

# October 2008 Communication Address

## Welcome

Brethren, I welcome you this evening to the 2008 Half-Yearly Communication. I extend a particular welcome to those brethren who have travelled a considerable distance from either country South Australia or from the Northern Territory

I am delighted to welcome Entered Apprentice Freemasons with us tonight.

Thank you all for giving your valuable time to be in attendance at this important function.

## Contemporary Communication

In many parts of today's society there is a heightened demand for instant results in all manner of activities. Amongst the most frequent and obvious examples for the requirement for instant communication are the use of mobile telephones and emails. Some people believe that it is essential for their existence to be in a position where they must be able to instantly answer such communications. On the other side, there is often a strong expectation that when sending an email or making a mobile phone call that the recipient should either instantly answer, or should reply in a short period of time. A test of this is the following questions. How comfortable do you feel if you inadvertently leave your mobile phone at home and don't have it with you? Do you feel a little lost, or in some way separated from contact with others?

This is certainly the current modern method of communication and the form of communication that is expected within, and is simply just part of the regular daily habits of, the younger members of today's society.

You would be aware that the Grand Lodge Office has been progressively improving its electronic communication. It is certainly understood that there is still a long way to go to meet the general expectations of a contemporary society, but further efforts will be taken to lift the delivery of electronic communications as well as an upgrade of our website. In the latest Journal, the Grand Secretary stated that the Grand Office was ready to expand the distribution of formal communications to the membership in general and he requested that you register with Grand Lodge to receive these communications. I have; have you?

Within a Lodge, whilst it is required that its members be informed of relevant Lodge affairs, is it necessary for this information to be read at meetings?

Some Lodges are very efficient with their administration. They save time, their visitors are admitted earlier, their meetings conclude earlier and all have the opportunity to get home earlier. Their actions ensure that the requisite information is provided to all of their members, including the Tyler, and not just to those who are at the meeting.

How is this achieved?

- Minutes and financial statements are sent to all Lodge members prior to the meeting, either by post or email;
- Rather than reading notice papers from other Lodges, they use the District Summary provided by their District Grand Superintendent and add the details of other notice papers that the Lodge

receives; and then hand out a printed copy to each Lodge member, including the Tyler, when they arrive at the Lodge meeting. The members then don't have to try to make a note of the details of a particular event or to try later remember those details. This introduces an improvement in communication as well as administration efficiency.

## **Progressive Science**

Whilst there it is certainly important to enhance these methods of communication, on some occasions some candidates and newer members in Freemasonry are encouraged to achieve such an immediacy with their progression in Freemasonry. I am sure that we have heard the comments relating to the hastening of the initiation of a candidate: This can result in:

- overlooking or unduly expediting the very appropriate process of the Committee of Enquiry;
- not notifying Lodges nearest to where the candidate has resided (which is a requirement of our Regulations); or
- that there is haste to hold an initiation on the same night as the ballot.

None of these actions assist in instructing or demonstrating to the candidate that the progression through the three degrees should be moderated. It is not a race to be a Master Mason or Worshipful Master. It is a journey, a journey to reflect the journey of life.

We should allow the new Freemason to enjoy his role and his special position as an Entered Apprentice or as a Fellowcraft. Thus provide him sufficient time for that steady progression in the science, to understand the teachings that have been presented in each degree and with an appropriate development at each stage.

We should also avoid the hasty encouragement of a newly raised Master Mason to take an office position, without allowing him sufficient time to understand the responsibilities of that role and the future expectations and commitments. Allow them to enjoy Freemasonry.

## **Inducting a Candidate**

To facilitate that understanding in each degree, each Lodge has recently been provided with the updated handbook "*Inducting a Candidate: An Instructional and Educational Programme for the Induction of Candidates into Freemasonry*".

### **What is the purpose of this handbook?**

There are some parts of the Introduction of that handbook that I wish to share with you:

- Each candidate needs encouragement and instruction and this induction programme aims to help that to occur. It provided instructions and materials for the Induction Officer and helps to induct candidates into what is for them, a very different world – the world of Freemasonry;
- Our candidates need to know the organisation they have joined; and
- They should have an understanding of its history, stretching back over centuries.

The philosophy of Freemasonry is communicated through long-established ceremony and ritual. To the newcomer these at first may seem strange and he cannot be expected, particularly in his crucial early days with Freemasonry, to discover, understand and accept all of Freemasonry's ways unaided.

**If Lodges and Freemasonry are to flourish and grow**, it is essential that every candidate becomes a committed Freemason, the chief factor of which, is an understanding of what the Craft is about. It is

clear that we will be far better able to achieve this if, from the moment of his acceptance, **every Lodge** commits itself to the Masonic education of its candidates.

The handbook is intended to provide an effective basis for each Lodge to induct its candidates into Freemasonry and it consists of five stages of induction and education.

There has been considerable effort by the relevant brethren to prepare this handbook for your use and each Lodge has been provided with this working tool. It is not intended that it be left with the records of the Secretary, or simply placed on a shelf for display. It is a working tool to be used. I commend this handbook to you, and expect that it will be faithfully applied for the benefit of your candidates and Freemasonry.

### **Other Masonic Orders, including the Chapter and Mark**

I thank the leaders and senior officers of the Royal Arch Chapter and Mark Masonry for their attendance at the October Conference, this Communication and for their continued co-operation.

This is a continued positive demonstration of Masonic Orders working together for the mutual benefit of Freemasonry.

### **Deputy Grand Master**

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to the Deputy Grand Master for his continued support and encouragement. RW Bro Clark, I congratulate you on your election as our Grand Master for 2009-2010 and I wish you and your leadership team well in all your future endeavours and service to this Grand Lodge.

Brethren I remind you that the public Grand Installation of our Grand Master-Elect and the investiture of the team of Grand Officers and Grand Stewards will be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Your attendance to support our Grand Master-Elect and our Grand Lodge would be greatly appreciated. The opportunity will again be provided for individual Lodges to be recognised at the Grand Installation with a "Parade of Masters" and I ask that you encourage your Worshipful Master to participate.

### **Grand Office Staff**

In closing, Grand Secretary would you please accept my personal thanks, and also pass the same to your staff, for the continued contribution to the administration of the affairs of our Association. Their dedication, professionalism and efficient service is greatly appreciated by all.

### **Closing**

Brethren, I again thank you for your attendance at this the October 2008 Half-Yearly Communication of our Grand Lodge.

Graham Bollenhagen  
Grand Master  
11 October 2008