

News release

Freemasons donate \$10K to the RSA, plan to host public commemoration service

Freemasons NZ plans to stream a special Facebook Live ANZAC Day commemoration service on ANZAC Day morning and is inviting all New Zealanders, not just Freemasons, to participate.

Freemasons NZ is also donating \$10,000 to the RSA's Welfare Fund and is asking brethren around the country to match that through donations to a dedicated bank account.

Freemasons NZ grand master, Graham Wrigley, says Freemasons NZ and the RSA have a special relationship underpinned by the fact that many Freemasons are also RSA members or active or returned servicemen.

"We share similar beliefs when it comes to the importance of comradeship, compassion and commitment and for caring for and supporting those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

"Just because we can't gather properly for dawn services or fundraise by normal means doesn't mean we can't gather virtually to pay our respects and to remember those who have served their country so gallantly either in the armed services or in other roles."

RSA chief executive Karen Rolleston said the Freemasons' fundraising efforts and the lengths they are going to show support are hugely appreciated.

"Like many other organisations and businesses, the lockdown has taken a major financial toll on us and we are extremely grateful for Freemasons' ongoing support."

The 15 minute Facebook Live service will be promoted to the public using social media and Graham Wrigley hopes thousands of Kiwis will participate.

"These are unique circumstances but we won't let Covid-19 beat us or stop us from showing our support. We're just innovating to maintain a strong tradition."

For more information contact Daniel Paul (021) 400-993

Editor's note: The Facebook Live service starts at 10.00am on ANZAC Day. Participants should visit www.facebook.com/freemasonsnz at 10am on Saturday where they will be able to access the Facebook Live - it will be pinned to the top of the webpage with a big red LIVE button.

Freemasons and members of the public can make donations to the RSA by visiting either of the two organisations' website – www.freemasonsnz.org and rsa.org.nz

Brother Thomas Bracken who wrote God Defend New Zealand was a Freemason.

Brother Rudyard Kipling was also a Freemason. He wrote the Recessional Hymn 'God of our Fathers, known of old' which is used frequently in ANZAC ceremonies.