

# Homewood Herald

## *Report from the Master*

*Greetings Brethren,*

*I hope you are doing well and in good spirits as we go through the colder months.*

*I find it hard to believe we are now in July. As I write this, I now only have another two months as Master.*

*I have been reflecting on the many roles and responsibilities officers in a Lodge have and the skills required of them. One dimension of the personal growth Freemasonry offers is the chance to take on these roles and, in doing so, enhance one's skills and experience.*

*We often hark back to earlier times when lodges could count more than 100 men in their numbers. There was competition for roles, but lots of people to do the work. Lodge business was clear; every meeting was a degree working of some kind. You could also choose to be a floor member, which was what most members were. Now members can be made to feel guilty if they wish not to be on the ladder.*

*Specialization was possible with so many members. Some brethren prepared refectory, others were involved in managing the lodge. Others could dedicate themselves to educating others; making sure salutes were sharp, perambulations were of a military- standard and charges were delivered without any prompting. Others were masters of ritual, finding challenge and stimulation in learning lengthy charges.*

*Today's lodges are small and requires 'all hands-on deck'. In a modern New Zealand Lodge, virtually all active Lodge members are officers or have a significant role in a Lodge.*

*Skills required include: secretarial; financial; ritual; memory work; planning; caring for others; editing and writing; project management.*

*Similarly, being a modern master of a small Lodge requires many skills. In a modern setting, these include: strategic planning; relationship management; pastoral care; conflict resolution; stakeholder management and thought leadership. Oh and yes, and masonic ritual too.*

*It is not enough for a Master to have the title and the gavel. With fewer members, a master needs to attempt to be efficient at galvanizing few resources and a small membership, be creative at organising interesting meetings, and agile. Soft skills such as empathy, being approachable and communicating well are essential.*

*Smaller lodges require more intense involvement and demand more of members. This is a good thing. While requiring more commitment, we now have more opportunities to take on new roles and to therefore grow, not only in Freemasonry, but also in our life skills.*

*Yet another huge benefit from belonging to our wonderful organisation.*

*In my final column in August, I will share my thoughts on what I think Freemasonry in Aotearoa will look like in 10 years time. I am optimistic, but things are going to look different!*



*Ahdut Coah Hi  
Worshipful Master  
David Barnes*

## Fraternal and Friendly Societies



As Freemasons, when we think of fraternal societies, we naturally think of our own organisation. However, fraternal societies have been in existence for much longer than freemasonry and for many different reasons. What distinguishes Freemasonry is that, of recently formed fraternal societies, it has survived longer than many and is larger than many. This article sets out to examine, briefly, the history of fraternalism and introduce some of the other fraternal societies with which Freemasonry has co-existed. Before starting, to be clear, a Friendly Society is one which collects a set amount from members, often weekly, and then

applies the funds collected to the provision of medical care and sickness and death benefits to members and their families. A Friendly Society may also meet in Lodges, have regalia and rituals. Many of these have now transformed into insurance companies.

### Early fraternal groups

Fraternal organisations have been known throughout history. Many of these were trade-based guilds such as the *collegium* of Ancient Rome. Other early fraternal groups in the early Middle Ages were religious orders associated the Roman Catholic Church, some of which still exist today.

The continental system of trade or craft guilds arrived in England after the Norman conquest. These guilds reserved the right to determine who could trade as a merchant in a town and who could practice what trade. The guilds concerned themselves with setting standards of training and levels of pay but were also involved in the celebration of religious holidays, sponsoring of churches and relief for their members. In some towns, the guild was effectively the local government. Although the guilds may have looked after their members and provided some form of social relief, they were perceived by many as restrictive in practice and by the mid-1600s, their power was substantially reduced. The introduction of the patent system in 1624 gave individuals the power to register their designs and the legal system the power to enforce their ownership – a system which reduced the power of the guilds to control trade practice.

### Ages of Reformation and Enlightenment

The Reformation in the 1500s brought significant change to society. The authority of the Roman Catholic Church was challenged and the development of the printing press led to greater literacy and the spread of Protestantism. Ultimately, in England, these ideas lead to the formation of the Church of England, the development of Puritanism and the English Civil War.

The Reformation was followed by the Age of Enlightenment, otherwise known as the Age of Reason, which included a range of ideas centered on the value of human happiness, the pursuit of knowledge obtained by means of reason and the evidence of the senses, and ideals such as natural law, liberty, progress, toleration, fraternity, constitutional government, and separation of church and state. It is unsurprising this period saw the foundation of the Royal Society, still regarded by many as the premier body of scientific research worldwide. In the same period there were other social factors evident as well. Industrialism was on the rise leading to an influx of people from the country to towns and an aspirational middle class who valued formal education was developing. Many of the social restrictions previously imposed by the Churches had been relaxed and there was a much greater acceptance of social gatherings simply for enjoyment rather than for religious purposes. In this environment, it is not at all surprising fraternal societies of people with a common interest began to form and neither is it a surprise that such groups should thrive, especially as eating and drinking were an established part of the meetings.

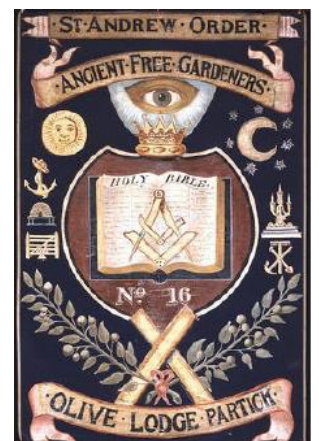
### Fraternal Societies in the 1700s

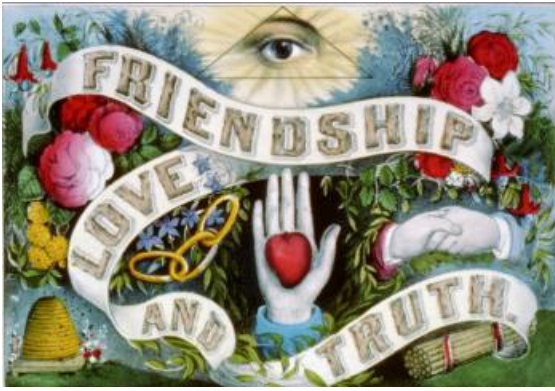
The 1700s saw the first 'rush' of fraternal societies, although it should be noted Freemasons' Lodges had been meeting in Scotland since 1599 or earlier. These early societies included:

#### Order of Free Gardeners

The first recorded meeting is 1646 in Scotland. The Order was formed from small landowners and farmers who gardened for pleasure. By 1720, they had developed mutual aid and a ritual involving three degrees. They also accepted members who were not gardeners. Interestingly, their emblem is the square and compasses, with a pruning knife and they seem to have modelled their organisation on the local Masonic Lodges. The Order spread across Scotland, into England and then into many of the then Colonies. The Order held the earliest Flower Shows in Britain.

By the early 1800s, there were many Horticulture Societies being formed which competed for members with the Order which began to focus on its mutual aid role and became a Friendly Society. The need for Friendly Societies was substantially reduced with the introduction of national health systems and the Order has almost died out with very few Lodges still meeting – probably less than ten worldwide.





## Oddfellows

The first meeting of the Oddfellows was held in London in 1730. Convivial meetings were held "in much revelry and, often as not, the calling of the Watch to restore order."

Although their motto is "Friendship, Love and Truth", their greatest talent appears to be one of schism with multiple splits in the organisation occurring over time. Over twenty different Oddfellows organisations formed in England alone. However, the talent for schism did not stop their growth and they are considered by some to have been the largest fraternal organisation ever.

Like Freemasons, they meet in lodges with quite elaborate regalia and again like Freemasons, they were banned by the Catholic Church.

They very quickly became a mutual aid society and continued as such for many years. Although the introduction of national health systems had a significant impact, they are still active today although much reduced in numbers. It is estimated the Oddfellows now have only around 10,000 lodges worldwide with around 600,000 members, down from millions of members in the early 1900s.

## Druids

Formed in 1781 with the motto of "Justice, Philanthropy and Brotherly Love", the Druids were another group which seemed to thrive on schism. They grew rapidly with over 190 lodges and 200,000+ members in the 1830s but didn't seem to progress beyond that peak.

Despite a few semantic similarities, an initiatory process and the wearing of regalia, sometimes quite elaborate, the Druids were not associated with Freemasonry. They have slowly faded away with very few lodges remaining worldwide.

## Fraternal and Friendly Societies in the 1800s

The 19th century saw a significant upsurge in the number of fraternal societies of various forms, not only in Britain but worldwide. These included:

### Ancient Order of Foresters

The Foresters, formed in 1834, had in their early days, a unique initiation ceremony involving the use of cudgels. Later that became quarter-staffs or swords. The practice of initiation by combat ceased at a relatively early stage. Foresters' Lodges met in Courts and had quite elaborate regalia.

From the outset, the Foresters were a mutual aid society and were very successful until the advent of national health services. Subsequently the traditional Foresters Courts have faded away but their mutual aid continues both as a registered Friendly Society and as an insurance company.

*Foresters Certificate (Held in the National Museum, Wellington)*



## The Temperance Movement

Increasing industrialization and urbanization resulted in an increasing number of poor and underprivileged and it was thought by some that total abstinence would assist people, especially the poor, to live better lives. The most significant of the Temperance fraternities was the **Independent Order of Rechabites** founded in Salford in 1835.

The rituals and ceremonies of the Rechabites vary from place to place but the order promoted three degrees, Knight of Temperance, Knight of Fortitude, and Covenanted Knight of Justice. Lodges are called tents because Jehonadab (or Jonadab) commanded the Biblical sons of Rechab to live in tents. The regalia could be quite elaborate. The Rechabites spread to the USA where they were reputed to have over 900,000 members in the late 1800s and were a major lobby group for Prohibition.

From the beginning they acted as a Friendly Society to support their members and since 2004 have traded in England as Healthy Investments, a financial services organisation that continues to specialise in providing ethical savings and investment products, not restricted to teetotalers. Society avoids direct investment in companies in the alcohol, arms, tobacco, gambling, and pornography industries.

Other temperance fraternities included the Sons of Temperance, the Grand United Order of Good Samaritans and the Good Templars.





### Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes

Known as the Buffaloes or "Buffs", they were formed in 1822 and spread across Britain and the former British Empire. They also became popular in Germany and USA. In a manner similar to Freemasons, they have initiation ceremonies and used to wear regalia. The practice of wearing aprons seemed to have stopped in the early 1900s and the regalia now consists of a variety of jewels. Indeed, the RAOB seem to issue jewels for every conceivable occasion. At their peak there were over 10,000 lodges. Unlike other groups, they did not become a mutual aid society but focused on the enjoyment of members and raising money for charitable purposes.

*Buffaloes Watch Fob*

### The Patriotic and Political Fraternities

Some fraternities grew out of a desire to maintain links with the mother country while others grew as political support groups. These included the **Sons of England Benevolent Society** which was a fraternal society for English Protestants, founded in Toronto, Canada, in 1874. Its purpose was to bring Englishmen together for mutual support, social intercourse, and to provide financial security to them and their families in times of sickness, hardship or death. In addition to these aims, the society acted as a cultural organisation, aspiring to preserve and celebrate the Anglo-Protestant cultural heritage of its members. The Society attracted members in other British colonies including South Africa.

Another was the **Primrose League** which was a political fraternity founded in 1883 and which grew to two million members by 1910. Although largely focused on social events, an obligation was required which was:

*"I declare on my honour and faith that I will devote my best ability to the maintenance of religion, of the estates of the realm, and of the imperial ascendancy of the British Empire; and that, consistently with my allegiance to the sovereign of these realms, I will promote with discretion and fidelity the above objects, being those of the Primrose League."*



### Twentieth Century

No significant new fraternal organisations, with elaborate initiations and rituals, were formed in the twentieth century. However, the start of the century did see the formation of several significant groups which focused on raising money for charity and enjoying social events. These might be better known as Service Organisations and will be familiar to many as they include:



**Rotary International** formed in Chicago in 1905. Initially, the aim was so professionals with diverse backgrounds to exchange ideas and form meaningful, lifelong friendships. Over time, Rotary's reach and vision gradually extended to humanitarian service. They are now a significant service organisation internationally with over 1.4 million members.

**Lions Club International** was formed in Chicago in 1917 by Melvin Jones who told his business club they should reach beyond business issues and address the betterment of their communities and the world. The club agreed and so Lions Clubs started. Local

Lions Club programs include sight conservation, hearing and speech conservation, diabetes awareness, youth outreach, and many other programs. The discussion of partisan politics and sectarian religion is forbidden. They are also now a significant service organisation internationally with over 1.4 million members.



**Kiwanis International** formed in Detroit in 1914. The original purpose of Kiwanis was to exchange business between members and to serve the poor. In 1919, when Kiwanis adopted a service-focused mission focused on Children. They were slow to expand outside USA and Canada and only started internationally in 1962. They now have over 600,000 members.

### Conclusion

The fraternal and other organisations discussed above represent only a very few of the fraternal organisations which have started in the last 300 years. It is estimated there have been over 500 such groups in Britain alone. The common theme seems to have been to have fun and the betterment of society.

For those interested there is a small display of fraternal society regalia at the Ellerslie Masonic Centre. A somewhat larger display may be found at the 167 Heritage Society in the Freemasons building in Khyber Pass Road.

*Reference to Tony Mansfield and the Periodical of the District Grand Lodge of North Island, New Zealand*

## Recipe – Gingerbread Men



### Ingredients

2 cups flour  
½ tsp baking soda  
1 Tbsp Gregg's Ground Ginger  
1 tsp Gregg's Ground cinnamon  
1 cup soft brown sugar, firmly packed  
150g butter  
1 egg  
1 cup icing sugar

### Method

#### Step 1

Preheat the oven to 180°C (fan assisted). Line 2 baking trays with baking paper.

#### Step 2

Sift the flour, baking soda, Gregg's Ground Ginger and Ground cinnamon together into a food processor or mixing bowl. Add the soft brown sugar.

#### Step 3

Add the butter and pulse in food processor or rub with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine crumbs. Add the egg and pulse or stir to mix. If the dough is too sticky, add a little more flour to the mix. Work the dough into a ball. Wrap it in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

#### Step 4

Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface or between 2 sheets of baking paper until 5mm thick. Using cookie cutters, cut shapes and place on the baking trays. Form the leftover dough into a ball and re-roll and repeat cutting out until all the dough is used up.

#### Step 5

Bake the gingerbread for 8-10 minutes or until cooked and golden. Remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack.

#### Step 6

Make the icing by sifting icing sugar into a bowl. Mix in 3-4 tsp hot water to make a piping consistency. Using a small piping nozzle, fill a small piping bag with icing and decorate biscuits.

# samaritans

Aotearoa New Zealand

If you are experiencing loneliness, depression, despair, distress or suicidal feelings, call 0800 72 66 66 now.

Samaritans operates a 24/7 crisis help line. Our phones are operated by volunteers from the community for the community. We receive no direct government funding.

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you"

Maya Angelou

## TECH TIPS

An online scam is any scheme designed to trick people out of money or steal their personal information that uses, or is delivered via, digital communications. Here are a few tell-tale signs you might be being scammed:

**Contact that is out of the blue** – even if the person says they're from a legitimate organisation like the bank, an embassy or your internet provider

**Getting told there's a problem with your phone, laptop or internet connections** – often they will offer to fix your device or say they are from your phone or internet company

**Being asked for passwords** – legitimate organisations will never ask for the passwords to your online accounts

**Needing to verify your account or details** – don't respond or click on any links in the communication even if it looks like it's from a real organisation

**Trying to get you to move outside of an online trading or booking website or app (like AirBnB)** – don't pay outside of the normal website or app processes

**Offering money or a prize in exchange for something up front** – they might say that it's a "processing" fee or something similar

Being asked for money by friends/partners you've met online – this is a very common tactic, do not pay the money

**Unusual ways to pay for something** – scammers try to use payments that can't be traced such as pre-loaded debit cards, gift cards, bitcoins, iTunes cards or money transfer systems

**Asking for remote access to your device** – never do this unless you have actively sought out the service they are providing

**Pressuring you to make a decision quickly** – this could be to avoid something bad (e.g. account being closed, trouble with the IRD) or to take advantage of something good (a deal or investment)

- [www.netsafe.org.nz](http://www.netsafe.org.nz)