

Homewood Herald

Report from the Master

Greetings Brethren,

Amelia Lucas and I had an enjoyable Christmas at home and then spent a week camping in New Plymouth - somewhere that none of us had visited before, but we all had a great time visiting the beaches and swimming pools, going for bike rides and bush walks, and the museum at Puke Ariki is well worth the trip too.

Since then we have had a planning meeting in mid-January which was well attended and quite productive – the minutes of this meeting are included in the summons this month. We had some good discussions around ideas for new and joining members, advertising, charity ideas, meeting topics and finances.

One of the items in the strategic plan is to formally appoint three roles – a recruitment officer, a retention officer and a charity officer. These could be shared between a couple of people each if needed. Would those keen to help with these activities please let me know, further descriptions are in the planning meeting minutes.

Another topic that was raised is the need to keep our website and Facebook page current with news articles and other fresh content (some of which can also appear in the Herald). In that vein I would be keen for brethren to contribute ideas and/or to write summaries of our meetings (e.g. the cockney working, Bro Saggars third) that can be published. If people create the content, I can easily get it posted.

Around finances we considered that both the dining charge and the membership dues will need to increase this year, and as such this will be part of the standing committee agenda this month. The details of the proposed changes will be circulated and agreed as per the process in our bylaws.

Our current programme for the next few months is:

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| February | Third degree tracing board, and a talk on Homewood History |
| March | Visit from Zealandia – the Master's appeal charity |
| April | Empty Chair ANZAC service |
| May or June | Master Masons charge night |

I also attended the District Meeting at the end of January where VWBro Mick Turner introduced his team and mentioned some of his plans for training and charity for the next three years. There was also a progress update on the Thorndon building. We should see some regular newsletters from our District GM in future, and the meeting minutes will also be circulated for those interested.

This month I am planning to visit Empire Fergusson on 25 Feb for a first degree. Also Bro Frank Hyatt is delivering the Cockney First Degree at Tawera-O-Kapiti on 18 Feb, I can't make that night but it would be great if others from Homewood could go along.

Finally, a reminder that the Lodge will be in mourning this month due to the passing of WBro Reg Todd in mid-January.



Ahdut Coah Hi
Worshipful Master
Mark White

Movie Review – The Gentlemen

If you have been following the movies made by Guy Ritchie, starting with the likes of Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels, Snatch and Revolver, this is a masterclass in movie making. Lock Stock is one of my all time favourite films, then Snatch, this comes along and eclipses both. Hugh Grant pops up (far left) as a dodgy investigator for a tabloid magazine and narrates the story. If you don't like him as his usual awkward softie, this is right up your alley and a far cry from anything he has ever been in.

Then there is Michelle Dockery who many of you probably know as Lady Mary from Downton Abbey, forget that. She is a hard, cockney tough business owner and married to the character played by Matthew McConaughey who is someone you really do not want to mess with lest you end up in the ocean off the docks.

Colin Farrell, I don't have the words, who is this guy in the film, lean violent and unassuming and is just brilliant.

One of the grittiest films I have seen in a while and as usual with Guy Ritchie films, the degrees of separation he uses to bring characters together in the film is brilliant. As with his other films, there is a fair amount of violence, and is rated as an R18 film for that reason. If you like his other films, this is a must see, just to see Hugh Grant in his role it is worth watching.

IMDB has a rating of 8.1 out of 10 by users and this is an accurate average, I give this a 9 myself and will be looking to purchase when it hits stores.



Bushfire in Australia / Measles Samoa

As you are all aware, the bushfires in Australia have been raging for some time and there are so many ways to donate to causes to help with relief.

Below is a piece from the email from our Grand Master suggesting how to donate.

It is important that we can help as much as we can, at the same time we must balance this with the needs of countries like Samoa who are desparate in the face of the measles outbreak who are also in great need, how we handle this as a Lodge or individually is up to each Freemason. No doubt we will discuss this at our Standing committee

This excerpt came in from our Grand Master:

"To support our neighbours, I have launched a 'Grand Masters Australian Bush Fire Appeal' so that our Lodges and Brethren can donate in support of our close colleagues who are suffering under tremendous circumstances. Deposits of support can be made directly into the account shown below:

Grand Masters Australian Bush Fire Appeal – Heartland Bank Account 03-1783-0450087-002 with Member name and Lodge Number or Lodge Name and Number in Reference or a cheque to the postal address below.

We will work closely with our Australian Grand Lodges for the distribution of funds at the appropriate time based on the greatest need and their advice."

German beer and sauerkraut in Africa

In December we visited Namibia, the northern neighbour of South Africa on the Atlantic coast. Namibia is a fairly large country but, with a population under 3 million, it is not very well known, apart from the fact that scenes for the latest Mad Max film were filmed in the Namibian desert.



During the 19th century several European countries rushed headlong to establish colonies throughout Africa. While the main colonising powers were France and England,

other countries were also involved: Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Italy, and Germany.

In 1882 Germans arrived in southern Africa and 'German South West Africa' became a German colony. Later, during WWI, South Africa occupied the country which it continued to administer until the new nation of 'Namibia' became independent in 1990. However, there is still a sufficiently obvious German presence and influence in Namibia. The part of Namibia that we visited was Swakopmund, a town on the west coast which is known mostly for its tourism. There we found several examples of German architecture.

English, German, and Afrikaans were the official languages during South African administration but, when Namibia became independent, the new government chose English. It appears, though, that English is a mainly administrative/commercial language, with only 3% of Namibians speaking it at home. In fact, there have been complaints that even 'English-language teachers' don't speak English adequately. As there are many indigenous languages, a lingua franca is required and Afrikaans plays that role (with English in second place). Some people even say that Afrikaans is the unofficial official language of Namibia. Most 'whites' speak Afrikaans (60%), followed by German (32%), and English (7%), according to the 2011 census. I remember looking at the names of the Namibian rugby team during last year's World Cup and many of them were Afrikaners.



Germany is the main source of European tourists and there are direct flights from Frankfurt to the Namibian capital, Windhoek. In Namibia we visited a German-language bookshop and ate and drank in a German pub. Our waitresses were German-speakers and it seemed as if most of the customers would have felt right at home in Berlin or Hamburg.

Namibia is an easy, safe, and inexpensive place to visit. There are game parks, sand dunes, shipwrecks, and amazing scenery.

David Ryan

Recipe – Simple Sauerkraut



Ingredients

- 2kg very firm, pale green or white cabbage (any leathery outer leaves removed), cored
- 3 tbsp coarse crystal sea salt (or 6 tbsp flaky sea salt)
- 1 tsp caraway seeds
- 1 tsp peppercorns

Directions

1. Thoroughly wash a large tub or bowl (mine was the size of a small washing-up bowl), then rinse with boiling water from the kettle. Make sure that your hands, and everything else coming into contact with the cabbage, are very clean. It's wise to use a container that will comfortably fit the softened cabbage, allowing several inches of room at the top to avoid overflow.
2. Shred the cabbage thinly – a food processor makes light work of this. Layer the cabbage and the salt in the tub or bowl. Massage the salt into the cabbage for 5 mins, wait 5 mins, then repeat. You should end up with a much-reduced volume of cabbage sitting in its own brine. Mix in the caraway seeds and the peppercorns.
3. Cover the surface of the cabbage entirely with a sheet of cling film, then press out all the air bubbles from below. Weigh the cabbage down using a couple of heavy plates, or other weights that fit your bowl, and cover as much of the cabbage as possible. The level of the brine will rise to cover the cabbage a little. Cover the tub with its lid (or more cling film) and leave in a dark place at a cool room temperature (about 18-20C) for at least 5 days. It will be ready to eat after 5 days, but for maximum flavour leave the cabbage to ferment for anywhere between 2-6 weeks (or until the bubbling subsides).

4. Check the cabbage every day or so, releasing any gases that have built up as it ferments, and give the cabbage a stir to release the bubbles. If any scum forms, remove it, rinse the weights in boiling water and replace the cling film. You should see bubbles appearing within the cabbage, and possibly some foam on the top of the brine. It's important to keep it at an even, cool room temperature – too cool and the ferment will take longer than you'd like, too warm and the sauerkraut may become mouldy or ferment too quickly, leading to a less than perfect result.

5. The cabbage will become increasingly sour the longer it's fermented, so taste it now and again. When you like the flavour, transfer it to smaller sterilised jars and keep it in the fridge for up to 6 months.



Can I Light a Fire?

Before you light a fire, check it's safe. Dry conditions are risky.

Always check if it's safe before you light a fire or reduce the risk of starting a fire when working in the outdoors.

Can I light a Fire

- Where you'll be lighting the fire and that area's conditions.
- What type of fire you're lighting.

Reduce the Risk

- never leave it unsupervised.
- Check the fire danger and the weather
- Create safety zones around your house to act as a barrier against fire.

Assess the Risk

- About a week before you plan to light a fire
- A few days before you plan to light a fire
- On the day you plan to light a fire