



**The Principal Masonic Temple
Company Path Georgetown**

Most Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters meet at the above Temple, which is also the venue for meetings of other Masonic orders.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL RETROSPECT OF THE DISTRICT GRAND LODGE

Freemasonry in Guyana began with the Union Lodge which was chartered in its present incarnation by the United Grand Lodge in 1813. The Ancients Grand Lodge of England warranted the Lodge on July 29, 1813 and assigned it the number 358 but the Act of Union which brought together the Grand Lodges of the Ancients and the Moderns in 1813 as the United Grand Lodge assigned the number 462 to it. Subsequently in 1832 at the closing up of lodges the number was changed to 308 and so it remained until 1863 when its current number 247 was assigned to it.

Mount Olive Lodge was warranted on March 8, 1823 by the then Provincial Grand Master for Barbados, Bro. John A. Beckles. Some time thereafter Bro. B. Daly of Union Lodge #462 ER acquainted the Master of Mount Olive Lodge with the contents of a letter addressed to him by the Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge. The Grand Secretary drew attention to the fact that the Provincial Grand Master for Barbados had no authority to grant warrants outside of his Province which was limited to the island only.

As a consequence Mount Olive Lodge was deemed irregular until it obtained a warrant from England.

In December 1825, the Master of the Lodge dispatched the petition by the hand of the above mentioned Bro. Daly who was then about to proceed to England. Up to the middle of September 1826 no communication or even an acknowledgement of that letter was received and a second petition was prepared and duly dispatched.

An interesting feature of the second petition was that the offices of the proposed first Senior and Junior wardens were to be filled by Brethren who were initiated, passed and raised in Mount Olive Lodge.

The provisional warrant was eventually granted and dated December 10, 1826.

The original number of the Lodge was 812 on the English Register. Thus it is not known whether the warrant was granted in answer to the first or the second petition.

Subsequently as in the case of Union Lodge the United Grand Lodge assigned the number 385 to Mount Olive Lodge which is its current number.

English Freemasonry in New Amsterdam dates from July 2, 1867 when Phoenix Lodge number 1183 was warranted by the United Grand Lodge of England. The existence of this lodge was short-lived and lapsed around 1875. The Lodge was however not formally erased until June 6, 1894.

Following on the erasure of Phoenix Lodge the warrant for Ituni Lodge number 2642 was approved on December 29, 1896 and the Lodge was consecrated on September 20,

1897 in the upper story of the Berbice Reading Society's Building in Church Street, New Amsterdam.

The tract "Historical Retrospect of the District Grand Lodge of British Guiana, South America on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee 1899-1949" by W. Bro. July has this to say about the formation of the District Grand Lodge:

"The desire for the formation of a District Grand Lodge was slow in growth, for although on the Installation night of Union Lodge #247, December 17, 1867, with W. Bro. Thomas Daly as Master, it was unanimously decided that a "Provincial" Grand Lodge be "appointed" and that W. Past Master Robert Wight Imlach be appointed the first "Provincial" Grand Master of British Guiana, it took 32 years for this desire to become fact. Indeed, on December 7, 1899, we find that Mount Olive No. 385 was not in favour of the formation of a District Grand Lodge and had to be informed on May 3, 1900 by the Rt. W. Bro. Lt. Col. T. Daly, DGM, that suggestion for its formation came finally from the Grand Master H. R. H. Albert, Prince of Wales. The First meeting was held at Freemasons' Hall Church Street, Georgetown on Saturday October 28, 1899 at 4:30pm for the purpose of installing the Right Worshipful District Grand Master and inauguration a District Grand Lodge of British Guiana under the jurisdiction of the United Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of England."

"The Lodge was opened in due form in the three degrees. The Right Worshipful District Grand Master designate W. Bro. Lt. Col. Thomas Daly retired with the Wardens and W. Bro. J. W. Davis. The Patent of appointment having been exhibited, the DGM designate was escorted into the Lodge where, after the reading of the Patent, the DGM was duly interrogated and obligated. He was then installed, proclaimed and saluted according to ancient custom."

In February 1904 Dr. J. E. Godfrey was installed as District Grand Master in place of R. W. Bro. Lt. Col. Thomas Daly who had resigned on leaving the colony.

In October 1906 the District Grand Secretary read a letter to District Grand Lodge from Lodge Unity No 797 SC thanking the District Grand Master for conducting the dedication of their new lodge room at 12 Wellington Street and the District Grand Officers for their attendance. This is an interesting example of the close fraternal bond which has always existed between the Constitutions in Guyana.

A special meeting of District Grand Lodge was held on Monday June 22, 1907 at which the Masonic Hall owned by Mount Olive Lodge at 86 Carmichael Street, Georgetown was consecrated. The Invocation and Benediction were pronounced by W. Bro. The Venerable Archdeacon A. Gywther, District Grand Chaplain. The Master of Mount Olive was W. Bro. Frank Gomes and representatives of Union and Ituni Lodges attended the Consecration.

An interesting item concerning District Grand Lodge at this time appears in the "Centenary History and Handbook of British Guiana" by A. R. F. Webber which states as follows:

"In April, 1908, the City of Georgetown enjoyed a little 'storm in a teapot' when Sir Frederick Hodgson decided that the foundation stone of the new Carnegie building should be laid by the District Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge, Sir Joseph Godfrey, Surgeon General, and a leading member of the Executive Council. The Roman Catholic citizens held that such an elevation of Free Masonry was an affront to them and would exclude them from taking part and the controversy grew intense and heated, but the Governor held his way and on April 25, Dr. Godfrey in full Masonic regalia, accompanied by his officers and a large number of Masons in Lodge attire laid the foundation stone."

In 1908 District Grand Lodge decided to order a Banner. The design was submitted and finally approved at its meeting in October when it was decided to send the order to Kenning and Sons Ltd, and that the cost should not exceed 20 pounds sterling. The banner was eventually bought for 21 pounds exclusive of freight.

District Grand Lodge met for the first time at the Masonic Temple in Berbice on June 30, 1910. Only 13 officers were present and only Union and Ituni Lodges were represented although by now Silent Temple Lodge had been warranted and consecrated. In October that year a petition from several brethren of Union Lodge was presented for a new lodge to be called Concord. The Lodge was eventually consecrated on March 20, 1912.

In 1915 at a special meeting in May W. Bro. W. H. Parratt was installed as District Grand Master in place of R. W. Bro. Sir J. E. Godfrey who had resigned on leaving the colony.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland requested District Grand Lodge in 1921 to consecrate Lodge Obadiah No 1255 SC in Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana. The District Grand Master appointed W. Bro. Frank Gomes, District Senior Grand Warden to represent him at the ceremony which took place on Saturday August 29, 1912. Eight brethren traveled to Suriname for the occasion, another example of the close collaboration between the constitutions. By now Roraima Lodge had been consecrated but there is no record of this event in the minute books of District Grand Lodge according to W. Bro. July's "Historical Retrospect".

In October 1925 R. W. Bro. W. H. Parratt resigned the office of District Grand Master and W. Bro. Sir A. P. Sherlock was appointed in his place and stead. On December 17 of that year a special meeting was held whereat he was installed as District Grand Master according to ancient custom.

His reign as District Grand Master was relatively uneventful and in January 1938 District Grand Lodge held a special meeting to install W. Bro. F. A. Mackey as District Grand Master in his place. Later that year news was received of the passing to the Grand Lodge above of R. W. Bro. Sir Joseph Godfrey Past District Grand Master. The Silver Trowel which was presented to him on the occasion of the laying of the cornerstone of the Carnegie Free Library in 1908 was handed over to District Grand Lodge for safe keeping.

On July 18, 1933 an Especial Grand Lodge was held in the Royal Albert Hall, London for the dedication of the Masonic Peace Memorial in Great Queen Street, London. This is the headquarters of the United Grand Lodge of England known to us all nowadays as Freemasons Hall. Present were representatives of Freemasonry from all over the world. The ceremonies were conducted by the Most Worshipful the Grand Master, Field Marshal H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn.

Sir Albert Sherlock, District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of British Guiana was present at this splendid occasion forming part of the procession of fifteen District Grand Masters in to Grand Lodge. Since then this District has been represented in Grand Lodge at the two hundred and fiftieth and two hundred and seventy fifth anniversary celebrations.

This historical event was celebrated at home in Georgetown on July 31, 1933 by Roraima Lodge holding a Social at Company Path under the patronage of the then Governor, Sir Edward Denham. The first part of the Social was a two part concert of piano solos, recitation and duets. This was followed by dancing – fox-trots, one step and waltzing to such tunes as “I want to cling to Ivy”; “Love is the sweetest thing” and a “Shuffle off to Buffalo”.

In 1942 the Rt. W. District Grand Master R. W. Bro. F. A. Mackey died in office and in 1943 he was succeeded as District Grand Master by W. Bro. Rt. Rev. Alan John Knight, the Lord Bishop of Guiana. The new District Grand Master was installed at a Special Meeting of District Grand Lodge on March 17, 1943.

That same year a warrant was granted for a new lodge, Mount Everest No. 5868 which was eventually consecrated on April 12 to attract candidates of local East Indian extraction.

In 1949 the 50th year of the existence of District Grand Lodge was marked by the celebration of its Golden Jubilee in October. A Masonic Service was held in Christ Church on Sunday August 28 and was the first of a number of special activities to mark this auspicious milestone in its history.

The next noteworthy event was the formation of Kara Kara Lodge in Mackenzie, Linden. A warrant for this lodge was issued by the Grand Lodge in 1970 and it was consecrated in the same year. This Lodge drew membership mainly from the brethren who lived and worked in the then thriving Bauxite Mining Town of Mackenzie. In recent times the industry has fallen on hard times and the lodge has suffered accordingly.

In 1973 Eureka Lodge received its warrant. The Archbishop had been initiated while at Oxford University in the Apollo University Lodge which along with the Isaac Newton University Lodge of Cambridge had permanent dispensation to initiate candidates at the age of eighteen. As District Grand Master he thought he had the authority of his

mother lodge, Apollo, to issue several dispensations to young men in this District to be initiated at eighteen. With the establishment of the University of Guyana in the early sixties he was very keen to establish a University Lodge. However, the University authorities at that time would not give permission for the use of the name and so Eureka Lodge came into being for those with University backgrounds.

Later in that year the Guyana Lodge of Research also received its warrant. The latter was intended to further Masonic research in the District. Both Lodges were consecrated in that year and the Guyana Lodge of Research became the first Lodge in the District which did not meet every month, but only thrice a year, which continues to be the case up to the present time.

The year was also memorable because it witnessed some fraternal unhappiness over the balloting for the new Master in the Union Lodge, which eventually caused the District Grand Master to suspend meetings of that lodge for a number of months as in his judgment, the members could no longer meet with that fraternal spirit which should characterize Freemasons. Following upon an inquiry several members received various degrees of punishment from the District Grand Master, after which the lodge was permitted to resume its normal activity.

Brethren of Mount Everest Lodge petitioned Grand Lodge in 1976 for the formation of a new lodge and a warrant was then issued for Lotus Lodge which was consecrated later that year. The founders were mainly brethren of Mount Everest and the two Lodges have maintained a close connection ever since.

The District Grand Master who had during his lengthy and distinguished reign become the Archbishop of the West Indies was now recognised for the quality of his Masonic career by Grand Lodge, which awarded him the Order of Service to Masonry. This award which is the highest in English Freemasonry is only given to a maximum of ten Freemasons living at any one time.

His Grace the Most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of the West Indies and Metropolitan, Right Worshipful, Bro. Alan John Knight the District Grand Master of Guyana, to give him his several styles and titles, was called to the Grand Lodge above during 1979 after thirty eight years at the head of the District. He was succeeded in May 1980 by Right Worshipful Bro. Peter Alfred Taylor.

Bro. Taylor during his lengthy address on the occasion of his Installation promised to be a "little more flexible" than his predecessor in the manner in which he directed the fortunes of the District. He also stated quite trenchantly while paying tribute to the late Archbishop:

"I feel it should be said that in holding the office of District Grand Master for such a lengthy period, others have been denied the privilege and honour of serving this District in its highest

office and making their contribution to its development. I will not do likewise when the time comes."

The new District Grand Master appointed W. Bro. Ivor Roy Byron Robinson PGStB as Deputy District Grand Master and thus began a long and fruitful association between these very experienced Freemasons.

R. W. Bro. Sir James Stubbs, the retiring Grand Secretary, visited Guyana as part of his farewell tour in August 1980 and was the guest of honour at a special communication of the District Grand Lodge. Sir James during his address to the brethren made this important statement:

"The other point on which I would like to dilate for a moment or two is that the Board of General Purposes also does not give rulings on points of detail of ritual. You can perform your ceremonies according to Emulation of Stability, or West End or East End there is even, RWDGM, a Ritual called Taylors (laughter); but having selected the ritual by which you are going to work, the Lodge should stick to that ritual and not pick up tit-bits from others, with the result that in a very short time the whole thing is a complete fruit salad of bits and pieces taken according to the whims of one Master after another, or one Director of Ceremonies after another to suit their own predilections. It doesn't matter which ritual you choose, but you are expected to stick to it when you have chosen."

1983 saw the warranting and consecration of Klubba Lodge which became the first Lodge in Georgetown since Mount Olive to meet at a venue other than Freemasons Hall. Klubba Lodge was supposed to draw its brethren from among members of the Georgetown Club which is the oldest private members club in Guyana. Klubba also adopted strict rules with respect to the invitation of guests to their meetings and the manner of the payment for meals consumed by its members and guests during after-proceedings. It took its rise at a time when there was some ferment in the District over the interpretation and effect of an Edict of the Grand Lodge which in substance, forbade forced expenditure by incoming brethren and Masters of the Lodge in the after-proceedings. Klubba Lodge meets at the Georgetown Club.

During the year 1988 a petition for the University Lodge of Guyana was completed but could not be presented to Grand Lodge because it was among items stolen from the home of the Organising Secretary. Also this year the MW Grand Master approved an application from the District Grand Lodge for the creation of a District Grand Charity Jewel depicting the Kaieteur Falls, to be awarded in various classes to brethren of the District according to the level of their charitable contributions.

The University Lodge of Guyana was eventually warranted and consecrated in 1989 and became the thirteenth Lodge of the District. This Lodge draws its membership from among the alumni of the University of Guyana and from members of its several faculties.

A number of brethren of the District who were also Rotarians attached to the Rotary Clubs in Georgetown petitioned the Grand Lodge in 1992 to form a lodge to be drawn from among Rotarians in Guyana. The Guyana Wheel of Service Lodge was warranted and consecrated during the year and meets at the Masonic Hall in Carmichael Street. The Lodge is very vibrant and in keeping with the advice given by Sir James Stubbs many years ago, faithfully practices the Emulation Ritual.

In May of the same year the brethren of Kara Kara Lodge who for many years had met in the inappropriate surroundings of a school building, and who by dint of hard work and assiduous fund-raising coupled with Masonic will had succeeded in building a new temple had it named and dedicated by the District Grand Master assisted by other members of the District Grand Lodge.

The members of Ituni Lodge petitioned the Grant Lodge during 1993 and received a warrant for the formation of Phoenix Lodge which was consecrated later that year. As has been stated earlier in this short history there had been a Phoenix Lodge in New Amsterdam before, and so it was appropriate that this new Phoenix Lodge should rise from the ashes of the former as it were. The new Lodge is closely associated with Ituni Lodge and meets at the same venue.

In September 1997, a sizeable delegation of brethren from all parts of the country journeyed to New Amsterdam to celebrate their centenary with Ituni Lodge. It was a splendid occasion enjoyed by all during which the District Grand Master presented the lodge with its centenary warrant marking a hundred years of unbroken Masonic activity. This was indeed a fitting prelude to the centenary celebration of the District which, as has been earlier stated, was itself formed following upon the consecration of Ituni Lodge a hundred years before.

*"Build me a House, a Home,
In the hearts of hungry men
Hungry for the bread of hope,
Thirsting for faith, yearning for love,
In a World of grief and pain.
Build me a House!"*

Thomas Curtis Clarke

OTHER MASONIC TEMPLES IN GUYANA



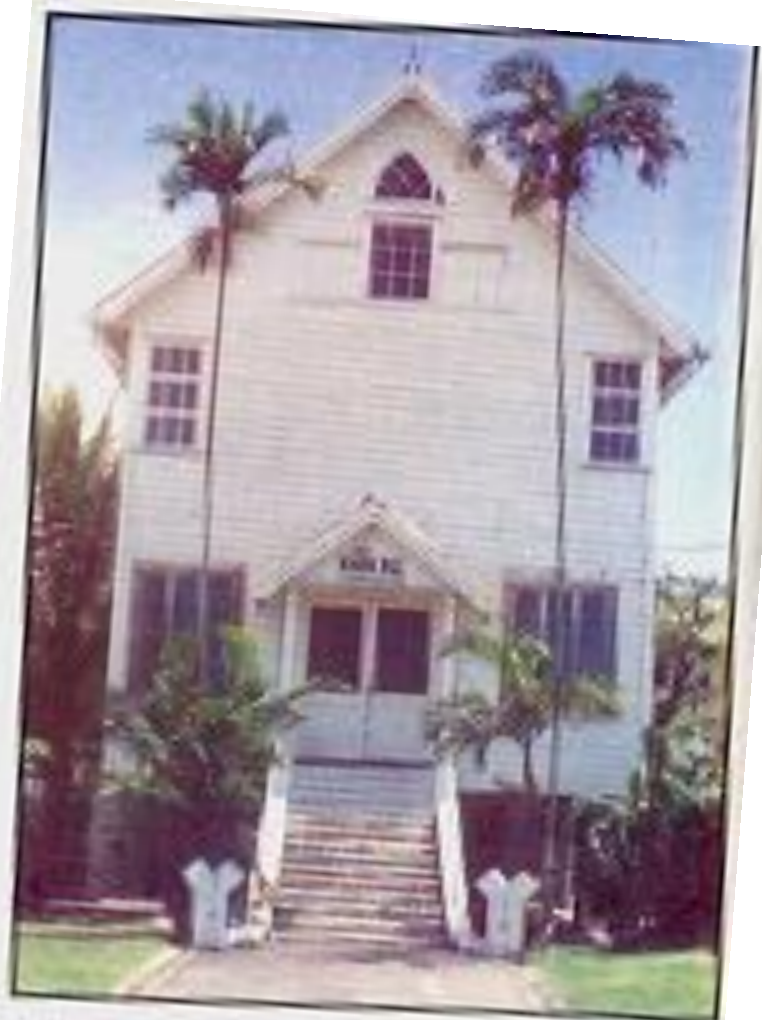
Temple at McKenzie,
Linden where Kara-Kara
Lodge meets.



Temple at Cornichard Street where
Mount Olive Lodge meets as well as
Wheel of Service and University
Lodges.



Temple at Ferry Street, New Amsterdam,
Berbice where Ituné and Phoenix Lodges
meet.





W Bro IVOR ROY BYRON ROBINSON
DEPUTY DISTRICT GRAND MASTER OF GUYANA

DEPUTY DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS OF GUYANA FOR LAST 100 YEARS
1899 - 1999

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|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| F J Bankart, PGD | — 1899 -- 1901 | H A N Barrowes, PGD | — 1924 -- 1933 |
| Sir Joseph E. Godfrey | — 1901 -- 1903 | C J Maggs, PGSTB | — 1933 -- 1936 |
| F J Bankart, PGD | — 1903 -- 1913 | F A Mackey | — 1936 -- 1937 |
| Sir Crossley rayner Kt H | — 1913 -- 1914 | W D Slater, PGD | — 1938 -- 1945 |
| G F Frans | — 1914 -- 1917 | F O Franklin, PIDG | — 1945 -- 1955 |
| Dr J H Coryers | — 1917 -- 1920 | G W E Cooper, o s i PGD | — 1959 -- 1964 |
| H A N Barrowes | — 1920 -- 1923 | C V Too-Chang, PSGD | — 1964 -- 1980 |
| C J Maggs | — 1923 -- 1924 | I R B Robinson, MS, PSGD | — 1980 -- |