

## GM'S ADDRESS AT THE 2015 GRAND INSTALLATION

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Before I begin my address, I would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present.

Grand Masters, Past Grand Masters, leaders of concordat and associated orders, ladies gentleman and brethren.

I stand here before you, with the feeling of humility and pride as this month also marks my 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary as a freemason.

I am honoured that the membership of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory have placed their trust in me to lead this jurisdiction.

Seeing our Sydney Town Hall so full, makes me feel proud that Freemasonry today has made and is making a tremendous contribution to society. We should all be proud of our history, but also be excited about our future. I would also like to thank all of our friends and families that are here today to witness this wonderful ceremony.

The strength of any organisation is of course, it's membership. Our biggest assets are our members, and I thank those brethren from New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory who have made the trip to be here today. Many masons have travelled great distances to be here, from Bondi to Broken Hill, thank you all.

Our grand lodge will continue to work with lodges across our state, recognising that some feel the tyranny of distance. We are a great

fraternity, and geographical divisions between good brothers, must be bridged.

Our connection with our local community is something we have done well and community leaders after joining our ranks have become wonderful examples for us all. After travelling extensively within our state and being received by these leaders, I feel a great sense of pride on how our image is presented as a whole.

126 years ago we became known as the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales, several years later we included the words Australian Capital Territory. We originally became a United Grand Lodge, when the English, Irish and Scottish lodges came together to unite the different ceremonies and degrees that were being worked. Our society, the family unit and the way we lived our lives was so different to how we see things today.

Today I see the word “United” as embracing all cultures and religions that now make Australia their home. Our specialised and cultural masonic lodges are maintaining growth, and I will continue to support those lodges with the Freemasons Annual Multicultural Exchange nights (FAME).

One initiative in my statement to the jurisdiction when I nominated for Grand Master, was to have a Masonic Open House. A date in 2016 will be set to welcome the community inside our doors. I will encourage all city and country Masonic Centres to take part in this special day. Every centre will receive the literature and marketing tools which are readily available in our Grand Lodge. I want to encourage and involve other community groups to participate in this event. This is not only to assist Freemasonry, but to promote that community spirit many of us have. Our Chairman of the Board of Management, RW Bro Bruce Munro and the board members have already accepted the challenge in this and other programmes.

As masons, on the night of our initiation we are taught about the grand principles of brotherly love, relief and truth. Relief or charity is something that masons have done well and through our involvement with our Grand Charity, MasoniCare, we are now able to provide substantial donations to those nominated charities through our interaction grants.

During my term, it is my desire to support the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia. This is a serious men’s health issue. Freemasons have supported this program through local initiatives and their involvement with the Movember campaign. Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in males and will affect 1 in 7 men by the time they turn 75, this risk increases to 1 in 5 by the age of 85. I wish to thank the chairman of MasoniCare RW Bro Andrew Fraser MP PDGM and the board of MasoniCare for their support. The Prostate Cancer Foundation has also provided their support to Freemasonry. I wish to thank Mr Tony Sonneveld OAM and Miss Cassandra Birch from the Prostate Cancer Foundation for their attendance here today.

To assist in our fundraising efforts, it is my wish to have a Masonic Cruise. This cruise will be of a 5 to 7 day duration. Many masons I speak to have recently returned from or are going on a cruise, so I see this as an

opportunity for further interaction. The cruise will include a masonic meeting and a number of group activities.

There are many people who I wish to thank for making today possible.

To our Immediate Past Grand Master MW Bro Derek Robson AM, I am honoured to have been a part of your leadership team. There have been many initiatives and programmes that have been undertaken and I intend to continue with this momentum. I have my own directions that I wish to pursue during my term which I hope will inspire masons to higher endeavours and shake any thoughts of masonic apathy. On behalf of all the membership, I would like to thank you for your guidance and leadership of our Grand Lodge over the last four years. To both you and Gael, I thank you for your friendship.

To our retiring Grand Secretary, RW Bro Kevin McGlenn PDGM, I thank you for your commitment having served this Grand Lodge for the past 11 years, the role of Grand Secretary involves many aspects and your skill and expertise has provided great leadership and stability for the staff within Grand Lodge. I wish you and Irene all the best for the future.

To our outgoing Chairman of the Board of Management, RW Bro Greg Mason, I thank you for your dedication and commitment to Freemasonry, the board has worked well under your leadership. I wish both you and Barbara all the best in your move to Victoria.

I would like to acknowledge our retiring Senior and Junior Grand Wardens, RW Bro Peter Ratcliff and RW Bro Peter Howlett. Thank you for your service and commitment to the Ceremonial Team.

To our Grand Director of Ceremonies, RW Bro John Begbie, I thank you for continuing in your role, I particularly would like to offer you and the ceremonial team my congratulations for the way they performed today. The rehearsals started many weeks ago and involved many people, thanks for putting it all together and making this possible.

To all the staff and volunteers in the Sydney Masonic Centre who have worked so hard to put the events over the weekend together, I thank you for your dedication and many hours that you have spent for us all.

I would like to thank the ladies, I thank you for the time you dedicate to Freemasonry. I would especially like to thank my partner. Yuana has always been a great support to me and I thank her for being there with me in this journey. Finally, I am excited to be your 38<sup>th</sup> Grand Master, thank you for the opportunity to serve you and the craft.

I wish to announce my theme during my term will be:

**FREEMASONRY - DIVERSITY, UNITY, MATESHIP**

Thank you all

MW Bro Jamie Melville  
Grand Master