

# The Square and Compasses.

A newsletter for the Grand Lodge of South Africa. No. 86 March 2019



Most Worshipful Brother David Duncan OSM.

## Magersfontein and Masonry

Brethren: Today, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019, is a very special day. It is a “birth day” in the truest sense of the word.

For those of us that are privileged to be here; it serves to remind us of several important aspects of life.

It reminds us that there is always hope for a positive future. As we, the old life, wither and pass away, young life springs up to replace us and carry on the messages of Freemasonry that we have tried so hard to bring to the world. Our ritual expresses this beautifully, but we all need to be constantly reminded.

It also reminds us that the principles that we follow are relevant, even in the darkest of hours. The name of this Lodge epitomises this.

Magersfontein was a battle that took place in the Kimberley region on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1899 in the then independent Orange Free State Republic during the conflict known as the Boer War. The British forces, under Lord Methuen were on their way to relieve the siege of Kimberley and under continuous harassment from the Commandos of Vecht-Generaal De la Rey. This was the second battle in a series of three that came to be known in British history as the “*Black week of the Second Boer War.*” The Boers had, yet again, succeeded in delaying the British advance. Lord Methuen was replaced by Lord Roberts who took control and succeeded in lifting the siege. History, of course, has not treated Lord Methuen kindly.

The lessons learned during this period related to how a relatively small detachment of strategically

placed, highly motivated and mobile troops could inflict heavy casualties on a force which was superior in fire power and numbers. Much of this motivation came from the fact that the Boers were fighting for their families and their lives as they knew them, whilst many of their opponents were conscripts fighting for the wishes of a foreign power.

I believe that the name of our new Lodge was chosen to represent the strong Masonic spirit that was shown during those dark days of conflict during the Second Boer War. Many of the participants, including leaders on both sides, were Freemasons. It has been reported that there were many occasions when, under a flag of truce, Freemasons from both sides met together in brotherly love. Peace and harmony were momentarily restored according to Masonic principles. After the meeting, it was back to business as usual.

It is also written that later in the conflict, countless lives were spared in Johannesburg and Pretoria when the Masonic military leaders on both sides, agreed not to fight street by street in those two cities and so spared the local population from the horrendous collateral damage that would have occurred.

We all take an obligation as Freemasons to obey the civil law. When called to action, we have a duty to perform. In line with their obligations, Freemasons heed that call, even where it clashes with some of the basic principles that they believe in - and many have paid the highest price. I believe that most however attempted to perform that duty within the confines of their Masonic principles as best they could and to show brotherly love whenever able to do so. In Masonic history, the activities of Freemasons in the Boer War have a special place in our hearts.

It is interesting to note that after losing the war and experiencing all of the suffering and carnage caused by that conflict, the people of South Africa won the peace. They achieved a measure of independence when the Union of South Africa was created some 10 years later and full self- rule in 1926 under the terms of the Balfour Declaration. Again, Freemasons were involved in this political victory.

I believe that the naming of this Lodge is a fitting memorial to all of the Freemasons that have suffered and died during times of conflict, even though they knew in their hearts that there were better ways of resolving differences.

May Lodge Magersfontein ever be a symbol of these better ways. May the Brethren labour together in peace and harmony and may true Brotherly Love permeate their every decision and activity.

**MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM  
Grand Master**

## MW Pretorius have a Family Initiation

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> February, Lodge MW Pretorius (62) had the distinct honour of initiating a father and son at a sanctioned double Initiation. Bros Willie van Eeden and Steven van Eeden wanted to share their first Masonic steps together.

Inevitably, this unique event attracted visitors from several GLSA Lodges as well as from the English and Scottish Constitutions. Wor Bro Tony Bosman, the Worshipful Master, describes it as a memorable milestone in his Masonic career.



A key component contributing to the success of the double working was the skill and preparedness of the Preparators. In this instance RW Bro Johan Britz (L) and Bro Duncan Kotze (R) executed their roles superbly making the ceremony a really impressive one.

## and ... Star of the North a Family Installation

On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February the annual Installation for Lodge Star of the North took place in Polokwane. This, however, was no ordinary event, as the outgoing Master, Wor Bro Machael Castelyn, had the extremely unusual honour of passing the Chair to his son Gert.



The Installing Officer was the Assistant PGM, Wor Bro Freddie Diener, and he was assisted by some 13 PGL officers. The working was of a high standard.

There was also a Grand Lodge call out led by the Grand Master, MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM. The ambience was exceptional and made even more moving by the enormous pride displayed by a father on this very special event in his son's Masonic life.

## Isandlwana visit the SAS Amatola

The visit to the SAS Amatola came about as part



of a program for Lodge Isandlwana to not only visit battlefields and focus on the military interest of the earlier wars, but to acknowledge the fact that members join a Lodge of military interest because they have something in common having been members of the modern SADF and SANDF. Commander Dieter Jones of the SA Navy base Durban is a personal friend of Wor Bro Johan van der Merwe and was delighted to be able to organise a guided tour of the frigate, SAS Amatola, for Isandlwana members and their families.



Commander Jones conducted a very detailed tour of the ship, explaining every part of how it operated technically and in conjunction with the rest of the Navy. It was a special experience to be allowed into every corner of the frigate and get such interesting information, first hand, from an experienced and dedicated Navy officer.



*Wor Bros Machael and Gert Castelyn with PGM RW Bro Peet Roos, Grand Master MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM, Wor Bro Freddie Diener and the GL and PGL Officers, Lodge members and visitors at the Star of the North Installation.*



*This picture was taken after the Magersfontein Consecration / Installation and includes all of the GLSA's most senior Officers. Front – RW Bro Avron Jacobson (AGM), RW Bro John Smith OSM MSA (DGM), MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM (Past GM), MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM (GM), RW Bro Alf Brönnner (AGM), RW Bro Cor van Zyl (PGM Central), RW Bro Basil de Kock (PGM Eastern), RW Bro Peet Roos (PGM Northern), RW Bro Tommy Hardiman (PGM Southern), while RW Bro Keith Hutton (PGM Eastern Cape) is behind the GM. They are surrounded by GL and PGL Officers, visitors and the Magersfontein Founders.*

### **An Extraordinary Central Division Weekend**

The weekend of Friday 1<sup>st</sup> and Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March must surely go down as one of the busiest and most successful in the GLSA's history. It was a hectic and demanding weekend, but the high standard of performance never faltered and all of us who were privileged enough to attend had a very special time.

**Chain's Conference** - on Friday morning at 9 am the senior Officers of both Grand Lodge and the Divisions got together for this now annual event. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Grand Master, RW Bro John Smith OSM MSA, and we focused on the Operational issues related to developing the GLSA. We explored such topics as the Constitution, types of Membership, Ritual matters, Administration and the implications of our GrandView Member Management system, Recruitment and Retention of members, Education and Mentorship, Benevolence and Fund Raising, Finance, Succession Planning and Public Relations. There was much participation and a great many good ideas were advanced. To general approval, the Grand Master announced that he would be introducing awards for the best Masonic papers from Installing Officers and Apprentices and Fellowcrafts.

**"What is Freemasonry?"** - This took place on Friday evening at 7 pm, and was well supported by the local community. RW Bro Tommy Hardiman was in the Chair and was assisted by Brethren from all the Divisions. The work was well performed and was followed by a very stimulating question and answer session. The Central Division then made a hugely impressive donation of clothing, food and drinks



*RW Bro Cor van Zyl, Maureen Oosthuizen, MW Bro Dave Duncan*

to Maureen Oosthuizen's Grace in Action charity.

The evening ended with a thoroughly enjoyable informal festive board with our appreciative guests.

**Grand Committee** - met on Saturday at 8 am and this was followed by an extremely busy afternoon.

**Central Division AGM** - started at 12h30 pm and was held in the Temple at the Bloemfontein Masonic Complex. The meeting ran smoothly with very few interruptions and RW Bro Cor van Zyl's report as Provincial Grand Master was uncomplicated and encouraging. There were impressive Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge delegations in attendance and the ambience was tangible and enjoyable.

**Consecration of Lodge Magersfontein** - took place straight after the AGM with RW Bro Cor van Zyl handing the gavel to the Grand Master, MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM, so that he could perform the ceremony. RW Bro Alf Brönnner is the Charter Master of the new Lodge with 27 Founders to support him. After reading his most interesting address, the Grand Master, ably assisted by his Grand Lodge Officers, gave a memorable demonstration of how an important working should really be performed. It was excellent!



*Magersfontein Founders, Central Division.*

*RW Bro David van Vuuren*

**Spit Braai** - this has and *Wor Bro Peet Louw* become a most important part of our Free State weekends and, as always, was a great success. Everybody gathered in the Lapa behind the Temple and simply enjoyed each other's company.

### **Magersfontein**

**Installation** - At the end of the Consecration, the Grand Master returned the gavel to RW Bro van Zyl and the Installation was then performed by VW Bro Frans Appelgryn, who is the Deputy PGM of the

## Almoner's Corner

It is with sadness that we report the passing of RW Bro Neville Rudram (Star of the Rand). It was just a few months ago that Neville was cheerfully awarded his 50 year jewel and it's hard to accept that he has been taken quite so soon thereafter. Neville is a Past PGM (Northern Division) and the Division will observe a mourning period of 60 days in recognition of his contribution. Our deepest sympathies go to his wife and family.



We have also had Wor Bro Gert Ackerman (Helderberg) called to the Eternal East. Gert was initiated in 1961 and had served both his Lodge and the GLSA faithfully for 58 years. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and all those close to him.

Southern's 2 cancer fighters, Louise du Preez and Wor Bro Corrie Grobbelaar (Simon van der Stel) are still remaining cheerful and making steady progress. "Vasbyt" – we admire you both enormously.

Bro Dawood Momla (Star of the Rand) still has his ups and downs as he waits for a suitable liver donor and is regularly in and out of hospital due to toxicity.

Wor Bro Fred Kitching (AJ Haak) continues his fight against cancer. He remains cheerful and positive - but we all know that it really can't be easy for him. You are always in our thoughts and prayers Fred.

RW Bro Nuno Calvet (Star of the West) is having a triple bypass on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March. We are thinking of you Nuno and pray that the operation will be the success that we all expect it to be. The recovery period is fairly lengthy and Nuno has resultantly withdrawn from all Masonic activity for the foreseeable future – hence the change in Almoner arrangements.

Wor Bro Dawie van Rooyen (de Goede Hoop) continues to recover well from his hip replacement.

RW Bro Brian Rossouw OSM (Cape Town) and Wor Bro Danny Retief (de Goede Hoop) have both had knee replacements and are racing around on their crutches as they seek to better their doctor's goals.

Wor Bro Jan Venter (Johan van Riebeeck) has also had knee surgery but came to Bloemfontein on his crutches anyway. He was able to demonstrate that the surgery did not affect his right elbow in any way!

Wor Bro Ron Kessler (de Goede Hoop) has been having chemo and has not been his usual cheerful self over the last month or two. He assures us, however, that he will be back at Lodge in April. It takes a great deal to keep these 50 year veterans down!

If anything is known about a Brother in distress, please ensure that your Divisional Almoner is aware of him:

Southern	Wor Bro Cobis Wilson	083 2844684
Northern	Wor Bro Simon Nash	082 4148604
Central	Wor Bro Johnny Cambanis	083 9865397
Eastern	Wor Bro Johan v d Merwe	083 3010219
E Cape	Wor Bro Roy Handley	082 8625804

## GRAND VIEW

Interesting items for you to benefit from!

- If you know somebody who is exploring the possibility of becoming a Freemason, everything that you need is immediately available to you. Log into GrandView, click on "Home"; "Resources"; "Candidate" and you'll be able to download the "Introducing Freemasonry" articles and the new candidate Application form ready for completion.
- If you are interested in meaningful Masonic articles, log into GrandView, click on "Home" and you will immediately have access to such items as "Square and Compasses" and all the most recent Installation Addresses. We are hoping to load any special Apprentice or Fellowcraft papers in the near future, so please keep yourself up to date.

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By now you should have received an email from Amity requesting you to register. You may have even wondered if it was Spam and avoided it. Fear no more - for this is the GLSA's latest technological offering!

The GLSA is happy to announce that we have partnered with Amity, which is a free tool for the Craft and aims to be a system that can help you in your everyday life as a Mason. Amity assists you to find Lodges and to document your visits when you travel and also helps you challenge visitors to your Lodge.

The GLSA has certified the recognition data in Amity and any GLSA Brother can now use this free tool. Masons in over 170 Grand Lodges trust Amity to help them understand who can visit their Lodge, and to scout for new Lodges for their Brethren to visit. With nearly 37,000 Lodges already in the system, spread all over the world, no other tool comes close.

Amity is also very strict about our privacy, is compliant with laws like GDPR, and is able to work with GrandView in a secure way. One of the ways that Amity and GrandView will work together is to provide you with a digital version of your membership card. "King Solomon's Pass" is a fully digital membership card that can be stored on your phone. It is an approved way to share your membership status in real time. This pass can be used anywhere in the world where you have an internet connection.

Getting back to the email that you should by now have received from Amity, please respond to it! This will establish your account credentials and to use the App simply follow the instructions in the email.

You may also choose to opt out of activating your account, and all of your personal data will then be deleted - but, frankly, this doesn't make good sense. Amity is a ground-breaking tool that all GLSA members are encouraged to use - and is by far the most effective system for ensuring that your visits to another Lodge are approved by the GLSA.

Should you have any queries regarding Amity, contact RW Bro Avron Jacobson on 087 550 2965 (ext 102) or send him an email to [avron@mweb.co.za](mailto:avron@mweb.co.za)