

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 122

FEBRUARY 2025

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



Lodges of the Province – Lodge Lochewe No 1551 - Aultbea

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Editorial

Welcome to the 122nd Edition of the Patter.

It's hard to believe that it was 30 years ago this month that I sat down and penned the first edition of the Provincial Patter.

Those early editions were only two or three pages long but, thanks to the dedication and commitment of those Brethren in all our Lodges and the other Orders, the "Patter" now extends to some 30 pages bringing news and views from each Lodge and Chapter and the various Orders in the Province.

Many of the former regular contributors are sadly no longer with us – Brethren such as Roddy Cade, Sinclair Bruce, Iain Sinclair, Donnie Ross, Ian Fraser and of course Jim Tait – ensured in the early days that I received all the news and views and thanks to them, we still have our current regular contributors whose names you will see throughout each issue.

It has set me thinking – if it was a reasonable enough cost, it might be nice to produce half a dozen bound volumes of the "Patter" with five years news and views in each or maybe just present the Highland Archive Centre with an electronic version to keep for posterity. Your contributions over the past 30 years have, in effect, produced something of a social history of Ross and Cromarty.

However, while it is nice to sit and look back and reflect on the stories from the past, we need to be aware of the challenges facing us as we move forward. Things have changed significantly in the past thirty years, and we need to change as well to ensure that we attract the right candidates into Freemasonry and equally important, that we are able to retain them as active members.

Please give that some thought as we move into this New Year.

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



THE GRAND LODGE
OF ANTIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF SCOTLAND

The work of the various Standing Committees is making progress on various fronts. Much headway is being made on the IT front – it is important that we get the specification right – so that is the priority at the moment.

One of the Sub-committees will be ensuring that there is a Grand Lodge presence at the Royal Highland Show and hopefully the Black Isle Show, supported by local Brethren.

Between now and the next edition of the Patter, I'll be heading Grand Lodge Deputations to a double celebration on 1st February with Lodge The Bonnie Doon No 565 and Fergusson St James No 566 in Ayrshire. The following week we will be heading north to Lodge John O' Groat to celebrate their Centenary. On 15th Feb it is back to Ayrshire and Lodge Coila St Andrew No 1334 in Joppa.

On 24th and 25th Grand Secretary and I will attend the Tri-Partite meeting in London after which I head to New Zealand. I arrive in Christchurch on Thursday afternoon and will install the new Royal Arch Grand Superintendent that evening before flying on to Dunedin to install the new DGM of South Island on 1st March then onward to Auckland in North Island to install their DGM on Saturday 8th after which it will be back to the UK hopefully in time for the Provincial visit to Lodge Fingal on 11th.

Sat 15th it is back north to Caithness to celebrate the Centenary of St Peters RAC No 600.

Saturday 22nd – Lodge St Andrew in Linlithgow, 29th Laird O' Cockpen RAC, 5th April – Installation of new PGM in Aberdeenshire West. On Saturday 12th April we have the Superintendents meeting finishing off the month with the Grand Lodge Leadership Day.

Editor

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The Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty

As this is the first edition of the Patter of 2025, can I, on behalf of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty, wish all our readers a very happy, healthy and prosperous year ahead.

Unfortunately, I must open on a sad note, as over the past three months this Province, and Freemasonry in general, has lost three huge characters.

In late November we heard that Brother Ian Fraser, Past First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland had passed to the Grand Lodge above. Brother Ian was a tremendous and tireless ambassador for Royal Arch Freemasonry, both within Scotland and the many countries throughout the world that he visited. He was well loved and respected by all that he met, and many will fondly remember his wry sense of humour, his charismatic manner and relaxed approach to Freemasonry despite its sometimes rigorous and staid rituals.

Ian served as First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland for nine years, from 2009 - 2018. He also served as Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty from 2001 - 2006 and was a Past Master of Lodge Avero No. 866.

The last time I met with Ian, along with the Grand Master Mason, Brother Ramsay McGhee, was to visit him in Raigmore Hospital to present him with his 60-year Jubilee certificate, a great achievement, and exceptional service to Scottish Freemasonry, served cheerfully with great honour and distinction.

Shortly later, in early December, we received the sad news that Brother Ian MacLaren, Past Provincial Grand Chaplain, had also laid down his working tools.

Brother Ian had bravely lived for the past several years with thrice weekly trips to Raigmore Hospital to receive dialysis treatment, but it did not stop him regularly attending meetings at his own Mother Lodge, Lodge Rosehaugh No. 1216, attending many other lodge meetings throughout the Province and a constant companion to Brother Ramsay McGhee during his travels throughout the length and breadth of Scotland fulfilling his various roles with the Grand Lodge of Scotland. During Ian's time spent with Ramsay, not only was a source of companionship, but he acted as navigator, keeping Ramsay on the correct route in their travels to many out of the way places, and affectionately earning himself the nickname of "Tom-Tom". During these extensive travels Ian made many friends, and gained the respect of many Brethren, who will sadly miss his cheery banter.

I also remember the bravery and ingenuity of Ian when, during a fund-raising event that we planned for the Make It A Million appeal, we had arranged to cycle around all the Lodges in our Province. Not to be outdone, Ian had talked to the nursing staff at Raigmore Hospital about the event and his frustration at not being able to join in, and so captivated were the nurses with his disappointment, that they had arranged for an exercise bicycle to be located in the dialysis ward so that he could cycle the equivalent miles whilst he was hooked up to his dialysis equipment receiving his treatment.

What an example of the mettle and fortitude of the man, and a great example to all his commitment to Freemasonry.

More recently, we were all shocked to hear of the sudden passing of Brother Jim Tait, Past Substitute Provincial Grand Master.

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Brother Jim, despite his many other ailments, was a regular attender, and participant, at many lodges and events, not only in our Province, but throughout Scotland. Jim was a great supporter of the Provincial Grand Lodge and was outstanding in his commitment, support and attendance.

Jim was a member of many other masonic orders and regularly held office in every order that he supported.

He was well known for his entertaining skills and there was never a dull moment when Jim was in the company. His popularity was evident in the huge attendance at his funeral, with around 75 Brethren perambulating and marking the grave.

All three of these Brethren were great ambassadors for Highland Freemasonry and their passing leaves a great void in our Craft, but we can rejoice in the affability, that we have been blessed in that we have been fortunate to have shared some harmonious and cordial time with each of them and have the everlasting memories of great times spent together.

Our heartfelt condolences are tendered to their families and friends and let us offer our prayers for the Great Architect of the Universe to bless and keep the souls of our departed brethren into his eternal lodge above.

Closing the Year

It was very pleasing that I was able to attend all of the lodge installations, with the exception of Lodge Fortrose No.108 which unfortunately clashed with the installation meeting at Lodge Rosehaugh No 1216, and to witness the Masters and Office-bearers cheerfully accepting their offices, affirming their respective responsibilities, and looking enthusiastically forward to working hard to further the development and standing of their lodges.

I wish all the Masters and the Office-bearers of each of the Lodges in the Province every success, fulfilment and enjoyment in their respective terms of office for the coming term and I look forward to working with them and receiving their support in our joint endeavours.

It was also pleasing to welcome into the Province a small, but influential deputation from the Lodge United Brothers No.251 from Trinidad and Tobago who attended a special meeting at lodge Fingal No.318. Lodge United Brothers No. 251 is the second oldest overseas lodge in the Scottish Constitution. I thank the Master and Brethren of Lodge Fingal No.318 for facilitating the meeting, and delivering an excellent Master Mason Degree for our visitors, which assists in further enhancing the special relationship the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty have with the Brethren from the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago & Grenada.

We hope and pray that the present concerning news coming from that area does not impact on our friends and their families based in the region, and that a resolution to the difficulties is found soon.

Annual Lodge Visits

We, in the Provincial Grand Lodge, look forward as the new year commences to commencing our Annual Lodge visits. It is always pleasing to meet up with the Brethren in their Lodges, particularly the new Masters and recently promoted Office-bearers, and to see them developing into their new roles.

Recently, we have witnessed a good number of new candidates joining Lodges in the Province, and I am very impressed by the quality of the new members, many answering their Test Questions in an exemplary manner, and some taking parts on the floor at an early stage of their progress.

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The Lodges in this Province have always enjoyed a high standard of ritual in the past, and it is important as we strive to improve our masonic experience, coupled with the influx of new enthusiastic and ambitious members, that we continue to maintain and improve the delivery of our degrees and ritual, and embrace other new practices and ideas to retain these new members, and of course, to retain our existing members.

As the new year commences, I urge all the senior members of the lodges in this Province to think proactively how we can support Grand Lodge, and in particular the Governance and Strategy Board, who are striving, along with the various committees, with actions and ideas to gratify the necessities of the Strategic Priorities, which we should have at the forefront of our masonic actions and behaviours:-

Placing Membership at the Heart of Scottish Freemasonry
Growing Scottish Freemasonry Internationally and
Creating Inspiring Communication and Engagement

I look forward to catching up with you all soon, and the dates of the annual visits to lodges are appended below.

Wednesday 12th February 2025 shall be the next Provincial Grand Lodge Communication, which will be held at Lodge Fingal, Dingwall, and I look forward to updating all on what is going on in the Province. It will be pleasing to see a good turnout of Masters and Wardens from our Daughter Lodges, as by virtue of their office, they are all members of the Provincial Grand Lodge.

Key PGL Dates

Grand Lodge Communication - Thursday 6th February 2025

Provincial Grand Lodge Communication - Wednesday 12th February 2025

Dates of Provincial Grand Lodge Visits

Averon 866 -	13 th February 2025
Ness 888 -	25 th February 2025
St Duthus 82 -	3 rd March 2025
Fingal 318 -	11 th March 2025
Seaforth 854 -	17 th March 2025
Robertsons 134 -	19 th March 2025
Rosehaugh 1216 -	4 th April 2025
Loch Ewe 1551 -	10 th April 2025
St Martin 1217 -	15 th April 2025
Kyle 1117 -	5 th May 2025
Fortrose 108 -	16 th May 2025
Allan Wilson 851 -	8 th July 2025

PGL AGM and Installation of Office-bearers - Wednesday 28th May 2025

PGL Lodge of Sorrow - Sunday 8th June 2025

Ladies Night / Dinner Dance - Friday 14th November.

Fraternal Regards

Raymond Mackeddie

Provincial Grand Master

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Young Masons Group

The group has continued to meet on a regular basis, monthly by Zoom and following an earlier proposal they continue to meet informally as a group at lodges in the Province. They regularly advertise lodge meetings on their WhatsApp Group which allows them to attend lodges to support new initiates and progressive candidates.

It was pleasing to see several of the newer members of the Young Masons Group recently taking part in Degree work and carrying out parts for the first time, and to a very high standard.

Over the last few months, the Brethren on the Zoom Meetings have enjoyed various presentations, including Brother Alex Craib PM, who gave an interesting insight into the history of Lodge Old Inverness Kilwinning No VI.

In December they also enjoyed an interesting presentation on Freemasonry and the Holy Land by Brother Kevin Pollock PM Brother Kevin is the Secretary of the PGL Renfrewshire East Insight Group, which is a popular online masonic research group.

Last month they had another presentation by Brother Dickon Sandbach PM, the PG Secretary of Inverness-shire, who delivered a well-received presentation titled "What is Freemasonry?", which generated a healthy discussion to follow.

Being very geographically spread, the Zoom meetings work very well for the group and last month we had many members logging in from the west coast lodge and the Isle of Lewis, by far outnumbering the members from the East side of the Province.

The group has been in discussion regarding a trip to Roslyn Chapel in the springtime when the weather for travelling should improve. Roslyn Chapel, near Edinburgh, is a very important building in masonic history, with a remarkable collection of very interesting stonework and masonic symbolism.

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

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 1995

The very first edition of the Provincial Patter was produced 30 years ago this month.

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From the Provincial Almoner

The following have sadly passed away to the Grand Lodge above.

On Thursday 17th October 2024, Brother William Skinner MM of Lodge Rosehaugh No. 1216 passed away.

On Tuesday 12th November 2024, Brother Alan Baker PM of Lodge Allan Wilson No. 851 passed away. Brother Baker was a regular attender to this Lodge.

On Tuesday 12th November 2024, Brother Hector MacKenzie PM of Lodge Kyle No. 1117 passed away in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. Brother MacKenzie will be a big loss to the Lodge and Freemasonry

On Saturday 23rd November 2024, Brother Ian Fraser PM of Lodge Averon No. 866 passed away. Brother Ian was also Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Ross and Cromarty and the First Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. Brother Ian will be sadly missed by all at home and all over the world

On Tuesday 3rd December 2024 in Raigmore Hospital, Brother Ian MacLaren PM of Lodge Rosehaugh No. 1216, passed away. Brother Ian will be a great loss to the Province and further afield in Scotland for all the visiting he made to many Lodges far and wide. He will be sadly missed by all.

On Friday 13th December 2024 in Broadford Hospital, Brother Alexander Mackenzie (Sandy the Piper), MM of Lodge Averon No. 866 passed away. He will be sadly missed for his piping at many Masonic occasions.

On Monday 6th January 2025, Brother James (Jim) A Tait, PM of Robertsons Lodge No. 134, passed away suddenly at home. Brother Jim was a well-known Freemason in all Lodges in the Province, other Provinces, other Masonic Orders and at Grand Lodge in Edinburgh. He will be greatly missed by all for his strength in Freemasonry. A good friend to many, a true gentleman and Freemason.

Recently the following Brethren of Lodge Fortrose No 108 have sadly passed away to the Grand Lodge above: Brother Norman Martin, Brother Murdo MacLeod and Brother Donnie MacLeod

I also report on the following: On Wednesday 8th January 2025, Rosemary Cattanach passed away peaceful in the Lawson Hospital, Golspie. Beloved wife of Brother Robin Cattanach PM of Lodge St Duthus No. 82 and Past Provincial Grand Master, Ross and Cromarty.

Brother Donald Graham PM of Lodge Fortrose No. 108, has managed to attend another Lodge meeting and is in good form.

Brother Duncan Munro PM of Lodge Averon No. 866 is much about the same.

Brother Charlie Carrison PM of Lodge Averon No. 866 has now recovered well and is managing his Masonic duties again.

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I will now close by asking once again that should any Brother require my assistance, please get in touch with me. I would also ask that Lodge Almoners and any other Lodge member to please keep me updated on any other members with health issues.

Fred T Fraser PM
Provincial Grand Almoner

fraserft@yahoo.com or 01463 870307

Around the Lodges

Lodge St Duthus No 82



Brethren,

January may be over but from all at Lodge St Duthus can I wish you all the very best for 2025.

Lodge St Duthus No 82's programme for the rest of the session is

3rd February a Mark Degree for PM S Regan & Bro Jonathan Murphy

3rd March Fellowcraft Degree for Bro Tommy Gordon this will also be the Provincial Visitation Meeting

7th April a short Lecture on the Square and Compass by Bro S O'Donnell.

The start of the year seen an uptake in groups wishing to hire out the Lodge rooms with Ross Shire Slimmer's holding regular weekly meetings. Tain Gala committee holding bingo and quiz nights plus other individual bookings as well. All this will help to maintain the fabric of the building and bodes well for the future.

Yours Faithfully & Fraternally

D Macrae - Bro. D Macrae PM Secy

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Lodge Fortrose No 108

At our benevolence committee meeting in December, it was proposed that we distribute more than £2,200 to various local charities, Grand Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge, recent widows and a few of our elderly brethren who we felt deserved a little help at this time of year.

The local charities we supported were: Hebridean Men's Cancer Group, Salvation Army Food Bank, Stornoway Rugby Club, MND Research, Western Isles Cancer Care Initiative & St Columba's Church (Boys & Girls Brigade.)

They were all invited to a cheque presentation but as you can see from the photo only the Rugby Club and The Salvation Army turned up.



Our annual installation was held on 6th December and Davie Thomas carried out the duties of installing master in his usual very efficient manner, he delegated some of the duties including the ceremony of the 4 corners to 4 young masons who were absolutely first class. The meeting was followed by the Festival of St John and the following day a coach load of brethren travelled to Tarbert to witness the installation there and of course enjoyed the famous Harris hospitality.

Our January meeting was purely a business meeting. Our annual Burns Supper is to be held on Saturday 1st February (postponed from 24th January mainly because our heating broke down and a replacement boiler had to be installed.)

We will be working an EA degree at our first meeting in February and a MM degree at our middle of the month meeting.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod PM

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Robertson's Lodge No 134

Sincere and Fraternal Greetings Brethren,

The Lodge has started holding meetings in this, the 2024 to 2025 Season.

As the November Meeting was postponed to 4th December 2024 due to inclement weather causing a lack of attending members. At the follow-on meeting held on 4^h December 2024 the Lodge held the Annual General Meeting where our Treasurer Brother Alasdair Taylor presented the Annual Accounts showing the Lodge was in good standing. The other business was the nomination and election of the RWM and Office Bearers for the following season, 2024 to 2025. After some discussion, Brother Peter Foster Snr was unanimously elected as the Master for the next season, his Office bearers were elected according to the approved procedure.

At the following meeting in December, the Installation Meeting, Brother Peter Foster, PM, was installed as Master for the following season. The RW Installing Master was Brother Brian J. Poloczek, PM, with his excellent Installation Team of Past Masters from Lodge Fingal 318. These being Past Master Poloczek and his team, Past Masters Donnie Gunn, Henry Cameron and Colin MacIntosh, with parts by the Provincial Grand Master, Brother Raymond A. Mackeddie, and Substitute Provincial Grand Master, Brother David A. MacMaster. Team Member Brother George Robinson, PM 866 took part also. Past Master Jim A. Tait installed the Office Bearers in his usual unique and inimitable way. It was an excellent Installation Meeting and even photos were taken this time.

However, since the Installation we were all deeply saddened to learn of the untimely death of Past Master Jim Tait. He has been a mainstay of the Lodge for many years and will be sadly missed by us all.

It was abundantly clear at the funeral service, the high regard in which Brother Tait was held, not only in our Lodge but in the wider Masonic family. It must have been a great source of comfort to Pat and the family to witness some seventy-five Brethren pay their respects at the close of the funeral service.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Pat, Duncan and Leigh at this very sad time.

Peter K. Ratcliffe, Secretary

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Lodge Fingal No 318

Our first meeting since the last edition of the Patter was on Tuesday 12th November when we had our AGM and nomination of Office Bearers. Plus, Brother Raymond MacKeddie PGM presented a very interesting and informative talk on Prostate Scotland.

Our next three meetings were all MM Degrees for Bros, Shaun Taylor, Kai McAuley and Andrew MacNeil. We also received a deputation from Trinidad during Bro McAuley's degree meeting.

On Saturday the 7th of December Bro Joe Thain and Bro. Richard MacDonald installed a Defibrillator outside the Lodge building. Hopefully this will never have to be used, but a great asset to the Lodge and the surrounding area.



On Saturday the 28th of December we held our annual installation meeting where Bro Alex Craib was once again installed as the RWM. This was an extremely well attended meeting with 77 Brethren in attendance. Many of the brethren stayed for the buffet after the meeting, which was enjoyed by all.



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On Tuesday the 14th January we worked a FC Degree for Bro. Mykel MacKenzie. This was a well-attended meeting with Bro. Shaun Taylor, presenting the lecture on the SE corner, which was his first ever time on the floor! Excellent effort Shaun!

Our next meeting on Tuesday 11th of February will be a MM Degree for our Octogenarian Brother Andrew Morrison.

The meeting on Tuesday 11th of March will be the annual visitation from the Provincial Grand Lodge. We hope that this will be another MM Degree, this time for Bro. Mykel MacKenzie.

On the social side we have the following events taking place: -

Quiz Night - Logie Lounge: Saturday 15th February 2025 - 7:00pm for 7:30pm. Brother David MacMaster PM, will be the Quiz Master, assisted by Brother Angus Beaton PM, teams of four at a cost of £20 per team. **To reserve a team** please contact the Lodge Secretary Angus Beaton - secretary@fingalodge318.org.uk or 07775 837998 or any Fingal Brother.

Ladies Night - Saturday 15th March 2025 in the Logie Lounge, 6:30 for 7:00pm; Dram on arrival; Sit down, three course meal, supplied by Storehouse, glass of wine during the meal; Music supplied by Edwin's Music. Tickets available from Bro. Andrew MacNeil - andrewm64@hotmail.co.uk or Richard MacDonald - richard85xx@hotmail.co.uk or any Fingal Brother.

The Ladies Night is always a very popular evening with numbers limited to around 55, so tickets will be sold on a first come, first served basis. Please note - Over 18's Only.

Saturday 16th August 2025 - Our Annual B-B-Q, details nearer the time.

Please note the new contact details for the Lodge Secretary

secretary@fingalodge318.org.uk

Mobile 07775 837998

Angus Beaton - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 2005

Plans are in hand to start a refurbishment programme in the Clubrooms at Dingwall and further plans are afoot to replace the Office-bearers Regalia. No doubt the RWM and his very active team of Office-bearers will be scheming and planning in the background to ensure that all the work they are keen to pursue will indeed come to fruition.

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LODGE ALLAN WILSON 851

During the close season of Lodge Allan Wilson, our Master, Brother John Stott, has been out and about in the Province representing the Lodge.

In anticipation of Lodge Union and Crown No 307 coming north to the Lodge later in the year to work the dramatized prisoner of war degree, the Brethren of 851 are having a sponsored duck race to raise funds to assist with the function.

Ducks are only a fiver each – buy one for yourself and a few for the family – first prize is £100; 2nd prize £50 and two third prizes of £25.

Ducks can be purchased through the Lodge Secretary or any member of the Lodge.

Ramsay McGhee - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 2008

After the Degree, an informal Harmony was held in the Clubrooms where the stories got more and more interesting as the night wore on. However, PM Maguire has backed up his claims of catching an 8lb trout (it was 2lb at the start of the night) with a photo to prove, once and for all that he did catch the beauty.



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LODGE SEAFORTH 854

The close of 2024 saw the Lodge hold its AGM and Election of Office-bearers Meeting, with the Brethren unanimously backing Brother Ronald Bruce to continue in a further year as Master of the Lodge.

The re-installation meeting of the Master, Brother Ronald Bruce, was held on Saturday 14th December with a good attendance being treated to an excellently presented installation ceremony led by the very popular Installing Master, Brother George Robinson PM, Lodge Averon No 866. George was ably assisted by several well-known eloquent local Brethren, and the Office-bearers were invested by Brother Mike Turner, Depute Provincial Grand Master.

The day was rounded off with a celebration of the Festival of St John, an excellent dinner, followed by articulate and poignant speeches, a well-stocked raffle, all enjoyed in a most harmonious and enjoyable atmosphere.



In our December meeting, the Brethren held a quickly executed business meeting then closed the lodge early to join the Ladies and enjoy the annual Christmas Carol and Lessons Service, a lovely night of carol singing and bible readings, followed by a tea and appropriate festive treats.

The January meeting was planned to be a Fellowcraft Degree for Bro. Matthew Ross, who unfortunately could not attend due to shift working requirements. Brother Shaun Taylor, a recently raised Master Mason from Lodge Fingal No 318, stood in as candidate and proved to be a very able replacement.

It is planned to host a lecture presentation at our February meeting and a Fellowcraft Degree for the March meeting, which will be the Annual Visitation from the Provincial Grand Lodge.

Community Bingo

Following the success of last summer's Bingo Night's, the lodge has decided to host Bingo Nights in January, February and March.

The dates for your diary are - Friday 21st February and Friday 21st March

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Everybody welcome
Doors open at 7:00pm
Entry from £1.00 per strip/10 games
Monetary Prizes
Raffle

Raymond Mackeddie

Lodge Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 1996

Warmest congratulations are extended to two well-known Brethren from the Province who have been honoured by the Grand Master Mason in recognition of their work and endeavour for Freemasonry within the Province. Past Master Hugh David Skinner, Lodge St Duthus No 82 has been awarded the Honorary Grand Rank of Bible Bearer while Brother George MacIver, Robertson's Lodge No 134, has received the accolade of Honorary Grand Tyler. It is most gratifying to see such Honours coming into the Province and we applaud both Brother Hugh David and Brother George for their well-deserved recognition.

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LODGE AVERON No 866

Hi Brethren,

I hope everyone is doing fine and getting back to normal after the Christmas and New Year celebrations. In late November early December we distributed funds raised from our annual golf day to our chosen charities Redwoods Nursing Home, Alness, Fox and Friends, Alness and the Sharing Shed in Evanton, each of these groups which serve our community received a cheque for £500.00, £1500.00 in total, the Brethren of Lodge Averon, the various Lodges from within and out with the province, guests and the various businesses whom contributed should be very proud. Freemasonry at its best supporting local communities.

Fox and Friends



Evanton Sharing Shed



Redwoods Nursing Home

On the 12th of December 2024 Past Master Brother William Ross was presented with his 60th year Diamond Certificate and Jewel, which was gratefully received by Bro Ross who is also a Past Provincial Grand Master, a great achievement and we wish him well for the future.

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Also, on the same night Brother Alister Ross was presented with his 50th year Jewel, which was lost in the post, Brother Ross was presented with his Certificate at an earlier meeting, he is delighted with his jewel and wears it proudly.

The night preceding our annual installation saw the Averon Brethren carry out another one of our yearly fixtures with the 'Santa Run'. This proved a great success again with some very sizeable crowds amassed to see Santa and his helpers and catch a sweetie or two. Thanks to the brethren who helped prepare and dismantle the sleigh and the brethren who took part on the night.



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The 21st of December 2024 a full Lodge, saw a big change at Lodge Averon when a new young Master was installed into the chair of King Solomon in the form of Brother Frazer Aaron McBeath. Quite momentous for our lodge as he follows in the footsteps of his father Past Master Frazer McBeath Snr. After the installation ceremony which was carried out by Past Master George Robinson and his team to a very high standard, we celebrated the Festival of St John, the meal prepared and served by the ladies of the lodge and their helpers was fantastic as usual and we are indebted to them.

Brother

Frazer Aaron McBeath

*Master of Lodge Averon
No 866*



As is customary at our installation we had a very sizeable raffle and an auction which I must thank sincerely everyone who contributed prizes and those who gave so generously buying 'small brown

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envelopes' as well as buying squares for the big bottle of 'Famous Grouse' there is not many left and hopefully they will go at our next meeting.

Our first meeting of 2025 on the 9th of January RWM McBeath got off to a flier or, as Immediate Past Master Carrison suggested, the deep end. We carried out an entered apprentice degree for Brother Phillip Brannan and are planning a Fellow Craft Degree on the 13th February for Brother George Hunter. This will also be our Annual Visitation from The Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty, and we look forward to welcoming the Provincial Grand Master Brother MacKeddie and his deputation on the night which is the start of a very busy period for provincial.

There's not much more to report apart from a massive congratulations to Past Master Brother Frazer McBeath Snr who on Tuesday 28th January was presented with a Lifetime Contribution Award from Judo Scotland in recognition of his commitment to our local Alness and Evanton Judo Club and his miles traveling all over Scotland in his capacity as a referee. I'm sure you will all join me in giving PM McBeath a massive well done.

We hope to see you at our meetings if not out and about visiting.

Till the next edition.....

Fraternally

Brother James MacDougall — Senior Warden

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 2007

Advance Notice of one or two events that will be taking place over the next few months – the Quarterly Communication will take place in Lodge Ness, Invergordon on 14th February at 8.00 pm and will be chaired by the IPPGM, Bro Ian Fraser.

The Provincial Education Day will take place on 17th March (not the 31st as advertised). It will take the form of a seminar for Lodge Secretaries, Treasurers and Almoners and I can announce that Grand Treasurer, Bro Douglas Duncan will address the seminar. Further details will be circulated in due course but get the date into your diary. Likewise, the 28th of April – the Provincial Charity Day. This will take the form of the Brethren of the Province helping at the Black Isle Cycle Ride in aid of the Highland Hospice. I will be writing to the Lodges but would take this opportunity to appeal to all Brethren throughout the Province to get involved by either – volunteering as a steward – actually cycling – gathering sponsorship for those who are cycling – running an event to support the cycle run at your own Lodge on the 28th of April or even running a fund-raising stall at the event.

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LODGE NESS No 888



Lodge Ness 888 had their installation on December 10th. The Installing Master was G Robinson PM and for the second time Bro I Wilson PM took the chair for another term following O Wilson PM.

From his office as Master, Lodge Ness is gaining members regularly and is getting busier - everyone is welcome. Also, a mention to Leslie Ross, PM having attained 25 years as Lodge Treasurer. He retired in December however the Lodge was delighted to present a diploma to him for 25 years distinguished service and very deservedly too.

Owen Wilson

Master – Lodge Ness 888

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LODGE KYLE No 1117

Lodge Kyle held its installation at the hands of Installing Master Rob Wilson on the second Monday in December. A lovely evening for all with PM Brother Steve Whittaker going into the Chair for a third term. It was generally agreed the Lodge and its work had improved under his tutelage. A good Harmony followed.

Our next event was to be a Third Degree for Brother Cameron Mackenzie; his father and grandfather in attendance. Sadly Hector Mackenzie (senior) passed to The Grand Lodge Above and so the Degree had to be postponed. Hector, whose Ritual knowledge was unsurpassed in Lodge Kyle, had a major role on the degree, to mark this third and important step in Cameron's Masonic Career. Hector our Brother and friend will be long remembered; and missed by us all.

The fabric of the Lodge continues to be troublesome. The floor, which has already been repaired, seems "springy" near the entrance of the Lodge. It will be inspected to see what needs to be done. We also had the electrics PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) tested. The old cooker has been disconnected and retired after many years' service as did a similarly ancient kettle with what looked like a cloth flex! The rest of the Lodge passed, and we were able to reinsure the Lodge.

We paid £791 to insure the Lodge to the value of £446,000 which was the insurer's recommendation for re-building the Lodge. While £791 per annum seems like a lot of money, our Treasurer has searched through cheaper solutions, finding mostly that their headline prices required increasing greatly to provide suitable cover, negating any pecuniary benefit.

Lodge Kyle benevolence was good this quarter with the Local Branch of Legion Scotland receiving £350 which includes another very generous donation from Janet Macpherson, daughter of the late PM Hector Macpherson, given in his memory. The Local swimming pool, The Lochalsh Leisure Centre, was also gifted £150 as their facility recently caught fire and the repairs are expected run into 6 figures. They had good insurance but continue to raise funds and we wish them well in their endeavours.

The Brethren are all optimistic that this year will be a good one and we benefit from several younger new members who keep the older Brethren on their toes to make it so! Several of the younger Brethren participate in The Young Masons, Meeting virtually (on Zoom) with other Young Masons across the country. This brings fresh ideas into the Lodge and adds knowledge and interest for new Brethren who are unfamiliar with our ritual and Freemasonry in general ... all from the comfort of their own home.

Lastly, may I take this opportunity to wish all the Brethren in the province, A Happy New Year with good health and prosperity in 2025!

Ronnie Miller, PM - Secretary

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

We held a 2nd degree for Bro Calum Mackenzie at our November meeting. Went very well and a good attendance also. Our installation evening was held on Friday 6th December with the Installation team led by Bro George Robinson PM Averon No 866. An excellent ceremony as normal with George at the helm. PM William Macleman installed the office bearers in equally good fashion. It was good to see Bro Graeme Brindle take the chair this being our first new master since 2017. An equally good harmony followed in social room following the evening's work. With Graeme heading off on holiday in January and now IPM Donald McLennan also away we decided not to hold a January meeting. Our next regular meeting will be held on Friday 7th February and will be a business meeting. As normal a good attendance of Lodge Members attended the war memorial in Avoch for armistice day. Bro Graeme Brindle has the honour this year in placing our wreath on at the monument. Incidentally the Avoch Gentlemen's golf society which a lot of our Brethren are involved in put the funds together to pay for the painting of the steps and outside fencing which tidied it up somewhat. No help from the Council on this or the memorial itself which does not look too good at present.

Ian Maclaren PM

It was on the 16th of December at Killearnan Parish Church we said our goodbyes to Ian with an excellent service conducted by our GMM Bro Ramsay McGhee with a large attendance including over 50 masons. Ramsay gave us a very interesting resume of Ian's life. He spoke about Ian's love of motor bikes, a trip to Isle of Man for the TT races aged just 13 and the work he did repairing the Dalmore Bedford Lorry (1957) and taking it to shows all over the Country. Things I did not know about Ian. I did know he also travelled the length and breadth of the country with Ramsay and Alec Craib attending meetings, installations etc and being an excellent ambassador for Lodge Rosehaugh where he became a freemason joining in 1986 on the same evening as his good friend Bro Donald McLennan PM. Ian's installation in December 2000 saw the Lodge jam-packed including a large delegation from Trinidad and Tobago in attendance.

Ian had kidney issues which required dialysis 3 days a week. This did not stop him getting involved in the Grand Lodge make it a million appeal for prostate cancer where he got the nurses to get a bicycle into the Raigmore unit and his efforts raised over £1000 for the appeal. A great effort.

It was very sad to hear a couple of months ago that Ian had other issues from which he was not to recover, and he sadly passed to the Grand Lodge above on the 2 December 2024. Ian is now re-united with his beloved wife Peggy who passed away 9 years ago. The lodge pass on their condolences to Bro Sandy, Bobbie, Michael and Maggie who was of great comfort to Ian. Lodge Rosehaugh was the venue for the wake which was Ian's request and very well attended where we toasted a final dram to Ian.

Keith Patience, PM

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Left: Brother Graeme Brindle laying the wreath at Avoch War Memorial.

Right: Brother George Robinson – Installing Master with Bro Graeme Brindle and PGM, Bro Raymond MacKeddie



Below: Brothers MacLaren, McGhee and Craib on their travels



BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 2008

Congratulations are extended to Bro John G MacKay who will soon be installed as the Grand Deacon of Scotland – a great honour for Hielan’ Shed No 6. We wish him well in his new high office and hope and trust that he will be blessed with good health to carry out the onerous duties of his office throughout the country.

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Lodge St Martin 1217

The lodge became involved with the Christmas lights Festival in Ullapool for the first time and lit up the lodge building (See photo). Just before Christmas the lodge had a very successful Santa Float raising more than £1200 for children in the local area (See photo with the creel tree).

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th February, tiling at 8pm, the work of the evening will be a second degree. The meetings on 18th March, 15th April (Provincial Visit) and 20th May will all be third degrees if all goes to plan.

Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary



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There is little to report since the last issue. At our November meeting, Bro Phil Ellis was installed in the Chair of King Solomon by Bro Mike Turner and his team. Having long since decided against holding meetings during December, January and February, months when night-time travelling over to the West can be, at best, difficult, we are now looking forward to our new season's meetings, commencing Thursday March 13th, when we shall be working a 3rd Degree for Bro Liam Fraser.

Michael Longley, PM – Lodge Loch Ewe

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 2014

The review this quarter begins, sadly, with the news that one of our brethren in the Lodge, whose health status was reported on in the last edition, died on Thursday 6th March 2014. Brother Danny Forbes, a Past Master and son of a founding member of the Lodge, did not have the good fortune to recover from the cancer that claimed him. Danny, at the time of his death was our WJW and carried out that duty with the aplomb he exercised in all his Lodge duties. Like his brother Colin, also a PM, who was back in the chair but died so suddenly before he could lead our Centenary celebrations in 2008, Danny was an ever-present attendee on lodge nights and both family members had an exceptional grasp of the ritual which was apparent to all with their clarity and lucidity of the subject in hand. Both have left an enormous gap in our resources at Aultbea. However, with their passing, some adages come to mind which, when one thinks about it, sums up the resilience of the remainder of the serving office bearers and members in Lodge Loch Ewe: Hope springs eternal - A Phoenix rising anew from the ashes and in this world, we do not have problems, only solutions or opportunities.

For our latest degree, it was a case of '*all hands-on deck*' and a reshuffle of manpower was expertly and quickly manipulated thanks to IPM Barrie Whitwell and Secretary Duncan MacLennan in taking the bull by the horns at a local level. All parts were excellently executed on the night with mention to tasks undertaken such as the obligation by Ken McMorran PM who travelled from Portmahomack in East Ross, WSW duties by Allan McCrimmon PM/Treasurer and WJW by Duncan MacLennan PM/Secretary. These adopted tasks on the evening were not lost on RWPGM Billy Ross in his summing up and referring to Duncan's rejuvenated role as WJW – very few of us know Duncan other than Secretary during his 50 years unstinting service to Lodge Loch Ewe and he maintains there is no chance of taking the WJW post on a regular basis!

Richard's EA education was completed at the last meeting of the session with the Mode of Preparation and Tracing Board lectures being carried out by WSW Mike Longley and DM Andrew Henderson respectively.

Our visiting Brethren over the past period are very much appreciated and we look forward to the next session and more of you coming west to sample the hospitality.

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Ye Corporation O' Squarmen Heilan Shed

As the Squarmen have been in closed session since our last Meeting in September some of the Brithers attended Grand Shed Meetings in Kingdom O Fife and Dundee – unfortunately our visit to Edinburgh was cancelled as The Mither Shed has folded due to a lack of Brithers willing to take part in the Rituals even although they have a large Membership

Bri Boxie has once again been busy getting things organised for this year and a number of Lodges have kindly agree for us to hold Meeting (as per list below) – should any Mark Master Masons fancy joining the Corporation they would be most welcome on the day at any of the Venues – It should be noted that PWD Neil Cooper is to become the Grand Worthy Deacon in May this year and he should be heartily congratulated on being Elected into this auspicious Office

VISITS FOR 2025

1st MARCH – **Committee Meeting and Installation**– GORDON TERR - INVERNESS 3:00 p.m.

5th APRIL Lodge Seaforth, - FORTROSE – bus leaves Inverness 13:30

3rd MAY Lodge St Andrew - GOLSPIE – bus leaves Inverness 12:30

10th MAY – **GRAND SHED INSTALLATION** – GORDON TERRACE – INVERNESS 2:00 p.m.

Installation of GWD elect Bri Neil Cooper and his Office bearers

Followed by Grand Shed visit to Heilan Shed at 3:00 p.m.

5th JULY Lodge Averon – ALNESS – bus leaves Inverness 13:30

2nd AUGUST – Lodge St Ninian – NAIRN – bus leaves Inverness 13:30

6th SEPTEMBER – Lodge John O Groat - CASTLETOWN – bus leaves Inverness 11:00

*John & Mackay -
Boxie*

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News from the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland

Two new working parties have been established in Supreme under the Chairmanships of Ian Duncan and Alan Buntain. One will be looking at Recruitment and Retention with the other looking at Education and how to bring back those members who have been absent for a while.

Work is also progressing to move the staff from St John Street up to Grand Lodge in George Street.

PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS MESSAGE.

It was a pleasing surprise at the Royal Arch Convocation on Friday 29th November to witness good friend, Harry Bristow, being recognised by the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland and being presented by the 1st Grand Principal W Ramsay McGhee, with a certificate of Distinguished Membership for his attendance at Convocations in Edinburgh over more than 3 decades and his support of many organisations in high offices in the Edinburgh area.



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Companion Bristow is also well known in Ross and Cromarty being an office bearer in Lodge Alan Wilson No 851.

The Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross and Cromarty congratulates Comp. Bristow on this achievement and wish him many years of happiness to enjoy his newfound fame.

The Provincial RA Chapter visits this year are as follows –

Cromarty Firth, Invergordon	Wednesday 5th March 2025.
Tain and Ross, Tain	Monday 24th March 2025
St Clement, Dingwall	Friday 28th March 2025.
Hebrides, Stornoway	Wednesday 14th May 2025
	Thursday 15th. March - Cryptic Council/Ark Mariner

Morris M Downie

Grand Superintendent

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 2011

Officer Fitness Reports – thanks to Bro Roddy Cade who was in the Royal Corps of Signals

- 1 I would not breed from this Officer**
- 2 His men will follow him anywhere, but only out of curiosity.**
- 3 He would be out of his depth in a car park puddle.**
- 4 He has delusions of adequacy**
- 5 Since my last report he has reached rock bottom and has started to dig.**
- 6 He sets low personal standards, then consistently, fails to achieve them.**
- 7 This man is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot.**

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Tain & Ross RAC 63

St Clement Royal Arch Chapter No 244

Cromarty Firth Royal Arch No 310

ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER HEBRIDES NO. 364.

The companions were deeply saddened by the news the passing of ME Companion Ian Fraser past 1st Grand Principal whose mother chapter was Hebrides No 364.

In December Ian George Maciver was re-installed as 1st Principal.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod IPGS R&C

PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES

Our meeting on Friday 31st January will be a practice Esquire grade in preparation for working both Esquire and Knight grades at the visit of our District Grand Prior in April.

I wrongly captioned the following photo in the last Patter, it was in fact Angus Allison who was being presented with his certificate as a Knight of the Temple by Eric MacGregor DGP and Henry Macinnes VP.



#Donald Macleod KCT

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BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - FEBRUARY 2005

In the early days of the "Patter", Brother Robert Scott, PM, was a regular contributor – this was one of his poems which is worth reflecting on once again.

We met and we married, a long time ago;
We worked for long hours, the wages were low.
No telly, no radio, no bath, times were hard;
Just a cold tap and toilet – away up the yard.

No going abroad, no carpets on the floors,
But we'd coal on the fire, and we ne'er locked the doors;
Our children arrived, no pill in those days,
We brought them all up, without any State aid.

No Valium, no drugs and no LSD,
We cured our own pains with a nice cup of tea.
And when we were sick, we were treated at once,
No filling in forms and "come back in a month."

No vandals, no mugging, for there was nowt to rob;
In fact you were rich with a couple of bob.
People were happier in those far off days,
Kinder, more caring in so many ways!

Milkmen and paper lads, they'd whistle and sing,
And a night at the pictures was a wonderful thing.
Aye, we had our share of trouble and strife,
But we just had to face it – because that was life!

Now I'm alone, looking back through the years,
I don't think of the bad times, the trouble and tears;
I remember the blessings, our home our love;
We shared them together and I thank God above.

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Historic Occasion at Grand Lodge



In the year that marked the 55th Anniversary of HRH the Duke of Kent becoming an Honorary Member of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, we were delighted to welcome him back to Edinburgh on the occasion of the October Communication.

In the photo we have Bro William Semple, Grand Secretary, Bro David Reid, Substitute Grand Master, Bro Charles Iain Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont, Ramsay McGhee, GMM, HRH the Duke of Kent, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, Bro Jonathan Spence, Pro Grand Master, United Grand Lodge of England, Adrian Marsh, Grand Secretary of United Grand Lodge of England, and Bro Alexander Moncrieff, Depute Grand Master.

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Royal Order of Scotland

Provincial Grand Lodge of Inverness and the Highlands

Provincial Grand Secretary: Bro. Michael Scott Turner

The next meeting will be held in Inverness in April.

Michael Scott Turner

Provincial Grand Secretary

BITS AND PIECES

Grand Lodge of Scotland – On-line shopping



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

