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I.G.L.D. Ramblings with Past President Brother Eric Warner

It was very pleasing to see so many of our members attended our meeting held in Hamilton over Waitangi weekend. Especially when most had considerable traveling to do to be there. An attendance of twenty-five including Sister Betty Moore of the Canterbury IGLD and two non-members made for a pleasant gathering. Our Secretary will forward detailed minutes of the meeting to members. However, I will mention that three presentations were made for years of membership. Brother Les Hansen received his ten-year button and Sister Sylvia McLay and me our twenty year buttons. Brother Norm Rosser read out some interesting information relating to preliminary proposals of establishing an IGLD branch in New Zealand, which he had come across in a couple of old Grand Lodge Conference Reports of almost forty years ago. The information is presented further down the page.

On the Saturday evening, members attended the centennial anniversary dinner of the Pride of Hamilton Lodge where approximately ninety attended. On display was a large collection of memorabilia including minute books dating back to 1919, trophies, honour boards, printed matter and photos. Several of the photos were of various Grand Lodge and IGLD groups. This created quite an interest for all who attended. Sister McLay had the honour of proposing the main toast of the evening, that to the Pride of Hamilton Lodge. Sister McLay joined IGLD at a meeting held in Hamilton twenty years ago and has attended many Hamilton Lodge meetings and functions since then. The lucky number drawn for a basket of substantial goodies went to Sister June Stewart all the way from Nelson.

Sunday morning Sister Helen and I had the pleasure of hosting sixteen of our members plus a few others (25 altogether) for breakfast at our home. Thank goodness, it was a lovely morning so we could expand out onto the veranda. Amazing how much bacon and eggs was got through. Sorry the champagne turned out to be only sparkling grape juice. There was a mix-up with the supplier.

Following breakfast, most started out on their return journeys home. However, eight remained long enough to visit a private New Zealand Railway Museum. A brilliant collection of memorabilia and printed history, it is owned by Mr. John Fitzgerald. It featured in the recent TV series "Off the Rails". The visitors stayed longer than the time I had allocated. Even then, I had to drag one Past Grand President away. Good to see everyone enjoyed it.

As one of the organisers for the weekend, I would personally like to sincerely thank members who made the effort to be in Hamilton. And for the way they supported and took part in all the functions and activities to help make the weekend such a success.

For meeting attendance records, four major milestones were passed at Hamilton. It was Brother McLay's 50<sup>th</sup> meeting, Sister McLays 45<sup>th</sup>, my 40<sup>th</sup> and Sister Warner's 30<sup>th</sup>. These records must be considered fairly good when it is realised that no more than three meetings have been held in any one year. Other members who have attended thirty or more N.I. IGLD meetings over the years include Sisters Mary Horman (39), Dolly Dyer (38, could be more), Diane Ayers (37) Barbara Wait (32) and Brothers Don Horman (39), Bruce Ayers (38) and Charlie Wait (32). Some of our earliest past records are missing, but it is certain that in the 33-year history of the North Island branch of IGLD no other member past or present has passed the 30 meeting mark although seven are starting to get close.

When W.A. Ross was Grand President in 1965-67, he made an official visit to the Australian Jurisdictions including being initiated into IGL of Australia. On his return, he took the bull by the horns endeavouring to establish a branch within the North Island Jurisdiction. A notice was sent out to eligible members from who was received, about 150 replied to the affirmative. The circular was not framed as well as it could have been, resulting in a considerable proportion of members not replying. At the 1967 Conference, Brother Ross was taken to task as to his authority for his actions. It was also questioned if it was lawful to institute a Grand Lodge within another Grand Lodge and if Grand Lodge (N.I.) would have to bear any expenses involved. Brother Ross elaborated on the benefits of forming an IGLD branch and gave answers to the various queries. Members were informed however that the Board of Management would refrain from acting until further information was obtained from London and not before the next Conference. Word was also received that the South Island Jurisdictions did not agree with the proposals, and nothing further eventuated.

It is interesting to note another side issue that came up at the Conference as Remit No 1. "That because the immaturity and inefficiency of our Grand Lodge Executive as at present constituted, has caused such widespread

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loss of Confidence, this Conference ask three Past Grand Presidents of proven ability – namely PGP's Brothers Corban, Hobday and Rogers, to be our GP, VGP and JGP respectively for the next two years to endeavour to straighten out our affairs and restore sanity to the running of our Jurisdiction". There was some dissatisfaction with Brother Ross's and his wife's expenses to Australia of \$527, the increase in management fees and a drop in membership. After limited discussion and points of order, the Remit was ruled out of order.

The possibility of forming an IGLD branch was again on the agenda for the 1969 Conference. Once again, JGP Brother Ross outlined the aims of the International Organisation as being basically to establish a higher order to promote Druidism on a worldwide basis. There were now branches in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. The present Grand President Brother L.P. Hamlin had recently been overseas and had been initiated into the international order. PDP Brother Harwood (Johnsonville) moved "That due consideration be given to the formation of a branch of the International Grand Lodge in New Zealand". PDP Brother Stokes (Hamilton) seconded the motion. Two Past Grand Presidents spoke in support and suggesting it be left to the Board to delve further into the matter. It was understood that a Grand Lodge Trustee Brother A. Clouston, later in the year intended being at the next World IGLD Congress being held at Malmo in Sweden. It was suggested deferring any further action until Brother Clouston's return. The motion was carried. The Canterbury and Otago Jurisdictions advised that they were not interested in the proposal. The main objection to the proposal was that the IGL would not accept female members of which the Canterbury Jurisdiction had quite a number.

It was three years later, on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 1972 that a New Zealand Branch of IGLD was finally formed with Brother Allan Moore being elected the first President. Members from the three Grand Lodge Jurisdictions did take part. A year later, it broke into three jurisdictions when our own present branch came into being.

While reminiscing, who remembers our meeting of ten years ago? Held in the Taradale RSA Rooms. PGP Peter Hamlin was present. The late Brother Jim Erickson presented our Order with a small sword for our ritual work to save the inconvenience of transporting a large sword. PGS Brian Hamlin reported on the meeting between the Liquidator and Lodge members who represented about 30 Lodges. A lot of water has flown under the bridge since then. Sunday there was a church parade at the Salvation Army Hall, a visit to a British Car Museum and a tour of Napier. A great weekend.

Our next meeting will be held in the beautiful city of Wanganui. I hope members will be able to give the Wanganui organisers the same support as we were given in Hamilton. Remember, it will be the Installation of Officers for the next twelve months. The meeting in Hamilton saw no difficulties in gaining nominations and acceptances for the various positions. This indicates a strong organisation.

So until next time, all the best in Druidism

Yours fraternally in UPC

Eric Warner – Past President

The morning after the local Lodge was visited by the Grand Lodge Board one of our members and his young daughter happened to run into the Grand President in the street. During small talk, the daughter was told that the gentleman had been at the Lodge meeting the previous night. Our Grand President was astonished when the young girl stated that a person must be very brave to go to Lodge these days. "Why do you say that?" asked the President. "Because said the daughter, "I heard Dad tell Mum this morning that there was a big shot present, the Bards were gunned for the way they took the password, the Guardian was a menace with his sword, members murdered the choruses and the pianist drowned everyone".

Why couldn't the Druid go into the pub?  
He was bard.