

The Square and Compasses.

A newsletter for the Grand Lodge of South Africa. No. 110 March 2021



Most Worshipful Brother John Smith OSM MSA.

Our Masonic Journey

Freemasons throughout the World including the Grand Lodge of South Africa commence their Masonic journey by being initiated as Apprentices. They are then, in due time and having acquired certain knowledge and experience, passed to the second or Fellow Craft degree and are eventually raised to the third or Master Mason's degree. It is generally accepted that the Master Mason's degree is the highest degree in Freemasonry and in certain jurisdictions, Freemasons are only acknowledged as full members of the particular Grand Lodge when they are raised to Master Mason. Once a member becomes a Master Mason's he is then eligible to be elected or appointed to an office in his Lodge and so begins his journey to the office of Presiding Master of his Lodge. In most Grand Lodges, this journey can take several years which enables the Brother to gain the required Masonic knowledge and the confidence to manage and rule his Lodge correctly and effectively and in accordance with accepted Masonic protocol and etiquette.

Members of the GLSA, on becoming Master Masons, are encouraged to join either the Royal Arch and/or the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. The Royal Arch degree is present in all main Masonic systems and in some jurisdictions this degree is worked as a "fourth" degree of Craft Freemasonry. In other jurisdictions it falls under a separate or appendant Order called a Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter.

In the three Craft degrees a Freemason is taught a series of practical lessons relating to the service of his

fellow man. Man is however not only a practical being, but also has an essential spiritual aspect to his nature. The Royal Arch degrees convey further moral and ethical lessons and develop this spiritual aspect of man's nature. By further explaining the practical lessons of Craft Freemasonry, the Royal Arch degrees extend the preceding degrees and the philosophical lessons conveyed thereby are appropriate to that stage in a member's Masonic growth. Some Grand Lodges regard this additional Masonic education to be so important that their members may only be elected or appointed as a Warden or Presiding Master in their Lodge if they are subscribing members of a Royal Arch Chapter and have attained the Royal Arch degree. It is generally accepted that the Royal Arch degree is the climax of Craft Freemasonry in that it has virtue for its aim, the glory of the Great Architect of the Universe for its object and the eternal welfare of man is considered in every part, point and letter of its mysteries.

Members of the GLSA are fortunate that the teachings of Royal Arch Freemasonry are assembled as stand-alone degrees under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of South Africa, which is an independent and sovereign Masonic body having its own Regulations and although it operates separately, it is an integral part of the GLSA.

By contrast, the GLSA recognises the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for South Africa as a sovereign and independent Masonic Order. There is, however, a mutual agreement that the suspension, exclusion and expulsion of members from the Grand Lodge will automatically apply to the Supreme Council and *vice versa*. The Supreme Council, while acknowledging that there is no higher degree than Master Mason, presents a philosophical background in the degrees it offers. These degrees will enhance the Master Mason's understanding of Masonic tenets and teaching and the pursuit of unity, tolerance and prosperity form the very basis of this Masonic Order.

To enable you, as a member of the Grand Lodge, to explore and obtain all the benefits which are readily available to you to increase your Masonic education and experience, I encourage you to re-read Section 7 of your Masonic Book of Life, which is easily accessible on GrandView. It is never too late to acquire more knowledge and understanding and so if you are a Master Mason, a Presiding Master or a Past Master and you have not yet done so, I encourage you to become a subscribing member of a Royal Arch or Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Chapter. The experience will enhance and enrich your Masonic journey.

**MW Bro John Smith OSM MSA
Grand Master**

Grand Master elected as new 1st Grand Principal

Although Royal Arch Freemasonry was introduced to South Africa by the English and Scottish Constitutions during the 1800s, the first Royal Arch chapter under the Netherlandic Constitution was only formed in 1953, being Chapter Mutual in Cape Town. Several further Royal Arch chapters were formed throughout the country thereafter and in 1967 all these chapters were removed from the register of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Netherlands and were placed under the Grand Lodge of South Africa. The then Grand Master, MW Bro Edward Conradie, also became the head of these Royal Arch chapters and assumed the title of First Grand Principal. In 1969 the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of South Africa was formed, but it decided to retain the Grand Master as its titular head. This situation persisted until 1983 when it was decided that the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of South Africa would formally elect its own First Grand Principal. From 1983 to the present, ten First Grand Principals, all members of the Grand Lodge, were elected and served their terms of office.

As the current First Grand Principal, MEC Johannes Britz, has served two terms of office and must retire during 2021, the Supreme Grand Chapter called for nominations for this office. On Saturday, 13 March the Grand Conclave of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of South Africa duly elected the Grand Master, MW Bro John Smith OSM MSA, as its next First Grand Principal. This will be the first time since 1983 that the Grand Master will also occupy the position of First Grand Principal. MW Bro Smith joined the Royal Arch Chapter de Goede Kaap in 1985 and was elected as its Most Excellent Zerubbabel in 1991. He thereafter served in various offices in the Provincial and Supreme Grand Chapter. In 2015 he was appointed as the Deputy First Grand Principal and as a result of his outstanding contribution to Royal Arch Masonry, he received the Meritorious Service Award (MSA) in 2018. The installation of MEC John Smith OSM MSA as the First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter will take place in Cape Town in September 2021.



One Month, One Mason

As an ongoing Public Relations initiative our GLSA Web Master, Wor Bro Jeremy Rundle, launched a series of articles focusing on a wide variety of Brethren who are members of our Grand Lodge.

Over the past few months, the contributors have come from all around South Africa and range from senior Brethren such as the Grand Master, to far more junior Brethren who are still in the formative phases of their Masonic journey. The objective is not to glorify

anybody's Masonic achievements, but to rather focus on their experiences and just why Freemasonry is an important part of their lives. Click on the following link

<https://www.grandlodge.co.za/news/>

This link will take you to the News section of our Web Site and, as you will see, the latest Mason featured is Wor Bro Riaan Croucamp of Losie Dagbreek in Bloemfontein who also happens to be the PGL Secretary and the 2020 recipient of the

"GLSA Secretary of the Year" award. Riaan's story is not only most interesting but is also an excellent example for you to follow as you develop your own narrative to submit for inclusion on our web site.

Please write your own story, send it to me at secretary@grandlodge.co.za and I will forward it to the Public Relations Committee on your behalf.

Deputy GM attends Madagascar AGM

On Saturday 6 May 2020, while the rest of us attended the Central AGM, the Deputy Grand Master, RW Bro Brandon Topham, represented the GLSA and our Grand Master at the Installation of the new Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Madagascar. RW Bro Topham was supported by RW Bro Nuno Calvet.



The Zoom meeting started at 8:00 am and it included representatives from Australia, Guinea, Gabon, Senegal, Mauritius, Ecuador and Benin.

Brandon advises us that he was informed that there were over 250 members present at the physical meeting at the Carlton Hotel in Antananoriva.

The 2½ hour long meeting, all in French, went smoothly and with the aid of his iPhone translation service, Brandon was able to follow the proceedings. At the end of the meeting, each visiting Grand Lodge was afforded 2 minutes to convey their congratulations and greetings. The feedback that we have received is that RW Bro Topham's message did the GLSA proud!

The first hour of the Zoom meeting had no sound from the meeting venue but other than that they were able to broadcast the proceedings in an interesting enough manner that it was almost as good as being physically present. As always, just supporting our Brethren in foreign Grand Lodges made a real difference and it was a privilege to participate.



The only true mistake in life, is being over-concerned about the fear of making one.

Celebrating 250 Years

Freemasonry was introduced to South Africa with the consecration of Lodge de Goede Hoop by the Grand East of the Netherlands in Cape Town on 2 May 1772. This means, of course, that 2022 will see us celebrating 250 years of Freemasonry in South Africa.

We know that the Castles and Cathedrals were built by teams of operative masons. Many of these magnificent structures, built in bygone times, have endured for hundreds of years. Despite sieges, bombardments,

storms and winds they have survived as a testament to the special skill and vision of the ancient



operative masons. *de Goede Hoop Temple in Cape Town* Freemasonry may be compared to these stone structures except that the building blocks which we use are not hewn in quarries but are rather created through the Brotherhood of like-minded men, through caring for each other, by forgiving each other's faults and frailties and by building traditions and practices which are passed on from one generation to another.

In the World in which we live today, it is easy to overlook the magnificence of what we see on a daily basis. We tend to take so much for granted and are often blind to the achievements which individual Freemasons contribute while building our grand edifice. Each individual contribution may often be quite modest and even insignificant and so individually we may not be able to identify something which will stand the test of time. The grave will further rob us of all our temporary achievements. It is only those ongoing commitments or "structures" which touch the lives of future generations which will be a testament to our own lives and these cannot be completed by any one of us acting alone.

Notwithstanding this, Freemasonry has stood the test of time. Formal Freemasonry has developed over the past 300 odd years and as a result of our capacity to embrace multi-cultural diversity and liberal values, we will celebrate 250 years of Freemasonry in South Africa in 2022. Freemasonry has changed and is still changing the lives of countless people. We will celebrate 250 years of individuals working alone and often working together to run small projects for the benefit of others or even just to open certain minds of closed thinking or discriminatory attitudes. We will celebrate 250 years of overcoming individual disputes for the benefit of the greater good and of learning to understand and accept our individual differences and nuances. What would South Africa look like today if there had been no Freemasons who had worked and are still working quietly together to chisel and mould our individual blocks to fit the unique contours of our land? While each of us and each stone we lay in the building process may individually have had no real significance, when we work side by side with each other, it is obvious that we have made and are still making a difference.

Next year we will certainly be celebrating the lives of such Brethren as Jacob de Mist, the first Deputy Grand Master National of the Netherlands, who played such a prominent role in the early formation of our structures around 1800. Men



such as Sir Johannes Truter who was the Deputy Grand Master National for over 40 years until his death in 1845 – he was also the first ever South African to be knighted by a British king.



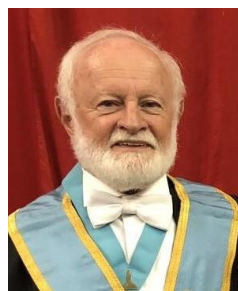
Sir Johannes Truter

and all the other Masonic giants who left such enormous footprints for us to follow. We remember their labours and the roles they played in carrying us forward.

Our celebrations will go far beyond recalling just our Masonic heroes, however, as the Grand Lodge of South Africa looks forward to celebrating the lives of every individual Freemason from all the Constitutions and of all the generations. We want to commemorate every single Brother who played a part, however small or "insignificant" it may have appeared at the time. They all contributed to making us what we are today.

Our celebrations will take place in all of our major cities and will culminate with the Grand Lodge AGM and celebration weekend at the de Goede Hoop Temple in Cape Town from 24 to 26 June 2022. This event is expected to attract Masonic leaders from Grand Lodges all over the international Masonic world.

We are also compiling a detailed Masonic history of South African Freemasonry. The editor in chief is RW Bro Brian Rossouw OSM and he and his Committee and contributors really are doing a superb job.



For your part, help us to prepare for this celebration by contacting a Brother who you do not know as well as you could.

RW Bro Brian Rossouw Meet up and learn his life story, what he has done, what he is proud of, where he has failed and what he still wants to achieve. Write it down and be the biographer to tell his story. Send us his story so we can tell the World the story of the stone that has made and is still making Freemasonry great, the stone that will lie next to you as part of the parapet on which future generations will stand and look out and see a bright future. Let each of your stories be our story. Let your failures teach us wisdom. Let your heartache give us strength. Let your successes be the beauty which we can all rejoice in. We are the stones of Freemasonry and your story is the cement that binds us together.

RW Bro Brandon Topham
Deputy Grand Master and Celebrations Convenor

Almoner's Corner

Our sincere condolences are extended to Wor Bro Mike Rhind (Unie) whose son Iain, a respected Scottish Mason, recently passed away from cancer. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this difficult time.

Wor Bro George Shein (Jock of the Bushveld) is slowly recovering from gunshot wounds after being shot during a work robbery. He has had extensive surgery and is paralysed in the left arm. It seems hard to believe, but he apparently remains very positive.

Our Royal Arch 1st Grand Principal and Grand Senior Warden, RW Bro Johan Britz (Libertas), is down with Covid but is coping well. He's had a tough year medically, so let's hope there's nothing more.

Wor Bro Hein van Rensburg (Jacob de Mist) has a malignant spot on one kidney and is getting radiation treatment. "Vasbyt" Hein, we are thinking of you.

Wor Bro Tommy Burke (Golden City) has taken a turn for the worse and is receiving aggressive treatment for an unknown debilitating virus. Stay strong Tommy, you are in our thoughts and prayers.

Wor Bro Thor Pedersen (de Goede Trouw) had the cancer in his eye tested and the Doctor gave him an all clear. Our prayers have been answered.

RW Bro Alan van der Vyver (Prins Frederik) underwent a procedure for some heart related issues and is recovering at home. We are thinking of you Alan and already missing you at our Lodge activities.

Our Grand Almoner, Wor Bro Andre Germishuys (de Goede Hoop), is having tests for excessive pain. Please keep him, and his daughter Desire who is getting weaker due to a kidney problem, in your prayers.

Bro Kearan Fourie (Prins Frederik) was attacked and stabbed multiple times on his way to work. He was admitted to hospital and is luckily in a stable condition. These incidents really are a shocking indictment of the world in which we are living. Get well soon, Kearan!

Bro Barrie Evrard (de Goede Hoop) has had major surgery on his leg and is slowly, but restlessly, making a recovery. Get well soon, Barrie, we care about you.

Wor Bro Bushy McElvey (Dromedaris) had a heart attack, went to hospital to have a stent put in and, so I am told, 4 days later was back to giving motorcycle classes. If it was anybody else it would be unbelievable!

Congratulations to Bro Ricky and Anja Plescia (Westerford) on the birth of daughter Sadie – and the completion of their pigeon pair. Enjoy every moment!

Bro Peter and Hancke Erasmus (de Goede Hoop) are expecting their first born. Thanks for the good news.

Remember, Brethren, that we are Freemasons and we care about those around us. Keep in touch with your older members, give the Lodge widows a regular call and always be ready with a word of encouragement.

.please share it with your Divisional Almoner.

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

Sentrale Afdeling Jaarvergadering

Die Sentrale Afdeling het sy jaarvergadering op Saterdag, 6 Maart per "Zoom" gehou. Die PGM, SV Br Frans Appelgryn, het almal verwelkom en die Grootmeester, HE Br John Smith ODV TVD, die geleentheid gebied om die teenwoordigheid van die Grootlosie Ampsdraers te erken en bedank vir hulle bywoning. Die afgestorwe Agb Brs Flippie Coetzer en Gawie Bouwer en Br Schalk Erasmus is plegtig onthou en die administrasie van die Afdeling is behoorlik afgehandel. *SV Br Frans Appelgryn*



Die GM het die PGM bedank vir 'n eerlike jaarverslag wat, onder andere, die skuif van Losie Diamond na Jagersfontein ingesluit het. Ons sien almal uit na die heropening van ons losies.

Getting back to Lodge

One thing that Freemasons have in common right now, is a desire to get back to Lodge. Covid lockdowns really have taken their toll and the Brethren want to share Masonic fellowship again. Zoom has a place and is here to stay, but it cannot replace meetings in Lodges.

Anyway, before we can hold any meetings at all, there are certain issues which simply cannot be ignored and which really do have to be attended to.

- 1 The Lodge buildings to be used have to be assessed and cleared from a Covid compliance point of view. We have to know how many people can attend any meeting and ensure that premises are properly cleaned before each and every event.
- 2 The Lodge, Chapter or Masonic group using the premises must ensure that they are properly prepared for the meeting. All of the required documents must be completed and a full set of PPE must always be available.
- 3 There has got to be a certified Covid Compliance Officer at every meeting. This rule is absolutely non-negotiable, Brethren – No CCO, No Meeting! The training is available so DO IT NOW!
- 4 Our Rituals have been temporarily modified to cater for Covid demands such as social distancing. These have got to be applied and the users must be sufficiently familiar with them to ensure that the Candidate still has a Quality experience.

Brethren, Covid really has been and still is very real and very threatening. Please, please do everything in your power to ensure the safety of your Brethren!

Covid Meeting Registration made Easy!

On entering the venue (Temple) Brethren attending any meeting under the GLSA have first got to .register their personal details and record such information as their temperature. GrandView have made this process super easy for GLSA members. When you enter the Temple, you log into your phone's GrandView app, click on "COVID-19 Compliance Questionnaire" and enter the details. GrandView just gets better and better!