

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 87

MAY 2016



In the May Issue –

Grand Lodge / Provincial Grand Lodge / Lodge News

Report from Trinidad

A Matter of Interest from Bro Donnie Mathieson

Badges by Bro Jim Dunlop

Bits and Pieces from all over the place!

Picture – Grand Lodge Deputation in Penang

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Editorial

Welcome to the 87th edition of the Patter.

Brethren from several Lodges in the Province have raised the issue of losing the exemption from payment of Water Rates with me. Accordingly, I raised the matter at Grand Committee on 28th April. This is a somewhat complex issue and there is no "one size fits all" solution to the problem. By registering as a Charity with OSCR will ensure that the exemption will continue but such registration can bring further issues and problems to the fore. Grand Committee has agreed to put together, through Mrs Dawn Olliff, a guidance paper which will hopefully point Lodges in the right direction but, each Lodge will need to look at the right solution for their particular needs.

In addition, the Provincial Grand Master Elect has been in discussion with the Province of Aberdeenshire West where they have an individual who will find the best deals possible in terms of all utilities. It is hoped that he will be able to assist the Lodges in this Province in a similar manner. Further details will be circulated in due course.

On a more cheerful note, I am delighted to report that the 2nd International Scottish Freemasons Conference held in Penang, Malaysia was an outstanding success. Brother Kalpesh Shah, District Grand Secretary of East Africa, was heavily involved in the 1st conference held in Mombasa two years ago and was a tremendous help to the Malaysian Brethren this time round. He has written a very useful synopsis of the conference which I have reproduced in the Newsletter.

After the Conference I had the privilege and pleasure to be involved in the Rededication Ceremony of the District Grand Lodge of the Middle East when we celebrated their Centenary. It was a marvellous occasion and, in the evening, we were joined by our wives for the Grand Banquet – a total of 650 attended the Banquet which was sponsored by Singleton Malt (which made the evening even more pleasurable and enjoyable).

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland

The Grand Master Mason has been extremely busy since the beginning of the year. Prior to arriving in Penang he was in Western Australia, Australia Goldfields and in New Zealand to carry out Installation Ceremonies of the respective District Masters.

Since returning he has Installed the PGM of East Lothian and Berwickshire, chaired the meeting of Provincial Grand Masters in Perth, visited the Grand Lodge of Denmark, travelled to the Bahamas to install the new District Grand Master and visited the 200th anniversary of the Peppercorn Ceremony in Bermuda. From Bermuda to Forres where he installed the new Provincial Grand Master.

On 6th February, I had the privilege of heading a Grand Lodge Deputation to Lodge Torphichen Kilwinning No 13 to carry out a Rededication Ceremony.

On 23rd March I headed a Deputation to Lodge St Bryde No 579 to witness Brother Tunnock (of Tunnock Teacake fame) receive his 60-year Diploma – I also had the pleasure to present the Lodge with an autograph book which my grandfather received in 1934 when he became Master of the Lodge. We also witnessed a superb Degree carried out by the Brethren of 579.

On 2nd April I accompanied the GMM to East Lothian and likewise to Forres on Saturday 30th April.

On Saturday 14th May I will be in Lodge St Vigean in Arbroath to celebrate their 250th Anniversary

On 9th June Grand Lodge meets in Edinburgh and the following night we have the Dennis Townhill Concert in Grand Lodge. *Ed*

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

The Annual Lodge of Sorrow takes place tomorrow, Sunday 8th May in Lodge Loch Ewe at 3.00 pm.

This is a very poignant service during which we remember those in the Province who have passed to the Grand Lodge Above in the past year.

Please consider taking time out on Sunday to travel west and be part of this service.

Provincial Grand Lodge Installation

The Installation of Brother Robert Charles Cattanach as Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty will take place in the Duthac Centre, Tain at 1.00 pm on Saturday 25th June 2016. The Ceremony will be conducted by the Grand Master Mason.

At the conclusion of the Ceremony an Installation Dinner will take place in the Duthac Centre – tickets priced at £20. Tickets for the meal should be ordered with Provincial Grand Secretary through each Lodge Secretary.

Provincial Grand Lodge Installation – Fundraising Raffle

I have been nominated, again, to spearhead the fundraising at the Installation meeting on Saturday 25th June 2016 in Tain.

The Raffle will again have a “Whisky Theme”. I would ask that all lodges in the Province supply a bottle of whisky for the prizes.

Because of the lateness of the appointment, I have been unable to attend all the lodges to request a bottle but have spoken to members of each lodge to bring the request up at meetings/committee meetings if possible.

I have possession of a couple of bottles but members should supply same before the event if that is possible. If not just bring it along on the day.

Bro. David MacMaster, Lodge Fingal No. 318 (Provincial Grand Lodge Almoner) who is on the fundraising committee is also available to receive your bottle.

The main prize has been donated, personally, by the Provincial Grand Lodge Substitute Master Bro. James A. Tait and is something very much worth winning.

Thanks to all in advance

Morris M Downie.

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From The Provincial Almoner

Sadly, yet again, I have to report on the passing of a number of our brethren to the Grand Lodge Above. Since my last report we have lost Past Master Denis Aldrich, Lodge Lochewe, Aultbea, Bro. Stewart Killoch and Bro. Alec MacLennan, Lodge St Duthus, Tain, and Bro. David Rennie, Dingwall, who were all highly respected members of the craft and very supportive of their respective Lodges. They will all be greatly missed.

Appropriate cards have been sent where possible and I'm sure you'll all join with me in expressing our sincere condolences to their respective families.

Past Master Roddy MacLennan, Lodge Seaforth, Fortrose was admitted to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness yesterday, Thursday 3rd May. He had been unwell with breathing difficulties for the previous ten days or so.

Past Master Cochrane Donald, also Lodge Seaforth, has been in hospital again but is at present at home. According to himself he is making slow progress and on my last visit to see him he was able to walk to the door with me, with the aid of a stick, when I was leaving. He has not yet been able to attend any masonic meetings but he stated that his aim was to attend the first meeting of Lodge Alan Wilson in June.

Past Master Bob MacLean, also Lodge Seaforth, at long last has attended a Pre-op clinic at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, which according to himself, he passed with 'flying colours'. He is now awaiting the date for his operation which he hopes will now happen in the very near future. Despite his mobility problems he is still able to be a regular attender at Lodge meetings and Provincial visitations.

Past Master Victor Shepherd, Robertson's Lodge, Cromarty, is still resident in Strathallan Care Home, Strathpeffer. He has good days and bad days and has recently been taken out for car trips to Gairloch and the Black Isle by family members and friends. On one of his trips he suffered a fall but was not hurt nor affected by it. I visited him today and he was in good form although sometimes a bit confused.

Past Master Ian MacLaren, Lodge Rosehaugh, Avoch, has had his long awaited operation in hospital at Livingstone and it was a complete success. He has resumed his full masonic duties and is regularly attending Lodge meetings and Provincial visitations. Nice to see you back in circulation Ian.

Past Master Sandy Rose, also Lodge Rosehaugh, continues to progress but has not yet ventured out to any masonic meetings.

Past Master Fraser MacKay, Lodge St Duthus, Tain is still in care at Invergordon and still not making much progress.

Bro. Alastair Taylor, Master of Lodge Seaforth and Past Master of Robertson's Lodge recently suffered an accident as a result of which he lost an eye. He is now out of hospital and back attending to his masonic duties.

Bro. George MacIvor, Robertson's Lodge, was also recently in the hands of the medical profession when he suffered a fall on the street near his home in Dingwall. He was initially admitted to Raigmore Hospital but allowed home later the same day having received treatment for facial injuries. He has now fully recovered and regularly attending Lodge and Provincial meetings.

Past Master Jim Tait, Robertson's Lodge recently suffered a back injury while trying to stop a car which he had been pushing. (That was the story !!!) He is also OK and able to play golf and attend to his masonic duties again.

I have visited brethren at home and in hospital where possible and have sent or delivered cards conveying the best wishes of the Provincial Grand Master and brethren of the Province.

Mrs Mina Ross, wife of the Provincial Grand Master, Billy Ross, has not been very well recently but is not in hospital. I also sent her a card conveying the best wishes of the brethren of the Province.

David MacMaster, Provincial Grand Almoner Tel: 01997 421306 email: david@strathpeffer.net

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



The Lodge is now in recess for the summer but will open on Monday 3rd October at the start of the new Masonic Season.

The Brethren of the Lodge would wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Past Master Brother Robin Cattanach on his appointment as Provincial Grand Master and wish him well during his tenure.

SNIPPETS FROM THE PAST – August 2004

This is a poem by the Clydebank Bard and is about a Glasgow Lady who owned the “Stein Inn” in Waternish at the time of composing and where I had the privilege of staying for many years.

Stranger with your lowland accent
Welcome to the inn at Stein
Look with reverence at the barmaid
Treat her gently she’s a queen

Gaze with awe at Don McKinnon
Sinking drams and quaffing beer
Reciting Wordsworth, Byron, Shelly
Aren’t you glad that you are here?

Listen to Dougie talking nonsense
He’s the boy to make things hum
If you want to keep him silent
Tie his hands and he’ll be dumb

Can’t you feel the peace and quiet?
The atmosphere that haunts the place
A quiet dram, a pint and stranger
The worried lines will leave your face

A little jewel from darkest Glasgow
Shining in the Isle of Skye
If you notice that she’s cheerful
Look around and you’ll see why

Far away from city turmoil
Listen to the Gaelic Bard
Ageless John of countless verses
Quoting poetry by the yard

Other men will come and join you
John Bain and Lachie are but two
They are people, warm and friendly
They’re contented—What of you?

Stranger with your lowland accent
Stay in Skye where men are built
Don’t go home to feed an ulcer
Sell your car—and buy a kilt

A “Provincial Patter” without Sinclair Bruce just didn’t seem right so I unearthed a poem he gave me for the August 2004 edition. Sinclair may have gone and we will remember him at the Lodge of Sorrow tomorrow but, like his old friend Roddie Cade, his stories and our memories of him will live on. *Ed*

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FORTROSE LODGE No. 108

I'm on my annual week's holiday in Aviemore and hadn't realised it was time for the Patter input so with help and photographs from Bro Henry MacInnes I've been able to cobble something together.

We've been fairly fortunate with candidates recently and have worked first degrees at our last two meetings. On 15th April we initiated Mr Graham MacIver and on 6th May Mr Peter Angus MacLeod.

On 20th May at the Provincial visitation we will be working a second degree when Bro MacIver will be passed to that degree. Also on that evening we are expecting a deputation from Fife which we are told will include 6 pipers, plenty noise in the Lodge that night, you have been warned.

We are expecting a deputation from Lodge Thistle No. 270 on 3rd June and it is hoped to work an emulation MM degree for Bro John Norman Murray who hadn't realised he had already been raised until we received proof along with his demit from his mother lodge in Edinburgh.

Work is progressing on the organisation for our 250th anniversary which will be celebrated on Saturday 3rd June 2017.



The so called "Stornoway Parliament", who meet thrice weekly in our upstairs lounge, are great supporters of our hosting of the Chernobyl kids. In order to show our appreciation, we invited them to an excellent 3 course meal cooked by Bro Robert Shields on Saturday 30th April. After the meal Ronnie MacKinnon gave a short talk on his time with Glasgow Rangers and answered questions afterwards, very entertaining.

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Robertson's Lodge No 134

Hi Brethren.

As most of you know we are now in recess. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 21 September and it is planned that it will be a business meeting. Notification will be circulated in due course.

OBITUARY

It is always sad to start this article with an obituary, but it was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Brother Sidney MacLean, affectionately known to all as "Big Syd". He was initiated into the Lodge on 6 October 1976 and became a Master Mason on 12 November 1976. Although Syd was not in attendance over the last few years he always showed an interest when he met up with you. He was a well-known and well liked character in Cromarty and will be sadly missed. His passing was marked in the Lodge at our meeting of 20 April 2016 and will be remembered with other Brethren who have passed on at the Provincial Lodge of Sorrow in Aultbea on Sunday 8 May 2016.

At our meeting of 16 March 2016 which was our Provincial Visitation PM Jim Tait was honoured by being presented with his certificate for 50 years' service to Freemasonry. The presentation was made by RWM Peter Foster Snr and Provincial Grand Master William Ross, who both congratulated Bro Tait and wished him many more years in the craft. A photograph of same is attached. PM Tait thanked them and the Lodge for the honour, but pointed out that the way to achieve this honour, was to reach old age. RWM Peter also presented Bro Tait with a commemorative mug to mark the occasion. On the same date PM Andrew MacIvor brought along some cakes for the Harmony to follow the meeting. The cakes were decorated with Ross County Logo's etc. to celebrate Ross County Football team winning the Scottish League cup on 13 March 2016. The attached photograph shows Bro MacIvor and Provincial Grand Master Billy Ross ready to scoff the lot. You can just see PM Ally Waugh of Lodge St. Duthus ready to pick up the crumbs but there is little chance from these two avid Ross County supporters.

On 2 April 2016 the Heilin' Shed (Squaremen) had the use of our lodge for their meeting. There was a good turnout of their members and our photograph shows Worthy Deacon Colin Thomson presenting our PM Neil Cooper with a cheque for £100 for a children's charity of our choice. This gesture is very much appreciated and the 'Shed' is to be congratulated for the good work they do in raising money for charities.

Our last meeting of the session was held on 20 April 2016 when we received a visitation from members of Lodge Averon who worked a Mark Degree. The deputation was led by their RWM Bro George Robinson and the Mark Master for the degree was PM Fraser MacBeath. The degree was worked on their own candidates Brothers Lewis Sinclair and Tom Wilson and it was worked in an excellent manner. The whole team carried out their duties to perfection but mention must be made to Brother John MacRae who did the final lecture. It was his first time doing it and he was flawless. Well done John. Our Master Peter Foster congratulated all at the end of the meeting and a Harmony followed. It is hoped we can return the compliment in the future.

On behalf of R.W.M. Peter Foster and all office bearers and members, can I take this opportunity to wish all an enjoyable summer break with hopefully, good holidays to look forward to

James A Tait, PM
Secretary

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Lodge Fingal No 318

February meeting: At Dingwall and within the Lodge Room of the Masonic Building, a regular meeting of Lodge Fingal No 318 was held on Tuesday 9th February 2016 at 8:00pm. The Lodge was opened in the EA° by the Master, Brother Angus Beaton with 16 Brethren and 5 visiting Brethren present. Reigning Masters & Past Masters were invited to their rightful seat in the East. Visitors were present from Lodge St John No 37, Robertson's Lodge 134, Lodge Averon 866, Lodge Steps 1213 and Lodge Rosehaugh 1216.

An excellent working of an EA° took place with Brother R. MacDonald being press ganged to act as candidate. Along with the Master, Brother Angus Beaton, Brother Rev I Warwick IPM, Brother D Gunn PM, Brother S Bain Brother J Hanson, Brother R Sutherland PM and Brother Andrew Henderson PM all participated in the working of the Degree. The Master, Brother Angus Beaton thanked Brother MacDonald for standing in as the candidate.

March meeting: At the Regular Meeting on Tuesday 8th March 2016 Bro. Angus Beaton welcomed 20 Brethren and 16 visiting Brethren from Lodge St John 37, Lodge Fortrose 108, Lodge Craigellachie 241, Lodge St Machar Woodside 319, Lodge St Gilbert 790, Lodge Averon, 866, Lodge Steps 1213, Lodge St Martin 1217, Lodge Priory 1235 and Lodge St Andrew 1318.

The work of the evening was to Initiate Mr Michael Kennedy Stewart and also to welcome the Provincial Grand Lodge on their annual visit. The Deputation, headed by the PGM, Brother William Ross comprised of PPGM Bro Morris Downie, DPGM Bro Robin Cattanach, and Bro Tom Walsh EC a Provincial Grand Lodge Officer with Province of West Kent and also a member of Lodge Fortrose No 108 along with 12 other Office-bearers. The Candidate, duly prepared was obligated by the Master, Brother Angus Beaton who was assisted in the working of the Degree by the following Brethren - Bro. Rev Ivan Warwick IPM, Bro Colin MacPhee IG, Bro Stewart Bain PM, Bro John Hanson WJW, Bro Ronnie Sutherland PM and Bro Andy Henderson PM. The Master, accompanied by the PGM greeted Brother Stewart, and congratulated him for taking his first regular step in Freemasonry. The PGM then congratulated Bro Beaton RWM, on his first year in the Chair wished him all the best in his second term in the Chair. As this was his last visit to Lodge Fingal as PGM, the PGM then presented Bro. Beaton with a framed photo of himself to be placed in the body of the Lodge. The Gavel was then returned to the RWM. The Provincial Deputation then departed the Lodge.

April meeting: At the regular meeting of Lodge Fingal No 318 held on Tuesday 12th April the Master, Brother Angus Beaton, welcomed 19 Brethren and 28 visiting Brethren from Lodges Old Inverness Kilwinning St John No 6, Dunblane, No 9, Robertson's 134, St Leonard 580, St Andrew, 601, Allan Wilson 851, Averon 866, Ness 888, Steps, 1213, St Martin, 1217, Priory 1235 and St Columba 1295. The visitors received the usual hearty Fingalian welcome and the Master intimated that he looked forward to meeting everyone in the Logie Lounge for the Harmony after the meeting.

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The work for the evening was to Initiate Mr Joseph Cameron Newlands. The Master, Brother Beaton, having obligated the Candidate was assisted in the working of the Degree by Bro D. Robertson JD, Bro Stewart Bain PM, Bro Jim Murray, Bro Colin MacPhee IG, Bro Stewart Bain PM, Bro. Ian MacLeod WSW, Bro. John Hanson WJW, Bro Ronnie Sutherland PM and Bro Andy Henderson PM. The RWM came down onto the floor of the Lodge and greeted Bro. Newlands, and congratulated him for taking his first regular step in Freemasonry.

Saturday 14th May: A deputation from Lodge Fingal will visit St. Peter`s Operative Lodge No. 284 Thurso. The workings of the day will be an Entered Apprentice Degree, candidate to be supplied by St. Peter`s. Any Brethren who would like a wee trip north should contact Brother Donnie Gunn as soon as possible.

Events Logie Lounge:

Annual Quiz Night, Saturday 27th February: very good turnout with 12 teams of four taking part with last year`s winner "3 Goons & A Gooner" winning once again, taking first prize of 4 bottles of whisky, (kindly supplied by John Bryceland). The runners up received 4 bottles of Wine, (kindly supplied by Andy Henderson). Our WJW, John Hanson assisted by his wife Margaret were very good Quiz Masters, possibly one of the hardest quizzes we have had in the last few years, but most enjoyable. A big thank you to all the Ladies who donated baking, sandwiches etc. Also many thanks to Past Masters Donnie Gunn & Henry Cameron for the smooth running of the bar.

During the interval the RWM Angus Beaton, handed out cheques to local charities, (Ross shire Woman`s Aid £400.00) and (Ross shire Voluntary Action £1000) and also a cheque for £100 for local girl Kiera Mae Russel, to help with her trip to Malawi.



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We also had a very good raffle; once again all proceeds to next years nominated charities.

Saturday 30th April: Was our annual Ladies Night, well supported with some 45 in attendance, the catering by Catherine Morrison of the Station Tea Room, Strathpeffer / Music supplied by Stirling Silver, [for those who are unsure, this is Tommy Stirling PM of Lodge Ness]. The floor was never empty all night.

Saturday 18th June: Will be our annual B-B-Q.



Bar open at 5:00pm / Food served from 6:00pm, barbecuing by the Two Hairy Bikers as they are calling in at the Lodge on their Tour of the North / Wee shindig @ 8`ish, music by Stirling Silver, [by popular FINGALIAN demand].
Cost, just a MERE £10/head.

That`s all Folks, watch this Space.

*D. Gunn PM
Secretary.*



SNIPPET FROM THE PAST – February 2006

And from PM Roddy Cade – a short ode that I`d commend to you all:

Send me Brother, a sample of Masonic word,
Something new that I`ve not heard,
Something fresh to grace these pages,
Then I`ll not need to search for ages.

This journal is here for your delight,
So Brother, please will you write.
I care not if you cannot spell,
And punctuation is quite gone to ... well!

These pages are for us all to scan,
Makes every reader a happier man,
In deepest thought or flippant span,
Please write. I know you can.

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To all Home Lodge Secretaries

Dear Sir and Brother,

DENNIS TOWNHILL MEMORIAL CONCERT

The Dennis Townhill Memorial Concert will take place, this year, on Friday 10 June 2016 at 7.30 pm within the Grand Lodge of Scotland, 96 George Street. Edinburgh. EH2 3DH.

The Brindley and Foster Organ will be played by Brother Simon Nieminski and Fife's well known Kingdom Brass Band will also be performing.

Admission is free and a retiral collection will be taken for the Grand Master's Charity – Prostate Scotland.

Please encourage the support of your Brethren, their families and friends.

With kind regards,

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

Tom Jessop.

**IF YOU CAN MANAGE TO HEAD DOWN TO EDINBURGH FOR THIS CONCERT YOU WILL
NOT BE DISAPPOINTED – IT IS WELL WORTH THE EFFORT TO BE THERE.**

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Lodge Allan Wilson No 851

The first meeting of Lodge Allan Wilson will take place on Tuesday 14th June. Coffee and tea will be available from 11.00 am and the business of the day, namely the Installation of Bro Rev Ivan Warwick as Master, will commence at 11.30 am.

On Tuesday 12th July, as well as the Provincial Grand Lodge visitation, we will have a talk by former Procurator Fiscal, Mrs Margaret Stevens, who has been involved in some very high profile cases during her career. She will be introduced by our Grand Junior Warden and current PGM of Fife and Kinross, Brother Rev Andrew Eadie Paterson. This looks like a very informative and entertaining meeting.

Our third and final meeting will take place on Tuesday 9th August when Brother Charles Winston, PM, one of the foremost Masonic Historians and Researchers in Scotland will be speaking to us.

The Master elect, Brother Rev Ivan Warwick extends a warm welcome to all Brethren to come along and join with us at our meetings and, equally important, join in the fellowship of the meal and harmony at the conclusion of the meeting.

WRM
Secretary

Lodge Seaforth No 854

Lodge Seaforth looks forward to welcoming the Master and Brethren from Lodge John O' Groat to work a MM Degree on Saturday 28th May at 3.00 pm. (the time may be put back an hour to allow those attending the Royal Arch AGM to get back in time but times will be confirmed soon).

Could any of the Lodge Seaforth Brethren who wish to attend the Installation of the Provincial Grand Master on Saturday 25th June at 1.00 pm in Tain, please contact the Lodge Secretary as soon as possible.

It is still hoped to run the Race Night in the Lodge Club Rooms on Friday 3rd June. Get the date into your diary and, if you'd like to sponsor a Race please contact the Secretary and he will make the necessary arrangements – further information will be out soon.

A Taylor, RWM

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Lodge Averon

The Freemasons of Lodge Averon in Alness have an annual party for the senior citizens at the end of February, which is held in the Alness and Ardross Bowling Club. The bowling club is given to use without charge for this annual event and the Lodge members are thankful to them for this.



back row; Thomas Wilson, John Macrae, Callum Mackenzie, front row, Harry McCartney, Donnie Mathieson, Master George Robinson and Charlie Carrison.

Our guests are picked up from their homes if required, soup sandwiches, cakes and drinks of their choice served to them by the Brethren of Lodge Averon throughout the afternoon. We have musicians from other Lodges in Ross and Cromarty who come along and give their time for free to entertain our guests. And another lodge member gave up his time to play the bagpipes for our guests. All of our guests were given a gift before the end of the afternoon.

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The Ann Noble School of dancers performed exceptionally well in several of their routines and this was enjoyed by all.



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This event is always a success and the Brethren who all take part in making the day run smoothly certainly feel that this is more than worth-while.

The Ann Noble school of Dancers is Lodge Averon's main group for this year, with many fundraisers planned at the lodge along with a Golf Scramble arranged for October this year at Alness Golf club. The Golf club let us use the course for a scramble once a year to raise money for local good causes, and thanks go to them for that and their staffs help on the day. Look forwarding to seeing old and new faces at the fundraisers to help this group as they do a wonderful job for the community and we want to return something to them. Thanks to all the local Businesses and people that help support our annual events by supplying raffle prizes, far too many to name.

The picture below is the dance group receiving the first cheque from the Lodge, and we hope to have many more before the end of the year.



We also had a special presentation for Mrs Connie Camp whose dad was none other than Lodge Averon's PM Neil Brownlie and she did not know! RWM Robinson found out and as a gesture organised a commemorative plate, which was presented to her at the lodge.



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Our Lady's night, which was a 50s -60s theme, went down a storm and everybody who had attended conveyed how good a time they had. Every single person got into the swing of things with costumes of the period and joining in with the jiving and games. Every single lady was presented with a single red rose and we had prize for best Jive, best twist, best dressed couple and best dressed individual. Music was provided by Bro "Tug" Wilson Bro T Stirling and Tommy's Brother. Also to Bro's H McCartney, J MacRae and F McBeath. My gratitude and thanks must go to these guys for their support in putting on these events. I can't thank them enough. Lastly but not least my good lady wife not just for putting up with me but for organising and building some great baskets for the raffle and helping with the buffet and general organisation. She truly is an unsung hero.

Now as we go in to the closed season we have lot to do with Visits from Lodge Stormont and Hozier on the cards. Our General fund raising for the lodge will still continue with Social nights, Quiz night amongst other things actively being organised. So watch out for dates and times and help us maintain a healthy lodge.

Lodge Ness No 888

We finished the season quietly and are now into the close season.



However, on the 18th of June we will be holding our summer BBQ in the grounds of the Lodge. There will be plenty food for all and entertainment provided by Tommy Stirling, Tug Wilson and friends. All are cordially invited with friends, relatives and children. starts 1pm.

On the evening of Friday, 24th June we will be carrying out a MM degree for visiting friends from Trinidad and Tobago and Granada. All qualified Brethren welcome to attend and that will be that until October when we reopen.

We wish all a peaceful and enjoyable summer season and look forward to meeting with you when the season restarts.

Raymond Morrison, PM

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LODGE KYLE No 1117

Two meetings ago an interesting coincidence took place and I thought we would share it with the readers. Our RWM Paul Newton who has also been The Master in both the Irish and English Constitutions was talking about falling numbers of Brethren in both Ireland and England where he attends his Mother Lodge and his affiliated Lodge. To illustrate how Lodges can thrive even in adversity, he told us he had been reading a book called "The Barbed Wire University" which highlighted the fact that in war time (WW2) Freemasons were able to set up a Lodge within the prison camp despite extreme penalties for doing so. At this point Donnie Gordon said that Jimmy Mackenzie from The Marine Stores in Kyle of Lochalsh and a regular attender and Master of Lodge Kyle was actually the RWM in a POW Lodge under extreme and difficult conditions.

Without Donnie's interjection, we would never have been aware of this and it just goes to show if we don't write things down or document them visually in photos, the memory of these small acts of heroism or defiance in the face of overwhelming odds will pass away with the brethren who were the only witnesses.

Lodge Kyle will close after our MAY Meeting (2 May 2016 at 8pm) for the Summer when we hope to get some work done on the grounds and re-open on the first Monday of September (5 September 2016 at 8pm) when all visitors will be made very welcome. Any news and meeting times can be found on our website at www.lodgekyle.co.uk

Ronnie Miller, PM Lodge Kyle No. 1117

Lodge Rosehaugh 1216

Not a lot to report on with Rosehaugh over the last few months with most of the meetings being Lectures. However, we did have a run through our ritual at our March meeting with a view of have this rewritten for our 100th anniversary. We did manage to work a F/craft degree for Bro Kirkwood. This meeting was held in Lodge Seaforth in April. A very good evening which was well attended with a lot of visitors and lodges represented.

Our final meeting falls on Friday 6th May with an 8.00pm start this being our PGL visitation. Normally at this time of year the Lodge and St Martin's attend a meeting of the Lodges 1212-1219 however at this point there has been no contact received from Lodge Craiglea in Paisley.

We are also pleased to have Bro Ian Maclaren back attending the Lodge and getting out and about again.

Finally, the Lodge hosted Robert and Sheena Jack's golden wedding bash in April. An excellent evening and congratulations to both currently enjoying a cruise to celebrate.

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Lodge St Martin 1217

The Lodge is now in recess and will re-commence on Tuesday 18th October.

Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary

SNIPPETS FROM THE PAST – August 2005

The following article appeared in the Lodge Ness Column 11 years ago – I can't remember if we ever solved the mystery???

Here's a wee memory jogger for the Invergordon Brethren. Who is Nigel? I received the following photo from Bro Duncan MacPherson, PM of Lodge Blackridge No 1145 in the Province of Linlithgowshire who recalls his seasonal job at Invergordon open air pool a few years ago!! He told me "I remembered I had an old picture somewhere which I duly found. I am the one in the middle, to my right is George Anderson whose Father had Jock the barbers. The chap to the left I believe was called Nigel but on this occasion my memory is rather hazy".

So Brethren, let's put Duncan out of his misery – can anyone throw any light as to who the third individual in the picture is?



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Lodge Loch Ewe No 1551

On a sad note we record the death of the lodge Substitute Master Bro Dennis Aldrich and the funeral service, which was very well attended by Brethren throughout the Province, took place at Inverness Crematorium on Tuesday 15th March. Pauline and the family were very pleased to see so many retire to the Waterside on the banks of the Ness in the city for tea, coffee and sandwiches after the interment and to have a chat with everyone there. Dennis affiliated to Lodge Loch Ewe on retiring to the area 25 years ago and certainly attended the lodge and served us very well.

Dennis, in addition to his role as lodge Substitute Master on more than a couple of terms of office, was also a very able Inner Guard and Junior Deacon and he certainly had a very personal knack of letting us know when the lodge was tyled which will remain with us for posterity! His craic and cheery disposition at Harmony were always a joy to absorb, especially when recounting the places, he had been to during his very eventful life of ninety years, and those of his sons in America and elsewhere abroad. The eulogies were eloquent in delivery by Dennis's friends in life and a special mention must go to his young grandson who gave a very creditable résumé of his fond memories of his grandad.

We see, from various photographs which have appeared via email and social media vehicles used by visiting Brethren to Lodge Loch Ewe, that some wonderful examples of the scenery in the West have been to the fore over the last couple of months.

In the last four meetings we have advanced three brethren to the rank of Mark Master Mason. Brothers Richard MacDonald, Michael MacLeod and Fred De Demonico.

We thank all the brethren from St Martins Lodge No. 1217 in Ullapool for their help with the first two ceremonies; without their assistance it would not have been possible.

The lecture by RWM Bro John R. Muir of Lodge St Aethans No. 1227 in Burghead on the occasion of the PGL annual visit on April 14th demonstrates the worth of our inter-lodge visits between here and the Province of Moray and Nairn since October last year.

At the advancement of Bro. Fred De Demonico we were able to staff the Overseers, in-house, with our own team augmented by Senior Deacon Bro Richard MacDonald acting as Mark Deacon as if he had held that office all of his life.

The Quiz Night of 11th March laid testament to just how popular this activity is within the Aultbea community and, once again as at the end of February, the grateful beneficiaries were the Air Cadets and Air Scouts of the neighbouring village of Gairloch.

Sunday May 8th we host the Provincial Grand Lodge of Sorrow, commencing at 3pm.

We look forward to Thursday May 12th when we are having an Initiation. We are experimenting with this extra meeting in May and another in June to see if we can encourage more visitors with the improvement in the weather. We tyle at 8pm, all are very welcome.

Andrew Miller Henderson, RWM and Barrie Whitwell, PM, Secretary.

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The Brethren who formed the Deputation to Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada

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BITS AND PIECES

Ross and Cromarty Provincial Grand Lodge Deputation Visit to Trinidad and Tobago March 2016

On the 18th March the Depute Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty, Robin Cattanach, led a deputation of ten brethren on a visit to the District of Trinidad and Tobago & Grenada. After a long flight from London Gatwick, via a stop in Antigua, the deputation was met at Tobago Airport by several well-known Trinidad brethren, including Adrian Franklin, the District Grand Master of Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada. After exchanging greetings and negotiating passport control, we were transported to our accommodation at the Sunshine Apartments, Bon Accord, Tobago.

After a quick unpack and clean up, the deputation was taken to a meet and greet dinner with the brethren of Lodge Tobago Kilwinning No 1643, at the Tobago Plantations Golf Club. The venue had been splendidly set out, with the tables in the form of the square and compasses, and a welcome banner, with greetings to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty from Lodge Tobago Kilwinning No 1643. Old acquaintances, and new friendships, were cemented over drinks and an excellent buffet dinner was served.

After dinner, a formal welcome was conveyed by Bro. Mike Elias, the Right Worshipful Master of Lodge Tobago Kilwinning No. 1643, and Bro. Adrian Franklin, the District Grand Master of the DGL of Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada, both thanking the brethren for the long journey made to visit the island, and looking forward to the week's events. Robin Cattanach, Depute Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Ross and Cromarty responded on behalf on the Ross and Cromarty brethren, thanking all for the hospitality extended to the brethren, and commenting on the number of times Trinidad and Tobago brethren had visited Ross and Cromarty, and that this reciprocating visit was long overdue.

On Saturday 19th March the deputation attended a regular meeting of Lodge Tobago Kilwinning No 1643, chaired by Bro. Mike Elias, Right Worshipful Master. This meeting was a historic event, not only was this the first meeting of the lodge visited by a deputation from a Provincial Grand Lodge, but each of the three candidates to be passed to the Fellowcraft Degree, were Lewis's from the same family. The passing to the Second Degree, of Brothers Brandon and Brad Elias, both sons of the RWM, Mike Elias, and cousin, Declan Elias, son of Bro. Charlie Elias, Director of Ceremonies, made the occasion a very memorable one for all who attended. It should also be noted that the lodge secretary is Bro Tommy Elias, another member of the Elias family.



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The meeting was well attended, and well supported by a large deputation from the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago, and Grenada, led by the District Grand Master, Bro. Adrian C. Franklin.

The harmony afterwards was of a very high standard, enjoyed by all present. The toasts after from distinguished brethren were interesting, reasonably short, and well received. It was particularly impressive to see each of the evening's candidates stand up and talk very eloquently on their masonic experiences to date.

Gifts were exchanged between The RWM of Lodge Tobago Kilwinning and the Dep. PGM PGL of Ross and Cromarty, a fine oil painting of the lodge building from Lodge Tobago Kilwinning, and a wooden commemoration plaque from the PGL Ross and Cromarty.

The following day the brethren of the lodge arranged a "lime" on the beach at Pigeon Point, one of Tobago's most beautiful beaches, and a trip on a glass bottomed boat to view the beauties of the local coral reef. After the cruise, an excellent lunch and refreshments were enjoyed by all.

This concluded an excellent and interesting weekend, and a fitting conclusion to a memorable occasion. Many thanks to the brethren of Lodge Tobago Kilwinning.

On Tuesday 22nd March, the deputation transferred to Port of Spain, on the island of Trinidad. That evening a dinner party was hosted by Bro Kelly Baggan, father of Bro Dr Keegan Baggan, the Right Worshipful Master Elect of Lodge Felicity No. 1681. Despite losing the power supply for the first half of the evening, due to local bush fires, this event turned out to be an excellent opportunity to meet the brethren of the lodge and their partners ahead of the formal installation planned for the following day.

On the morning of Wednesday 23rd March, the deputation visited the historic Masonic Temple Building at Mount Moriah, Port of Spain, as hosts of Lodge United Brothers No 251. This historic lodge is practically unique among the lodges of the world, as it worked under three Masonic jurisdictions in its 213 years of existence. The three Masonic jurisdictions are the Grand Orient of France, the Grand lodge of Pennsylvania, and lastly the Grand



Lodge of Scotland, each change due to political circumstances over which it had no control and which left it no alternative.

Following a fine lunch buffet served up by the brethren of the lodge, the deputation was taken on a tour of the Queens Park Oval, Port of Spain, currently the largest capacity cricket ground in the West Indies. The tour was arranged by the District Grand Master, Bro. Adrian Franklin, who is member of the Queens Park Cricket Club. A guided tour of the Oval Cricket Heritage Museum by the curator, Stephen Almandoz, a former player at the Queens Park Club, whose passion, enthusiasm and knowledge for the history of the game, club and grounds proved very interesting, even to the non-cricket loving Scots.

That evening the deputation attended the installation of Brother Dr Keegan Sonny Baggan as Right Worshipful Master of Lodge Felicity No. 1681. The ceremony was well attended, by well over one hundred brethren being present in the lodge, and deputations admitted from the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada, both Scottish and English Constitutions, and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty.

The ceremony of installation was carried out to a very high standard by the retiring RWM, Bro. Krishna Sukdeo assisted by a distinguished team of Past Masters and Brethren.

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It was interesting to witness the Installed Masters Board and Degree being ably conducted by the Right Worshipful Master Elect's father, Bro Kelly Baggan.

Another interesting point was observed at the altar, the use of three open versions of the VSL, the Bhagwad Geeta, the Quran and the Bible, each with the Square and Compasses adjusted during passing and raising.

The Office Bearers for the ensuing year were invested by the newly installed Right Worshipful Master, Bro. Dr Keegan Sonny Baggan.

The evening concluded with an excellent harmony, the Director of Ceremonies, Bro. Maniram "Mannie" Maraj, who ably conducted the distinguished speakers, and exuberant audience, through the formal toast list.



The Depute Provincial Grand Master of PGL Ross and Cromarty thanked the brethren of Lodge Felicity for their hospitality, congratulated the Right Worshipful Master on his installation, wished him every success in his year in office and presented the lodge with a commemorative plaque to mark the PGL visit. The gift of a model steelpan drum in a presentation box, appropriately inscribed to mark the occasion, was presented to the Depute Provincial Grand Master.

An excellent evening was had by all and celebrations continued into the wee sma' hours.

The following day was a lazy recovery day, brought alive by a wild-meat curry prepared by our host Mannie. This meal rejuvenated the deputation, and set them up for the return flight back to Tobago that evening.

The visit quickly came to an end on Friday 25th March, with a lunch at a local restaurant with some of the local brethren, including the RWM of Lodge Tobago Kilwinning Bro Mike Elias, and their lady partners.

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We bade farewell to our wonderful hosts, thanking them for the tremendous hospitality given to us all during our stay, and we hope to see some of them in Scotland soon.

Special thanks are expressed by all the brethren who travelled to Trinidad and Tobago to Bro Morris Downie, Past Provincial Grand Master of PGL Ross and Cromarty and Proxy District Grand Master of Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada for his impeccable arrangements in organising this visit including liaison with brethren, arranging, flights, accommodation, transfers, etc. Without Morris's close relationship with the brethren of the islands, the trip would not be as successful as it was.

Raymond MacKeddie

PM – Lodge Seaforth 854

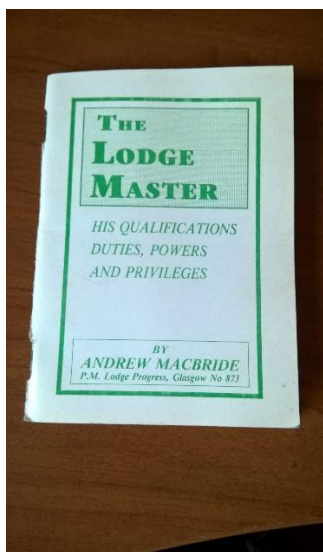
JUST AS A MATTER OF INTEREST

Those of you in the know, will know that I am currently sitting in the west preparing to continue my journey east, with more than a little trepidation. Mainly due to my ceremony, in short it's terrible at times, or at least it feels like it sometimes.

We have all been there and faced the wrath of the khans, that moment where you mess up, sometimes more than once, and you can feel the radiation of thoughts of disapproval slap you about the head telepathically, real or imaginary, who knows! Or you pause for breath or thought and "whack" you hear the next word prompted in stage whisper and straight away your thinking "have I missed something". You're done for after that, the seed is there. Even more frustrating afterwards. "You don't do it like that" but PM what's his name said. "Don't care he's wrong". All sound very familiar?

This is mainly, for me, down to the most commons of things, Time. I don't have any or very little or don't spend enough of it on my ceremony to give myself that level of confidence I think I am going to need. "I am going to be a useless master" is a thought that hits me more often as I get closer to that chair. "They will judge me on how well I can recite my ceremony" Help ma Bob! That's what they do. Is it not?

Well brethren please don't despair... as it happens, I was doing what I try and do as often as I can and was spending some of the free time I do have in the Lodge on my own pottering about with the lodge history and trying to sort it out and get it into our new cabinet upstairs for all to see and share. A simple pleasure of peace and quiet and sometimes reflection as I read. As I was engrossed in some book or another, when the little book below literally fell on to my lap! And little it is measuring no more that 9cm by 18cm.



The Lodge Master! His qualifications, duties, powers and privileges.

This little marvel was owned by Lodge Averon's very own. PM W Dunbar 1956 -1958.

Also as fate would have it, the very first page I opened, as you do, at random has this to say. I quote. *"You may go through all the degree's up to the 33rd have a lorry load of diplomas and more jewels than your coat can carry, and yet be utterly ignorant of real masonry. Your parchment may be nothing more than hieroglyphic wrapping round an Egyptian mummy, and your jewels, the ornaments of a stage puppet. There is a kind of knowledge being able to repeat the ritual and form of the order, this gramophone ability, however, does not imply any real knowledge of the truths and principles that underline its symbols and ceremonies. A Parrot may repeat the proverbs of Solomon. True knowledge is the perception of the principles underlying anything; for instance, the craftsman who knows the lines that govern the art of building, the lines that give strength and stability, and those that give beauty to a fabric. This kind of knowledge is power. It's this that makes a man a Master!"*

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Boom! PM Dunbar just provided me with another piece of the jigsaw, a masterful piece of advice from beyond the grave. It was there right in front me all of the time and this is only the tip. This little gem is full of advice that I fully intend to take on board and shape my tenure around. Rather than just ritual recital and numbers, it will be based on understanding, encouragement, praise, even just for trying and what freemasonry is trying to teach and the practice of that, about building my young brethren's confidence, experience, knowledge, pride in their lodge, of being a freemason, what being a freemason means and what they will ultimately give back to their community and what they themselves will gain and maybe having some fun doing that.

My own ceremony? Well I guess someone has to provide the entertainment. I will never give up, no fear of that, it's just not in my nature. I will just have to find the time, but when I do get it right it will be delivered with meaning and understanding. Then when I am done I will pass this little diamond along and Lodge Averon 866 will flourish.

Bro Donnie Mathieson

Lodge Averon 866



Highland Hospice

Could I express my sincere thanks to all the Stewards who assisted at the BICC on Saturday 23rd April. As usual the majority of Stewards were volunteers from throughout the Province although, this year we had quite a few from out-with the Craft due to weddings, meetings and things getting in the way – to those volunteers a very special word of thanks for helping out – it was greatly appreciated. The weather on the day was unbelievable – first time we have ever had snow but it didn't deter the cyclists – over 300 took to the roads and forest tracks to complete one of the four challenges available. Not sure how the money is doing yet but we hope to beat last year's total of £20k plus.



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My sincere thanks to Bro Jim Dunlop, a member of Lodge Douglas, 1557, who is a regular reader of the “Patter” for submitting yet another interesting feature.

All the following badges are openly worn by Police and Fire Officers in America – can’t see Police Scotland following their example!!!



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**2nd International Scottish Freemasons Conference – Penang, Malaysia
25th Feb – 26th Feb 2016**

Synopsis of the Conference

PREPARED BY: Bro. KALPESH SHAH

Thursday Feb 25th 2016

We started the morning with Bro Neoh Ho Keat Chairman of the Organizing Committee welcoming all to Penang, Malaysia and to the 2nd International Scottish Masonic Conference 2016.

He invited the Grand Master Mason, Bro. Charles Ian Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont to give his welcome address and open the Conference.

The Grand Master Mason in his opening remarks stated:

Heart of freemasonry is the Individual Lodges

Strength of our Masonry is diversity and the individuality

We must maintain our traditions

We must accept change when necessary and to adapt as best possible within our Masonic boundaries

The Grand Master Mason then declared the conference OPEN.

A spectacular LION DANCE took centre stage to mark the opening of the Conference.

SESSION 1

The Scottish Craft in the 21st Century by Grand Master Mason, Brother Charles Ian Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont.

Grand Master Mason emphasized that there are 3 main aspects to this topic:

Duty of all Scottish Freemasons to protect and improve the traditions and landmarks of the Craft

Our ritual is the Cornerstone of the Order

It is a privilege and honour to be a Mason by having access to the “Signs, Tokens and Words” of the Craft.

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Grand Master Mason talked about adapting to the 21st century; as Freemasons, we must improve and adapt with the changing times.

How to improve ourselves:

Marketing. By showing how we conduct ourselves in the public eye and use the same as a positive marketing tool.

Education of new members hoping that younger Masons will enjoy it

Timings of meetings need to be considered and adopted, if necessary, to suit the needs of the members;

Are the meetings too long?

Can we reduce the length of meetings by cutting down on admin matters by circulating minutes beforehand by email?

Pressure on candidates - do we give the candidates too much too soon?

Dress codes- must look dignified and smart in our meetings

Speeches/Toasts - should be short and to the point

We must share the importance of the History of Freemasonry

The Grand Master Mason acknowledged that we as Freemasons may not be marketing our Order in the best way possible. Masonry should be enjoyed and not be a punishment; A little humour during the ceremony keeps the young Masons stimulated.

In conclusion the Grand Master Mason stated that we must:

adapt,

stick to the ritual,

be proud of our signs, tokens, and words.

This is the vision and in which we all must partake.

Grand Lodge Benevolence and Charity by Grand Almoner Brother Thomas C. Smith

The Grand Almoner gave an explanation of how Grand Lodge Benevolence and Charity operates and informed the Brethren as follows:

Grand Lodge operates 2 Care Homes in Scotland.

All Districts and Provinces conduct their relief in a manner that is deemed appropriate and relevant to their Districts and Provinces

Current Grand Lodge Benevolence appeal is based on requirements by Lodges based in Scotland. We must now consider having another Grand Lodge Benevolence appeal for Overseas Lodges.

Gave Brief explanation of the structure of Grand Lodge funds

Grand Almoner stated that the support of local Non Masonic charity is important to maintain our standing in Society but how can we adapt to this considering that some of our Laws are out of date, lack definition and may need to be changed:

Option 1 - maintain status quo

it protects Benevolent funds,

understood by all,

no change required in the Constitution

However, it is limited to the needs of the past by donating to the poor distress Brethren and their families only.

Option 2 - change the definition of law 192 to adapt to the current times.

This would entitle Grand Lodge to partake more globally in relief Charities

However, this would also entail that Masonic Benevolence would not be protected to poor and distressed Brethren and their families.

Grand Almoner gave a breakdown of how charities have benefitted globally in 2011, during the 275 year celebrations of Grand Lodge to the tune of over Sterling Pounds 611,000.

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Option 3 - to create a charity fund from the Benevolent fund and the General fund.

This would allow the Districts, Provinces, and Daughter Lodges to partake in non-masonic charitable activities in their respective regions.

Gives some protection to Masonic Relief by restricting the moneys allowed to be withdrawn.

However, this would require extensive rewriting of the Constitution and Laws.

Scottish Masonic Protocols and Procedures – “The Essence of Scottish Freemasonry” by Grand Secretary Brother David Begg.

Grand Secretary reiterated the etiquette, protocols and procedure of Scottish Freemasonry in detail.

Masonic etiquette

Takes the form of proper decorum.

We must maintain etiquette in order not to disturb the harmony of the Lodge and the atmosphere at the meeting.

The impression on the candidate during the ceremony remains for life and therefore it is essential that etiquette is always maintained.

Apron - symbolically representative of the life and conduct of the wearer and is a sad reflection on the individual if he does not keep it in good condition.

Jewels- wearing a PM or Lodge jewel is a mark of respect to the Lodge.

Toasts are to the institution and not to individuals

Scottish Freemasonry is an individual journey or experience and therefore Grand Lodge is not defining the ancient landmarks but leaves it for the individual to consider.

Session 2

Role and Responsibilities of Proxy Office Bearers and Daughter Lodges by Depute Grand Master, Brother Ramsay McGhee

Depute Grand Master gave a detailed explanation of the role of Proxy Masters and stated that:

Every Scottish Lodge is entitled to be represented at Grand Lodge. Where distance precludes the Master and/or Wardens from attending, representation is made by the Proxy Master.

However, we acknowledge and identify the problems that come with time.

Proxy is a two-way system. Communication between Lodge and Proxy Masters it is essential that the Lodges do communicate regularly with their Proxy Masters.

Grand Lodge of Scotland is taking action and resolving the issues by:

meeting with all Proxy Masters. The first meeting took place in Feb 2016 and it was agreed that these meetings would take place once every year.

all Proxy Masters to get in touch with their Lodges

new application form has been designed and which requires a confirmed commitment by each individual

All Proxy Masters must have access to internet and emails

All Lodges will be informed of their Proxy Master and Wardens. The Yearbook does state the name of the Lodge Proxy.

A Lodge may appoint a Brother, other than the Lodge Secretary, to be the liaison with the Proxy.

There is an on-going survey within the Proxy Masters and the Results of survey will be sent out to all.

He concluded by stating that non performing Proxy Masters will be replaced once the survey results are out.

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Breakout sessions

1. DGM, DDGM, SDGM, Present and Past – By Depute Grand Master Brother Ramsay McGhee and Substitute Grand Master Brother Russel Kelly -49 members in attendance.

Various concerns were raised regarding Freemasonry:

not being accepted publicly in certain parts of the world due to misconception or political issues.

How to drive membership

Solutions were also discussed and found that we need to publish the good works done and go for targeted membership. However, it was noted that these problems are difficult to solve as they are specific to the various regions.

2. District and Lodge Secretaries and Almoners Present and Past – By Grand Secretary Brother David Begg and Grand Almoner Brother Thomas Smith -34 members in attendance

The Grand Almoner elaborated on the duties of the Almoner which include:

Run the benevolent side of the District

Look after brethren and their families

Manage fund raising activities for the districts

Visit recipients of Grand Lodge benevolence

Manage individual Lodge Almoner's in the District

Ensure benevolence applications are made when necessary

It was noted that the definition of Masonic benevolence may need to be looked at as a narrow definition defines Masonic charity and the broader definition encompasses non Masonic charity.

There was a discussion on filling returns electronically and Grand Secretary confirmed that returns and reports to be sent electronically without signature. However, the copy at the District level should have the signatures. He also confirmed that minutes of meetings may be sent electronically to Brethren.

3. District and Lodge Director of Ceremonies and Treasurers Present and Past- By Grand Director of Ceremonies Brother William Gauld and Grand Treasurer Brother James Bell - 42 members in attendance

Some of the issues discussed in this group were:

Date of consecrations of Districts to be mentioned in Grand Lodge yearbook

Initiation fees to be reconsidered by Grand Lodge as currency fluctuations overseas make it expensive to be a Mason.

Improve communication by email and not use Postal services

Manual for Director of Ceremonies to be considered by Grand Lodge However, it was noted that Scottish Lodges have their own individuality and therefore a manual would only be as a guide.

Cross pollination of the constitutions exists so keep it simple and limit the protocols

Declining membership – It was noted that Grand Lodge has commissioned a film/documentary on Freemasonry to be streamed on YouTube.

Discussed the duration that the Director of Ceremonies should hold office and criteria required for a Director of Ceremonies. Here it was noted that that there is no time frame

How to get attendance at rehearsals - Make it exciting and rewarding for the Brethren

Friday Feb 26th 2016

Session 3

Strengthening Fraternal Bonds – By District Grand Master of the Bahamas, Brother Joseph Curry

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Brother Curry gave an elaborate talk and indicated that there are 3 pillars to strengthen fraternal bonds:

Communication - sharing of Lodge and District events stating that without good communication Brethren may lose enthusiasm and interest

Masonic Exchange and Visitation - Local and overseas visitation helps create strong Lodges and the ties lead to strong fraternal bonds and life-long friendships.

Study and Masonic preparation -Make daily advancement in the Craft.

Understanding and improving the Lodge experiences – By District Grand Master of East Africa, Brother Michael Craig

Brother Craig broke this topic into two parts:

Part 1 - Understanding the Lodge Experience:

Objectives of Understanding include:

Traditions

Self -improvement

Sense of Accomplishment

Fellowship – Belonging to a like- minded group

A break from the workday routine

Philosophical and Spiritual side of Freemasonry

In the end it is your own Lodge Experience that is important: An individual experience, an individual journey.

Part 2 – Improving the Lodge Experience

The more involved one becomes, the more time one has to put aside for Masonic activities

The new Entrant needs to pace himself and gain a better understanding of the Craft and the workings of the Lodge before moving on to broaden and deepen his Masonic experience.

Brand Awareness

Opportunity – Are Brethren “Available” and “Approachable”?

We need to be INCLUSIVE and not exclusive

The Intender Programme

The learning, understanding and memorizing of the Lodge ritual

Poor ritual presentation can reduce the impression on the candidate

“Drab” and Uninspiring rituals and workings fail to teach anything to a candidate

Questions to ask after a presentation:

Did I capture the complete attention of the candidate?

Did he learn from my presentation?

Thoughts Suggestions and Aspiration of younger Freemasons; results of a Survey – By R.W. Master of Lodge Darul Takzim No. 1836 (DGLME) Brother Faizal Sharizad

Brother Sharizad discussed a survey that he undertook in the District of the Middle East to understand what the Young Masons were looking for in Freemasonry.

Who are the young masons? These are generation X and Y born men. They are searching for their own identity.

Some of the results showed that:

Young Masons felt lost and confused in the first few years

They cannot identify specific value or benefit from freemasonry

Freemasonry has little effect if not understood

Online information can be misinterpreted

They are not patient to learn yet want to reap the benefits quickly.

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Not sharing work load
Young Masons want excitement
They want meaning of Freemasonry delivered in a manner understandable
They want recognition
help each other outside the Masonic world

Some of the Suggestions that came from the Young Masons were:

More guidance and mentoring
Stress real world application in workings
Personal experience sharing
Webinars
Interchange roles of office bearers in the Lodge
Flexibility in the delivering of ritual
Social Internet networking
More control over their tasks
Young masons involved in recruiting young masons
More engaging of seniors
Instant gratification
Increase public knowledge
Less hierarchy
Share background of persons

Young Masons are interested in:
trendy charity works; i.e. sports, cultural activities.
Events that are family oriented
fellowship with non- members
lectures, daytime fellowships

Grand Lodge Disciplinary System – By Grand Secretary Brother David Begg

Grand Secretary explained in detail the Disciplinary system as required by Grand Lodge.
He explained the process stating the 5 options that are available for Disciplinary matters:

Take no action
Take appropriate informal action to resolve the issue
To remit the matter for hearing and disposal by a Lodge (could cause disharmony in the Lodge)
To remit the matter for hearing and disposal to the District Grand Lodge
To remit the matter for hearing and disposal to Grand Committee

Grand Secretary explained the pros and cons of each option and reminded all that the Lodges must report to Grand Secretary any member convicted by a court of law.

He further stated that inappropriate remarks on social media are unacceptable and could lead to suspension.

Open Discussion with Question and Answer – Panel Grand Lodge of Scotland

Brethren had been requested to write their questions and hand them in beforehand.
Several questions with regard to Freemasonry were asked to the Panel and they discussed in open conference and answered to the satisfaction of the Brethren at this session.

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Session 4

“Open Installations” – As practiced by Sister Grand Lodges – Open Discussion

A discussion took place to better understand the concept of “Open Installations”.

Advantages of Open Installations:

To get better support from the spouses

To bring potential individuals (candidates) to these meetings so they may get a better understanding of Freemasonry

In conclusion it was noted that Grand Lodge of Scotland is not against Brethren attending “Open Installations” of sister Grand Lodges as long as they (sister Grand Lodges) are in amity with Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Closing of the Conference.

The Rapporteur gave a detailed synopsis of the conference followed by the District Grand Master of the Middle East Brother Dustan Fernandez giving a vote of thanks.

The Chairman of the Organizing Committee, Brother Neoh Ho Keat thanked the Brethren for their participation and constructive interaction and hoped that it was not just an educational but also a fun experience for all. He then requested the Grand Master Mason to give his comments and close the conference.

The Grand Master Mason, Bro. Charles Ian Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont commended the Brethren of District of Middle East for organizing a wonderful conference and also thanked the Brethren for their discussions and thoughts.

Grand Master Mason announced that the next conference i.e. the 3rd International Scottish Freemasons Conference would be held in the Bahamas in 3 years and thereafter declared the conference CLOSED.

PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

A reminder that the AGM this year will be in Tain on Saturday 28th May at 1pm. This is to accommodate the companions from Stornoway who plan to get back home on the same day.

Can I take this opportunity to remind the chapters to forward any donations they have for SGRA’s dementia appeal to PG Treasurer, W Ross so that we may be able present this at Supremes’ convocation in June?

ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER HEBRIDES NO. 364.

It is intended to work a RA degree on the Wednesday at the provincial visitation this month and a Cryptic degree on the Thursday. Let us know if any members of the visitation would like to obtain the Cryptic degree.

Highland Guild Lodge

Next Regular Meeting will be on 13th May 2016 in the Masonic Hall, Alness.

Alasdair Taylor

Kirkwarden/Scrivener
Highland Guild Lodge

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PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES.

RE DGP Andrew Morrison made his annual official visit to Stornoway on Saturday 23rd April.

This year as it was the 40th Anniversary of the Preceptors' charter it was decided to make it a special occasion and ask the Most Eminent & Reverend Grand Master James Hogg if he would be able to attend. He graciously accepted and attended along with his Grand Constable David Park, Grand Man at Arms John Mulgrew and Grand Sword Bearer James Legge who acted as Grand Mareschal that day.



ME&R Grand Master James Hogg, VE Preceptor Tom Paton & RE DGP Andrew Morrison.

The following picture is of the 6 extant charter members who attended along with VEP Tom Paton.

There were 17 Charter Members now only eight remain alive. The two extant members who were unable to attend are Donald M Macdonald and Kenneth Macaulay.

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From the left Sandy Matheson, Alex J Macrae, George N Macleod PP HGP & Holder of the Grand Master's Award, Donnie Macleod KCT, Colin Macleod & John Steven.

Donnie Macleod



Provincial Grand Lodge of Fife and Kinross

On Sunday 28th April, I had the privilege to represent Grand Lodge at the Annual Divine service of the Province of Fife and Kinross which was held in Cupar St John's and Dairsie United Parish Church. The Service was led by their PGM, Bro Rev Andrew E Paterson who preached a powerful and very meaningful sermon based on leadership.

The attendance was large with representatives from many other Orders being present which ensured that the singing of the well-known hymns was excellent.

At the conclusion of the service we all enjoyed a cup of tea in the Church hall

PROVINCIAL PATTEN

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Highland Shed



Picture taken after the Shed Installation in March. Colin Thompson handing over a donation to Shona Bechie, the Barmaid in "The Club" for her daughter Zoe who is doing a sky dive for multiple sclerosis

