



December 2019

I appreciate that it has been “a long time” between newsletters. I have been waiting to receive the Minutes from the Grand Master’s Council held in September and the Grand Communications in October. We received a copy of the GM Council minutes just a week or so ago and today, I received a copy of the Minutes from the Quarterly Communications. It gives me great pleasure to communicate some of the details from those minutes.

- A request for a Brother to serve as Worshipful Master of Lodge No. 107, Colombo, Sri Lanka, though not having served the office of Warden in a Lodge under the Irish Constitution.



The Grand Master’s Council met at Freemasons’ Hall, Dublin on Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019 and the Quarterly Communications were held on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2019 at The Mourne Country Hotel, Newry. Abridged matters that can be discussed by the Provinces have been highlighted below.

### Confirmation of the Grand Lodge Officers for 2020

The Grand Masters Council confirmed the nomination of the Grand Lodge Officers for 2020 as submitted to Grand Lodge at the June 6<sup>th</sup> Communication.

### Dispensation under Law No. 118

The GM Council approved the following:

- A request for dispensation for a Brother to serve as Worshipful Master of St Finbar’s Lodge No. 129, Rossburgh, South Africa for a 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year.



Act of Remembrance at Fort Dunree.

### Act of Remembrance

It was agreed that an Act of Remembrance [was] held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 11.00 a.m. Ciaran Crone, Royal British Legion Parade Marshall agreed to participate and assist with the event.

### Education Committee

The Education Committee has met on three occasions, discussing various facets of its terms of reference, that is, to enrich the knowledge and improve the understanding of the fundamentals of Freemasonry, and to develop a strategy embracing both traditional and modern means of communication. It became evident that this remit was very wide, encompassed a wide range of topics, so it was decided to form three sub-committees to consider certain key elements, namely:

- Public Perception of the Order
- New Members and their Retention
- Membership Engagement.

R.W.Bro. Noel Drain is relinquishing his role as Chairman, citing personal reasons, but has agreed to stay on the Committee for the time being. I am delighted to announce that **R.W.Bro. Roger Matthews** has agreed to take over as Chairman.



# Provincial Grand Lodge of New Zealand

Under the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland



## Website

David Robinson, Administration and Support Manager presented an overview of the new Website.

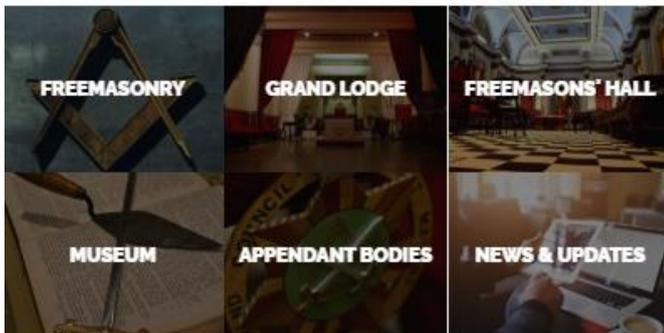
*Although this is still regarded as being a work-in-progress, I encourage all to visit this site.*



### About the Grand Lodge

The Grand Lodge of Ireland is the second most senior Grand Lodge in the world and the oldest in continuous existence. We welcome you to the website which will serve you as a guide to our Fraternity and is intended to assist you in finding the answers to some common questions.

If you wish to book a tour of Freemasons' Hall in Dublin, or if there is any information you require that you cannot find here, please contact us for assistance. [Read More](#)



## Guidance for the use of Social Media

Social media platforms have become an increasingly popular channel for communication in the 21st century. They provide ways to share content with a wide audience, and as such are tools for sharing information about Freemasonry and Masonic activities. However, as with any powerful tool, social media needs to be used with caution, as incorrect use can have a damaging impact on Freemasonry's public image, and therefore on Freemasonry itself.

The guidance applies to posts made by Freemasons on all social media platforms. The term 'post' refers to any action taken on social media, whether sharing original content, making a comment on

content someone else has shared (including 'liking' Facebook posts and Tweets), or re-sharing content to one's own connections.

## Laws & Constitutions

The Deputy Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Rodney McCurley handed in a Notice of Motion under the provision of Grand Lodge Law No. 22 that the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Ireland and the Grand Lodge of Instruction be revised and brought up to modern day requirements.

The Book of Constitutions comprising

The Laws and Regulations of

**The Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland**

to which are appended

The Old Charges, Prayers and Forms to be used in Lodges and the Book of Clothing and Insignia



Published by Authority of the Grand Lodge of Ireland Dublin

*The Grand Lodge Laws and Constitution are available for viewing on the new website.*

## Provincial Boundaries

Further to the introduction of Provincial Boundaries changes that included the following proposed amalgamations with some minor adjustments:

- North Connaught, South Connaught and Meath
- Munster & North Munster
- Midland Counties, South Easter and Wicklow & Wexford
- Metropolitan Area to become a Province and include Lodges in Drogheda and Dundalk

Consideration to be given to reducing the size of Antrim and Down .



## Provincial Visits

It is the intention that the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Assistant Grand Master and the Grand Secretary will meet with each of the Provincial Grand Masters and their senior team including the Provincial Grand Treasurer's and Secretary's.

The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Assistant Grand Master and the Grand Secretary will meet with the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim on 13th August 2019. A meeting with the Provincial Grand Lodge of Down will be arranged as soon as possible.

## Vision 2020 Website

The Vision 2020 website is now available at <https://grandmastersfestival.ie/>

## About Vision 2020

The Grand Lodge of Ireland, through its Lodges throughout Ireland and overseas is becoming increasingly recognised for its continuing support of non-masonic charities. The cumulative total each year distributed to a wide range of charities, normally chosen at local level, now runs at around 2 million euro.

Roughly every 5 years the Grand Master calls for an additional Festival to support specific Charities.

**Vision 2020** is the Grand Masters Festival now up and running until the end of 2020.

During each Festival our Lodges run a wide range of events with funds raised dedicated to Festival accounts with distribution to the Charities by way of both interim and final tranches. The final reconciliation, this time, is likely to be in June 2021.

The chosen Charities for Vision 2020 includes **Medecins Sans Frontieres**



In bringing assistance to those in greatest need, **Medecins Sans Frontieres** runs hospitals and clinics, performs surgery, battles epidemics, carries out vaccination campaigns, operates feeding centres and offers mental health care services. **MSF** constructs wells, dispenses drinking water and provides shelter materials.



**MSF** also treats patients with infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, sleeping sickness and HIV/AIDS and provides medical and psychological care to marginalised groups.

*“The impact of **Vision 2020** may be to support our work during emergencies, enabling us to respond quickly and effectively to provide for those in need. These needs can be great as can be seen by our work during the conflict in Yemen, following Cyclone Idai in Mozambique or during the Ebola epidemic in West Africa.*



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*At this time no one can be aware of what emergency and where would best suit Vision 2020 but during the term of your Festival we will, no doubt, be called for help at which time your project can be both confirmed and published.”*

In addition to the report from Grand Lodge, in the Midday News on TVNZ today, I saw a report of a refugee camp created on the Greek Island of Lesbos. The camp was designed for 2,000 people, yet over 18,000 are living there. In fact only half the people can be accommodated in the State-run camp; the remainder have had to set up makeshift lodgings in the neighbouring Olive Groves.



The camp is no place for a child, yet over 7,000 children have fled war-torn countries to the safety, security and humanity of Europe. Many are suffering severe mental health issues and over 150 have been referred to MSF Psychologists in the last 2 months alone. Within this makeshift camp, a tented-shack has been set up where MSF staff are trying to help children, just be children. Something that most of our children have the privilege of doing every day.



Every day, members of MSF are trying to make a difference. Let our efforts help MSF make that difference – to a group of our society that has no business but to just be children.



You can see the report on TVNZ On Demand at: <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/shows/one-news-at-midday/episodes/s2019-e234>

## Grand Masters Conference

Grand Lodge is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 4th June 2020 and the Grand Masters Conference will take place on Friday 5th and Saturday 6th June.

## News from around the Province



For those that havent seen the article below as published in the ODT on 26 November, 2019...

A Dunedin police officer has been recognised for his actions in the aftermath of the Christchurch mosque attacks on March 15.

Senior Constable John Karaka received a District Commander's Commendation last month for his dealings with the Muslim community in Dunedin.



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Snr Const Karaka, of Dunedin, said he thought he was just doing his job.

*"I am grateful to have been nominated for and received the award, but really I'm a small cog in the big wheel in the response to what happened."*

Following the attacks, Snr Const Karaka contacted local leaders in the Muslim community, including the President of the Otago Muslim Association. A hui was organised at a Dunedin marae for the day following the attacks, where affected communities, members of parliament and the former Dunedin Mayor Dave Cull met.

*"A lot of them were terrified and needed reassurance — we tried to provide that."*

Snr Const Karaka, who has been a member of the police for 24 years, took on the role of ethnic liaison officer last year alongside his role as an investigator.



Senior Constable John Karaka has been awarded the District Commander's Commendation for his work in the aftermath of the mosque attacks. PHOTO: CHRISTINE O'CONNOR

*"My goal in starting the role was to get out and connect with ethnic communities in Dunedin. I didn't realise how much making those connections and contacts would come to mean this year."*

Snr Const Karaka said many members of the Muslim community withdrew and it took time and effort to see that reversed.

*"I worked quite hard to build relationships with different ethnic communities and it wasn't until after March 15 I realised how crucial those relationships would be."*

- emma.perry@odt.co.nz

On behalf of all of us, congratulations John. You are a fine example of what means to be a Freemason and to live the fundamental principles of brotherly love, relief and truth.

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**This evening** we saw yet another Dunednite, VW Bro. David McBride, in his capacity as **Associate Professor and expert on Toxic Gases** appear on National TV, giving his consideration to the tragic event that has occurred on **White Island** this week.

Our thoughts are with all those involved: the fatalities, the injured, their friends and families, the Whakatane community, the 1<sup>st</sup> responders and public involved in the rescues, and the emergency staff that are continuing to help those in need.



VW Bro David McBride



As part of Ara's 348 175th celebrations, the Lodge donated an Ambulance to St. John's. It was pleasing to receive the following note from VW Bro. Ron Agnew of 454 today:

[His wife], Margaret is a Paramedic at Thames St John, and is delighted to have the use of the Ara348 vehicle at this time, as photos attached illustrate.

*You are probably aware, but it takes 5 patients, with up to 3 stretchers, plus 2 sitting, and a Nurse/Doctor only seat.*

*It is used for Waikato/Middlemore patient transfers every morning and every afternoon, seven days a week, and is a highly valued asset.*

*They are all so grateful to Ara.*

Kind regards.....

Ron AGNEW



## Lodge of Light

No.  454

### Founded 1870, Thames

*Brethren, please note in your diaries that 454 will be celebrating 150 years of Freemasonry on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020.*

This special event will coincide with our Communications, so I trust it will be well-supported by brethren from all four Lodges. Please book your travel and accommodation soon to avoid disappointment.

Registration forms can be obtained from your Lodge Secretary.

### Teddies for Loving Care



Most of you by now will be familiar with the teddies. As previously mentioned, these are the same teddies that are made for our Grand Lodges in Ireland, England and Scotland. If you are an avid watcher of the medical reality TV programmes from the UK, such as '24 Hours in A&E', you may spot these teddies in use. In an episode aired on the 30<sup>th</sup> November, a young girl was admitted to St. Georges Hospital, London after having stuck a



chickpea up her nose (what child hasn't done something like this). However she was not in favour of the procedure to extract it, so the medical staff gave her a teddy, and with the aid of some 'blue tack', got her to operate on the teddy using the same procedure to show that it will be a simple and painless procedure.



If you watch the episode, I can't say it help calm her down during her own procedure but it was a good example of the teddies in use.

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## Teddies for Loving Care sending teddy bears to children with measles in Samoa



The Trustees of the TLC Appeal were recently approached by the NZC to see if we could assist with the measles outbreak and be prepared to provide some teddy bears for use by the medical teams in Samoa.

To date, 5,000 children have contracted measles of which 70% or 3,500 have been aged 5 or less. Of those, 20% or 700 have been classed as critical and hospitalised, mainly in Apia, many of which have now been discharged home. However there are a further 200 new cases a day with the same proportions, so 140 aged 5 or less and 30 critical.

While the major crisis has passed with the immunisation rate now reaching population immunity levels, there are still 174 children in hospital (as of the 13<sup>th</sup> December) and they expected they will continue to admit 20-30 children daily over the next two weeks.

Accordingly we have arranged for 8 boxes (576 teddies) to be airfreighted to Apia this week. *Fliway International* have arranged all the freight and handling, including customs clearance at Apia, at cost.

The plan is that the teddies will be delivered to the main hospital in Apia and presented to the hospital by representatives of the local lodge, Calliope No. 252 NZC

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/world/2019/12/teddies-for-loving-care-sending-teddy-bears-to-children-with-measles-in-samoa.html>

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## FREEMASONRY AND CHRISTMAS

R.W. Bro Jim Bennie, Southern Cross Lodge No. 44, Vancouver B.C.(Canada)

The observance of Christmas doesn't seem to bring satisfaction to some people.

On one hand, many say it's too religious, and thus don't want Christmas trees in public buildings and nativity scenes within a shepherd's-crook length of government lawns.

On the other hand, many say it's not religious enough; it's too commercial.

They've been saying it for years it's the central theme behind the charming animated cartoon A Charlie Brown Christmas which was made some 40 years ago.

Setting that aside, what does Christmas mean to the Freemason?

Certainly Freemasonry is not a religion, Christian or otherwise. It leaves the determination on spiritual matters to each individual Mason, so long as he believes in the Almighty Creator. But there are certain messages from the story of Christmas that are applicable to all Masons, not just those who celebrate the birth of Jesus on December the 25th.

Many Christians feel God gave his greatest gift to mankind, and that Gift's birth is marked on Christmas Day. And the spirit of giving is also outlined in our Masonic ceremonies.

The Fellowcraft is reminded to practice charity whenever possible. There's the monetary charity of that portion of our ceremony. And there's another kind. The one referred to in the Charge in the same degree which admonishes

*"to relieve his necessities, soothe his afflictions, and do to him as you would that he, under similar circumstances, should do unto you."*

In other words, the Golden Rule, from the Sermon on the Mount, Christmas is a time of faith for our Christian brethren. But all Masons are reminded in our different degrees, of the principle of faith.

Therefore, let this time of year serve as a reminder to all Masons to practice their faith, whatever it may be. Faith and Charity are names of principal staves or rounds, but there is another round, and that is Hope in Salvation.

While Salvation has a particular connotation to those who believe in the story of the virgin birth, the concept of some kind of reward for following Masonic principles during our lives winds its way through the various degrees, as those of you familiar with the working tools explanations of the Second and Third Degrees well know.

So let this season of the year remind all Masons, no matter what their religious beliefs, to follow those universal tenets of the Craft- faith, hope and charity. Doing so should bring satisfaction to you at this time of the Year.

*I wish you and your nearest and dearest all good health and happiness at this special time of year. Enjoy the summer and I look forward to seeing you all next year.*

*Yours sincerely and fraternally,*

*Andrew*

*RW Bro. AG McGregor  
Provincial Grand Master.*