

The DGM/s Corner

ASSISTANT DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS REPORT

Salutations, Brethren.

Once again, the time has arrived for the delivery of this annual report.

To describe the past year as easy would be inaccurate. Due to several family commitments that required travel overseas for approximately a quarter of the year, I was absent during some periods when considerable Lodge business was being conducted. As a result, the level of visitation and involvement was not as high as had been hoped. However, the belief that family comes first is one shared by all. In this case, regrettably, those family obligations took me overseas more frequently than desired—but a Dad must do what a Dad must do. This is not presented as an excuse, but as a statement of fact.

Nonetheless, during the periods I was in New Zealand, I was fortunate to remain active in the Craft. I attended several lodges throughout the top of the South Island—what I affectionately refer to as "my patch"—as well as in Canterbury. I was honoured to participate in Installations and Proclamations across several Lodges, including Dunedin, Greymouth, Southern Star, Phoenix, Lazar, Amberley, and Pacific Hokitika.

As with the previous year, my first major visit was to my mother lodge, Phoenix Lodge, where I had the privilege of conducting the full installation of the Worshipful Master. This occasion held personal significance, as the incoming Master—Worshipful Brother Graham Mason—is a close friend and colleague, known through years of involvement in brass banding and the shared experience of raising young families, even before our paths crossed in Freemasonry. An interesting aside: at one time, Phoenix Lodge counted as many as eight Brethren who were also members of the Westport Municipal Brass Band, a testament to how involvement in other organisations can influence Masonic membership.

One of the functions of the District Grand Lodge is to assist local Lodges when called upon. In this capacity, I found myself in Amberley Lodge in July, lending assistance with a Second Degree ceremony. That meeting was especially noteworthy, as it brought together the District Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, and myself in the same place—an occurrence that could be considered rare and noteworthy.

It continues to impress how many different approaches Lodges employ to reach the same ritualistic outcomes. Masons are encouraged to pursue daily learning within the Craft, and I have found myself in the fortunate position to do so through frequent visitations. Regional variations in ritual—especially apparent when visiting outside one's home district—highlight the rich diversity within Freemasonry. This, in my view, is one of the great advantages of visiting. Another is the genuine fraternal comradery that blossoms in the refectory, a space where the social bonds of the Craft are nurtured. Indeed, it is this spirit of fraternity that

remains the most elusive "secret" (or white Rabbit if you will), to those outside the Craft—one which conspiracy theorists and online detractors simply cannot grasp or replicate.

One of the most significant developments of the year was the successful resurrection of the Greymouth Lodge. I extend sincere gratitude to all those—both within the Greymouth area and from beyond—who contributed their time, energy, and commitment to preserving the Greymouth Lodge Charter. Once lost, a Charter is not easily regained, making this achievement all the more valuable.

I was also privileged to attend a number of Installations and meetings of New Zealand Constitution Lodges across the top of the South Island. These included Torea, Robbie Burns, Havelock, Advance Mawhera, and Awatere. The variety of ritual observed at these meetings further demonstrates the diversity within the Craft. However, regardless of constitutional or ritual differences, the common thread remains: the pursuit of Fraternity and the aspiration to make good men better. This shared goal is both celebrated and achieved across the Constitutions. I believe the relationship between the various Constitutions within the Seddon Shield region to be strong, vibrant, and enduring—long may it continue.

Brethren, thank you for your patience and Fellowship as I resume my journey in Freemasonry. I continue to learn from, and be inspired by, the many that I am privileged to meet and engage with. I am especially grateful to those of you who have mentored me during the last two years. Knowing there is someone to turn to for advice and guidance is invaluable.

I look forward to continuing to serve you all in the next 12 months.

I remain, Brethren,

Your Obedient servant,

Ray Moroney

DGM TRAVELS

Travelling is fun and exciting but can be very tiring. This year Marie and I have had the privilege of being able to officially represent our district in both London and Kuala Lumpur.

In early April Marie and I set off on a 4 week journey which took us to Vancouver, Netherlands and London. The primary reason for this trip was to attend the Grand Investitures of both the Craft and Royal Arch over 2 days. These were preceded by Forums and DGMs meetings with the program master and other senior members of Grand Lodge. In total 4 days were taken with these meetings. For those who have not been to the Great Hall in Queen St, London it is a must do at some time during your masonic life.

The grand investitures of Grand officers for the craft took place on Thursday 30th April. I had the privilege with all the other DGMs of escorting the Pro Grand Master into the temple where about 1600 masons stood and clapped him in. the ceremony itself was not too different to our communications but with more formality. It was an honour to hear the names of WBro's Frans van Zoggel DDGM received Grand rank promotion of PSGD, Ray Moroney. ADGM PAGDC and John Woolcott receiving PAGDC All well deserved.

The next day were the grand rank promotions of Royal arch. And again, we were honoured with 2 companions receiving Grand rank. Comp Ron Sutherland received Senior overseas Grand rank and Graham Moore with overseas grand rank. Again, congratulations and well deserved.

The investitures themselves took well over an hour on each day and as you can imagine was rather tiring. Each officer was invested with his collar by either the Pro Grand Master or ME 1st Grand Principal.

It was unfortunate that MW the Grand Master HRH the Duke of Kent was not in attendance on the first day but was present for the Royal Arch. It was again an honour to be part of the escort to bring him into Grand Chapter

On both days there were over 1600 people from around the world in attendance from MMs up. at the close on both days the national anthem was sung and to hear the grand organ start up and then 1600 brethren singing God save the King was a little mind blowing. I think we all have a bit to do to match that.

Although it was a very exhausting time, it was well worth going to experience what the locals see on a regular basis. Incidentally on the Thursday London had its hottest April day on record with 30deg. Being dressed in a 3-piece suit and walking to and from the hotel to the hall was not comfortable.

After arriving home, I had just under 2 weeks to prepare for our own communications in Blenheim which was well run by the Dunedin Lodge 931.

On Monday 1st June we again took off for Kuala Lumpur to attend the annual communications and Convocation of Craft and Royal Arch over 2 days Thursday and Friday.

Again, these are conducted not too different from us but with at least 10 times more masons for both occasions. Each was concluded with a banquet in the evening.

On the Saturday was the installation of W.Bro. Mathir Mahzon as District Grand Master for the Eastern Archipelagos. Brethren travel from all over, including Malasia, Hong Kong, India and Sri Lanka, Singapore and of course both districts of New Zealand. The ceremony of installation was conducted by RW Bro. Michael Snyder DGM UGLE. The ceremony again was not too different to ours but as you can imagine to have over 800 in attendance does make a difference. Attached is a photo of the senior members of the lodge as well as Bro. Mathir Mahzon the new DGM on my immediate left.



The theme for the weekend was climate change. Everything at this banquet was related to this including the way the stage was prepped to audio and visual screens and speakers. Like us they look at charities for the medium term and work towards supporting them with charitable support.

When you look at what we here in the South Island are able to do with our charitable support we can hold our heads high as although we may not work with the same numbers we are very generous with the charities we support.

On the Monday night before we left for home I was picked up from the resort and taken to the Negri Sembilan Lodge 3552 EC. About 1 ½ hours out of KL where they had a past master's night and performed a live 2nd degree. To watch was amazing. Everyone was word perfect and new exactly what was expected of them. Brethren we could learn a lot

from visiting these places. The refectory afterwards was equally as good with no quality spared. I believe this is the normal standard for their refectory and not put on for our benefit. Attached is a photo of the lodge rooms which are owned by the lodge and was built in 1922.



With both these trips Marie and I were away for nearly 6 weeks making a bit of a trip of it visiting Vancouver and the Netherlands to spend time with our daughter and Grandchildren. We initially left NZ on Sat 5th April for Vancouver where we spent 5 days. They say it rains for approx. 250 days per year. were we lucky. The day we arrived and the day we left beautiful sunshine. Everything in between just rain.

Vancouver has an unusual tradition. During the early days of the city about 100 years ago the men would all meet up at one of the watering holes for a couple of beers after dinner. The trouble is they lost track of time and only realised how late it was when daybreak hit.

They were asked by their ladies why they were so late and were told no-one had a watch or clock to go by. After a while the wives got weary of this and devised a plan. Anyone who has been to Vancouver may know about the cannon. I'm sure some wives would like to have fired it at the watering hole. But no. all the men were advised that at precisely 9.00pm each night this cannon will fire, we then expect you home very shortly afterward. Although probably not needed these days this cannon still fires at precisely 9.00pm every night just in case. A nice piece of local tradition that has not evaporated with time.

From there we flew to Amsterdam and spent just over 2 weeks with Tina, Wiaan and our 2 grand children Robin and Mikayla. When we left for London, we travelled on the Chunnel train. It was very uninspiring as once you hit the tunnel it is pitch black outside for 28 mins.

You really have no idea what is outside or that you are travelling under the English Channel.

Brethren those of you who have travelled and visited overseas know of the warm welcome that you will always receive. I can only say if you are travelling for a reasonable time to pack some gear and make at least one visit to an overseas jurisdiction. Just make sure you check with Dist Grand Secretary to ensure you are able to visit certain lodges where ever you are.

Lodge Roundup

Southern Star 735

Our July meeting was quite different from our usual gatherings. We tyled half an hour earlier at 6:30pm, conducted our business swiftly, and then closed the lodge. From there, we moved on to a very special refectory, where friends and families were invited to join us and share in the evening.

Our Worshipful Master, Andrew, together with his wife Helen, prepared and hosted a lively general knowledge quiz. Andrew proved to be a very entertaining quizmaster, keeping everyone engaged and in good spirits.

This was followed by a Filipino-themed supper, with an array of dishes lovingly prepared by our Filipino brethren and their wives. The evening continued with song performances, adding even more fun and entertainment to the night.

It was truly an enjoyable and well-attended event, filled with fellowship and good cheer. A huge thank you to the officers and brethren of Southern Star Lodge whose efforts made this such a memorable and successful evening.

Canterbury 1048

On Saturday 5th July The Canterbury Lodge met.

It was heartening , that we had a great turnout . All chairs were filled by their invested officers

The Lodge was called off and our ladies were invited to enter the Lodge room.

Our RT W District Grand Master John Soper , then gave a very interesting talk on the recent trip John and Maree had overseas. The trip was a mixture of personal travel and Masonic Business.

On a personal note they caught up with their family , who John said have grown in stature , since their last visit.

John attended an Instillation Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, plus visited and attended a Grand Lodge Meeting and Ceremony in London.

It came through very clearly from Johns comments , how well he and Marie , were looked after by their Malaysian Masonic host.

At the end of the talk it was commented by The Canterbury WM , how much time and personal funds John and Maree contribute , to fulfil his role travelling and representing us , in his role as our District grand Master.

After a quick drink and appropriate toasts , in the refectory , we adjourned to The Phat Duck Restaurant for a very convivial meal.

John Woolcott

**Phoenix 1690**

Proclamation of their sitting Master W. Bro. Graham Gordon Mason was duly declared.

Winchester 1737

The Installation of W.Bro Jeff Elston was held with good support from the Sister Constitutions. W.Bro F van Zoggel was the Installing master.



Ashburton 1811

A domestic evening held.

Conyers 1916

A presentation was given by W.Bro F van Zoggel discussion paper on 'The Power of Three' which was very well received.

**Amberley 2007**

a well worked 1st degree for Mark Woods was held with the new Master (Ben Smith) in the Chair.



St Albans 2597

In the month of July at St Albans Lodge, we had a presentation by the District Learning and Development Officer, Worshipful Brother Jackson, about the demonstration of the tracing boards. This was well delivered in a classroom style that was extremely engaging, informative, and fun.

The brethren had an opportunity to discuss all the elements from the three tracing boards, as well as the history behind them, while learning from each other's input.

No meeting

Dunedin Lodge 931

Lodge of St John 1137

Pacific Lodge of Hokitika 1229

Greymouth Lodge 1233

Lazar1689

Canterbury 1048 RAC

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

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." Winston Churchill

A poignant quote from a famous freemason. So, my question is what have you or your lodge done to make a life?

Here is a glimpse at the district charities and how we partnered with them in July.

Cholmondeley Children's Centre

Things have been a bit slow this month due to the colder weather but I'm catching up with the team at Cholmondeley next week to discuss what's next as we are due to run a charity event that they will benefit from.

They have their annual 'Little Gems' fundraising gala coming up on 6th September and tickets are available for sale now! Being that it's their 100th anniversary I can assure you this will be a big celebration. I highly recommend this event and encourage attendance.

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2025/little-gems-centenary-party/christchurch>

One Mother to Another

The district charitable trust purchased three boxes of teddy bears from TLC and dropped them off to OMTA this week ready for their packing day.

If you are looking for a great gift for someone special, I highly recommend their cookbook. You can purchase one here: <https://onemothertoanother.org.nz/product/cook-book/>

I'm still waiting for volunteers to be part of our own packing day!! Can you please contact me directly if you are keen to be involved and I will collate names and then provide some dates. nigpat@xtra.co.nz or 0272201001.

Next event

Repeated message from last month: I'm still waiting to hear from people on the West Coast and Blenheim area to understand interest in a simultaneous night we can run a dinner, for late October/November, that

we will run a video link between each venue. This event will mean dinner, raffles, and auctions where the proceeds will be split between both district charities. Touch base on the contact details above to show interest.

I look forward to updating you next month!

Fraternally,
Nigel Paterson
Charity Steward

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

Details to follow.

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

To all Lodge Mentor's, further to my article in the May issue of Degrees South , I am still waiting to hear from many of you.

I am here to help you in your important role within your Lodge. I am keen to talk to each of you on a one to one basis, to discuss in detail how being the Lodge Mentor is working for you, to offer guidance and support from both myself and District and to ensure a degree of consistency throughout our District.

I am aware that some of our Lodges do not currently have a Mentor appointed. To all Lodge Secretaries, please remind your Lodge Mentors to contact me and if no current Mentor, please advise whom within your Lodge will be appointed. The deadline is by your next installation, preferably now. Our DGM has rightly decreed that all Lodges must have a duly appointed Lodge Mentor.

The role is of vital importance, not just to foster and to care for new Brethren, but to ensure that senior members of our Lodges are cared for and fulfilled within their Lodges. I wonder how many of our Lodges have Brethren who no longer regularly attend Lodge meetings. We cannot afford to lose good Brethren. Can you think of anyone within your Lodge I know the answer.

My contact details are 021 1475990

I look forward to hearing from you.

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 September for the August Edition.