

Freemasonry—Valuable & Viable!

REGIONAL RAMBLINGS

with RW Bro Graham Davies RGC 10

Rumours seem at times to be the lifeblood of Freemasonry and we all like catching up with the latest news or happenings as we visit. Yet rumours can be created or spread for unmasonic purposes: to denigrate a Lodge or a Brother, to discredit our superiors or even to convince Brethren that the Craft is in crisis. The most easily believed rumour is one which has some truth, but all derogatory rumours can inflict damage, which is sometimes difficult to detect and may even be impossible to repair.

If a Brother tells you something juicy but derogatory to the Craft or another Brother, challenge him to prove that it is true. If a Brother says the Craft is in crisis or has lost its heart, hear him out, then ask him for a 3 point plan to fix it, which you can then help him to implement. However should you genuinely become aware of a real problem, please tell your WM or DGIW, don't spread the rumour around, stop it and repair any damage yourself.

We all joined and have remained in the Craft because it is a valuable addition to our lives as men and we want to continue to enjoy our Masonry, in a society of brotherly love and mutual support. Let's not denigrate or cheapen the experience of a lifetime by a lust for short term notoriety and self-serving bids for power.

The Grand Master

As only one application was received for the position, MW Bro Derek James Robson AM was declared re-elected as Grand Master for 2012-13 at the March Grand Communication. The Grand Master announced that the Grand Proclamation will be combined with the regular September

Communication and will take place in the Sydney Masonic Centre.

As a reward for merit...

At the March Communication, the MW Grand Master announced further Masonic honours for the following Brethren in Region 10:

- RW Bro Ron Woodhill, PAGM, Yass Lodge of Concord No. 27 promoted to Past Deputy Grand Master; and
- RW Bro Warren Turton, OAM, PJGW, Lodge Commonwealth of Australia No. 633 and Lodge Gowrie of Canberra No. 715 promoted to Past Assistant Grand Master.

Congratulations Brethren, these honours have been well deserved by years of diligent work to support and expand the Craft. We all trust that you will both be able to continue working for the good of Freemasonry for many years to come.

Region 10

masoniCare Meeting

Planning is well advanced for the masoniCare Training Day at Cootamundra on Sunday 29 April commencing at 9.30 am. The presentations are for RGCs, DGIWs, WMs, Lodge Secretaries, Wardens, Regional and District Education Officers and masoniCare District Representatives as well as interested ladies and Brethren. Please book your place with Greg Lynch DGIW 106 (6942 4483 or e-mail gandtlynch@bigpond.com), Don Geddes (6942 1015 or e-mail donald.geddes@bigpond.com) or John Arthur (6386 2298 or e-mail jhhmarthur@bigpond.com). A cup of tea will be available on arrival and a light lunch at the end for a small cost. Hope to see you there.

New masoniCare Arrangements for NSW & ACT

At the March Communication the Grand Master announced the appointment of four new Regional Managers:

- South - RWB Graham Davies (existing RGC for Region 10)
- North - VWB John Moore (existing MRR for Region 4)
- West - VWB David Robertson (existing MRR for Region 6)

- Sydney - RWB Lynden Norgate (existing RGC for Region 1)

Lynden Norgate and I will continue as both RGCs and in these new roles, until new regional arrangements for the Craft are announced later this year. The South Region extends roughly from Deniliquin to the coast and the NSW/Vic border to just below Cowra. It comprises 14 Districts, 63 Lodges, 2,399 masons and a lot of potential to harness our energies in support of our communities.

New RGC and DGIW Arrangements

The Grand Master has again stated that the Craft will follow the same structure as masoniCare above. The RGCs will definitely reduce from 13 to 4 during their current term and, so far, no names have been put forward against those 4 positions. As the final part of the restructure, the Board of Management is planning to re-allocate Lodges to about 35 new DGIWs, who will be chosen from amongst those interviewed. The successful Brethren and their new Districts will be announced at the June Communication as usual.

Region 10 Communications

Due to problems with abuse of the former unmonitored e-mail system by some users, I have ordered it closed. RW Bro Geoff Ludowyk and WBro Craig Revell, WM of Lodge Ethos, are building a new system for Region 10. Soon your Lodge Secretaries will be asked to provide their members' e-mail addresses so we can e-mail you an invitation to subscribe to the new service. You don't have to join but it will enable you to receive information about Masonic activities direct. The system will be controlled by the DGIWs who will moderate the postings.

Region 10 Website

The Board of Management has signed a contract for new software for a Grand Lodge website which will incorporate regional websites. The new GL site is planned to become operative from June 2012 and I expect to be able to post information to it at that time.

Around the Lodges

Lodge Jerrabomberra Daylight Lodge No, 1001

This Lodge has been in existence since 1990 and is now unable to meet without support. The members need help from Brethren who can affiliate for a few years to help them survive and grow. Lodge Ethos will be helping by supporting a

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Contributions to 'Columns'

The next edition will be published in June 2012. Please send articles and photos of masonic interest to the Editor - Geoff Ludowyk (see Page 4 for contact details). Contributions are accepted subject to editing prior to inclusion.

A Guide to Freemasonry

This is an extract from a paper prepared by Peter Lazar AM (Chairman of Professional Public Relations) and John Tuffin to assist volunteers manning the stands at O Week in Sydney in February 2012. It provides a number of simplified statements to help Brethren explain the essence of Freemasonry without using the rich, but confusing, language of Freemasonry itself. It also provides a guide as to 'how far' we should be prepared to go when attempting to explain the workings and intentions of the Craft.

It begins by providing answers to the questions we are most likely to receive, like: "What's in it for me?" ... and goes on to provide an explanation of Freemasonry in very simple terms.

Though Freemasons are quite capable of learning this sort of material by heart, the guide is intended to provide a range of options for your use when talking about Freemasonry. It offers, a menu of replies that you should use, as you wish, in your own way. The only two important things are:

- To speak from the heart
- Enjoy it.

Your enthusiasm alone will communicate the light and vigour of Freemasonry.

The Key to one-on-one communication:

Invite enquiry. Then: engage... inform... invite... offer.

SECTION 1: QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What is Freemasonry?

An international personal development group for men.

What's in it for me? The right to be an individual. And build a better life of your own making. To make new friends. Develop new skills – especially public speaking. Become a better person and serve the community.

Why should I join?

Freemasonry offers a simple ethical framework for living. It brings men of all creeds and backgrounds together in friendship. It protects and celebrates diversity and tolerance. And promotes universal values such as prudence, temperance, fortitude and justice. Freemasons are encouraged to do good work in their community and to be charitable.

What will I get out of it: Guidance without dogma. The wisdom of the ages. Better presentation skills. A loyal and diverse group of friends. The opportunity to 'be happy, and confer happiness on others'.

- In time, it will also help you: Shape your attitude to others. Be 'on the level' as an individual. Act fairly in your professional and personal dealings.
- And personally, it will help you be: A better husband and parent. A better and more sought after employee and employer. A pillar of your community. A man admired by others.

How can I find out more before I decide?

Look up Freemasonry on Wikipedia. See Freemasons talking about Freemasonry on the Information Pack DVD. Buy a copy of the book "It's No Secret: Real Men Wear Aprons". Visit the Museum of Freemasonry at the Grand Lodge building in Goulburn Street (Free). Ask friends or family who are Masons what it's about. Contact your Lodge Secretary and have a coffee with him. Join the members for a meal after one of their meetings.

SECTION 2: ABOUT FREEMASONRY

What is Freemasonry?

An international personal development group for men. Based on ancient ethical principles... that are shared and celebrated by its members. There are 6 million Freemasons world-wide and more than 75,000 in Australia and New Zealand.

What do Freemasons do? They adopt and live by well established rules of behaviour... which help men to lead useful and happy lives... using the tools of working stonemasons to illustrate ethical teachings. This has resulted in many common sayings that have come into the language from Freemasonry. Sayings like: Be on the level... Treat others fairly and squarely...

Freemasons meet at Lodge usually once a month. There is no penalty for missing a meeting. And after Lodge they sit down to a meal, a beer or glass of wine. It's very social and convivial and most members form life-long friendships with others.

Is it a Religion?

It's not a religion, nor a substitute for religion. Religion is a personal matter and all religions are respected and protected in Freemasonry.

Can anybody join?

Freemasonry welcomes good men of all races, religions and backgrounds. Members must be good men, with an overall belief in a Supreme Being. How they define Supreme Being is a matter of personal faith, and therefore private.

Do you have to be invited?

No. In fact the opposite is true... Freemasons are reluctant to invite others to join. The first expression of interest must come from the outside individual. After that, we can talk about Freemasonry as much as we like.

Do you have to be rich or famous?

Freemasonry isn't interested in the individual's position, or profession, or the wealth or otherwise of applicants or members. All Freemasons are equal in the Lodge, which is why we all dress alike... some Lodges in dress suits, some in lounge suits, others in jackets and ties. The catchcry of the French Revolution: 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' had its roots in French Freemasonry of the time.

Is it all secret?

The old membership rule – where you couldn't talk to others about Freemasonry – meant that fathers didn't even talk to their sons about Freemasonry. So in effect, it was secret. But that has changed, and today you can visit the Grand Lodge building at the corner of Goulburn and Castlereagh Streets, have a look at the Museum of Freemasonry on Level 3, (which is open every day and free of charge) visit a Lodge room, and see all that there is to see. The Freemasons in NSW and the ACT were among the first in the world to break down the barriers and open the doors. Now the rest of the world's Freemasons are doing the same. We have Information kits to give away and books for sale.

What about the secret handshake?

Freemasonry takes its learning from the stonemasons of old. In the days before diplomas and certificates, Stonemasons were given secret handshakes to indicate the position they had reached in the trade – whether as Apprentices, Fellow Craftsmen or Master Masons. We use the same descriptions for our members, who begin as Entered Apprentices, go on to become Fellow Crafts and in time become Master Masons. We have kept the handshakes for two reasons:

- To allow members to identify themselves to one another (which hardly ever happens outside Masonic meetings)
- And because we believe that a man who can keep a small secret, is also reliable in all other ways.

The secret handshake is really only important as a symbol of fidelity and trust. You can probably find the handshakes on the

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Regional Ramblings continued...

meeting of Jerrabomberra Daylight at 6.00pm on Wednesday 18 April, just before their meeting. Come along, affiliate and support Jerrabomberra Daylight – you just might need a daylight Lodge one day!

Lodge Federal Burrowa Burns Night

In conjunction with the D106 DGIW interviews on 12 January, I was invited to visit Lodge Federal Burrowa for their Burns night celebration along with the DGIW VW Bro Greg Lynch. The format was a brief business meeting followed by a supper with ladies present. A very enjoyable meal and a pleasant evening's entertainment.

Lodge Capitol Presenting RBO Jewel

On Monday 16 January I presented the RBO, Bro Philip Purcell, with his badge of office in his Lodge (Capitol No. 612). Work for the evening was a fraternal visit by Lodge Ethos No. 963 bringing an EAF (Bro Troy Cavanagh) to be passed to the 2nd Degree. It was also a MM's Night so the Lodge was under the control of their JW, Bro Simon Hruza who did an excellent job together with his team of MMs. 22 members, 15 visitors and 1 GL attended.

D106 Meeting Yass – double 3rd Degree

On 22 February I was invited to attend the D106 Meeting hosted by the Yass Lodge of Concord. The work for the evening was a double Third Degree on two younger members (both about 40 years old) of the Lodge. Present were 16 members, 12 visitors and 2 GL (DGIW 106 and myself). Many of the charges were delivered to the best standard and the two candidates were suitably impressed.

Lodge Woden Valley No. 974

On 26 February I attended Lodge Woden Valley's Installation where Bro Baden Williams was installed aged 75 by his cousin, RW Bro Bob Nairn, PSGW KL. Present were 37 brethren, 20 GL and 20 ladies at the Queanbeyan Masonic Centre for a most enjoyable evening.

A Guide to Freemasonry (continued)...

web. But a good Mason will never break the trust placed in him by divulging them.

What happens at a Lodge Meeting?

A Lodge is a group of men. And each of the Lodge Buildings you see is shared by a number of Lodges – or groups of men who meet there once a month. There are all sorts of Lodges: University Lodges, Trade Lodges, Sporting and Sailing Lodges, Regimental lodges... There are Daylight Lodges that meet during the day. But most meet in the early evening, with the members staying on for supper afterwards.

Each Lodge meeting begins with formal proceedings in the Lodge Room. These are much like any club meeting, with a secretary reading correspondence, a treasurer reporting on funds and so on. Then the teachings of Freemasonry are performed or a talk may be given on a topic of ethical or general interest. Occasionally social evenings are held by Lodges to which women and family members are invited.

What about the initiation of new members?

The Initiation or First Degree ceremony is – like the ceremonies for the Second and Third degrees – conducted using a script that is formal and memorable. These scripts are written in the rich and beautiful language used at the time Freemasonry began in 1717 – almost 300 years ago. Everyone who takes part in the ceremony must learn the words they have to say – their part – by heart, so the ceremony becomes a formal and unforgettable event for the candidate.

Candidates – who have no prior knowledge of what happens at each level – are sometimes just a little nervous when they enter the Lodge, but as they never come to any harm they soon begin to enjoy the event – which is held – as is made clear, in their

Lodge Young Burrangong No. 20

Despite floods blocking all but one road into Young a good attendance of 20 brethren, 13 GL and 20 ladies were able to support RW Bro Ron Woodhill PAGM who represented the MWGM. The South was a most convivial evening with friends despite the vagaries of inclement weather.

District 105 Meeting

The meeting was held in the Pambula Masonic Centre hosted by Lodge Baddeley No. 205 and the work of the evening was to raise Bro Harley Jenkins to the Third Degree. He has already made his mark modernising the finances of his Lodge and has now turned his hand to being Lodge Secretary while still a Fellowcraft!

With the MWGM's approval the DGIW 105, VW Bro Tom Peadon and myself took a GL delegation into the meeting. Eight of the delegation of eleven took part in the ceremony and I had the pleasure of thanking the WM (who had relinquished his post to play the organ) for handing back our delegation, "in good working order". Four Brethren visited from Lodge Bairnsdale in the Victorian Constitution.

Lodge Caledonia of Canberra No. 938 Installation

On 24 March I supported RW Bro Wal Hopkinson who was representing at the Re-Installation of W Bro Joe Arnold. The Installing Master was Wal's youngest son VW Bro Ken Hopkinson PDGIW, Wal delivered the Address to the WM and his eldest son WBro Fred Hopkinson gave the Address to the Brethren. During the South those Brethren present donated \$1,000 for Cambodian Kids Appeal by sponsoring Bro Alex Slater, Deputy Grand Organist, in his 17 April ride from Canberra to Melbourne. To donate please see <http://www.everydayhero.com.au/canbmelb>

**The Aim of Freemasonry
Meeting in the Grand Design
of being happy and conferring happiness**

honour.

Each level includes the giving of advice based on the working tools used by stonemasons through the ages – all of which are still in use today.

The use of working tools

At their initiation, candidates are shown three working tools:

- The 24 inch gauge or ruler – to remind them, in part, to plan their lives as they would a 24-hour day, giving time to work, family and rest.
- The mallet – to remind them that planning alone is not enough, and that action should follow, and
- The chisel – to illustrate the truth that even the smallest of tools can be used to create great works if the user remains patient and steadfast.

Freemasons benefit from taking part as candidates or officials – as each person in the room interprets in their own way the meaning being offered. Because there is no catechism in Freemasonry, no right or wrong answers, meaning is purely a matter of personal interpretation and reflection – with each person taking and retaining meaning according to their personal interest and need.

Is it a men-only organisation?

Yes. It began in the days when all stonemasons were men... and has always been a men's organisation. Now, at a time when men are being encouraged to form support groups, 'open up' and communicate more with one another, Freemasonry provides an important all-male environment for them. There are similar Masonic organisations for women only, including the Order of the Eastern Star.

Is Freemasonry demanding?

Freemasons are urged to put their duties to their family ahead



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REGIONAL ROUNDUP



Clockwise from top left: Newly conferred RW Bro Ron Woodhill as PDGM and RW Bro Warren Turton OAM as PAGM; Kevin Mulcahy and Tom Peadon at Lodge Baddeley; VW Bro John Church receives his 50-year certificate; Candidate Harley Jenkins receives his VSL from the WM at Lodge Baddeley; Newly reinstalled - W Bro Joe Arnold - Lodge Caledonia; and Ernie Whitcher and Kevin Mulcahy handing over at Lodge Baddeley.

A Guide to Freemasonry (continued)...

of all other considerations... including their participation in Freemasonry. Freemasonry strictly requires that candidates join of their own free will. Having joined of their own free will, members are also entitled to leave the organisation, without penalty or obstruction, if they choose to. Likewise, there is no penalty for missing meetings or requirement to 'make up', as is the case elsewhere.

Is it a charity?

Freemasons value "Brotherly love, relief, and truth" above all other desirable attributes, with relief meaning the provision of relief - or charity - to those in need. Local lodges make donations to support scholarships, the purchase of medical equipment, and other works in their community. State organisations look to raise funds for flood victims, and the like. Masonic charities benefit all sectors of the community - mostly non-Masons. There are some areas of special interest. In NSW the Freemasons have developed more than 50 retirement villages to provide affordable accommodation and medical care for the elderly in less well off regional centres.

Conclusion:

Freemasonry will help you live a better, more fulfilling life of your own design... in a positive fraternity, where good men of all kinds meet in peace and harmony... to break bread, be happy and confer happiness on others.

Freemasonry—Valuable & Viable!

REGIONAL RAMBLINGS

with RW Bro Graham Davies RGC 10

LATE EDITION
New article from DGIW 104 and Goulburn
Lodge of Australia Installation Photos

Changes at the Top

At the end of his first year in office, the Chairman of the Board of Management, RW Bro Ian Newberry PAGM, did not seek re-appointment. The Grand Master has announced his replacement will be VW Bro Jack Garside from Lodge Cooma Monaro, who possesses the requisite skills and knowledge as well as being a member of the Craft for over 40 years. Our best wishes, support and congratulations go to VW Bro Garside as he takes up this vital post.

RW Bro Rick Allen PJGW from Albury has taken up the position of Deputy Chairman (Operations) on the Board of Management until at least 12 September. Having served two terms as RGC Region 8, Rick brings a wealth of experience to his new position.

As a reward for merit...

At the June Communication, the MW Grand Master announced the conferred rank of PDGDC for W Bro Ron Jaajaa from Lodge Cooma Monaro No.164. Ron had the additional thrill of being present to hear his advancement read aloud to the assembled brethren.

Congratulations Ron for this well deserved honour which is the result of your many years working for the good of Freemasonry and your Lodge.

New Website

The new Grand Lodge website (<http://www.masons.org.au/>) was launched by the Grand Master at the last communication. It is a vast improvement on the previous one, is well worth the visit and contains much more information in the Members' Area

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Contributions to 'Columns'

The next edition will be published in September 2012. Please send articles and photos of masonic interest to the Editor – Geoff Ludowyk (see Page 4 for contact details). Contributions are accepted subject to editing prior to inclusion.

than was previously made available.

You will need your membership number in order to register. If you have used the previous site, then use your membership number and old password. You will be required to change your password immediately.

Within the bounds of propriety ...

A Social Media Code of Conduct for Freemasons of NSW and ACT has been published by Grand Lodge and guides all members of the Craft in their interactions on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. Visit the website above and print or download a copy from the Members' Area (Login required).

On 12 May 2010 the Board of Management passed a resolution stating the principles governing esoteric research. These principles are central to the practice of Regular Freemasonry. In order that there can be no doubt that they bind every brother and Lodge in this jurisdiction, the Board of Management has rescinded its resolution. The Grand Master has issued an edict and it is available on the Members' Area of the GL website.

If you are undertaking any Masonic research, please familiarise yourself with the edict before proceeding.

For your diary

The Grand Master will attend the Installation of Bro Daniel White as WM of Lodge Canberra on Saturday 14 July at Queanbeyan. Lodge Tyles at 4.00pm, Visitors at 4.30pm and the Grand Master will enter the Lodge at 5.00pm.

The Proclamation of MW Bro Derek Robson as Grand Master for 2012-13 will take place in the Sydney Masonic Centre on Wednesday 12 September 2012, along with the regular GL Communication.

Making a Difference
Over the past 18 months
masoniCare and NSW and ACT
Freemasons have donated over
\$1,109,033 to hundreds of
causes

Do you want to continue on your Masonic journey?

When you applied to become a Freemason the interviewers advised that it was your journey into Freemasonry and to make up your own mind the pace and direction you wanted it to take. This is always good advice which has to be understood not only by the initiate but by the lodge you are joining.

If and when you decide you want to be an active participant in Lodge the next move is really up to you. Just waiting to be asked does not always work for all sorts of reasons. Remember everyone is busy and in a hurry and they know JOE knows the work, so he gets the job.

You are now a Master Mason and still waiting to get a job what do you do to advance your Masonic experience. Firstly you attend rehearsals and volunteer to be the candidate or whatever vacant spot the Director of Ceremonies asks you to fill. Read from the book if you have to, but above all your regular attendance at rehearsals will show your interest and willingness to learn.

After you have attended a few rehearsals ask the Worshipful Master or the Director of Ceremonies if you could learn a charge to try at the next rehearsal. Start with a shorter charge like the Third Degree Tracing Board and progress to the Working Tools. This way you will gain in confidence and show to the Brethren you are ready to progress in the lodge.

I also believe that the Worshipful Master and the Director of Ceremonies should not wait for volunteers to do charges, but delegate them at the previous meeting thus ensuring greater participation and avoiding that repetitious look in Lodge. You can make their job a lot easier by attending rehearsals and showing you are capable of taking office or doing a charge.

One last comment on my own Masonic experience I enjoyed rehearsals as much as lodge nights, you gain greater insight into your fellow masons in a more relaxed environment and find out much more of what's really going on. So my advice is simple: **Be There!**

Peter Camiller DGIW 104

MAS Candidates

Who are these new entrants to our honourable and ancient fraternity? They are men who have formed a favourable opinion of Masonry but also they are not well known to at least two Master Masons.

There is one important difference – these men have done their homework. They have looked on the internet and elsewhere; they have read about us and thought about us. They have found information both positive and negative and they have come to us with questions. Interviewing them results in an exchange of views and information and it becomes apparent that they are intent on choosing Masonry to make their journey of personal development.

In Districts 103 and 104, we had about 562 masons as at May 2011, and over the past 20 months we have had the following MAS candidates:

	Members	Enquiries	Enquiry %	Dropped Out	Initiations	Initiates %	In Progress
D103	335	38	11.34	15	11*	3.28	8
D104	227	45	19.82	4	36*	15.85	

*4 candidates transferred from D103 to D104 at their request

MAS candidates have also created a challenge for the existing masons, there are more MAS candidates coming forward than we have ever had to deal with. While we welcome them as Brethren to the fraternity, we need to support and guide them on their way. They are the foundations for our future and we must ensure that their Masonic development is informed, pleasant but above all becomes a vital part of their humanity.

Equally is their Masonic journey has to be at their own pace, within the context of their family, work and study commitments so they can maintain a proper balance in their lives. New masons must not be coerced into heavy visiting schedules, or pushed into office too quickly just because a Lodge has a vacancy in progressive office, or because they have been convinced to desire promotion. Our system, from Steward to WM, is designed to give a Brother a gradual advancement in skills, confidence and knowledge in a supportive atmosphere. We push Brethren forward through these progressive offices at their peril and sometimes to our cost.

Finally it is incumbent on their mentors, as well as the rest of the Brethren, to support, advise and even warn MAS candidates as they move forward through their Degree work and the management of their Lodge. It is our duty to properly train and guide these men so they can, of their own volition, find those sublime truths which it is ever the object of Freemasonry to teach.



New DGIWs

The DGIWs for 2012-14 were approved by the Grand Lodge at the June Communication in Sydney. Congratulations to the following Brethren on their appointment:

District 102 – W Bro Roy Bloomfield, Goulburn Lodge of Australia No. 56

District 103 – VW Bro Graeme Moller AM, Lodge Commonwealth of Australia No. 633

District 104 – W Bro Geoff Burns, Lodge of Truth, Braidwood No. 25

District 105 – VW Bro Kevin Mulcahy, Pambula Daylight Lodge No. 1000

District 106 – W Bro Charles Royall, Yass Lodge of Concord No. 27

These Brethren were chosen through a local selection process in each District and now have the endorsement of Grand Lodge to take up their duties from 12 September 2012. A training course will be held at the Sydney Masonic Centre on 13 and 14 September to ensure they can confidently take up their new duties.

New Regions and Districts

Since June 2011 the Grand Master has spoken of and worked towards putting more power and responsibility in the hands of Districts and Lodges, where masonry is actually practised. This will be achieved by reducing the number of Regional Grand Counsellors (RGCs) from 13 to 4 and similarly reducing the number of District Grand Inspectors of Workings by realigning the Districts. There is no intention to interfere with established links between Lodges but of course these will adjust over time.

The proposed new structure was put out for consultation just before Easter and I would like to record my gratitude to those Lodges and individual Brethren who provided feedback to the Board of Management. I can assure you that every submission was read and considered by the Board.

When will the changes happen?

Towards the end of 2012 Grand Lodge will advertise the 4 vacancies for new RGCs and the Brethren who are chosen will take up their appointments from September 2013. The new DGIW positions (replacements for those just announced in June 2012) will be filled from September 2014.

The newly appointed DGIWs will serve their full 2 year term from 12 September 2012 and I will remain as RGC Region 10 until September 2013.

What is the effect?

From September 2014:

- SE 1 (Total 9 lodges) – current District 105 joins Batemans Bay, Moruya and Narooma lodges;
- SW 3 (Total 9 lodges) – current District 106, minus Yass Lodge of Concord, joins Adelong, Gundagai, Temora, Wagga Wagga and West Wyalong lodges;
- SW 7 (Total 7 lodges) – current District 102 plus Yass Lodge of Concord, Lodge Caledonia of Canberra and Lodge Commonwealth of Australia; and
- SW 8 (Total 9 lodges) – current District 104 plus Lodge Canberra, Lodge Perfect of Canberra and Lodge Woden Valley.

The Grand Tour—Pictured Left: (L-R) Georgia Turnbull, Laurien Wells, Brian Morgan, Will Colebatch, Robert na Champassak, Georgina McAuley, Helen Morgan, Daniel Foster, Sam Cooper, Jonquil Mackey, Alex Slater, Gabriel Spira and Glenn Demery outside the Cootamundra Masonic Centre.

The Grand Tour

Bro Alex Slater has been involved with a charity bike ride between Canberra and Melbourne – as you may already know. This commenced on the 17th April and finished in Melbourne on the 23rd April 2012. The team consisted of twelve riders: Georgia Turnbull, Gabriel Spira, Georgina McAuley, Laurien Wells, Glenn Demery, Jonquil Mackey, Alan Lee, Will Colebatch, Robert na Champassak and Alex Slater from Canberra, as well as Sam Cooper and Daniel Foster from Melbourne. Sam Cooper is the founder of the *Cambodian Kids Foundation* – the organisation to which this cycling trip contributed. We had a fantastic support team consisting of Ian Cooper, Meg Dixon-Child, Jon Murphy, Jimmy Dargan and Kevin Morrison.

On behalf of the team that rode the distance, Alex would like to thank all the masons in Canberra and surrounding areas for their support to this ride and continued support to him on this and many other occasions. It is only through the generosity of good people that events like this bike ride run successfully and the Freemasons of the Canberra Region continue to help in many ways.

Arriving in Cootamundra, the team was greeted by Helen and Brian Morgan. Helen and Brian arranged so much for the team and provided support above and beyond any requests for support ever sought in the process of organisation. We thank Helen and Brian for their huge effort, for dinner, showers and accommodation in Cootamundra – which made the first night so pleasant and memorable to us all.

Moving to Wagga Wagga the next day, we were met by Rick Priest – Rick is the Worshipful Master of Lodge Wagga Wagga, No. 22. We were kindly put up for the night in the Wagga Wagga Masonic Centre. This building is beautiful and huge! The hall and the lodge room cover an area of around 400 square metres and the ceilings are nice and high! We thank Rick for access to the hall and a key, so we could explore the city of Wagga Wagga before heading to bed that night.

The number of people that we met on the way who affected us in a positive way was beyond overwhelming and left a supportive image in everyone's mind throughout the trip. People obliged when we asked for directions, people sat and talked with us to find out what we were doing and others simply kept smiling along the journey through town after town.

There was also a "fun" aspect of the journey, which consisted of various events, some positive and some negative. Positive experiences included camping and bonding over group dinners, exploring small towns and having a sense of humour to get

through each trial. The team was fantastic in the way we just knew each other and had the same drive and enthusiasm to do the same things. An overall understanding of the limits of each person was also a benefit to keep everyone happy. Slight mishaps included punctured tubes, snapped spokes, a broken chain and navigational errors in Melbourne. On the last day, there was a lot of fiddling around to navigate through Melbourne. Unlike Canberra, where the bike paths are signed, in Melbourne, one just "has to know". This could have been seen as an adventure, but more a learning experience to stick with the route originally planned.

The Freemasons of this region will always be looked favourably upon by those who cycled to Melbourne. A few interesting questions were asked about what we do, what we're about and of course the secret handshake. I could answer the first two and did so simply to describe the Freemasons as a network of people that provide assistance to those who need it, who give as much as they can within their capabilities and colour the world like a bloom does a plant with good, happiness and kind spirits.

When you look at a spider's web, you see a network of threads, joined only by nodes. Take one event and symbolise it as this web. The threads represent gifts of time, money and happiness. The nodes represent the people affected by the event, both masons and those who are not. Each one of those nodes is unique, yet necessary for the event to be successful. The closer the node is to the centre, the more involvement it has with the event. The web becomes a beautiful diagram of the presence of Masonry in our community and its increased activity through the good of everyone who believes and lives the craft.

The funds raised by the bike ride between Canberra and Melbourne, as you may be aware, go directly to the building of a multi-purpose hall for the International School in the Soksan Village in Cambodia. This facility will allow the school to have a purpose built function and meeting area, as well as provide facilities for the students to play indoor sport. The team is very proud to have raised around twenty thousand dollars for this project.

Thank you again one and all for your support to me, the bike riding team, the craft and its continuation in your community.

If there are any more questions regarding the bike ride, please do not hesitate to contact Alex directly and he will be able to provide you with some stories, lessons learnt and some more photographs.



Above: (L-R) Dan Foster, Gabriel Spira, Laurien Wells, Georgia Turnbull, Sam Cooper, Jonquil Mackey, Glenn Demery, Will Colebatch, Georgina McAuley, Alan Lee, Robert na Champassak and Alex Slater



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REGIONAL ROUNDUP



**Goulburn Lodge of
Australia
Reinstallation:**
Clockwise from top:
(1) Newly
reinstalled WM -
VW Bro Rodger
Bush with
Representative RW
Bro Ralph Stone. (2)
Rodger & Margaret
Bush. (3) The Grand
Delegation



The Grand Tour—Above: (L-R) Jon Murphy and Brian Morgan with the heritage fire truck and Bailey the dog.