

Engage Newsletter #112

2016 Grand Installation



The 2016 Grand Installation of RWBro. Don Reynolds is fast approaching. Dates and venues have been confirmed for the following associated functions – please enter these into your calendar.

Visit the Rendezvous Hotel website at: [Rendezvous Hotel](#)

Contact Natalie at the Rendezvous Hotel to make your reservation on (03) 9250 1888 or email reservations.melbourne@rendezvoushotels.com

Register with the Conference Secretariat online by visiting: www.hpe.com.au or download the form at http://www.freemasonsvic.net.au/media/uploads/GIBrochure_2016.pdf for printing and fax to High Profile Events on 03-9596 6668.

Deputy Grand Master's Message



With our Grand Master MWBro. Hillel Benedykt and his wife Sue enjoying a well-earned break visiting family in London it is opportune on their behalf and from Mya and I, that we extend New Year wishes and trust that all Brethren and their families have enjoyed the festive season and are looking forward to a safe and happy 2016.

In high-jacking our Grand Master's message, Mya and I are certainly looking forward to the term ahead and extend an invitation to all Freemasons, their families and friends to join us to celebrate the Grand Installation and an exciting number of associated functions full of surprises from Thursday 31 March to 3 April 2016. For more information click on the tab to the right of this edition of *engage!* Newsletter and register your interest.

As leaders of our great organisation we are gratified at the philanthropic activities of Lodges, Districts and individual Brethren within many of our Victorian communities and the way in which we are supported by the Freemasons Foundation. Grand Master MWBro. Hillel, Sue, Mya and I joined with a number of Past Grand Masters, their wives and a number of Brethren and families visited the annual meeting of the Wakanyanas on Monday 28 December at the Bellarine Masonic Centre in Queenscliff. While it was my first visit to this gathering I had been aware of its existence dating back to the early 70's when my father would return from the gathering with many stories. The Wakanyanas raise funds and support for The Cottage by the Sea a non-government, not-for-profit organisation caring and mentoring disadvantaged young people. Despite the undue attention by the self-appointed Auctioneer in WBro. Don Robinson, it was a most enjoyable day with some passionate Freemasons.

Following on from my address at the September Quarterly Communications we need to remember that there is nothing improper about receiving recognition for our assistance in the community. The Square and Compasses is a powerful symbol that conveys to the community that we are supporting them.

RWBro. Don Reynolds

Deputy Grand Master – Grand Master Elect

2016 New Year Resolutions



Happy New Year Brethren, I hope you and your families have a very happy and healthy 2016.

It is often the case that at New Year time, people make resolutions; about losing weight, going to the gym, changing career, etc.. Often these are readily forgotten or put in the too hard basket.

My challenge to each of us this year, is for every one of us to make a difference, for the good of the craft in Victoria. Our aim must be not to just do a mixture of things by impulse, but do a specific number of small things brought together. So where to start?

Well let me share some information with you:

1. We have recently undertaken a survey of membership opinions on the challenges/opportunities we face. This survey is still open for your input and the login is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CBQB3PF>

So far the results have overwhelmingly confirmed that each of us has as a major focus:

- a. That we are concerned about declining membership;
- b. That we believe we need to restore our confidence in belonging to Freemasonry and help us promote that.

So to everyone, I challenge each of you to start talking Freemasonry up. As the oldest fraternity in the world that has a track record in improving an individuals' worth to his community, we have much to be proud of. Also, to increase membership let's all bring one new friend to a Lodge function this year. If only one out of 10 decide to join Freemasonry we will have increased our membership by 1,000. Seems a pretty small step to start, but it can achieve a great deal.

2. While the current organisational structure has served us well and achieved a number of significant milestones, as we look to implement the new strategic plan, it has been decided to implement a wide-ranging review of Grand Lodge operations. This has a focus on improving the performance of the Board, the various committees, principal portfolios and the Grand Secretariat. The aim is to have a streamlined structure to increase the effective implementation of the 2016 Strategic Plan. This process is currently under-way and further details on this will be provided in early course.

3. The survey results will form the starting base for directing the 2016 Strategic Plan. As mentioned previously, the plan will be formulated by a group representative of the broad spectrum of the membership. When it is in draft form, there will be a number of information sessions to allow input from the broader membership. This Strategic Plan will focus on the key issues, with realistic timelines for success, but it will be rigorous and all Brethren will have a role to play in its effective implementation.

As I look forward, I believe we have many fantastic opportunities to reinvigorate our craft in Victoria.

I know we can improve in a number of areas and together we can make a difference.

As Bro. Mark Twain said *"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret to getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small, manageable tasks and then starting on the*

first one”.

So Brethren, let us all start a new chapter in making a difference to our wonderful craft in Victoria.

Yours fraternally

RWBro. Keith Murray, PJGW

President, Board of General Purposes

Vanuatu Appeal raises \$11,000



After deducting bank fees and charges for the transfer of funds to Vanuatu and the cost of newspaper advertisements for the Appeal raffle, a whopping \$11,000 was transferred to the Account of the Lodge of Discovery in Vanuatu who will manage the disbursement of the funds.

Bro. Rokovic from the Lord Northcote Lodge is also a member of the Lodge of Discovery in Vanuatu so he will represent Freemasons Victoria in a symbolic hand over in March.

Sincere thanks to members of the Freemasons Victoria Vanuatu Relief Appeal Project Team WBro. Bob Ashe, Lodge of Australia Felix, WBro. Eric Williams and WBro. George Finnis, Lord Northcote Lodge, all other Lodges and individuals for your donations and to the raffle prize donors and ticket sellers.

VWBro. Jim Puohotaua

Project Manager

Freemasons Victoria Vanuatu Relief Appeal Committee

Bendigo Masonic Scholarship Fund celebrates its 25th year



The Bendigo Masonic Scholarship Fund celebrated its 25th year in 2015 by presenting awards worth \$4,400, its highest total ever.

Since it was formed in 1991, the Fund has given Transition Scholarships to local students worth more than \$50,000. Each year it invites local primary and secondary schools to nominate a student who has achieved notably, but who has overcome some hurdles to get there. The achievements are usually academic, but often also include leadership roles within their school community: school captains, peer mediators, charity work, sport and so on. The intention is to let a student know that someone out there is aware of their efforts, and their difficulties, and is proud of them for making the effort to do well.

The awards are called Transition Scholarships as they are given to Grade 6 students about to start secondary school (\$300) and to Year 10 students about to begin VCE (\$500). A committee of local Lodge members has the difficult job each year of considering the school applications and choosing the final winners. Funds come from the Bendigo Lodges, other Masonic orders as well as the Bendigo Masonic Auxiliary, and the Freemasons Foundation.

This year, four secondary scholarships were presented to students from Bendigo South East College, Crusoe College, Eaglehawk Secondary College and Weeroona College. Eight primary scholarships were given to students from Eaglehawk North, Eppalock, Kangaroo Flat, Maiden Gully, Specimen Hill, Spring Gully, Strathfieldsaye and White Hills Primary Schools. This made the presentations a juggling act, as the schools all seemed to want to hold their awards ceremonies on the same few evenings!

In a thank you letter, one of this year's Grade 6 recipients wrote:

"I really appreciate this amazing gift you have given me. I was so surprised. I cannot thank you enough. My dad is going to use the money to buy school supplies for me for next year. I was really worried about dad being able to pay for everything and now your scholarship will really help provide a fantastic start for the 2016 school year for me."

That, quite simply, is why we do it!

The scholarships were all personally presented by members of the committee and other Bendigo members. Coordinator of the Bendigo Masonic Scholarship Fund, WBro. David Beagley, says it also gives the opportunity to talk about the 160 year history of Freemasonry in Bendigo."

"Scholarships are a simple and direct way that Lodges can engage with their local community, especially in smaller towns which may not have other service groups offering such support. It only takes a couple of raffles to raise the funds!", WBro. David said.

Other stories from this issue include:

- Supreme Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons
- Freemasons shed tears for suicide cause
- Only 2 weeks to get your scholarship applications in!
- New trailer for Colac Sea Scouts
- Lodge Eschol opens its doors for the Burns Support
- Gipps Street Working Bee
- Lodge members put in for register
- 60 year jewel for Orana's most senior
- Taskforce on FaceBook
- Peace and Loyalty Lodge Scholarship Awards Night
- Moreland Primary School Scholarship
- New sprinkler gives Marnoo reserve an upgrade
- King David provides pedal power

Please visit the 'ALL NEWS' section of *Engage!* Newsletter online to access these news items.

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