

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

*The Quarterly Newsletter of the
Province of Ross and Cromarty*



Lodges of the Province – Lodge St Duthus No 82 - Tain

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

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Editorial

Welcome to the 119th Edition of the Patter.

"The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing."

- *Socrates.*

It has occurred to me, especially over the past few months, that while we all believe that we know lots of things, there is so much more that we don't know in life. Moving from the helm of the Grand Lodge of Scotland to the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter has certainly brought home to me that I must work hard on a steep and continuous learning curve to lead the organisation along the right path and, at the same time, become proficient in a completely different set of ritual.

However, what I have found is that there are so many people who are willing to share their experiences and knowledge and make the transition that bit easier. It has been deeply moving to know that help and advice is readily at hand and that those around me are so willing to share their knowledge with me. In all those people, I have witnessed the essence of Freemasonry at work – brotherly love has been abundantly available. It has been a valuable lesson bringing to life that bit of ritual from the Grand Lodge rededication ceremony – *that the jewel of office should remind us to help each other, in our own way in order that we may upbuild those moral values upon which Freemasonry rests.*

I started with a quote, let me finish with another –

"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it."

- *Margaret Fuller*

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



The Governance and Strategy Board have met twice since the last edition of the Patter and are, along with the Standing Committees, beginning to find their feet and make progress.

Much time has been spent on preparation for new IT systems that are fit for purpose and up to date. A new group are in the process of being formed to work on the specification – that is an important piece of work and critical that we get it right. There will be an opportunity for all stakeholders, especially Lodge Secretaries, to have their say as to what they require.

It should be stressed that the new system will be much more than a database – it will have the ability to pass information from the centre to individuals no matter where they are in the world. Good communication is essential and in today's modern world we must be able to communicate through all forms of electronic media.

The other topic that is raising its head is leadership. Another group of experts in the field within our ranks are going to be looking at how best to deliver suitable and pertinent training for leadership skills.

Editor

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

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MAY 2024

Provincial Grand Lodge:

The past three months have been particularly busy with the Provincial Grand Lodge Annual Visitations to the Lodges in the Province, with only Lodge Kyle No 1117, Lodge Loch Ewe No 1551, Lodge Fortrose No 108 and Lodge Allan Wilson No 851 remaining to visit to complete the round.

All the lodges visited have been fairing up well, all maintaining financial stability, and with many having an increase in new initiates wishing to join the Craft.

It was also pleasing to note that the standard of the ritual work witnessed was of the highest standard throughout all the lodges visited. This all adds to a positive future for the Craft in Ross and Cromarty.

I would also like to thank all the Provincial Grand Lodge Members who have supported the deputations on the various visits to the Lodges.

The dates for the remaining lodges to be visited are,
Monday 6th May 2024 - Lodge Kyle No.1117
Thursday 9th May 2024 - Lodge Loch Ewe No.1551
Friday 17th May 2024 - Lodge Fortrose No. 108
Tuesday 9th July 2024 - Lodge Allan Wilson No. 851

Progress Lodge No 4584 EC

In March, a small deputation of Provincial Grand Lodge Members travelled south to the Wirral, near Liverpool, to attend a very interesting Centenary Celebration Meeting of Progress Lodge No 4584, in the Province of Cheshire. Progress Lodge is the Mother Lodge of Bro Simon Regan, who is a popular visitor to many of the Lodges in our Province.

We were made very welcome and joined the assembled Brethren to witness an interesting Centenary Celebration led by RW Bro David Dyson, the Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Cheshire accompanied by a very large deputation of Provincial Grand Lodge Office-bearers.

An excellent harmony followed, with many very informative speakers contributing to a very entertaining evening.

The visit was particularly interesting as the meeting was held in Port Sunlight, a village that was built by Lever Brothers, to house families of those employed in their Sunlight Soap factory. William Lever saw Freemasonry as a useful tool to promote social cohesion and high standards of personal conduct and actively encouraged membership amongst his workforce. He established a Masonic network at Port Sunlight which deliberately reinforced the existing hierarchy within Lever Brothers. Separate Lodges were created for managers, supervisors, and workers.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Bro. Lever was a founding member of Progress Lodge No. 4584, and it was reputed that the name “Progress” originates from the title of the mid managers internal newsletter called “Progress”.

In May 1918, now known as Lord Leverhulme, he purchased the Isle of Lewis for £167,000 and in late 1919 he also bought the estate of South Harris for £36,000.

In December 1918, the brethren of Lodge Fortrose No. 108 unanimously elected him to be their next Master of the Lodge and he was installed to chair on 17th January 1919.

So, it was quite fitting that we were visiting a lodge in England founded by a Past Master of the Province of Ross and Cromarty.

Prostate Scotland

As a Prostate Champion, I was pleased to present the first Prostate Awareness Presentation at Lodge Averon No.866, which appeared to be well received by the brethren present.

The role of Prostate Champion was set up as part of the legacy partnership between the Grand Lodge of Scotland and Prostate Scotland. The Prostate Champions role is to raise awareness about the prostate, make people aware of prostate disease and prostate cancer, tell them about the signs and symptoms to look out for and let them know where to get help and support. It is particularly relevant to men over fifty years of age, as prostate disease will affect almost 1 in 2 men, and 1 in 10 men are at risk from prostate cancer.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Caring and Sharing
The Grand Lodge of Scotland

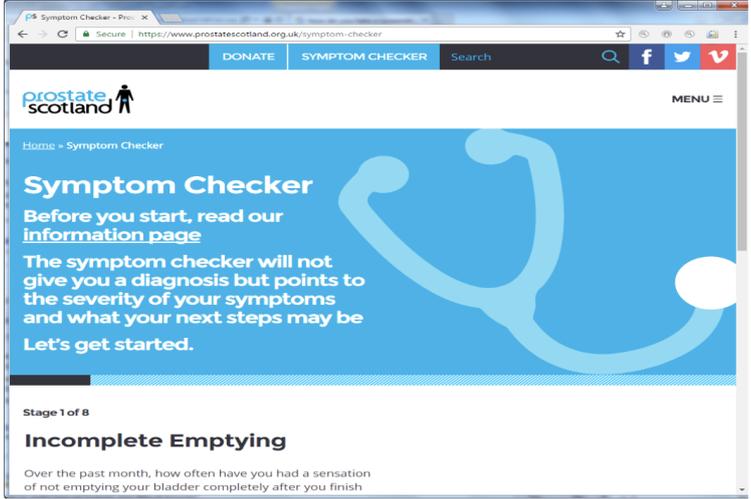
Notice symptoms?



prostate
scotland

**Make an appointment
with the GP**

**Prostate Scotland website
Symptom Checker**



Prostate Scotland working in partnership with the Grand Lodge of Scotland

Provincial Grand Lodge Installations

On Friday 2nd February 2024, I travelled to Port Glasgow, and attended the Installation of Office-bearers in the Province of Renfrewshire West. I was warmly welcomed by the Provincial Grand Master, Bro John Black, and we enjoyed witnessing an excellent Installation of Office-bearers ceremony carried out by the Substitute Provincial Grand Master, Bro Alan Beck.

On Saturday 20th April 2024, I had the pleasure to attend the Installation of Bro John I Mackay as Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Inverness-shire, and his Commissioned Office-bearers. An excellent installation ceremony was conducted by the Grand Master Mason, Bro Dr Joseph J Morrow, assisted by his Grand Lodge Office-bearers. A fine harmony followed with some very interesting and inspiring speeches. We wish the Provincial Grand Master and his Office-bearers every success and pleasure in their respective terms in office.

On Saturday 15th June 2024 we shall be travelling North to Thurso to witness the installation of Bro James Moodie to the office of Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Caithness. The Installation Ceremony will be conducted by the Grand Master Mason, Bro Dr Joseph J Morrow, and his Grand Lodge Office-bearers. It will be good to have a deputation of PGL Office-bearers to accompany me to this momentous event.

Dates for Your Diaries /

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Dates for Your Diaries

The remaining Provincial Grand Lodge visits to lodges are,

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Friday 17th May 2024 - Lodge Fortrose No. 108

Tuesday 9th July 2024 - Lodge Allan Wilson No. 851

The next Provincial Grand Lodge Communication, which will be the AGM and Installation of Office-bearers shall be on Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at Lodge Fingal, Dingwall at 7:30pm. Please note this meeting will be a week earlier than usual, as it clashes with a visit to the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago & Grenada.

A good attendance of Provincial Office-bearers and Daughter Lodge Masters and Wardens will be appreciated. The meeting is open to all brethren in good standing.

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Sorrow shall be on Sunday 9th June 2024 at Lodge Fingal, Dingwall at 3:00pm, and officiated by Bro the Rev Iain Ramsden B Th MStJ. This is a very important meeting to mark those brethren who have passed to the Grand Lodge above in the past year. Following on from previous years, the families, and friends of those passed will be invited to attend this meeting.

A Provincial Grand Lodge Ladies Night is to be held on Friday 8th November 2023 at the Ben Wyvis Hotel, Strathpeffer. Details will be sent out to all lodges in the Province shortly.

As most of the lodges are going into recess as the masonic season ends, can I thank all the brethren for making it such a successful year, and I hope you all enjoyed your Freemasonry as much as I did, and are looking forward to meeting up again soon.

Raymond Mackeddie

Provincial Grand Master

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1996

The Annual General Meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge took place on Wednesday 29th May in Dingwall, courtesy of the brethren of Lodge Fingal. The Lodge was opened by Past Provincial Grand Master, Brother Iain MacLean in the absence of the Provincial Grand Master, Brother Kenneth Bisset who, the previous week, had suffered a mild stroke. The Brethren present were delighted however, to hear that brother Bisset had been discharged from Raigmore that afternoon and was making good progress. The best wishes for a full and speedy recovery were sent to Brother Bisset from all members of Provincial Grand Lodge.



Young Masons Group

The group has continued to meet on a regular basis, monthly by Zoom and following an earlier proposal they have met as a group at lodges in the Province. They have met up to support new initiates at several Lodges, including St Duthus No. 82 and Lodge Ness No. 888.

The group has welcomed many new members in the past few months as lodges are seeing an increase in applications from new initiates.

The group continues to communicate using a What's App Group Chat, which makes it easier to share what is happening at lodges, arrange meets to attend lodges, witness the degree work, and welcome and support new candidates as they join.

Over the last few months, the Zoom Meetings have enjoyed presentations, including one from Bro Chris Igoe, who gave a very interesting insight into the work of the Young Masons group in the Provinces of Midlothian, East Lothian and Linlithgowshire. They had carried out a survey of their young masons and identified that education and meeting new friends were important aspects of Freemasonry to the newer members. This motivated them to arrange social events and run educational based presentations. We also enjoyed a very interesting presentation from Bro Stewart Cleland titled "The Schaw Statutes: A discussion on the manuscripts" which turned out to be a very interesting subject. The 1598 Statute written by William Schaw gives a code of rules governing the activities of Operative Masons in Scotland.

Last month we had another presentation on Masonic Etiquette and Best Practise, which always proves to be a popular subject for discussion.

If any lodge has any Young Masons who have not already attended these meetings, and would wish to join them, please get in touch with Raymond Mackeddie.

Raymond MacKeddie, PGM

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

From the Provincial Almoner

Sadly, since my last report:

On Saturday the 30th of March 2024, Brother Hugh Grove, MM of Lodge St Duthus No 82 passed to the Grand Lodge above. Brother Hugh was also a member of other Masonic Orders.

I also report on the following:

Brother Donnie Graham, PM of Lodge Fortrose No. 108 is now getting about on his electric mobility scooter.

Brother David MacMaster, PM of Lodge Fingal No 318 was in Raigmore Hospital recently and is now back home recovering.

Depute Provincial Grand Master Mike Turner has recovered pretty well but has now injured his back.

Brother Andrew MacIvor, PM of Robertson Lodge was admitted as an emergency, due to a health episode to Raigmore Hospital. This occurred after Brother Andrew arrived home, after attending the Robertson's Lodge 250th Anniversary Rededication Ceremony. Fortunately, he was discharged after an overnight stay and is now recovering at home. He passes on his kindest regards and thanks to all for their kind wishes.

I will now close by asking once again should any brother require my assistance, please get in touch with me.

I would also ask that Lodge Almoners or any other Lodge member to please keep me updated on any brother with health issues.

Fred T Fraser PM Prov. Grand Almoner fraserft@yahoo.com 01463 870307

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2007

As was previously notified a Training Seminar took place in Lodge Fingal on Saturday 17 March 2007 for Lodge Secretaries, Treasurers and Almoners. It was not as well attended as it should have been, but I know from those who attended that it was a great success and worthwhile. I am sure the Provincial Grand Master will be reporting further on this. It is also good to hear that most Lodges have now filled the Office of Almoner.

Around the Lodges

Lodge St Duthus No 82



The Lodge is now in recess until Wednesday 18th September 2024.

Yours Faithfully & Fraternally

D Macrae - Bro. D Macrae PM Secy

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1995

1. Are you an active Member?
The kind that would be missed,
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list.
2. Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the flock?
Or do you stay at home
And criticise and knock.
3. Do you take an active part
And help the work along?
Or are you satisfied to be
That kind that Just belong.
4. Do you ever go and visit?
A member who is sick.
Or leave the work to a few
And talk about a clique.
5. Think this over, Member,
You know right from wrong.
Are you an active Member,
Or do you just belong?

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Lodge Fortrose No 108

Donald Macdonald was put through his 1st, 2nd and 3rd degrees in February, March and April respectively and Alex Scott who is a member of Lodge St James Kilwinning (Tarbolton) No. 135 was affiliated to Lodge Fortrose in April.

At a meeting of our benevolent committee in November we agreed to distribute £2,080 to various charities, recent widows and a couple of older brethren. The final cheques were distributed in early March, some of the beneficiaries which included the Salvation Army and the local Men's Cancer Group are in the attached picture.



Symbolically handing over the charity cheques

As the 250th anniversary of Robertson's Lodge coincided with the visit of the District Grand Prior and his deputation to the Preceptory of the Western Isles eight of our members were able to attend the celebration. Congratulations to Robertson's Lodge for attaining this tremendous landmark.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod PM

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Robertson's Lodge No 134

Sincere and Fraternal Greetings Brethren,

Robertson's Lodge members missed their January Meeting due to inclement weather but held one in February, where a Mark Mason Degree was held and conveyed upon Brothers David Cooper and Ryan McManus. There had also been a ballot for two candidates to go forward.

On the March meeting there had been an Entered Apprentice Degree conveyed on one of the prospective candidates, Brother Michael J. Duffy.

The 17th of April Meeting, which was also the Annual Visitation of the Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty, Brother Raymond A. Mackeddie, and his Deputation, where a Fellowcraft degree was carried out for Brother Michael J. Duffy.

During all this time The Master, Brother Derek M Rodway, his office bearers and the brethren had been also planning and preparing for the upcoming 250th Rededication Anniversary Meeting on Saturday 27th April 2024 which was to be carried out by the Grand Master Mason, Brother Dr Joseph J. Morrow, CVO, CBE, KC, FRSE, and his Deputation from Grand Lodge.

On Saturday 27th April 2024, we had the 250th Rededication Anniversary of Robertson's Lodge No134. The ceremony was held in the Victoria Hall, Cromarty, arranged and conducted in the usual exemplary manner by The GMM and his Deputation from Grand Lodge. Brother George Donnelly, as Grand D of C kept all in good order, assisted by Brother James McDougall, as D of C for Ross and Cromarty Provincial Grand Lodge. We were privileged to have a good cross section of Visitors, with PGMs and Provincial Grand Deputations and Visitors from Neighbouring Provinces, Inverness-shire, Moray and Nairn, Sutherland, and Caithness. Our own Provincial Grand Master, Brother Raymond A. Mackeddie, headed our own Province of Ross and Cromarty. Visitors came from all over, including English Constitution Brethren, which included Brother Fred MacIvor who is a Life member of Robertson's Lodge, and Brother Bill Baxter who is visiting all Lodges. A good opportunity for all to meet at first and renew old acquaintances, especially with members of Lodges in our Province. Thank you to all for coming to support us.

We were also privileged to have the services of Organist, Brother Stewart Robertson, PM, Lodge 601 and Piper, Brother Murdo Mackenzie of Lodge 43, both of whom contributed to the success and ambiance of the whole meeting by carrying out their well-known services in their usual high standard.

An excellent meal was prepared and presented by our caterer, DM Catering. There was a lively Raffle held and enjoyed by all, especially those who won prizes. There was even a brief Lodge History given on Robertson's Lodge and its involvement in Freemasonry locally over the years. At the end of the meeting, we trust all managed to get home safely.

But, the event would not have been a success without the hard work and involvement of the Master, Brother Derek M. Rodway, his Office bearers and Brethren of Robertson's Lodge. As a team, all pulled together to make the whole event a success. Such as putting up the Marquee, and dismantling, were events enjoyed by all. However, big thanks to all for a creating a successful event. Now we can start to plan for the 275th Anniversary. *Peter K. Ratcliffe, Secretary*

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Past Masters of Robertson's Lodge with the GMM and PGM



*Members of Robertson's Lodge 134
with GMM and Grand Lodge and PGMs and PGL Deputations.*

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



*Bro W Gauld, DGM, Broth J Morrow, GMM, Brother Derek M Rodway,
Bro Raymond A Mackeddie, PGM and Bro J MacKenzie, SGM*



*Brother Dr Joseph J. Morrow, CVO, CBE, KC, FRSE,
the Grand Master Mason with Brother Derek Rodway,
Master of Robertson's Lodge No 134*

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Lodge Fingal No 318

At the February meeting, we worked a FC Degree, for Brothers Shaun Taylor and Kai McAuley. The Degree was witnessed by 18 members and 24 visitors, collection amounted to £200.

The March meeting was our annual Provincial Visit. The Provincial deputation entered the Lodge led by the Provincial Grand Master of Ross & Cromarty, Brother Raymond A MacKeddie, accompanied by PPGM Brother W Ramsay McGhee, PPGM Brother Morris M Downie, HPPGSW Brother Roger Cundiff, SPGM Brother David A MacMaster, and 10 other Provincial Grand Lodge Office-bearers, took their seat in the body of the Lodge.

We worked an EA Degree, for Mr Andrew Stewart MacNeil. After the Degree work, the RWM came down onto the floor of the Lodge accompanied by the PGM and greeted Bro MacNeil, both congratulated him on taking his First Regular Step in Freemasonry. The Degree was witnessed by 17 members and 14 visitors, collection amounted to £260.

Following on from the committee meeting on Thursday 21st March, at which Brother Alex Craib, Master, suggested that the Lodge give Easter Eggs to the bairns, of St. Clements School, a small deputation from the Lodge went to St Clements on Friday 22nd March, where we met with the head teacher, Mr Colin Masterson. He informed us that there are currently 51 pupils at the school, and that the Easter Eggs would be handed over at the break of term, on Thursday 28th March during the disco which the pupils would be enjoying at that time.



On the day of the disco, Past Masters Donald Gunn and Stewart Bain went along to the school to hand over the Easter Eggs. The disco was in full swing. Mrs Avril Robertson, Chair, St Clements Parents Council (second from left) said he was delighted that Fingal hope to raise money for the school.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

On the way out, we spoke with Mr Masterson, who mentioned that the school, should only have 40 places but in the not distant future they hope to get the old library property which will enable them to expand. Part of the project will also see an old porta-cabin being knocked down to give a bigger play area. This is where the money which we hope to raise would go - to help with the ground works etc.

To raise the money, Lodge Fingal are to have two stalls at the Dingwall Gala, which is to be held at the Cromartie Car Park, on Saturday 6th July. They will stick to the same format as last year. On that occasion, they raised £1200 which went to The Puffin Pool. This year, all being well, the Lodge hopes to raise a similar amount for the school. Mr Masterson was overwhelmed and thanked the Lodge for their very kind gesture. More good news - the pupils at St Clements are going to design and produce a poster to publicise the event.

In April we worked an EA Degree, for Mr Andrew Morrison. The Degree was witnessed by 20 members and 34 visitors, collection amounted to £260.

On Monday 15th April a Deputation of 9 Fingal Brethren visited Lodge Seaforth No 854, to witness our Brother Robert Derrick Cronie, receive his Mark Master Mason Degree at the hands of the Seaforth Brethren. The Master, Brother Ronald Bruce, and his team, worked the Degree to a very high standard. Derrick will never forget that night.

As the Season comes to an end, on behalf of the brethren of the Lodge, may we wish all brethren, Wives, Partners, and Families a relaxed summer recess.

Forth Coming Events, Logie Lounge:

August time: B-B-Q, date to be decided.

D. Gunn R.W.M

Secretary.

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2010

On the evening of Saturday, 20th February we were delighted to welcome 12 teams to the Logie Lounge for our Annual Quiz night. Once again it was in the very capable hands of Brian & Margaret Crawford who put so much time, effort, and money to make it the success was. Competition was fierce and the eventual winners were Kopykatz (under leadership of John Hanson with help from St Duthus) with SS + 1 (Strathpeffer Surgery) runners up.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



LODGE ALLAN WILSON 851

The next meeting of the Lodge will be the Installation meeting on Tuesday 11th June 2024 at 11.30 am. The Master, Brother David MacMaster, would be delighted to welcome visiting Brethren to witness Brother John Stott being installed in the Chair. Members of the Lodge should meet at 11.00 to open the Lodge and deal with the business in order that the Installation can start promptly at 11.30.

Ramsay McGhee - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2012

Some Interesting and Strange Masonic Trivia – received from Bro Bomi Mehta, PDGM, India

On August 23, 1879, Lodge #239 of France held a meeting in a balloon flying over Paris, at which time a candidate was initiated.

On his famous solo flight across the Atlantic, Charles Lindbergh wore a square and compasses on his jacket as a good luck piece. He was a mason.

When the great Obelisk of Alexandria (Cleopatra's Needle) was moved to New York in 1880, there were discovered certain emblems on the original foundation and pedestal. One is clearly a square, causing some to conclude that Masonry existed in ancient Egypt. This issue is still open to debate.

The largest Master's chair is in Ophir Lodge #33 Murphy's, CA. It is 15 feet long and can seat the Master, living Past Masters, and visiting dignitaries.

In 1892, the tallest building in the world was the Masonic Temple at Randolph and State Streets, Chicago, IL

Brother William Brockmeier (1866-1947) of St. Louis conducted 5586 Masonic funeral services.

(Taken mostly from "The Truth is Stranger than Fiction," By Bro. Alphonse Cerza, Masonic Service Association, 1934.)

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



LODGE SEAFORTH 854

The new Master, Ronald Bruce has settled into his role and has chaired several well attended and successful meetings since our last report.

The February meeting saw a young volunteer candidate from Lodge Averon stand in to be raised again to the Degree of Master Mason. It was a well worked degree with an interesting Emblems Lecture by Bro Donald McLennan, Master of Lodge Rosehaugh. Many thanks to Bro. Kyle Gordon for standing in as the candidate on the night.

At our March meeting, which was the annual Provincial Grand Lodge Visitation, the Master and the Office-bearers delivered an excellent Entered Apprentice Degree. Unfortunately, the proposed candidate was unable to attend due to work commitments, and Bro Donald Ferguson willingly stood in to be re-initiated in the First Degree.

The April meeting was interesting as the Master agreed to assist Lodge Fingal No 318 in carrying out a Mark Master Mason Degree for Bro Derek Cronie.

The Master, assisted by the Immediate Past Grand Master Mason, also had the pleasurable duty of presenting Bro Hamish Keir PM with his 60 years Diamond Certificate and Jewel.



Brother Hamish Keir receiving his 60-year Diamond Diploma and Jewel

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Bro. Hamish is a stalwart supporter of Lodge Seaforth, worked tirelessly as a Past Master, assisted in maintaining the fabric of the lodge building and held the Office of Treasurer for over twenty-five years.

The Brethren are looking forward to the Lodge's biennial sojourn North to visit Lodge John O'Groat No. 1333 on Saturday 22nd June 2024, to work a Fellowcraft Degree for Bro. Andrew Morrison, the son of the current Master, Bro. Denny Morrison.

We are looking forward to the trip, rekindling and reacquainting fraternal relationships with the brethren of Lodge John O'Groat, with whom we have had a long-time relationship with, going back more years than we can clearly remember.

The next Regular Meeting of the Lodge will be on Monday 16th September 2024. It is planned to carry out an Entered Apprentice Degree, and all brethren are most welcome.

Raymond MacKeddie PM - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2011

A parapsydokian sentence consists of two parts where the first is a figure of speech and the second an intriguing variation of the first. They're used typically for humorous or dramatic effect. Enjoy these!

- Never argue with an idiot, he'll drag you down to his level and beat you with experience.
- Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
- The last thing I want to do is hurt you, but it's still on the list.
- If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
- We never really grow up; we only learn how to act in public.
- Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit; Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
- The early bird might get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
- How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

LODGE AVERON No 866

Hi there Brethren,

Wow it seems like just yesterday that I was writing the last quarters 'Patter content', this year so far has flown in! My thanks to our PGM for the reminder on the morning of the deadline for submission and my apologies to the 'editor' for keeping you waiting!!

Since the last edition of the patter Lodge Averon has been as usual busy, whether working degree's, visiting other lodges and our various charitable events and functions.

This quarters activity commenced on Thursday the 8th February with Lodge Averon being the first Provincial visit of the year, the deputation led by our PGM Bro MacKeddie was admitted and we carried out an exemplification of the Fellow Craft Degree on Bro Sinclair, thereafter the Provincial secretary/treasurer gave their reports, followed by the PGM who spoke highly of the efforts of the Master, Office Bearers and Brethren of the lodge which was very much appreciated by all present.

Saturday 10th February saw us change venue to Alness/Ardross Bowling club to hold our annual Senior Citizens party, there we wined, dined and entertained some 50-ish guests. Musicians and performers on the day were Pipe Major Bro Callum MacKenzie, Addie Harper Jnr from Wick on the box, Bro Frazer McBeath PM with his music, singing and party games, Bro Brian Jay for his Magic Tricks and finally Anne Nobles School of Dance with a fantastic display of Highland Dancing with both her senior and junior pupils. Thanks must go on record to the Bowling club for the use of the venue, the Ladies of Lodge Averon for once again organising and suppling the catering, outstanding as always Ladies, and lastly the brethren, who freely gave their time on the day, whether driving, serving or very kindly donating presents for our guests, Thank you all.



*Dancing to Addie Harper Jnr
at the Lodge Senior Citizen's
Party*

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



*Left – Pipe Major Bro Callum Mackenzie and
Below – dancers from the Anne Noble School of
Dance*

The entertainers at the Senior Citizen's Party



Thursday 23rd February saw a change in direction in our lodge, when after any business was attended to, our Depute PGM Bro Mike Turner PM delivered a lecture (in his unique style) on the Life, Works and Masonry of Rudyard Kipling. Thanks to Bro Mike for this, it was very interesting, enjoyable and well received.

In a change from previous years where our last meeting of the session is usually a Mark Degree, this year we flipped this around, and a Mark Degree was carried out with Bro Jamie Little being the Candidate on the 14th of March, our penultimate meeting of the session, with just the right amount of humour and solemnity.

This left our last meeting of the session available for what was a first in our province, one of our three Provincial Prostate Champions, Bro Steven O'Donnell was due to deliver a presentation on Prostate Disease but was unavailable on the night due to circumstances out with his control, Bro Raymond MacKeddie PGM stood in at short notice and delivered the presentation perfectly on what is a very emotive subject. I can honestly say this was the quietest I have ever witnessed Lodge Averon, it really was a very sobering experience. Thanks to the PGM and also Bro Keith Bauer for suppling the projector and screen greatly appreciated.

Bro Ian Duxbury PM held a Quiz night within the lodge on Saturday 6th April which was well supported and a great time was had by all....you learn something new every day if you are willing.... I learned in my 54th year that the national animal of Scotland is the unicorn since the 15th century. Again, PM McBeath was on hand with music and song to complete the evening. Thanks to Bro Dux for this event, and to our resident DJ!

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Cromarty Firth RAC 310 made use of the lodge on Saturday 13th April and held a much needed fundraiser in the form of a Magic and Mystery night by Companion Brian Jay, it was a very well attended evening and we were all treated to some fantastic magic and even nearly saw a head getting cut of in the guillotine but thankfully it was only the carrots that ended up in the basket. This night was finished with Companion/Bro McBeath's music and singing.



Brian Jay night of magic

Finally, on the 20th of April Bro Gary Miller organised and ran a ladies night which was a sell out and the folkies present had a great night by all accounts.

As always massive thanks to all who all who help organise, run and attend these social and charitable events, the lodge appreciates your efforts and looks forward to seeing as many as possible later in the summer at our barbeque in August and annual golf outing in September.

As Lodge Averon is now in recess can I wish you all on behalf of the Master, Wardens, Office Bearers and Brethren an enjoyable time over the summer months and hope the weather is good. We look forward to seeing you when we resume business later in the year.

Kind and fraternal greetings.

Brother James MacDougall — Senior Warden

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

LODGE NESS No 888

Tonight (Tuesday 30th April) Lodge Ness 888 are working a Mark Degree for no fewer than five Members in a special meeting. This will undoubtedly be an interesting and enjoyable night so why not toddle along to Invergordon and give the brethren your support.

ANNUAL BAR-BE-QUE



The Lodge Ness Annual BBQ will be held at Lodge Ness 888 on **Sat 29th June**.

Everyone will be made very welcome and there will be free ice cream for the kids.
There will be Live Entertainment too.

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2007

On the 30th, March members of Lodge Ness presented a cheque for £200 to the South Lodge School Nursery in Invergordon, to be used to assist in the purchase of equipment.

Owen Wilson

Master – Lodge Ness 888

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

LODGE KYLE No 1117

Sadly, last season we had a few departures from the Lodge. Happily, these brethren are still with us, simply enjoying their Masonic retirement at home after more than a hundred years in Freemasonry collectively. The good news from Kyle is that we now have three new Brethren of younger years join the Lodge. The last going through his First Degree in May. They bring with them new ideas that will benefit our Membership and make for a more interesting experience when our brethren attend the Lodge.

One of the newer ideas (from PM Bro Rob Wilson) is our *What's App Group*. We encouraged all brethren to install the App and one of the first benefits is the immediacy of response from almost all members of our What's App group. For example: One Brother sent me (The Secretary) an open Apology as he was unable to attend the Meeting that week. This was closely followed by three more apologies in rapid succession. While it's not good that 4 Brethren were unable to attend, it indicates that the others in the group WILL be attending, thus the knowledge that the Meeting will go ahead and not need to be cancelled. Some of our number have reasonably long distances to travel, and it is somewhat disheartening to travel all that way in the dark, wind and rain, only to be told the Meeting has been cancelled.

The What's App group is only for Kyle Brethren as too many members would ruin the efficiency of the experience. I believe it to be an excellent addition to any Lodge's Marketing and Communication Working Tools.

If you would like to form a WhatsApp group for your Lodge – it's easy! This is what you do: -
PREP: Choose someone in the Lodge with phone and app skills, we will call him Admin. He is responsible for adding Members and the tasks that require intervention (like telling people what they can and can't do). He will then explain to the brethren the advantages of a WhatsApp Group and that it is secure. He will then instruct the brethren how to install the What's App or offer help if a phone is being problematical. Once everyone is "installed", a brief training session can be held to show the brethren where the most frequent actions and buttons are. This is by far the hardest part of setting up the Group.

Setting up the Group:

Open WhatsApp and go to the Chats tab.

Tap on the "New chat" icon (it looks like a speech bubble with a pencil).

Select "New group" from the options.

Now you can choose the participants for your group. Search for or select the contacts you want to add and tap on their names.

Once you've added everyone you want, tap the green forward arrow.

Give your group a relevant or catchy name! This will be the subject of the group chat. You can also add an emoji for some personality.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

You can set a group icon by tapping the camera icon. You can choose an existing photo or take a new one.

When you're happy with everything, tap the green checkmark icon to create the group. That's it! Your WhatsApp group is now set up. You can start chatting with everyone you added.

Here are some additional things to keep in mind:

There's currently a limit of 256 people you can add to a single What's App group.

You can also invite people to a group after it's created by sharing a link or QR code.

There is a desktop version of the App for PCs and Mac.

Enjoy!

Ronnie Miller, PM - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1996

The Kyle Brethren are looking forward to welcoming Brother John Hawkins from America on Tuesday 18th June. Brother Hawkins was initiated into Lodge Kyle in 1937 prior to emigrating to America. He recently donated the sum of £1000 to the Lodge to assist in their building fund, an action which duly prompted the Kyle Brethren to almost double that sum through local donations. Brother Hawkins and his family will be in Kyle for two days during which time they will meet with the principal Office-Bearers and a representative from Provincial Grand Lodge at an informal dinner party, at which he will be presented with his 50-year jubilee certificate. While in Kyle he also hopes to meet up with Brother Bob Simpson who is now resident in Graham House, Dornie and with Brother Sam MacKintosh who was in the Chair when he was initiated in 1937. I've no doubt that Brother Hawkins will be impressed when he visits the Lodge as the brethren have put the money to good use in the re-decoration programme. Best wishes are extended to Brother Hawkins for a happy and enjoyable reunion in Kyle.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

We had hoped to hold an Entered Apprentice degree in February. However, once again our proposed candidate was called away offshore just before the meeting. We did go ahead with the degree albeit with Bro Steven Bassindale standing in as candidate. We had a business meeting on our normal March evening but, we did however, hold a special meeting on 15th to enable Steven Bassindale to attain his third degree. A good evening with Bro Allan Carmichael as RWM and special thanks to Bro Ronald Bruce RWM of Lodge Seaforth for assisting in the ceremony. At the April meeting, which was the annual PGL visitation we unfortunately still had no candidate. However, we worked an EA Degree with Brother Andrew MacNeil of Lodge Fingal stepping in as candidate. There was a good attendance, and everyone enjoyed the evening's work. During the meeting we had an obituary for Bro David Reid who passed away on 12th March aged 97.



Bro Graham Law, PM, was in attendance during our March meeting and updated us on the clothing project undertaken by his wife and himself. This is an initiative to provide casual clothing for in-patients in local hospitals who, for a variety of reasons have been unable to get their own clothing brought into them. This gives them the chance to get up and about in normal clothing rather than in hospital gowns.

We were pleased to pass a couple of bags of suitable clothing to Graham recently.

We are unsure if we have a candidate available for our May meeting. If we can, we will hold an EA degree. If not, we will look into a special meeting during the summer.

Past Master Scott Patience recently received his Great Grandfathers apron. His great-grandfather, Brother Alexander Reid, was initiated, passed, and raised in 1943. The Apron is around 80 years old and has now been framed to be displayed in the Lodge.

Keith Patience, PM



PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Lodge St Martin 1217

St Martin will be working a first degree on Tuesday 21st May 2024, the final meeting for this season tiling at 8.00pm, all brethren are invited to attend.

Congratulations are in order for Lodge Piper Bro Norrie Gillies who completed the Pipe Majors Course 54, also being commended for being the top student on the course, showcasing exemplary skill and knowledge on the course. Bro Gillies also becomes the first three generation family with PM certificate and lodge piper to St Martin.

Brother Jon Stranix has also been busy with the Maundy Thursday ceremony in Worcester Cathedral, Bro Jon is a member of the Yeoman of the Guard and is seen second from the right in the first photo below.

Well done to both of our St Martin members from all the brethren at 1217.

Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary



PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Lodge Loch Ewe 1551

I am very pleased to report that, following a relatively quiet business meeting in March, April saw the regular meeting of the Lodge one of the best attended since well before the pandemic. The business of the evening was an Initiation, and it was indeed a joy to see the candidate, now Bro Craig Simon, take his first regular step in Freemasonry witnessed by some twenty visitors from throughout the Province.

It is to be hoped that our next regular meeting, to be held on May 9th, the date of the rescheduled Provincial Visit, will be equally well attended, as the main business of the evening will again be an Initiation, for Mr Liam Fraser.

Michael Longley, PM – Lodge Loch Ewe

PROVINCIAL PATTTER

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Ye Corporation O' Squaremen

Hielan Shed

VISITS FOR 2024

4 th MAY	-	Lodge Ness – INVERGORDON – bus leaves Inverness 13:30
1 st JUNE	-	GRAND SHED VISIT – Gordon Terrace – INVERNESS 3:00 p.m.
6 th JULY	-	Lodge St Martin - ULLAPOOL – bus leaves Inverness 10:30
3 rd AUGUST	-	Lodge St Andrew – ARDERSEIR – bus leaves Inverness 13:30
7 th SEPTEMBER	-	Lodge Mercantile Marine – STROMNESS

PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO SCRABSTER - This WILL be an overnight stay.

We held our AGM and Installation in Inverness on Saturday 4th March – Sadly we had to announce the Passing of Gordie Bain, 6 River Park, Nairn

At the AGM where the Grand Worthy Deacon of Scotland Bri Martin Kelly was in attendance Bri Robert Hannah was Installed as the new Worthy Deacon by Bri Boxie assisted by AD Neil Cooper and AD Morris Downie – we then donated £1,100 to various good causes including £300 for the GWD's Charity which is to help the people of Brechin that were so badly affected by the storms.



GWD Martin with WD Robert



WD Robert handing Donation to Peter Ratcliffe

On 6th April we visited Robertson's Lodge in Cromarty where we were delighted to have another two new Members join the Corporation and had a very enjoyable afternoon, we also donated a cheque to Secretary Peter Ratcliffe for a worthy cause of the Lodges choosing.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Due to other commitments, we were unable to attend the Installation of the new Grand Worthy Deacon Bri Jim Turpie but have passed on our congratulations and will look forward to his visit to Heilan Shed Saturday 1st June.

Our next visit Meeting will be to Lodge Ness on 4th May where we usually get a good turnout – the bus will leave Inverness at 13:30 for a 15:00 Meeting start – hopefully we will get a few Candidates.

*John & Mackay
Boxie*



The first Saturday in March saw Heilan Shed No 6 hold their Installation meeting in The Club, Inverness. Present was the Grand Worthy Deacon of Scotland, who witnessed an excellent ceremony carried out by Bri Boxie, himself an ex Grand Worthy Deacon. Assisting him was Bri Neil Cooper who installed the Office-bearers.

The newly installed Worthy Deacon Bri Robert Hannah thanked the presiding officers for an excellently carried out Installation.

Photo above shows Auld Deacon James Williamson congratulating Bri John G Mackay on his efforts.

All monies raised during the year were distributed to local needy children's organisations.

The Grand Worthy Deacon's personal charity was also included in the disbursements.

Morris M Downie

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

The 1st Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland MEC W Ramsay McGhee commenced his visits by calling in to visit the Hebrides Arc Mariner and Cryptic Council in Stornoway on Tuesday 20th February where he was warmly welcomed by a good attendance of members.



A fine short harmony followed the meeting.

There was a strong bitterly cold wind on the Wednesday morning, but the ferry left on time and the crossing was calm.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



The 1st Grand Principal and the Provincial Grand Superintendent of Ross and Cromarty attending a meeting of St Clement Royal Arch Chapter in Dingwall

Morris M Downie

Grand Superintendent

Tain & Ross RAC 63

Please note - The Tain and Ross RAC have changed their meeting night to the fourth Monday. This will alleviate clashes with Lodge Fingal and Lodge Ness.

St Clement Royal Arch Chapter No 244

The February meeting was a Mark Mason Affiliation and an Excellent Master Degree for Brother Ronald Bruce.

A month later, on Friday 29th March E C Ronald Bruce was advanced to the Holy Royal Arch Degree. This was our Annual visitation from Provincial Grand Chapter. The Provincial Deputation was led by MEC Morris M. Downie, Grand Superintendent. He was accompanied by MEC John Mackenzie, Grand Superintendent Inverness-Shire, 2nd Principal, MEC James Tait, 2nd Principal of Inverness-shire, MEC Lewis Mackenzie who were introduced by the acting D of C MEC John MacKenzie.

Honorary Grand 1st Sojourner MEC Hugh Fraser introduced the 1st Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, MEC Ramsay McGhee to the 1st Principle MEC Gwyn Philips, who warmly welcomed everyone into the Chapter.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

On Friday 26th April, E C Michael Longley was affiliated to the Mark Lodge and thereafter received the EM Degree. Mike received his Royal Arch Degree in his Mother Chapter, Widows Sons Constitutional Chapter No 55 in the English Constitution...

Donald Gunn PZ
Scribe E.

Cromarty Firth Royal Arch No 310

Brian Jaye is one the newest Masons in the Province to join Royal Arch Masonry and was the candidate at a recent meeting of Cromarty Firth RA Chapter No 310.

On Saturday 13th April he was the main and magical performer for the Chapter's fundraiser contribution for the Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross and Cromarty "Summer Charity Initiative" launched last year.

An excellent and large audience was present to witness a wonderful evening of his magical talents.

The audience fully participated in his tricks and was much appreciated by all in attendance.

The function was held in the premises of neighbouring Lodge Averon No. 866.

Thanks to the Office Bearers and members of the Chapter must be acknowledged for making the event such an enjoyable and successful occasion.



PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER HEBRIDES NO. 364.

We have three new members in the persons of James Macleod, Alick Graham and Chris Marrow who all became excellent masters this year, they will be continuing with their Masonic education during the visitation week in May when they will attain their Royal Arch degrees.

In February we were very privileged in having the honour of conferring the chair degrees of the Ark Mariner Lodge and Cryptic Council on our new First Grand Principal Ramsay McGhee who had previously that evening affiliated to Hebrides Lodge and Council.



During his visit to Stornoway the 1st Grand Principal presented the Companions with a picture of the “Iolaire”, painted by a Black Isle artist, the late Hayden Jeffery. Given the tragic story of the Iolaire, the Companions were delighted to receive the painting to add to the other material they have on the disaster. The picture was very kindly donated to the Lodge by Mrs Louise Jeffery.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod IPGS R&C

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES

The preceptory is continuing to meet and in good strength. Since being made Knights during the district visitation in April last year Alex Scott and Angus Allison received their Malta grades last March.

On Saturday 27th April we received a visit from DGP Eric Macgregor along with a healthy deputation when an exemplification Malta grade was worked - we were told to his satisfaction.

†† Donald Macleod KCT

DISTRICT GRAND PRIORY OF THE NORTH IN SCOTLAND.

Right Eminent District Grand Prior Eric Macgregor has asked me to report that he was very pleased with the workings and record keeping of each of the preceptories he visited during March and April which culminated with a Malta grade in the Preceptory of the Western Isles at which he was accompanied by seven of his officers.



He is now looking forward to the various installations which begin in Stornoway on 26th October and then throughout the district.

It's disappointing to note that the Preceptory of the Highlands and Preceptory of Ross are currently unable to hold meetings due to lack of members.

pp †† Eric Macgregor DGP
†† Donald Macleod KCT

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024



Royal Order of Scotland

Provincial Grand Lodge of Inverness and the Highlands

Provincial Grand Secretary: Bro. Michael Scott Turner

The 75th Anniversary of Inverness and the Highlands is being planned for June 2026

Bro Mike Turner, accompanied by Bro Jim Sutherland had visited Grand Lodge, and a meeting of the PGL of Glasgow and West of Scotland, where PGM had replied to the visitor's toast at the dinner after the meeting. Bro Stephen Smith has visited the PGLs of Southwest Counties, Devon, South Wales, Somerset and Grand Lodge.

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1996

"I Sat in Lodge with You".

There is a saying filled with cheer,
Which calls a man to fellowship.
It means as much for him to hear,
As lies within the Brother grip.
Nay more. It opens wide the way
To friendship deep and true:
There are no strangers when you say,
"I sat in Lodge with You".

Though in far lands ones needs must roam,
By sea and shore and plain,
These words bring him a touch of home
And lighten tasks which seem in vain.
Men's faces are no longer strange,
But seem as those he knew,
When someone brings the joyous change,
"I sat in Lodge with You".

So you my Brother, now and then,
Have put me in your debt,
By showing forth to other men
That you did not forget.
And when the world seems grey and cold
And I am weary worn and blue,
Then comes this golden thought I hold,
"I sat in Lodge with You".

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

BITS AND PIECES

Following a recent sojourn by a deputation from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty to the Wirral to attend a Centenary Celebration Meeting at Progress Lodge No.4584 EC, we were made aware of the huge impact that Williams Hesketh Lever had made in Freemasonry in that area and it was particularly interesting as he was a Past Master of Lodge Fortrose No. 108 in our own Province.

William Hesketh Lever

William Hesketh Lever, 1st Viscount Leverhulme FRGS FRIBA, (19 September 1851 – 7 May 1925) was an English industrialist, philanthropist, and politician. Having been educated at a small private school until the age of nine, then at church schools until he was fifteen; a somewhat privileged education for that time, he started work at his father's wholesale grocery business in Bolton. Following an apprenticeship and a series of appointments in the family business, which he successfully expanded, he began manufacturing Sunlight Soap at a factory in Warrington, building a substantial business empire with many well-known brands such as Lux and Lifebuoy. In 1886, together with his brother, James, he established Lever Brothers, which was one of the first companies to manufacture soap from vegetable oils, and which is now part of the British multinational Unilever.

The success of the Sunlight brand, especially after Lever assumed full responsibility for the product's quality, was exceptional; so much so that by the end of 1887 it had become impossible to squeeze any more capacity from the Warrington plant. Having failed to either extend the site or find more space in the areas, Lever eventually decided to move the whole manufacturing facility to an 11 acres (4.5 ha) green-field site near Birkenhead.



PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Port Sunlight

Lever was the founder of 'Port Sunlight'. In 1887, Lever bought 56 acres (23 ha) of land on the Wirral in Cheshire between the River Mersey and the railway line at Bebington. This site became Port Sunlight where he built his works and a model village to house its employees. From 1888, Port Sunlight village offered decent living conditions in the belief that good housing would ensure a healthy and happy workforce. The community was designed to house and support the workers. Life in Port Sunlight included intrusive rules and implied mandatory participation in activities. The tied cottages meant that a worker losing his or her job could be almost simultaneously evicted.

In some matters, Lever was keen to allow the residents of Port Sunlight a degree of democratic control, and this seems to have led to a common conviction that he was in favour of women's suffrage: a belief that possibly stems from a situation arising in connection the Bridge Inn, a Port Sunlight temperance "pub" that was opened in 1900. Lever was a lifelong teetotaler, and he naturally assumed that the Bridge would be "dry". Within two years of its opening, however, representations were made to change its status to a licensed house. Lever promptly announced that he would not impose his own views, and that the issue would be decided by a referendum; insisting somewhat unconventionally for that time that women would take part. With the added proviso that the Bridge would only become a true British "pub" if a supermajority of 75% was in favour, Lever probably felt confident that the outcome would support his abstemious sentiments, but in the event more than 80% voted for an alcohol licence and even though some people petitioned Lever urging him to use his absolute authority in Port Sunlight and ignore the referendum, he refused to do so.



The Masonic procession returning to Hulme Hall led by W.Bro. Col. Dean, with Lever in the centre of the picture.

Port Sunlight is the location of Hulme Hall, named after Lever's wife's family name, where Progress Lodge No. 4584 meet, and where we met for the Centenary Celebration Meeting.

Port Sunlight which has around 900 homes and many historic buildings and parks, remains preserved as a model village and has been informally suggested as a World Heritage Site.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Freemasonry

William Hesketh Lever became a freemason when he was initiated into the lodge named after him, William Hesketh Lever Lodge No. 2916, in 1902. He passed through all the chairs and was installed as Master in 1907. The lodge was formed by a group of local masons, many of whom worked for Lever Brothers and chose to have their named after the chairman of the company. It is possibly unique in being one of the few lodges to be named after a living non-mason.

The warrant was signed on the 18th of April 1902 and the Lodge was consecrated on Wednesday 4th June 1902.

William Hesketh Lever was installed as Worshipful Master of the Lodge on the 25th of October 1907 at the regular Installation Meeting held Girl's Institute, Port Sunlight.

In 1907, while sitting as an MP, he was a founder of the Phoenix Lodge 3236, and in May 1912 he founded St. Hilary Lodge No. 3591. He then became Past Pro-Grand Warden (P.P.G.W) and Immediate Past Master (I.P.M). In 1919, he was appointed Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England. He was Provincial Senior Grand Warden of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Cheshire and founded many other Lodges.

Brother Lever saw freemasonry as a useful tool to promote social cohesion and high standards of personal conduct and actively encouraged membership amongst his workforces. He established a Masonic network at Port Sunlight which deliberately reinforced the existing hierarchy within Lever Brothers. Separate Lodges were created for managers, supervisors, and workers. Freemasonry was an important instrument in his paternalistic policy for the welfare of his workers.

In May 1918, by then in semi-retirement, Baron Leverhulme of Bolton-le-Moors, as he was then known, bought the Isle of Lewis for £167,000 (probably the equivalent of £16 million today). And in late 1919 he bought the estate of South Harris for £36,000; both of these located in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland.

The Brethren of Lodge Fortrose No. 108, in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, one of twelve Lodges in the Province of Ross and Cromarty, were very honoured and delighted to have Lord Leverhulme affiliate to the Lodge on 23rd August 1918. Later that same year, on the 27th of December 1918 the Brethren saw fit to elect him as Master of the Lodge, and Lodge Fortrose Secretary's telegram to Lord Leverhulme read; "Pleased to announce that your Lordship was unanimously elected RWM of Lodge Fortrose No. 108, Stornoway at forenoon meeting today. Festival of St John tonight - glad to receive message for Brethren assembled."

Lord Leverhulme's reply was "Grateful thanks for telegram just received and for supreme mark of confidence in myself shown by Officers and Brethren unanimously electing me Worshipful Master Lodge Fortrose for coming year which I am honoured and pleased to accept relying with fullest confidence and support and forbearance of Brethren in my sincere and best endeavours to discharge the duties and heavy responsibilities of this high office. Allow me to convey to one and all best wishes of the Season and a happy and prosperous year for Masonry in Lewis - Leverhulme."

On 17th January 1919 he was installed into the Chair of the Lodge as Right Worshipful Master of Lodge Fortrose No. 108.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

He only held office for one year, declining the honour of a second. He was presented with his Past master's jewel by the Master Bro. George Stewart on the 18th of August 1921.



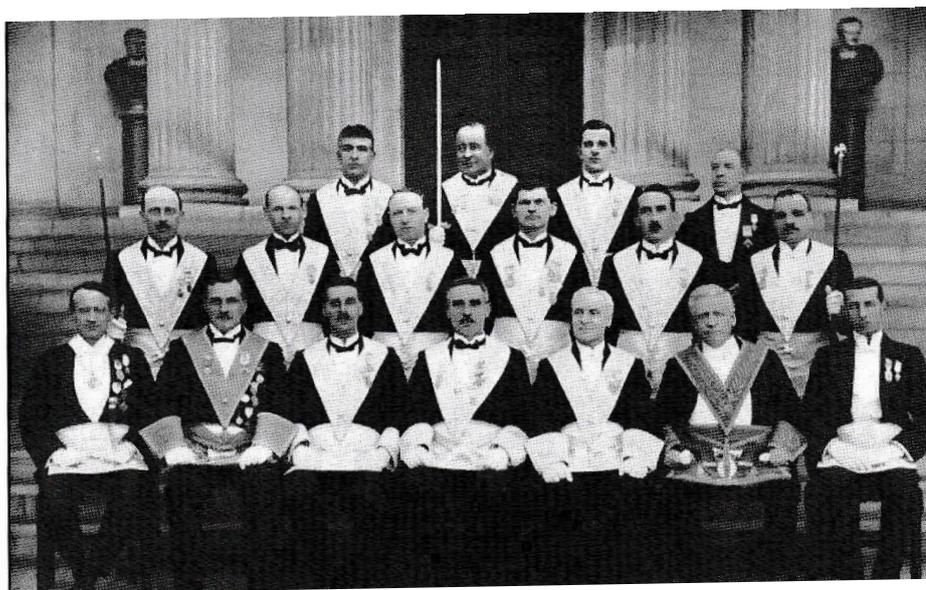
PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

The name “Progress” appears on the original badge of the Lodge and was also the name of a Lever Brother’s internal business magazine. Former employees of Lever Brothers verify that that his magazine is still in print. The Red Rose of Lancashire was a direct of two founder members, Bro’s. Charles Lancashire and Walter Lancashire, the Anchor and “Busy Bees” reflect the local Boys Brigade from which many of the founder members had been involved with.



The Officers of Progress Lodge with Lord Leverhulme seated 2nd from the right on the front row.

Western Isles

In May 1918, by then in semi-retirement, Baron Leverhulme, as he was now, bought the Isle of Lewis for £167,000 (equivalent to £16,700,000 in 2021), and in late 1919 he bought the estate of South Harris for £36,000; both in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland. His plans for their future prosperity centred upon the application of modern science and his own business skills in establishing a large and thriving fishing industry. Although Stornoway had a good harbour, there were many disadvantages to Lord Leverhulme's plans for the port. Its remoteness led to additional transport costs for ice, fuel, packaging, and anything else that had to be imported, as well as for the fish products, almost all of which was sold on the Scottish mainland. The place itself was, for various reasons, unpopular with sailors, and the local population's strict Presbyterian observance of the Sabbath had a negative effect on fishing operations, while catches of varieties of fish other than herring were unfeasibly small.

Lord Leverhulme intended that the port should be improved and enlarged to attract landings of fish from visiting vessels to supplement catches made by local boats and his own fleet of modern drifters and trawlers. There would be an ice-making factory, and cargo vessels with refrigerated holds to take the fresh fish to a depot on the British mainland at Fleetwood, Lancashire, which was well placed to serve the industrial towns of the North of England. Leverhulme also expanded the herring-curing capacity and enlarged the fish processing facilities with the installation of a canning factory, and a plant to make fishcakes, fishpaste, glue, animal feed, and fertiliser, with similar equipment being established at Fleetwood.

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Vertical Integration was apparently one of Leverhulme's main strategies for the island fisheries venture, and to this end he acquired retail fishmonger's shops in most of the UK's larger towns and cities: all were modernised and refitted, and their previous proprietors were installed as managers. This aspect of Lever's Hebridean venture was named Mac Fisheries; the fleet of fishing vessels the MacLine Company. Mac Fisheries was a success, and it grew rapidly until there were over four hundred shops all purchasing fish from many different wholesale suppliers. Other food industry enterprises were acquired including Wall's, a manufacturer of ice-cream and sausages, and various companies specialising in different segments of the fish business, as well as several fishing fleet owners and operators. Although these developments brought tangible benefits to the people of Lewis, Leverhulme's plans did not suit everyone, and this anomaly created severe obstacles for his ambitious plans for the Western Isles.

The population of Harris was smaller in size and more scattered than that of Lewis. Consequently, Leverhulme's plans advanced there with very few problems. With permission from the locals, the fishing village of Obbe was renamed Leverburgh. On 3 September 1923, Viscount Leverhulme, as he had become the previous year, addressed the Stornoway Council and the Lewis District Council at a meeting which he had asked to be specially convened on that date. Lord Leverhulme asked them to take the land and make their system work, but only Stornoway, always on Leverhulme's side, accepted the gift, set up the Trust, and to a large extent made it work for the benefit of the town. Left with so much of the Island he no longer wanted, Leverhulme sold off as much as he could, but many of the buyers were interested principally in shooting and fishing. Leverhulme died in May 1925. Very soon thereafter, the Board of Lever Brothers gave orders for all development on Harris to stop, and so Leverhulme's scheme for the Western Isles perished with almost nothing achieved there.

Grand Lodge of Scotland – On-line shopping



Here is a small selection of items available from the Grand Lodge Shop



PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 119

MAY 2024

Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland



Since taking over as First Grand Principal, I have visited the following Chapters – St Clement RAC No 244, Edinburgh Defensive Band RAC No 278, at which I was installed in the Chair, Edinburgh Defensive Band CC, Provincial Grand RAC of Angus & Mearns, Provincial Grand RAC of Fife, Burnvale RAC No 397 and Troon RAC No 575.

I have been privileged to receive Honorary Membership of Linlithgow RAC, No V, the Provincial Grand RAC of Aberdeenshire and Burnvale RAC No 397.

The Half Yearly Convocation and Installation of Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter Office-bearers will be held within Freemasons Hall, 96 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3DH at 1:00pm on Friday 14th June 2024 followed by a dinner commencing at 4:30pm. As is usual, all seats for the dinner will be reserved and, as the demand for tickets is very likely to be high, please intimate your attendance as soon as possible, but no later than 17th May 2024, by returning the remittance form attached and advising of any dietary requirements. The cost per ticket is £40.00 per person.



W Ramsay McGhee
1st Grand Principal



The "Official" picture