

The Square and Compasses.

A newsletter for the Grand Lodge of South Africa. No. 98 March 2020



Most Worshipful Brother David Duncan OSM.

Difficult Times!

Who said that size matters?

We now have to contend with a microscopic entity that has disrupted our lives beyond imagination. We are, of course, used to the common cold and the flu, but this one is something else. The whole world is in panic mode and new expressions have been coined such as “voluntary isolation” and “social distancing”. But why?

The problem is that we do not know the capability of this new virus. Reference is being made to previous strains of corona virus, of which “Spanish Flu” accounted for upwards of 19 million deaths in 1918 to 1920. We all accept that environmental conditions and medical research have progressed a long way in 100 years and yet, the world is in panic.

Countries, including our own, have “locked down” in order to prevent human to human contact spreading the disease. We are now encouraged to have funny handshakes and other forms of non-skin contact greetings. Until recently, it was Freemasons who were ridiculed for our “secret” handshake. Funny how the wheel turns!

Brethren: The activities of the Grand Lodge were suspended until further notice not out of panic, but after due consideration of the facts and opinions at hand. We do not know who has the virus in the early stages of infection and so, in order to make sure that Freemasonry did not compromise the health of any of its members, we took the only sensible decision. One which we feel has been vindicated by subsequent

activities around the Masonic world. No-one must ever be in the position to claim that he was infected at Lodge. The only thing that we want to spread is Brotherly Love and sometimes this involves attempting to protect ourselves from each other.

Difficult times generate innovative solutions and I am happy to say that the Brethren in Grand Lodge have risen to the challenge. We already have Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge committee meetings taking place through the internet and Lodges are following suit. This is effected by the use of “Zoom”, a software package specifically designed for effective online interaction. Zoom is currently being rolled out in conjunction with the GrandView Seminars facility and will soon be available to all for Masonic purposes. We will use the well proven ability of GrandView to directly contact every member in order to update them on the protocols required for using the facility.

Zoom will allow us to conduct meetings with every member of the Lodge “present” whilst he is in the comfort and safety of his own home. Please remember that these will still be Masonic meetings and should be treated with dignity and respect. Just because we are not dressed formally does not mean that the meeting can become informal and subject to trivial behaviour.

We cannot perform ritual workings with candidates by this means as our Degree workings rely, to a large extent, on the face to face interaction for their emotional impact on the Candidate. We do expect however that Lodges will be creative in the subject matter that they address during these “virtual” meetings in order to stimulate the Brethren and reduce the impact of their not having a “live” Lodge to attend during this time.

This plague will pass; just as every other one in history has passed. It will leave a legacy which we must adapt to in order to emerge from these difficult times stronger than when we first encountered the challenge. With your assistance and creativity, we will continue to flourish as a force for good in civil society and an example to the world in terms of our care and consideration for all humanity.

**MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM
Grand Master**

Northern Lodges provide masks to Seniors

In true Masonic spirit, members of our Northern



Lodges set us all a fine example by donating 125 masks, several towels, 100 Dettol soap bars and various similar items to the Masonic Haven home for the aged in Gauteng.

RW Bro Bernard Neuhaus celebrates 60 Years

Monday 10th February saw a very special event on our Grand Lodge's calendar. RW Bro Bernard Neuhaus celebrated 60 years service as a member of the GLSA



and 50 years as a Royal Arch member. Bernard is a past Grand Senior Warden and a past 3rd Grand Principal and has contributed a great deal to our Order over the years. He is also a past member of the Executive of AASR for South Africa and has been awarded their highest honour, a MA, for his services to them.

MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM presents Bernard's 60 year jewel. RW Bro Neuhaus is also a member of the Grand Lodge of Mauritius. He is an active Assistant Grand Master with their Grand Lodge and, as such, travels extensively around the world and represents them at a wide variety of Masonic events. In recognition of his contribution to them, the Grand Lodge of Mauritius awarded RW Bro Neuhaus an OSM.



MEC Johan Britz presented a 50 year RA jewel to Bernard.

RW Bro Neuhaus is one of the best known and well loved members of our Grand Lodge and will hopefully be around for many years yet. We all look forward to his 70 year award!.

RW Bro Coen Willemse receives 50 year jewel

Aurora celebrated their Installation on Tuesday 11th February and the Grand Master took advantage of



the occasion to award a 50 year service jewel to RW Bro Coen Willemse. Over many years now, RW Bro Willemse has played a leading role in our Grand Lodge, in PGL Northern Division and in his mother Lodge, Aurora. He also spent a number of years as a member of Lodge Star of the Rand.

MW Bro Dave Duncan OSM presents Coen's 50 year jewel.



Bro Stephen Hunt's 16 Midmar miles

In the swimming fraternity, the Midmar Mile is a legendary event. Leading on from this, a special event was organised in aid of charity. In the highest category, 10 selected swimmers had to swim the Midmar Mile 16 times over 2 days. At the same time, they had to raise a minimum of R20,000 in support of their chosen charities.



Bro Stephen Hunt (First United) was in the top category and placed 2nd overall. His charities included CHOC (Children's Cancer fund). Well done Stephen - we are proud of you Brother!

Broederband Open Installation a great success

As far as Grand Lodges in South Africa are concerned, Open Installations are only performed by the GLSA and even then are fairly rare. On 19th February, however, Broederband had an Open Installation. It was a great success and all involved were delighted



Wor Bros Wikus Steyl, Simon Nash and Andre Fischer.

The Provincial delegation was led by the PGM, RW Bro Godfrey Place, accompanied by Past PGM, RW Bro Peet Roos, Deputy PGM, Wor Bro Simon Nash, and Assistant PGM Wor Bro Reuven Coenen.

After Wor Bro Wikus Steyl had read his most positive report, Deputy PGM, Wor Bro Simon Nash, installed Wor Bro Andre Fischer as the Lodge's new Presiding Master. Wor Bro Nash presented a most interesting address entitled "As a humble Freemason, I greet you well" and, assisted by the PGL Officers, performed the ceremony to his usual high standard.

The non Masonic attendees were most impressed by and extremely complimentary about the evening and much enjoyed the ambience at the festive board..



RW Bro Peet Roos, Wor Bro Wikus Steyl, RW Bro Godfrey Place, Wor Bros Simon Nash, Andre Fischer, Reuven Coenen



Settlers Chapter 4° Working

On 15th February Bro Xavier Macleod was advanced to the AASR 4th degree by the Brethren of Port Elizabeth's Settlers Chapter. Taking part in the ceremony were:
Bro Ric Gillmer, Ill Bro Marius Terblanche, Ven Bro Dennis Nienaber, Bro Xavier Macleod, M Ill Bro Nowellyn van Vuuren, Ill Bro Keith Hutton, Ven Bros Wayne Enslin, Daniel Stander Ill Bro Paul West



At the Dagbreek Installation are Assistant PGM Wor Bro Marcel de Kock (row 3, 6L), Assistant PGM RW Bro Alf Brönnner (row 2, 5L), Wor Bro Mike Rhind (row 2, 6L) and members of Grand Lodge, PGL, the Lodge and various visitors.

Dagbreek Installation another step forward

In the recent past Losie Dagbreek in Bloemfontein has struggled against declining membership. While there is still much to be done, the Lodge is starting to make some progress and have a high calibre of members.

On Saturday 1st February Wor Bro Marcel de Kock installed Wor Bro Mike Rhind as the new Master and wished the Lodge well in their upcoming endeavours. The year ahead looks a very positive one.

Aurora's Gallagher Braai

10 years ago Wor Bro Mike Gallagher invited the residents of the Masonic Haven home for the aged and their neighbours to the Pretoria Masonic Centre, to join in a year-end braai. It has now become an annual event.

The members of Aurora Lodge eagerly committed themselves to once again providing an excellent feast to some 70 residents. With beautifully laid tables, relaxing background music and succulent lamb-chops and boerewors, the residents much enjoyed themselves.

Wor Bro Bothma of the Masonic Haven, thanked the Brethren with a quotation from Mother Teresa – "Love is not patronising and charity isn't about pity, it is just about love. Charity and love are the same – with charity you give love, so don't just give money but reach out your hands."



Avron's visit to the GrandView conference

In the early part of February 2020 the GLSA sent RW Bro Avron Jacobson to the United States to attend the GrandView User's conference. GrandView now serves the needs of 34 Grand Lodges, 5656 Lodges and 514,144 Brethren and does, as you will know by now, play a leading role in our Grand Lodge's progress.



RW Bro Avron Jacobson (3R) with the GrandView team, Tim Larkins, Josh Mixon and Jeff Clarke.

At the Conference, GrandView reviewed the current software and outlined their new ideas. The Seminar facility incorporating Zoom software plays a leading role in their plans and, with our pending lockdown, is clearly very relevant to us right now. Other new facilities were introduced and discussed and Avron found the future plans most exciting. Just as important, he built strong working relationships with the GrandView team which will serve us well as we go forwards.

The Conference was part of the American Grand Lodges Conference and Avron was also able to promote the GLSA to a whole new market.



Freemasonry and Covid-19

During the past weeks the world has been hit by the deadliest, most contagious virus to threaten man in many years. Our world has been brought to its knees with most major public events being cancelled until things are properly back under control.

Freemasonry, like all other activities, has felt the impact and we, like most leading Grand Lodges around the world, have discontinued all of our regular meetings until the threat has subsided.

The economy is in turmoil, small businesses are battling to survive, travel has been dramatically curtailed and the immediate future looks bleak.

This, however, is not the first time that the world has been threatened by disaster and somehow it survives – usually coming out stronger than ever. It's interesting to note Sir Isaac Newton's reaction to the bubonic plague some 300 odd years ago.



Sir Isaac Newton was a scientist, inventor, and student of the Enlightenment whose dedication to *Masonic* principles changed the course of human history. *He* was a true scientist whose contributions to the study of mathematics, physics and

optics were and are world renowned. He is believed to have been a Freemason and is credited with having helped found the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, but as society was cloaked in secrecy in his day, definitive proof is lacking. This remarkable man's life changed the course of human endeavours.

After an outbreak of Bubonic Plague, the University of Cambridge closed its doors for 2 years. Isaac Newton had completed his degree, but his academic career was now put on hold. He retired to a small farmhouse where he developed calculus, optics and gravitational theory.

Some of Newton's most profound work came from his own quiet period.

In the same way, let us turn this quiet period into our Opportunity! Clearly, we cannot hold our monthly ceremonial workings and will not be able to attend our regular BoMs. We can't have Open Evenings and our Social and Charity events will be negatively affected.

There are, however, many things that we can do – and we've now got the time to do them. We can further our Masonic education, learn some new ritual excerpts or plan some meaningful activities for the months ahead.

We can also, incidentally, introduce new ways of interacting with each other. GrandView, for example, has a superb "Seminar" facility which allows us to hold online meetings with minimal skills required to do so. We can plan our future events, run online education sessions, distribute some excellent Masonic material and generally involve ourselves in Freemasonry in a whole new way – let's try it. Perhaps this is our "Opportunity"!

There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow men. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self.
Ernest Hemingway

Almoner's Corner

We sadly have to report that Wor Bro Fred Kitching (AJ Haak) finally lost his battle with cancer on 23 March. Fred was a Master Ritualist and a dedicated Freemason and will be sorely missed. Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family at this difficult time.



RW Bro Cedric Moroukian (Cape Town) is still recovering after his recent heart procedures. He's short of breath and very bored, but is otherwise bearing up.

Wor Bro Greg Spires (Golden City) is making a steady recovery from his recent double hernia operation.

Wor Bro Heinz Smekal (Hiram) is very frail. While he assures us that he's doing fine, Alyson needs to support him 24 x 7 and is more than concerned. A Brotherly call of encouragement would be much appreciated.

Bro Sonwabo Zide (Star of the Rand) is scheduled to have a spinal tumour removed at the end of March. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

Wor Bro Eric Henkel (de Goede Verwachting) is one of our 50 year veterans. His He's not at all well, is bedridden and drifts in and out of consciousness. Our thoughts are with the family at this challenging time.

Wor Bro Theo Lindeboom (Perseverance) has been in hospital recently for treatment on his legs and will be resting at home for the next couple of weeks.

Bro Carel and Ilse du Preez's (Hiram) baby has been discharged from hospital and is now at home with her very proud parents and family.

A number of our older Brethren are really struggling nowadays and need our encouragement – just a phone-call at present would make a real difference. Most of them can't attend Lodge regularly, if at all, but all are still very committed Freemasons. Included on this list are such Brethren as RW Bro Ben Spies (Sonop), Bro Koos Breet (MW Pretorius), RW Bro Ken Manefeldt (de Goede Trouw), RW Bro Bill Prentzler (Mutual) and Bro Rodney Marquis (Marina). Let us not forget them, and others like them, when they need us most.

As of yet, there have been no reports of any of our Brethren having contracted Covid-19 but that, sadly, could change on a daily basis. We are about to start a 3 week lockdown and, while it really does highlight the seriousness of the world's current predicament, it also creates an opportunity for us to interact with our Brethren who need our support, so let's take advantage of it.

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 Reuven Coenen	071 6120577
Central	Wor Bro Johnny Cambanis	083 9865397
Eastern	Wor Bro Johan v d Merwe	083 3010219
E Cape	Wor Bro Ian Hetherington	082 9545297