

BELMONT ALBION



February 2016

<http://thebelmontalbionlodge.co.nz>

FROM THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

Greetings Brethren and a heartfelt, though slightly belated, Happy New Year.

As is common behaviour come Christmas and New Year, we take time to pause and reflect on what the last year has brought, and project our vision forward to what 2016 will bring. Being away from loved ones often makes that reflection all the more poignant. Without question, our Lodge has been through a lot in 2015. It may be no more or no less than other Lodges suffer, but it is our Lodge and the impact is felt most directly on us all.

We have had to farewell, both permanently and less permanently, a number of our Brethren from Lodge. The gaps left by these departed Brethren are hard to fill, but I am pleased to see that our Lodge has adapted where necessary to do so. In addition, we have been incredibly fortunate in welcoming back Brethren from sickness, and we continue to support those that have succumbed to illness and are yet recovering.

I am continually reminded that with my relocation to Singapore so early into my tenure, there was always going to be an impact on the Lodge of an absent Master. When Bro. Geoff accepted the role of Deputy Master and agreed to "fill in for the Master when he is unavailable...", I don't believe for a moment that he foresaw what this might eventually entail. I must express my profound thanks to Bro. Geoff Foote for filling the Master's Chair for most of last year. We are so blessed, that of all people that could take the reins, we had someone of such high calibre and reputation to rely on.

As we look forward into 2016, I take strength in knowing that Bro. Russell Ward has planning well in hand for taking the Chair, and I humbly ask that you all provide Bro. Russell and his leadership team your support, your commitment, your drive and your energies. This year will be a great year for our lodge, please all be a part of it.

Yours Fraternally,
Sean Neely



Vision Statement: To prosper into the future

Mission Statement: The Belmont Albion Lodge No 45 shall practice the principles of freemasonry in all ways, to enhance education, knowledge and care for its members, attracting men of high quality, personal development and participation in our community

FROM THE EDITOR

As this is the first edition of 2016 the Newsletter follows the Worshipful Master's words in wishing all its readers a somewhat belated 'Happy New Year'. The Lodge being in recess since last December this issue is playing catch up with an item from a 'How to Learn Ritual' education evening in November and details of the festive events held prior to Christmas.

“The Future of Masonry lies not simply in the increase of numbers, but in the dissemination of Masonic principles throughout the world. The greatest function of Masonry is to raise mankind to a higher realisation of the beauty of the truth and the importance of human freedom”. These words appeared seventy eight years ago in the 'New Zealand Craftsman'. As I read the headlines in the English speaking press around the world I think never have these words had more pertinence.

*Following questions asked I would remind you that for some months now the Masters Calendar has not been shown in the Newsletter as it is available in 'real time' in the lodge web site. Fourth tab along at the top of the home page.

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My thoughts on learning, memorising and presenting Ritual

The dictionary tells us that:

LEARNING is the act of acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing different types of information.

MEMORISING is to commit to memory, learn by heart, impress on memory, study, become word perfect.

In order for us to memorise the ritual it would help to have an understanding of what we are trying to learn.

We may not understand every word or sentence of various charges completely but the more we understand what we are trying to learn the easier it will be to commit it to memory. So it goes without saying, if we understand what the 'Charge' is about the easier it will be to learn.

I must confess that there are still many words and phrases, in the ritual, that I do not fully understand.

Remember, Freemasonry is a progressive science. So how does one decide what standard is required when learning a charge? Is there a standard expected by the lodge or is near enough good enough? I have asked myself many times “how important is memorising the ritual and does it really matter? Does it really need to be word perfect”? As long as the story is the same does it matter if there are a few different words or phrases and it has been presented well?

There will be varying views on this but at the end of the day we can only ask for one 'to do their best in order to maintain the best possible standard'. - What more can one ask of a brother?



The reason I say this is that my very worst presentation may be better than a brother who has presented his very best. If he has been honest with himself and put in the hard yards with only a mediocre result 'He has done his best' and that's good enough for me!!

I know of some very competent brethren who only memorise just enough to get them through a charge this after a several prompts. They seem to be happy to adopt this lazy style but it is not for me.

There are no short cuts to memorizing a charge, it is hard graft over a lengthily period of time. Those with photographic memories must indeed be fortunate, personally I have not met anyone with this ability.

I don't believe I am a good ritualist because I possess any special learning abilities and feel a lot of it is due to personal development through Freemasonry. I have always liked doing things well and to be frank I would be too scared to undertake a charge and present it 'undercooked'. There is a difference between presenting a charge uncooked and knowing a charge and the wheels fall off on the night. I know I have been there!!

Any brother who is prepared to put in the Effort coupled with Perseverance will have Success.

A Few Suggestions

- If ritual is new to you start off by learning the small charges first, the satisfaction and achievement will give you the encouragement and confidence to keep going and gradually progress into the more substantial charges.
- Only undertake learning and memorising one charge at a time.
- Refrain from accepting any new charges if you are already committed to learning one, this applies to any other Orders you may also belong to.
- Attend rehearsal as often as possible as you will repeatedly hear and subconsciously embed words and phrases used by other brethren by association, which will make the task of learning and memorising charges easier at a later date.
- Start by reading the 'charge' (ritual) fluently without hesitating.
- Understand the meaning of any strange sentences or phrases.
- Ask someone who knows the ritual for the meaning and symbolism of unfamiliar words and sentences as it is easier to memorize when understood.
- Check the dictionary to learn meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words.
- The key to memorising is repetition.
- Learn each word sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph (in sequence) do not attempt to learn too much at any one time.
- Once you have memorised a sentence go back to the start of the paragraph and (without looking at the ritual book) recite what you have already learned incorporating the newly memorized sentence.
- Then once each paragraph is completed go back to the start of the 'charge' and by memory recite it right through all paragraphs up to where you have learned.
- After learning every paragraph using the ritual book read charge making sure you have not transposed or substituted any sentences or words.
- If a wrong word is learned, habit makes it difficult to correct when eventually realised.
- I use a little card to cover the words ahead, reciting the sentence and then checking for correctness.
- Take the opportunity to practice what you have already learned whenever possible. For example, recite while driving your car, mowing the lawns, walking or when you are in the little room!

You will be surprised at the benefit derived from the odd moments which would otherwise be wasted. As you progress recite aloud with emphasis on punctuation and delivery.

- Decide where voice inflection should occur and where emphasis should be placed paying attention to the relevant punctuation as per the ritual book.
- This aspect can be worked on more thoroughly once the charge has been committed to memory.
- When learning charges whenever possible say the charge aloud.
- Learning the charge aloud I believe has a better result in embedding the words and will also give you practice as to volume levels required.
- A person who does not know his charge well, tends to speak at a lower volume level.
- Do not talk too slowly or too fast; your presentation should be clear and deliberate.
- When learning don't be too concerned about gesturing as this will come in time with experience.
- Look at the candidate when speaking, but be audible so all brethren can hear.
- Remember "A daily advance in Masonic knowledge" was sage advice hundreds of years ago and it still holds good today!
- If you know the words you will deliver the charge well and enjoy the opportunity. When you have given a good charge, you will know the personal pride, satisfaction and enjoyment that go with doing the job. It is a great feeling when you know you have the attention of all the brethren in the lodge room.
- That will be your wages for your efforts.

And finally, Degree ritual is extremely important, because it's the first thing a candidate experiences. If the working is of a poor standard the candidate may not come back. If it's done well, no doubt he will be impressed and hopefully he will continue his journey in Freemasonry. Freemasonry competes with many other organizations and leisure time and we must step up to the plate and perform a quality ceremony. Trust this has been of help.

By Geoff Foote

Dr. James Anderson (1679 - 1739) writer, minister and freemason

James Anderson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1679 gaining a Doctorate of Divinity in the northeast port city of Aberdeen (these 'facts' vary dependent upon whose account one reads). In 1707 he was ordained a minister in the Church of Scotland and moved to London. Anderson is chiefly remembered for his work 'Royal Genealogies: or the Genealogical Tables of Emperors, Kings and Princes from Adam to these times' published in 1732 but amongst Freemasons he is better known as the author of what is called colloquially 'Anderson's Constitutions' the correct title of his work being a verbose thirty words long. This was published in 1723 and was the first official Masonic publication.

A second edition published in 1738 contained a restructured Grand Lodge minute from September 1721. It reads, 'His Graces's worship and the Lodge finding Fault with all the Copies of the Gothic Constitutions, order'd Brother James Anderson, A.M. to digest the same in a new and better Method'. In constructing the Constitution Anderson followed the wording of several versions of the Old Charges the result being notable for codifying the rules and regulations of the Craft. In the section named the 'Six Charges', he claims to have extracted these from the ancient records of lodges 'beyond the sea' and of those in England, Scotland and Ireland. He removed statements of Christian



belief from the practice of the lodges and implanted the words 'that religion in which all men agree'. The reference to God was also amended to 'The Great Architect of the Universe'. In doing this Anderson introduced the tenet of non-denomination that has been the basis of Freemasonry ever since.

Anderson included a historical section which combined the various legendary histories of Masonry from Noah to the establishment of the Craft in England. In this he traced the art of architecture from Cain who had been instructed in geometry by Adam and stated that Moses had been a Grand Master.

In the 1920's the Masonic historian H.L. Haywood wrote that Anderson's history of Freemasonry should be read with extreme caution for it contained little dependable historical fact, further commenting that Anderson's history belongs 'in the realm of fable for the most part'. Haywood does concede though that despite 'his faults as a historian Anderson is a great figure in Freemasonry's annuals' and that it was his document that was the groundwork for a symbolic Freemasonry with no sectarian character as to religion or politics.

Source:- H. Paul Jeffers / S. Brent Morris / H.L. Haywood / John K. Young / Barb Karg
image:- freemasonry.bcy.ca

PCC

100 Years Ago

From the minute book of Albion Lodge No. 45, Meeting in the Masonic Hall Devonport, 10 February 1916.

Correspondence:-

From the Grand Secretary enclosing a copy of the Bylaws duly certified as in order by the Grand Registrar and countersigned by the Grand Secretary on behalf of the Board of General Purposes. Also acknowledgement of receipt of Resolution of the Lodge passed on 9 December 1915 determining to Register under the Grand Lodge of Freemasonry N. Z. Trustees Act 1903.

Memorial Service:-

A Memorial Service in remembrance of W.Bro. T.J. Rutland & Bro. W. Anscombe lately deceased was then held. The Order of Service was as follows. Hymn 'Days & moments quickly flying', prayer by Bro. Bartley the Chaplain, address by the W.M. in which he eulogised the good qualities of our departed Brethren, Hymn 'Abide with me', prayer by Bro. Bartley the Chaplain, concluding with the 'Dead March' by V.W.Bro. W. Rolfe Organist with all the Brethren standing.

Notice of Motion:-

Notice of Motion by Bro. A.W. Clark "That at the Regular meeting in March a ballot be taken rescinding or otherwise the resolution passed on 9 September refraining from the use of alcoholic liquors at refreshment during the period of the war".

The Lodge was closed in P L H and with a solemn prayer at 9.40 pm

A request for information



During November the Newsletter was approached by Susan Ellen whose family has a masonic history and is herself a Master Mason being a member of 'The Eastern Order of International Co-Freemasonry'.

Susan asked if the item pictured below could be identified. It belonged to her grandfather but the family knew little of its history.

With the aid of the 167 Heritage Museum the piece was identified as a 'watch chain fob'. Usually they are much smaller but this large one is typical of a Victorian funeral fob.

There was a second piece Susan left with me and this will be shown next month.

Is there a spy at BA No. 45?

This photograph, which appears to have been taken from a hidden camera, was forwarded to the Newsletter by an unknown sender. It seems to show our W.M.Elect getting in some practice for his Initiation in April. A Newsletter reporter asked for a comment from the W.M. elect but he declined to make a statement.



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Out and about with the Secretary

We are indeed fortunate to have as B/A Almoner Wayne Jones. Late last year he was busy organising, on behalf of the North Shore District, the annual 'Widows and Senior Masons Luncheon'.



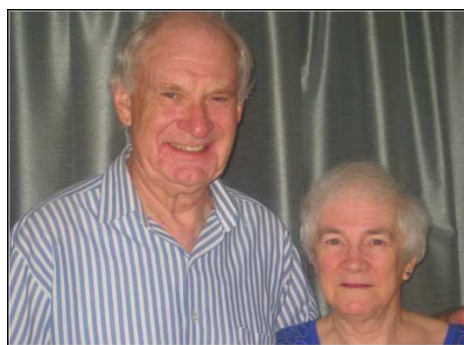
Then he was the major organiser of the "Auckland Almoners Association" Senior Masonic Luncheon and rounded off his year by organising the supply of Xmas Cakes and with some assistance delivered these cakes to all our Lodge Widows.

We at B/A salute you Wayne, for a job well done!
(Wayne's story can be read elsewhere in this issue.)

Stop Press:- Congratulations to Murray on his 70th birthday spent in Sydney courtesy of his wife Kay.

Wayne's Story

November and December 2017 was a lively period for BA 45 'Almoner for Life' W.Bro Wayne Jones. He recounts his story below.



Wayne and Bev

The months of November and December were hectic for me, what with being Lodge Almoner and also being responsible, with my wife Bev, for the refectory arrangements for our Regular meetings.

Let me tell you briefly of the events on Saturday 7 November, the date of the North Shore Widows and Aged Masons Function, with just under fifty in attendance. This is a popular event for the widows on the Shore and it is an opportunity to rekindle old friendships and enjoy a pleasant lunch time and afternoon. This with a great luncheon, plenty to drink and as ever Harvey Sadgrove on the piano. Father Christmas, looking very much like Jack Lambert, made an appearance handing out gifts and even doing a 'stand up' comedy routine whilst his sack was refilled. To complete the event Bernice Ansell cut the first slice of the Christmas cake.

Whilst I was organising this luncheon I was also arranging Christmas cakes for the widows and aged masons associated with the lodges in Auckland. After some fraught moments these were finally collected from the New World Store at New Lynn on 20 November with the 350 cakes being taken to the Mt. Albert Lodge Room in Bute Street. That was the 'easy' part. I then had to arrange for each lodge to collect their allocated number of cakes. The saying 'herding cats' springs to mind in

organising this. The cakes for the Belmont Albion group then had to be individually delivered and the wonderful support of Nelson Webster ensured this was achieved.

As I found I had the odd minute to spare during this time, I took on the job of organising 'The Auckland District Senior Masons Luncheon', one of the major events in our District.

The event was held at the Selwyn Village, Mt. Roskill with an attendance of 120 Brethren. I now found out what the word 'STRESS' really meant.

This was the first time I had organised this 'shindig' and for a sad reason. In previous years the luncheon had been organised by Don Trenwith but Don had died suddenly and the Auckland Almoners Association asked that I take over the reins. I had no history regarding the organisation of the event and found my first task was to find a new venue as the RSA at New Lynn was no longer available. Selwyn Village stepped in but there was a caveat they could not supply the drinks so it was 'finger in the air time' to guesstimate how many bottles of what to purchase. Barmen were arranged and Harvey Sadgrove said he would play the piano. I arranged for a large cake to be made with the Masonic Symbol on the top this to be cut by the oldest Brother present. At 103 he was even older than Dave Barr!

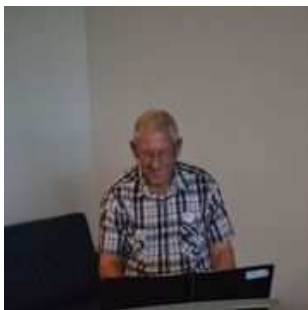
The tables were set up with a Christmas theme and the room looked magnificent with a roast lunch served followed by Pavlova and fruit salad. It was heart-warming to be told by many of those present that it was the best prepared and organised one they had attended and to make sure I repeated the event in 2016. I have already booked the room. I have never made arrangement for an event with over one hundred attendees before and so in receiving the accolades given I felt a quiet satisfaction.

But I had not finished as the Brethren of BA45 were now clamouring for their Christmas function. Forty five attended and as ever Richard Shaplin prepared a feast and we all enjoyed ourselves toasting the holiday.

Finally I would wish to thank my wife Bev would supported me through this period and who month on month prepares the North Shore Masonic Centre refectory for each BA 45 Regular meeting. Thanks Bev and I hope you will let me put my feet up for a while.

I show a few pictures below with many thanks to the cameramen Briene Salosagcol and Allen de Guzman

Wayne





North Shore Royal Arch Chapter No. 52



Early years of the Royal Arch Degree

The first reference to the Royal Arch is found in the January 10-14, 1743 edition of 'Faulkner's Dublin Journal'. A brief report on the St John's Day celebrations states that 2 excellent Masons from the Youghall Lodge No. 21 carried the Royal Arch. The report is vague and it is not known if this alluded to a new 'high degree' or whether it was just an arch that the Worshipful Master and Officers of the lodge walked under.

The next reference was in a report by the author Fifield D'Assigny, again published in Dublin. In 'A serious and impartial enquiry into the cause of the present decay of Free-Masonry in the Kingdom of Ireland, (1744)' he writes "I am informed in that city (York) is held an assembly of Master Masons under the title of Royal Arch Masons, who, as their qualifications and excellence's are superior to others they receive a larger pay than working masons". This seems to refer to a new type of Mason connecting the degree's legend to York the county town of Yorkshire.

On December 22 1753 the next important reference is found when the lodge in Fredericksburg, Virginia, conferred the degree of Royal Arch on 3 Master Masons. The unclear references from Ireland had crossed the North Atlantic and now there is a clear record of a new ceremony. Returning back across the Atlantic in 1758 is the first recorded ceremony of the Royal Arch in England, this in Bristol. So now the Royal Arch Degree was established on two continents.

Source:- Morris/D'Assigny/Young/Barb

PCC

"Peace cannot be kept by force, it can only be achieved by understanding"

Albert Einstein



Deadline for March issue 24 February 2016.