

Kent Henderson, *300 Famous Australian Freemasons*, Global Masonic Publications, Melbourne, Australia, 2016.

Paperback in a limited edition of 300 copies. ISBN 978-0-646-95731-1, 430 pages, c. 200 illustrations, c. £30.

Reviewed by Bro. John Belton

This is indeed a magnum opus and exceeds the author's previous compilation, *The Masonic Grand Masters of Australia* (pub. 1988), by some 13 pages - at 430 pages. That said the effort required to both select and research 300 Famous Australian Freemasons is surely a herculean task and the author deserves commendation for the scale of task undertaken.

Confronted with such works, I find myself facing the question as to what I prefer; is it 'famous men who were masons' or 'men who were famous masons' – and (whether reader or author) it remains a thorny question. Bro Henderson does manage to strike a balance between these two, as I discovered. Catching my eye early on was George Adams, publican and Lottery Promoter. He also ran Tattersall's Hotel in Sydney and, when it was demolished, his famous marble bar was rebuilt inside the new Hilton Hotel. My eye also alighted on Adolphus 'Bert' Appleroth, maker of Jellies (sweets).

There are of course surprises, Rabbi Sir Israel Brodie (who was a rabbi in Melbourne in 1923) and Sir Henry Brown-Hayes (described as a 'noted early convict'). The latter was knighted in 1790, probably after a period as sheriff for the City of Cork, Ireland, but was brought to trial for kidnapping an heiress and undergoing a spurious marriage in 1797 – sentenced to transportation to New South Wales. He is famous for convening a masonic meeting in a lodge (probably without a warrant) on 14 May 1803. This is considered as the foundation date of Freemasonry in Australia!

Well I do remember watching Eddie Charlton, snooker player on television (but never knew he was a Brother), and I am delighted to see Thomas Mayne, the inventor of *Milo* (my mother would send us to bed after busy days with a cup of this chocolate drink), and Capt. Fred Walker inventor of *Vegemite* (in our food cupboard at home). Added to these are of course the good and the great, the premiers, judges, generals and many sportsmen.

I would like to comment on two omissions. The first is the absence of Bro Edith Cowan (1861-1932) (*Droit Humain*) who was an Australian politician, social campaigner and the first woman elected to an Australian parliament. She is seemingly important enough to feature on the \$50 banknote of Australia but not to be among the 300. The second is one of my personal masonic heroes – RW Brother Maurice Harry Kellerman OBE, PDGM (1902-2000). After all, few have done more to spread masonic knowledge.

I did feel that the lack of an index made it much harder to use the book. Not necessarily an index to names, not required of course because the arrangement is alphabetical, but an index to occupations, interests etc. Thus one might discover cricketers or convicts, or even governors or generals.

Anyone with Antipodean interests will not wish to be without their copy of this book – and the supply is limited to 300!