



## THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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### **BRO. REVD. STANLEY GILLICK DRUMMOND MBE (1884-1943)**

Stanley Drummond was born on 22 May 1884 at Attunga, 20 km north-west of Tamworth, New South Wales. His father, who had been born in Beechworth in Victoria, was a saddler by trade, but both Stanley's parents became NSW State school teachers in various locations and it was at these country schools that Stanley received his education.

He was not a good student and, on leaving school, he took a job as a junior clerk in the Department of Lands at Queanbeyan. He took ill with pneumonia and, on medical advice, he accepted outdoor work as a carpenter's assistant.

Drummond then decided to enter the ministry and he came to Sydney to study at the Central Methodist Mission.

In 1909 he was appointed to take charge of the Home Mission station at Bulahdelah but shortly after his arrival, he fractured his hip after being thrown from his sulky. He then spent an agonising eighteen months on crutches with his hip in an iron splint. He recovered slowly but walked with a slight limp for the remainder of his life.

He moved to Bowral where he married Lucy Doust. He was 27 and Lucy, who had been a mission sister at the Central Methodist Mission, was aged 35.

After his admission to the ministry, Drummond took charge of the Rylstone circuit during the Great War years of 1914 to 1918, then Canowindra from 1919 to 1922 followed by Yass in 1923.

School teachers and ministers of religion, among others, were always on the move, so the various moves were nothing new to Stanley Drummond, and Lucy simply had to make the best of the changing domestic arrangements.

The Drummond's next move was even more remote. Stanley was appointed superintendent of the mission at Cobar with a territory that covered Ivanhoe, Broken Hill, Tibooburra and across the Queensland border.

It was a sparsely populated, semi-arid area about the size of France and Stanley and Lucy travelled extensively in spite of the heat and dust of summer and the freezing nights of winter.

In 1924, Stanley again took ill and he and Lucy travelled to Sydney for Stanley to have his gall bladder removed.

He had always been concerned with the plight of children in his outback region and it was whilst he was lying on Manly beach recuperating from his operation that, on 6 December 1924, he conceived the idea to bring children from the far west of the state to the seaside for a holiday.

The Drummonds returned to Cobar and, in January 1925, they brought a party of 58 children and 6 mothers to Sydney. It was such a success that a second group of 128 was immediately arranged for their holiday in the 'big smoke.'

Stanley Drummond was a man of action and the resulting financial problems and details of other arrangements were typically left to Lucy and others.

Drummond quickly realised that the children needed medical and dental attention as well as a holiday and so the Far West Children's Health Scheme was established.

He began enlisting the assistance of politicians, particularly the state member for Bourke, and senior people in the railways, medical and dental professions and the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

He gained the co-operation of teachers, clergy and the police to help select the children for the Scheme and the resulting publicity caught the public's imagination.

Children, some 10 years of age, appeared wide-eyed on newsreel bulletins at their first sight of the sea and their first ride in a lift.

The Scheme was expanding rapidly and Drummond resigned his church appointment and just avoided financial ruin in 1928 when he received £250 damages after being hit by a car.

In spite of the great economic depression, the Scheme expanded after 1930 to include baby health sisters conducting travelling clinics using the railways and, sometimes, aeroplanes.

In 1935, Drummond published a book, *Health*, which told the story of his inspiration.

Public funding was made available and, in 1935, the Drummond Far West Home was opened at Manly and Stanley Drummond was awarded the MBE. Had he been a pop-singer, he would have received a knighthood!

In 1936, Drummond suffered a severe heart attack. He also had increasing deafness. He was just 52 years old.

His wife Lucy died, aged 66 on 18 December 1942 and Stanley died in Sydney of cancer on 24 April 1943 aged 59 years.

Drummond was an idealist who always insisted that his work was non-sectarian and he seldom spoke of religion to the children whom he loved which he combined with the disappointment that he and Lucy had no children of their own.

Bro. Stanley Drummond was made a mason at Forbes in Lodge Lachlan No. 46 on 14 August 1922. He was passed a fellowcraft on 1 September 1922 and raised a master mason on 29 December 1922.

As with many another clergyman, Bro. Drummond found himself moving to other towns and affiliating with other lodges.

On 23 August 1923, he affiliated with the Yass Lodge of Concord No. 27 and on 15 July 1924, he affiliated with Lodge Cobar No. 97. He was Junior Warden of Lodge Cobar in 1926-27.

On 22 August 1929 he affiliated with Lodge Central Australia No. 88 at Bourke where he retained his membership until shortly before his death in 1943.

Bro. Drummond was spending some time in Sydney in connection with the Far West Children's Health Scheme and on 14 November 1929, he affiliated with Lodge Manly Temperance No. 568.

The award of his MBE was reported in *The New South Wales Freemason* in July 1933:

**Bro. Rev. S.G. Drummond, M.B.E.**

The splendid humanitarian work done by Bro. Rev. S.G. Drummond in the Far West Children's Health Scheme is recognised all over New South Wales. Bro. Drummond's Brethren are delighted that the King has conferred upon him membership of the Order of the British Empire. As Masons we cannot show our appreciation in a more practical manner than by assisting him financially to carry on his splendid work.

Back in the far west, Bro. Drummond became a foundation member of Lodge Brewarrina No. 644 on 10 March 1934. Not surprisingly, the lodge began supporting the William Thompson Masonic School and the Masonic Schools Welfare Fund.

In 1964, twenty-one years after Bro. Drummond's death, Lodge Brewarrina won the Welrre Fund's *Richard S. Bales* Shield for the largest amount subscribed to the fund by a Lodge on a per capita basis. The amount was £117 / 9 / - which represented £1 / 3 / - for each of its 102 members.

Our Brother Stanley Gillick Drummond would have been proud indeed.

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## REFERENCES

Australian Dictionary of Biography.  
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The NSW Freemason, July 1933; April 1982.  
The Freemason of NSW, September 1964.