

GRAND MASTER'S

NEWSLETTER



History on Our Side

In our normal lives, we regularly look back on history to review where we are today.

This week, we have had the wonderful opportunity to reflect on some of our own masonic history as we celebrated the 200th anniversary of Lodge Antiquity No 1.

The history of this grand old lodge is as much about the beginnings of Australia as it is about the history of Freemasonry in Australia and New Zealand. Even in these earliest of times, Freemasonry itself could be seen to provide a benefit to the growing community in and around Sydney, and there were plenty of candidates seeking admission.

Once Lodge Antiquity was established, it set about gifting dispensations to allow the consecration of other lodges in NSW, Victoria and New Zealand, and we will read much about this in future issues of the Freemason magazine during this 200th year.

Freemasonry played an important part in those earliest days, and we continue to build on that platform today.

There are some similarities here too about old and new. Lodge Antiquity had only 12 subscribing members at its consecration. On its 200th anniversary, and again in unusual circumstances, a small number of us met to honour this wonderful commitment to Freemasonry.

We can learn so much from history. The members of Lodge Antiquity acted with perseverance, resilience and tolerance as they worked to create something very special. Most importantly, they recognised the value of respect – respect for their community, their lodge and themselves.

It is for us to now build on these wonderful attributes.

COVID-19 has slowed our progress this year, and while we are aware that there are many prospective members eager to join our wonderful fraternity, it is important not to rush these events. The Grand Director of Ceremonies and the Ceremonial Team have committed to creating practical COVID Safe environments, with small numbers appropriately spaced, and they are always available for advice.

As always, please continue your online meetings for all lodge business, and only attempt face to face meetings with small numbers where absolutely necessary.

Take care.

Derek Robson AM
Grand Master

Taree's Masonic Op-Shop \$70,000 to Charity and counting

Since August 2018 the brethren of D44 MCI* decided to establish an Op-Shop in the ground floor of the Taree Masonic Centre.

The shop is staffed by an entirely volunteer group of over twenty helpers, mainly ladies of whom only three have masonic connections. The stock which is sourced from donations by the local communities is sorted, cleaned and processed by our willing team.

The great support in donations from the local communities is due to virtually all donations of funds raised going back to the local area which is stressed by the shop volunteers.

In the 2019-20 financial year

over \$50,000 was given in donations, and in the current period so far the following donations have been made:

- Riding for the Disabled \$6,000;
- GM's Bushfire Appeal \$5,000;
- Port Macquarie Hospital Child Oncology Unit \$6,000;
- Wingham Art and Soul \$2,000;
- Forster Family assist \$1,000.

Other further donations are currently under consideration.

** District 44 Masonic Charities Incorporated which is now part of*



W Bro Wal Riley, W Bro Doug Davidson, RW Bro John Jacobson, W Bro Bob Webber

District 13 is a charitable body set up by the lodges of the former District 44; consisting of Lodge Greater Taree, Lodge Cowper, Forster Great Lakes United, Lodge Gloucester and the former Lodge Laurieton Haven United with the object of raising funds for local charitable causes in the area surrounding those lodges.

Upcoming Events

"1st Tracing Board" final **Masonic Education Network**

Wed, 04 Nov 7pm - [Reg link](#)

Every Wednesday a guest lodge takes the centre stage and conducts the presentation on a topic of their choosing.

Masonic Education Network **Fellowcraft Freemasons Q&A**

Thu, 05 Nov 7pm - [Reg link](#)

Q&A run every Thursday alternating between EAFs and FCFs.

"Topic to Be Advised" **Saturday Zoom Room** **Masonic Education Network**

Sat, 07 Nov 3pm [Reg link](#)

Saturday afternoon meetings run every week with a different topic of discussion.

"1st Degree Catechism" discussion **Masonic Education Network**

Wed, 11 Nov 7pm

Every Wednesday a guest lodge takes the centre stage and conducts the presentation on a topic of their choosing.

Masonic Education Network **EAFs Q&A**

Thu, 12 Nov 7pm - [Reg link](#)

Q&A run every Thursday alternating between EAFs and FCFs.

\$8,000 support for Camp Breakaway

Camp Breakaway is a purpose-built facility established in 1982 at San Remo on the Central Coast of NSW just 35 minutes from Gosford and less than an hour from Newcastle. Specialising in providing respite care for children and adults with moderate to severe disabilities and their carers, siblings, parents, etc.

Sadly, since March 2020, Camp Breakaway has had to close its doors to the community due to the outbreak of COVID-19; with this closure, normal income streams and donor support have dwindled.



Hilda Gibbs, Richard Blanshard, VW Bro Graeme Ingall, VW Bro Chris Matthews, W Bro Eric Gibbs and VW Bro John Jenkins with the donated beds

Freemasons on the Central Coast along with the lodges of District 21 recently combined to financially



Hilda Gibbs, Richard Blanshard, VW Bro John Jenkins, RW Bro David Levesque, VW Bro Graeme Ingall, VW Bro Chris Matthews, Sara Evans, Brett Walker, W Bro Eric Gibbs, W Bro Matt Harrison

support Camp Breakaway with a donation of \$8,000. Ms Sara Evans, Community Engagement Officer, sincerely thanked the Freemasons for this most generous donation.

This valuable contribution, together with other donations of goods – carpet, special beds, paint, lino, etc – has enabled Camp Breakaway to put the temporary closure to good use and focus on the upkeep of the facility with a full six months of renovating, refurbishing, painting, and landscaping.

Camp Breakaway has re-opened after the closure. For further information, phone 02 4390 7624.