

Warwickshire

Provincial Grand Lodge News

August 2003

Twins

Kevan and Michael Marston of Etone Lodge and John and James Ashmore of Holte Lodge are the only sets of twins that we have as members in the Province, as far as we know.

Confessions

'When I joined the Squadron I was a bit of a rogue. At the summer camp at Sylt I won the beer drinking competition sinking a pint of Guinness mixed with lager in less than four seconds'. Which Warwickshire Mason is this? A clue – he owned a rather fast and noisy Manx Norton motorcycle at the time.

Christmas Fayre

This annual event promoted by the Ladies Gift Fund, will be held on Saturday 15 November at Stirling Road commencing at 10.30am. Donations for tombola and raffle prizes will be welcomed on 0121 445 5406. Please bring the family and friends.

Two centuries of service

The Provincial Grand Master presented a 60 year certificate to Norman Ingram of Forward Lodge in April. Sir Neville Bosworth, Ray Partridge and Gordon Shearer were present and, with Norman, their total length of service is a staggering 217 years. May they all have many more happy years in the Craft.

The old helping the young!

Don Adams, Michael Bowes, John Gisbourne, Robert Jay and Clive Jennings of Bedeword Lodge walked the length of Hadrian's Wall earlier in the year. The sponsored walk was in aid of "Hearts for Kids" at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

The end of a distinguished Masonic musical era

At the Installation Meeting of the London Warwickshire Lodge at the end of April, John Bussell paid a delightful and moving tribute to Conrad Leonard, the Lodge Organist who had died on 19 April at the age of 104. Conrad, one of the first recipients of London Rank (at the age of 100) had been initiated in the Lodge in 1933 and was the organist for 67 years. He remained in that office until shortly before his death.

A night to remember

Robert Fisher is most unlikely to forget his Initiation into St Paul's Lodge in April. It was witnessed by some 60 Brethren including representatives of the Lodge's twin Lodges from France and Germany. There was a sharp intake of breath when the French Brethren presented a bottle of Beaujolais to the Lodge, but not just any bottle – it held the equivalent of 12 ordinary bottles.

Another first for Warwickshire

John Harvey, a Founder and Past Master of the Lodge of Jurisprudence, had the signal honour of proposing the Toast to the Grand Master at the Grand Festival following the Annual Investiture on 30 April. John was completing his year as a Grand Steward; earlier in the day he had been appointed as an Assistant Grand Registrar. John had been nominated for the office of Grand Steward by St George's and Cornerstone Lodge No 5. His successor from that Lodge is Nick le Poidevin, a former member of the Lodge of Jurisprudence.

Royal seal of approval

As from 1 May 2003 the MTGB is to be known as the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys. This is a worthy recognition of the work done by the Trust in giving assistance not only to the children of distressed Freemasons but also in giving relief to children outside the Craft

The Board of Grand Stewards

At the original assembly and feast of Grand Lodge in 1717 at The Goose and Gridiron Ale-house, the Grand Wardens were responsible for all the arrangements. Later, the Grand Lodge decreed that, should the work be too arduous for the Grand Wardens, the Grand Master or his Deputy should have authority to nominate Stewards to assist them! The first Board of Grand Stewards was appointed in 1728 and so they share with Warwickshire a 275th Anniversary. By the end of 1735 Grand Stewards were entitled to wear aprons lined in red silk.

Nuptial bliss

Our warmest congratulations to Raymond and Patsy Rooke on their marriage on 3 May. We wish them every happiness for their life together.

A mason of double merit

Our fraternal congratulations go to Bill Gibbons who received a Certificate of Merit from the Provincial Grand Master of Worcestershire on 21 June. Bill is already the holder of a CM from the Provincial Grand Master for Warwickshire. Bill must be unique in this respect.

Ups and downs of an Annual Meeting

After the Annual Meeting in

May, lunch was delayed for some 25 minutes – the Provincial Grand Master was missing! He was stuck in a lift with the Provincial Grand Master for Worcestershire, Barrie Cooper, Dr John White and David Manners! The Provincial Grand Master and his 'elevated' party soon arrived, safely released from their 'uplifting' experience to tumultuous applause from the Brethren.

New Provincial Grand Master for Staffordshire

On 14 May 2003 Thomas Lloyd was installed by the MW Pro Grand Master as Provincial Grand Master for Staffordshire, succeeding RW Bro Kevin Chawner who had retired after leading the Province for thirteen years. John Bedson and Haydn Palmer continue as Deputy and Assistant Provincial Grand Master respectively and John Griffiths is the new Assistant Provincial Grand Master. We wish RW Bro Tom Lloyd and his team every happiness and success for the future.

The three Rs

Recruiting, Retaining and Retrieving were themes pursued by the MW Grand Master in his address at the Annual Investiture in April this year. "Recruiting is both acceptable and desirable as long as it does not put undue pressure on potential candidates. Having succeeded in recruiting new Brethren it is clearly important that we make every effort to retain them. We all recognize the career and family pressures faced by younger men, so it is imperative that Lodges work to harness the enthusiasm of the new recruit and make him feel welcome. Retrieving lapsed members is initially a task for the Lodge Almoner especially where financial or health difficulties have caused a Brother to resign; but there is an increasing body of Masons who resigned from their Lodge because of business, career or family pressures, who may have found those circumstances have now eased or disappeared. Here

we can all make a difference by encouraging them to rejoin their Lodge or another Lodge and once again become active in their Masonry."

Welcome to our neighbour on the web

The Province of Worcestershire launched a brand new website www.worcestershirepgl.org.uk on 1 May. Our warmest congratulations to all concerned with the design and preparation of the site. A visit is highly recommended.

Warwickshire Marathon Mason

Congratulations to David Tiller of George Eliot Lodge who finished this year's London Marathon in 4 hours 4 minutes, taking an amazing 31 minutes off his time last year. David raised £2,800 to help to improve the quality of life of Elliott a little boy who suffers from an incurable disease. The Province was delighted to sponsor David for £500.

Special Events

There are a number of special events taking place in the Province in the near future. If you wish to attend any or all of them please call Barbara or Bridget in the Provincial Office on 0121 454 4422:

Lodge of Friendship 60th Anniversary – 24 September
Mozart Lodge 600th Meeting – 21 October
Shenstonian Lodge 400th Meeting – 27 October
Lodge of St Barnabas Banner Dedication – 13 November
Tudor Lodge 125th Anniversary – 15 November
Machen Lodge 125th Anniversary – 20 November
Orion Lodge 75th Anniversary – 27 November
Three Shires Lodge 75th Anniversary – 21 January 2004.

Remembrance Service

The Annual Service of Remembrance to commemorate those Freemasons who made the supreme sacrifice in theatres of war will be held at Stirling Road on Tuesday 11 November at

10.45am. All Brethren and their families are invited to attend.

www.warwickshirepgl.org

A revitalized and exciting edition of the Provincial web site has been launched. It has the same address as before but many more features for the enquiring Mason, and lots of items to whet the appetite of those not yet in the Order but who might be contemplating joining.

Another 25 Years

Produced to coincide with the 275th Anniversary of the Province is the authoritative and beautifully illustrated summary of the last 25 years in the history of the Province; it is a "must" for all Brethren. Written by Bob Russell who wrote the original 250 years history and to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks for his excellent opus, copies are obtainable from Harry Owen at the Provincial Office at a cost of £15 plus £2 for postage and packing. Order your copy now!

90 and still going strong

Frank Chatwin celebrated his 90th birthday in May. Initiated in India some 55 years ago, Frank joined the Swan of Avon Lodge in 1986. He rarely misses a meeting and still takes part in ceremonies.

The super salesman

Harry Owen never misses an opportunity to sell the Provincial merchandise. At an Installation Meeting recently, Harry kindly offered to accompany three junior Brethren as they left the Lodge for a short while. When they returned, one of them was seen to be sporting the Provincial tie!

Appointments and Promotions in the Mark Degree

Our heartiest congratulations to these Warwickshire Brethren who received appointments to or promotions in Mark Grand Rank at the Annual Investiture on 10 June:

Richard Wallis – Grand Master Overseer

Keith Holdsworth – PGJO

Alex McDowall – PGJO
Brian Wills - PGJO
Brian Price – PGSD
Peter Burdekin – PGJD
Trevor Wellings – PGJD
Geoffrey Lates – PAGDC
Chris Sanders – PAGDC
Andrew Sweeney – Grand Steward.

Gala New Year's Eve Party

This extravaganza will be held at Severn Street on 31 December. Tickets are £40 per person and include a six course meal and wines. Details from Cedric Stiles on 07990 521737 or Bill Wood on 0121 243 5760.

Charity aid for games

The RMTGB is a major sponsor of the 2003 National Junior Games for children with disabilities to be held at Stoke Mandeville from 24 to 28 September.

A record attendance?

Lord Leicester Lodge was represented by twelve of its members at the Annual Meeting in May. Any advance on that?

Second-hand regalia for sale

There is a selection of second-hand regalia for Craft and other Orders together with a number of regalia cases for sale at Stirling Road, with proceeds going to the Heritage Fund. If you are interested please get in touch with Trevor Cavill on 0121 454 4422.

Flying with the birds

The Province of Norfolk has a Provincial Birding Society. Masonic birdwatchers will meet three or four times each year either to visit locations or to have demonstrations of bird ringing or taxidermy.

The Grand Design for Rugby Masons

The Temple at Rugby is to be redecorated but advice is first required from an experienced interior designer. If you can help, contact Les Dacombe on 01788 841207.

Help for mums and babies

Baby Lifeline is a Coventry based Mother and Baby Charity.

Thanks to your generosity the charity has been able to purchase some vital monitoring equipment for the Birmingham Women's Hospital. Three portable blood pressure monitoring systems were presented to the hospital on 5 June by the Provincial Grand Master. If your Lodge is interested in supporting Baby Lifeline, Helen Meeke would like to hear from you on 02476 422135.

The Heritage Fund

The Fund reached its second milestone on 5 June – £200,000!

The anti-mason brigade

'There are Masons who always wear their hats back to front to convince people that they are coming when they are going'. 'Many Masons wear their trousers back to front for their own good reasons.' 'Bear in mind that immorality is the hallmark of the average mason.' 'The Council has not acknowledged receipt of my cheque of £150 for last week but Royal Mail Masons could again be interfering.' 'The hidden rulers of Freemasonry classify rank and file Masons as imbeciles, intriguers, crooks and loafers – food for thought for the dupes in the lower degrees of Freemasonry, who look upon it as a philanthropic institution.' 'British Intelligence works for the Freemasons to make sure nobody competes with their drug empire.' That's what some of our critics say about us – true!

Freemasonry and local government

(a) In the period 1994-1999, the Local Government Ombudsman received 76,951 allegations of maladministration in local government. Of that number, 24 alleged some improper Masonic influence. Only two of those resulted in charges of technical maladministration which did not affect the planning consents involved. These facts do not bear out the need perceived by some local authorities to require Masonic membership to be disclosed.

(b) Under the Code of Conduct for Members of local authorities, Members must notify the monitoring officer of membership of any charity. Since all Master Masons are members of the Grand Charity that interest must be notified accordingly by relevant councillors.

Rewarding talent

Kimberley Blackwood, a ten year old talented violinist, will be able to take up a place at the Birmingham Conservatoire, thanks to a generous donation by the Province.

Running for money

Ivor Emo of Corinthian Lodge is taking part in the New York Marathon on 2 November. He is looking for sponsors and can be contacted on 01282 425691. The proceeds will go to the Warwickshire Benevolent Fund.

Assistance to charity

London Warwickshire Chapter, in celebration of their 75th anniversary, raised a staggering £11,750 for Moorfields International Children's Eye Centre. London Warwickshire Lodge has donated £15,000 to the Prostate Cancer Research Charity.

Library online in Derbyshire

Congratulations to the Province of Derbyshire. All Masonic books in their extensive library are now catalogued on their web site www.derbyshiremason.org and can be ordered simply by telephoning or emailing the Librarian.

A world record?

Scottish Freemasonry is officially recognized as being the oldest in the world and is recorded as a Guinness World Record. Now that will ruffle a few Masonic feathers!

Freemasonry Abroad

The first recorded evidence of the existence of Freemasonry in the Netherlands is in 1731. The Duke of Lorraine, the future Francis I, was 'made an Enter'd

Apprentice and Fellow Craft, by virtue of a deputation for a Lodge there' at the home of Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield, the English Ambassador in The Hague.

That's one way to learn it!

The Grand Lodge of New Jersey has 27 Districts. Each one has a District Ritual Instructor, all having the style of a RW Brother! Preceptors in this Province need not apply for the same rank!

Daniels in abundance

There are five Daniels in St Mary's Lodge.

Dead ringers

W Bros Old, Pittham (sic) and Swain were honoured at the Annual Investiture in April, but they have nothing to do with Warwickshire.

Masonic Charitable Record

The four national Masonic charities have announced that 2002 was a record year for Masonic charitable giving with some £22.9 million being expended on those in need.

If only!

'All line officers (from Junior Deacon up to the Master) are required by Grand Lodge Edict to attend an Officers' Training Program at Springfield Lodge on Saturday 3 May at 8.30am.' Extract from the summons for a Lodge in the USA. If only!

A Masonic Goon

Major Denis Bloodnok, Ind. Arm. Rtd. (Military Idiot, coward and bar) born 1867 and 1880 Sandhurst NAAFI, was a Freemason! He used his Masonic connections twice to return to the Army as a Major. He served one year in the ATS as Florence Bloodnok. He was cashiered seven times – a world record. Clubs: Anyone. Recreations: Piccadilly Circus. Hobbies: The Indian Army.

Not in prison

In 1872 Grand Lodge decreed that, as it would be inconsistent with the principles of Freemasonry, Lodge meetings could not be held in a prison!

George Washington – President and Mason

For students of American history and Freemasonry, a virtual tour of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial is well worth taking on www.gwmemorial.org

Marking well

Fred Hall and John King, both Past Masters of Concord Lodge, have been honoured in the Mark Province of Worcestershire. Fred is the Provincial Grand Senior Warden and John is the Provincial Grand Secretary.

So it did begin in Coventry!

In 1541 Thomas Phillips, freemason, and another, contracted 'to prepare, find and make a Lodge or house for masons to work in during the time of making' the Coventry Cross. The townspeople of Coventry further contracted with a Freemason to rebuild their cross of 'good, sure, seasonable free-stone of the quarries of Attilborough, or Rounton, in Warwickshire.'

Suits you Sir!

A number of nearly new and very fine suits, sadly outgrown by their Masonic owner, have become available to any Brother in the Province who is a Regular 40. Discreet enquiries to the Provincial Information Officer.

Arthur John Hackney

John Hackney, a most loyal and dedicated Freemason, died on 11 June. He was perhaps best known for his work as Provincial Grand Almoner. John held the Provincial Grand Master's Certificate of Merit.

New Master for 4538

Michael Arnold is to be the Master of the Installed Masters Lodge and will be installed at the September meeting.

Provincial Grand Master for Worcestershire to retire

At the eleventh Annual Meeting over which he has presided Barrie Cooper, Provincial Grand Master, announced that he is to retire from that high office and

that of Grand Superintendent on 1 January 2004.

Queen's Birthday Honours

Many congratulations to Ron Eamonson OBE and Peter Rana MBE.

Dates for your diary for 2004

Initiates Lunch – 20 March 2004

Annual Meeting – 22 May 2004

Pre-Season Supper – 14 June 2004

Church Service – 20 June 2004

Masters and Masters Elect Dinner – 9 September 2004

Better late than never

Jim Heslop has become a joining member of Alauna Lodge at the age of 92!

No marmalade!

Richard and Helen Wallis have recently returned from Peru where, it is rumoured, they stayed with relatives of a well known bear. Sad to say, they did not bring back any marmalade.

Plea for visitors

Alan Wellan goes into the Chair of Federation Lodge for the fourth time on 3 October and would welcome some company. Alan is on 01926 842828 if you can help.

Warwickshire rules in Worcestershire!

Peter Band, a Past Master of Cosmopolitan Lodge, is the newest Assistant Provincial Grand Master in Worcestershire.

Sponsorship

Sponsors are eagerly sought for this newsletter. Anyone who is interested should get in touch with me. Rates are very favourable.

Rodney Pitham

Provincial Information Officer

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