

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

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 4

DEGREES SOUTH

DECEMBER 2023



2023 A YEAR OF CHANGE

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Installations
Pacific—February
Canterbury - March
Lazar—March
Conyers—March
- Board of General Purposes—
May



Well, 2023 has been an interesting year with plenty of goings on.

Back in May, Richard Malcom Taylor resigned as our DGM. This was just after the Annual Communications held in Winchester and they should be really proud of their brilliant running of that weekend.

In his 5 years, Richard brought the District to consistency with the UGLE guides, especially with Ritual. The South Island had been operating differently to the North. Lodges starting organising their own installations. District Officers were even seen to perform second degrees for a couple of Lodges. Richards smiling face and positive attitudes will be missed.

In June John Soper was installed as the new DGM, Frans van Zoggel as the DDGM and Ray Moroney as the ADGM by the UGLE Deputy Grand Master, Sir David Hugh Wootton. Some said he looked like a Boris Johnston look alike.

This year we lost several Brethren to the Grand Lodge above. One of these had 70 years continuous service, some had 60 years' service, but all served the District well. Our District Almoner made sure the correct contacts had been made.

UGLE has now given us the ability to issue certificates for 40 years' service, down from 50 years as the new starting point. Making it easier for Brethren to reach this target.

The voluntary District Charity Plan has been released and presentations have been given to some Lodges. The District Charity Steward is happy to present this at all Lodges. Cholmondeley home has been chosen as the new main District Charity for the next 3 years.

UGLE has updated many systems and are producing some great information and materials for the District to implement. The 2022 Strategy (see First Rising) is a good example of this and gives clear achievable building blocks to go forward with. The Strategy Temple is on the last page. Check out Solomon www.solomon.ugle.org.uk the knowledge database. You are never too old to learn.

Thank you to the 3 Lodges that contributed to the website and this newsletter this past year.

I wish you and your families a very good festive season and look forward to catching up with you around the traps.

Murray T
Ed

DGM REPORT

Brethren yet another year has flown by. They say the older you get the faster they go well I am not sure where this year went.

As I may not get to see some of you before Xmas both Marie and I wish you and your families a very happy and prosperous season. It is an opportunity to sit back and unwind after a very busy year. It is a time to look to others and offer relief to those not so fortunate, where we can. This was shown on the third Monday of November where the lions had their annual toot for tucker. I acted as driver for Marie who belongs to the local Lions group. In all the Ashburton lions collected 480 banana boxes filled with grocery items for the local food bank. A great achievement and will certainly give a lot of people happier Xmas.

It has been a busy but enjoyable time since the last degree south with official visits to all constitutions in the South Island and attending their installations where I have been well received. As well as the communications of District Grand Lodge NI. I thank those brethren who have at times accompanied me. Especially the out-of-town ones like Dunedin.

Tuesday 28th November I went to Southern Star lodge in Nelson to present some well-deserved service pins to some very distinguished brethren. Bro. Ian Allport 60 years. Bro's Athol Allan. Brian Dobson. and Morris Campbell all received 40-year pins. From the District I thank you for your service to masonry and trust you will continue to give valuable service to the district.

On the weekend of 25th -26th November Marie and I represented our District at the annual communication of the district of North Island. We were well received and looked after during our stay. Brethren I ask that you consider making the journey to the North Island for their communications. It is important that our two Districts keep a close fellowship.

On a sadder note brethren. over the last 6 months we have lost some very notable brethren to the Grand Lodge above.

Bro. Allan Williams PDSGW

Bro. Ken Lipscomb PDSGW

Bro. Paul Ditmer PDGStdB

Bro. Andrew Donahue DSGW

They will all be missed and leave a gap in our lodges.



Brethren a situation which I can now talk about and put to bed. Over the last 6 months the GLNZ has been in discussion with the UGLE concerning our District Grand Lodges in both the South and North Island being handed over to the GLNZ. Our Grand Sect has kept both Warren Weir and myself up to date during this time. From this end we have told UGLE that we had no appetite to change our affiliation. London has now written to Bro. Jim Watt GMNZ stating our stand and ceased any further communication on the matter. Therefore Brethren if you are asked or told by a NZ const member that we are moving to the NZ Constitution you can say **no we are not**.

Brethren again I wish you all a very merry Xmas and look forward to catching up to all in the new year.

RW. Bro. John Soper

DGM

CHARITY REPORT

It has been a progressive time for District charity work since Communications in May. As you will all remember the new charity, we have partnered with, was voted for at the communications dinner. The charity was Cholmondeley Children's House. I have been in touch with them and visited their site to start building a relationship. I also had the pleasure of being invited to their Golf Charity tournament where I acted as a helper and assisted in running the live auctions during the prize giving. The day was a great success for them. The next steps will be to touch base in the new year to plan an event that all funds raised will go to Cholmondeley. For more info about them feel free to check out the below: <https://www.facebook.com/Cholmondeley.NZ> or www.cholmondeley.org.nz We don't want to forget about the relationship with Hohepa Canterbury as we still have one more event for them that will now be done in February/March 2024. Expect more information about the medieval dinner planned in the early.

Also don't forget about the offer to present the District Charity plan in one of your lodge meetings. A couple of lodges have already taken up the offer and it has been well received.

Fraternal greetings,

Nigel Paterson

District Grand Charity Steward



THE ACACIA

Intimately connected with the legend of Freemasonry is the Acacia, an esteemed and sacred tree.

It has always grown abundantly in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and it is venerated by Freemasons.

Isaiah recounting the promises of God's mercy to the Israelites tells them that *"God will plant in the wilderness, for their relief and refreshment, the Acacia"*

This plant seems to always survive, even after drought, fire, or extensive grazing.

... so we believe the Acacia to be incorruptible as it appears not liable to injury from the attacks of disease or from any kind of insect or animal.

The Ark of the Covenant, sacred in the Quran, the Torah and the Old Testament was made from this robust wood, as were many ancient Altars and sacred furniture and fittings.

The early Masons appropriated this plant as the sacred symbol of the immortality of the Soul.

We see the presentation of a sprig of Acacia today as an act of respect for XXXX...

... and to remind us that we all have a vital and eternal soul within us, which shall survive our perishable frame, and its spirit will never ever be extinguished.

Our beloved Brother XXXXX has been called for by the Great Architect of the Universe to the promised reward of blissful immortality, we wish him eternal peace."

Supplied by Frans van Zoggel



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

Degrees South Deadline:
February 24th for the March Edition.

Gavel exchange

The photo is of an exchange of gavels, we held on the night of my Proclamation at The St Albans Lodge 2597 on 19/10/23

The exchange of gavels was between Aorangi Lodge 2300 EC and St Albans Lodge 2597

Exchanging gavels are JR Woolcott WM St Albans Lodge and S Elliott North island District Grand Senior Warden and member of Aorangi Lodge

In the Background are newly installed St Albans Wardens, Bro S Sugati and WBro R Butler



The UGLE Strategy Temple

