



Working for elephants

Bro Owen Parry has **long memories** of Freemasonry. This is his story.

I was a child the first time I heard about the Freemasons. My mother was discussing how her grandfather was a Freemason in England and when he died young, leaving seven children and a wife in the days of no social security or insurance, his brother masons offered assistance to the widow and children. I thought that these men must be of substantial character and have a strong bond between them to do that.

My next encounter with Freemasonry was as a teenager reading Rudyard Kipling and watching the movie *The Man who would be King*. Once again the bond between the brother masons impressed me and the secrets intrigued me.

I played rugby for many years at a great club (Drummoyne Dirty Reds) where many strong friendships were made.

When I stopped playing a few years ago I missed the camaraderie. I thought maybe Freemasonry could offer me the same benefits without the broken bones. I joined Lodge Chelmsford 261 and have found exactly that: friendship, worthwhile activities, encouragement, cooperation and brothers.

I am a civil engineer working at Taronga Zoo for the Taronga Conservation Society of Australia, project managing design and construction of exhibits and facilities. One of my projects was the male elephant enclosure. I enjoy being an engineer and I have found that I can relate my work back to Freemasonry. Many of the working tools from the three degrees used by masons in the construction of King Solomon's Temple, and castles and cathedrals in the Middle Ages, are still in use today and significantly, were used in the construction of the elephant enclosure.

I am currently a Junior Deacon at Lodge Chelmsford and one of the youngest members at 31 years of age. What impresses me

about Chelmsford is that the older established members are willing to listen to the younger members' ideas and to visit lodges with them. They also take their ritual seriously and answer all of my questions patiently and show an interest in my progression.

Another benefit of Freemasonry that I look forward to is hopefully seeing my two year old son Winston join me at Lodge Chelmsford. Having another bond with him and knowing that I will work and have dinner with him at least every month is exciting. We had a father and son in Lodge Chelmsford (Stephen and Arthur Lidbetter) until recently when Arthur sadly passed away, it was great to see them work together and the enjoyment they gained.

