

Quarterly NEWS UPDATE

of Craft & Royal Arch Masonry in the District of South Africa, North



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DGM's Welcome

Warm and Fraternal Greetings, Brethren,

Brethren,

2026 is well underway, marked by renewed energy and the formal commencement of our District Strategy.

It is perhaps fitting to draw a parallel with the Chinese Year of the Fire Horse, a symbol of vigour, ambition, and dynamic momentum. These qualities are clearly reflected in the spirit currently evident across our District.

Our District's General Meeting in early February further affirmed this positive trajectory, underpinned by a robust and considered strategy. For the first time, the collective SWOT analyses of our Lodges have been consolidated, allowing for the identification of meaningful trends and the development of a comprehensive "heartbeat" report. This milestone equips us with a clear and informed path forward.

In reflecting on progress and transformation, one is reminded of Sir Isaac Newton's principle that energy cannot be created or destroyed but only transformed. Transformation is indeed evident within our District. Freemasons' Hall Johannesburg with over 140 solar panels on its roof fully self-sufficiency through solar power is a near reality. This achievement will soon be, without doubt, a remarkable first for a Masonic Hall of such scale and complexity, long regarded as our own "Park Lane."

I conclude by extending warm festive greetings to our Muslim Brethren who celebrated Eid, our Hindu Brethren who welcomed their New Year - Chaitra Navarathri (March 19) our Jewish Brethren observing Passover, and our Christian Brethren celebrating Easter.

Keep a keen eye open for our newly formatted Second Risings from the Communication Council, reflecting renewed energy and clear direction as we look ahead to a remarkable 2026.

Your District Grand Master,

Christopher van Gaalen



FROM THE EDITOR

Brethren,

Welcome to the initial newsletter of the year. As always, the news from across the District is always overwhelming and I extend my thanks to the contributors everywhere.

In my somewhat self-appointed capacity as the District Grand Raider of Lost Artifacts, I found myself traversing the digital byways of second-hand marketplaces, where, amidst the ordinary and forgotten, there occasionally emerges something of far greater significance.

On this occasion, my attention was drawn to a remarkable enamelled Lodge jewel, still paired with its original case, a small but enduring fragment of Masonic history, quietly awaiting rediscovery. Sensing its importance, I made enquiry with Rahere Lodge No. 2546, reaching out through their Secretary. In a pleasingly swift turn of events, within a matter of hours, their Secretary, WBro. Tim Yates, responded with both enthusiasm and fraternal interest. Arrangements were promptly concluded, and the jewel secured.

Rahere Lodge, being a Lodge of medical interest, has long counted among its members Brethren whose vocations carried them across the globe. It is therefore fitting that this jewel has resurfaced on South African soil. Among its possible former custodians are Bro. Benjamin Biggar, a surgeon in Durban who served in the South African Medical Corps during the Great War, and Bro Alexander Copeland, who served in the same Corps during the Second World War and, prior to 1957, practised as a surgeon at Stanger Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal, with a particular interest in the early detection of cancer.

Small in size, immeasurable in significance, this recovery stands as yet another quiet application of the “soft power” of Lyceum Lodge of Research No. 8682, where diligence, curiosity, and fraternal goodwill combine to preserve and restore that which might otherwise have been lost.

Thus, what may at first appear a simple recovery becomes something richer, a thread connecting service, sacrifice, and science, woven through time and distance, now awaiting its final journey home.

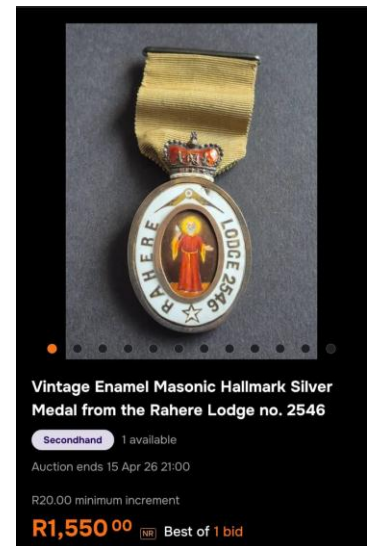
For now, it rests in safe custody at Freemasons’ Hall, Johannesburg, yet it does not belong to us. It awaits its rightful reunion with its Lodge in London.

Should any Brother be planning a visit to Freemasons’ Hall London, Great Queen Street, I would gladly welcome the opportunity to facilitate its safe passage and, in so doing, help join the dots across our far-reaching Brotherhood.

Fraternally yours

Brett Theron

DistGASec
IPM Lyceum Lodge of Research



THE DISTRICT GRAND STRATEGY

BEYOND SWOTS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS. A CALL TO ACTION

**WBro Victor Raison AsstDGM, District Strategy
Ambassador**

Brethren,

As 2026 gathers momentum with renewed energy and clear direction across our District, it is perhaps timely to reflect on the structured approach that is increasingly shaping our collective progress.

Some may perceive this as a shift towards a more “corporate” model, with an emphasis on SWOT analyses, reporting, policy, and strategy. Yet, in truth, this is entirely consistent with who we are. Our Working Tools remind us that we are members of a regular and well-governed society, not only in the world at large, but equally within the confines of our Lodge rooms. The Book of Constitutions stands as enduring evidence of this principle. Order, structure, and discipline are not new impositions, but fundamental tenets of our Institution. Indeed, it may be said that such principles have long guided organisations far beyond our own.

This renewed focus is already yielding encouraging results. As highlighted at the District General Meeting in February, our membership is showing positive growth. This is no coincidence. It is the result of a shared vision, aligned objectives, and the deliberate execution of a clearly defined District Strategy.

We are fortunate to be supported by committed and capable leaders across the District. The distinction between leadership and management remains central to our approach. Leadership is forward-looking, strategic, and empowering; it inspires growth and fosters continuity. Management, whilst necessary, is inherently focused on the present. Our task, therefore, is to ensure that those entrusted with office are equipped not merely to manage, but to lead.

In my role as Assistant District Grand Master, and as District Strategy Ambassador, I am privileged to contribute to this broader strategic framework, collaborating with various committees, including the Communications Committee, whose evolving digital presence is already strengthening engagement and connectivity throughout the District.

The introduction of Lodge Management Plans and SWOT analyses was, understandably, met with a degree of uncertainty in some quarters. However, through disciplined application, these tools have provided valuable insights. For the first time, we are developing a comprehensive, ground-level understanding of our District, forming a solid foundation upon which our strategy continues to evolve.

One of the most significant findings to emerge is the need to further strengthen leadership at Lodge and Chapter level. Installation is not an endpoint, but a point of departure. The responsibilities that follow extend well beyond ritual, requiring leadership, adaptability, and a clear sense of purpose.

To this end, Lyceum Lodge of Research, in collaboration with the District Grand Mentor, has been tasked with expanding its “Masters in the Making” initiative into a more comprehensive “Leaders in the Making” programme. This enhanced offering will encompass both Craft and Royal Arch, acknowledging their distinctions whilst reinforcing a unified leadership ethos.

The programme will be launched at Freemasons’ Hall Johannesburg, thereafter, being extended to country Lodges, and ultimately developed into a digital format. It is being designed as a practical, engaging, and forward-thinking initiative, aimed at equipping Brethren with the tools required to lead with confidence and effectiveness.

Brethren, the energy that has characterised the start of this year must now be sustained through purposeful action. The strategy is in place, the

direction is clear, and the opportunities before us are considerable.

I therefore encourage every Worshipful Master, Principal, and Officer to actively engage with these initiatives, to embrace the principles of leadership, and to contribute meaningfully to the continued advancement of our District. Keep a keen eye open for our new format Second Risings from the Communication Committee, delivered with renewed energy and direction, as together we shape a remarkable and defining 2026.

MODERN COMMUNICATION FOR THE MODERN MASON

WHO READS EMAILS ANYMORE?

**WBro Warren Flynn, District Communications
Officer**

Brethren,

As our District continues forward with renewed energy and clear direction, effective communication remains central to our progress. It is therefore worth considering the role and purpose of the Communication Council.

It is not an additional layer of committees, nor simply another WhatsApp group. Rather, it is a focused initiative designed to improve how we communicate across one of the United Grand Lodge of England's largest international Districts.

The principle is straightforward. Communication must be clear, consistent, and accessible. Just as importantly, it must be delivered through platforms that are relevant to the modern Mason. This is the purpose of the Communication Council.

From the outset, the aim has been to simplify. To reduce noise, to move away from overloaded email inboxes, and to ensure that Brethren are connected through a small number of

purposeful platforms. The goal is to communicate with members, not merely to them.

While simple in concept, this is a significant undertaking. The Council comprises a team of fifteen Brethren, operating as a digital secretariat for the District. As demonstrated at the District General Meeting, structured WhatsApp channels have been introduced, each serving a clear purpose, including Second Risings for District news, daily advancements, and charitable initiatives. All members are encouraged to subscribe and engage.

Many of the outcomes of this work are already visible. Live streaming from Lodge Room 1, digital messaging from the District Grand Master, and the large-format LED screens in the North and South Columns at the General Meeting all form part of this evolving communication approach.



Looking ahead, further developments are underway, including e-learning platforms, enhanced video conferencing, and additional digital tools. Each initiative is aimed at ensuring that our communication remains relevant, effective, and aligned with the needs of the District.

Brethren, communication is only effective when it is used. Its success depends on engagement.

I encourage every Brother to make use of these platforms, to stay informed, and to contribute to the flow of communication within the District.

Keep a keen eye open for our new format Second Risings, delivered with renewed energy and direction, as we continue to strengthen connection and clarity across the District in this remarkable year.

THE ROODEPOORT LODGE 131 YEARS GO WEST - THE WEST IS BEST

[Ed:] Indulge me for a moment as I reflect on my Mother Lodge, one of the original twelve lodges that founded our District, and which has recently celebrated the remarkable milestone of 131 years. Established as the Western-most English Lodge closest to Johannesburg, it remains, with justifiable pride as THE English Lodge in the west of the greater Johannesburg metropolitan area. The District's five-pillar strategy? Sorted! .

In March, WBro Brandon van Heerden was installed into the Chair of King Solomon. A notably swift progression through the lodge offices, I recall vividly his delivery of the First Degree Working Tools as an Entered Apprentice at a previous installation, marked by understandable nerves, standing alongside VWBro Leighton Shaw. It was therefore particularly gratifying to witness his confident and composed installation of his officers, this time with WBro Fernando Barradas officiating.

The lodge continues its compassionate and enduring association with St Lawrence's Children's Home. In keeping with tradition, Easter eggs were once again delivered, warmly received, and one suspects, very promptly enjoyed.

On a more personal note, I record with particular pride the recent raising of a young Brother to the Third Degree. Having observed his journey from youth to manhood, and now to full membership within the Craft, it is a moment of quiet satisfaction. My only regret is that I was unable to be present, owing to concurrent Royal Arch District duties. Nevertheless, congratulations

are due to Bro Josh Cronje. He stands as part of the future strength and continuity of the Lodge.



EXCUSILITIS FRATERNALIS

WAS THE MEETING TONIGHT?

WBro Egbert Harmse

WM Lyceum Lodge of Research

Acute Peri-Summons Excusilitis

A Highly Contagious Condition Observed in Otherwise Healthy Brethren

Brethren,

District medical observers have confirmed a sharp rise in a most unusual and highly selective condition: **Acute Peri-Summons Excusilitis**.

This modern strain is remarkable for its precision. It does not affect the Brother throughout the month, nor even the week. It activates exclusively within the 24 to 48-hour window preceding a Lodge meeting, rehearsal, or ceremony.

Up until that exact moment, the patient is entirely well.

Robust, even.

“Looking forward to Thursday,” he will declare with confidence, possibly while booking a round

of golf, a hunting weekend, and a dinner reservation in the same breath.

Then, without warning, the decline begins.

At T minus 48 hours, the first tremor: "Work might be tight."

At T minus 24 hours, the condition accelerates: "Remind me, is that this week?"

At T minus 12 hours, the full clinical picture emerges:

"I did not see the summons."
"I think I am coming down with something."
"My car is making a sound."

"My boss has discovered urgency."
"I have to... just... quickly... sort something out."

By T minus 2 hours, the patient is no longer reachable by any known communication method, including, but not limited to, WhatsApp, telephone, carrier pigeon, or summons printed on gold leaf.

And yet, Brethren, here lies the true marvel of the condition.

At T plus 12 hours, the same individual will reappear in high-definition colour, photographed on a golf course, at a braai, or on the back of a bakkie holding something recently hunted. Energy levels are exceptional. Complexion radiant. No trace of illness remains.

Science is baffled.

Current research suggests that upon opening the summons, microscopic Accountability Particles enter the system. In the majority of Brethren, these particles activate attendance. In affected individuals, however, the body rejects them violently, triggering a cascade of highly specific symptoms:

- Complete and irreversible Summons Amnesia.
- Sudden and urgent need to reorganise the garage.

- Deep philosophical reflection about "work-life balance."
 - Temporary loss of the ability to iron an apron.
 - Severe allergic reaction to Lodge regalia.
- Most concerning is the phenomenon of **Selective Device Failure**.

The afflicted Brother will report that he "did not see the message," despite having posted, liked, and commented on seventeen unrelated items in the same WhatsApp group within the previous hour, including a video of a man falling off a jet ski.

Extensive testing has confirmed that the condition does not affect:

- 04:30 departures for hunting trips.
- The accurate recollection of golf tee times.
- The ability to locate a premium whisky. Navigation to a restaurant booked three weeks in advance.
- Attendance at anything described as a "weekend away."

Indeed, Attendance Appetite Loss appears to apply exclusively to Lodge meetings and rehearsals, while appetite for ribeye remains entirely unaffected.

If left untreated, the condition may progress to chronic states, including:

- Permanent absence with occasional nostalgic commentary.
- Transformation into a "Name on the Roll."
- Statements beginning with "In my day..." despite limited recent evidence.

Treatment options do exist, though they require careful application.

Early intervention remains key. A firm and cheerful, "We will see you there, you are in the opening," has been shown to cause immediate discomfort but long-term recovery.

More advanced techniques include:

- Direct eye contact at the previous meeting
- Public acknowledgement of expected attendance.
- Strategic humour, including the gentle diagnosis of “Stage III Excusillitis”

In severe cases, Brethren may require exposure therapy, also known as “actually attending a meeting.”

Brethren, whilst we laugh, the observation remains.



And where necessary, let us prescribe the only known cure:

Turning up.

Because, strangely enough, the hunting weekend never forgets the date... and neither, it would seem, does the golf club.

FROM WHITE GLOVES TO WORKING GLOVES

AN OPERATIVE APPLICATION OF OUR SPECULATIVE CRAFT.

WBro Kobus Snyman, WM Columbia Lodge

On a bright Saturday morning, the Brethren of Columbia Lodge set aside the symbols of *Speculative Masonry* and stepped once more into the spirit of the *Operative Craft*. The white gloves and aprons, so carefully worn within the Lodge as emblems of purity, rectitude, and the moral labour of the speculative Mason, were exchanged for the more practical working gloves of those who build with hand, heart, and purpose. For a brief but meaningful moment, the Brethren returned to the condition of the ancient Operative Masons, whose tools were not only symbolic but functional, whose labour shaped stone rather than character alone. In doing so, they reminded themselves that our symbolism is never detached from action; rather, it is perfected through it.



Lodge life does not falter through lack of good intention, but through absence. The summons is not a suggestion. It is, as the name rather inconveniently implies, a summons.

And so, as this condition continues to spread, let us remain vigilant. Let us support one another.

Under the guidance of Bro Justin Webster, our Charity Steward, the Lodge assembled in service to the Door of Hope Children’s Mission, an organisation whose work so clearly reflects the Masonic virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity in living form.

Founded in 1999 by Cheryl Allen of the Berea Baptist Mission Church, Door of Hope began with a simple yet profoundly human mission: to provide safety and dignity to abandoned and orphaned infants in Johannesburg. From those modest beginnings, it has grown into a sanctuary of life and hope, having rescued over 2 200 babies and facilitated more than 850 adoptions over the past two decades. Today, operating from homes in Berea, Glenvista, and Hillbrow, it continues to care for approximately 60 to 80 children at any given time, offering not only shelter and sustenance, but love, stability, and the promise of a future.

Its vision continues to expand through the development of the Door of Hope Children’s Village south of Johannesburg, a long-term sanctuary designed to provide a permanent, family-style environment for up to 150 children who may not find immediate adoption. Alongside this, the internationally recognised “Baby Saver Box” remains one of its most vital initiatives, offering a safe and anonymous alternative to abandonment. Since its inception, it has already saved more than 250 infants.

For Columbia Lodge, this day of service was more than charitable engagement. It was a return to first principles. The Brethren worked side by side, not in ritual, but in reality, producing over 600 handmade bricks to assist in the construction of road paving for the new Children’s Village. In the dust, noise, and shared labour, the distinction between speculative and operative Masonry became beautifully thin.

Here, the symbolism of the white gloves was given fuller meaning. Within the Lodge, they signify moral cleanliness and the obligation to act justly. On this day, however, they were metaphorically replaced by working gloves,

stained not with impurity, but with purpose. It was a reminder that the purity we profess is proven not in ceremony alone, but in service rendered.

Throughout the day, the Junior Warden ensured that labour and refreshment were duly observed, calling the Brethren from work to rest and from rest to work, maintaining the ancient balance that defines both Masonry and fellowship. In this rhythm, pleasure and profit were found not in material reward, but in shared effort and



collective purpose.

As the day drew to a close, a quiet sense of fulfilment settled among the Brethren. Each Brother departed knowing that even the simplest act of labour, when undertaken in the spirit of Brotherhood, contributes to something far greater than itself.

In keeping with the symbolism of the Dove, long associated with peace, care, and charitable continuity, Columbia Lodge’s efforts may well be seen as part of a broader “flight” of compassion. In this sense, the Dove does not merely descend as symbol, but ascends through action, carrying the intentions of the Lodge outward into the world it seeks to improve.

True charity, as ever, is not measured in words spoken, but in hands that labour, hearts that give, and lives that are quietly, but meaningfully, changed.

Learn more about Door of Hope and their inspiring work at www.doorofhope.co.za

99TH INSTALLATION CEREMONY

96 VISITORS, 5 CONSTITUTIONS, 1
SMALL LODGE ROOM & BOUNDLESS
BROTHERLY LOVE

WBro Eric Cleaver, WM Kensington Lodge

What a truly humbling and historic evening it proved to be. On 26 March 2026, Kensington Lodge marked a significant milestone with its 99th Installation Ceremony, setting the stage for the forthcoming centenary year.

The atmosphere within the Temple was electric, as at least 96 visiting Brethren joined the members of Kensington Lodge to witness the proceedings. It was a rare and inspiring spectacle, with representation from all five Constitutions: the English, Scottish, Irish, the Grand Lodge of South Africa, and the Netherlandic. Such unity in diversity stood as a powerful testament to the universality of the Craft.

The evening served as a profound reminder of the enduring adage that one reaps what one sows. The remarkable support received from across the Masonic family reflected the dedication, commitment, and fraternal spirit consistently demonstrated by the Lodge.

A special and heartfelt note of gratitude is extended to WBro. Mathew Scott, who, at short notice, undertook the duties of Installing Master in place of WBro. Vossie. His readiness to serve exemplified the very essence of Masonic charity and ensured that the ceremony was conducted with the dignity and decorum befitting the occasion.

Through his guidance, WBro. Eric Cleaver was duly installed into the Chair of King Solomon. The newly installed Worshipful Master expressed deep humility and sincere appreciation, reflecting on the genuine brotherly love so clearly demonstrated by all in attendance.

As Kensington Lodge now turns its gaze toward its centenary year, it does so fortified by the energy and unity of this exceptional evening. Sincere thanks are extended to every Brother who travelled to be part of this memorable chapter in the Lodge's distinguished history.



CHARITY IN ACTION: FREEMASONRY IN SERVICE.

THE ABRI DE NUIT DE BELLE ROSE,
MAURITIUS

**WBro Nadeem Lallmamode, WM Lodge of
Friendship, Mauritius**

Charity occupies a central and defining place within Freemasonry. It is regarded not merely as an act of generosity, but as a moral obligation that calls upon every Mason to practise compassion, benevolence, and active concern for the welfare of others. True charity, in the Masonic sense, is expressed through sustained and meaningful action, directed especially toward those who find themselves at the margins of society. It is in this spirit that the Lodge of Friendship has committed itself to a

monthly charitable initiative in support of the residents of the Abri de Nuit de Belle Rose.

The Abri de Nuit de Belle Rose, operated under the aegis of Caritas, provides far more than temporary overnight accommodation. It serves as a vital point of support for individuals experiencing homelessness, social exclusion, and economic hardship. Many of its residents arrive after facing prolonged periods of instability, often marked by unemployment, family breakdown, illness, or other personal adversities. The shelter offers a safe and structured environment where basic human needs are met with dignity, respect, and understanding.



Beyond providing a bed and meals, the facility plays a vital role in accompanying its residents on a path toward reintegration into society. Through counselling, guidance, and referrals to relevant social and administrative services, residents are encouraged to regain structure,

responsibility, and confidence. Where possible, they are supported in accessing employment opportunities, securing longer-term accommodation, and rebuilding social and family ties. The objective is not to foster dependency, but to empower individuals to restore their autonomy and reclaim their place within society.

The work of Caritas extends well beyond the Abri de Nuit itself. As a charitable organisation deeply engaged in addressing poverty and social exclusion, it works tirelessly with those at the lower end of the social and economic spectrum. Its initiatives aim to alleviate immediate hardship while also addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability. Through its various programmes, Caritas seeks to uphold human dignity and to offer hope, support, and practical assistance to those whose circumstances have left them marginalised or forgotten.

In recognition of the importance of translating Masonic ideals into practical service, the Worshipful Master, WBro Nadeem Lallmamode, has taken a clear and deliberate commitment to place charity at the forefront of the Lodge's activities through a Freemasonry in Action initiative. This reflects a conscious resolve that the principles of Freemasonry should be actively lived and demonstrated beyond the confines of the Temple, through visible and sustained engagement with the wider community.

Within this framework, a monthly dinner is organised for the residents of the Abri de Nuit de Belle Rose on the third Thursday of every month. In true Mauritian spirit, where hospitality is not merely tradition but a way of life, these evenings are prepared with warmth, care, and a genuine sense of welcome. The Brethren come together not only to serve a meal, but to create a moment of shared humanity reminiscent of the island's deep cultural values of togetherness, respect, and community. The atmosphere is simple yet heartfelt, echoing the Mauritian home where no guest is ever turned away and every visitor is received with dignity and kindness. This

initiative is conducted under the guidance of the Charity Committee and the stewardship of the Charity Steward, Brother Jananda Moothoo.

On each occasion, Brethren prepare and serve a warm meal, creating an atmosphere of fellowship, respect, and inclusion. The dinners provide not only nourishment, but also an opportunity for conversation and human connection, reinforcing the sense that the residents are valued and respected.

It should be noted that, in keeping with legal and ethical obligations relating to privacy and data protection, photographs of the residents cannot be taken or published. This restriction is fully respected and aligns with both the policies of the Abri de Nuit and the broader Masonic principle of safeguarding the dignity and privacy of those assisted.

These monthly gatherings are more than acts of hospitality. They embody the Masonic understanding of charity as an expression of empathy, presence, and consistency. For the residents, the evening offers comfort, reassurance, and a reminder that they are not alone. For the Brethren, it serves as a powerful reminder of the responsibility that accompanies Masonic membership and of the transformative potential of charitable action when conducted with sincerity and humility.

In Freemasonry, charity is inseparable from the cultivation of moral character. Through charitable works, a Mason refines his sense of duty, strengthens his commitment to service, and contributes, in a practical way, to the alleviation of human suffering. The regularity and organisation of this initiative underscore the belief that charity should not be occasional or symbolic, but sustained, structured, and rooted in genuine concern for others.

The Lodge of Friendship No. 1696 EC remains steadfast in its support of the Abri de Nuit de Belle Rose and in its collaboration with Caritas. The Charity Committee, the Charity Steward, and all participating Brethren are to be commended for their dedication and generosity.

Through this ongoing Freemasonry in Action initiative, the Lodge reaffirms its commitment to translating Masonic values into meaningful service, contributing to the dignity, reintegration, and well-being of those most in need.

DISTRICT GRAND CHARITY

IN SERVICE TO THOSE IN NEED

At the commencement of the Christmas season, an extraordinary effort by the Brethren resulted in a substantial collection of toys, each one carefully sorted, classified, and thoughtfully wrapped. These were delivered to St Mary's Children's Home, an institution where great care and dedication are evident, and where the gifts were received with genuine appreciation and joy.



In addition, provisions to the value of over R2,500, comprising essential foodstuffs and basic necessities, were delivered to the Benoni AKTV in support of their ongoing feeding

scheme, a contribution that will assist in sustaining those most in need within the community.

Brethren are further reminded that a Second Rising has been called for the **annual blanket drive**. Lodges are warmly encouraged to support this initiative by procuring blankets through the District Office. With the continued rains extending into early autumn, the prospect of a particularly chilly winter is all but certain, and the need will be felt all the more keenly.

Through such efforts, the true spirit of Masonic charity is not only upheld but made visible, practical, and immediate.

FIRST WINTER BLANKETS

FLAME LILY LODGE STARTS THE DRIVE

Flame Lily Lodge distinguished itself as the first in the District to deliver winter blankets. It is perhaps no coincidence that the national flower of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, is the *Gloriosa superba*, a striking flame lily with vivid, flame-shaped petals. More than a flower of remarkable beauty, it symbolises warmth and hospitality, qualities deeply associated with those of that heritage. Inspired by this spirit, the Brethren of Flame Lily Lodge led the way in donating blankets to the Waverley Memory Care Centre, setting a fine example of practical charity in action.



SUSTAINED SUPPORT AT THUSO GLOBAL VILLAGE

TWO LODGES, ONCE CHARITY

Maritime Lodge and Semper Vigilans Lodge have jointly extended their charitable efforts to Thuso Global Village, providing essential foodstuffs together with Easter eggs for the children under its care. This contribution forms part of an ongoing commitment to support the centre and its vital work within the Nooitgedacht community.

Thuso Global Village serves between 35 and 40 children daily, ensuring that each child receives a nourishing meal, which, in many cases, may be the only meal of the day. Under the dedicated leadership of Principal Hene, supported by three assistant teachers, the centre offers a safe and structured environment where children may learn and play while their parents are at work. Operating from Monday to Friday, between 06:00 and 18:00, the school functions entirely on a no-fee basis, relying heavily on donations to sustain its operations.

Maritime Lodge has, over several years, maintained a steadfast relationship with the centre, contributing food, blankets, and undertaking repairs to critical infrastructure. Over the past twelve months alone, this support has amounted to nearly R50,000, reflecting a sustained commitment to the welfare of the children.

Semper Vigilans Lodge has now joined this endeavour, not only by providing Easter eggs for the children, but also by pledging ongoing monthly financial support towards the purchase of essential food supplies. This collaboration marks a meaningful strengthening of efforts to ensure the centre's continued ability to care for those it serves.



Looking ahead, several projects are envisaged to further improve the facilities and sustainability of Thuso Global Village. These include the installation of a borehole pump to secure water independence, the provision of uniforms and jerseys for the children, painting and general maintenance of the property, the planting of fruit trees and vegetables, and the enhancement of security measures at the premises.



Such initiatives stand as a testament to the enduring principle of charity in action, where practical assistance and long-term commitment combine to make a tangible difference in the lives of those most in need.

MY MOTHER LODGE

- BY BRO RUDYARD KIPLING (1886)

WBro Ken Barker - a regular contributor:

A renown mason, author of many works including *The Tyler's Toast*, *Kim & The Man Who Would Be King* - all with masonic tones and symbolism.

There was Rundle, Station Master,
An' Beazeley of the Rail,
An' 'Ackman, Commissariat,
An' Donkin' o' the Jail;
An' Blake, Conductor-Sergeant,
Our Master twice was 'e,
With 'im that kept the Europe-shop,
Old Framjee Eduljee.

Outside "Sergeant! Sir! Salute! Salaam!"
Inside "Brother," an' it doesn't do no 'arm.
We met upon the Level an' we parted on the
Square,
An' I was Junior Deacon in my Mother Lodge
out there!

We'd Bola Nath, Accountant,
An' Saul the Aden Jew,
An' Din Mohammed, draughtsman
Of the Survey Office too;
There was Babu Chuckerbutty,
An' Amir Singh the Sikh,
An' Castro from the fittin'-sheds,
The Roman Catholick!

We 'adn't good regalia,
An' our Lodge was old an' bare,
But we knew the Ancient Landmarks,
An' we kept 'em to a hair;
An' lookin' on it backwards
It often strikes me thus,

There ain't such things as infidels,
Excep', per'aps, it's us.

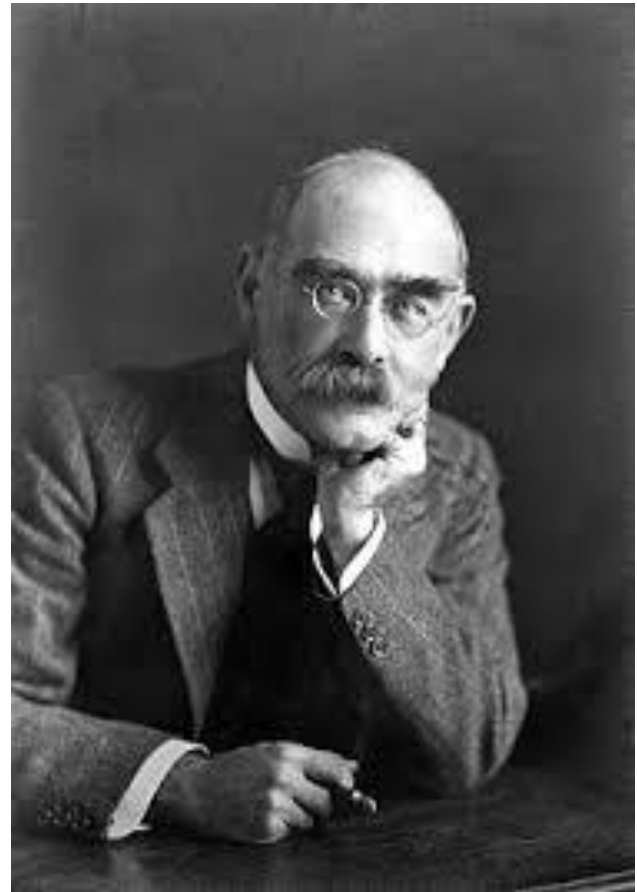
For monthly, after Labour,
We'd all sit down an' smoke
We dursn't give no banquets,
Lest a Brother's caste were broke,
An' man on man got talkin'
Religion an' the rest,
An' every man comparin'
Of the God 'e knew the best.

So man on man got talkin',
An' not a Brother stirred
Till mornin' waked the parrots
An' that dam' brain-fever bird;
We'd say 'twas 'ighly curious,
An' we'd all ride 'ome to bed,
With Mo'ammed, God, an' Shiva
Changin' pickets in our 'ead.

Full oft on Guv'ment service
This rovin' foot 'ath pressed,
An' bore fraternal greetin's
To the Lodges east an' west,
Accordin' as commanded
From Kohat to Singapore,
But I wish that I might see them
In my Mother Lodge once more!

I wish that I might see them,
My Brethren black an' brown,
With the trichies smellin' pleasant
An' the hog-darn passin' down;
An' the old khansamah snorin'
On the bottle-khana floor,
Like a Master in good standing
With my Mother Lodge once more.

Outside "Sergeant! Sir! Salute! Salaam!"
Inside "Brother," an' it doesn't do no 'arm.
We met upon the Level an' we parted on the
Square,
An' I was Junior Deacon in my Mother Lodge
out there!



[Ed:] Kipling was initiated into Freemasonry in Hope and Perseverance Lodge No. 782 EC, located in Lahore, Pakistan on 5 April 1886.

GUIDELINES FOR TAKING AN OBLIGATION BOUND BY THE SACRED VOLUME OF A FAITH.

WBro. Deacon Dr Vernon van Wyk

PAGChap Lyceum Lodge of Research

Some time ago there was a discussion on the Lyceum Lodge of Research WhatsApp group on Methods used to take an Obligation by Candidates of different faiths. The subject was also raised on the "Proud to be a UGLE Freemason" Facebook page on 25 January 2024. I thought that it may be of value to provide some short guidelines on this subject to the Lodges in our District. I am indebted to Brothers Mustapha Adamjee, Dill Dossa, and Nadeem

Lallmamode from Mauritius for their guidance on the subject.

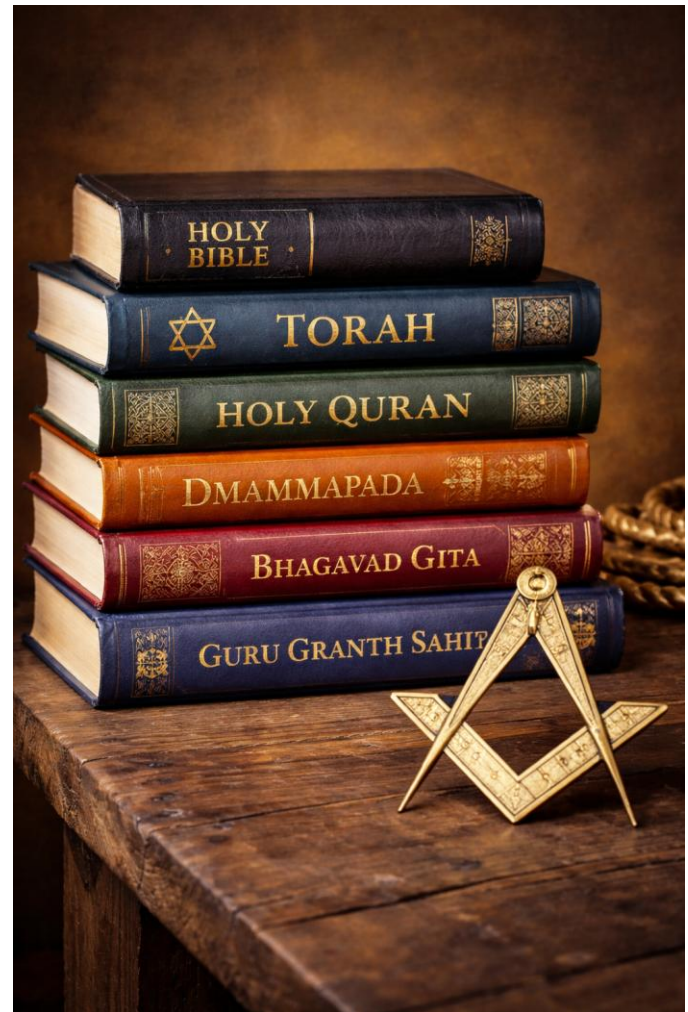
Freemasonry requires of all its members to believe that *God has revealed Himself, His will and purpose in the Volume of the Sacred Law.* The Ancient Landmarks and Constitutions of Freemasonry states the following:

“Let man’s religion or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the order, provided he believes in the glorious architect of heaven and earth.”

Paragraph four of Aims and Relationships of the Craft states:

“The Bible, referred to by Freemasons as the Volume of the Sacred Law, is always open in the lodge. Every candidate is required to take his obligation on that Book or on the Volume which is held by his particular creed to impart sanctity

Freemasons are tolerant of all religions professing faith in a Supreme Being and in lodges with memberships comprising of a variety of faiths, several different sacred texts, such as the Holy Bible, Quran or the Bhagavad Gita may be used. This is not done to place these sacred writings on a par with each other or to make a theological statement. If this were true, it would be unacceptable to any consistent Christian, Muslim, Jew, Hindu, etc. Such books are present in the Lodge chiefly to give solemn sanction to the taking of the obligation, much as it is used in civil courts. A member thus takes his obligation on the book which he honestly believes will give sacred sanction to his obligation to remain loyal to the organization *“without evasion, equivocation or mental reservation of any kind.”* Honesty demands that he affirm his obligation on the book he would regard as rendering the Obligation as *“binding to his conscience”* - which he cannot do if he does not believe in the sacred writings contained therein. This is done to avoid hypocrisy.



Because of the differences in customs in various religions, modifications are required in the method of obligation. In general, an obligation should be taken and sealed in such a way that the candidate regards it as unconditionally binding. Methods of taking an obligation bound by the Sacred Volume of a faith vary considerably and Lodges should be aware of what might be expected. Indeed, there can be variations within a faith as well, depending on the custom of the locality and/or country of origin of the Candidate. It is important to inform a Candidate beforehand that he will be expected to take an obligation and what his preference according to his *“mode of worship”* will be.

Where there are Brethren of different faiths in a lodge, the VSL of the Worshipful Master’s faith is placed on the pedestal before him. It is desirable to provide an additional pedestal in front of the Worshipful Master’s pedestal on

which to place any additional Sacred Volume's and so remove the temptation of placing any of them on top of the VSL on the pedestal. They should also never be placed at a different level than the open VSL. Remember they are equally considered Volumes of the Sacred Laws. It should also be noticed that in some cases a particular Sacred Volume will be used closed for the purposes herein and not open and the candidate may prefer not to take the oath with his hands on the VSL. (Not taking an oath with his hands on the VSL is his personal choice in terms of his "mode of worship").

Faith of Candidate and Sacred Volume Methods used for obligations.

1. **Christian** - The *King James Version of the Holy Bible* was originally used for obligating candidates only. It was not until 1760 that it became, on the proposition of William Preston, part of the "furniture" of the lodge. Now, of course it is always open in lodges at labour. The current method of obligating candidates on the Bible is with the person kneeling with his right hand on the VSL and the left in a position varying with the degree. The VSL is always open at the Old Testament during labour and usually on the Worshipful Master's pedestal. There is no official Grand Lodge ruling as how it should be placed or to the page at which it should be opened.¹

The Obligation is taken kneeling with the bare right hand on the Volume of the Sacred Law and the Square and Compasses on the left-hand open page facing the candidate. The Obligation is sealed with the lips. Some Christians may, in the light of Jesus' words in Matthew 5: 33 - 37 that "your yes be yes, and your no, no", not be willing to place their hand on the VSL nor seal the Obligation with the lips. It is thus advisable to consult with the candidate before the ceremony.

2. **Jewish** - *Torah*. (*King James Version of the Holy Bible* open at the Old Testament) The Obligation is taken with the candidate standing, with the kippah head covering. The Worshipful

Master will instruct the candidate to "cover" himself and take the obligation with his hands on the VSL. The candidate may seal the obligation by kissing the VSL as required.

3. **Muslim** - *Holy Quran*. The Obligation is taken with the Holy Quran closed and wrapped in a clean linen cloth. Advice was sought from the Iman of Kedah in 1952, who recommended that the candidate should be obligated with the closed Holy Quran held above his head, preferably by another Muslim brother, wearing gloves. The words "*hereby and hereon*" should be changed to "*hereby and hereunder*." If he is afterwards required to seal it with his lips, the Book should be kept wrapped up so that the lips do not actually touch it. Also note that at this point the candidate does not wear gloves and can only touch the Quran provided he has purified himself prior to entering the lodge after the manner of his religion. (He should always be so informed by his sponsors.)

Another method is to place the wrapped Koran on the pedestal, and the candidate places his hand on it (as with the Bible); the only difference is that the bare hand does not touch the Koran directly. This method is not so commonly used.

There are various versions of the Holy Quran in circulation. This is something to bear in mind in the eventuality that an Ahmadi/Qadiani is ever initiated so that we can cater to the initiate's belief. Likewise, the Wahabi's version differs here and there. It is advisable to consult with the candidate beforehand and that he possibly bring his accepted version of the VSL.

4. **Buddhist** (Mahayana Sect only²)
- *Dhammapada* or the *Holy Bible of both Old and New Testaments* may be used. The Candidate needs to be made aware long before the meeting that he will be undertaking an Obligation. This gives him the opportunity of praying in advance at his temple. He may or may not seal the Obligation with his lips, depending on his received custom. Otherwise, the procedure is as for the Holy Bible, namely

kneeling with his right hand on the VSL and the left in a position varying with the degree.

5. Hindu - *Bhagavad Gita*. The Gita may be opened and touched with the hands, but not sealed with the lip, so the final instruction by the Worshipful Master to that effect should be omitted and replaced with an instruction to salute it in the manner customary to the Candidate's faith. This is normally by placing both hands on the Gita, bringing them to the forehead and then to the chest with the palms together.

6. Sikh - This is not a dominant religion in our part of the globe, but we must be prepared for the eventuality. The *Guru Granth Sahib or Japji Sahib* is placed to the west of the Lodge VSL if not the primary VSL used. When using the *Guru Granth Sahib* shoes are removed to conduct a very simple, but moving act of approaching bowing to the book, uncovering, opening, closing, recovering it, bowing to it, and retreating backwards from it before the shoes are replaced and events resume their normal course. As the *Guru Granth Sahib* is too voluminous and requires the above rituals for handling, the *Japji Sahib* may be preferred as it can be handled respectfully with shoes on. There is no objection to touching the wrapped Book but sealing it in the accepted Masonic Manner with the lips is NOT permitted. The Procedures may possibly be as for the Holy Bible, namely with the person kneeling with his right hand on the VSL and the left in a position varying with the degree, except that sealing with the lips should be replaced with a reverential bow by the candidate. The Worshipful Master providing suitable words for the salutation at this point. The unwrapped book should not be touched by a non-Sikh.

¹ In June 2024 I wrote a paper titled "Openings of the Volume of Sacred Law" in which the various portions in various Constitutions are discussed

² The Hinayana Sect: Mainly in India, Thailand and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka do not believe in a Supreme Being and hence are not eligible to be Freemasons)

References:

This guidance notes have been prepared from the

i Paper by V W Bro Rev Neville Barker Cryer Past Grand Chaplain in AQC vol. 90 pp. 85-91

ii 'The Volumes of the Sacred Law' by V.W. Bro. Lin Boon Par, Singapore, 22 May 1972 iii. "Masonry Under Cross examination" Questions Christians ask of Freemasonry"

i iv. Cognisance was also taken of comments by Brothers Andranik Ashdjian and Amarinder Singh Brar on Facebook site "Proud to be a UGLE Freemason" on 25 January 2024.

ii Consultation with Brothers Mustapha Adamjee, Dill Dossa, and Nadeem Lallmamode from Mauritius

NORWOOD TEMPLE AND LODGE

NORWOOD LODGE - RESILIENCE IN ADVERSITY AND CHARITY IN ACTION

What can only be described as one of the wettest summers in modern South African memory brought relentless and unyielding rain. It seemed, at times, as though the heavens had opened for forty days and forty nights, and even longer. Indeed, such was the deluge that one might jest that the Brethren of the Royal Ark Mariners could well have taken up their working tools and constructed an Ark.

Jokes aside, the severity of this was felt most acutely toward the close of 2025, when the roof of Norwood Temple succumbed to the sustained pressure of the rains, collapsing during a typical Johannesburg afternoon thunderstorm.

In true Masonic spirit, a swift and coordinated response was immediately set in motion. Emergency scaffolding was erected to preserve the structural integrity of the building, while urgent funding was sought and duly approved through the Heritage Fund. Repairs have since been completed, and under the careful scrutiny of WBro. Woodward, one can only imagine the precision and craftsmanship that guided the restoration which is nearly complete.

Despite being rendered, in effect, temporarily without a home, Norwood Lodge has continued to distinguish itself through unwavering commitment to charity and service:

ADDITIONAL TOY DONATION TO BHCC HOSPITAL AND CLINIC OUTREACH

Following the Lodge's initial toy donation initiative, Bro. Morné Steenekamp facilitated an additional contribution of toys to the BHCC Hospital and Clinic Outreach. These items will bring comfort and joy to children receiving care at government hospitals and clinics within the programme. The donation was received by Ms Brenda Erasmus on behalf of BHCC.



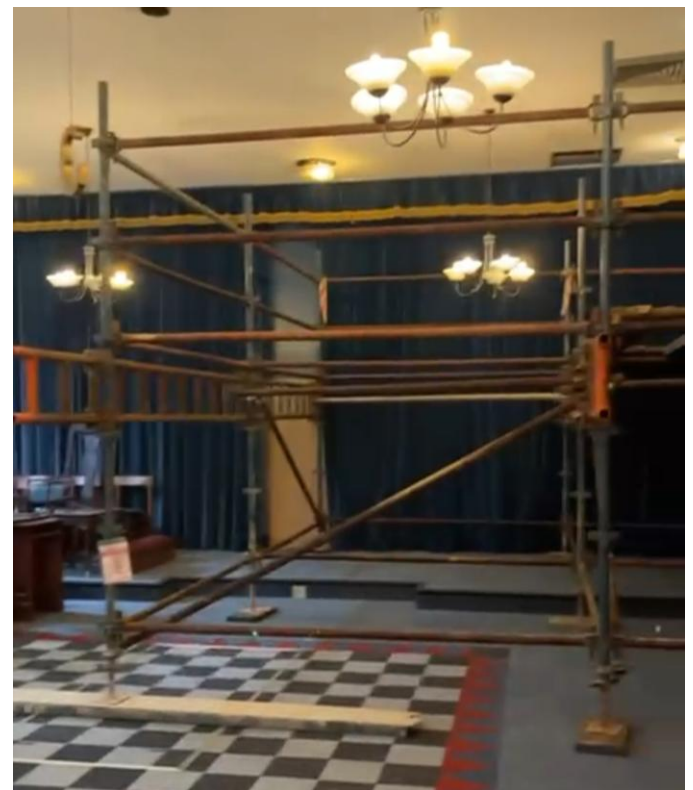
SECOND-HAND CLOTHING DONATION TO BHCC OUTREACH

The Lodge further organised a collection of good-quality second-hand clothing for distribution through the BHCC network. The generosity of the Brethren resulted in a trailer filled with donations, which were collected by Ms Brenda Erasmus for onward distribution to those in need.

SUPPORT FOR THE JOHANNESBURG CHILDREN'S HOME

Responding to an urgent needs list, the Brethren of Norwood Lodge purchased and delivered 140 kg of rice to the Johannesburg Children's Home. The donation was gratefully received by the Managing Director, Mr Siphso Mdluli.

RESTORATION OF THE LODGE ROOF



With the support of the Heritage Fund and the dedication of the Brethren, the necessary repairs to the Lodge roof have been successfully

completed, ensuring the preservation of this important Masonic space for future generations.

Through adversity, Norwood Lodge has demonstrated that the true strength of the Craft lies not in its buildings, but in the character, compassion, and unity of its members.

PYRAMID LODGE FARM STYLE MASONRY

FARM STYLE INITIATION

WBro Pierre Visser

Pyramid Lodge meets upon the Buffelskloof farm and homestead of W.Bro. Vic Raison, a place where the land itself seems to slow the passage of time. What was once a simple agricultural structure, used for the storage of farming implements, has been carefully and respectfully transformed into a Lodge room, retaining its rustic soul while being furnished with all the necessary conveniences of modern Masonry.

On this occasion, the Lodge was convened for a ceremony of Initiation for Bro Alen Patrick. The meeting of the 21st of March was one of particular note. A total of 26 Brethren gathered at Buffelskloof, evenly divided between 13 members and 13 visitors, arriving at a landscape already wrapped in the deepening hush of the countryside.

There, beside the still waters of a farm dam, the Lodge sits quietly within the land, as though it had always belonged there. As dusk settled, the air grew softer, carrying with it the scent of dry grass, distant earth, and the faint coolness rising from the water. The only sounds were those of nature at ease with itself, the slow pulse of crickets beginning their evening chorus, the occasional ripple across the dam's surface, and the low breath of wind moving through the trees like a whispered benediction.

Inside, the contrast was gentle but unmistakable. Lantern light replaced the fading sun, casting warm, shifting patterns across timber, stone, and polished brass. Shadows moved softly along the walls in rhythm with the flicker of flame,

giving the room a living quality, as though the building itself breathed with the Brethren assembled within it. The Initiation ceremony was conducted with care, dignity, and steady precision. Of particular note, the Junior Deacon's office was undertaken by our District Grand Master, RWBro Christopher van Gaalen, in his Steward's regalia.

His presence added a certain charged attentiveness to the proceedings, ensuring that more than a few Brethren remained delightfully on edge throughout. "Tonight is a full house, and it is pleasing to see the entire prospect of Masonry present here tonight enjoying Freemasonry."



The ritual work was delivered with assurance and sincerity, harmonising naturally with the setting, as though the ancient forms of the Craft were being gently carried by the land itself. The Brethren departed in high spirits, already looking forward with quiet anticipation to the next Initiation scheduled for the 15th of May.

As the formal labours concluded, the Festive Board awaited beneath the open rural night. Long tables were set with generous farm style fare, simple, hearty, and abundant.

The glow of lanterns hung in the still air, their light pooling warmly on wood and cloth, while beyond their reach the night remained vast and quiet. Conversation unfolded easily, unhurried, and genuine, carried by the sense that here, removed from the world, time had agreed to linger a little longer. Glasses clinked softly, chairs shifted on gravel, and laughter rose and faded into the night like passing wind.

Also in attendance were Brethren of the District Grand Lodge of the Scottish Constitution, Central South Africa: WBros Derrick Morris, District Grand Substitute Grand Master, Chris Bowels, District Grand Marshal and Ashley Augustus, District Grand Secretary.



In closing, WBro. Vic Raison captured the essence of the evening with quiet conviction: “I can think of no place I would rather be than here tonight. By the third week each month, I begin to feel the absence keenly, counting the

CHARITY, COMMUNITY, AND *CORPS* D'ESPRIT

VERONA LODGE - WHERE CARE MEETS “GEES”

WBro Alexander Russel

It is always a privilege to attend an Installation at Vernon Lodge, but it is in the Master’s report, particularly when addressing charity, that one truly appreciates the strength and character of this Lodge.

There is no ambiguity here. Vernon Lodge has its act together.

Charity is not treated as an obligation to be fulfilled, but as a natural extension of their Masonic life. Their calendar reflects a Lodge that is active, engaged, and united in purpose, from well-supported bowls days to convivial wine and whisky tastings, each event

strengthening the bonds between Brethren while contributing meaningfully to their charitable endeavours.



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Of particular note is their care and consideration for senior members of the community. In a recent initiative, the Lodge prepared and delivered care packs to residents of Elandvallei Home for the Aged, a simple yet deeply meaningful act that reflects both compassion and continuity, remembering those who have come before us and ensuring they are not forgotten.

Equally, their Ladies’ Day remains a cornerstone of the social calendar, a well-attended and much-anticipated occasion that recognises the essential role played by partners and families in supporting the life of the Lodge.

What distinguishes Vernon Lodge is not any single activity, but the consistency with which it approaches all aspects of its work. Charity, fellowship, and social engagement are not separate pursuits, but interwoven expressions of a shared *corps d'esprit*.

It is a Lodge that does not merely speak of Masonic values but lives them.



Peripatos - Lyceum Lodge of Research's Newsletter



Why “Peripatos”? What does a walkabout have to do with research and scholarship?

The original Peripatos was a pillared walkway around the Acropolis. Aristotle's Lyceum was held there, and Aristotle's teaching habit involved walking around as

he expounded his ideas. He was thus the original Peripatetic philosopher.

The Master's Voice



OPINION PIECE

A NOTICE TO THOSE WHO COME AFTER

WBro Egbert Harmse

FOUND AMONG THE RECORDS OF A LODGE AND SET DOWN FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF BRETHREN WHO INHERIT ITS CARE.

Every Lodge exists in time, yet it is not owned by time. The future is not given to any generation to know, yet it is given to each to contemplate and to prepare for. A Lodge does not arrive at its future by chance. It arrives there by intent and by gravity, carrying its history openly, never by accident, never by sentiment, and never by neglect.

The immediate past requires no interpretation. It stands as a faithful record of decisions taken, duties fulfilled, and obligations neglected. From these alone, the future takes its form. In this way, the Lodge is shaped not by circumstance, but by stewardship.

Endurance, therefore, is legacy.

Not every Brother will leave a mark upon the wider world. Few will design works of public magnitude or shape the affairs of cities, as some distinguished Brethren once did. Such achievements are honourable, but they are not the common measure.

For most, the truest and most durable legacy lies in the condition in which the Lodge is handed on.

Let it be recorded that some Lodges now standing were constituted more than a century ago, before electric light and before the conveniences now taken for granted. Meetings were ordered by the phases of the moon, not by preference, but by necessity, so that Brethren travelling by horseback might return home safely. Lodges such as Roodepoort and Coalfields did this not as exception, but as common practice.

These matters are not preserved in recollection alone. They are enshrined in handwritten minute books, in approved bylaws, and in records sanctioned under the highest authority of their time. They were written deliberately, approved formally, and preserved because they were understood to matter.

Communication was slow and exacting. Minutes and summonses were handwritten, copied by hand, and delivered by hand. Petitions were composed with care and transmitted with effort. Secretaries bore personal cost and responsibility in the faithful execution of their office. None of this was convenient, yet none of it was neglected.

And the work endured.

These Lodges survived periods of war, scarcity, and disruption. Their numbers diminished, yet their purpose did not. The Craft persisted, not because it was placed first in all things, but because it was taken seriously in its proper place. Attendance was planned. Participation was assumed. Duty was understood.

You who read this are present because those before you left something intact enough to be received.

That condition was not achieved by ease, but by expectation. Time was not discovered. It was ordered. Absence was accounted for. Mediocrity was not mistaken for harmony, nor was indifference excused as restraint.

Let it be clearly understood that the most consequential person connected to any Lodge is not

always seated within it. He is the man not yet present. The prospective Brother is the point within the circle. All that surrounds him, the work, the discipline, the seriousness, exists either to give that point meaning or to render it empty.

The point is singular. The circle gives it purpose. Without the point, the circle becomes form without substance.

No rule is broken when such a man turns away. Yet something is lost.

Freemasonry does not solicit. A man must come of his own free will and accord. This principle remains fixed. Yet it was never intended to permit indifference. It demands that those within the Lodge maintain such standards of conduct, instruction, and purpose that the Lodge may be worthy of discovery.

If, despite the advantages of the present age, a Lodge declines, the cause will not be mystery.

The return of a charter is not an event. It is a conclusion. It signifies that something entrusted was allowed to diminish, gradually and without sufficient resistance, until nothing remained that justified its preservation.

No penalty is imposed. None should be. The Craft governs by conscience, not by fear. A Lodge survives only because its members choose to act as custodians rather than occupants.

This Lodge was not given to you for use alone. It was entrusted to you for preservation and improvement.

Many Masters have preceded you. Many Brethren have laboured before you. All were temporary. None possessed the Lodge. Each held it in trust.

The duty of leaving it intact, and more than intact, does not rest upon office or seniority. It rests equally upon every Brother who benefits from its existence.

When you lay aside your tools, the measure will not be the remembrance of your name, but the condition of that which you leave behind.

It is not your Lodge.

It is your legacy.

Act accordingly.

Egbert Harmse

IT IS FOUND!

WHAT MASONIC WIVES REALLY DO IN LONDON

Mrs Tammy Theron - Immediate Past First Lady Lyceum Lodge of Research.

There appears to be a widely held belief that when a Mason travels, his wife enjoys a quiet and leisurely existence in his absence.

Allow me to correct the record.

Each year, I attend a corporate event in London, conveniently located within striking distance of Freemasons' Hall in Covent Garden. This, as any seasoned Masonic spouse will understand, is not a coincidence. It is a logistical operation.

Before departure, I am issued with what can only be described as a *non-negotiable procurement list*. At the very top sits the crown jewel of Masonic merchandise: the bath-time rubber duck.

Failure to return home with said duck is simply not an option. The domestic consequences have been made abundantly clear. Titles may be honorary, but moods are very real. I have no desire to elevate my husband to the rank of District Grand Grumpy.

Thus, upon checking into my hotel, I waste no time. Freemasons' Hall is my first point of call.

Naturally, I begin at the café. One does not rush these things. Seated in a leather armchair of such depth and

authority that it practically demands reflection, I order what can only be described as a cappuccino of architectural significance, accompanied by a pastry that requires no justification whatsoever.

Around me, Brethren begin to gather. There is a certain rhythm to it. Jackets are adjusted. Voices lower slightly. An air of purpose settles in. Meanwhile, I am quietly calculating how many rubber ducks constitute "too many" before it becomes a discussion at home.

Having spent an amount roughly equivalent to annual Lodge dues on entirely essential masonic merchandise, I settle in to enjoy my coffee and plan the next phase of operations.

Ah yes, Dr. Martens. A short walk away, and, as it happens, a personal priority.

Just as I prepare to leave, my phone pings. My husband, clearly deep in thought wherever he may be, has had what he considers a breakthrough:

"Please ask someone to show you the intended imperfection. It's somewhere in the floor tiles. "At this point, I pause. I look around. I reconsider several decisions that have led me to this exact moment.

What follows is a volley of voice notes, culminating in one of the most formal messages I have ever received, beginning with:

"Dear Sir and Brother, I bring you sincere and fraternal greetings from Lyceum..."

This, apparently, I am to deliver. In person. To security.

With all the confidence I can muster, I approach the desk and relay the message.

What happens next is extraordinary. I have never seen a man transition so rapidly from "pleasant staff

member” to “fully operational Mason.” The tone shifts. The posture changes. The mission is accepted.

Within moments, I am being personally escorted to the foyer before the Grand Temple. As we arrive, an announcement is made to a group of waiting Brethren: “Good afternoon, Brethren, the lady is spoken for.”

I do not question it. I simply continue walking.

There, just off to one side, is the objective. A small section of limestone flooring, perhaps 5cm by 5cm, quietly and deliberately out of sequence with the rest. The intended imperfection.

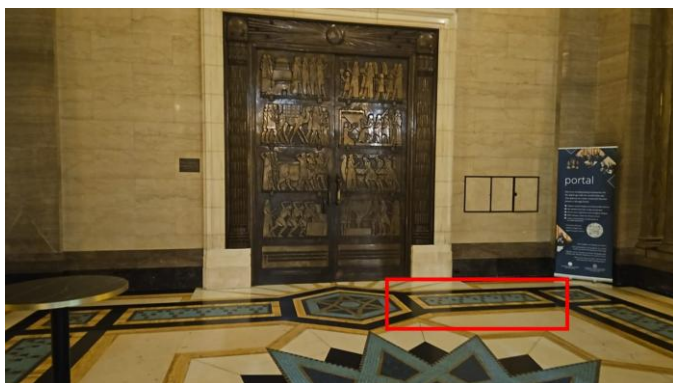
Photos are taken. Explanations are given. I nod, as though I have always had a deep and abiding interest in architectural anomalies.

Mission accomplished.

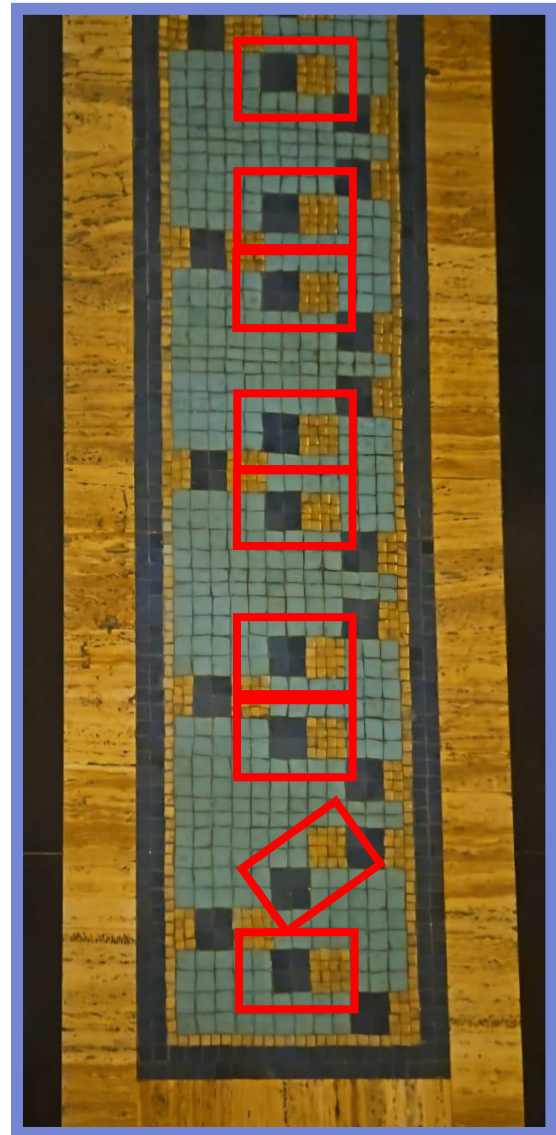
We part ways. I am thanked. I am nodded at. I am, I suspect, now part of a story being told somewhere else.

And with that, I continue on to Dr. Martens, where I am quite certain there exists a pair of boots that I both need and deserve after what can only be described as a successful Masonic field operation.

Below – the location outside the Grand Temple.



[Ed:] The image below shows the regular pattern in the mosaic floor tiles, notice that the 2nd from the bottom is out of alignment.



MASONIC TAROT CARDS

PRESERVING TRADITION, INSPIRING CONVERSATION

WBro Bojan Lazarevski PAGDC

Originally created by WBro Colin Browne several years ago, these Tarot cards are now set to be relaunched,

offering a distinctive gift and an engaging conversation piece.



Lyceum is currently evaluating production costs and, once an initial print run quantity has been determined, final pricing will be established.

In the meantime, should you wish to express your interest, kindly leave your details and you will be contacted as soon as the first sets become available. As is customary with an inaugural release, this first run will include an exclusive distinguishing feature, setting it apart from subsequent editions.

[Click here if you are interested in buying a set.](#)



LEADERS IN THE MAKING

MODERN MENTORING FOR MODERN MASONIC LEADERS

WBro Brett Theron DsitGASec, IPM Lyceum

Following WBro Vic Raison’s references to the “Leaders in the Making” seminars, Lyceum’s mandate is clearly twofold: firstly, Masonic research, and secondly, mentoring.

Having attended a “Masters in the Making” seminar some years ago, and with due respect to the Brother who delivered it, the experience felt somewhat clunky and dated. I recall driving home reflecting that it had been, regrettably, a poor use of both time and petrol. This impression, however, became the catalyst for rethinking the concept entirely.

Last year, I undertook a revision of the seminar with the deliberate aim of making the content relevant, engaging, and accessible to the modern Mason. The response was notably positive. Building on that momentum, and aligned with the renewed strategic focus, the seminar is now being further developed into a comprehensive Craft and Royal Arch programme. It will therefore speak directly to Masters, Wardens, and Principals, both current and elect.

The intention is to launch this initiative at Freemasons’ Hall, Johannesburg, before extending it to other regions. In time, the vision is to evolve the programme into a digital offering, whether as a virtual seminar series or preserved as a podcast for future reference.

These events will be promoted across all appropriate channels, including through the Communications Council. The programme is grounded in practical experience and shaped to ensure contemporary relevance.

It is a worthwhile initiative, and I look forward to seeing many of you there soon.

PRESERVED AND POSITIVELY PICKLED

A TREASURE DISCOVERED AND DECODED

From our founders Tom and Rodney.

[Ed: Our Worshipful Master gifted our founders a case of 6 bottles of Swanepoel Wine's best. What follows is worthy of reading twice. Enjoy!]

We arrived home after a leisurely peripatetic perambulation on the Plettlittoral to find that someone had left a Mysterious Chest Labelled "Long Lost Documents," at the entrance to our cave.

We prodded it; there was no lock or staple, so we broke away the outer sarcophagus, to find a smaller one, more delicate and covered with hieroglyphs: a large birdlike creature and wavy lines in a circle,

dominating the others. A Heron Dam? Duck Pond? No, it was statelier than a Duck, a Swan? Swan Lake? Maybe a Pond? Perhaps even a key to that rarest of creations: a Swan-pool?

Filled with excited anticipation, we carefully broached the inner Sarcophagus and discovered serried ranks of many exquisite Volumes.

The first in a pale green bottle. When we opened it, our room was filled with a magical aroma of mulberries and blackberries with a faint whiff of fynbos. We knew that we were on a journey of discovery. We could feel the reverence of the documentation: one of Honesty, respect for authority and yes! the love of Mankind.

We passed the bottle to and fro, gently inhaling its fragrance. We swore an oath never to invite any unworthy one to partake of its secrets and shook hands on it. Then we thought we may as well taste it, and ...!

We both swore that we could see those grapes growing high up against the Rocky Mountains in

Tulbagh. There and then we swore again (with a little more pedantic emphasis) to share our wonderful experience only with like-minded brethren and shake hands with them on this wonderful experience, at the same time saying the word:

'It Sure-Has' (pronounced, in consequence of our incipient difficulty in aspiration, **"Shiraz"**).

The second of our discoveries made us love the whole world. (No! We did not share the 'Sure Has'!) The Second Volume, you can well imagine, we saw in a new light, approaching a slight haze. It taught us to love everything God has given us: The Birds the Bees and Plettenberg Bay.

The volume came in a light brown bottle and once opened, the room was flooded with the smell of White Pear and Peaches.

Yes, we thought we should comprehensively and exhaustively taste it, all the time thinking of some poor fellow peeling all those red grapes to produce the true expression of Iconic Pinotage Grape - the Strength peculiar to Cape vintners.

We decided that we would only share this one with those whom we could trust in joining us in loving life. We would shake their hands, look them in the eye, and whisper the words **"White Peanut-Age"** (that we pronounced with a slight but inexplicably persistent slur). [Ed: White Pinotage.]

The third Degree in our discoveries was that the Grim Reaper was just around the corner. By now we had 'Studied' The 'Sure Has' and the 'Peanut-Age' entirely by ourselves, in hushed tones and with

increasing fascination. In this third volume we were startled to find out that they send the Grim Reaper up high in the Citrusdal Mountains to whack the Old Bush Vines... That's us guys!



But we steadfastly refused to be morbid, for it is a superb wine – wait for this! - concentrated aromas of citrus and rich honey notes with a lingering sandstone minerality. We realised that making a great harvest of our lives makes the next giant leap, one that has no fear; and are ready for that Grim Reaper, whom we will greet with a handshake and a ‘Chin-on Plank’ (muttered rapidly in a sibilant monotone, and twice over because our respective pronunciations were becoming, at this stage, not entirely congruent). [Ed: Chenin Blanc.]

Once we had finished (sic) these three, we needed to take a short rest before proceeding further.

After a snooze, a stretch, and a scratch we again went to work, strong enough to analyse the Fourth Step in our research and eager to make further progress.

The Fourth step came in very dark bottle, and we were pleased to read that it was wild fermented in a

Historic Stone cellar. Which brought warm synergies to our hearts reminding us how the rediscovery of the Holy Royal Arch at the temple in Jerusalem in a dark period of our history put God back in his rightful place in our hearts.

Every time we tasted (and re-tasted) this wine, with its aromas of bright red fruits such as cranberries and cherries, it brought to mind the trouble our poor old world is in; and this prompted a wish for likeminded men to stand together and shake hands – and to whisper the word ‘**Gran – H - Noir,**’ a prayer for our leaders (pronounced with a phonetic “eish” in the middle for their shortcomings). [Ed: Grenache noir.]

The Fifth Step was a second Dark Bottle, a second ‘**Peanut Age**’ but with this one with the skins on it, having aromas of red fruits but also fine grain tannins ensuring a long-lasting aftertaste.

It’s a wine that has made its Mark; it stands strong and tall and forever in our hearts. It reminded us to make use of the talents with which our

Creator has blessed us; and to use those talents to the benefit of our world and its people.

We again greet you with the same the word ‘**Peanut-Age**’ - but now with the honest ruddy complexion that marks our journey thus far.

The last and final volume was the smallest of all in size but one that embodies a great promise. It combines all the Excellent grapes in Tulbagh, to create a smooth dance on your palate; and it brings a warm glow to your heart, at the end of a Perfect evening. A Most Wise choice.

It is with rumbustious joy that we thank you for entrusting us with these documents for our thorough and earnest perusal; and we greet you with a loud Huzzah! and again, Huzzah!

Rodney Grosskopff and Tom Cloete.

HUZZAH! HUZZAH! HUZZAH!