



# WBro. John Woodage

*The Prince Of Wales Lodge No. 1338*



John was initiated into Quoin Stone Lodge No. 6481 in 1988 and was exalted into Victorian Royal Arch Chapter No. 2084 in 1989.

He joined the Prince of Wales' Lodge in 1999 and served as master in 2004.

John was born in the East End of London (Borough of Poplar), the youngest of three boys. His father, who had been a POW during World War II, was a builder and his mother an office cleaner. John and his brothers were brought up by their grandmother who lived with the family.

John first attended school at Manorfield Primary School, a brand new school opened by the Queen, during the opening of which the headmistress, Miss Anderson, was presented with an MBE for services to education. He then attended St Paul's Way Secondary Central School.

John left school at 16. His father had become ill and had been forced to give up his building business and become a storekeeper at the local tech. John felt he had to go to work to help bring some money into the household.

John wanted to be a draughtsman and joined structural engineers on the Isle of Dogs. The company built mainly bridges and all their steel was delivered by barge. After a year, he was transferred to the Accounts Department which he didn't like so he walked across the road to the local docks, told the duty policeman he was looking for a job and was directed to a blue and yellow cabin where he met Captain Carew with whom he got a job tallying the dock workers hours.

This was before containerisation and at that time the dock workers were effectively self employed and there was a major problem with workers claiming hours but not actually working. After the report by Lord Devlin in 1966-7, the docks were de-casualised and the dock workers were employed by the shipping lines. Some of the dock workers received substantial redundancy payments – one of those was a Mick Oliver who used his redundancy to buy a pub called The Cricketer. His grandson is Jamie Oliver.

John then worked in the City for shipping lines and studied night school for his Fellowship in the Institute of Freight Forwarders.

In 1970, his father died and John moved to Dagenham and went into partnership to run McGregor Swire Air Services in Barking. After about seven years, he was approached to join another company, Gilburn Freight Services which he did. Incidentally it was this company's owner, David Head who proposed John into freemasonry.

In 1989, the company split up and John decided to emigrate to New Zealand after looking at and rejecting Canada (too cold), South Africa (politics) and Australia (snakes).



He was appointed DGJD in 1998, DGRReg in 2000 and DGChap in 2003.

## The Prince of Wales Lodge

[www.englishmasons1338.org.nz](http://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.





John worked for a number of companies but, for a number of reasons, was made redundant as companies closed, transferred their operations to Australia or were bought by other companies. At one point he was offered a transfer to Australia but was unable to take up that opportunity as his wife suffers from ophiophobia.

John then decided he needed to be self employed so he couldn't be made redundant and became a driver for Corporate Cabs.

John met Liz while on holiday in Corfu and, in his words, pursued her for some years. He proposed in Paris while standing under the Eiffel Tower and they married in New Zealand in 1991 at the Soldiers Memorial Church in Tiritangi.

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In New Zealand, John joined Remuera Lodge No. 1710 in 1992 and served as master in 1995. He then joined the Prince of Wales' Lodge No. 1338 in 1999 and served as master in 2004. He also joined Waitemata Lodge no. 689 in 2008 to support them and served as master in 2009.

He was appointed DGJD in 1998, DGReg in 2000 and DGChap in 2003.



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Biography Research 2010