

# The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

Greetings Brethren,

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### Membership e-mail address list

A list of current  
members and their  
e-mail addresses is  
available on request.

## REASONS FOR PREPARATION

Brethren, although this is not a part of our Ritual or Initiation ceremony it is very interesting and does give an explanation of the candidates preparation. It is therefore presented here as a mini lecture. I shall now explain to you the reason for your preparation, which to you may have appeared somewhat strange.

Let me, however, assure you that every part of it has a deep symbolical import, and was designed to convey an important and useful lesson.

Your preparation was twofold -- internal and external. Internally you were prepared in your heart, by a favourable opinion preconceived of the Order, a general desire for knowledge, and an earnest wish, based on worthy motives, to be ranked amongst its members.

Externally you were prepared in a peculiar manner in a convenient room adjoining the Lodge, to fit you for the ceremony of Initiation.

You were divested of all m..... and m.....s; first, that you might bring nothing offensive or defensive into the Lodge to disturb its harmony; secondly, that as you were admitted into Freemasonry in a state of p....., you should always be mindful of your duty to relieve indigent Brethren so far as may be consistent with your circumstances in life.

It was also intended to point out to you that in a Freemason's Lodge a man is not esteemed on account of his worldly substance, for therein all men are equal, meeting on the L..... and parting on the S.....

And thirdly, it had reference to the building of King Solomon's Temple, for it is upon the circumstances surrounding the erection of that edifice that our ceremonies are chiefly based; there was not heard the sound of any hammer or other implement of iron, the stones being prepared in the quarries, and the timber in the forests, and placed in their respective positions in the building by means of wooden mauls.

You were b..... or h.....w..... This was symbolic of your being in a state of darkness with respect to the mysteries of Freemasonry, and to impress upon you the necessity of keeping others in a similar state until brought to the light in the same regular manner as you have been.

It was also to remind you that the heart must be made to conceive before the eye can be permitted to discover.

A c..... t... was placed around your neck, first, as a means of restraint should such have been necessary, and, secondly, as symbolic of your being in a state of bondage, the bondage of ignorance.

Your r.... a... was made b.... in token of your sincerity, and to show that you were able and willing to work in furtherance of the interest of the craft.

Your l.... b..... was made b.... in token of your fidelity and to prove that you were not an imposter as regards sex, for the rules of our Order forbid the admission of females into our assemblies, and further that you might be received on the point of a sharp instrument presented thereto to intimate to you that you were about to engage in something serious and solemn.

Your l.... k.... was made b.... in token of your humility. On it you knelt, and in the presence of T.G.A.O.T.U. entered into a solemn obligation never improperly to reveal any of those Masonic Secrets which have been entrusted to your keeping.

Your r.... h..... was s.... s..... This was to point out to you that our Lodges are considered to stand on H.... G....., and in token of an antient custom amongst Eastern peoples, referred to in the Fourth Chapter of the Book of Ruth, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> verses:

Ruth 4 : 7 Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour; and this was a testimony in Israel.

Ruth 4 : 8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Bo'az. Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

## WHAT DO I GET FROM BEING A MASON

People have asked me from time to time, what I get from being a Mason. What is it that I learned, or discovered in Lodge that makes it so interesting or valuable to me? Why do I keep going back to Lodge, paying Dues, serving as an Officer, spend so much time on the Internet researching and discussing Masonry? I don't think anyone really learns anything new in Masonry. I know I didn't, though I really expected to. Much to my surprise I was, and continue to be, reminded of several principles and virtues that I had already inculcated as my own long before I became a Mason. Most, if not all, Masons it has been my pleasure to meet also accept these principles and Virtues as valid and true in their lives. What are these Virtues? What are these Principles? I will enumerate and describe them, as best I can, one at a time.

**Brotherly Love:** This Virtue admonishes us to regard the entire human race as family. We were, after all, created by the same Creator, and the tie that binds us is stronger than we sometimes think. In all that we do, we should consider our family, known and unknown. What is best for them, and for ourselves?

**Relief:** Whenever we encounter a fellow creature in need, particularly at times when we are in abundance (but even when we are not), we should never fail to do what we are able to relieve their distress.

**Truth:** This should always have the highest priority, above personal agendas and disagreements. We must be always ready, not only to seek, but find and speak the Truth. However, we must be prepared to hear it as well. This is not always easy. In fact, hearing an unwelcome Truth is usually difficult. Still, hear it we sometimes must, and accept it as well.

**Faith:** When we believe in something bigger than ourselves, something greater than we can even aspire to becoming, we are humbled. Humility inspires us to do our best. Not because we can equal the Creator, but to imitate Him and make something of Beauty ourselves. Beauty gives both pleasure and brings the following Virtue.

**Hope:** A better world awaits us. Even in this life, we may look forward to an improved existence. Educating our Children will insure that they will be able to make good decisions when it is their time to do so. Here I speak not of an empty Hope, but a Hope based on the secure knowledge that we have all done our best to make the world of tomorrow better than it is today.

**Charity:** Beyond Relief (above), we should always work hard to improve the condition of those around us. Where Relief leaves off, Charity begins. Going beyond soothing an affliction or satisfying a need, Charity is the act or acts designed to prevent those needs from ever existing again. Preventing distress, not for the recognition, thanks or acclaim, but because it improves some part of the world, is the highest form of Charity.

**Tolerance:** By this principle of life and conduct we are reminded that it is seldom necessary to prove someone else wrong for us to be right. We do not have to cause another to fail in order to succeed. In the 60s, there was a term called win - win. Both sides of almost every conflict can find a "middle ground" in which satisfaction may be a shared commodity, if both sides are willing to allow the other to win also.

**Temperance:** Doing almost anything to excess is harmful. Charity, given to excess, can leave one impoverished. Love, given to excess, may be smothering. The effects of kava, drugs and alcohol, when used to excess, are well known. However, consider the effect of too much Truth. Truth without tact (the knowledge of when NOT to say things) can hurt feelings and even destroy friendships.

**Fortitude:** Without fortitude, no one can succeed. Everything gets difficult sometimes, there is always the temptation to give in or give up. When we show Fortitude, we learn to "stick it out" and overcome obstacles to accomplish goals.

**Prudence:** The mark of a Polite person is knowing when to speak and when not to. What to say and what not to. "To everything, there is a season." This is not only a quotation from Scripture, and a popular song of a previous decade, but good advice as well.

**Justice:** Everyone deserves to have their fair due, whatever that may be. Like Truth, we must be prepared not only to dispense Justice, but to have it dispensed to us. We must be able to put aside our own wants and sometimes needs in order to insure that Justice is served.

All these Principles and Virtues are bigger than ourselves, greater than our personal desires. Observing and practicing them, we are making this a better world, not only for ourselves, but for all who inhabit it.

This is what I get from Masonry. This is why I keep coming back - to be reminded of these principles, and learn more about them.

## Meet the Brethren

**Very Worshipful Brother Ross McDonald**

**Grand Inspector South West Pacific Group of Lodges**

V.W. Bro. Ross McDonald is one of Fiji's most experienced businessmen and has wide commercial experience in the South Pacific having lived and worked in the region since 1960.

Currently he is the Managing Director of Credit Corporation (Fiji) Limited in Fiji and was appointed to this position in 2001. He is also responsible for Credit Corporation interests in Vanuatu and visits the office in Port Vila several times annually to review operations.

He had an extensive career with the Burns Philp Group being at various times Managing Director of their operations in Vanuatu, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, before being appointed General Manager of all of their Pacific operations stretching across seven Pacific countries from Papua New Guinea to the Samoas. He has great satisfaction from his time with Burns Philp having achieved record profitability in all of his Burns Philp executive positions. He says, "It was a great company to work for, very much a family company with good people. It was sad to see its demise."

He left Burns Philp in 1992 and on his return to Fiji he was appointed managing director of WR Carpenter (South Pacific) Limited.

His working career is unique as he is the only person to have ever managed the then two largest business houses in Fiji and the South Pacific, Burns Philp and Carpenters.

Ross was born in Perth in Western Australia and completed his education in Melbourne. As a child in the mid 1950s he and his family lived on Fanning Island (in the mid-Pacific that is now part of Kiribati) for two years when his father was there with Cable & Wireless. His earlier working career in Fiji was with the ANZ Bank and the Pearce &

Company Group that later merged with Stinson's to become Stinson Pearce Ltd.

He is a past president and a founder member of the Fiji Institute of Accountants and a Fellow of CPA Australia. He has served as a director and chairman on many boards and is also a Trustee of the Diocese of Polynesia (Anglican).

Ross says that Freemasonry has always been part of his life and he comes from a long line of Masons. "It seems I was destined to become a Mason. Both my maternal and paternal grandfathers were members of the Craft in Western Australia, my paternal grandfather being a PM of Lodge Nanine in the goldfields in Western Australia in the early 1900s and my father a PM of Guilford Lodge in Perth in the 1940s. With the demise of the goldfields Lodge Nanine no longer exists! My father-in-law the late W. Bro. R.C. Evetts was a Past Master of the Lodge of Fiji having been master in 1936 and 1937."

His earliest recollections of Freemasonry are as a three-year old toddler struggling to carry his fathers lodge case to the door on Lodge nights and saying..... "Daddy where are going"..... "his father replying"..... "to Lodge son"....."what do you do at Lodge Daddy"....."ride the goat son"! Ross says he is still looking for the elusive goat!

He was initiated in 1973 in LOF and says "I have enjoyed every minute of Freemasonry, and would do the same again given the opportunity."

He was first installed into the Chair of King Solomon in the Lodge of Fiji in 1979 and says he was privileged to again be installed in the Lodge of Discovery in 1983 when he and his family lived in Vanuatu for five years. At the time he was the Managing Director of Burns Philp (Vanuatu) Ltd then Vanuatu's largest trading company.

He was appointed Grand Inspector in 1999 and says his greatest satisfaction in this role has been the resurgence of Lodge of Lautoka that he thinks could well become Fiji's largest lodge once it again has its own Temple.

Ross is also a Past First Principal of the Loloma Royal Arch Chapter where he has twice been in the Chair in 1994 and 1995.

Asked what he most enjoys most about Freemasonry Ross says, "Freemasonry's humility and the humility it teaches, the camaraderie and the wide circle of friends I have been privileged to make through Freemasonry, and the deeper message it has in leading us through life." He says "Freemasonry being multi-racial is the only organisation in Fiji, and across the South Pacific, that I am aware of where race, creed or colour, or standing in society do not matter, where we meet for the simple joy of each others company and for our commitment to Freemasonry." He says "Fiji and the South Pacific need more of this".

Outside of Freemasonry Ross enjoys all sports, takes an interest in news and local and international current affairs. For exercise and relaxation he walks, enjoys golf, and grows orchids.

Ross and his wife Sonia married in 1965 and have a son Owen who is a mortgage broker and resides in Brisbane with his partner Deb. Owen specialises in providing mortgage finance for those interested in purchasing residential property in Australia. They have two grand daughters, Ella and Madison, aged almost four and two respectively. Owen represented Fiji in tennis at the South Pacific Games in Tahiti and the mini South Pacific Game in Tonga.

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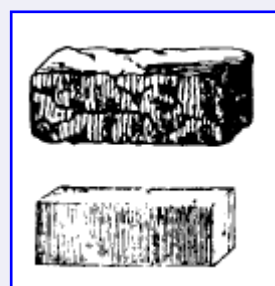
## THE ASHLAR

We know that the ashlar is important in Freemasonry because we know it to be one of the moveable objects referred to in the 1<sup>st</sup> degree lecture, but what significance does it have? What does the ashlar symbolise? The rough and perfect ashlar, are two of the most significant symbols in Freemasonry, yet is only barely mentioned in the rituals. What does the ashlar signify, and why is it such a key to Masonry?

The dictionary defines an ashlar as nothing more than "hewn or squared stone." At first this seems to show the historical connection between Freemasonry and operative Masons, however, in our EA ritual we are taught that "by the rough ashlar we are reminded of our rude and imperfect state by nature, by the perfect ashlar, of that state of perfection at which we hope to arrive....."

However, we cannot say that the rough ashlar (either literally as a stone, or symbolically as man) is imperfect, for both were created by the Great Architect of the Universe, that created nothing imperfect. The ashlar, therefore, can be seen as symbolising our mind, which becomes more "perfect" the more effort we exert individually. The chisel and other tools therefore can be seen as representing education, past experiences of others, lessons and the like.

An EA is said to represent the rough ashlar, who, by expanding his mind (remember the symbolism of the compass) becomes a perfect ashlar, or a MM, ready take his place "in the house of God." In some Lodges, a newly initiated EA is asked to symbolically chip away a piece of the rough ashlar, to signify that his learning, and expansion of the mind, has begun.



## THE KING'S FREEMASONRY

Most, if not all of you, will have either seen or heard of that excellent film **"THE KING'S SPEECH"** which won a host of industry awards..



This article has been reproduced from the current edition of Freemasonry Today.

There is no mention of Freemasonry in the Oscar-winning film about King George VI. Paul Hoolley puts us right

The King's Speech has been critically acclaimed as one of the finest motion pictures of recent years and has renewed the public's interest in, and affection for, King George VI, who reigned from 1936 to 1952. The film, which chronicles the constitutional crisis created by Edward VIII's abdication and George's struggle to overcome his pronounced stammer, focuses on the moving relationship between the King and speech therapist Lionel Logue, which had such a happy ending.

What the film does not mention, however, is that both men were members of the Craft; or that the King believed Freemasonry had also helped him overcome his disability – which rarely surfaced whenever he performed Masonic ritual. Logue, who had been the Master of St George's Lodge, Western Australia, was also speech therapist to the Royal Masonic School.

### KING GEORGE'S LOVE OF FREEMASONRY

Following service with the Royal Navy in the First World War, he was initiated in December 1919 into Navy Lodge, No. 2612, of which his grandfather King Edward VII had been founding Master. On that occasion he noted: 'I have always wished to become a Freemason, but owing to the war I have had no opportunity before this of joining the Craft'. From that moment he became a most dedicated and active Freemason. He was invested as Duke of York in 1920 and the following year installed as permanent Master of Navy Lodge.

He joined other lodges and degrees and was appointed Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge in 1923.

George V died in January 1936 and was succeeded by his eldest son Edward, who had been initiated (also in 1919) into the Household Brigade Lodge, No. 2614. But before the year was out Edward had abdicated. Of the moment of change King George VI wrote, 'On entering the room I bowed to him as King... when [he] and I said goodbye we kissed, parted as Freemasons and he bowed to me as his King.' Protocol required George to resign his Masonic affiliations, however when it was suggested a new position of Past Grand Master be created especially for him, he immediately accepted, declaring, 'Today the pinnacle of my Masonic life has been reached.'

### THE VICTORY STAMPS

After the Second World War, King George wrote that 'Freemasonry has been one of the strongest influences on my life' and in collaboration with engraver Reynolds Stone helped create a postage stamp, part of the '1946 Victory Issue,' which is filled with Masonic symbolism.

The 3d Victory Stamp was widely praised for the 'strength and simplicity of the design'. It depicts the King's head in the East, his eyes firmly fixed on illustrations of a dove carrying an olive branch (representing peace and guidance), the square and compasses (in the second degree configuration) and a trowel and bricks (the sign of a Master spreading the cement that binds mankind in brotherly love). On the stamp the images appear in white, the colour of purity, out of purple, the colour of divinity.



The three coupled illustrations are surrounded by a scrolled ribbon made up of five figure threes – sacred numbers in Freemasonry – and was the unusual positioning of the wording meant to represent two great pillars?

By its name and intention, the stamp proclaimed victory over evil, yet by its appearance it expressed compassion and hope.

King George VI once stated, 'the world today does require spiritual and moral regeneration. I have no doubt, after many years as a member of our Order, that Freemasonry can play a most important part in this vital need.' The Victory Stamp captured those words in a graphic representation that also expressed the King's belief that the building of a new and better world could best be achieved by adhering to the principles of the square and compasses.

### MAINTAINING VALUES

He reinforced those thoughts in 1948 in an address he gave to Grand Lodge: 'I believe that a determination to maintain the values which have been the rock upon which the Masonic structure has stood firm against the storms of the past is the only policy which can be pursued in the future. I think that warning needs emphasising today, when men, sometimes swayed by sentimentality or an indiscriminate tolerance, are apt to overlook the lessons of the past. I cannot better impress this upon you than by quoting from the book on which we have all taken our Masonic obligations: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set".

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### The Worthy Mason

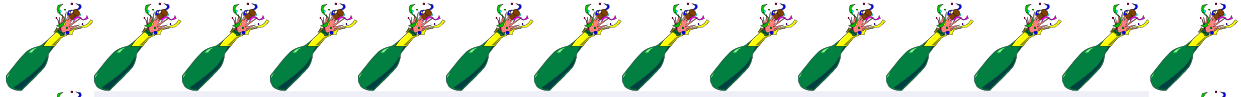
This is a poem that tells of visiting and, in fact, describes a night out Masonic-style. I'm sure we've all had nights like this.

Here's to the worthy Mason,  
As worthy he must be  
To travel far and wide at night  
Hs Brethren for to see  
To don the simple lamb skin

Is done with lots of pride  
And witness ancient ritual  
With his Brethren by his side.  
The warmth of friendly greeting,  
The clasping of the hand,  
The small talk in the foyer  
Is something oh so grand  
The stuffy heat of summer  
The cold wet winter's night  
Are things we take within our stride  
To see the wondrous sight  
Of Brethren standing side by side  
All in regalia dressed,  
Has been from time immemorial  
A witness to the test  
Of meeting on the level  
And parting on the square  
And all that goes on in between  
Is done with lots of care.  
The merriment at supper  
The solemnity of the toast  
The honours to the visitors  
Presented to the host  
Are things that we all cherish  
And things that we all see  
So here's to the worthy Mason  
As worthy he must be.

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## THE WORKING TOOLS OF A STEWARD



I now present to you the Working Tools of a Steward—they are the CORK-SCREW, DISH MOP and the TEA TOWEL.

The corkscrew is a small instrument, twisted in its form which, when applied with consummate skill will remove the most stubborn cork, strengthen one's pouring arm and enable you to liberate the taste and bouquet of the intended beverage.

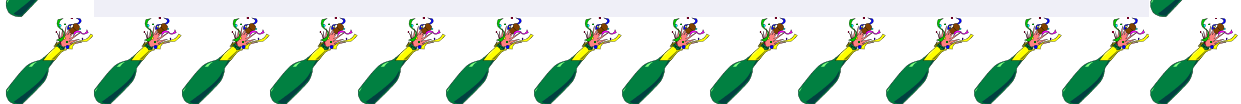
The dish mop, although normally retained by the senior steward of the Lodge, is to be delivered into the hands of some unsuspecting Past Master at the conclusion of a meeting, so that he may assist you to maintain order in the south, particularly in the kitchen.

With the tea towel suitably draped over your left arm, an air of professionalism and efficiency is displayed when obliterating the bubbles that emanate from the Master and senior officers at the top table.

But I know that, as you are not just speculative, but rather an operative or practicing purveyor of the gastronomic delights, you will apply these tools to your methods.

Hence the corkscrew teaches us that by consistent screwing, we derive considerable pleasure throughout life.

The dish mop illustrates that by sloppy actions, we can point out to our superiors that we are not here to be laughed at, chaffed at, or generally



**Two non Masons were passing a Lodge after have quite a few drinks.** "What do you think goes on in there?" asks one. "I don't know but I am going in to find out," said the other. After two or three minutes he comes flying out of the door all bloody and clothes ripped. "What happened to you?" asks the first. "Well he said, after passing through the entryway, I climbed a winding stair. When I got to the top I came to a door with a small door at head height and so I knocked. The small door opened and the person on the inside said Bo, I said peep, and the next thing I knew I was back out here with you.

**The Worshipful Master directed that the Lodge Deacons wear less after-shave in future,** as the Candidate who had just been initiated that evening, when asked if he had felt comfortable during the ceremony, replied, "I was a bit worried for the first five or ten minutes, but the woman behind me was very helpful in keeping me from staggering!"