

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



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DEGREES SOUTH



MARCH 2021

DISTRICT GRAND MASTER

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Annual Communications,
14- 16 May in Greymouth.
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Greetings Brethren,

Here's a thought: "Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change." - *Stephen Hawking*

In the last few years we have been inundated with change. Locally, we started out in 2018 by changing our approach to Installation ceremonies, then changing how we went about receiving our visitors and so on. UGLE have reorganised at the very top by creating a CEO position for our Grand Secretary, a seismic shift to a far more corporate approach to running the organisation. This was followed by a reorganisation of the administrative staff in London which saw a degree of streamlining and changes in roles. We have seen change bring about the University Scheme, a lowering of the age of entry to the Craft and an increased focus on younger members. We now have the knowledge database of Solomon, the Pathway guide for Lodges to increase membership and a change coming up soon called Hermes that will move much of our Lodges administration on line.

On top of all of this we have had sudden and unwelcome change forced upon us both in our masonry and our everyday lives due to the CoVid19 pandemic.

Also, somewhat sadly, I have recently witnessed a lodge in some jeopardy due to a stoic resistance by some of its members to consider making changes to secure its future.

We can never tell, until we accept a change and test it, whether any single change that we make is good for the Organisation or not so, in many respects, "*Fortune Favours the Brave.*"

We have seen UGLE's video series "*Inside the Freemasons*" and either applauded it as a sign of a significant shift to a high degree of openness or have lamented the loss of some of the

mystery and wonderment of Freemasonry to our potential candidates.

I recently attended a short dissertation delivered by Bro Leo Milani in which he questioned the wisdom of this openness as destroying the more esoteric mysteries and, in some way, secrets of Freemasonry. Thereby stripping us bare of one of our major unique selling points to which our candidates are attracted and revealing us to be just a "bunch of ordinary blokes"

Bro Milani went on to question the mantra, often quoted, that Freemasonry makes "Good Men Better", its subjectivity shifting the focus to the bland end of the spectrum. Far better it could be, he opined, if we could make "Ordinary Men Extraordinary". I'm inclined to agree.

So the single change I wish to make in the District for 2021 would be that each Lodge review their Lodge Plan so that it can focus on how to embed the aim of **making Ordinary Men Extraordinary**.

Thank you Brethren and I look forward to seeing you all in 2021.

Fraternally,

Richard

Apology from the Editor

Brethren, I apologise for my over enthusiasm in producing the last Degrees South.

For those who were not aware I published pictures of Ritual.

There is a booklet all new Mason should have been given called, Information for the Guidance of Members of the Craft.

It is worth reading by all, so you do not make the same mistake I did.



South Island Charitable Trust & District AGM

On Wednesday the 14th of October the District Grand Lodge held its AGM along with the South Island Charitable Trust meeting. This meeting was held at the Canterbury Masonic Centre in Christchurch.



The RW DGM addressing the meeting.

District Conducts a Second Degree

At the Conyers Meeting on 14 October, District were invited to conduct the Passing of Bro. Jules Castle. District Officers were put into the following positions: SW W.Bro Tasker; JW W.Bro Kelsen; SD W.Bro Dittmer; JD W.Bro Young; IG W.Bro Jackson; Tyler W.Bro P van Zoggel; Chaplain W.Bro King; DC W.Bro Godfrey.



Banks will soon stop accepting cheques Are you and your brethren ready?

Since time immemorial cheques have been critical to the operation of lodges. Our members have paid their dues by cheque and our lodges have paid their bills and contributed to charity all by cheque.

In recent years some brethren and lodges, and District Grand Lodge, have thrown away the paper and moved to electronic banking. Now that change is going to be forced onto the rest of us.

In 2020 Kiwibank stopped accepting cheques and in mid-2021 the major trading banks will stop processing cheques. ANZ will stop accepting cheques in May 2021. Westpac will stop in June, and BNZ in July. Other smaller banks will follow suit.

For lodge treasurers this means that, if you haven't already, you will need to register for online banking to pay your bills.

For lodge almoners this means that some of your brethren may need help to prepare for a cheque free world. Many of your brethren and lodge widows have used cheques all their lives and may not be comfortable in an online environment.

One important thing to know about the change to online banking is that it is time consuming and can be difficult. Anti-money-laundering laws require banks to reconfirm the details of any person or organisation when changes are made to their accounts. For individuals this means providing proof of identity and residence. For organisations like lodges it is more difficult. They need to prove the identity of the organisation and for the people operating the account.

So if you haven't already started... Contact your bank now and ask what you need to do to setup online banking. And for those of you already using online banking - ask your brethren if they need help to setup their own.

WBro Steve Kelsen
District Grand Treasurer



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Will we lose cash as well??

ASHBURTON LODGE

On the 27th October, Ashburton Lodge installed their new Master.



W. Bro LD Sutton in the Chair of King Solomon.

Combined Lodges Meeting

On Wednesday 13 January 2021, VW Bro Ray Gudex Master of the **The Methven Lodge No. 51** hosted a combined lodges meeting and conferred a demonstration Second Degree on Bro Christian Maghinsay (middle) of the Ashburton Lodge EC.



Masters taking part were from left: W Bro D Mackay, SW, Conyers Lodge No. 1916 EC. W Bro C Thorndycroft, JW, United Forces Lodge No. 245. (Bro Maghinsay *The Candidate*) W Bro Sutton, *Questions*, Ashburton Lodge, EC and VW Bro Gudex, *Master*, The Methven Lodge No. 51.



Ashburton St John chair Paul Thomas (left) with Ashburton Masonic Lodge's John Soper.



This is freemasonry as its best when the various Constitutions come together in unity.

Ashburton Masonic Lodge has given \$1000 to support the operation of Ashburton St John health shuttle. John Soper said the shuttle was an important community service and he and his organisation were proud to support it.



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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 24th for the May 21 Edition.

A Special Evening

At the Ashburton installation on October 27th a special presentation was given to W. Bro. Gavin Jamieson.

Ashburton being his Mother Lodge he was presented with a 40 year scroll to mark his time in Masonry.

This was presented by the RW DGM, Richard Taylor and further congratulated by the Past DGM RW Geoffrey Rowe.

