

The  
Newsletter of  
the District  
NSW Hunter

June 2015



**BIRTHDAY BOY LES  
O'DONNELL TAKES  
HIS 30TH DEGREE**



**DAVID HENRY FLEW  
IN LANCASTER  
BOMBERS!**



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# NEWSLETTER

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## The Ninth Degree

The Ninth Degree, or Elect of Nine, was enthusiastically performed by Brethren from both Shortland and Hunter Districts before an appreciative audience of Rose Croix Masons just prior to Aquila Alba Sovereign Chapter's June meeting. The performance was held under the Lachlan Macquarie Chapter of Improvement.

Without giving too much away, this degree is concerned with the dramatic pursuit of the murderers of H.A. The Ninth & Tenth Degrees are often known as the vengeance degrees, which can be misleading, since according to the legend, summary vengeance was

*Above: E&P Bro.  
Terry Thomson  
together with Officers  
of the Ninth Degree  
act out their dramatic  
roles in this  
extraordinary  
performance.*

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not inflicted but instead there is an underlying moral. The symbolism is all about recognising and eliminating faults in our own character.

Of course the murderers, who represent human meanness and other undesirable vices, hiding away in the recesses of our hearts, are the chief symbols that illustrate this captivating allegory and so to a Mason they are to be confronted face to face, before they can be captured and put down.

The cast comprised of ten seasoned thespians, from both districts, who kept their audience on the edge of their seats: Em.:Bro. Roger Broadbent played the roll of Illus.:Sovereign, with Illus.:Bro. Kevin Allen as Senior Warden, Illus.:Bro. Keith McCord as Junior Warden, Senechel was played by Em.:Bro. Bill Bagnall, The Herald by Em.:Bro. Dave Parsons, Marshall by Em.:Bro. Les Cawthorne, Senior Deacon by E&P Bro. Jeffery O'Connor, Junior Deacon by Em.:Bro. Rod Stokes, Hospitaller by Em.:Bro. Barry Stephenson. Our true professional candidate was E&P Bro. Terry Thomson.

The Degree sparked considerable discussion on a number of topics, in particular its allegorical interpretation and its relevance to an individuals mastery of his own nature. Em.:Bro Dave Parsons, from Shortland District, said that he thought the lessons taught were extremely profound and yet clearly communicated a way that one can search out and eliminate disagreeable character traits.

Other Brethren noted that perhaps the Intermediate Degrees from the 4th to the 17th should be given more exposure by finding ways of introducing them into the format of regular meetings. This was seen as providing a means of revitalising Chapter work and reducing the need to rely upon well worn lectures when a Candidate for Perfection was not available.

Likewise, Councils could perform the ceremonies from the 19th to the 29th Degrees thereby raising more interest in the fuller content of our A&ASR heritage.

Very.:Ill.:Bro. Ted Oldfield 33°, District Commander, District Shortland and Assistant Preceptor of the Lachlan Macquarie Chapter of Improvement, and his colleague V.:Ill.:Bro. David Padgett 33°, District Commander of District Hunter organised the Ninth Degree performance. The Tenth Degree, will be held at St. Elizabeth Sov. Chapter, in November later this year.

## *Ninth & Tenth Degrees*



The Ninth and Tenth Degrees are concerned with bringing the Murderers of H.A. to justice. The Ninth being called the 'Elect of Nine' and the Tenth, the 'Elect of Fifteen'.

The Tenth Degree will be performed under the authority of The Lachlan Macquarie Chapter of Improvement prior to Saint Elizabeth Sov. Chapter's meeting 7th November 2015.

Why not come along and enjoy this deeply moving dramatic performance, which only takes place once every eight years.



The Cast of the Ninth Degree, from left to right: Em. Bro. Les Cawthorne as Marshall; Em. Bro. Bill Bagnall as Senechel, Illus. Bro. Kevin Allen as Senior Warden, Em. Bro. Roger Broadbent as Illus. Sovereign, E&P Bro. Terry Thomson as the Candidate, E&P Bro. Jeffery O'Connor as the Senior Deacon, Em. Bro. Rod Stokes as the Junior Deacon, Em. Bro. Dave Parsons as the Herald, Illus. Bro. Keith McCord as Junior Warden, Em. Bro. Barry Stephenson as the Hospitaller.



Left to right: E&P Bro. William Downton, V. Illus. Bro. David Padgett 33<sup>0</sup>, E&P Bro. Merv Downton.

### **A Hearty Welcome to William Downton**

The MWS, E&P Bro. Graeme Ingall, welcomed E&P Bro. William Downton as a new member at Aedis Christie Sov. Chapter's February meeting. William's brother Merv, a member of a Sovereign Chapter in Coffs Harbour, travelled to the meeting especially for the occasion.

William was Perfected at Sydney St Andrews Sov. Chapter in 1992 but has been unattached to a Sovereign Chapter for quite some time. He is a member of Lodge Rosewood No. 120, Qld Constitution and a member of the RA Chapter, Laidley No. 139 also of the Qld Constitution.

He now lives in Killarney Vale on the Central Coast, is married to Dianne and they have two children, five grand children, three great grand children with one on the way.

# Aedis Christie Honours

## Em.: Bro. David Henry DFC, 32<sup>o</sup> CoM



**David with his Lancaster Bomber presentation flanked by E&P Bro. Barry Shepherd (left) and Em.: Bro. Bill Elliott 32<sup>o</sup> CoM, MWS of Aedis Christie Sovereign Chapter. (Photo - David Padgett)**

On Saturday 9 May 2015 at Aedis Christi Sovereign Chapter No 49, Em.: Bro David Alexander Henry DFC 32<sup>o</sup> Com was presented with a gift of a beautiful model of a Lancaster Bomber and instrument panel.

David served our country in World War 2 with the RAAF and flew Lancaster Bombers from the United Kingdom. He was awarded the DFC for his service.

Born on 23 December 1918, David was Perfected on 18 October 1959, advanced to 30<sup>th</sup> Degree 11 April 1968, 31<sup>st</sup> Degree 6 April 1972 and 32<sup>nd</sup> Degree 11 March 1998. He joined Aedis Christi Sovereign Chapter No 49 on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1980 and has held all positions in the Chapter, serving for a

long time as Recorder. He was also a Member of the former Lakes Sovereign Council No 57 and the Illustrious Grand Commander for consecutive years 2008 to 2010.

David is one of the most admired Masons on the Central Coast and has assisted his Lodges in many positions, having made a name for himself as a great ritualist. Due to his failing health, Em.: Bro Henry was transported to the Gosford Masonic Centre for the presentation by E&P Bro Barry Shepherd.

In making the presentation the Most Wise Sovereign, Em.: Bro Bill Elliott 32<sup>0</sup> CoM said, "This gift shows our thanks to you for the service you have given to our Chapter and to Freemasonry".

In response, Em.: Bro Henry spoke of his appreciation of the presentation and his love of the A&ASR Rite, however, he indicated that he did not think that he would be able to attend future meetings due to his health problems. As it was, he was unable to stay for the entire enthronement ceremony which followed.

On his departure Em.: Bro Henry was afforded a standing ovation from the assembly. (Article by David Padgett)



V.: Ill.: Bro. David Padgett 33<sup>0</sup> presents Illus.: Bro. Derek Crawford 30<sup>0</sup> with his MWS Certificate at Aedis Christie Sov. Chapter Enthronement meeting.

E&P Bro. Graeme Ingall, PMWS, enthroned Derek after completing one year in that office. Graeme is now the Director of Ceremonies.

## **85th Birthday Boy Les O'Donnell's 30th Degree**

Celebrating his 85th birthday at Hunter Sov. Council on the evening he was advanced to the 30th Degree, was just Les O'Donnell's luck, and he well and truly took it all in his stride.

Les's decorated birthday cake, organised by Gail Padgett, our District Commander's 'Commander', found an appreciative sweet tooth and was enthusiastically enjoyed by everyone present.



**Les O'Donnell cuts into his surprise birthday cake.**

Les, who is the Worshipful master of Speers Point Lodge No. 538, joined St Albans' Sovereign Chapter in January 2012. After three active years in the Eighteenth Degree he was able to advance to the Thirtieth Degree to continue his Masonic journey.

We wish Les many more happy birthdays as a member of the A&ASR.

## **E&P Bro. Kevin Eshman takes Second Term as MWS of St. Albans**

E&P Bro Kevin Eshman was Re-Enthroned as the MWS of St. Albans Sov. Chapter at its April meeting. The Enthroning Officer was

Illus.: Bro. Terry Holstein and his guest of honour was our Regional Commander Most.: Illus.: Bro. Greg Summerhayes 33<sup>0</sup>.



**Most.: Illus.: Bro. Greg Summerhayes 33<sup>0</sup> congratulates E&P Bro. Kevin Eshman after the Enthronement Ceremony.**



**From left to right: Most.: Illus.: Bro. Greg Summerhayes 33<sup>0</sup>, Em.: Bro. Bill Hall 31<sup>0</sup>, Illus.: Bro. Phil Hurley 30<sup>0</sup>, Very.: Illus.: Bro. Les Hipwell KCom 33<sup>0</sup>**

At the same meeting three new members joined St. Albans and received a welcome from Most.: Illus.: Bro. Greg Summerhayes 33<sup>0</sup>. They are Em.: Bro. Bill Hall 31<sup>0</sup>, Illus.: Bro. Phil Hurley 30<sup>0</sup> and Very.: Illus.: Bro. Les Hipwell 33<sup>0</sup>.

Em.: Bro. Bill Hall 31<sup>0</sup> who is 102, is a rejoining member and wishes to be advanced to the 32<sup>0</sup> later this year. He will rejoin the Hunter Sov. Council on the 29th June.

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Our 2015 District meeting will be held at St. Albans Sov. Chapter's July meeting when two candidates will be Perfected. E&P Bro. Kevin Eshman said that he looks forward to welcoming brethren from our four District Hunter Chapters as well as from St. Elizabeth Sov. Chapter, District Shortland.

## Our District Commander's Message

It was wonderful to be present at Aedis Christie Sovereign Chapter for the presentation to Em.:Bro David Henry DFC 32<sup>0</sup> CoM. He has been such a dedicated worker for our Rite for so many years. His contribution has been invaluable and he will be missed.



The presentation of the 9<sup>th</sup> Degree was carried out very enthusiastically by the team and appreciated by the audience. The same team will be involved with presenting the 10<sup>th</sup> Degree at the Maitland Masonic Centre on Saturday 7 November 2015, prior to St Elizabeth Sovereign Chapter's regular meeting.

At St Albans Sovereign Chapter's meeting, which coincidentally fell on ANZAC day, our Regional Commander, M.: Ill.: Bro Gregg Summerhayes 33<sup>0</sup> was in attendance and witnessed 102 year old Ill.: Bro Bill Hall 31<sup>0</sup> being welcomed as a re-joining member. Bill is so keen to renew his allegiance to our Rite that he will re-join Hunter Sovereign Council at their meeting on 29 June. He has also expressed his desire to advance to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Degree.

Also on 29 June, Hunter Sovereign Council will advance E&P Bro Cedric Lane to the 30<sup>th</sup> Degree.

Our District meeting will be held under the Charter of St Albans Sovereign Chapter on Saturday 25 July 2015 where they have 2 candidates for Perfection.

On Monday 31 August 2015, we will form a Consistory to advance 4 brethren to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Degree, then 2 brethren to the 31<sup>st</sup> Degree. Hunter Sovereign Council will then meet where Em.:Bro Bob Lyons 32<sup>0</sup> OoM will be installed as Illustrious Grand Commander.

### Other meetings that are coming up are:-

St Elizabeth Sov. Chapter, Saturday 2 August 2015 at Maitland Masonic Centre commencing at 7.00 PM.

Aedis Christi Sov. Chapter, Saturday 8 August 2015 at Gosford Masonic Centre commencing at 7.00 PM.

Mystes Rosae Sov. Chapter, Tuesday 11 August 2015 at New Lambton Masonic Centre commencing at 7.00 PM.

Newcastle Northern Sov. Council, Saturday 29 August 2015 at East Maitland Masonic Centre commencing at 3.00 PM.

Aquila Alba Sov. Chapter, Friday 5 September 2015 at Belmont Masonic Centre at 7pm.

# Wisdom is the Principal Thing

by Roger Broadbent

In my youth I was employed by the Manchester Central Library. The Library building is a beautiful, awe inspiring circular architectural delight, modelled on the Pantheon of Ancient Rome (A.D. 118-125), and like the Pantheon it had at the top of its great dome, a 'dorma', eight to ten metres in diameter, letting in soft defuse light that illuminated the reference library desks below. An apt metaphor in a place of learning.

The Chief Librarian, Mr. Colley, a highly refined man, who I suspect was a Mason, kindly took me under his wing one day and brought to my notice the words in an ornate inscription that skirted the bottom of the Dome. It was from Proverbs, Ch4. V7-9. It said, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all they getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace; a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee."

I am not claiming that I am wise but in times that I find myself contemplating complex issues I follow that dictate and look for understanding, either from discussion with others who's wisdom I respect, or go about researching, or simply use a critical method of analysis from which I can make some deductions. Each of these approaches relies upon a simple process of making probing questions and seeking honest answers, either from others, or of oneself. But avoiding the trap of self opinionated assumptions.

Leading questions like: "Why are Lodges in general not getting new members and retaining them? Does this Chapter or Lodge have a welcoming, friendly atmosphere? Do we have an interesting social program? Do we really cater for the needs and interests of younger Brethren? Have we tried to understand their point of view? Are we investing enough in our younger members? Have we harnessed the skills of our most sympathetic and affable members to act as mentors?"

The broader Masonic culture is a complex issue that I believe is pivotal to understand in regard to membership issues; the key to understanding problems initiating and retaining new members, especially members from the younger generations in our society. We can't deny that many of our Lodges are experiencing shrinking membership for all sorts of reasons, but ask yourself, "Why are younger members often here today and gone tomorrow?" Many Lodges are top heavy with Past Masters, they are the proven ones who enjoy what they do and are therefore satisfied - but are we aware of the needs of the younger set?

Our ageing population, who love Masonry and all that it has given to them, form the greater part of our masonic family and undoubtably are well skilled in Masonic Lore, Ritual and management; but have we accepted the need to develop the mindset that will enable us to pass the baton to younger generations of masons?

Wearing our broader cultural suit is such an all pervasive phenomena, that we so often immerse ourselves totally, forgetting to look around at who is wearing a different cultural suit.

Our lodges are made up of several different generations, of different ethnic groups, of differing religions, political persuasions and even socio-economic groupings, and so our institution has a rich, diverse, multifaceted and complex cultural identity.

I believe that to understand ourselves and where we are taking Masonry, we have to look hard and long into that 'proverbial cave', to recognise what is hiding in its dark recesses; 'see' what we may have missed, and make adjustments to our behaviours and Lodge culture so to improve how we devolve the leadership of our Lodges to those that should happily inherit.

The up-coming younger generations always recognise different cultural priorities to their forebears, including the infamous, ageing Baby Boomers, who in their youth were regarded as social phenomena themselves. Young people today, in their digitally connected world think much differently, make quick decisions influenced by their social media, they are more flexible, view education, employment, ambition and enjoyment differently and so are a product of their new age as we once were.

Masonry has the structures built into it that are designed to progressively devolve power to the younger generations. Among other things Masonry teaches leadership. It teaches young men how to gradually embrace ever greater responsibility as they move through the Progressive Offices from Steward through to Worshipful Master. It provides the moral and social pointers for a graceful and successful life, developing strength of character and stability for its adherents. So leadership is not just about position and power but also about how an individual influences others by their positive words and actions. A virtuous character is powerful.

Many Past Masters find it hard to consciously step back from their 'leaders' podium and transition to the more important role of encouraging and building confidence in their 'younger brothers'. Some of the negative results of this are voiced when you hear things like, "In this Lodge we have always done it this way", or, "The members wouldn't like it if you were to try to change things".

To limit change causes frustration for younger men. The perception of a general past often suffocates aspirations of reform and revitalisation that coming from youth.

The future of our organisation should not be dependant upon this generation dying off before the new one can find the promised land.

I was pleased to see that the Grand Master Elect, RW Bro. James Melville of the UGL of NSW & ACT said recently, "For Lodges to work individually is a challenge but I will encourage districts to come together and share ideas in a formal structure. The community does not look at us as a lodge but *as Freemasonry*, and one of the strengths of our Craft today is that it is made stronger by Brethren who have joined other Orders. I believe we need to pool all of our constructive ideas and work together for the whole masonic family."

In our Order, the A&ASR, we recognise that we have a community that is culturally different to Craft Masonry in that we have smaller Districts with fewer individual autonomous Chapters and Councils as compared to Lodges. This is a benefit for we do work as districts, not only as individual Chapters or Councils.

RW Bro. James Melville is a 'younger mason', only 44 and I think that we are fortunate in NSW & ACT to have him as our UGL leader. By inference he distinguishes the Masonic Family as the collective institutional framework from which we can draw strength. It is my belief that "other Orders", such as ours, provide avenues for younger Masons to be able to invest more of themselves in Freemasonry and for our X and Y generations these Orders may fulfil a cultural need that invigorates their quest for knowledge and information.

I believe that our job is to encourage youth, to inspire them and by doing so aid them on their journey towards developing understanding and wisdom; maybe in the process we may come to understand more about their new world and their distinctive culture.

## **Do you have something to contribute to our Newsletter?**

We only publish our Newsletter when we can fill several pages with news that is topical for the three month cycle through which our Chapters meet. We like to include something about each Chapter and Council in the Hunter and Shortland Districts.

If you wish to contribute something simply jot down the details, enclose a photograph if you have one, and E-mail the material to Roger Broadbent, [rbr20269@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rbr20269@bigpond.net.au). Roger will write the article up for you, let you see it, make any changes required and then publish with your permission.

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