

The DGM/s Corner

ASSISTANT DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS REPORT

The concept of "visiting" is woven into the very fabric of Freemasonry. While a Mason's "Mother Lodge" is his home, the true scale of the craft is only realized when we step beyond those familiar doors. To visit another lodge is to participate in one of the oldest traditions of the fraternity, transforming a local membership into a global brotherhood.

We have become very accomplished at visiting Other Constitutions. Indeed, in my "patch", we are proud of the relationship and the integration of our Brethren with Sister Constitutions.

However, within our own English Constitution, we may know "who is who", but to walk into a different Lodge is a bit like being at home, just in a different room. I sometimes wonder if we may have used more of our time in our South Island region visiting Sister Constitutions rather than our own. There is an advantage to visiting more within our own Constitution.

The Expansion of Perspective

Every Masonic lodge operates under the same fundamental principles, yet each possesses a unique "flavour" shaped by its history, its members, and its local customs. By visiting different lodges, a Mason gains a broader understanding of the Universality of the Craft.

* Ritual Variations: Even within the same jurisdiction, subtle differences in floor work or oral tradition can offer fresh insights into the allegorical lessons of the degrees.

* Cultural Exchange: Visiting a different lodge in one's own Constitution proves that the "Brother" sitting across from you shares the same values, regardless of language or background.

Strengthening the Mystic Tie

Freemasonry is often described as a "system of morality, veiled in allegory." However, it is also a social institution. Visiting prevents a lodge and its members from becoming an echo chamber. It fosters inter-lodge communication and keeps the fraternity vibrant. When we visit, we bring news, ideas, and fellowship from our own homes, effectively knitting the various lodges together into a cohesive whole.

Personal Growth and "Travel"

In operative masonry, a "Fellowcraft" was expected to travel to different building sites to learn new skills and master his trade. In speculative Masonry, we continue this journey metaphorically.

* Building Confidence: Walking into a room of strangers and being received as a friend is a powerful exercise in social confidence.

* Learning Leadership: Observing how other Masters preside over their lodges provides a masterclass in leadership styles and parliamentary procedure and maybe in insight as to how we, as UGLE members, can work within our own ritual.

* The Joy of Hospitality: There is a specific warmth in Masonic hospitality—the "Festive Board" or the post-meeting meal—where the deepest bonds are often formed over shared bread (maybe a dram) and conversation.

Visiting isn't just about what you, the visitor, receives; it's also about what you can give. A guest in a lodge brings encouragement. For a small lodge struggling with attendance, the presence of a visitor can be a significant morale boost. It serves as a reminder that their work is recognized and valued by the wider Masonic community.

So, a summary of Benefits.....

Benefit: Impact on the Mason, Impact on the Lodge.

Education: Deeper ritual knowledge, Exposure to new ideas.

Fellowship: Expanded social circle, Increased energy/vitality.

Unity: Sense of global belonging, Stronger ties to Grand Lodge.

Visiting a Masonic lodge is the antidote to insularism. It turns the "lodge room" from a specific physical location into a worldwide sanctuary. For any Mason looking to truly "complete his work," the passport is his membership, and the destination is any place where brothers meet.

Start local. Let's support our own Lodges to the best of our capacity.

Ray Moroney

Lodge Roundup

Southern Star 735

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Pacific Lodge of Hokitika 1229

Installation meeting moved to March.

Lazar Lodge 1689

On Monday 9 February, The Lazar Lodge 1689 EC held the first meeting for 2026 in the Tiny Lodge located at Willow Bank Heritage Village located in Wakefield, Tasman.

(<https://www.willowbankwakefield.co.nz/>) This interactive living museum is home to over 20 themed shopfront displays and buildings, which includes a miniature lodge room known locally as "The Tiny Lodge," which was opened in November 2021.



Whilst small in size, this is a perfect miniature lodge which the public can visit on open days as a contribution to de-mystifying Freemasonry. Usually staffed by some volunteer masons it provides an opportunity to explain Freemasonry and its objectives to interested visitors.

On this occasion, the lodge was used for the normal meeting, followed by a barbecue with wives and partners in the adjacent grounds.

As a dining lodge, meals are normally somewhat more formal but blessed with some fine Nelson weather and aided by some very capable hands at the barbecue, a truly memorable evening followed - a vintage moment for the lodge.



Phoenix 1690

Domestic evening.

Winchester 1737

Domestic Meeting

Ashburton 1811

No details provided.

Conyers 1916

A lecture was given by Frans van Zoggel on the following.

The Impact of Freemasonry in 18th-Century England

- the development of Freemasonry in the 18th century, with particular attention to its impact on charity, education, and the role of religious tolerance in shaping relationships between social classes.

The Tyler and the Cowan

- What is a Cowan and why should the Tyler have to keep him out?.

Amberley 2007

A domestic meeting.

Canterbury 1048 Royal Arch Chapter

An interesting quiz evening on Royal Arch Masonry was held in the refectory. It highlighted the gaps in knowledge generally held. The Crusaders Team managed 12 out of 20 correct answers.

This was followed by a delicious feed of whitebait and other food items. Some chastising was heard from the kitchen when a couple of eggshell bits accidentally got into the mix. Easily fixed and harmony restored, eventually.

Food now consumed at the long table, and just waiting for the rest of the evening.

**St Albans 2597**

Our February Domestic meeting was a very special meeting not only for me as the first meeting in my second term as Worshipful Master, but also the birthday of our most senior elders in our lodge, Worshipful Brother Ron and Peter. Apart from celebrating this special occasion, we had a special visit from Canterbury Kilwinning Lodge for a gavel exchange. St Albans and Canterbury Kilwinning have had a long friendship for many years and since we meet on the same day, the third Thursday of the month, we decided to pay a visit to each other at least once a year and exchange a gavel. It was indeed a good night with a lot of laughter and music, as can be seen below.

**No meeting**

Dunedin Lodge 931

Canterbury 1048

St John 1137

Greymouth Lodge 1233

District Charity (Nigel Paterson – nigpat@extra.co.nz)

More exciting news next month.

Membership Officer (Alister MacPherson - alistermacnz@gmail.com)

UGLE has produced some very information on membership. As some examples, there is a brochure that can be given to new potential members, an Initiates guide and the Royal Arch. The District Secretary has copies of these.

District Mentor (Nigel Howard – nigelflyer@extra.co.nz)

A revised plan being worked on.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE DISTRICT GRAND LODGE OF THE SOUTH ISLAND

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

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4th March the February Edition.