

The Square and Compasses.

A newsletter for the Grand Lodge of South Africa. No. 53 June 2016



Most Worshipful Brother Geoff Edwards OSM.

I'm not against but!

As several of you are already aware, I recently went to Ouagadougou (Wagadoogoo) in Burkina Faso to attend the Installation of their new Grand Master. Despite some logistical challenges which resulted in such situations as my spending a long night in a very run-down Ethiopian hotel, trying to pass through customs into the wrong country, claiming an unbooked seat on a hotel bus and arriving at the Grand Banquet inappropriately dressed, it really was a memorably enjoyable and rewarding weekend. I have known the new Grand Master, MW Bro Alain Coffe, for a while now and both like and admire him.

Before I went to Burkina Faso, of course, I was reminded by a number of people about the ISIS attack which had seen 40 people killed in Ouagadougou in January this year. The terrible truth, though, is that terrorist attacks occur all over the world nowadays and we cannot just stop everything as we succumb to their threats. In my experience, countries that have been subjected to terrorism become extremely vigilant about preventing a recurrence and, in truth, I really do believe that I'm at greater risk travelling to the airport! Sadly, the fatalities in the January attack had also included the Grand Lodge of Burkina Faso's new pro Grand Master, so they really felt the pain.

There were 13 Grand Lodges in attendance over the weekend and these were ourselves, Burkina Faso, France, Italy, Liberia, Gabon, Mali, Guinea, Togo, Congo, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Benin. The Brethren present also included 7 Grand Masters.

Burkina Faso's population is, of course, almost entirely black and they talk mainly French. I was further advised that roughly 50% of them are Moslem, 40% Christian and 10% other. For me, of course, being

visible was easy! It's worth mentioning, though, that while many of them spoke little or no English, they always managed to include me and I participated in some most interesting discussions about Freemasonry.

At the end of the Installation ceremony, the new Grand Master welcomed each Grand Lodge on an individual basis and I was duly called upon to respond.

After extending our congratulations, I continued by noting that I was a white, English speaking male from South Africa who had been brought up in a Christian home. I was clearly very different from almost every other Brother in the hall (and there were about 300 of us). Despite this I had enjoyed the warmth and love that only Freemasonry really brings. I was accepted simply as a man and as a Brother and I observed that, if only all men could apply and live by our principles, most of the world's conflicts would simply not exist. I sat down to some very warm applause,



which sort of threw me as I *with MW Bro Alain Coffe* didn't think that most of the Brethren present would understand my English - but they certainly had.

Exploring this further, Brethren, one of Freemasonry's greatest strengths is our practice of Tolerance. We live in a world, and indeed a country, where sensitivities are high. Where there is a very strong, often violent, reaction to thoughtless comments that are published or voiced. But the truth is that we, as Freemasons, should never ever be drawn into any of these situations, because bigotry in any form is diagonally opposed to our core Masonic beliefs.

And yet I still hear people who feel that it's in order to offer a highly bigoted opinion with an introductory preface of "I'm not against" and they will then specify a particular religion, race, language group, nationality, political party, employment group or any other identifiable segmentation, then it's "but" and they include every single being who falls into that category as they set about destroying its credibility.

Brethren this is not Masonic and it's not okay. We judge men based on their conduct as men, not on their background, their upbringing or their beliefs. As Freemasons, let us always bear this in mind! Let our contribution to our country and society be the example that we set as to how good men really should behave.

**MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM
Grand Master**

Lodge Westerford's Installation

On Thursday 5th May Wor Bro Graham Symons was installed as the new Master of Lodge Westerford. Assistant PGM Wor Bro Evangelos Doucas performed the Installation, while the Board of Installed Masters was attended to by Wor Bro Louis van der Linde. In both cases their work was of a very high standard.



Wor Bro Louis van der Linde, Wor Bro Graham Symons, Wor Bro Tommy Hardiman, Wor Bro Evangelos Doucas.

The report given by Wor Bro Tommy Hardiman, the retiring Master, was impressive and encouraging - but when one considers that a short 7 years ago the Lodge was looking at going into recess and that it has since been PGL Southern Division's Lodge of the Year 3 times, won the Best Ritual Lodge 4 times and has also won the Spring Ball Contributions trophy, it's hardly surprising that he was able to be positive!

The Installation ceremony was followed by a well attended and thoroughly enjoyable festive board.

Some Thoughts for the New Apprentice

I was recently approached by a new Apprentice. "MW Grand Master", he said, "give me a few brief words that I can use to build my Masonic career on".

To be honest, I find the request a somewhat daunting one. It supposes a level of wisdom that I'm not really sure that I possess, but let me share a few random thoughts with you anyway.

- * Freemasonry is about improving our spiritual selves so that we may better serve the world in which we live.
- * It is a journey without an end. We never stop working at the rough ashlar that symbolises our lives.
- * It strongly promotes the philosophy "Do unto others as you would they do unto you". Always endeavour to be thoughtful, respectful, considerate and kind.
- * Everything about Freemasonry should constitute a Quality experience. This includes ritual work, charity or social events or any other activities. Never accept anything below the very best that you can offer.
- * Freemasonry should be Fun! It is not compulsory - you choose to take part. Make certain that you and all those around you enjoy your Masonic experience.
- * Share Freemasonry with others. It really is far too great a blessing to selfishly keep it for ourselves.

Grand Master

The Eastern Division Annual Meeting

Every year, in the first half of May, Durban sees our Eastern Division's Annual Meeting. This year was no exception and RW Bro Frans Roodt and his team welcomed Brethren from both the GLSA and our Sister Constitutions to a very well organised weekend.

Friday night saw a few early arrivals enjoy a very pleasant evening at the Havana Steakhouse. The Grand Committee then met on Saturday morning to discuss matters related to the ongoing development of our Grand Lodge. It really is exciting to see the extent to which the Divisions are working together nowadays and this bodes extremely well for our future.

Saturday afternoon saw the Annual Meeting take place in the very appealing NMR Temple. The meeting was well run and the report presented by RW Bro Frans Roodt was a most positive one. As always, there are many challenges to face, but there are also opportunities and it is up to us to see that we focus on these.

The weekend concluded with an extremely enjoyable dinner at the Durban Club. The food and company were both of a very high standard and a most enjoyable time was had by all the Brethren and their partners.

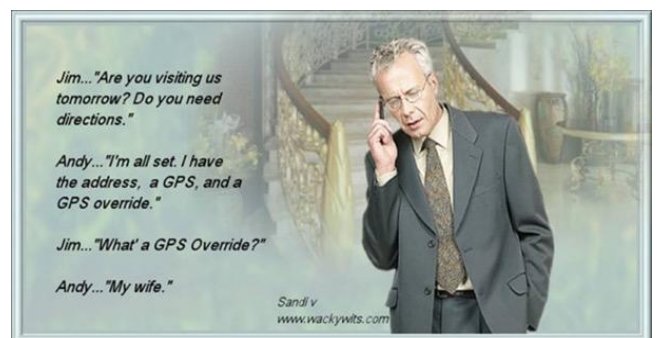


PGMs of Southern & Northern Avron Jacobsen & Alan v d Vyver



Christine & Rodney Schreuder Karen & Wayne Johnston

On the Lighter Side.



A Lament from the Editor:

I'm supposed to respect my elders, but now it's getting harder and harder for me to find one.

It's not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, it's those who are most responsive to change.

Charles Darwin

The Installation of the "new" Chapter de Broederband, 12 April 2016.



Front row: MEComp JJ Britz (1st Grand Principal), EComp J Dawe (H), MEZ R Ingle, EComp I Muthien (J), EComp T du Toit (Grand Superintendent).

Chapter de Broederband, which had met at the Willows in Pretoria, had regrettably suffered from the same disharmony that had seen Losie de Broederband degenerate from one the strongest Lodges in the Division to the point of closure in a remarkably short period of time. It is so sad when Brethren, by their unMasonic behaviour, destroy the basic harmony of their Lodge. Harmony is a basic Masonic virtue and needs to be nurtured, not abused. But, just as the Lodge has been resurrected, the Chapter has also arisen from its despair and is now up and running well.

The Chapter moved from Pretoria to the Brakpan Masonic Centre in Queen Street, Brakpan. The Installation ceremony saw MEZ Rex Ingle take the chair with Ex Comp Justin Dawe installed as H and with Ex Comp Ignatius Muthien installed as J.

Initially, the Chapter will be strongly supported by the Provincial Grand Chapter and is planned to fill a "Royal Arch vacuum" and provide a "local" Far East Rand Chapter. The Chapter meets on the 2nd Tuesday of February, April, July and October.

Installation of Lodge Flaming Star No 139.

On Monday 18 April, a Grand Lodge delegation led by RW Bro Dave Duncan OSM visited Flaming Star to witness Bro Patrick Wanketa being installed as the new



Wor Bro Achilles Katumbay period of development, the Lodge has been supported by both Grand and Provincial Grand Lodge Officers and these were

thanked in Wor Bro Achilles Katumbay's excellent valedictory report in which he also highlighted the very busy year experienced by the Brethren. He reported that the ritual work had remained of a very high standard and that Members of Lodge Flaming Star were regularly assisting other Lodges with the performance of their rituals. He congratulated Lodge member Bro G Nguessy-Guibinga, for being one of the first recipients of a Ritual Excellence Program award. He stressed that the philosophy of the Lodge is that our Freemasonry must be fun and that the social life of the Lodge is just as important as the labours in the Temple. A very successful outing to the Barnyard Theatre raised over R20,000 for the Lodge.

The installation Ceremony was well conducted and with great dignity by Wor Bro Gavin Macintosh and a large team of Provincial Officers.

In his address Wor Bro Patrick Wanketa

detailed his working plans for the year and if achieved, the year will be even busier than that just past. A number of new candidates have been identified and the focus will remain on high ritual quality at the respective



ceremonies as well *Wor Bro Patrick and Louise Wanketa* as having fun whenever the Lodge members meet.

*"You can never do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late."
Ralph Waldo Emerson*

RW Bro Conrad Christian Silberbauer

1904 saw RW Bro C C Silberbauer installed as Deputy Grand Master, a position he then held for some 40 years. Like so many of his predecessors, he was a member of Lodge de Goede Hoop and a well respected lawyer. He is described as being "a man of very large heart, always kindly, tolerant and tactful". He was recognised as a wise administrator who paid attention to detail and made very few mistakes.

Shortly after he had settled into his new position, the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Transvaal was formed and his term of office saw the opening of a large number of new Netherlandic Lodges, some 18 of which are still active today. Examples include Diamond (22), Senekal (27), Neerlandia (31), Fidelity (34), Star of the East (28), de Voortrekker (41), Marina (25), Bellville (42), Westerford (43), Jacob de Mist (44) and de Goede Verwachting (23).

He was known as the Masonic poet and, together with his brother C Fred Silberbauer, was a highly accomplished Masonic writer. Between them they penned many articles and hymns which are still regularly used today.

Tradition has it, incidentally, that Silberbauer always attended formal Masonic occasions in full court dress – tailcoat, lace shirtfront, knee breeches, silk stockings and silver buckled shoes. If you stand at the entrance to the main de Goede Hoop Temple facing East, an original painting of Silberbauer is to be found on the left hand wall of the outer vestibule.



It is also an interesting fact that, approximately 25 years ago, his 2 great grandsons were concurrently the Worshipful Masters of Lodge de Goede Hoop and Lodge de Goede Trouw.

MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM

The Dying Senses

My sight grows dim; unto mine inward eyes
Lord, let Thy heavenly light unclouded rise!

Man's voice and music fail my straining ear,
Grant that angelic harpings sound more clear!

No longer scents of earthly blooms I prize;
O! for the flowers that blow in Paradise!

For mortal food sore sickness, bids me fast;
Life-giving Manna, be my soul's repast;

Dead is my sense of touch; yet this abides,
I feel Thy Hand that comforts me and guides.

C Fred Silberbauer (19 March 1910).

Silberbauer also wrote such Masonic hymns as "Wisdom, Strength and Beauty" and "The Fellowcraft's Journeys".

Almoner's Corner

It is with sadness that we have to report this month of the passing of two stalwarts of Grand Lodge.

Wor Bro Daan Snyman (Lodge Jacob de Mist) passed to the Eternal East after many years as a Mason. He was a great supporter of his Lodge and a highly respected member of Southern Division.

RW Bro Coenie Bronkhorst (Losie Sonop), having survived several serious operations, was again taken to hospital on Thursday 19th May with intestinal problems. It would appear that his recent issues with blood clots may have not been completely resolved and these had caused a major colon problem. Coenie was taken into surgery but, sadly, nothing could be done and he passed to the Eternal East on Sunday morning.

Coenie was one of the greatest supporters of Grand Lodge and was only a couple of months away from qualifying for his 50 year service award.

A Masonic funeral will take place at noon at the Central East Rand Temple on Monday 30 May.

Grand Almoner

Brethren, the Grand Almoner is only as effective as the information he receives. Please, if anything is known about a Brother in distress, please phone RW Bro Neville Klein OSM at 071 4148869 or send him an email to:

kleinneville@gmail.com



Registration Number: 2002 / 031211 / 23

Masonic Tour to Israel

"In the Footsteps of Freemasonry"

Join the Grand Master on this wonderful tour during
September 2016 - Cost is R30,934 pp sharing

Please contact Henda Heyneke on +27 (0) 11 764 2783,
Cell: +27 (0) 83 256 6682 or on heyneketours@telkomsa.net
for more information on this tour and other arrangements.

GRAND LODGE REGALIA ITEMS

"Wear them with pride".

The following items of regalia of the Grand Lodge of South Africa are currently available from the Grand Lodge Office.

The price of the tie is R100.

The cufflinks cost R140.



Both of these items are only available whilst the current stocks last.