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Victoria Fires Appeal



Monday, 23 February 2009 13:18

UPDATE (5 June 09): The Victoria Fire Appeal has now closed and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those Lodges, Trusts and individuals that donated to this worthy cause. In total The Grand Lodge of New Zealand Victoria Fire Appeal raised AUD \$34,661.19 and a bank draft for that amount has now been forwarded to the Grand Lodge of Victoria. The Grand Secretary in Victoria has said "Thank you, we in Victoria are very grateful to our Brothers in New Zealand. We are humbled by the generosity of your Grand Lodge's response to this tragic event."



Dear Brethren –

Freemasons in New Zealand, in overwhelming response to the Victoria fires disaster, have joined in voice to help their brethren across the Tasman. The Grand Lodge of New Zealand Freemasons is starting its own appeal the proceeds of which will be passed directly to the Freemasons Victoria appeal. The following is an extract from a letter sent by MWBro Garry J Sebo, Grand Master Freemasons Victoria to the Lodges of that State:

The shock and grief felt by Victorians in the wake of the devastating bushfires of February 7th cannot be exaggerated. The depth of these tragic events is yet to be measured and may never be.

In response I have established the Grand Master's Victorian Bushfires Appeal. Funds raised by this Appeal will be directly applied to significant community redevelopment and reconstruction projects in addition to providing direct assistance to seriously disadvantaged members of the Masonic and wider community. The appeal has been launched with an initial contribution from the Benevolent Fund of \$400,000 and a half page announcement of the Appeal in both the Herald Sun and The Age on Friday, February 13th.

A committee has been established under the chairmanship of RWBro Vaughan Werner, Deputy Grand Master, to coordinate Freemasons Victoria's response to these events and react to the needs of communities and individuals directly affected by the fire. I am also particularly anxious that we promptly respond to the needs of Freemasons, their relatives and friends who have been affected by the fire.

Freemasons Victoria is liaising with Government agencies to investigate the logistics and feasibility of contributing \$1000 for each bereavement in support of the grant being offered by the Commonwealth Government to supplement funeral and memorial costs. In times of such gravity our defining characteristics as a community are most clearly demonstrated. I have no doubt that all our Brethren will practice that foremost Masonic characteristic; Charity, and will give generously.

... It is the aim of the Appeal to generate a further \$300,000 and to achieve this we need the assistance of every Freemason.

...

Our thoughts and prayers are with those among us who now suddenly find themselves poor and distressed. Our support must, and will be, with them throughout the coming months as they come to terms with the consequences of this most terrible time.

Yours Fraternally,
Garry J Sebo
Grand Master, Freemasons Victoria

The Board of General Purposes is launching our New Zealand appeal with a donation of \$20,000. Individuals, Lodges and Freemason Trusts are invited to contribute.

Donations can be made at any National Bank by depositing into the following account:-

06 0899 0106160-31 Grand Lodge - Victoria Fire Appeal

Fraternally,
L G Milton
GRAND SECRETARY



