

THE RE-FORMED TRIAD RITE

IN AUSTRALIA

Part 1



In July 2002, Wor Bro Graeme Love and Wor Bro Neil Morse gives for the first time a demonstrated lecture of the (Masonic) HUNG RITE of Australia 1935 – 1957, in the Victorian lodge of Research No 218. In August 2006 Wor Bro Graeme perform this also in the Kring Nieuw Holland meeting. After the Lodge room was prepared (we will see that later) he starts to explain how he got all the information of this Rite.

Some ten years ago Graeme was given, almost ‘under the lap’ three pieces of paper which recorded the closure of a small Masonic Order, the Triad League, in Melbourne. He tries to find out the story behind those papers as they gave little indication of the extent or operations of that Order.

He got some help from Bro Neil Morse who came across a book “the History of Freemasonry on the Central Coast” written by Bro Phillippe Tabuteau, and here they find the missing pieces, so finally they put all things together and this presentation was born.

The early papers given to Graeme with the new papers (some 70 in all) provide sufficient information regarding the Rite and to make preparation of this presentation worthwhile.

The fraternal records, regalia and memorabilia, knowing as the Tabuteau Collection are now in the hands of the Canberra Lodge of Research.

Creation of the Rite;

In 1935 Brother Clive Loch Hughes-Hallett, an Englishman living in Melbourne, sought expressions of interest in surveying the ritual of the Hung, or Haven and Earth Society with some masons in his Lodge.

Bro Hughes-Hallett was made a Mason in the West Australian Constitution in 1927; he later moved to Melbourne and joined the Lodge of Mercury No 518, and the Victorian Lodge of Research No 218.

His study group out of five members, decided to stage an exemplification of the ritual as it exists today. Then the idea gained ground to reconstitute the Society as it might have been centuries ago.

In his draft of a proposed lecture to the Sydney Lodge of Research, Bro Hughes-Hallett used Ward and Stirling (The Hung Society, published 1925) as his main reference, suggesting as Ward’s ritual is the most easily accessible to you, I will use it as the basis for discussion tonight.

(As I am in possession of this book, I will use part and pictures out of it for this article. (Fred).

In 1947, Bro Hughes-Hallett wrote; It was some 13 years ago that a few of us, all Masons, began to look seriously at these Chinese ceremonials, and to recognise in them the same basic principles as underlying the Masonic system.

The ceremony has its challenges, its trials, its symbols, and his penalties, while signs, passwords and methods of recognitions are given. The ceremonies generally provide for Grades 1 to 5, but sometimes, there is evidence that a further 10 Grades have been conferred in special instances.

The ritual, which is never printed in the East, has a few notable and outstanding examples of literary perfection.

There is the prayer offered in the red pavilion; though heathen in origin it is sublime in expression and rises to great heights, and the whole ceremony is marked by solemnity, dignity and reverence.

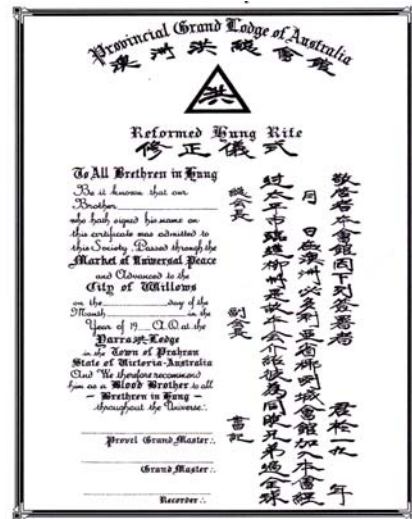
We pieced together the ritual as we believed it should run, and then it occurred to us that there was nothing in the wide world to prevent new life being breathed into the ancient ceremonial, and a new spirit infused into a worthy successor of the mysteries of old. Who are more suited to the task than a body of Freemasons?

So we constituted ourselves a Lodge and in this, as in any subsequent step, we have sought to safeguard the Chinese traditions during their British stewardship by adhering rigidly to administrative terms of reference contained more particularly in the closing stages of the T.R. (Triad Rite). Thus: there were 5 who in Melbourne formed the first Lodge in 1935, and again another 5 who 12 years later 1947 established the Lodge which it is hoped will be able to work in Sydney.

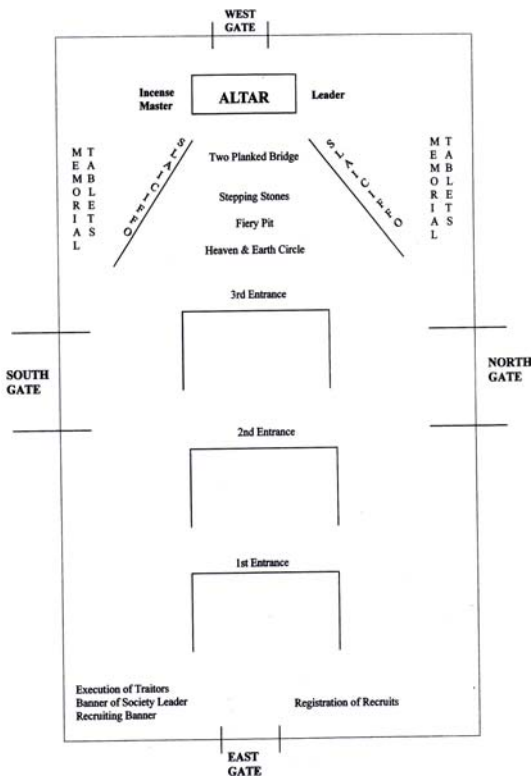
The Melbourne Lodge;

From a modest consecration in a room in a house (believed to be Sir F. Clarke's whose son, Colin, was a member) in South Yarra, the pioneer Lodge has graduated to a lodge room in Prahran Masonic Hall, where it meets today subject to the tacit and benign understanding of the United Grand Lodge of Victorian Masons.

The ritual was rearranged into a sequence we believe was most probably followed before Imperial persecution drove the old society underground, when to save space and for the purposes of concealment, the ceremonial was so to speak telescoped.



Triad membership certificate



Setting of the Lodge room

At the same time we had the revised working printed, but the many political and vengeance motives with which the proceedings are overlaid were not at that time expunged except in a few simple cases. This phase of work remains to be done. The political references mean nothing today since the Manchu Dynasty is a thing of the past, but it remains nevertheless to remove them and also to substitute invocations to the Supreme Being in place of the gallery of Eastern deities.

The ninth Convocation, held on 12 July 1940, at the Prahran Masonic Hall, was possibly the first meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Australasia as showed on a summons.

Here the order of the evening was as follows;
7.30 pm: Joint Consecration of the Provincial Grand Lodge, and of District Grand Lodge of Victoria

- 7.50 pm: District Grand Lodge business
Confirmation of Minutes of previous Convocations
- 8.00 pm: District Grand Lodge called off.
Provincial Grand Lodge opened.
- 8.15 pm: Provincial Grand Lodge closed.
District Grand Lodge Called on.

The Sydney Lodge;

On June 22nd 1947, several of the brethren met at Toowoan Bay N.S.W. to consider the formation of an operative organisation of the Hung Society, to promulgate the Masonic affinities and develop research of the ritual used by the Hung Society. The permission of the then United Grand Lodge of New South Wales to meet in a Masonic temple was sought in September 1947, and would appear to have been granted for, in November, contact was made with the Lane Cove Temple owners for bookings in 1948.

Expansion into Brisbane;

In August 1949 Bro. Hewison wrote a letter to Hughes – Hallett enclosing a copy of an airmail letter from a Bro. Arthur Casey wishing to “open a branch in Brisbane”. Casey sought information on the Rite.

He also sought a copy of the Constitutions, bylaws and advice of the colour basically used in the Rite. In his letter he stated; I have about twelve to fifteen very good men in line for foundation members who have been selected on an invitation basis due to their sterling work as Craftsmen.

We don't know if the Brisbane Lodge was assembled as the only name of Bro. Arthur Casey appeared on the list of brethren associated with Hung Rite in Brisbane, in Melbourne they where 22 names, and in Sydney 21 names.