

2016 Kellerman Lecture Tasmania **SOUTHERN LIGHTS.**

**The journey of my life through my eyes, abroad, and in Tasmania, a life
interwoven with Freemasons**

V. Wor. Brother Albert Kusnezow
Launceston Lodge of Research



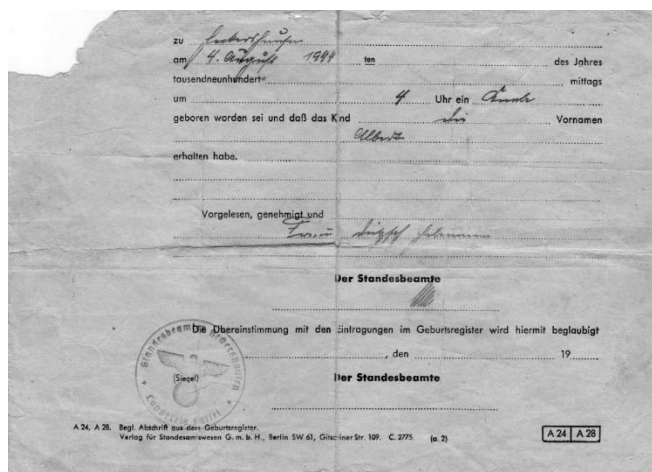
How many times have we met and got to know people and yet we are completely unaware of their past? This is my story through life, from Germany to Australia and then ending up in this magnificent state of Tasmania, where we can see the Southern Lights (Aurora Australis) displaying their awe and splendour between September and March.

My father, (Alexander) was born in Russia in 1903 and was 14 years old at the time of the Russian Revolution in 1917 when the Bolsheviks took control of the Government. The Bolsheviks completely reformed the Education System and he was selected to attend a Polytechnic and train as a Veterinarian. When he graduated he was given an area, a local district, to treat the animals, mainly horses and other farm animals as they were the backbone of agriculture. Where he was originally placed, there was a variance of 80 degrees Celsius between winter and summer, reaching minus 40 degrees in winter and 40 degrees in summer. After a while, my father moved to Ukraine to a warmer climate.

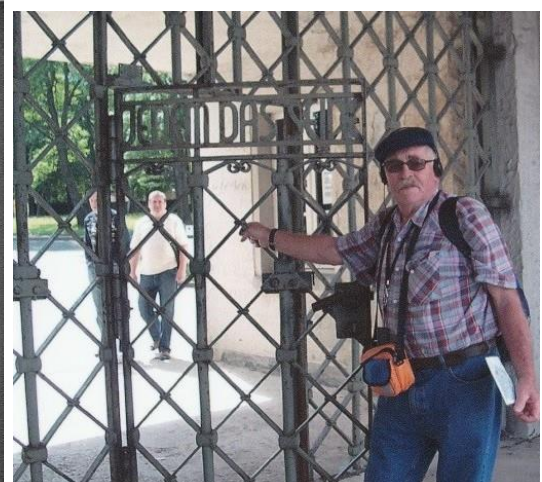
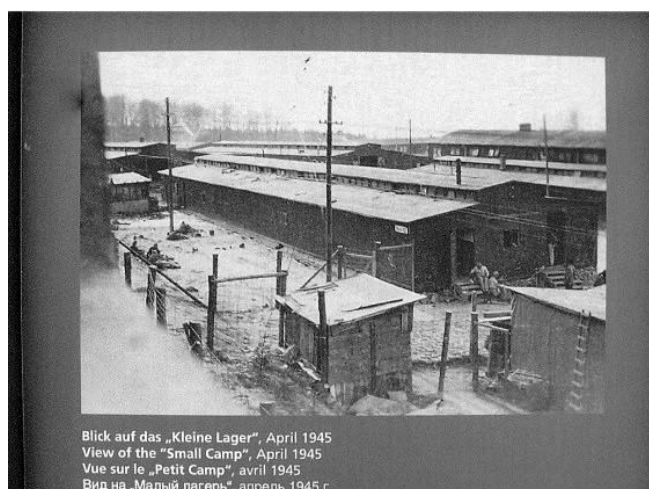
It was here he met and married my Mother who was a widow with one son and went on to have a daughter and son. Whilst working as a local vet, he was conscripted into the Russian Army and taken to the battlefield to administer to the horses of the Cossack Regiments.

Being a pacifist and anti-communist he chose to go AWOL and sought out his family to then travel on foot across Poland knowing that if he got caught he would be shot. After three months the family reached Germany and he surrendered to the German Army in the hope that his skills as a vet would be of use to them and save his family.

The family was transported to Buchenwald Concentration Camp, the first and largest concentration camp in Germany and from where all other camps were devolved. Being situated on the outskirts of Weimar and in an agricultural area he and my Mother were put to work tending animals and growing crops to feed the Guards and staff that ran the camp. Sign with the phrase “Jedem das Seine” (“To each his own”) on what was the main gate of Buchenwald concentration camp, at the Buchenwald Memorial, near Weimar, Germany. The family was subject to the same conditions as all the other prisoners, of great deprivation, starvation, and fear. Whilst I cannot date their internment into Buchenwald it would have been some time in 1943.



I was subsequently born in Buchenwald on 4th August 1944 and was issued with a German Birth certificate stating I was born in a nearby town of Heckerhausen. I later found out that the practice of registering the few babies that survived was an attempt to deny the camps existence.





Buchenwald camp prisoners

Prisoners of Buchenwald concentration camp, near Weimar, Germany, April 16, 1945, days after the camp was liberated by American troops. The author of the book "The Buchenwald Report", Elie Wiesel is seventh from the left on the middle bunk, next to a vertical post

On 8th April 1945, the German Army evacuated from the camp taking some thousands of prisoners with them, fortunately, my family was not amongst them. The prisoners left

behind sat for three days not knowing what their fate would be and too fearful to leave. Subsequently, on 11th April 1945, Buchenwald was liberated by the 6th Armoured Division of Third Army of the United States of America led by Captain Frederick Keffer, later joined by Generals Dwight D Eisenhower and George S Patton.

Whilst the Americans liberated us we were without a home, country and or papers (other than my Nazi Birth Certificate). Unable to return to his home country of Russia due to being a deserter we became DP's (Displaced Persons), and became the vagabonds of Germany, eating what we could find, sleeping where we could. In an attempt to control this gypsy life the Americans made the Ems River as a stop line where all DP's attempting to cross were diverted to proper camps and preparations were made to seal off Germany by closing the frontiers.

After four years the family was able to register for immigration. My father decided on Australia and we eventually departed on board the Dundalk Bay from the port of Naples



in Italy on 14th August 1949. We arrived in Australia on 14th September 1949 and decamped to Bonegilla Immigration Centre (below) for six weeks and they were moved to Cowra where we stayed for another six weeks.





We then moved to Tasmania and ended up in a place called Mawbanna, a farming district in the Circular Head Municipality. My Father was given work in late December working for the Forestry Commission firebreaks.

Left Forest Area School

Myself in 1949

Family Photo on Arrival in Australia/Tasmania



We lived in a Forestry Camp in an old mess hall, my father made walls out of hessian bags for privacy. Other similar families were housed in the single men's huts in the camp. My father was contracted in this job for two years by which time we had saved and purchased a block of farmland which had an old two-room wooden hut on it that my parents attempted to turn into a home for the five of us. Our first beds were the removed doors and bags of straw for a mattress and pillow. My sister, brother and I attended the Forest Area School, all in the one class, not speaking a word of English.

We thought we were very well off, but being so soon after the end of the War, and being in the middle of a Soldier Settlement farming district we were subject to persecution and humiliation because of our nationality. Acceptance gradually came, due to the fact my father was a skilled veterinarian and was called upon by the surrounding farmers in times of emergency and they came to know him and accept his unorthodox practices.

In 1956, there was a shortage in Australia of potatoes and they reached 100 pounds per ton. The family worked very hard to benefit from this windfall and it enabled us to purchase more land, which had a 3-bedroom weatherboard structure on it that my parents turned into

a better living environment than had been. There was no hot water, with an outside bathroom and a small outbuilding right up the backyard, but to us, it was a palace.

We then built a dairy (which did have hot water) and started a dairy herd, which grew to seventy cows. We also ran a piggery and cash crops. This enabled us to eventually purchase a tractor, as we had been farming mainly by manpower and a team of horses. If we didn't grow it or rear it, we didn't eat it.

My father wanted us all to become Australians and on 25th July 1958 we all became proud Australians; I was 13 years old. But to my mind my proud "Australian" moment occurred in 1956 when my brother and I had been chosen as schoolboys to run the Olympic Torch relay (prior to the Melbourne Olympic Games) between Smithton and Boat Harbour, a memento of which I still have, and my Certificate is displayed alongside my Citizenship Certificate.



In 1958, after completing Grade 9, I left school as I was needed to work to help support the family financially. I was fourteen years old. The next eight years were spent working on the farm at weekends and in a saw-mill during the week. I progressed through the various jobs in the mill until I became a Benchman who is responsible for pushing the logs (physically) into a large bench saw.

This was very hard work, not something that would be considered for such a young person today, these included stints in the main workshop in Burnie repairing machinery. Weekends were taken up on the Caterpillar D6 bulldozer at the mill, to spread the sawdust on the pile and pulling the logs from the main stockpile to the log yard and skidway. During this time, I developed an interest in mechanical machinery and how they functioned, I just wanted to drive or operate anything that had an engine and moved.

Wanting to better myself in the future, I successfully took up a correspondence course in Diesel Mechanics. This was to stand me in good stead later in my life. At the age of 18

years, I was becoming interested in motorcycles and joined the North West Motor Cycle Club and participated in “Beach Racing” and “Scrambles” which is now known as “Moto Cross”. At that time, I had a 350cc single cylinder BSA beach racer, a 500cc scrambler bike, and a 650cc BSA Gold Flash twin as my general runabout. This bike had all the accessories possible including twin driving lights on the front crash bars.



Wanting to break the cycle of constant hard physical labour, I contemplated joining the Tasmania Police Force as it had been a long-held dream of mine. When I was 22 I ventured into Smithton Police Station and met Sergeant Eric Barrenger who was my first contact with a Freemason (unknown to me at the time) who accepted my application. I was notified six weeks later that I was accepted as a trainee and moved to Hobart. The training facility was run by an Inspector Fred Shepherd, another Mason. This development was of great consternation to my parents who feared authority (and my father for his life), subsequently,

I could never visit my parents wearing my Police Uniform and they were unable to attend my graduation. I sold my beach racer and scramble bikes, but retained my pride and joy, the BSA 650 Gold Flash twin cylinder, and purchased an HD Holden sedan which became my preferred mode of transport.

Upon graduation, I was transferred to Launceston in December 1966 for general Police duties, otherwise known as the Brisbane Street Beat, and the first Police Officer to welcome me aboard was Senior Constable Laurie Leaver who also unknown to me, at that time, was another Freemason. The accommodation was offered to me at a Boarding House on Invermay Road opposite St Finn Bars Primary School, with a group of other young policemen, two of whom were also Members of the Craft. That fact also would become known by me in later years.

The photo was taken at entry into Tasmania Police Force. (1966)



During this time, I met the love of my life, Patricia, she was the youngest daughter of a Warrant Officer in the 34 Cadet Battalion of the Australian Defence Force at Milne Bay Barracks in William Street in Launceston.

After some six months of the beat, court and dance patrol duties, I was transferred to Deloraine in May 1967 to relieve a Police Officer who went on Annual Leave, after a short time this resulted in me being permanently stationed at Deloraine. Being stationed there greatly increased my knowledge of police work, which included office procedures, hotel checks, traffic management, attending

accidents, some being major fatalities requiring a thorough accident investigation, general country patrol work, court duties, police escort work and conducting vehicle safety checks throughout the district on country roads and State Highways.

During this time, it was my wish to join the Traffic Branch of the Tasmania Police Force, but after two unsuccessful attempts at applying for positions that became available on motorcycles in Traffic Control Launceston I was a bit disillusioned with both the outcome



and myself and became resigned to the fact of being a “country cop”. In June 1968, my fiancé and I were married at St Mark’s on the Hill, Launceston, by the Rev. Canon Tyson, another Mason, and took up accommodation in Deloraine.

Family Photo in 1968 (taken at Burnie)

In August 1968, I received correspondence from the Police Commissioner that I had been chosen to fill a vacancy in the Highway Patrol division of Traffic Control, Burnie. As you can imagine I was elated and did not hesitate in accepting the position, and transferred to my new position a few weeks later, we then resided in police accommodation in a state housing subdivision in Acton Estate, Burnie.

The duties of this position included checking of over-dimensional loads (over-width, over-length and overweight), and it required me to obtain a weighbridge operator's licence, plus mechanical safety checks on heavy transport vehicles and attending to fatal accidents. The area that was required to be patrolled was all the 004 telephone area, from Queenstown on the West Coast to Deloraine in the North, and all areas in-between; we were under the control of Sergeant Nichols and virtually had free rein as to where we travelled with the loadometers to perform our duties. A loadometer is a weighing device with a dial scale that a vehicle drives on to determine the weight on that wheel, they were used in pairs, with one axle at a time being checked.

Because of the shortage of police accommodation in the Burnie area we moved to a housing commission area in West Ulverstone, and later to a newly constructed Police house at Turner's Beach, which was absolute heaven, it was situated right at the mouth of the Forth River. This allowed for fresh fish for breakfast. In 1970, It was here that we started our family, and by January 1972 I was blessed with two boys.

In August/September 1972 there was the talk of disbanding the Highway Patrol and handing it all over to the Transport Department, which meant more moves, only now with a young family. My wife, being the daughter of a soldier, had experienced numerous moves within the defence force, from New Guinea to Launceston and places in-between. This disrupted her schooling considerably and consequently she was not prepared to have the same happen to our boys.

I resigned from the Police Force on 12 October 1972, purchased a small weatherboard house in Mowbray and took up employment with a transport company, (Lloyds Transport, from Burnie). Lloyds North had started operations at the newly constructed woodchip mill at Long Reach and I was employed as supervisor of the operations, and to carry out necessary repairs and services to their equipment when required.

After a few months, the eldest son of the owner, Byron Bonney, purchased the Long Reach operations from his father, and it operated under the name of Lloyds North P/L. A workshop, storeroom, office and fenced compound were constructed on the Long Reach site.

Starting off as a small company consisting of limited onsite equipment, being five rigid trucks, a large bulldozer on the chip heap, two large wheeled loaders in the log yard feeding the log decks and a small bulldozer on the waste dump working two, ten-hour shifts. Within a year, it went into full production of three shifts a day and sometimes including Saturdays,

depending on the demand, as a bulk carrier from Japan arrived every six weeks taking on 34,000 dry tonnes of wood chips. This could amount to 35,000 wet tonnes.

Even in my time at Long Reach I was in contact with Masons, such as Jack Hawkey, Basil Wright, Laurie Williams, Dennis Trull and Derek Gannon.

Eventually, with the mill still in its infancy, a railway line was built to Long Reach (situated near George Town on the Tamar River) to transport the chip logs by rail from various railheads throughout Northern Tasmania.

This was a time when Lloyds North drastically had to increase their operations to satisfy the requirements of the contract the company had with A.P.P.M, the chip mill operators.

Log loaders were in operation at Mole Creek, Tonganah (near Scottsdale), Fingal and Herrick. The sawmills, in Northern Tasmania, finally had an outlet to streamline their operation by chipping their waste timber and supply it to Long Reach for export. All this extra cartage required Lloyds North to purchase five prime movers and 5x 80 cubic metre chip bins, and the need for larger premises for a depot was imminent.

A disused brick factory in Prospect was purchased by the company and transformed it into a depot, and this move allowed the company to expand further and a contract was signed with the Hydro Electric Commission to supply equipment for the construction of the dams on the West Coast. The new equipment consisted of thirty-five articulated six-wheel drive dump trucks of 25 tonne carrying capacity, (30 Volvos, 3 Terex and 2 Moxy, 1 Bomag vibrating roller and 1 rigid 3-way 10-yard tipper). At first, the Hydro engineers were doubtful as to whether this equipment was suitable in this harsh environment for the engineers were only familiar with having large rigid Euclid trucks on their operations. In a short time, the smaller and more manoeuvrable equipment proved to be acceptable to the engineers and they left a smaller footprint on the ground surface.

Up to that time, I was running the workshop and the company management asked me to do field service throughout the state. This was a big responsibility for me and as I needed to be continually on the road, and still manage the workshop, I appointed a "Leading Hand" as my time at the base was restricted.

During my time on the West Coast, I saw the completion of the Bastion Dam at Tullah, the commencement and completion of the Pieman River Scheme at Stringer's Creek, the construction of the road, known as "Anthony Road" from the base of Mount Black to the Yolande River via Newton Creek, the commencement of the Gordon-below-Franklin scheme, with its main base being at John Falls camp upstream from Butler Island. The Gordon-below-Franklin project was stopped when legislation was passed by the Federal Government to cancel the operations.

I worked, with Lloyds North on the commencement and completion of the King River Scheme and the construction of the Anthony Scheme. The Anthony Scheme included a number smaller dams and canals to feed Lake Anthony which is situated behind Mount

Reid, (near Rosebery) an area known for its exceptional and the heaviest rainfall in the state.



Unfortunately, dam building on the west coast came to a halt after 15 years and eventually the equipment was sold off and there was a need for management to look further afield for new challenges.

Around this time (1990) I was starting to get interested into Masonry and started asking a few questions, but I was not getting much response, perhaps I was not asking the right people, so I put it on the back-burner.

At this time, the company had signed a contract in a completely new venture with Norske Skog at Boyer to harvest pine logs and deliver them to various rail yards. The company was innovative in introducing mechanical pine harvesting into the State, and three gangs of mechanical pine harvesters operated throughout the State, some being winter plantations and some summer, from Pittwater in the south, all north-eastern and eastern areas and beyond Deloraine in the west, consequently more prime movers and log trailers would be required.

In the meantime, the cartage of hardwood and pine chips increased and the need to increase the fleet of prime movers and chip trailers was paramount. As back-loading is the profit of any business and hydraulic operated unloading ramps only available at chip mills, a new method of unloading the chip trailers was to be considered.



The introduction of the hydraulic operated “walking floor” trailer revolutionised the cartage of bulk products. This method was introduced by Lloyds North and required removing the existing sheet flooring and altering the cross members of the trailer and replacing the floor with twenty-four aluminium floor boards/runners (each being 10 cm wide) running the full length of the trailer, the boards were set up as a three lots of eight and were connected to three hydraulic cylinders which were fitted under the sub-frame of the trailer and driven by a hydraulic pump mounted on the gear box of the prime mover.

This allowed the company to venture into new fields that had not been possible before. After the initial purchases, all modifications of the old trailers were carried out in the company workshop under my supervision. This conversion took approximately one week and the cost of the conversion kit being approximate \$25,000.00.

At the peak of the Lloyd North operations, the fleet consisted of 34 prime movers and 38 trailers in bulk handling situated at Burnie, Fingal and Prospect, 9 prime movers and 12 trailers in forestry operations at Burnie, Scottsdale and New Norfolk and seven pieces of specialised equipment at Bell Bay servicing Comalco, Temco and Pine Panels. 6 log loaders, (fitted with log forks); 3 Kato excavators (fitted with log grabs) and 2 Prentice loaders (fitted with log grabs) a Prentice loader is similar to an excavator without tracks and is mounted on the rear chassis of a tandem drive prime mover. All this equipment was placed between Rosebery in the West, Wiltshire Junction in far North West to Bridgewater in the South, and all places in between in handling hardwood and pine at various railheads.

The mechanical pine harvesting operation consisted of three John Deere harvester/processors, to fall and process the pine logs, and three Kockums forwarders to pick up the logs from the forest floor and deliver them to a landing on the side of the road, and load the trailers. And last but not least, the 37 items of equipment on dam and road construction on the west coast for the Hydro. As you can imagine, the (8) personnel employed in the workshop were kept extremely busy and it finally required the introduction of (2) two fitters to perform afternoon shift.

In 1990, I decided to buy a caravan and enjoy life a little more and was successful in obtaining a site in the Swansea Caravan Park. This allowed me to enjoy what I loved best, to be out on Great Oyster Bay in my 15 foot half cabin fibreglass boat, relaxing and fishing for Flathead, King George Whiting, Squid, Bream, Cocky and Black Back Salmon, as well as Flounder-spearing and beach netting at night. In January 1992 I purchased a block of land in Francis Street in a newly developed area in the south part of Swansea, erected a 6m X 6m colour bond shed and fitted it out with a toilet, shower and laundry leaving space for a B.B.Q and my half cabin boat, and had an architect draw up plans for a residence and this was known as “The Shack”.

Swansea was where my masonic interest surfaced again, as there were a few Masons in the caravan park set up permanently as myself, the likes of August Jones, a member of Army Navy Lodge, Ian Westwood from Empire Lodge, and Herman Hermanson from a Lodge in Hobart, wherever I went “they” were there. After many discussions and deliberations with

the members of the two lodges, I gave it much consideration and made the final decision to join the Craft.

As Ian Westwood gave me the application form, he was not in a position to propose me into Masonry, because he had just reached the rank of Master Mason. Eric Barrenger (the Sergeant from Smithton) became my proposer, and Ken Reece (whom I had boarded with at Invermay) was my seconder, unaware as I had been that they were Masons. In my younger days, I was quite aware that Freemasonry was a well-established organisation throughout Tasmania but as to what it stood for, I must admit that ignorance on my part was obvious, therefore, I was preparing to enter into the unknown and unfamiliar territory.

On the 10th of September 1992, I was initiated into Empire Lodge 37TC, the Worshipful Master was Wor. Bro. Ron Johnston who occupied the chair of King Solomon. I found the initiation ceremony to be intriguing but was very wary as to what next? I actually found the preparation a little uncomfortable, but the person outside the door assured me all would be right and everyone in that room had gone through the same process. When I finally entered through the door and paraded around the room, I was completely unaware what the knocking was about or what was to happen next, but finally when the blindfold was removed I noticed there were a lot of familiar faces that were seated, especially the two police officers (Ken Reece and Graeme Cameron) and bus driver (Allen Wright) I had boarded with, in the Invermay boarding house many years previously, the workers I mentioned from the Long Reach mill, and some Police Officers from my Burnie days. Later the Director of Ceremonies, Lance Barnard, (Past Deputy Prime Minister) approached me after the Initiation and assured me that I was doing the right thing and there was nothing to fear.

After the event, a few things were explained to me so that made things that were performed, more easily for me to digest and understand the progression required of me to proceed through the next stages. I was passed to the degree of Fellow Craft on the 11th of February 1993, and I purchased tickets to the Grand Lodge Installation of Rt. Wor. Bro. P Hodges on the 13th of March 1993, as Grand Master in the Albert Hall, Launceston.

But as my plans for a residence at Swansea had already been passed by council, an opportunity arose for me to have the use of backhoe and 10 yard tipper on that same weekend, to dig the footings for the intended structure, which unfortunately caused me to miss the Grand Installation of Most Worshipful Brother Hodges as our new Grand Master.

Following the excavations I spent every weekend at Swansea at the block fencing, having power connected to the shed and connecting the sewerage to the mains and generally tidying up the footings and making preparations to move the caravan from the Park to the block later in the year when my contract was due to expire.

I was raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on 10th of June 1993, Wor. Bro. Eric Stancombe being the Master of the day. I found this ceremony very enlightening and interesting and made me realise the importance of going through the various degrees to

become a Master Mason. Because my work necessitated travelling all over Tasmania to the different work sites, I took the opportunity on long trips to learn my obligations for all the degrees and questions and answers required before progressing to the next stage.

On the 10th of September, I received my Master Mason's Certificate and throughout, this time, Wor.Bro. Lance Barnard was Director of Ceremonies for Empire Lodge. Unfortunately, I felt I was slightly abandoned by the members of Empire Lodge as they all said I need to visit other lodges to learn more about Freemasonry, but none were forthcoming in accompanying me on my visitations and I felt like I was entering into unknown territory, it was very difficult to visit other lodges as a newly initiated Brother and not feel like a stranger.

At the time, I was living in Snow Street, Newnham, and residing opposite me was also a Mason, Maurice Dexter, who was Master of Lodge Heather and he took me under his guidance. Wor.Bro. Dexter and I travelled and visited regularly and things became easier for me to visit on my own.

On 13 August, 1993 I affiliated with Launceston Lodge of Research, 69 TC, and in 1998, became interested in the lectures and the way they were being delivered, and was requested by some "seasoned and experienced lecturers" to become active and involved in their presentation when various Lodges requested the Lodge of Research to provide the work for the evening, I accepted, and have not looked back since and feel fully confident in performing this duty on behalf of Research.



Eventually on the 19th of July, 1994, I affiliated with Lodge Heather 64 TC and requested a Clearance Certificate from Empire Lodge 37 TC. There was some disappointment expressed by a few Empire brethren as to my departure, so I expressed my own concern in being abandoned and having to fend for myself.

In November 1995, I was invested as Junior Deacon of Lodge Heather, and subsequently appointed as a Director of the Heather Hall Company Inc. I progressed through the offices until November 1999 when I was installed as Worshipful Master of Lodge Heather 64 TC, and requested Rt. Wor. Bro. Laurie Leaver to conduct the ceremony of Installation as the Installing Master, which he accepted with pleasure.

Left, Installation as Master of Heather Lodge 1999

Throughout the year as Master I found my nervousness hard to control, but I was not prepared to give up the challenge, and at the end of my tenure, a request was made by me, to the Board of Lodge Heather, for me to continue as Master for the forthcoming year as I was more at ease with the office as Master and was re-invested as Master in November 2000 by Grand Master, Most Wor. Bro Allen Swinton. I thoroughly enjoyed the second year and I also gained considerable confidence and the ability to communicate with brethren at all levels of Masonic rank.

In Feb 2001, I was invested as a Grand Lodge Steward for the northern team. This was another challenge for me, and I found this to be completely out of the ordinary and soon noticed that there seemed to be a class distinction (them and us) but was fortunate to have V.Wor.Bro.John Slore (Grand Chaplain) close by at the time when performing my duties as Regalia Steward, to which I was extremely grateful and still remind him of to this day.

At the end of my term as Grand Steward, I was greatly disheartened by the attitude of the Grand Director for his unfair and constant degrading comments to the Grand Lodge team after every Installation. It appeared we could not do a thing that was right, and there was not one positive comment of encouragement from him. I formed the attitude "if this is Grand Lodge, this is not for me" and declined all positions that were offered for the ensuing year, and had no intention of ever joining Grand Lodge again.

In 2002, my conditions of employment changed within the company, and I was given the task of implementing an Occupational Health and Safety Program, that being a major requirement by the industries which the company was contracted to, and engaged in various business arrangements. I completed the task within 12 months and the company received full accreditation by Peter Rankin of Lloyds Register, Melbourne, after successful field and desktop audits with some optional recommendations made to further enhance the system.

For the next 12 months, all operating procedures on equipment and drivers of heavy combination vehicles, (Semis and B doubles) quality assurance and safety audits on all equipment within the organisation was carried out by myself.

After this 18-month period, administration of the company was transferred to Quoiba, near Devonport, to the Caltas offices. By this time, all construction work on the West Coast had ceased and completed and the relevant equipment disposed of to either local or mainland contractors, and the workshop was closed.

In 2004, this again changed my conditions of employment. All repair and service work on the remaining equipment was contracted out to a major truck and machinery supplier at Connector Park in Launceston to perform the necessary requirements for the upkeep of the fleet of trucks. As I was in possession of all the endorsements and necessary tickets to operate the machinery involved in the transport industry, and holder of the relevant driver's licence (heavy combination vehicle) I accepted the position of being a driver of the company's semi-trailers. This position did not allow me to be involved with any masonic activities, due to the early starts and long days



replaced and in 2010 a successful reverse shoulder replacement was performed on my right shoulder.

This then allowed me to once again to become more involved in my Masonic activities. After being away for so long it was extremely difficult to return and be active, for a while I had to force myself to get dressed and drive to a lodge meeting. It took some months before I settled back comfortably into the duties as a member of Lodge Heather and



In May, 2007, at the age of 63 years, I resigned from the company, as my knees and hips and shoulders were sending a clear message, that from all the heavy lifting and swinging a 20 lb sledgehammer in my younger years in workshop and field service activities that the time has come for some urgently needed replacement parts of my own, and in 2008 both my knee joints were successfully

Launceston Lodge of Research. After holding office in various positions in Research, in November 2007, I was invested as Master of Lodge of Research, and re-invested as Master again in 2008 and since then have continually held various positions, but mainly as Director of Ceremonies.

Left Master of Launceston
Lodge of Research

In 2007 I was invited onto the Board of “The Launceston Benevolent Society” which was established in 1834 by a Mason and I served as President of the Society and Chairman of the Board from 2010-2012, but unfortunately, due to my Masonic commitments and continued workload, I could not make myself available to the demands required of me to fulfil the challenges of being a Board Member and in 2013 a decision had to be taken and I regrettably resigned from this charitable institution, after some seven years of voluntary service. In October 2008, I was elected onto the Board of the Fred French Masonic Nursing Home Inc., and the following year (2009) at the AGM, I was elected as Chairman of the Board and still remain in this role.



In Nov 2009, I was again elected as Master of Lodge Heather and held the title of Master for four consecutive years, and upon vacating the Chair of King Solomon I continued to maintain a strong presence within the lodge as Secretary of the Lodge.

In September 2009, Lodge Heather made a twinning arrangement with Lodge Scotch College 80TC to assist each other in membership, and I have subsequently held the offices of Junior Warden, Chaplain and the Director of Ceremonies.

In 2010, I attended Lord Carrington Lodge at Fingal as a Visiting Master with other Masons from the Launceston area, one of whom was Wor Bro Brad Emmerton who had been selected by the Grand Master (Norm Cooper) to be Grand Director of Ceremonies for the Northern Grand Lodge Team. Brad informed me that not one single person had put their name forward to act as Grand Steward for the coming year, to act as Regalia Steward.

After a brief discussion in the car with Brad on the return journey back to Launceston, I decided that I would apply for the position as Grand Steward and take on the role as Regalia Steward for **one year only**.

After many months as Grand Steward, I found the whole culture of “them and us” had completely changed and my thoughts of Grand Lodge had also changed and was encouraged by some senior members to continue and progress through the offices. I was elected Junior Grand Deacon in 2012, Grand Chaplain 2013 and again in 2014, Grand Inspector of Lodges 2015 and Senior Grand Deacon 2016, and invited onto the Grand Lodge Board of Benevolence in 2013, and still retain that position.

I always remember the wise words of advice my father gave me in my teenage years which were

“Always look to the future with confidence - and always look back on your past with pride”

and that is one thing I can most certainly say I have done, after landing into a foreign land as a Displaced Person, and struggling for many years to make ends meet, I am sure that I

have served my great country called Australia, the land of the Southern Lights, extremely well and that my contribution to society may leave a small footprint for others to follow in my steps.

My past and current Masonic involvements are....

Lodge Heather..... Currently Lodge Secretary
Secretary for Board of Management
Director of the Heather Hall Company.
(Master for 6 years)

Lodge Scotch College Currently Director of Ceremonies
Member of the Board of Management

L'ton Lodge of Research Currently Director of Ceremonies
Member of Board of Management
(Master for 2 years)

Grand Lodge.....Currently on the Grand Lodge Board of Benevolence
Grand Inspector of Lodges
Past Grand Steward (X2)
Past Grand Deacon
Past Grand Chaplain (X2)

F/ French Nursing Home... Chairman of Board
Chairman of Planning Committee

Member of the Fred French/Peace Haven Amalgamation Working Group to unite both Boards under the new Board of Masonic Care Tasmania Inc.

Member of North/South Masonic Homes Merger Working Group to unite all 3 Masonic Homes in Tasmania to be part of Masonic Care Tasmania Inc.

Thank you for your kind attention
V. Wor.Bro. Albert Kusnezow.