

Bro. R Hughes Montgomery

Hugh is the Research Lodge of Otago 161, Librarian, and for a number of years has been the D.C. at our Installation. We could also rightly say he is our 'senior' Historian on local Masonry (particularly regarding local Scottish Freemasonry), Archivist, and Lecturer.

Hugh actually comes to us from the North Island, being born in Palmerston North. He went to several Primary schools, then to Hamilton High School, before proceeding to Auckland University College in 1955 / 56. In 1957 to 1960 he moved to the University of Queensland, graduating with a Bachelor of Veterinary Science (He was also a athletics blue, and the Queensland Marathon Champion in 1958 & 1960). In 1965 he was the inaugural Churchill Travelling Fellow. England beckoned in 1973, and he attended the Royal Veterinary College in London, graduating with a Diploma of Animal Health in 1974.

From 1961 to 1976 Hugh was a practising veterinarian in Milton and Balclutha, specialising in sheep, and beef cattle. Then he moved as a veterinary pathologist to the Invermay Animal Health Laboratory, being a specialist in the histopathology of animal tuberculosis, and Consulted internationally. He retired in December 2001.

Hugh has a real interest in music, and has been the Chairman &/or President of the City of Dunedin Choir since 1980, and also the Dunedin Branch Chairman of the Chamber Music N.Z. since 1996. He also has a great interest in photography, and the history thereof, and is an international authority on Ihagee/Exakta cameras and lenses. He collects, books (earliest 1764); choral music scores and records; pre 1970 cameras, lenses and microscopes; Peugeot cars, and stamps of the British Empire 1930 – 1960.

It makes you wonder how he manages to fit in his many Masonic activities. Hugh was initiated in Lodge St John, 461, S.C. in 1963, and was Master in 1976. Since 1995, till the present, he has been the Lodge Treasurer.

He was Master of The Research Lodge of Otago, 161, in 1990, and became our Librarian in 1992.

In the Scottish District, NZ South, he was District Grand Director of Ceremonies – 1987/92. Made Honorary Grand Asst Director of Ceremonies in 1994. He was promoted to Depute District Grand Master, NZ South in 1995, and then became District Grand Master, NZ South, Scottish Freemasonry on 03 December 2000, a position he held till 2008.

In 2008 he was made Honorary Senior Grand Warden, Grand Lodge of Scotland.

As well he has been the Chairman of the Otago Masonic Charitable Trust from 2009 to 2011, and is a member of Royal Order of Scotland, and the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite – Sphinx Chapter

Many will also be aware, that Hugh has attended two Conferences in Edinburgh associated with Masonic Research. The first in 2007. Then in May 2009 he presented a paper, at the 2nd International Conference on the History of Freemasonry, in Edinburgh, entitled; "Scottish Miners and Freemasonry" (RLO Vol 16, No. 19, Sept 2009)

Hugh married Carol in 1969, and they have two sons and two daughters.

So we can see from the above, that his being our Librarian is only a small part of Hugh's full and varied life, and we are indeed fortunate to have his services and advice available to us.

This continues our series on Brethren in Otago who have, or are, contributing to the fabric of present day Otago Freemasonry.