

# 1521 NEWSVIEW

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF EVENTS IN  
**WELLINGTON LODGE**  
No. 1521

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## ONE THIRD

We are definitely getting back into the swing of things and after two double firsts, it was nice to be able to catch up on one of the long awaited workings – the Third for Br Lloyd Perez on Wednesday 21 October 2020 (the 215<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar – which may be considered as your daily advancement in non-masonic knowledge although there is some debate about whether or not Lord Nelson was a Freemason). W Br John Hume retired with Entered Apprentices before the ceremony began. W Br Satish Chandra sat in as Junior Warden, W Br Gerard Paver stood in as Senior Deacon, W Br John Bonifant as Chaplain and W Br Tony Cross as Tyler. Those participating in the ceremony were:

Obligation	W Br John Rapanut
Exhortation	W Br Murray Alford
Charge	W Br John Rapanut
15 Fellowcrafts	W Br Chris French
Investiture	Br Leon Craze
Observations	Br Daire Queenan
Traditional. History	W Br Bob McKillop
Working Tools	W Br Leon Craze

It was great to see W Br Murray Alford back on the floor delivering a charge in the manner to which we have been accustomed and an example of the advice and coaching he gave in earlier editions of 1521 Newsview. At the end of the ceremony the following presentations were made:

Education Programme	W Br Murray Alford
VSL, Apron & Case	W Br David Crump
S&C Pin from DGL	W Br Steven Elliott
Ritual Book	W Br John Rapanut

It is perhaps worth remembering the words that accompany the presentation of the

Volume of the Sacred Law which we receive as a consequence of the Charles Thomas Tatum bequest:

*“Do not keep it out of sight brother. It will bear the light of day, will comfort you in the night watches and if its divine precepts are followed by you will bring nothing but honour to your home and the respect of every member of the community in which you happen to reside.”*

Br Tatum’s generosity also extended to the superb silver-inlaid gavel buffers which are on the pedestals of the Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, although in more recent times they are counselled to avoid striking them for fear of damaging the silver inlays.

But to return to the ceremony and more particularly to Br Perez. Lloyd worked in the same environment as Br John Rapanut, but the interest in Freemasonry goes back to his days in The Philippines when he first thought about becoming a member. When he arrived in Wellington, he again thought about joining a Lodge and even gained the help of his wife in looking for a Lodge in the Hutt Valley. Then he discovered that John Rapanut, with whom he worked, was already a member of both Conyers Lodge in Christchurch and Wellington Lodge. [Third Wednesday, Dark Suit Syndrome!]. John is Godfather to the youngest of Lloyd’s three children, so it was a match made in heaven! Lloyd graduated Bachelor of Science in Electronics and Communications Engineering from Saint Louis University in Baguio City in The Philippines in 2001. He worked as a process engineer for Sanyo Capacitor Philippines from 2002 until 2007 when he joined Accenture Inc in Software Quality Assurance. From 2010 until 2013 he was a Quality Representative for Hewlett

Packard Philippines. In September 2013, he and his wife, whom he met when they worked together in the same business unit in Accenture Inc., migrated to New Zealand. Lloyd joined AIG as a Business Analyst and in 2016 he joined the New Zealand Racing Board also as a Business Analyst. More recently he has established his own business consultancy.



This is Lloyd and John in 2018



This is John, Lloyd and Leon in 2020. You can see how two years of Wellington Lodge ages a person. Photographs by Br Cameron Macfarlane

John proposed Lloyd as a member and Leon was his Secunder. And one should record with the customary modesty of the Lodge, that it was a really nice ceremony into which the team had put a great deal of effort, A superb Fifteen Fellowcrafts by W Br Chris French and Working Tools by Br Leon Craze.

All that done and dusted we retired to the Grand Dining Room for a very pleasant refectory that included the customary formal toasts, followed by the toast to Aorangi Lodge to which W Br Steven Elliott responded. The toast to the candidate was given by Br Leon Craze and an appropriate response was given by Br Perez. The toast to the visitors was given by W Br Satish Chandra and the response by W Br Tim Warren from Remuera Lodge in Auckland. Tim is a regular visitor to Wellington Lodge as from time to time his business brings him to the capital and he is always a very welcome visitor to our assemblies.

## THE PROGRAMME

This month (November) we have the Second Degree for Br Kyle Sia and then it is Christmas. My, how the year has flown. Importantly, we now have a full calendar out to the beginning of 2023 which indicates we are a healthy Lodge that attracts good candidates and that augers well for the future.

## REFECTORY

Refectory bookings are essential. We are required to give the Wellesley Boutique Hotel adequate notice of the number attending and if there are any special dietary requirements. So for this November meeting please let the Secretary know if you will be attending refectory by **Thursday 12 November 2020** by email to [rmmck@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rmmck@xtra.co.nz)

## THE DIARY

**WBH=Wellesley Boutique Hotel, JMC=Johnsonville Masonic Centre, EMC=Ellerslie Masonic Centre**

MON09NOV20 at 5.30pm Wellington Lodge Rehearsal, WBH

SAT 14NOV20 at 2.30pm Aorangi Lodge Installation Meeting, JMC

MON16NOV20 at 5.30pm Wellington Lodge Rehearsal, WBH

WED18NOV20 at 5.15pm Wellington Lodge Committee, WBH

WED18NOV20 at 6.30pm Wellington Lodge Meeting, Second Degree, Br Kyle Sia, WBH

SAT21NOV20 at 8.30am AGM of the North Island English Masonic District Charitable Trust, EMC

SAT21NOV20 at 10.00am Installation Convocation District Grand Chapter, EMC

SAT21NOV20 at 2.00pm Installation  
Communication District Grand Lodge, EMC  
SAT21NOV20 at 6.30pm Installation Dinner,  
EMC  
TUE01DEC20 at 6.00pm Aorangi Royal Ark  
Mariner Meeting JMC  
TUE 01DEC20 at 7.30pm Aorangi Lodge of  
Mark Master Masons meeting, JMC  
THU10DEC20 at 5.30pm Wellington Lodge  
Rehearsal, WBH  
MON14DEC20 at 5.30pm Wellington Lodge  
Rehearsal, WBH  
WED16DEC20 at 5.15pm Wellington Lodge  
Committee Meeting, WBH  
WED16DEC20 at 6.30pm Wellington Lodge  
Christmas Meeting, WBH  
FRI25DEC20 Christmas Day  
SAT26DEC20 Boxing Day  
MON28DEC20 Holiday for Boxing Day

**THE LATE BROTHER JOHN MAURICE  
ALDCROFT, RW DISTRICT GRAND  
MASTER, DISTRICT GRAND LODGE OF  
NORTH ISLAND NEW ZEALAND, HON  
SENIOR GRAND WARDEN, GRAND  
LODGE OF SCOTLAND.**

It was with the greatest sadness that we learned that Brother John Aldcroft, passed away at home in Auckland on Wednesday 4 November 2020. He was educated at Mount Roskill Grammar before embarking on a career in logistics, firstly with Hellman Worldwide Logistics, then with Divers and Leonard before a twenty-one-year career as warehouse Manager for Fliway and Fliway International.

His long and distinguished career in Lodges of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, culminated in his appointment and installation as District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of North Island New Zealand, Grand Lodge of Scotland by The (then) Grand Master Mason Bro Charles Iain Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont on 20 February 2016, a ceremony attended by RW Br Brian J Westhead, District Grand Master, District Grand Lodge North Island New Zealand, United Grand Lodge of England, RW Br Andrew McGregor, Provincial Grand Master, Provincial Grand Lodge of New Zealand, Grand Lodge of Ireland and MW Br John Litton, Grand Master, Grand Lodge of New Zealand. He was especially accorded a Certificate of Appreciation by the Grand Lodge

of New Zealand in 2008. While Br Aldcroft's interests were Golf and Freemasonry, his partner Jean Knapman was prominent in the World Masters Games, specifically in rowing. He was a much-respected member of the Craft throughout all the four Constitutions in New Zealand and will be sadly missed. He will be at the Masonic Centre in Grey Street, Onehunga briefly before the funeral service on Wednesday 11 November 2020 in Purewa All Saints Chapel, St John's Road, Meadowbank, Auckland.

**OTHER ORDERS IN FREEMASONRY**

**THE ANTIENT AND HONOURABLE  
FRATERNITY OF ROYAL ARK MARINERS**

The Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners is administered by the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons in London and when the ritual was revised in 1994 it became known as the Fraternity rather than the Degree. What makes it so different is that the basis of the ceremony predates that of other degrees (which are temple based) by some 1472 years, being founded on the great flood and the building of the Ark. Royal Ark Mariner Lodges are required to be moored or linked to a Lodge of Mark Master Masons, but it does not follow that all Mark Lodges are required to sponsor a Royal Ark Mariner Lodge. In 2020 there were 10 English Mark and 7 English Mariner Lodges in New Zealand all administered by the District Grand Lodge of New Zealand. It should however be remembered that both degrees are also worked under the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of New Zealand, but again not by all chapters. The Royal Ark Mariner Degree is different. It has as one of its devices the triangle which is prominent in its ceremonies both in the furniture of the lodge room and the ritual. Indeed, the form of the Lodge is triangular with the Worshipful Commander and the Wardens seated at the points of an isosceles triangle.

There are rather more charges in this degree than in most others, but some of them are quite short. The principal officers are the Worshipful Commander, Senior and Junior Wardens they represent Noah and his two sons Japeth and Shem and are often referred to and addressed by those names. The ritual explores a range of human characteristics and

attributes using the story of the flood and Noah's relationship with God to accomplish that. The language while similar to that of other degrees has its own idiom and beauty. Like all degrees in Freemasonry, the ritual only comes to life when it delivered without the assistance of the text and after the ceremony has been well rehearsed. Then, and only then can the participants and in particular the candidate, gain the full meaning and lessons that are conveyed by this degree.

## **THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL ARK MARINER DEGREE**

Because the Royal Ark Mariner degree (RAM) is based upon the legend of Noah and the Flood it is considered to perhaps be the oldest Masonic order. The record of the Flood is contained in the Book of Genesis Chapters 5 – 9 but to put that into a time line it is necessary to rely on the work of a number of scholars such as Bishop James Ussher (1581-1656), who graduated from Trinity College in Dublin and became Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland. He wrote three treatises between 1648 and 1650 in which he calculated from the Old Testament that the day of creation was 22 October 4004BC. He was not the only one to have arrived at roughly the same conclusion nor did he rely solely on scripture for his calculation. Persian, Greek and Roman history together with his expertise in the Bible, biblical languages, astronomy and ancient calendars, all contributed to his chronology of what was known history in 1650. Bishop Ussher's timeline would date the Flood around 2472BC and that is similar to the calculations in the Masoretic text of the Old Testament. The Flood is also recorded in the Qur'an. It is from these calculations of the origin or birth of the Earth, that the Year of Light or Anno Lucius is derived. On this basis, the RAM degree is chronologically about 1500 years older than those based on the building of the first temple at Jerusalem! The following timeline adds some perspective and is built on one developed by Masonic author W Br David Mitchell

4004BC	Creation
2472BC	The building of the Ark by Noah and the Flood.
964BC	King Solomon started first temple at Jerusalem
958BC	The approximate time of the death of Hiram Abif.

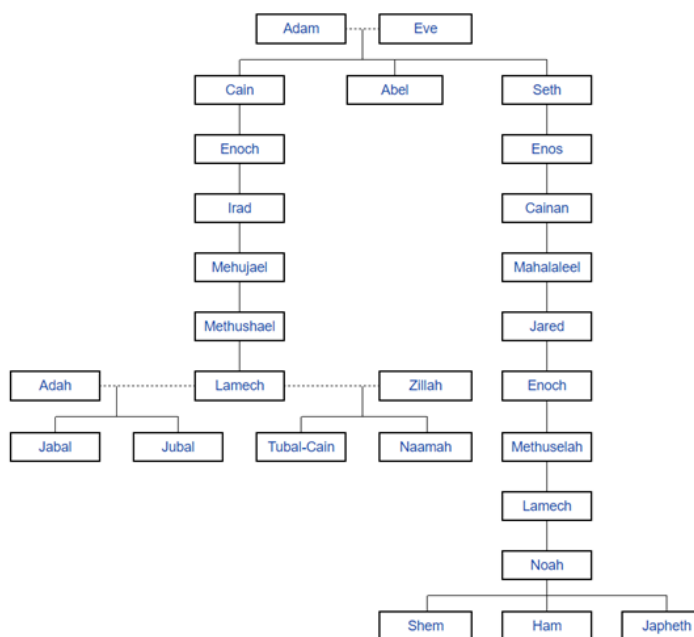
957BC	King Solomon completed the first temple at Jerusalem
587BC	The destruction of the first temple by Nebuzzaradan under Nebuchadnezzar and the deportation of as many as 1,000,000 Jews to Babylon
539BC	Release of Jews by Cyrus, King of Persia with only about 50,000 returning to rebuild the temple under the leadership of Zerubbabel.
169BC	The destruction of the second temple by Antiochus Epiphanes the brother of the King of Syria
20AD	King Herod (the Great) undertakes the reconstruction & refurbishment of the second temple usually referred to as the third temple.
70AD	The destruction of the third temple by the Romans under Titus
800AD	The beginning of a seven-year period during which Free and Operative Societies of Architects, known as Freemasons emanating from the Collegia Artificium came into existence as Freemasons in England, Steinmetzen in Germany and Compagnonnage in France. These societies were secret and operative and engaged in building ecclesiastical and other buildings. They are perhaps the origin of modern Freemasonry
1200AD	The development of the Mystery Plays depicting stories from the Bible
1717AD	Formation of the Grand Lodge known subsequently as the "Moderns".
1723AD	First Book of Constitutions published by Dr Anderson
1751AD	Formation of the Grand Lodge of All England known subsequently as the Antients claiming their origins dating back to 926AD.
1780AD	Thos. Dunckerley believed to have been working the Ark Mariner Degree
1790AD	Dispensation granted to Robert Gill held in Mark Grand Lodge archives
1796AD	Lord Rancliffe succeeds Thos. Dunckerley as Grand Commander
1813AD	Formation of the United Grand Lodge of England which excluded the degree of Mark Man and Mark Master.
1843AD	Attempted revival of the Royal Ark Mariner Degree by John Dorrington
1856AD	Formation of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons.
1870AD	Br Morton Edwards appointed Grand Commander, succeeding John Dorrington.
1884AD	Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons purchases the Degree from Morton Edwards for £25.0.0 (10 June 1884)

There have been many brief histories of the degree which have appeared in journals such as "Freemasonry Today" and otherwise, and it is to these that reference must be made for an understanding of its history and development. It is about Noah and the building of the Ark and although popular accounts might focus upon the use of the Ark to preserve all the species of animals on the Earth, that is not a feature of

the RAM ritual. Some years ago, David Fasold wrote an account of the discovery of the Ark, not on Mt Ararat but certainly in the Turkish highlands at Durupinar. It is thought that the translation of some texts was wrong, and that the location of the Ark was in the highlands of Turkey and Northern Iran, not specifically on Mt Ararat. Sadly, after long and detailed research, Fasold concluded that what had been discovered at Durupinar was not the Ark, the exact whereabouts of which remains a mystery!

### THE LINEAGE OF NOAH

The degree is not only about Noah but also his family. Noah was the ninth generation descended from Adam and Eve and it is useful to see the outline of his family tree because members of it not only feature in the ritual but in the case of his sons Japheth and Shem are participants as the Senior and Junior Wardens.



### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEGREE

The degree has been well accepted in some quarters and dismissed in others as irrelevant in the context of temple based Freemasonry and although that may be literally true, it contains teachings that are expressed in a ceremony that is short but meaningful. Having briefly covered the biblical origin of the degree, it is now necessary to consider its development as a part of speculative masonry. A number of texts tell us that the origins of the degree are obscure, and while like the Mark

degree, it was excluded from those approved when the Craft and Royal Arch degrees were adopted, at the union of the two Craft Grand Lodges, it none-the-less existed and continued to be worked. It does seem that it first appeared formally in the minutes of a meeting held in Bath in 1790 with other informal records suggesting that the ceremony of Elevation was being performed thereafter. Thomas Dunckerly who featured in many of the Masonic degrees at the time, had been working the ceremony from about 1780. He had styled himself the Grand Commander and had appointed a deputy and an assistant, but the records of this organisation were lost in a fire in 1793. There is however a record in Mark Masons Hall of a dispensation granted to the Assistant Grand Noah, Robert Gill in 1796. Shortly before Dunckerly's death Lord Rancliffe was appointed Grand Commander, holding that office until 1799 but thereafter this Grand Lodge seems to have slowly disappeared. In 1843 Br John Dorrington attempted to revive the degree, declaring himself Grand Commander until in July 1870 he signed a warrant appointing Br Morton Edwards in his stead. In that same year, a meeting was held to re-establish a Grand Lodge, but this conflicted with the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons because a number of their Lodges had worked the degree. As a consequence the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons was in 1870 (some fourteen years after the establishment of that Grand Lodge in 1856) installed into the Chair of Noah and Morton Edwards was unsupported but continued actively as a rival Grand Lodge until the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons purchased the degree from him for £25.00!

### NOAH AND THE ENGLISH GUILDS

However, the legend of the Flood and of Noah were more deeply rooted in English history having existed from the thirteenth century as one of as many as fifty Mystery Plays which the trade guilds staged to act out various biblical events. The carpenters, it seems, adopted the story of Noah and presented it in what were collectively known as pageants until they were suppressed during the Reformation during the sixteenth century. Despite that, some of the Mystery plays survived in Chester and Wakefield. It is not suggested that the

mystery play was the direct origin of the Royal Ark Mariner degree, but it does show that the story of Noah, the Ark and the Flood were sufficiently important to be before the public and to remind those seeing the plays of the moral teachings contained in the story.

Charles Kightly in *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain* notes that guilds originated in the Anglo-Saxon period (410AD–1066AD) to provide mutual support and care for the sick, members, widows and orphans associated with particular trades. By the twelfth century the guilds had developed to become regulatory bodies for their respective trades, supervising the training of apprentices, regulating prices, providing quality control, setting wages, and ensuring that only qualified workmen practiced within their craft or 'mystery' (i.e. mastery). They also organised elaborate annual Mystery Plays on religious themes. Between them, the guilds controlled every aspect of trade and industry in medieval Britain (lasting until the fifteenth century), and in disciplines that included Basket-makers, Bowyers, Waxchandlers and Wire drawers. The most powerful however, were the Great Guilds of merchants and wholesalers including Mercers, Grocers, Fishmongers, Merchant Taylors, Vintners and the even more powerful Guilds that were domiciled in London, often aspiring to Royal Charters. They in many cases advanced to being livery companies that in the case of the Haberdashers wore furred gowns and in the case the Drapers, garments of blue and gold. They were politically influential but after the Reformation shed their religious role in favour of private enterprise and capitalism. While ultimately many of the guilds declined, those like the Goldsmiths continued to regulate the quality of gold and silver through the assay office in their Hall – hence the term Hallmark. They ended up as the Twelve Great Companies; Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Merchant Taylors, Skinners, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vintners and Clothworkers, whose liverymen (seniors) cast their votes for the office of Lord Mayor. The history of the guilds continues to be a dominant part of British history but in their earliest times they, through their mystery plays kept the story of Noah and the Flood very much in the public's mind.

## THE PERCEPTIONS OF NOAH

But there is more to the origins of the degree. The Graham Manuscript which apparently dates from 1726, refers to the sons of Noah seeking the secret which their dead father possessed, a quest not dissimilar to that of the third degree in the Craft. Graham's document offers a Noahcite legend rather than an Hiramite one, the latter having first appeared in 1730 in Pritchard's *Masonry Dissected*.

While in English Freemasonry the legend of Noah was never part of the three degrees upon which the union of the Antients and Moderns was based, the Royal Order of Scotland founded in the 1740s did see the Noachite tradition as important. There remains the perception that Noah was a saviour chosen by God.

The Royal Ark Mariner Degree as it is now known, stems from the commitment of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons to its preservation, resulting in the purchase of it in 1884 and the establishment subsequently, of the Grand Master's Royal Ark Council.

Much of this history comes from a paper prepared by W Br Matthew Christmas and published in *Freemasonry Today* Winter 2000/2001, which acknowledges two other publications, viz *The Royal Ark Mariner Degree; its Origins and History* by R M Handfield-Jones and *The Arch and the Rainbow* by N B Cryer, the latter recently republished by Lewis Masonic. *Freemasonry Today Spring 2020* contains an article outlining the origins and fundamentals of the degree with illustrations of the Edwards document selling the Degree to the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons.

To join an Ark Mariner Lodge, one has to be a Mark Master Mason and certainly in Wellington, the Aorangi Lodge of Mark Master Masons and the Aorangi Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners provide an opportunity to enjoy both degrees.