



Eastern Rose

The newsletter of the District of New South Wales-Shortland
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DISTRICT COMMANDERS MESSAGE

Installation of an Illustrious Grand Commander is always a pleasing occasion, and this year was no exception, Dave Parsons was re-installed to serve for a second year. He brings to the post enthusiasm and a longstanding affection for the Rite. He was brought up in the strict school that is New Zealand masonry, and it shows in his attention to detail in the ritual work.

Seldom has a more experienced member of the Rite been Enthroned as Most Wise Sovereign of the Saint Elizabeth Sovereign Chapter than Bill Bagnall, who previously served five times in that capacity in the Nelson Bay Sovereign Chapter. Bill gave tirelessly of his time attempting to keep that Chapter viable, eventually unsuccessful, but undaunted, he once again brings the skills honed in his days as a professional fisherman to the job before him, dedication, patience and encouragement, and I look forward to his "first year in the chair", albeit in his new Chapter.

The Tenth degree was exemplified at the Belmont Masonic Centre on Friday 5 June prior to the Enthronement meeting of the Aquila Alba Chapter, the ritual team being drawn from members of both Districts. As Assistant Preceptor I know the effort that the team had put in at rehearsals, and it showed in the high quality of the ritual work, it bodes well for the future of Rite Masonry in the Hunter. The eleventh degree will be worked on Saturday 7 November 2015 in the Maitland Masonic Centre prior to the regular meeting of the Saint Elizabeth Chapter, with the same ritual team, and I look forward to welcoming all the members of the District.

On 31 August 2015, prior to the Enthronement Ceremony at Mystes Rosae Chapter, I intend to convene a Consistory for the purpose of elevating eligible brethren to the 32°, Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret, and immediately following, a Tribunal to elevate eligible brethren to the 31°, Grand Inspector Inquisitor Commander. Eligibility to advance in the Rite at all levels is that the preceding degree must have been held for three years, and I encourage eligible members to apply for promotion, and to experience these beautiful degrees. The District Recorder has the application forms!!

The Ark of the Covenant (Concluding)
author V.:Ill.:Bro Ian Handley 33°

Possibilities as to the Ark's present whereabouts. Most scholars agree that the Ark was never placed in the Second Temple (the Temple of Zerubbabel and Herod). It disappeared from the biblical story during the First Temple period and cannot be clearly traced afterward. The world began considering the question of the Ark's whereabouts with the release of the motion picture *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Today there is no lack of possibilities regarding its fate.

Based on ancient Jewish writings some have suggested that the Ark is hidden on Mount Nebo on the east bank of the River Jordan. Others suggest that the Ark is hidden somewhere near the Dead Sea on Jordan's West Bank. This location is usually considered in association with the ancient city of Qumran and the people of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Here, the Ark and other artefacts are believed buried in one of the region's caves, like the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Another view suggests that the Ark is located beneath Jerusalem in a stone carved tunnel. Some say it is beneath the suggested site of the crucifixion. Interestingly, the thesis of the *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, that the Ark was taken from the Temple by Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak, is not a popular view today.

Was Nebuchadnezzar the thief? In 587 BC the Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Jerusalem. They burned the kings' house, Solomon's Temple. Was the awful fate of King Nebuchadnezzar - he died insane - his punishment for desecrating the Ark?

More recent views on the subject A view that has received wide attention in the past decade is that the Ark of the Covenant was taken from Jerusalem in the days of King Solomon. While there are numerous variations of the story, the common thread centres on a son fathered by King Solomon and born to the Queen of Sheba. While this union is not mentioned in the biblical account of the meeting between these two monarchs, it has a long tradition in Ethiopia, a suggested location of ancient Sheba. The son, named Menelik, is said to have brought the Ark to his country for safe keeping, according to an account preserved in the Ethiopian royal chronicles. This story has also been boosted by the now famous Black Jews of Ethiopia, the Falashas. These black Africans practising a very ancient form of Judaism, received international attention when an Israeli military action airlifted them to freedom from religious persecution in 1976. The sacred vessel is said to have eventually made its way to the Chapel of Saint Mary of Zion in Axum where Ethiopian Jewish tradition says that it remains to this day.

Installation 2015
Newcastle Northern Sovereign Council No 9

Em.:Bro David Parsons 32° OoM
Installed on 31 January 2015
by Em.:Bro Kendall Smith 32° CoM



Dave has come to us from New Zealand affiliating to the Saint Elizabeth Chapter on 7 November 2009 and elevated in the Council the following year.

Dave was Perfected in the Lower Hutt Chapter EC and was later the MWS of that Chapter and subsequently of the Moncton Chapter EC at Levin. He was the Most Wise Sovereign of the Lake Taupo Chapter NZC in 2005.

He was elevated to the 32° on 29 March 2014 at the Consistory convened at East Maitland in the presence of both the Lieutenant Sovereign Grand Commander, V.:P.:Bro Ian Tilbury 33° and the Grand Marshal, Regional Commander of Region No 6, M.:Ill Bro Greg Summerhayes 33°.

Enthronement 2015
Saint Elizabeth Sovereign Chapter No 85

Em.:Bro Bill Bagnall 31° CoM
Enthroned on 2 May 2015
by Em.:Bro Peter Groves 31° OoM



Bill was a long-time member of the Nelson Bay Sovereign Chapter No 189 affiliating with Saint Elizabeth on 4 February 2012 after his Chapter had surrendered their Charter.

Bill was Most Wise Sovereign of the Nelson Bay Chapter in the years 1998 (18°) 1999 (18°) 2006 (30°) 2007 (30°) and 2008 (30°)

Bill was elevated to the 31° on 9 November 2010.

Bill spent many early years of his working life as a professional fisherman based on Nelson Bay and in season prawning in the Gulf of Carpentaria later re-training as a linesman with Telstra where he spent 17 years.

Ninth degree “Elect of Nine”



In the 9° King Solomon despatches a party of nine under the guidance of an “unknown” who gives no clue to his identity other than that he is a shepherd. The tracing boards of the eighteenth century depict this “unknown” as a dog, a symbolism that is found in many quarters. In the Apocryphal Book of Tobit is told the story of Tobias and the angel Raphael, in which Tobias is accompanied by a dog, and the dog mentioned in the “great journey of Yudhishtira” preserved in the Mahabharata.

This party succeeds only in discovering the third ruffian, hiding in a cave near Joppa. In the struggle to avoid arrest he is killed by Joabert (the candidate), who takes the ruffians head back to Jerusalem as evidence that one of the villains has been accounted for. As King Solomon had given strict orders that the men were to be brought to Jerusalem alive, so that they may be properly tried, Joaberts’ disobedience resulted in his own condemnation to death. His plea that he had acted in self-defence was, however, accepted and he is received as a Master Elect of Nine.

Owing to one of the words occurring in the legend, these degrees have come to be known as the “Vengeance degrees”. This term is apt to give rise to the misconception that summary vengeance was inflicted, and to obscure the underlying moral – “Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord”.



Colloquial Words derived from Freemasonry

The fact that the word 'square' has been used symbolically for thousands of years by many kinds of people prompts the remark that ordinary language contains many terms strongly resembling masonic words and phrases. The ancient Egyptians used their word 'square' as meaning 'just' and 'proper'. To the ordinary public a thing is 'on the square' when it is straight, and honest and above board; similarly a thing is 'on the level' when it is free from dishonest twist. Shakespeare says, "She's a most triumphant lady, if report be square to her" – that is, if report be true to her. A matter presented 'squarely' – to a Committee, for example – is presented fully and honestly, without mental reservation, every fact relevant to the matter being revealed. The Scots 'square-man' originally was a stone-squarer; the square man today is a man whose deeds square and do not present a number of divergent angles – an honest man.

We must admit that a few slang words have been derived from freemasonry, not always, to our regret, complimentary to it. 'Masonics' and 'masonry' are colloquial words for 'secrets', 'under cover', 'hidden', 'out of the way'. Men speak of bad and dishonest action as being 'on the cross' and of a good and honest action as being 'on the square'. Dickens used the phrase: "I have squared it with the lad...and it is all right" – that is, he had done the right thing by the lad; but often the word 'squared' has unpleasant associations, for sometimes 'to square' a man means to bribe him, or give him some special consideration. This meaning 'to square' has come quite naturally from the other: in the first case it means to settle the matter satisfactorily and fairly, in the second to settle it by hook or by crook.

The American term 'to give the third degree', almost certainly derived from Freemasonry, means to submit a person to a gruelling and possibly brutal questioning.

In the middle of the eighteenth century - say from 1730 to 1760 - freemasonry was greatly abused by dishonest men – hypocrites, worthless beggars, and the like – who carried on their evil practices under the cloak of freemasonry, which caused certain masonic names and phrases to acquire very uncomplimentary meanings in the colloquial language of the day. The horse-dealer, giving worthless notes in payment for a horse, was a 'mason' or 'masoner', while a 'mason's maund' was a typical type of begging imposter, in which a sham sore above the elbow was made to deceive the almsgiver into supposing that the beggar had an injured arm.

Having distorted the meaning of the honourable word 'cowan', freemasonry presented to the public in the eighteenth century 'cowan' as a term for a sneak, eavesdropper, or paul-pry; but as a slang term it did not have a long life.

Masonic Ideals in Poetry

Are you a Man?

I do not ask, my friend, if you
Were born a Gentile or a Jew,
A Buddhist, or Mohammedian;
I only ask, are you a man?

It matters not, my friend, to me
If you are black as black can be,
Or coloured red, or brown, or tan:
I ask but this, are you a man?

I care not, brother, whence you came,
Nor do I seek to know your name,
Your race, religion, creed or clan:
I want to know if you're a man.

I care not if you're homely quite,
Or handsome as an angel bright,
If you, throughout your little span,
Have only shown yourself a man.

I think that most men think like that:
They hate a weakling, loathe a rat;
They've always liked, since time began,
One who is first and last a man.

W.R. Shields