

The Square and Compasses.

A newsletter for the Grand Lodge of South Africa. No. 63 April 2017



Most Worshipful Brother Geoff Edwards OSAI.

Measuring a Quality Lodge

Throughout my term of office I have stressed the need for our Freemasonry to be a "Quality" experience. Clearly, when taken down to Lodge level, this must encompass all aspects of our activities and the basic principles must be subscribed to by all of the Lodge's members, from the newest Apprentice to the senior Past Master. But how do we measure this "Quality"?

Let me make it clear right at the start that while Vision 2020 and growing our numbers is critically important to us, increasing membership will never, all by itself, result in a "Quality" Lodge - so let us explore 10 "Quality" aspects that really count:

1 Effective WM with clear Plans and Objectives

Electing an effective Worshipful Master is an absolute essential. All too often Brethren are thrust into this critical position for the wrong reasons. Long service, forcefulness, likeability, ritual excellence, desire for the position and so on don't automatically result in good leaders - and "Quality" Lodges always have good leaders! It's also essential that the Lodge knows where it is going and what it is trying to achieve. Proper plans and objectives are a whole lot more important than simply being "nice to haves", they are absolutely vital if the Lodge is to succeed.

2 Adherence to Masonic Principles

As Freemasons, we should instinctively conduct ourselves in an appropriate manner. True Freemasons don't need rule books or instructions, they know what is Masonically correct and how to behave and they simply wouldn't even think of conducting themselves in any other way. They are honest, caring and of the highest integrity. They are men that you can trust, men who you are proud to call your Brother.

3 High Standard of Ritual Work

"Quality" Ritual is not about the glorification of the presenter, it's about the message conveyed to the candidate and, in my view, it's absolutely essential that it has the highest possible impact. If, for whatever reason, your Lodge can't do its ritual work alone, enlist outside help. Freemasonry has some beautiful and life-changing messages and you owe it to your candidate to ensure that he gets the maximum benefit from receiving them - whatever it takes.

4 Practice of Benevolence and Charity

While we are not simply a Charity organisation, we certainly promote charity in its broadest sense. "Quality" Lodges support their widows and those Brethren in distress and also strive to offer some aid to those in need outside the Lodge. As Freemasons, we genuinely care about our fellow men and are fully committed to expressing this aspect of our characters.

5 Mutual Respect amongst the Brethren

We are all individuals with our own opinions and views, but that doesn't mean that we should treat any Brother with a contrary view with disdain or contempt. In "Quality" Lodges all the members are treated with respect and valued for the contribution that they make.

6 Effective Communication and Feedback

This is another non-negotiable. Brethren must be kept fully informed as to what is happening and planned - and this is almost more important if the Brother has missed a few meetings. Regular feedback must be given on Lodge, Provincial and Grand Lodge matters. This communication may be verbal or written, as long as the Brethren are kept up to date on progress.

7 Leadership Example by Senior Brethren

All too often Lodge harmony is spoiled by a few cantankerous Past Masters. They must remember that they were young Freemasons once and try to share in the experiences of the newer Brethren. Their role is to encourage and support, not to bully and dominate!

8 Enthusiasm and Commitment to Harmony

You've often heard me proclaim that "Freemasonry is Fun!". I've been a member for over 30 years now and, for the most part, I enjoy it more now than I ever have. I love having people contact me to update me on their latest success or to share a new idea. Enthusiasm motivates Lodges and the close interaction that inevitably results really is conducive to harmony.

9 Insistence on High Standards

We've touched on Ritual Work, but these "Quality" standards must apply to all our activities. Whether it be the Festive Board, a social event, the BoM or simply a visit to another Lodge, make sure that you do it well and with total commitment to excellence. It all ties in with the improvement of ourselves as men.

10 Desire for Sharing and Promotion of Growth

"Quality" Lodges can't wait to share their messages with the outside world. They want their friends and acquaintances to join them and benefit from the Masonic experience that is so important to them. They hold and support "recruitment" activities and Open events and regularly expose themselves to the profane.

"Quality" Lodges are attractive to belong to and their members look forward to being together and sharing in each new experience. Their Brethren are proud to belong; set very high standards; enjoy their time together and having "fun"; attract new members without really trying; and seldom lose Brethren for the wrong reasons. It doesn't just happen, Brethren, but the results certainly make it more than worthwhile.

**MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM
Grand Master**

Chain's Conference 2017

Some 3 years ago, we introduced a new format for our Conference and focused on providing feedback on our activities and getting input from those Brethren tasked with implementing them. The formula worked well and the Bloemfontein Conference is now an annual event, this year attracting over 30 participants. While I won't try to update you on all that took place, I thought I'd share a few very appealing highlights.

Firstly, our Grand Lodge has after a long, hard battle now started to show growth. As our Deputy GM, RW Bro Dave Duncan OSM, pointed out, however, too much of it is being offset against losses which really shouldn't occur. It is not Freemasonry that's to blame, Brethren, it's invariably members who fail to conduct themselves properly as Freemasons. This is something that we will address in the year ahead.

The Masonic "Book of Life" is now handed out to all new initiates and is proving invaluable. We are about to release a new update and will also be introducing an "Afrikaans" version which will include all articles which have been translated to date.

The Ritual Excellence Program is proving a real winner and is having a significant impact on our ritual work quality. RW Bro Alan van der Vyver and his team are now implementing recorded assessments on a national basis so that all of our Brethren can participate in this initiative, regardless of where they may live.

The "What is Freemasonry?" presentation ritual is having a real impact on our promotional and PR efforts. It has enjoyed much success in Southern and Northern Divisions and we will now roll it out to the smaller Divisions. The ritual, incidentally, is available in either English or Afrikaans, depending on the need.

Steady progress is being made as regards the implementation of our new "Grandview" Member Management system. The US developed software that we are using continues to grow and new facilities are becoming available which will further enrich our members Masonic experiences. A recent example is a feature that allows us to measure how ready a Brother is to progress between degrees. As this will be online, it will not matter where the Brother happens to live.

There is an old Chinese proverb which says "May you live in interesting times." In the GLSA we certainly are, Brethren, and we really hope that you are finding them as stimulating and fun as we are.

Central Division Annual Meeting

The Central Division's AGM and the Installation of RW Bro Cor van Zyl as the new PGM took place in Bloemfontein on Saturday 4 March 2017.



RW Bro Cor van Zyl with GL Officers, RW Bro Alf Brönnner, RW Bro Dave Duncan OSM, MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM, RW Bro John Smith OSM, RW Bro Vic Mühlenbeck.

The Installation was performed by the Grand Master, MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM, in the presence of a large Masonic audience. It was a most memorable Masonic occasion and RW Bro van Zyl's Escort of Honour included all of the Sister Divisions and Constitutions and, to everybody's great delight, we had RW Bro Fanie Kloppers as the Regalia Bearer.

To make the event even more memorable, the outgoing PGM, RW Bro Alf Brönnner, was promoted to Assistant Grand Master and a long serving Past PGM of the Division, RW Bro Frikkie Botha, was presented with his 60 year jewel.



The large number of Brethren at the Central AGM illustrates just how much support the new PGM, RW Bro Cor van Zyl, enjoyed.

"What is Freemasonry?" - Taken to New Heights



The Brethren and Guests assembled in the packed Temple.

Freemason's Hall in Park Lane Johannesburg was the venue for Northern Division's latest "What is Freemasonry?" presentation on Monday 13th March - and what an evening it turned out to be!

The GLSA invited the Sister Constitutions to join us and to invite their own families, friends and prospective Candidates and the Scottish and Irish Constitutions were delighted to accept. The turnout for the evening was beyond anybody's expectations and created some excitement as all were accommodated.

To trigger off a spectacular evening, the 3 Constitution Heads were welcomed, with their own Sword and Banner Bearers, by over 130 visitors and 143 Masons. This was not only the first time anyone present had seen all 3 Banners present at one meeting but also, apart from the UGLE Annual meeting, the first time that the Temple had been completely full.



Bro Jim Kerr (RW DGM, Scottish) is formally welcomed while RW Bro Nic Benson (PGM, Irish) is at the left.

The Northern Division officers did themselves, their Division and the GLSA proud by delivering the presentation in a very professional and easy manner.

All the Constitutions were rewarded for their efforts with Candidates applying on the evening. The reaction to the presentation by the wives, families and friends was also very positive and further enhanced the image and reputation of our Order. As a symbolic gesture all the visitors were presented with a pair of white gloves, which they were encouraged to wear during the presentation.



At the end of the presentation, Northern Division's PGM, RW Bro Alan van der Vyver, hosted a Question and Answer session from the floor. All the questions raised, both the usual ones and some new and most interesting ones, were very well answered to the general satisfaction of all present. A few of the



Wor Bro Jacques Fouche (WM of Lodge Star of the Rand) welcomes Bro Bob Law (RW PDGM, Scottish).

answers were suitably light-hearted and amused the visitors and Masons alike. Bro Bob Law, immediate Past RW DGM of the Scottish, brought the house down when he shared his opinion that there are really only 2 types of Freemasons - those who are Scottish and those who would like to be.

Several Freemasons, including senior ones, reported afterwards that they too, had gained much from the evening, hence showing that there is always something more to learn. The meeting was followed by a festive board where Freemasons and visitors spent time together chatting and answering more questions.

The aim of the presentation is not only about recruitment, but is also aimed at improving our brand. Nonetheless, based on the reports from the different Constitutions, over 18 new applications were received or confirmed after the evening concluded.

The great success of the evening confirms that if we want to continue to be relevant in our community in modern times, Freemasons must continue to interact with and promote our brand to the public.

"It's a terrible thing, I think, in life to wait until you are ready. I have this feeling now that actually no one is ever ready to do anything. There is almost no such thing as ready. There is only now. Generally speaking, now is as good a time as any".

Hugh Laurie

Losie De Morgenster

In November 2016 het Losie De Morgenster in Kroonstad 'n fondsinsamelings projek geloods. Hulle kon vir 'n kinderkuis in Kroonstad 'n opslaanswembad koop en vir al 14 kinders sowel as vir die huis ouers 'n ete by die Spur in Kroonstad geborg.



Teenwoordig tydens die oorhandiging: SV Br Cor van Zyl (PGM Sentrale Afdeling), Agb Br Johnny Cambanis (Losie De Morgenster), Anna en Herman Mulder (Huis Ouers).


"The best executive is one who has sense enough to pick good people to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it." Bro Theodore Roosevelt

AASR install Sovereign Grand Commander

On Saturday 11th March 2017 the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for South Africa held their Annual Meeting at Misty Hills near Krugersdorp. In the course of events they installed the new Sovereign Grand Commander, M Puis Bro Boet du Plessis, and all the AASR Executive Officers. In the evening the celebrations concluded with a formal banquet.



The new AASR Executive; Back: M Ill Bro Martin Kotze, M Ill Bro Cor van Zyl, M Ill Bro Vic Mühlenbeck, M Ill Bro Frans Roodt, Front: M Ill Bro Geoff Edwards, Puis Bro Izak Heyneke, M Puis Bro Boet du Plessis, M Ill Bro Mike Burchell



Registration Number: 2002 / 031211 / 23

Second Masonic Tour to Israel "In the Footsteps of Freemasonry"

Join us on this exceptional tour from 9 to 20 September 2017 for only R32 500.00. For more details, call Henda Heyneke on +27 (0) 11 764 2783 or +27 (0) 83 256 6682.

GRAND LODGE REGALIA ITEMS

"Wear them with pride".

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

The price of the tie is R100.



The cufflinks cost R140.

Both items are only available whilst the current stocks last.

The Grand Lodge has also had printed some hard cover Lodge Attendance Registers with 300 pages. Price: R400



Almoner's Corner

It is with much sadness that we have to report that our Grand First Preparator, Wor Bro Ray Supra, was unexpectedly called to the Eternal East on Tuesday 28th March. Ray was Master of Lodge Helderberg and a pillar of strength in Lodges Oranje and St Jan. He is a past recipient of the GLSA Secretary of the Year award and made an enormous contribution to Southern Division's Masonic Spring Ball fund-raising. He will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Lenette and the family.



VW Bro Schalk Stapelberg (Losie Sonop) has been in and out of hospital recently. Schalk and his wife, Liz, are amongst the greatest supporters of our Grand Lodge and are rarely absent from any call out. Please remember him in your prayers..

VW Bros Johan Haasbroek and Swenny Crofton (both van der Stel) continue to fight their stroke and cancer challenges and are in our thoughts and prayers.

Wor Bros Basil de Kock and Colin Mathee (both of First United) and Rodney Potter (Hiram) recently lost family members. Our hearts go out to you at this difficult time and we hope that the good memories that you have of your loved one will dampen the pain.

Grand Almoner

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

kleinneville@gmail.com

