



Ashton News

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NEWSLETTER of ASHTON LODGE No 218 of the UNITED GRAND LODGE OF QUEENSLAND

Quandry on future of South Brisbane Centre

A crisis meeting is to be held in late November to decide the future of Lodges who regularly meet at the Vulture Street Temple.

In a letter to all Co-operative members (of which Ashton is one) the Board of Directors said that the time has arrived when serious consideration be given to the future of the South Brisbane Masonic Centre.

Over the past ten years there has never been an annual profit made from the running of the Centre.

The deficit has escalated during this period to \$73,173.

Due to the age of the building, maintenance and improvements had to be carried out, with the hope that such work would im-

prove the facilities and add comfort to the members.

It was also hoped that the improved facilities would make the centre more attractive to prospective members, and for the same reason, hire charges were kept low, particularly in view of the closure of the Sunnybank and the Petrie Terrace Centres.

However, new membership was disappointingly low and losses have continued.

The problem has been exaggerated by several member bodies with low membership numbers which makes their continued viability highly suspect.

In addition, there is a possibility that one tenant member have it in their mind to

locate elsewhere.

The options of keeping the Centre viable are slim and the Board of Directors are considering a motion to take steps to put the property on the market, and suggest that to delay this decision unduly will see the loss of more money.

The Board of Directors have advised that the winding-up of the co-operative will have to be done in accordance with the Queensland Co-operatives Act, and a postal ballot will be conducted by a Returning Officer.

If this ballot ratifies a decision to wind up, a Liquidator must be appointed to supervise with the payment of outstanding debts, and the distribution of remaining funds.

But before conducting the ballot, the

Board considers it necessary for a Special General Meeting to enable members to discuss this situation.

Lodges working for Leukaemia Foundation

Answering the call from the ULGQ to get out and make the Craft visible to the general public, ten Lodges who meet at the South Brisbane Centre have combined to promote and sell a giant Christmas Raffle at three of the major shopping centres on the southside of Brisbane.

The prize is valued at \$2000 and has amongst it's many products a Victa mower, Rover petrol powered line trimmer, Child's Pedal Car, plenty of toys, various items of Crystal ware.

The tickets are selling for \$2 each and will be drawn at 12 noon Saturday 8th December at the Greenslopes Shopping Mall.



WITH WARMEST WISHES FOR A WONDERFUL
CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

from John and Dianne Gray W.M.

Ceremony of Thanksgiving

The September meeting of Ashton was modified so that a Ceremony of Thanksgiving for the life of the late John Pender could be performed by members of the Lodge.

After the reading of the minutes and passing of correspondence and accounts, the Lodge was closed and family and friends of John entered the Lodge room and joined in the Thanksgiving Ceremony.

The service was unique and moving, originating from a ritual conceived by a good friend of Ashton, V Wor Bro Athol Hard-

ing who was formerly its AGS of Wks, and a prominent member of Caledonia Lodge.

The Ceremony centred around the five principal officers of the Lodge and Director of Ceremonies.

A black cover was draped over the Volume of Sacred Law.

The Worshipful Master opened the proceedings by asking the Junior Warden what was the the uppermost thoughts and sentiments on an occasion such as this?

The Junior warden replied by saying: "Sorrow for the loss of a Brother, remembrance of his former place amongst us and sympathy for the be-

reaved who mourn his passing".

The sacred component of the night's proceedings consisted of the Director of Ceremonies laying the late Brother's apron in the symbolic centre of the Lodge.

A sprig of acacia carried by the Senior Warden, was placed at the head of the apron as an emblem of the immortality of the soul.

The lighted candle of remembrance was held by the Junior Warden and placed at the head of the apron as a token of fidelity.

The Master, carrying the open compasses said:

"The compasses are

a symbol and emblem of his dignity. I close the compasses to indicate his earthly designs are completed, and with due reverence, I place this emblem of his prestige upon the Apron".

The ceremony concluded with an Oration delivered by a Past Master, who said:

"Brethren, grieve not for John Pender for he has attained a place of honour within the brilliant courts of the Grand Lodge above.

Let your sense of loss be assuaged in the sure knowledge that he has found perfect peace beyond that distant bourne from which no traveller returns, where all is love and concord.

Be not over saddened, Brethren, for where our Brother dwells, there also shall you dwell. A place for you has been prepared.

Each of us, at the closing hour of our existence must heed the summons to depart this mortal life and enter into a glorious reunion of kindred spirits in the harmony of the Grand Lodge above.

And when that time shall come, may you pass nobly through the open portal and receive a welcome such as that, we trust, has greeted our late Brother".

Attendance for the night was 61 Brethren and 25 visitors.

Grand Lodge Honours

The September communications of the United Grand Lodge of Queensland contained good news for members of Ashton.

Recognition has been accorded to one of our most respected and dedicated members, Stewart Henry (Tom) Blackwell.

Tom was conferred with the title of Past Grand Sword Bearer.

He was introduced into Ashton by the late David (Jock) Mitchell, in 1966 and became its Master in 1977.



As an active member over the years, Tom has proved himself to be an expert ritualist and has represented the Lodge on various committees, such as a Director of the South Brisbane Masonic Hall Co-operative Company.

He was involved with the operation of the Fete

held at the Freemason's Home Sandgate, by collecting and then selling the items on the day of the fete.

In the early part of his Masonic career, Tom was involved with his wife Margaret, on the board of the South Brisbane Masonic Ball Committee which was the forerunner of the present day Masonic Debutante Ball.

Tom is still active in Lodge ritual, often being called upon at short notice to deliver charges, and up until last year was its Chaplin.

A weekend away with a Lodge in the UK

Ashton member Ian Pieper is entering into the third year of his working holiday in the UK, and as can be read, is still enjoying his visits to Masonic Lodges.

One of the foundation members of Ashton Lodge was a member of The Gael, so while many of the Lodges are closed for the summer, I took the opportunity to visit, as they are one of the few Lodges that meet over the summer months.

Much of the discussion for that evening was about an upcoming trip that was being organised to Lodge Kildalton 552 on Islay.

The Gael have a bit of a reputation for visiting and are regularly invited to perform degrees within other Lodges, in this case they had been invited to perform a Mark Degree.

I asked if I could tag along and they were more than happy to have me.

They hired a minibus and 12 of us headed off to catch the ferry from Kennacraig to Port Askaig.

The trip took us through Argyll and Bute, some of the most beautiful country that I've seen over here.

The lads were generally in full voice and getting into the swing of a trip to the island with the highest con-

centration of distilleries in the world.

After arriving on the island we bussed across to Port Ellen where Kildalton meet.

It has always amazed me just how much stuff some people need to carry with them because they couldn't do without it.

Some of these blokes would be pushing 80 or more and we're only there for one night.

Port Ellen is a small peaceful bay on the south of the island and like so many towns throughout the world, the cenotaph is both prominent and far to large.

Several other brothers had made there own way to the island to meet up with us.

Some of the brethren had not travelled too well, and as we were preparing to enter the Lodge as a Deputation, the decision was made to rearrange the officers.

I was asked if I would cover the position of Inner Guard for the Mark Lodge. Of course, I accepted.

The night went well and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

It was a big night for the locals to have so many visitors for a summer meeting and

they turned out in force to provide suitable hospitality.

The Gael had two pipers there, one of whom is the Grand Lodge Piper, so the night was long and boisterous.

It was a really good weekend away.

I've already got my name down for the trip to Inverness in October, they are hoping to get a full bus-load of around 50 together.

AN IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back,

May the sun shine warm on your face,

And the rains fall soft upon your fields,

And, until we meet again, may God hold you in the hollow of his hand.

How to cook up a Haggis

Haggis is typically served on Burns Night, January 25, when Scotland celebrates the birth of their greatest poet, Robert Burns, who was born in Ayrshire on that date in 1759.

During the celebration, Burns poems are read, and a member of the party addresses the haggis, ceremonially, in the form of verses from Burns' poem, 'Ode to a Haggis.'

A typical meal for Burns Night would include Cock-a-Leakie (chicken leak soup), Haggis with Tattie-an'-neeps (potatoes and turnips), Roast it Beef, Topsy Laird, (drambuie trifle) and Dunlop Cheese.

Traditional Haggis

1 sheep's pluck (stomach bag)

1 kg dry oatmeal

1/2 kg suet

1/2 kg lamb's liver

2 1/2 cups stock

1 large chopped onion

1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper, Jamaica pepper and salt

Boil liver and parboil the onion, then mince them together.

Lightly brown the oatmeal. Mix all ingredients together.

Fill the sheep's pluck with the mixture pressing it down to remove all the air, and sew up securely.

Prick the haggis in several places so that it does not burst. Place haggis in boiling water and boil slowly for 4-5 hours. Serves approximately 12.

A fine philosophy on life

A philosophy professor stood before his class with some items in front of him.

When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks about 4cm in diameter. He then asked the students if the jar was full?

They agreed that it was. So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar.

He shook the jar lightly, The pebbles of course, rolled into the open areas between the rocks. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was and laughed. The professor then picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar which of course, filled up everything else.

"Now," said the professor, "I want you to recognise that this is your life. The rocks are the important things – your family, your partner, your

Do you know what would have happened if there had been Three Wise Women instead of Three Wise Men?

They would have asked for directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the babe, cleaned the stable, knocked up a birthday cake and brought some practical gifts

health and your children.

Think that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full,

The sand is everything else, the small stuff.

If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the rocks.

The same goes for your life."

If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness, play with your children, take time to get medical checkups, take your partner out dancing.

There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal.

Take care of the rocks first – the things that really matter, set your priorities, the rest is just sand.

But then a student took the jar, which the other students and the professor agreed was full, and proceeded to pour in a glass of beer.

Of course the beer filled the remaining spaces within the jar, making the jar truly full.

The moral of this tale is: that no matter how full your life is, there is always room for a beer.



The Christmas Spirit

This is the story of how the fairy got on top of the Christmas Tree – for children of all ages.

Once upon a time, Santa Claus was in the process of getting the annual Christmas order made, packed and labelled ready for delivery to his customers. His was a seasonal trade mainly.

Anyway, local suppliers had really mucked him about that year, He was short of boxes, short of labels, and the presents were not the best his factory had ever produced. However, in fact he was practically giving them away, and what with transport overheads and the like, he was considering giving up the whole game and going into a simple business, like making stationery.

By early December, the gnomes had really become tired of working long hours, the wages were pretty inadequate, and the conditions – well you know what Lapland is like!

So they went on strike, and it took feverish negotiations between Santa Claus and the Amalgamated Gnomes Union chief to come to an agreement.

The gnomes got their holiday loading, and three plaster humans to stick in their gardens, and equal pay, regardless of the length of their ears.

So they went back on double time until the packing was finished.

The boxes were a bit thin, and a few of the labels were upside down, but at least the job was done

Then, on Christmas Eve, two of Santa's reindeer went in for service, and another was misfiring in one leg, but Santa managed.

Off he went through the wind and rain, hail and snow, from house to house.

He got filthy dirty, tore his red gown, got stuck in umpteen chimneys until his Ho-Ho-Hos became few and far between.

But at last, early on the twenty-fifth, his final deliveries made, he got home to Lapland.

Weary and bedraggled, Santa Claus slumped down in his favourite chair, knocking back scotches, his hands shaking, and with a shocking headache.

There was a rap on the door and a little angelic fairy came in, dragging an enormous Christmas Tree which shed mud, bits and debris all over the polar bear-skin carpet.

"Where would you like me to put this Christmas Tree?" she asked.

AND THAT'S HOW THE FAIRY GOT ON TOP OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE.