

[Book REVIEW by Neil Wynes Morse, February 2005]

BLUE AND GOLD – FREEMASONRY AND COMMUNITY IN BENDIGO 1854 – 2004,

edited by Bro David Beagley, published by Holland House for Golden and Corinthian Lodge, Bendigo. 2004
ISBN 0 9586073 7 0

In 1995 RWBro RJ Linford PAGM and Kellerman Lecturer for NSW, when addressing the NSW Lodge of Research, stated

The historian ... would wish to view lodge happenings in a broader context. This may, for instance, be in relation to decisions taken in the Grand Lodge or perhaps in relation to changes in the organisation of lodges in the area or District in which the lodge is the subject of the history is operating, such as the formation, amalgamation or closure of lodges. It may and, having regard to their influence on the development of the lodge, often **should** [my emphasis] relate to such factors as economic conditions, social and cultural standards, and even legislation. The historian would, in these circumstances, be likely to have as his objective writing for an audience not only of the lodge, but also a wider one of seeking to understand the dynamics of a lodge's development in the economic, social, cultural and political environment in which it exists.

The subject volume does this, and more. It also works in the opposite direction, considering Bendigo's development through the actions of the lodge's members.

Besides Golden and Corinthian No 7, only four UGLV lodges have survived to celebrate a sesquicentenary, and none, to my knowledge, has had the wisdom and strength to produce a beautiful and useful volume such as this to commemorate the occasion.

It is a collection of papers which celebrate the Craft in the community of Bendigo since the early days of the goldfields of the 1850s. We discover not only the major figures of the lodge throughout its 150 years, but also gain a greater insight into the place of Freemasonry in Bendigo.

I know of several lodges which would refuse to have a volume such as this to mark a significant anniversary. There are not enough names, no long extracts from the minutes, no self-satisfied recountings of charity collections, no unsustainable comparisons of candidates I, P & R'd over the years and little to describe the minutiae of the workings of the Lodge. But to publish such a collection of papers as this borders on the remarkable, and fully meets the wider objective mentioned by Bro Linford above.

Oh, that this could be the template for lodge histories from hereon in –

Buy a copy; it is a very good read, and I doubt if any better lodge histories will appear over the next ten years. If there is, it will only be the centenary history of 218VC!

Details:

Gold and Blue: Freemasonry and Community in Bendigo, 1854-2004

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To order, send cheque or money order (in \$AU) to:

Holland House Publishing, PO Box 6, Strathdale, Victoria, Australia 3550

Or email the editor at beagley@impulse.net.au

The reviewer proudly admits that:

- he was born in Bendigo;
- he is a country member of Golden and Corinthian, resident in Canberra;
- he likes to think he is a mate of Bro Beagley's; and
- his dad, W Bro Max Morse, is an active member of the lodge.

Given these linkages, the above is as unbiased a review as he can produce.