



WBro. Gerry Byrne

The Prince Of Wales Lodge No.1338 EC



Gerry was born in Manchester in 1943, the younger of two children. From the age of 11 until he was 18, Gerry was an avid chess player and played for Manchester and Lancashire. His last game was a demonstration game with 20 other players who played the then British Grand Master simultaneously.

Gerry left school at age 16 and started work as a trainee cost and management accountant. He later took a job with a major engineering firm, Reynolds Ltd, where he worked in quality control.

At Reynolds, Gerry met his future wife Joan in 1966. Supposedly she worked right at the other end of the company which was a long way to walk so he asked a friend to ask her out for him. Interestingly, Gerry's mother and father and his aunt and uncle also met at the same company.

Gerry and Joan married in 1971 and they have two sons. Martin and Christopher.

Gerry left Reynolds and ran his own road haulage company before emigrating to New Zealand in 1974, arriving on New Zealand Day.

Gerry's first job in New Zealand was with the Prison Service where he worked for two years before going into the printing industry, an industry he stayed with for many years.

In 1987 Gerry joined the Auckland Star as a circulation rep. While there he organised a charity match involving members of both the All Blacks and All Whites to raise funds for the Child Cancer Foundation, of which Lady Blundell was the patron. Players from the All Whites included Frank Van Hatten, Brian Turner and Billy McClure (all of whom had been in the team which qualified for the World Cup in Spain in 1982). Players from the All Blacks included Joe Stanley, David Kirk, John Kirwan, the Whetton brothers and Andy Haden. The coaches were John Adsett and John Hart and the match was played at Bill McKinley Park in Mt Wellington.

As a special guest for the match, Gerry had arranged for Rob Muldoon to be there but he had to pull out with a broken ankle so Gerry arranged for David Hasselhof (who was in Auckland at the time) to attend. David donated photos and autographs to help with the fund raising and David was given an All Black jersey by John Kirwan. The Auckland Star provided Gerry with the time and support to organise the event and free advertising. Gerry joined the New Zealand Herald and was promoted to Operations Manager, a position he filled until he was made redundant in 1998. After three years with Foodtown, Gerry took a position managing the Guardian Vault.

Gerry was followed soccer for many years. He played for his church team in Manchester and has been a supporter of Manchester United since he saw, at the age of 5, Johnny Carey holding the FA Cup when the team returned after winning the cup in 1948.

In 1977 he joined Papatoetoe AFC where he played for a year before becoming coach. He coached the team to the third division championship and then became Club Captain for two years. When the club was promoted to the National League, Gerry became the team manager. In 1987 Gerry also joined Manukau AFC and he was physio for both clubs for ten years. At Papatoetoe Gerry was Vice-President and at Manukau, he became Vice-Chairman in 1989, went on to serve three years as Chairman and was then elected President.

He also coached Holy Cross Primary Scholl, reaching the Auckland Championship, and De La Salle College 2nd XI. Gerry has served as a JP since 1998. Gerry has been active in Freemasonry for many years.

- Initiated into Lodge Arohanui No. 264 N.Z.C. on 9 July 1985, passed 8 October 1985 and raised 11 February 1986.
- In 1987, he joined Lodge Maungakiekie No. 373 N.Z.C. and rose to become Master for 1992/3 and 1993/4 and again for 1996/7.
- He was also a member of Lodge Otahuhu No. 387 N.Z.C.
- In 1994, Gerry joined the Prince of Wales Lodge rising to Master in 2000.
- In 1995, Gerry was appointed Almoner, a position he held continuously until 2009.
- Along with Peter Hobson, he also joined the Harmony Lodge No. 2180 in 2006 to support them and was Master in 2007.
- In 2009, Gerry joined Harmony Royal Arch Chapter.

In District, Gerry was appointed DGSwD in 2003, DGTreas in 2006 and DJGW in 2009
Gerry has also served as a trustee for the North Island English District Charitable Trust and on the Board of General Purposes.

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www.englishmasons1338.org.nz

The Prince of Wales Lodge, No. 1338, under the United Grand Lodge of England, was founded on the 18th day of December, 1869, and consecrated on Thursday, the 28th day of September, 1871, at the Masonic Hotel, Princes Street, Auckland, by Bro. J.J. Fitzgibbon, Past Master of the Waitemata Lodge, No. 689, E.C.

