

# The Square and Compasses.

A newsletter for the Grand Lodge of South Africa, No. 138 July 2023



Most Worshipful Brother Godfrey Place.

## New Grand Master's Inaugural Address

The world in which we currently live is very different to that of 5 or 10 years ago, let alone the time when we were children. As a young adult and then a parent I was determined to avoid having a generation gap between myself and my children. I now have to grudgingly admit to my naivety. Reality is that the world is constantly changing and the rate of change is almost exponential. This is the world in which we as Freemasons live, where many good things of the past are being discarded for instant gratification, necessities are replaced by greed, and morality is all but scorned.

Have we, as Freemasons, changed accordingly? Why are the traditional institutions struggling for survival in our modern society? Our own membership numbers have steadily declined over the past 15 years, yet the very essence of our Order is good, sound, and relevant. The problem is that we have not been able to adapt to the rapid changes in the world around us and as an organisation reverse the trend of attrition.

At our Chains Conference in March, I asked our Brethren "If your Lodge were to cease to exist in the areas in which it operates, would it be missed?" The general consensus was "NO". A sad situation indeed, but we must ask why, and what we can do to mitigate this negative answer. We as the GLSA must be highly visible in society for all the right reasons. To achieve this, sacrifices must be made. Masonry must become fun again and this fun element combined with great visibility will surely attract many good men to join us.

As the oldest and largest fraternal organisation in the world today, we cannot complacently think that

we will continue to survive for hundreds of years to come, purely on our legacy. No, survival means adapting to the constant changes in our world and societies in which we live. Yet we seem unable to make these changes, just as I proved unable to bridge the Generation Gap in my family. We simply must bridge this gap. No one can do this for us.

Yes, the World has changed and will continue to do so. Society has also changed. Small towns and villages are now shells of their former selves. Urbanisation is now the new society, we live in a sprawling mess, where the breakdown of the very fundamentals of common decency, respect of law and order and, more importantly, morality is very clear.

The world in which Freemasonry was practiced in the past has vanished and our challenge is to find ways to keep us relevant in society today. That clearly requires change from us, change which we have simply not brought about quickly enough. We cannot continue to do the same things over and over and expect a different outcome. Einstein described that as the first sign of lunacy. We must do things differently, without destroying the age-old traditions, landmarks and practices of the Order.

We determine our own destiny and cannot allow outside influences to distract us. Are we not proud to openly admit that we are active Freemasons? Far too few of us have our best friends as members of our Order, some openly admitting that they would be ashamed to introduce their friends into their Lodge. Instead of being ashamed of the very organisation to which they belong, they must ask themselves what they can do to change the situation. We are all accountable for our actions and destiny. The Lodge to which we belong is **our** community. We are fraternal Brothers and therefore collective action as a Lodge will render this argument null and void.

This introduces planning - an integral part of how any organisation operates. If we fail to plan, we are, by default, planning to fail. All the great plans and ideas garnered over the past years **MUST** now be implemented. Every member must know what the plan is, and the direction must be clear. There is no time for simply talking. We must now apply compounded action followed through with pig headed discipline and determination to ensure that we achieve our goal. Freemasonry must be demonstrable action.

We must show that we are men of conviction and that we are serious about our intentions. We need to demonstrate to society, that we are making the world we live in a better place for all.

At the same time, when formulating new plans, we must interact with the Brethren to promote inclusivity and not impose ill-conceived change on an unwilling audience, yet we must be mindful of being

caught in the trap of hobbling change for the comfort of familiarity. Freemasonry is a way of life. We must all be excited about our Freemasonry.

Freemasonry must be a genuine family affair. We must involve our wives, partners and children in our projects within our communities and have them playing a role in the Grand Lodge vision. Imagine having our wives encouraging us to attend meetings, as they and their Masonic Friends have charitable tasks to attend to - **she** does not want to miss her meeting, because **she** will let **her** team down if **she** is not there. The combined activities of the Brethren and their families are an integral part of the great plan.

Steve Jobs said: "If you are working on something exciting that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you."

John Maxwell says "A great leader's courage to fulfil his vision comes from passion, not position." He also said: "The difference between Ordinary and Extraordinary is just a little Extra."

Let us all get out there and, using our various skills and talents, make a real difference and have an immense amount of fun while doing so.

**MW Bro Godfrey Place  
Grand Master**

### A Memorable Grand Lodge AGM

Some are good weekends and others are Great weekends and Saturday 15 July 2023 was certainly the latter. This was MW Bro John Smith's final meeting as Grand Master and he would not only report on the past year's progress, but would also install our new Grand Master, RW Bro Godfrey Place.

The meeting started at 12h45 and, having placed his Officers at their stations, MW Bro Smith received our visitors from the Grand Lodges of Mozambique, Mauritius, Benin, India, Scotland, Ireland and England. Having circulated his Annual Report before the meeting, the Grand Master was able to work through the Agenda with minimal fuss. He cleared such items as Finance and the Constitution changes



and then moved on to his Awards. The first was the highly sought after Charity Jewel. This was presented to RW Bro Alf Bröner and Wor Bro Max Matjane, both of

whom had excelled in their assistance to and support of their Brethren in so many different ways.

The next award went to Jeffrey's Bay, for the "Balanced Lodge of the Year". They are extraordinary in the way that they have settled into the GLSA's way of doing things and all agreed that they were extremely popular and worthy winners. As important, they are a Lodge who visibly enjoy their Freemasonry!

The trophy for the "Best Installation Address" went to Northern Division's Wor Bro Wikus Steyl who had impressed by the manner in which he researched his material and produced addresses which were both extremely interesting and very relevant.

There was only one "Exceptional Performance" award and that went to MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM



for his "commitment and dedication" as the Grand Secretary. As always, he noted that rewarding people for "simply having fun" seemed strange.

The next award was presented by the Grand Secretary and was for GLSA's "Secretary of the Year". This year Bro Leroyd Bergsteed (Northern) was the worthy winner. He serves 2 Lodges, Star of the Rand and Vereeniging, and has earned a reputation for being both very efficient and extremely committed to his Lodges.



The final award was the biggest of them all. After reading out an astonishing resume of some of his many achievements and summarising some of the Masonic highlights, MW Bro John Smith OSM MSA, presented RW Bro Brandon Topham with an OSM.



This is the highest honour which can be awarded by our Grand Lodge and RW Bro Brandon Topham OSM is an extremely deserving recipient.

The Grand Master then announced the recipients of Past Grand Lodge Ranks that he was conferring and disinvested his senior Officers. The time had now arrived for him to install his successor.

This was MW Bro Smith's final duty as the Grand Master and to say that he had prepared well is an understatement. The working really



was superb and all aspects of it ran like clockwork. The new Grand Master, MW Bro Godfrey Place was just as well prepared and it was little wonder that our visitors were extremely impressed – we all were!

Having been installed, MW Bro Godfrey Place then installed his team. The Senior Officers are:

- Deputy Grand Master RW Bro Tommy Hardiman
- Assistant Grand Master RW Bro Johan Britz MSA
- Assistant Grand Master RW Bro Keith Hutton OSM
- PGM Northern RW Bro Simon Nash
- PGM Eastern RW Bro Johan v d Merwe
- Acting PGM Southern Wor Bro Raymond Eyiomen
- Acting PGM Central Wor Bro Marcel de Kock
- Acting PGM Eastern Cape Wor Bro Ric Gillmer
- Grand Secretary MW Bro Geoff Edwards OSM
- Grand Treasurer RW Bro Brandon Topham OSM



MW Bro Godfrey Place installing his Assistant Grand Masters, being RW Bros Johan Britz MSA and Keith Hutton OSM. Both Brethren

are well respected for their GLSA endeavours.



MW Bro Godfrey Place with his Acting PGMs - Wor Bros Raymond Eyiomen, Marcel de Kock and Ric Gillmer. All things being equal, it is hoped that they will be installed at the next AGM of their Divisions.

The rest of the Grand Lodge Officers were then



installed before the new Grand Master thanked the Grand Lodges who had supported us and closed the meeting.

He is exchanging gifts with Benin

Grand Master, MW Bro Eustache Kotingan.



Pictured left are our new Grand Master, MW Bro Godfrey Place with Deputy, RW Bro Tommy Hardiman.

That evening we all went to the Wanderers Club to celebrate and to relax. It was a perfect way to end a Great weekend – the new

Grand Master was now properly installed!



*Seen at the Banquet were MW Bro Geoff Edwards, Linda and MW Bro Godfrey Place, MW Bro Eustache Kotingan, Edelweiss and MW Bro John Smith.*

## Northern Celebrate an Excellent Year

Northern Division's AGM was held in the Park Lane Temple on Saturday morning 15 July.

RW Bro Simon Nash was installed as PGM of Northern Division a year ago and is making great progress. With the support of his excellent senior team of Wor Bros Marius Mostert (Deputy), Alex Ndubuisi, Gerald Bosch, Wikus Steyl and Max Matjane, the Division's future really does look promising.

The Annual Report was exciting, the Finances are well under control and the Division is well set.

As always, the top performers were recognised.



Presiding Master of the Year was Wor Bro Willie Luck (Star of the East) He was selected for his impressive efforts and commitment to growing and strengthening the Lodge and the manner in which he has led the Lodge

over the past year to the benefit of all affected.

Master Mason of the Year was Bro Anton Geldenhuys for his extraordinary zeal and commitment to his Lodge and to our Order and his willingness to take office in multiple Lodges and appendant degrees to assist with their labours and to promote the rich diversity of Freemasonry.



The Secretary of the Year was Bro Leroyd Bergsteedt who was similarly recognised by Grand Lodge.

Ritualist of the Year was Wor Bro Scotty Lourens. This was no surprise as he had recently attained Grand Ritualist status and is well renowned for inspiring and motivating other Brethren to excel in their delivery of Ritual.



Overall it was an excellent AGM and set the tone for the Grand Lodge AGM that afternoon.

## Westerford Blood Drive raises Awareness



Wor Bro Marco Petronio is a very creative Charity project initiator. In this activity the Lodge "family" donates blood every 2nd month. Marco says 1 pint save 3 lives – and that sounds pretty good to us!

## Freemasonry is a Family Affair!

This is a report that I enjoy compiling. We have recently had a number of “family” Masonic events.

On Wednesday 19 July De Broederband initiated



Bro Carl Venter. He is seen here with his father, Bro Angus, who is a member of Tolerance in the Eastern Cape, as well as the

Master of De Broederband, Wor Bro Fritz Ganz.

On Thursday 6 July in the Bloemfontein Temple,

Losie Dagbreek initiated Bro Pieter Kruger. His father, looking extremely proud on Pieter’s right, is also named Pieter and is currently the Lodge’s Senior Warden. He is much looking forward to Mentoring his son.



Also on Thursday 6 July but at Cape Town’s de



Goede Hoop Temple, Bro Rodger Wegener was initiated into Westerford. Rodger and RW Bro Tommy Hardiman had been friends and Rodger introduced his sister, Lily, to Tommy. You guessed it, Lily and

Tommy fell in love, got married and Rodger and Tommy are now Brothers as well as Brothers-in-Law.

On Saturday 8 July in Grootfontein (Namibia)

our Grand Junior Warden, RW Bro Monty Montgomery, saw his son, Shane, initiated as a member of Lodge Makalani. Monty and his wife, Lara, are much respected members of our Masonic community and having another Montgomery in the GLSA just has to be good news.



## Chapter de Goede Kaap Exalt Jarred Clarke

On Wednesday 19 July Comp Jarred Clarke was



exalted to the Royal Arch by Chapter de Goede Kaap. He is seen here with MEC Malcolm Gessler (MWS in red) and the Principals and members of the RA Chapter.

## Almoner's Report

It is with much sadness we have to report on the passing of Wor Bro Paul Nash. He was a member of Star of the Rand, a Provincial Warden and had Past Grand Inner Guard conferred on him at our recent AGM. Paul was also an active member of the AASR Executive and had been responsible for opening our first Shriner’s Chapter. Our sincere condolences are extended to Joan, Simon and the rest of the family at this time.



We were also shocked by the news on Heinrich Dauth, the son of Wor Bro Francois Dauth. A few weeks ago he felt unwell and his doctor rushed him into hospital where he was diagnosed with meningitis. To make matters worse, Heinrich suffered a series of strokes due to the infection and was placed under an induced coma. While he is now awake again, he is still battling the side effects. Our thoughts and prayers are extended to Francois and the family.

If anything is known about a Brother in distress, please share it with your Divisional Almoner.

Southern Wor Bro Cobis Wilson	083 2844684
Northern Wor Bro Herman Roos	082 3184238
Central Wor Bro John Meyer	073 3525832
Eastern Wor Bro Bushy McKelvey	076 8912058
E Cape Wor Bro Ian Hetherington	082 9545297

## Lodge’s Charity Initiatives

We are always delighted to see our Lodges getting involved in their communities and providing support to those in need. Some recent examples are:

Lodge **Star Of The West** decided to do something to help those in need. They held a function to raise money for winter school clothes for children at a local school in Stilfontein and raised R10,000. They bought winter jackets, sweaters, pants and shoes for 38 children, who were extremely appreciative.



Another Lodge who have brought much credit to themselves by their charity activities is **Orange** who raised money to feed a number of families for a full 2 week period.

**Senekal** (Central) also put a great deal of effort into a bumper event where local disadvantaged people were given a special day with a tempting selection of food and gifts which really brightened up their lives.

Gary Hendriks of **Perseverance** continues to feed some 300 children twice a week.