

## Headlines

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### June 2016 Quarterly Communication



The June 2016 Quarterly Communication, held at the Melbourne and Olympic Park Stadium was live streamed to Masonic Centres across Victoria. The recording of the event will be featured on the Freemasons Victoria members website shortly. In the meantime, here are some of the highlights of the night.

VWBro. Bruce Cowie was announced as Assistant Grand Secretary, we paid our respects to MWBro. Dr. John Connell, AM, PGM and Bro. Andre Clayton, Chairman of the Freemasons Foundation formally pledged \$750,000 to the Australian Prostate Cancer Research Centre.

Dr. Tony Costello of the APCR made a very relevant and informative presentation, highlighting the importance of placing men's health in the spotlight.

Deputy Grand Master RWBro. Keith Murray

provided an overview of the operational structure proposed for Freemasons Victoria, and while votes were being counted both at the event and across the regions, we watched an inspiring new video created to really emphasise the spirit of this great organisation.

Grand Master MWBro. Don Reynolds concluded the evening with words of encouragement for the membership, further reinforcing the importance of shining a light on our achievements and initiatives for all to see.

The Freemasons Victoria video that featured at last night's Quarterly Communication is available to watch from the Freemasons Victoria website [www.freemasonsvic.net.au](http://www.freemasonsvic.net.au).

### Our newest members given valuable insight



Freemasons Victoria hosted the 2016 New Members Night, held at the Coppin Centre on Wednesday 22 June.

More than fifty new members and their partners attended the event, hosted by Past Grand Sword Bearer WBro. Lee Andrikopoulos of SEAVic Lodge No. 8.

"It's great to see so many new faces here tonight, and wonderful

that there is finally an outlet for young guys to network and mingle together – there certainly wasn't when I joined more than twenty years ago", WBro. Lee said.

The night was an opportunity for new members, some who had never met any other members other than those in their own Lodge, to meet other new members, learn about their experiences and hear about the great things Freemasons Victoria can offer.

Collections Manager for the Library & Museum Samantha Fabry gave a very thorough summary of the wonderful materials and information that can be found in the Library, and Brendan Kyne spoke about the Lodge of Research.

Two of the Coordinators of the *Blue Lounge* spoke about the initiative, that provides opportunities for new young members to drop in, catch up, and socialise with like-minded young people. The Blue Lounge, currently run from the Brunswick Masonic Centre is open for members to bring their partners/wives and friends.

Grand Master MWBro. Don Reynolds spoke to members about the kinds of experiences he had when he first joined and encouraged all guests to speak openly about their membership. Mya, MWBro. Don's partner gave everyone an insight into her role supporting the Grand Master and how ladies can be involved in Freemasonry.

The evening was concluded with a panel discussion that included MWBro. Hillel Benedykt, PGM, MWBro. Don Reynolds, RWBro. Keith Murray, DGM and RWBro. Peter Henshall, Grand Secretary who willingly answered questions from guests.

### **Operation Newstart graduates look forward to a bright future**



The young achievers of Intake 35 of Operation Newstart – Casey graduated on Thursday 16 June, in front of family, friends, sponsors, volunteers and partners at the City of Casey Council Chambers in Narrewarren.

Making the formalities that extra bit special was a presentation from Freemasons Foundation Director Tim Clark of a cheque for \$35,000 to go towards the continuation of this valuable program.

"I was proud to hand over a donation today to kids that are really trying to make a difference to better their futures," Tim said.

Operation Newstart is an innovative re-engagement program for young people aged 14 -17 attending Victorian State Secondary schools who are at significant educational risk. Many are at risk of expulsion, have failed to attend school regularly and are at risk of not completing their secondary education.

Operation Newstart Victoria Executive Officers Mr Phil Wheatley and Mr Ross Miller were also in attendance, Phil saying how important it is for these kids to have the kinds of opportunities that Operation Newstart provides.

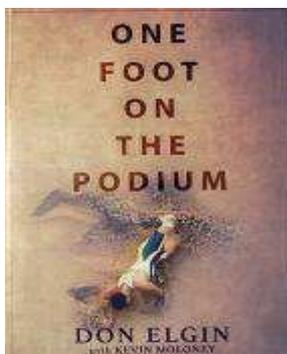
“I am so pleased to see these kids growing and progressing as young adults, and I hope they all continue successfully in life, taking with them all of the skills they have learned through the program,” he said.

Completing the Term 2 program for Casey was Paige Batson, who was also awarded a ‘high achievement’ certificate, Khya Kerr, Sarah Lunny, Emma MacDonald, Mohammad Mohammadi, Amber Percival and Josh Wilkinson.

All participated in rock climbing, mountain bike riding, rafting, and hiking activities as well as a session with the Channel 9 News Team and the CFA learning about fire safety and first aid. These activities have strengthened confidence in some, and built leadership skills in others.

Find out more about Operation Newstart at <http://onv.org.au/>

### **Don Elgin tells Freemasons not to leave a bum print**



Freemasons Victoria enjoyed one of the most inspirational presentations for some time, at the quarterly CBD Business Luncheon on Thursday 23 June.

There aren't many people who can say that they get up every day and say 'Giddy-up! Life is awesome!', especially people who suffer from a disability, but Don Elgin does.

Don, a champion athlete who won his first gold medal at the 1994 International Paralympic Committee (IPC) World Championships, was born without the lower portion of his left leg.

Never accepting that he had a 'disability', Don said that he didn't even know what the Paralympics was until a friend from school suggested he should enter. By 18 years of age he had made the Australian team.

Don said that setting goals and challenging himself as well as grabbing hold of opportunities has helped him be the success he is today. He has never stopped dreaming, saying that some of his greatest moments have come from stepping outside of his comfort zone.

“Life is not the way it's 'supposed' to be. It's the way it is. The way we cope with it is what makes the difference,” he said.

After his first gold medal, Don's focus moved from sprint events to the Pentathlon – five events: long jump, shot put, 100m, discus and 400m. At the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games Don won bronze at the Pentathlon. He won a silver medal in the 2002 IPC World Athletic Championships and in 2004 became a triple Paralympic medallist at the Athens Paralympic Games.

“It's not about the medals”, Don said. “It's about the journey, and about making the most out of every day because we don't know how long we will be on this earth! Leave a footprint, not a bum print!”

“People need to appreciate the simple things and take the time to 'realise' the moment”, Don said.

Don participated recently in the Kokoda Trek challenge which even some fully able bodied wouldn't consider. With blisters on his stump and a well-worn prosthetic leg, Don managed to complete the challenge saying it was one of the most gruelling experiences of his life.

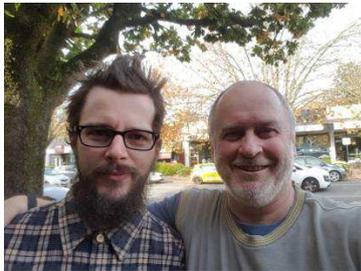
"We all have choices. If you surround yourself with positivity, you will attract positive people into your life", he said.

Guests at the luncheon were heard saying afterwards that they felt inspired, uplifted and encouraged by what Don had to say.

In 2015 Don released his book *One Foot on the Podium* and was awarded a silver medal for 'Best Non-fiction in the Australia/New Zealand region'.

Don's book was on sale at the end of the luncheon. If you would like to buy your own copy, visit [www.donelgin.com.au](http://www.donelgin.com.au)

### **A Brother's battle**



A Healesville Lodge No. 247 member is battling a Grade 4 brain tumour.

By scale – this tumour is at the worst end of the spectrum as tumours go and is in an aggressive state.

In December 2010 Bro. Marcus Seipel had a seizure and was taken to hospital for some analysis. It was found that he had a brain tumour and a biopsy confirmed that it was at a Grade 3 level.

For this he received the maximum allowable level of radiation treatment, but in April 2014 the symptoms worsened and the tumour was then surgically removed and chemotherapy was given.

In February this year while still undergoing chemotherapy, another tumour appeared and was removed. It turned out to be a Grade 4 tumour.

In April, the Grade 4 tumour returned so Marcus started on a medication which is considered to be the best possible treatment to win this battle. Unfortunately this medication is not under the Government's PBS system which means that Marcus has basically got to fund all of his treatment without Government support. In total, the treatment will cost in excess of \$20,000. It consists of six fortnightly treatments at \$3,359 and then many more ongoing treatments at \$500 per fortnight.

Marcus has borrowed from friends and family to cover the initial procedures but was reaching the end of the road financially. After finally mentioning his financial plight to members of the Lodge, the Lodge decided to pitch in to try to assist Marcus through his ordeal.

The Lodge has provided \$2,500 of its own funds as an initial amount and Lodge members are making personal pledges as well which at this point in excess of \$1,300.

Members of Glenroy Lodge No. 748 lead by VWBro. Andrew McPhee are hosting a function in the coming months with all proceeds going to support Marcus's medical expenses.

Throughout this ordeal Marcus has fought valiantly to attend Lodge as often as possible. He loves the camaraderie and the distraction from his own issues.

Healesville Lodge , with some assistance from others, are giving Marcus their full support in his battle to fight this tumour. He is a young keen Freemason who deserves a chance to win this battle.

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