

## **Engage Issue 8**

One of the greatest strengths of Freemasonry is the lifelong friendships that are formed between Brethren. Such bonding continues to unite us all, and it is through common interests that we forge and maintain lasting and meaningful relationships, that will support us through our Masonic journey and at associated events.

Freemasonry, at its heart, is our members, members that form a close knit community, on both a business and social level. Freemasonry, at its most essential, is not simply ceremonial nor is a Lodge simply the building. It is the bond between us and our community that makes us all Freemasons, our way of life.

Over the past month, I have been afforded the privilege of attending the inaugural 'New Initiates Cocktail Function' at Dallas Brooks Centre and The inaugural 'CBD Quarterly Luncheon' at Morgans 401 in Collins Street, Melbourne. These initiatives have yielded an outstanding result for Freemasons Victoria with Brethren attending both events with family members, work colleagues and friends. Days following the CBD Luncheon our new Membership Administrator Jim Pouhotaua has met with two 'friends' of Freemasons who want to join our Brotherhood.

I encourage all Brethren to be part of these new and exciting initiatives to ensure we remain engaged and introduce Freemasonry to our family, friends and work colleagues.

### **The art of staying together...**

**By Mark Richardson**

The saying, "people who play together, stay together," may (at times) seem a little trite, more so, when expressed as the catalyst of a lasting relationship, a happy family or even workplace cohesion. However, this expression demands some degree of respect, afterall, people who do play together, are at the long and short of it, together.

The seeds of engagement are sown when people come together. Whether planned or spontaneous, for business, social or calendared events, people engage through the meeting of minds, sharing and exchanging ideas, expression and other common interests – creating positive outcomes that will feed, nurture and bring a friendship to blossom, inspiring the cultivation of lasting relationships, full of life, colour and admired by others. Hence the need for the saying in the first place, "people that play together, stay together."

Social gatherings come in a wide variety and different forms - all providing the potential to be beneficial to those who attend. When we least expect it, friendships can develop within any given situation, providing you are there, you are officially engaged.

Take the 1985 the American film written and directed by John Hughes – 'The Breakfast Club,' for example followed the journey of five teenagers (each a member of a different high school clique) who were made to spend a Saturday in detention together. By detentions' end, each came to realise they were all deeper than their respective stereotypes.

The five students - Allison, Andrew, Bender, Brian, and Claire - who seem to have nothing in common at first, come together at the high school library, where they are ordered not to speak or move from their seats by the antagonistic school principal, who assigned a 1,000 word essay in which each student had to write about who they thought they were.

Unsupervised, the students pass the eight hour detention in a variety of ways. Gradually they open up to each other and reveal information about themselves that unexpectedly bonded them by breaking down preconceived judgments about all of them and by detention's end, new friendships were formed through discovering they truly had things in common and looked forward to seeing each other on Monday.

Twenty-five years on, the simple, yet thought provoking message in the film still inspires sociological, academic, corporate and membership discussions around the world on the rewards of engaging in any given situation, whether planned or spontaneous, for business, social or calendared events. When people engage through the meeting of minds, sharing and exchanging ideas, expression and other common interests, inspiring the cultivation of lasting relationships, ultimately gives voice to the saying - "people who play together, stay together."

The universality of Freemasonry combined with the facilities of this highly technological era allows us to actively engage with Freemasons on Global level. Several 'International Masonic' groups actively remain connected this way.

Interpersonal engagement at social events at Lodge level and beyond will ensure we remain connected with lasting relationships. Membership retention is as important as introducing a potential member to Freemasons. Friends, partners, work colleagues and family members who are non-Freemasons are beginning to attend our social events upon invitation. The value of these types of engagements in recruiting should not be undervalued in our happy Masonic family at Freemasons Victoria as we collectively play together, and stay together. Anyone for breakfast?

### **New Initiates Cocktail Function**



Guests engaged at 'New Initiates Cocktail Function'

New Freemasons initiated after 2008 were celebrated at the first New Initiates Cocktail function held at the Dallas Brooks Centre in October. The night provided a wonderful opportunity for new members, partners and their guests to come together in an informal

and relaxed environment to share a few drinks, strengthen their friendships and meet Brethren from other Lodges representing all 17 districts.

Hosted by RWBro. Bob Jones Deputy Grand Master, guests were formally welcomed by MWBro. Vaughan Werner Grand Master before engaging in a range of social networking games and entertained by the hilarious comedy duo 'The Music Men' - who performed renditions of reworked songs written especially for Freemasons by John Farnham, Shannon Knoll and Jimmy Barnes. Melbourne's popular music sensation Shaun McLachlan also added to the evenings' high calibre of entertainment with his solo performance of world-wide hit songs.

The night was hailed a huge success with over 150 attendees who also discovered the benefits of becoming involved with Freemasons Victoria's Victoria Masonic Motorcycle Association, Ionic and Doric student tutoring services and the Task Force.

### **'Freemasons in the CBD' – Quarterly Luncheon**



Event MC VWBro. David Gibbs PGIWkgs welcomes guests at 'CBD Quarterly Luncheon'

Freemasons living and working in Melbourne's CBD recently enjoyed an inspiring luncheon at Morgans 401 located at 401 Collins Street, Melbourne. The CBD networking initiative was the brain child of VWBro. David Gibbs PGIWkgs who delighted guests with his entertaining role as MC.

Guests were officially welcomed by RWBro. Bob Jones Deputy Grand Master and MWBro. Vaughan Werner, Grand Master before the official guest key note speaker Gary Morgan of Roy Morgan Research took to the microphone with a colourful and fascinating expose' into the early history of Melbourne and the influence Freemasons had on the development of early Melbourne.

Guests of Freemasons to the luncheon included non-Freemason work colleagues and friends that live and work in the CBD that were interested in learning more about the organisation.

The next CBD quarterly luncheon will be held on Tuesday 22 February 2011 at Morgans 401 at 401 Collins Street, Melbourne. Guest Speaker ex-AFL Essendon Footballer Mark Bolton, CEO of Youth Homelessness Organisation – 'Ladder'. For more information and bookings email Donna De La Rue [delarue@freemasonsvic.net.au](mailto:delarue@freemasonsvic.net.au) or 9411 1103

Freemason Victoria welcomes networking initiatives from all districts to keep your members engaged. Submit your ideas to Membership Services Manager Lena Condos [condos@freemasonsvic.net.au](mailto:condos@freemasonsvic.net.au)

## **Membership Update**

- 56 enquiries from Grand Lodge Website – October 2010

### **Membership Initiations – October 2010**

- During October 27 members were initiated state wide.
- Average age of these is 35.
- District totals for October are: South East Mornington (6), Western (5), Northern (4), Central (3), Maroondah (2), Bellarine Otway (2), Central Highlands (2), Gippsland South West (1), Monash Gully (1), and Gippsland South East (1)
- During October Grand Lodge processed 17 applications and referred 17 candidates to Lodges.
- During October 25 new propositions were received across the state

### **Membership Initiations – Year to date January - October 2010**

- 300 members initiated YTD.
- Average age on Initiates 44.
- Districts with the highest totals YTD are: Central (41), Western (39), SE Mornington (31), Northern (30), Bayside (23) and North East (20).
- Lodges with the highest totals YTD are: Bendigo City, Williamstown, and Middle Park (7 new initiates), King David, Gordon, and Revival (5), Footscray Wyndham, Golden Fleece, Tradition, Baxter, Commerce, Beechworth, Guiding Star, Concentration, Evolution, and the Union Lodge of North Gippsland (each with four new initiates).
- Our resignation rate is reducing. The numbers show that our net loss for August – October inclusive was only 26!!!

### **State wide Target by 2013**

- Membership decline will have halted.
- We will have 13,900 members.
- The average age of our membership will have decreased at least to 65.

The figures above indicate that the tide is in full swing of turning. This is terrific news for Freemasons Victoria. The net loss of members for August-October inclusive was only 26. Let's keep up the good work.

**Lodge Target - Recruit 1 new member for every 10 members in your Lodge.**

## Pre-Christmas joy from Freemasons Victoria



Children receive new bikes for Christmas thanks to Freemasons, Variety & 3AW

Variety, the children's charity, recently presented 100 bikes and helmets at Dallas Brooks Centre to children who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs as part of its annual 'Bikes4Kids' program.

This presentation was made possible due to Freemasons Victoria donating \$20,000 through their involvement and support of the 3AW Variety Radiothon. President of the Board of Benevolence VWBro. Frank Fordyce proudly presented the cheque to 'Bikes4Kids' Ambassador Derryn Hinch during a formal media presentation. This was the first of 5 bike presentations that will be held across Victoria in the lead up to Christmas, during which over 1000 bikes will be given away!

Freemasons Victoria's Deputy Grand Master RWBro. Bob Jones, MWBro. Vaughan Werner Grand Master joined by Bev Werner, RWBro. Barry Reaper, PDGM, GSec, RWBro. Peter Henshall, SGW and members of The Task Force and Grand Lodge staff to present a bicycle to each of the excitable children.

## Operation Shoebox – Delivering Christmas Joy to Afghanistan Troops



'Goodies' set to brighten Christmas for troops serving in Afghanistan.

**Operation Shoebox**, is an exciting initiative of the Baxter Masonic Lodge No.934 aimed to help troops serving in Afghanistan enjoy their Christmas.

Lance Corporal Bro. Stewart Brookes, son of the Master of Baxter Lodge No.934 WMBro. Chris Tobin, is on his second Tour of Duty in Afghanistan. When asked what local Freemasons could do to support him and his fellow soldiers, his reply was, "It's just great to know that we have the support of Australians back home."

Lodge members decided to demonstrate their support in a practical way - to supply each member of Lance Corporal Bro. Stewart's regiment with a shoe box sized full of 'goodies' including packets of soup, exotic coffee, beef jerky, magazines, confectionary and, "Stuff you can't walk over to the milk bar and buy".

Funds were raised by local Freemasons and members of the public to send a total of sixty shoe boxes full of treats to Afghanistan. Freemasons Victoria Benevolent fund matched local funds dollar for dollar.

Operation Shoebox is a pilot program. The project will be assessed on the feedback received from Lance Corporal Bro. Stewart's regiment and their family and friends.

Members of the public are able to sponsor a shoe box for \$30, "a small donation that goes a long way towards acknowledging the sacrifice and dedication of our soldiers and to show that they have support from home." For enquiries contact WMBro. Stewart Brookes Email: [angelabrookes@bigpond.com](mailto:angelabrookes@bigpond.com)

### **Calling for Calender of Events submissions**

Don't forget to submit your Lodge or District's events to Lena Condos by 30 November for inclusion in Freemasons Victoria statewide Calendar of Events. The January – June 2011 Calendar of Events has the aim of promoting Freemasonry to the wider community, encouraging membership enquiries and further engaging our current membership. Events should be of a significant nature and involve the public in some way. We are seeking to include events which will serve to fulfill our aim of exciting the public and our membership about Freemasonry.

Examples of events include:

- Your District is holding an Open Day/Night
- Your Lodge is setting up a stand at a community festival
- Your District is hosting a major charitable event.

Please submit your events to [condos@freemasonsvic.net.au](mailto:condos@freemasonsvic.net.au) for consideration.

### **The inspiring VMMA 'Breathless Ride'**



VMMA 2010 "Breathless" 8 Day Ride raises over \$87,000 for Cystic Fibrosis Victoria

The 2010 "Breathless" 8 Day Ride concluded on Saturday 6th November at Queenscliff. Police escorted riders to the Masonic Centre for the official reception to receive and acknowledge all those riders who endured the 8 day ride to raise Awareness of Cystic Fibrosis and Freemasons Victoria throughout country Victoria. To date, VMMA members raised a staggering \$87,000 for Cystic Fibrosis Victoria to assist families living with the debilitating disease. Congratulations VMMA. Click here for more information [www.vmma.net.au](http://www.vmma.net.au)

### **Subscribe to Freemasons YouTube Channel**

To subscribe to the Freemasons Youtube channel, you will need to;

- Go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and sign up as a member
- Click on the link <http://www.youtube.com/user/freemasonsvic>
- Scroll down and click on the "Subscribe" button

Once you have successfully subscribed to the channel, you will get automatic notifications via email once any new videos have been uploaded to the channel. For any enquiries, please email [support@freemasonsvic.net.au](mailto:support@freemasonsvic.net.au)

### **Add sender to whitelist**

If you are receiving this e-newsletter in your Spam folder, you will need to add this sender's email address to your 'list of trusted users' or to the 'whitelist'. Alternatively you can add this email address to your address book and it will ensure that all future emails are sent directly to your inbox.

**More 'secrets' to be revealed at Lilydale Agriculture Show 2010**



WMBro. Tony Hedley - Djerriwarrh Lodge No. 891 & WMBro. Geoff Ralph Melton Lodge No. 367 at the Melton Djerriwarrh Festival in November.

Yarra Valley Donna Buang Lodge No. 860 welcomes all Brethren to invite family and friends to visit the Lilydale Agriculture Show featuring Freemasons Victoria 'Mobile Lodge' that was recently showcased at the Melton Djerriwarrh Festival in November and Whitehorse Festival in October.

30 serious membership enquiries were generated from both Melton and Whitehorse Festivals collectively.

Where: Lilydale Showgrounds Main Street, Lilydale.

When: Saturday 20 November Saturday

Gates Open : 8:00am onwards

[www.lilydaleshow.org.au](http://www.lilydaleshow.org.au)

### **Lights, Cameras...Aprons!**



WBro. Peter Noonan being interviewed by Compass at home.

On 10 November the ABC Compass program filmed segments of a re-enactment of the Installation of WBro. Peter Noonan as Master of the Healesville Lodge. The re-enactment of the Healesville Investiture of the Lodge Officers also took place in Lodge Room 1 at 300 Albert Street East Melbourne. As an Open Investiture there were approximately 300 attendees that included Freemasons and their family and friends.

Compass is planning to televise the Freemasons story on ABC in 2011.

### **Magazine distribution in your local area**

Grand Lodge is currently collecting names and addresses of businesses which agree to stock our magazine *Freemasonry Victoria*. These businesses include libraries, doctor's and dentist's surgeries, universities, Scout Halls and Community Centres.



As we would like our magazine distributed to these types of businesses Victoria-wide, we are requesting that Lodges each contact and provide details for at least **three** businesses in their local area.

As you will agree, this concept will enhance public awareness about our organisation and the work our members undertake in the community.

As soon as practicable, could you please send contact details of three businesses in your area to: [condos@freemasonsvic.net.au](mailto:condos@freemasonsvic.net.au)

Please Note: It is strongly recommended that you discuss the purpose of this project with businesses to ensure our magazine does not end up in the bin! Thank you for your co-operation.

### **XPED11 INFORMATION & TRAINING DAY**

**Saturday 19 February 2011**

**An Information Day for all Victorian Freemasons**

## **REGISTRATIONS CLOSING SOON**

Freemasons Victoria will host an Educational/Information Day on Saturday 19 February 2011 commencing at 9:00am and concluding by 4:30pm.

**XPED11** is an opportunity for Freemasons in Victoria to catch up on a number of the new initiatives, many emanating from the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan, as well as enhancements to existing initiatives.

Registrations will close at 5pm on 30 November 2010. For more information **email** [education-admin@freemasonsvic.net.au](mailto:education-admin@freemasonsvic.net.au)

### **Lena Condos ties the knot (of Ring-Pulls)**



Freemasons Victoria's Grand Lodge staff and Grand Master recently gathered to celebrate Lena Condos - Manager Membership Services on her marriage to Ben Way. Lena & Ben married on Saturday 20 November in Malmsbury. Congratulations and may they produce many new initiates...