

Worshipful Brother Ian Souster

Ladies Most Worshipful Brethren

Rt Worshipful Brethren Worshipful Brethren & Brethren All

Tonight you have heard about the history of the Waitemata Lodge

I would now like to share with you a little about the soft side of Waitemata.

My involvement with Waitemata spans well over 50 years, while I have only been a member for under half that time.

I am a son of a member of Waitemata. I have been brought up within Waitemata and with families of other Waitemata brethren.

A lot of those families are represented here tonight. We have the Coytes, the Rutters, the Riddlers, the Belchers, the Rushtons, the Tisdals and the Irelands just to name a few.

Waitemata is a family lodge.

Going through the membership lists you will find names repeated generation after generation.

Grand fathers, fathers and sons.

As children we were brought into the lodge for Christmas functions and to help set up for other celebrations.

In my memory "Lodge", as we called it, was a fun place. It was housed in a big building in town which was great to explore.

I led expeditions upstairs to sneak into the lodge room and look at the big chairs and funny floor. But the best bit was to look at the real sword in the glass case on the wall.

Then there was the basement, the walls were all covered in black and white tiles, but the scarryest thing of all was the caretaker. You never wanted to let him find you sneaking around.

Our parents socialised together and therefore we as children grew up together. So now when I email papers to someone like Graham Rushton in Kaitia, it is his daughter who responds. She was one of the explorers.

It is therefore a privilege to be a member of the Waitemata extended family.

W. Bro Ian Souster, Ladies and Brethren

On behalf of the Waitemata family I thank you for the toast and the way you honoured it.