



e-newsletter No. 68

engage!

Grand Installation Special



A word from the Grand Master

It's a great feeling for me to be writing this foreword as the 44th Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria. The Grand Installation events were a great showcase of various aspects of Freemasonry for Victorians, Freemasons from the remainder of Australia and New Zealand, people from all over the world who watched the Grand Installation via the internet, and of course, the 40,000 viewers watching our live to air television broadcast on Channel 31.

It's hard to imagine when I gave my address to the September 2013 Quarterly Communication, it was going to be 182 days until I became Grand Master, talk about racing toward the future! So, for the moment, no more counting down, it's time for action. I stated last September you would hear more from me about respect, which you will. I also mentioned there are those Brethren who are genuine

Freemasons and those who are just members of the organisation. I want to inspire the latter group to embrace Freemasonry, its values and the direction in which it is heading. I want those who do not speak up in their own lodges about matters they are unhappy with, to find a positive and appropriate way to do so. As a Fraternal brotherhood, we must stamp out those negative squeaky wheels, and encourage them to be part of the happiness we are trying to sustain within our Lodges. If your Lodge is not a happy place, why is that? What are you doing about it? If you're not doing anything about it, why not? What makes you think it will change if you don't speak up? Do you want/need some help? Why are some Lodges going gangbusters today and others are struggling?

There are still Brethren out there who think it's all about the building they're in, rather than being about their Brethren who form the Lodge. Ask them why. A house is not a home – we all seem to understand that, just as a Masonic Centre is not a lodge – some people disagree. Those who have worked collaboratively with Freemasons Victoria regarding the home for their lodge(s), have together created the Masonic Centres of the future, such as Williamstown, Ballarat, Box Hill and so on. We must continue to progress in this area, and enhance our public image to integrate more visibly with the community, in facilities we and our future brethren will be proud of.

I can't let this issue of engage! Newsletter pass by without thanking all those involved in putting together, supporting and attending the various Grand Installation events. For my family and for me, it was the most humbling experience you could ever imagine. I'm not sure I have come down to earth just yet. To be the Grand Master of this wonderful organisation is an exceptional honour and one which I will treat with the utmost of respect.

Let us all join in in celebrating this 125th year of Freemasonry in Victoria, and make it a year we will never forget – for all the right reasons.

MWBro. Hillel Benedykt

Grand Installation Ceremony

As a talented group of trumpeters from Melbourne Youth Music heralded the start of this grand event, delegations from New Zealand, all States of Australia and the Middle East were welcomed by MWBro. Bob Jones, to the installation of RWBro. Hillel Benedykt as the 44th Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria.

In a traditional ceremony, substantially unchanged for over 125 years, RWBro. Hillel was then installed and invested as Grand Master before an audience of over 1,000 people and a further 31,000 viewing the live telecast through Channel 31.

As Grand Master, MWBro. Hillel then addressed all guests with a very heart felt, honest speech that not only thanked those closest to him but also opened their eyes to his heritage.

He spoke about the fact that he is only the second Jewish Grand Master to lead Freemasonry in Victoria since MWBro. Henry Nathan, in 1982. This significant milestone was concluded with his pledge of respect and honour for Freemasonry and the smashing of a glass in the centre of the carpet.

Mazel Tov!!

Ladies Breakfast

What would a Grand Installation be without a Ladies Breakfast!? There are so many important women in Freemasonry, all of whom came together on Friday 21 March at the Port Melbourne Yacht Club to wish Sue Benedykt all the very best in her new role, and to thank Kerry Jones, for the years of hard work she has put in by her husband's side.

Flowers were given, after Kerry Jones addressed guests making special mention of Lyn Julier, wife of Peter Julier, the Past Grand Director of Ceremonies who has been a wonderful support to her over the years.

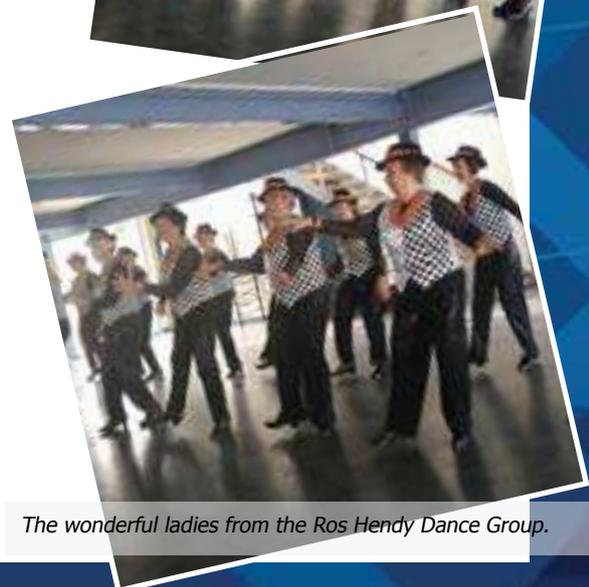
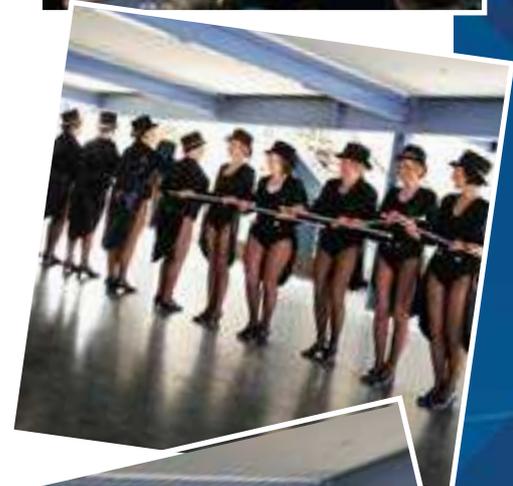
Lydia Bustin, partner of WBro. Harry Pitaro, the new Grand Director of Ceremonies, coordinated the announcements and made sure all guests had an enjoyable morning. This included the surprise entertainment of the Ros Hendy Cabaret Dancers, who treated guests to not one but three dance performances.



MWBro. Hillel Benedykt takes the chair next to RWBro. Don Reynolds DGM and MWBro. Bob Jones PGM.



MWBro. Hillel Benedykt is sworn in as Grand Master.



The wonderful ladies from the Ros Hendy Dance Group.

Shabbat Service

Given MWBro. Hillel's heritage, what better way to mark the Grand Installation celebrations than to invite guests to a special Shabbat Service?

Held at the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation in South Yarra, the Service was hosted by Rabbi Dovid Rubinfeld.

Shabbat (the Sabbath) is a key part of Jewish life and is observed as a day of rest and spiritual rejuvenation.

Shabbat takes place from nightfall on Friday to nightfall the following evening. Blessings are made and candles lit to signify the start of the festival.

The Service comprised of prayers and singing, most of which were in Hebrew as the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation is a traditional Synagogue. Guests were guided by prayer books and by Rabbi Dovid's instruction.

Kiddush

You can't have a Shabbat without a Kiddush, so following the Shabbat Service, all guests travelled a short way to the Royal Freemasons Homes in Prahran to enjoy a wonderfully prepared feast.

Guests were treated to some great entertainment, one performer especially, who had made it all the way from Israel for the occasion. When asked to cheer the 'shy' performer came out onto the stage, a familiar face graced us with his piano accordion to the clapping and cheering of the audience. This was the first time in many years that Hillel had played in public.

The celebration was a fantastic opportunity for delegates and local guests to mingle and get to know each other, as well as relax in an environment of fun, laughter and food.



Rabbi Dovid Rubinfeld addresses the guests before beginning the Mincha and Kabbalat Service.



MWBro. Hillel Benedykt hosts the Shabbat Service at the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation.



MWBro. Hillel Benedykt treats guests to a unique performance of the piano accordian.

Grand Banquet

Held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on Saturday 22 March, the Grand Banquet was a glamorous affair with ladies in beautiful dresses and the gentlemen in smart dinner suits.

The evening began with music and dancing – the new Grand Team invited to join MWBro. Hillel and Sue in the Hora, a traditional dance which saw both MWBro. Hillel and Sue hoisted up on chairs and passed in circles around the room.

For those who have never witnessed a Hora before, everybody involved forms a circle, holding hands, and steps forward toward the right with the left foot, then follows with the right foot. The left foot is then brought back, followed by the right foot. This is done while holding hands and circling together in a fast and cheerful motion to the left. The music gains momentum, as do the dancers, until finally a huge circle is created, and in the case of the Grand Installation, a conga line!

A speech from Immediate Past Grand Master Bob Jones followed, who recalled some humorous events, possibly unknown to guests, of MWBro. Hillel's youth, as well as a few of the activities MWBro. Hillel now has to look forward to.

MWBro. Hillel finally took the stage and without piano-accordion in hand, thanked all of the guests and sponsors for attending the event which marked for him the start of a very challenging but rewarding two years.

A lovely selection of food and wine was enjoyed by all, while guests were treated to *Midnight Express*, the band especially chosen to entertain for the evening and as the night progressed, most were up on the dance floor pulling their best moves.



The wonderful interior of the MCG.



Sue Benedykt and MWBro. Hillel Benedykt with Christina Chia from the Royal Freemasons Homes.



Members from Elrona Lodge No. 384 from left MWBro. John Leisegang GM UGLMMM, WBro. Richard Coates JGD, Dr Rodney Abud and RWBro. Doug Mount DGM UGLMMM.

MCG Tour

For those who were still standing, after such an eventful few days, a tour of the Melbourne Cricket Ground was hosted by the wonderful guides at the MCG.

The stadium, built in 1853 and known colloquially as the 'G, is Australia's favourite stadium. It is the birthplace of Test cricket and the home of Australian football, holding more than 80 events annually and attracting close to four million people. It has hosted more than 100 Test matches (including the first in 1877) and VFL/AFL Grand Finals.

The guides took guests through many of the stadium's facilities including the Ponsford Stand, MCC Members Reserve, Players' change rooms, Cricket viewing room, Long Room, MCC Library, media facilities and a walk on the "hallowed turf".

Farewell Luncheon

Meeting at the MCG's Jim Stynes Room, guests sat down to a relaxing Farewell Lunch – an opportunity to reflect on the events of the past few days and thank interstate and overseas guests for making the trip to Melbourne for this grand occasion.

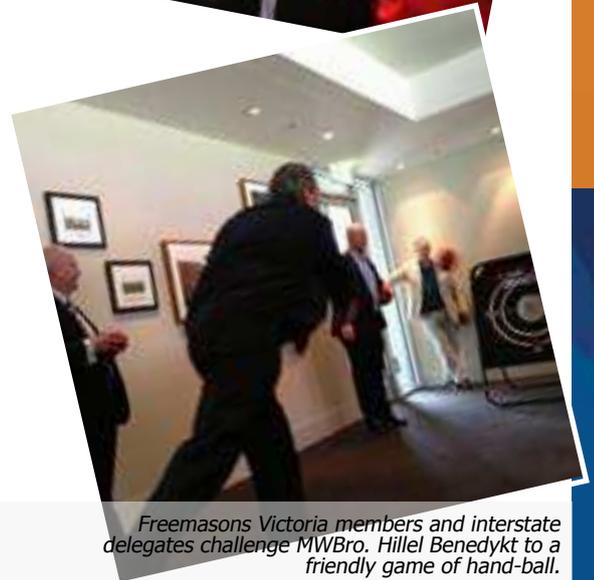
Joining guests were Ladder CEO Michael Bolton, and Melbourne Football Club Half Forward Dom Barry. Ladder, with which Freemasons Victoria shares a partnership, is an independent non-profit organisation established in 2007 to tackle youth homelessness in Australia. Founded by a group of AFL players, the organisation empowers young people aged 16-25 to break the cycle of homelessness by harnessing the support of the AFL industry's profile, networks and players.

Following speeches and recognising the support of all of the sponsors of the Grand Installation and associated events, the Luncheon was concluded with a friendly hand-ball challenge which saw many of our interstate Grand Masters shoot for 10 points!

Freemasons Victoria would like to thank its sponsors LITTLE Projects, KPMG, JB Were, Wiseman Institute, McKean Park, Technology One, Epworth Freemasons, Willis, Executive Security Solutions, MIRVAC, and Bank of Melbourne. Without the support of our sponsors the Grand Installation and associated events would not have been as successful.



Michael Bolton, CEO Ladder Foundation and Dom Barry, Melbourne Football Club Half Forward joins MWBro. Hillel Benedykt at the MCG.



Freemasons Victoria members and interstate delegates challenge MWBro. Hillel Benedykt to a friendly game of hand-ball.

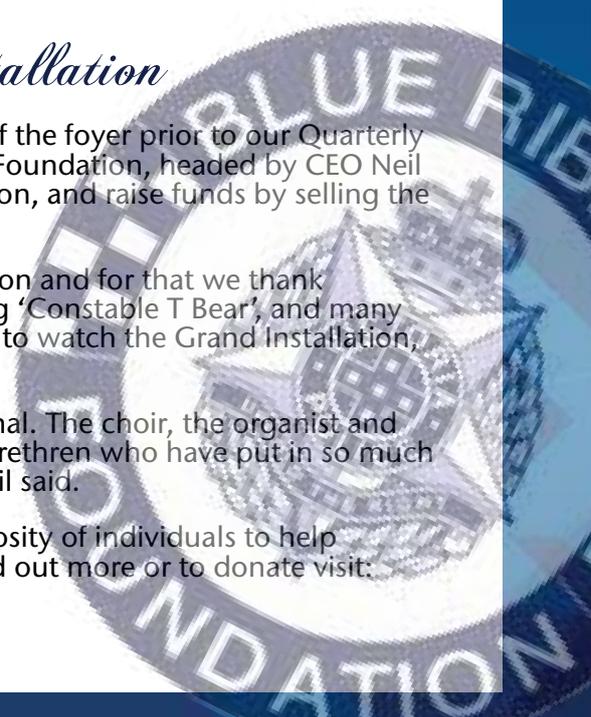
Blue Ribbon joins our Grand Installation

You may have noticed a guest in the merchandise section of the foyer prior to our Quarterly Communication and Grand Installation. The Blue Ribbon Foundation, headed by CEO Neil Soullier joined us to spread awareness about the Foundation, and raise funds by selling the Blue Ribbon Foundation bear 'Constable T Bear'.

"This was a fantastic opportunity for the Blue Ribbon Foundation and for that we thank Freemasons Victoria very much. We raised \$250 through selling 'Constable T Bear', and many approached us to talk about our work", Neil said. Neil went on to watch the Grand Installation, and said it was one of the most stunning shows he's ever seen.

"I've been to many shows in my life, but this one was sensational. The choir, the organist and the audio were perfect, and I have the utmost respect for the brethren who have put in so much time, training and rehearsal to make the evening seamless", Neil said.

The Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation relies on the generosity of individuals to help perpetuate the memory of fallen Victoria Police Officers. To find out more or to donate visit: <https://www.remember.org.au>



Grand Installation Special

Royal Freemasons Homes Open Day

You couldn't have asked for a better weather day for the Royal Freemasons Homes Open Day. A bright sunny day drew a great crowd, all there to help celebrate and recognise the good work of the Homes.

Hosted by VWBro. Wes Turnbull, the event began with a brief overview from Board Chairman Ian Buckingham of the Homes' Strategic Growth Plan, followed by a presentation by Noeline Brown, Ambassador for the Ageing. Noeline, better known perhaps for her appearances on television show *Blankety Blanks* in the 1980s, gave a valuable insight into what retirement really means; opportunity, volunteering and community service.

A number of Lodges were then recognised for their financial contributions to the Homes, ranging from \$1000 to \$20,000 donations, and members were invited to the stage.

CEO Bro. Felix Pintado announced the *Lorna Chapman Award*, presented to an individual who has shown outstanding commitment to the core values of the Homes. This award was presented to Lynette Valeslovic.

Shortly afterwards, VWBro. Wes was joined on stage by MWBro. Hillel Benedykt, MWBro. Garry Sebo PGM, and Ian Buckingham to present the Presidents Jewel as part of the new Homes Jewel Program for fundraising.

After all awards were given, and individuals and groups recognised, a lovely BBQ lunch was enjoyed by all.



Ambassador for the Ageing, Noeline Brown.



CEO, Royal Freemasons Homes, Bro. Felix Pintado.



L-R: June Bates, President Jewel Recipient; Noeline Brown; Christina Chia, Royal Freemasons Homes and her daughter.

ACTION LIST

<p>Don't forget to buy your FHA Diary. Diaries can be purchased for \$5 from The Grand Secretariat at 300 Albert Street, East Melbourne or by calling (03) 9411 0100.</p> 	<p>✓</p>
<p>Dont forget to buy your limited ediuion 125th Anniversary merchandise. Cufflinks, tie pins, ties and mugs are all available from 300 Albert Street, East Melbourne or by ordering through the online e-shop on the Freemasons Victoria members intranet.</p> 	<p>✓</p>

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Deadlines for content for coming issues:

Engage 69 - 9 April
Engage 70 - 23 April
Engage 71 - 1 May

Don't forget, previous issues of engage! Newsletter can be found using the Publications tab on the Freemasons Victoria intranet. Just log in!

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