

APRIL 2009 – ANNUAL COMMUNICATION ADDRESS

WELCOME

Brethren, I welcome you to the 2009 Annual Communication of Grand Lodge and I make a special welcome to those who have travelled from many parts of country South Australia and particularly those who have travelled from the Northern Territory. I also welcome those Freemasons who are visiting from other jurisdictions.

It is also very pleasing to have the Fellowcraft Freemason who is with us tonight.

GRAND MASTER'S BUSHFIRE APPEAL

I wish to share with you the progress of the Grand Master's Bushfire Appeal. The generous donations and support from many individuals, from many Lodges and from other Masonic Orders is a fine example of the charity of Freemasons. At the Conference of the Grand Masters from Australia and New Zealand to be held early next week, discussion on the Victorian Bushfires is the first item on the agenda after business from the previous meeting in August of last year. You will be kept advised of the ultimate decision regarding this appeal, but as it is intended to provide a lasting contribution, an immediate decision is not expected.

The launch of this appeal was the first endeavour of such extent to utilise emails for the prompt distribution of a message to the general membership.

In turn, this was handled in different manners by individual Lodges. Whilst our network process at a Lodge level is reasonable, there needs to be recognition of its significant potential and for this networking to be improved; so that should there be a similar need for speedy communication, even more members can be promptly advised.

RECENT SUCCESSES IN FREEMASONRY

We can often hear the tales of Freemasonry past and of the large numbers of Freemasons that used to attend certain functions. Because of this judgment based upon the past, this can give an impression to some, that the future of Freemasonry is dire. Whilst that may be true for some Lodges, this certainly does not apply to the vast majority.

I now wish to share with you several recent examples of the positive future for Freemasonry:

- **Hyde Park Bankers Lodge**, with five entered apprentices, is an example of younger men bringing in others; well supported by effective mentoring, education and training programmes; and giving the younger members a true opportunity to be involved in the management of certain aspects of Lodge affairs.
- **The Lodge of Sincerity**, also with five entered apprentices, is an example of a Lodge interacting with its community. In conjunction with other Lodges in Murray Bridge a very successful men's health evening in Murray Bridge identified that Freemasonry exists, has a face and is alive and well.
- **Katherine Lodge of Fidelity**, currently reviewing seventeen expressions of interest in becoming a Freemason. Not all will proceed as the Lodge is ensuring the appropriate standards expected from a candidate. For a number of years this Lodge has been very active and visible in its community. They don't hide away in a Lodge building (they don't have one). Their membership *"has been taught to actively promote in their daily dealings, the philosophy of Freemasonry, in act as well as in deed, and*

are now reaping the benefits of this past hard work.” I will share with you another statement from that Lodge: “To accept, maintain and actively promote a positive attitude amongst our membership is in my experience, one of the hardest hurdles to overcome; as complacency and the attitudes of “she will be right”, or its “all too hard”, are all too easy and comfortable; except there is no future in this attitude.”

These are but a few examples of the positive future for Freemasonry, and there are others. But what are you doing to ensure that your Lodge also has a similar future? Under the leadership of our new Grand Master further support will be provided to assist Lodges. Listen to his message.

PROMOTION OF FREEMASONRY

Further promotion tools have been, or are in the process of being, provided to you. These include:

The car stickers that were provided in the last Journal. I encourage you to use them and if you want more of these stickers, they are readily available from the Grand Lodge Office. Be proud to be a Freemason and share our values.

Pamphlet holders. When visiting certain Lodge buildings in the metropolitan area, I had noticed that their notice board, which is often in an area accessed by the public, would often contain information regarding Mark, Chapter, Mariners, Order of the Eastern Star and several other Masonic Orders.

Whilst it is commendable to provide information about the Masonic family, what was obviously missing was any information regarding the Craft.

To remedy this, the District Grand Superintendents will be distributing these holders (free of charge) to certain Lodges; together with the promotional brochures regarding Freemasonry. I ask that these holders be properly maintained and replenished. If you have not read the promotional brochures that will be provided, please feel free to take them, read them and more importantly share them with others. These are further opportunities to promote Freemasonry to others and share our values, as well as ensuring that the membership is more informed. Please use these tools.

FREEMASONS INVESTMENT SCHEME

This scheme is just at its beginning and already has investments of approximately \$2 million and is growing. It took New Zealand twenty years to get to their current stage where they are receiving a benefit of \$1 million per annum.

This Investment Scheme is a continuing project and I look to you for your continued support and promotion.

This Scheme has been established by this jurisdiction and its details are to be presented at the Grand Masters’ Conference when the other jurisdictions will be encouraged to participate.

RETIRING GRAND OFFICERS AND GRAND STEWARDS

As I near the end of my term as Grand Master, I will take this last opportunity to express my grateful appreciation to those who have served Grand Lodge; for their dedication to their duties and for their contribution to Freemasonry.

I have already provided my thanks to many on a personal basis, but this is my final and public opportunity to express a collective appreciation to those who have served Grand Lodge in their various capacities during that term; be it those who have provide pastoral care, financial management, legal advice, educational support, general administration, music, care or the provision of a ceremonial example worthy of emulation.

These Officers and Stewards of Grand Lodge continue to volunteer their most valuable time in the service of our Grand Lodge.

Deputy Grand Master, our Grand Master-Elect, I thank you for your continued contribution to Freemasonry, and we all wish you well and pledge our support in your future role as our leader.

CLOSING

In closing, to you Grand Secretary and your staff, including the caretakers and the volunteers, thank you for the support, the patience, the friendliness and especially the quality of service that is provided to the membership from the staff of the Grand Lodge Office. I thank you all for your continued dedication and successful contribution to the affairs of our Grand Lodge.

Brethren all, I again thank you for your attendance at this April 2009 Communication of Grand Lodge and I look forward to your attendance at the Grand Installation on Saturday.

Graham Bollenhagen
Grand Master

15 April 2009