.”

VW Bro Dr David Staples, Grand Secretary and CEO UGLE

“The terrible tragedy that has occurred on our soil was never something that we, in New Zealand, have ever contemplated. Our hearts go out to all our Muslim brethren, their families, and friends at this catastrophic time.

We in New Zealand have always treated others in a fair and respectful manner and to have such a thing happen on our soil is deplorable.”

RW Bro Brian Westhead District Grand Master, District of the North Island

“Right now we are experiencing the painful process of shock turning into grief. Only once the community has been able to grieve will we start to be able to gauge the effect on the future of New Zealand and be able to consider how we all adjust to that future.

Our members are receiving messages of sympathy from Freemasons all over the world which, as ever, is always a great comfort.”

RW Bro Richard Taylor, District Grand Master, District of the South Island

“There are few words apt to describe the nature of the attack which occurred last Friday in Christchurch. It is a tragedy that is unparalleled in New Zealand...”

“...I have been contacted by Grand Masters, Lodges and brethren from around the world expressing their compassion and support – naturally they are all unanimous in their condemnation of the act that has taken place but also in their wish to assist.”

MW Bro Mark Winger, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of New Zealand

“Having watched the terrible events unfold over the weekend I am sure that I speak on behalf of all at the MCF in offering sincere condolences to all those affected. You are all certainly in our thoughts at this very difficult time.”

Les Hutchinson, Chief Operating Officer, Masonic Charitable Foundation, London

IMPORTANT DATES

- Monday 8th April - Amberley Installation
- Fri 10th - Sat 11th May - Annual Communications at Ashburton
- Saturday June 8th - Phoenix Installation, Wespport
- Monday 24th June - Winchester Installation
- Tues 23rd April - Canterbury Royal Arch regular meeting

The Level demonstrates that we are all sprung from the same stock, partakers of the same nature and sharers in the same hope.



SEARCHING FOR W BRO W.H.S. HINDMARSH

I am researching my Gt. Grandfather, William Henry Scott Hindmarsh, with the aim of writing a book about his life.

Born 1835, Norfolk Island, a childhood in Sydney till age 7, then two years on an Australian station, followed by six years with his grandparents at the cottages for old sea capt., Mile End, London, back to Sydney for 10 years then Ipswich, Australia for 6 years. Using the usual research tools combined with two journals he wrote detailing these years I have enough material about this time in his life and have now begun researching his time in New Zealand, 1867-1919.

The first years 1867 - 1881 were spent in Greymouth and the rest of his life 1882-1919 he lived in Reefton. He had various jobs, secretary, legal manager to gold mines, sharebroker, insurance salesman etc. I am interested in his involvement in the arts: writing (pen-name 'Waratah'); directing, writing and acting in plays and music. Examples of his beautiful script can still be seen in St. Stephen's church Reefton and in various Masonic Lodges - more on this soon. He was often called on to do 'illuminated addresses' described in detail in historic West Coast newspapers.

I knew from Papers Past that he entered into the life of the Masonic Lodges on the Coast with great enthusiasm. For example:

Grey River Argus, 25th May, 1872 ...The ball-room was decorated in great taste.....The whole of this decorative arrangement was under the direction of Mr. Hindmarsh, a zealous member of the brotherhood, and the artistic manner in which he executed the diagrams and figures on paper was really surprising.....

GRA 2nd Dec. 1873 ...Installation of officers....The ceremonywas rendered more impressive by the choral services of Bro. Hindmarsh.....who presided at the harmonium....

Heritage New Zealand's online article about the Reefton Masonic Lodge- William Hindmarsh, in the Inangahua Times of 14 July 1892, notes that the plans and specifications were largely prepared by Bro. Dunn while Hindmarsh himself provided designs for the fretwork. There is some suggestion, however, that Hindmarsh had more of an architectural role in the design than this, and it is known that he produced the architectural designs for St. Stephen's Church (1877-78) and Reefton's second Methodist church completed in 1906.

This same Heritage NZ article details the interior. Some interesting features were: the entablature of 25 inches is carried around the hall, having a bold cornice and frieze, fixed shields with Masonic designs - gold on vermillion together with mottos of the Order beautifully cut in fretwork.....I have a Historic Places Trust photo of

the interior taken 1980 which shows none of this and only one solitary motto.

Query 1 It seems that the interior of the Masonic Hall, Reefton was much changed long before it went into private hands in 1997. I would like to find pre-1980 photos of the interior of the Hall showing the original decoration.

Query 2 Does anyone know where the records for the Reefton Masonic Lodge are? It would be interesting to follow in the records the design & building of the Masonic Hall, Shiel St., Reefton from its beginnings right through any alterations to its interior decoration and to see exactly when things were done (knowing when would make it easier to find any photographs)

Until late November 2018 my knowledge of WSH's involvement with Freemasonry was restricted to information found online and it was confined to the Westcoast. Since November, thanks to time and material generously given by Doug Stapleton, my general knowledge of Freemasonry and my specific knowledge of WSH's role outside the Westcoast has exploded. Amberley Lodge records show:

1885 - Set of Tracing Boards purchased from Reefton for £17/10/....

In the Amberley Lodge there are four mottos... "Faith, Hope, Charity" "Brotherly Love, Relief, Truth" "Honour, Virtue, Mercy" "Wisdom, Strength, Beauty" These were painted and presented to the Lodge by Bro. W. Hindmarsh of Reefton, and arrived on 29th November 1892, to mark the opening of the new rooms.

Because they came from Reefton it is possible that WSH did the Tracing Boards. The records show that he definitely did the mottos. This is a revelation to me - i.e. that he did work outside the Westcoast. Thanks to Ian James and Doug Stapleton I was able to see this art at the Amberley Lodge and photograph it in December 2018.

Query 3 It now seems quite possible that WSH Hindmarsh did such art for other Lodges in the South Island. I would really appreciate hearing about ANY mention of WSH Hindmarsh found in Lodge records 1867-1919

Jo Wynne, 55 Crofton Rd., Harewood, Christchurch 8051. ejowynne@gmail.com



"I would really appreciate hearing about ANY mention of WSH Hindmarsh found in Lodge records 1867-1919."

NEWS FROM THE TOP OF THE SOUTH

Greetings Brethren from the Top of the South, where Freemasonry is still very much alive and prospering, and in good heart.



Unfortunately, this is not so for our lovely old building in Collingwood Street in Nelson. Following the many earthquake events in and around the country, the Collingwood Street Building now does not come up to the earthquake standards required by the Nelson City Council. Engineering inspections have been carried out and reports are awaited,



which are suspected to be well below the standards required. To bring the building back up to these standards will require a large amount of capital which Southern Star Lodge does not have. So, the inevitable may be looming and the building may have to be disposed of, hopefully to a developer.

In the meantime, the Lodge had negotiated accommodation at the Nile Street Lodge rooms for itself and accompanying Lazar Lodge and the Scottish Royal Arch. Whether this will be a permanent arrangement or not, is subject to developments in Collingwood Street.

Another event that is going on in Nelson is the construction of a new Hospice, in Suffolk Road in Stoke. During the instigation and planning of this new facility, a shortfall in

funding came about when further additions were recommended.



A call went out to the community, including the Freemasons of Nelson, for help. A very substantial amount was realised from the English Constitution, the New Zealand Constitution and the Scottish Royal Arch.

Hence on the 11th of November 2018 an invitation to the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, members of District Grand Lodge, Southern Star Lodge and of the Scottish Royal Arch to visit the site. During the visit, speeches were made along with the presentation of the cheque for monies raised by Freemasons. A number of photos were taken in an area proposed for a Masonic Garden which will show the names of



those who made the donations. 2019 Nelson entered into a period of very hot, dry weather from which developed some serious fires in the area just South West of Richmond. The fires spread so quickly and fiercely that incident commanders declared a state of emergency. Hence many families in the Wakefield and surrounding areas had to be evacuated from their homes as the fire spread. As you have already heard, many of these families were well looked after by emergency services and the many volunteers in the Nelson area, even the schools in Wakefield were vacated and moved to safer areas of

Brightwater.

As you can imagine many of the children caught up in this disaster would have been quite traumatised and the Freemasons of Nelson wanted to assist in alleviating some of their fears.



So, having some Teddy Bears shipped up from Christchurch, we went out to the Wakefield schools and pre-schools to present these to the children. There were some very happy faces.



Freemasons helping the local communities is a great and rewarding venture. Do try it!!!

Wor Bro Dave Stenning, PAGDC, DDistGM.



www.sifreemasons.org.nz

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION
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The views expressed in these pages do not
necessarily reflect those of the District Grand Lodge

Degrees South Deadline:
April 30th for the May Edition.

SOLOMON

Last month saw the official launch of UGLE's new online resource, known as Solomon. Anyone can register to use this fantastic new e-learning tool. The site contains an array of 'nuggets', short fact notes in an easily digestible form that can be read by the individual or perhaps used as fillers in Lodge meetings or at LOIs. There are also papers, videos and other learning tools, all designed to encourage all of us to make that daily advancement in Masonic knowledge. Solomon is aimed at reintroducing the concept of learning as an aid to filling in some of those knowledge gaps so prevalent in new masons; yet, even the most experienced mason is likely to find something of interest that they didn't know before. Access to Solomon is by <https://b.ugle.org.uk/> and click on "Learning" icon.

ROYAL ARCH

This year a convocation of the Canterbury Royal Arch Chapter, No 1048, will be held in Ashburton on the Saturday morning of Communications weekend. Grand Inspector, E Comp R M Taylor would strongly urge all Brethren who are not members of the English Royal Arch to seriously consider becoming members of this esteemed Chapter, the last remaining on the South Island. Country membership is currently available for less than \$25 per year and, even if you are a member of the NZ Royal Arch, you would be welcome to join and boost the numbers of the Chapter. At the time of writing the membership is fast approaching 50 which makes it one of the largest in New Zealand. If we are able to double that number the future of the Chapter, and therefore English Royal Arch Masonry, will be assured for some time to come. Joining forms are available from Scribe E, E Comp Karl Moen.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARDS

Since our last report the Boards have been fairly quiet, which can be either a good thing or the calm before the storm. Having said that a special meeting was called on the 16/2/19 to discuss our Teddy Bear project.

The reason for this is that while some Lodges have put a lot of work into distributing The Teddies, particularly in the Nelson Region others have been virtually non-existent in distributing the product to the right organisation resulting in a lack of much needed publicity. Another reason is that, at the rate they were being distributed, if kept in storage for years they could deteriorate.

The Board received an invitation to join in with the Teddies for Loving Care Appeal (TLC) with our North Island English District counterparts and Sister Constitutions in the distribution and publicity of The Teddies

The following motions were discussed, voted and passed at the Special Meeting on 16/2/19:

"A proposal has been received from the Chairman of TLC Appeal NZ it is hereby moved that the custody and distribution of the Teddy Bears held by the SIEMDCT be given to TLC Appeal NZ"

"The Chairman of the South Island English Masonic District Charitable Trust will appoint a representative to liaise with the TLC Appeal NZ with regards to coordination of distribution within the South Island"

"The Chairman of the South Island English Masonic District Charitable Trust will represent the organisation with the Board of TLC Appeal NZ subject to being invited."

"That each Lodge in the District of South Island New Zealand be invited to nominate a representative to assist the TLC Appeal NZ in the distribution of the Bears within their region and act as a liaison between TLC Appeal NZ and the emergency department of their local hospital"

Re the above, please be assured that in our view this will not hinder English South Island Lodges from having Teddies distributed in their area and will streamline delivery, plus create more publicity for your area

At our quarterly meeting of The Boards in November the following items were discussed

Communications report

Representatives of The Ashburton Lodge 1811 who are hosting this year's Communications reported that planning is underway and that The formal Dinner will be at The Ashburton Hotel. The same weekend there is a major farming event in the area and members requiring accommodation are urged to book as soon as possible. At present the Hotel Ashburton still has rooms available

Newsletter and Website

As if he hasn't already got enough to do, our District Grand Master has been maintaining The Newsletter and Website. If there is a person out there who can take over this role (Degrees South Editor not

District Grand Master lol) it would be very much appreciated.

By Laws

As advised previously a small group has been tasked to look at The District By Laws to make the wording more acceptable to current times and to suggest deletions of irrelevant material This is ongoing and expected to be finalised before our next regular meeting South Island English Masonic District Charitable Trust.

Financial Report:

The Financial report for the period ended 31 October 2018 was presented by the Treasurer who moved it be received; seconded, P. D. Stenning. He reported a good surplus for the year although the market took a bit of a hit in October.

It was reported that meetings had been held with Craig's Investment Partners relating to management of the Trust's Investments. There was some general discussion as to the options: The Treasurer moved and F van Zoggel seconded that the Trust appoint Craig's Investment Partners to manage the funds with their Discretionary Investment Management Service. The Treasurer to inform them accordingly and develop the investment strategy and policy.

Just a reminder that if there is a worthwhile cause or a Brother is in distressed circumstances that require immediate consideration, please do not hesitate to contact me or any members of the Trust