



KINDRED LODGES ASSOCIATION

To facilitate and foster relationships among Freemasons who are or were involved in Youth Work

NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2018

"I've just been on a once-in-a-lifetime holiday. I'll tell you what, never again."

This was a joke made by Tim Vine and was named the best joke of the Edinburgh Fringe 2012. It about sums up my recent experience starting end of January 2018 and returning mid-March after 13 flights, over 30,000 miles, 8 different locations and visits to all the Scouting Lodges in New Zealand, Australia and Hong Kong.

My name is Brian Hughes and it was an ambition of mine as UK Secretary of the Kindred Lodges Association (KLA) which coordinates the combined activities of 34 Scouting Lodges, 4 Boys Brigade Lodges and other associated side orders and degrees. Our overseas members include one in New Zealand, one in each state of Australia (except for Tasmania), and one in Hong Kong. The visit coincided with each of the Lodges, all named after the Scout Founder, Robert Baden-Powell, celebrating his Birthdate, 100 years of Rovers in Australia and various presentations to Rover Crews for good service.

I was not alone, Steve Gough, Chairman of the KLA with our mascot Dobbie came along too. In the main we were hosted by a Masonic or Scouting contact at six of the eight locations.

Our First visit was to Wellington, New Zealand, following a stopover at Dubai and Auckland. All the Scouting Masonic meetings except for Hong Kong were conducted in Scout Uniform wearing masonic regalia.

We learned very quickly that the Masonic structure of New Zealand, Hong Kong and Australia is totally different to that of the U.K., having only two tiers of membership at Lodge level and then District Grand Lodge level, note no Provincial or National Grand Lodge.



In New Zealand we were hosted by Ed and Margaret Robinson, secretary of the Baden Powell Lodge 381 and we attended their Installation meeting which was conducted at the Masonic Hall, Lower Hutt. Having introduced our third member 'Dobbie' to the W.M. Dave Henry (Both pictured), We were assembled in the main room where we witnessed an Installation Ceremony, conducted entirely by the Grand Master M. W. Bro. Mark Winger and his Grand District Team. (Dobbie was turned to face the wall during the board of Installed Masters, he only having a Third-Degree Apron.) Given the structure of Masonry in New Zealand the meeting was attended by no less than one M. W. Grand Master, two M. W. Past Grand Masters and four V. W. Past Assistant Grand Masters.

We also visited another Masonic Temple which forms an integral part of the Old Wellesley Hotel owned by Masonry New Zealand which has an intriguing squared carpet with actual tassels attached on each corner, a Third-Degree Tracing Board which looks like no other I have seen and a ceiling of lights which can be adjusted to display different constellations. In addition, there is tiered seating at the back of the Senior Warden to accommodate any numbers over the norm.

We went on to Sydney, Australia where our host, a local Scout District Commissioner Cheryl Borsak who was married to a State Member of Parliament and lived in a very ornate and unusual house which must be seen to be believed. We were met at the main entrance by a stuffed ten-foot bear and that theme carried on throughout the rest of the building.



In addition to visiting the Sydney Parliament in session and being formally welcomed by the speaker therefore having our visit recorded in Hansard, we took tea and cakes with the President of the House, ran a Scout meeting night and attended the Baden Powell Lodge 1051 New South Wales. This was purely a Presentation evening by the BP Lodge 1051 at the very ornate Petersham, Egyptian Room Meeting Room with little Masonic pomp and ceremony except for formal welcoming of the Grand Master M.W. Bro James Melville (Pictured with Dobbie) who took an active part throughout the evening. Around 80 Scouting and Masonic brethren being present took part in a Rover Bannerette presentation to help celebrate 100 years of Rover Scouting in Australia. Dobbie took his place on the Secretary's desk and joined the Top Table for the following Festive Board.

There were several speeches in the Lodge covering Freemasonry and local scouting. This was followed by a full three course dinner which also included toasts and presentations for local awards to Rover Scout Units.

Our hosts could not do enough for us ensuring that we both visited as many places as possible to compliment the Aussie experience.



Our next stop was after a quick half hour flight to Brisbane where once again our host M. Ex. Comp. K. (Kirby) Leeke, First Grand Principal, Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Queensland who was initiated into Freemasonry into Baden Powell Lodge 505, and his wife Denise ensured we were well looked after. (Pictured are Steve and I with our hosts Kirby and Denise.)



We attended the meeting of Baden Powell Lodge 505 at Cleveland Street, Stones Corner to witness and take part in their Founders Day ceremony attended by the Grand Master M.W. Bro Alan Townson with his Grand Officers, along with the Chief Commissioner for Scouts Daryl Scott and Rose Windley, Queensland delegate to the National Rover Council.

There followed several presentations and the Scout Promise was renewed by all Scouts present. It was followed by an informal meal with just a few speeches. Dobbie was once again welcomed into the fold and was a great attraction.

The next evening, we took in another Lodge Meeting at the same venue. Dennistoun Lodge 301, this time a 3rd Degree Ceremony. The Festive Board afterwards was just a finger buffet, no seats and no alcohol. It is really strange doing Toasts whilst standing around.

Now unfortunately, two of the Scouting Lodges in Australia meet on the same evening so we had to put a full four weeks into the trip to enable us to visit them all, so Steve and I took time out to visit Cairns and the Barrier Reef, three days on a 'live-aboard' boat, twelve dives, 28 degrees water temperature, someone had to do it!

A long flight from Cairns to Perth, arrived with a 3-hour time difference to be met by two hosts John Robinson and Chris Denny, Secretary and D.C. of Baden Powell Lodge 350 who each provided us with accommodation. Next day taken on a tour of the city with a special look at the ANZAC memorial which provides a panoramic view of the city. They were both splendid hosts and ensured that we found some wild kangaroo just outside the city border.

We helped to set up the Masonic Temple in readiness for the afternoons event. The Scout Founders Commemoration Ceremony for Baden Powell Lodge 350 was attended by the Grand Master M.W. Bro

Dr. William (Bill) Babe, his delegation, the Chief Commissioner for Scouts Liew Whithers and his colour party and Claire Veen and Katrina Lane as representatives for the Guides.

There followed an informal ceremony which included the Rover Procession with Staves and Hat, a presentation of certificates and cheques. This was followed by a 'finger buffet, which had more sausages in one bowl than I have ever seen before in my life! There was so much food that a good deal was rescued and returned to my hosts house from where we all had a splendid evening with the odd glass or two. This was an all too short visit full of good fellowship and generous hospitality. Once again, a very early start for our next leg to Melbourne.



We were met by W. Bro. the Hon. Michael Baden-Powell, Grandson of Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scout movement worldwide. He was resplendent in his scout uniform, he and his wife Joan transported us to their home in the suburbs of Melbourne. It took over an hour to get to there and we were provided with superb accommodation and a lovely meal. Given the distance, and we had lost three hours of the day, so early to bed for a rest.

Their house is a shrine to their Scouting past and connections with many original items relating to his Grandfather and the development of Scouting over the years. He always referred to Joan as Grandma and she always replied, 'Old Man'. Equally, if he was in conversation and could not recall something, he would always say 'I will remember it tomorrow'.

Lodge Baden-Powell 488 met at the Waverley Masonic Centre, Stephenson's Road, Mount Waverley, Victoria. There were over 100 present both Masonic and Scouting accompanied by the Mr Brendan Watson, Chief Commissioner for Scouts Victoria, the Grand Master M.W. Bro Don Reynolds and his Lodge escort. In addition, there were several Rover Crews, all of whom were in attendance to receive Certificates of Commendation for their work over the last year. In addition, 20 A.E.D's (defibrillators), were distributed to 20 different camp sites and activity centres throughout the region. This was following a massive fund-raising effort by the Lodge and the Masonic District which contributed a huge amount of money.



During the ceremony Steve Gough presented Michael Baden Powell with his Grand Lodge Certificate, he being a member of the Lodge of Unity, Peace and Concord No 316, the Installed Masters Lodge of the Kindred Lodges Association.

Following the presentation, the Grand Master announced that Michael would be receiving Grand Rank (PPrGStdB) in the next round of promotions.

The winning Rover Unit had unfortunately lost their HQ's by arson a couple of weeks previous and the raffle for the night was conducted for their benefit. It raised over 700 dollars which was immediately increased to 1000 dollars from the Grand Masters fund, an extra 500 dollars was given by the Lodge and the Grand Master instructed one of his officers and the Lodge to make an immediate application for a Major Grant from Grand Lodge funds.

Brendan Watson, Victoria Scouting Commissioner thanked the Lodge and Masonry in general for their support and related two very moving stories in relation to attitudes of young people towards others relating to a Joey (an Aussie Beaver equivalent) with Angel Blankets and a cub who wanted to play games with the homeless. Not a dry eye in the house.

A Three-hour flight to Adelaide and we were welcomed by Phil Rungie, Secretary of Baden Powell Lodge 222 who immediately took us back to his house way up in the hills, no Wi-Fi and very slow unreliable internet connection.

We were hosted by Phil and his wife Rhonda, both have been actively involved in Scouting for very many years. His home is contained within a 10-acre paddock and is surrounded by trees and wildlife. His dog is called beans, because he is full of them.

We were taken to the State Scout Headquarters and had coffee with the Chief Commissioner Harry Long. We made a visit to Woodhouse Scout Camp Site and met Simon Fredrick the Camp manager. A very large facility with very many activities and accommodation on site.

The Masonic meeting was attended by the Deputy Grand Master M,W. Bro. Bill Merrill, Harry Long the Chief Commissioner for Scouts and we met up once again with the Hon. Michael Baden-Powell who had travelled up to be with us at the meeting. The photo shows Dobbie with the Deputy Grand Master and Chief Commissioner for Scouts.



In addition, we were hosted by the South Australia Scout Sub Aqua Group who organised a local dive especially for us. The Group has a fully functioning Headquarters, store and transport to facilitate diving at all levels primarily for local scouting.

Staying at such a remote location we were able to see wild kangaroos inside the paddock of the house and koalas in trees just down the road.

On to our final destination, Hong Kong via Brisbane where we were met by Peter Halliday, a member of the Baden Powell Lodge 929, who met at the B.P. International Hotel, our accommodation for the duration of our visit.



Now this is no ordinary hotel boasting 25 floors of accommodation, car parking, conference facilities, two floors as Headquarters for the Scout Association of Hong Kong, a large and well stocked Scout Shop, restaurants and bars.

It is also ideally placed with excellent transport links to visit both the mainland and Hong Kong Island. The Masonic meeting was the only one conducted without wearing Scout uniform and was an Initiation Ceremony attended by the V.W. Bro. Calvin Chau, an Asst. Grand Master who was also a member of the Lodge.

It was followed by a splendid Chinese meal which consisted of around ten different courses washed down with the odd glass or two. We were led astray to a local bar where one of the members had more than a few bottles of whiskey, especially set to one side for him. This was to be repeated at several different locations throughout the weeklong visit.

We were both invited to a separate Installation meeting at the only Masonic Hall in Hong Kong where the ceremony was conducted under the English Constitution but with input from Grand Officers from both the Irish and Scottish Constitutions.



Once again, our hosts could not do enough for us with visits across the colony from a tourist and Scouting perspective. This included a purpose-built training and activity centre which could only be reached by ferry.

13 flights, 30,000 miles, 9 Masonic visits, meeting numerous strangers who all became firm friends, 6 weeks away from home, it really was the Trip of a Lifetime! It really could not happen ever again, I now need a holiday to recover.