

Warwickshire

Provincial Grand Lodge News

November 2003

Christmas Greetings from the Provincial Grand Master

“As we approach Christmas it is appropriate that we reflect upon and pray for peace in the World. In the Middle East particularly, lasting peace seems a long way away. Dawn joins me in sending to each of you, and your families, our very best wishes for a joyful Christmas together, followed by a peaceful and prosperous New Year. May peace and contentment be with us all and in our Lodges.”

Support for hospice

Brethren of Abbey, Newdegate, George Eliot, Etone, Bedeword and Athelstan Lodges have contributed towards the cost of car stickers for the Mary Ann Evans Hospice. The stickers proudly proclaim that they are sponsored by the Freemasons of Nuneaton and Atherstone.

Compulsory registration in the police service

It would appear that the proposal to introduce compulsory registration of Freemasons in the Police Service has been dropped. The Home Office says that “there are no current proposals for compulsory disclosure”, but discussions with the Association of Chief Police Officers are concentrating on “other ways of resolving the issue of under-registration”.

The honorary visitor

Gordon Blow of Elizabethan Lodge has been a regular visitor to Cosmopolitan Lodge for 25 years. In that time he has acted in every office of that Lodge other than Master whenever Regular Officers have been absent. To mark his Silver Jubilee of visiting, the members of the Lodge will confer

Honorary Membership on Gordon.

Never too old

In a delightful and moving ceremony Bro Derek Edge became a Master Mason in Shakespeare Lodge in October. Derek is a very young and agile 79 year old. His new apron was first worn by his grandfather 100 years ago!

Sutton Coldfield Study Circle

All Master Masons are eligible to join or visit the Circle. Meetings are held at the Masonic Hall, Mill Street, Sutton Coldfield on the first Mondays at 7.30pm in October, December, March and June.

Flying Lunch by Royal Appointment

Ken Wilkinson of the Warwickshire Royal Air Force Lodge and a former Spitfire pilot was honoured with an invitation to take lunch with HRH Prince Michael of Kent in July as part of the Battle of Britain remembrance at Capel le Ferne near Dover.

Highest accolade for Michael Porteus

Michael Porteus, a Past Master of St Paul's Lodge No 43, is the creative brain behind the praise-winning Provincial web site, his own Lodge site and many other Masonic sites on the Internet. In recognition of his unique talent and skills and of the excellent work that Michael has done for the Province, the Provincial Grand Master has conferred upon Michael his own personal Certificate of Merit and promoted him to the rank of Past Provincial Junior Grand Warden.

On the double at the door!

Peter Turner and his son Paul are currently and respectively the Inner Guards of the Lodge of Jurisprudence and the Birmingham Old Edwardian Lodge.

Twins again

Sorry to the Boston twins of Aston Old Edwardian Lodge. The omission to mention them in the last edition was quite deliberate, however, to demonstrate that our reader was still with us!

All for Dad

Neil Watkin of the Lodge of Goodwill has initiated, passed and raised his father Austin. At the raising ceremony in September, Neil presented his father with a Master Mason's apron last worn by Austin's father in 1948.

Garden Party success for Heritage Fund

The garden party in August organised by the Leamington and Shipston Lodges raised the magnificent sum of £6,000 for the Warwickshire Masonic Heritage Fund. Congratulations to all involved in this very successful event.

Information for the guidance of members of the Craft

The September 2003 edition of this invaluable booklet has now been issued. Each newly made Mason should be given a copy when he is presented with the Book of Constitutions and the Bylaws during the Initiation ceremony. A copy should also be presented to each newly installed Master.

A very loyal traveller

Jonathan Mills, of Loyal Travellers Lodge No. 2733, was a Provincial Grand Steward in 2002/2003. Despite living near Welshpool, Jonathan made the two-hour trip on many occasions to Warwickshire to attend Installations. In October he was installed into the Chair of Sant Myllin Lodge, in Llanfyllin, Powys. An emotional moment for him was when his father Jack delivered the Address to the Master.

Lodge mailboxes

Lodge Secretaries are asked to look at their electronic Lodge mailboxes on a frequent and regular basis for important information from the Province. If they do not have the facilities to make use of this medium there might be at least one Brother in each Lodge who could access the Internet and provide the service for the Lodge. Lodges are accordingly recommended that, where they are not already in place, arrangements are made for each Lodge to nominate a member who has the responsibility to access the Provincial web sites - www.warwickshireppl.org.uk and www.royalarch.org.uk - and Lodge mail boxes on a regular basis. He should report to the Lodge, through the Secretary on the Second Rising, the information that is obtained through this medium.

Minutes of Lodge Meetings

Lodge Minutes of each Regular Meeting might usefully be circulated with the Summons for the next Regular Meeting. A copy should be sent to the Provincial Grand Master or other representative of the Province with the summons for the Installation Meeting. It is a constitutional requirement to record the minutes in permanent form and not in loose-leaf binders, and to record the details of attendance of members and visitors, and apologies, in the Minute Book. Reliance on the Tyler's Book as a record of attendance is not permitted.

Archbishop of Canterbury

The Archbishop of Canterbury has agreed to meet the Pro Grand Master and the Grand Secretary. The Pro Grand Master believes we can feel content that our prime concerns have been answered adequately by Dr Williams, and can now put this unfortunate episode behind us.

But not in Australia

The Sydney Anglican Synod at the end of October told Brethren in New South Wales that Freemasonry and Christianity are not compatible, that there are links with witchcraft, and that Freemasonry teaches and upholds a system of false religious and spiritual beliefs that are contrary to biblical Christianity. They have demanded that Freemasons who are Christians should resign their membership of the Order immediately. In a strongly worded condemnation of this stance the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New South Wales concluded:

"Surely, in this civilised society, the church's role is to teach love, compassion, unity and tolerance of one's fellow man, and not to promote division, hatred, alienation and down right bigotry."

Remember however

Mussolini in 1924 decreed that every member of his Fascist Party who was a Mason must abandon one or the other organization. He dissolved Freemasonry in 1925. Goering, as Prime Minister of Prussia, when the Nazis took over power in 1933, wrote that "... in National Socialist Germany, there is no place for Freemasonry". Franco in 1940 sentenced all Freemasons in Spain automatically to ten years in prison.

Deputy Grand Master

The Deputy Grand Master, Iain Ross Bryce, has expressed a wish to retire from next March to make room for someone younger. The MW Grand Master has appointed Peter Lowndes, Past Grand Director of Ceremonies, to

succeed him. We wish Peter a very happy and rewarding tenure in this high office.

Heritage Fund

At the time of going to press the Fund stood at £226,000.

Stanley Lates

We are pleased to report that Stanley continues to make good progress following his car accident in September.

Grand Lodge web site

The address is now - www.ugle.org.uk

Internet in the Province

Members of the Internet Lodge held their Regular Meeting by dispensation at Stirling Road on 11 October. The Lodge has over 180 members from 17 countries. Ab Goedhals, from the Netherlands, and Peter Lanes, from Florida, both present at the October meeting, have been Masters of the Lodge, consecrated in 1998 in Manchester.

Warwickshire Year Book

The new look edition for 2003-2004 is available and is a snip at £4.00. See your Lodge Secretary now if you haven't got your copy. You don't know what you are missing!

Coventry City Council

Sadly, there is no progress to report on the disgraceful act of discrimination by the City Council against Freemasons. The Chief Executive, Stella Manzie, is not replying to probing questions. Perhaps she has no answers! The issue has now been referred to the Local Government Ombudsman.

A 'hot' night!

A Burns' Night will be held on 24 January 2004 at the Masonic Hall, Severn Street, Birmingham at 7.00pm for 7.30pm. Dress is formal. Tickets are £35.00 per person. Contact Bill Wood on 0121 243 5760.

Praise for Elkington's web site

'A particularly nice touch to the design of this site is that the main graphic used has been taken from the very first Lodge summons dated 1864' says *Freemasonry Today* in praise of the Elkington Lodge web site – www.elkingtonlodge.org.uk

Son makes Dad a Mason

Simon Gee initiated his father David in a delightful ceremony at Howe Lodge in October.

Heading for goal

Michael Squires, the Provincial Grand Treasurer, and his son are passionate about football. They have so far visited 85 of the 92 league grounds.

Talking of football

The Football Association was formed on 26 October 1863 after a meeting of 11 club representatives at the Freemasons Tavern in London.

Provincial web site a big hit

From 1 November 2002 to 31 October 2003 the Provincial web site had 402,887 hits. October was also the record month with 41,037 hits. Visits to the site have been made from 30 countries.

Gordon Brown helps Grand Charity

The Grand Charity is now entitled to reclaim the tax on members' annual contributions. For every £1 that a member gives, the Grand Charity will be able to benefit from an additional 28p, reclaimed from the Inland Revenue. All that Brethren need to do is to sign the Gift Aid Declaration, copies of which will shortly be sent to all Lodge Secretaries. The Grand Charity can now boost its income by £200,000 to £300,000 each year with this tax relief, at no additional cost to Brethren

Grand Charity online

The Grand Charity now has its own web site - www.grandcharity.co.uk

Nuptial bliss for fifty golden years

We offer our warmest congratulations to Peter and Patricia Waring who celebrated their Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary on 1 September. Peter, a Grand Officer in both Craft and Royal Arch Masonry, is the Very Illustrious Inspector General of the District of Warwickshire in the Ancient and Accepted Rite (Rose Croix).

An act of desecration

The memorial to Bro Mac Walker, unveiled by the Prime Minister in Perry Barr, Birmingham in July, has been destroyed by a mindless act of vandalism. The Police Memorial Trust will replace it.

What a whale of a time

Trevor Johnson of Jephson Lodge and his family had an unusual shock while on holiday in Australia recently. A whale landed on the deck of their chartered yacht breaking the mast and nearly capsizing them. Obviously not shielded from the attacks of the amphibious!

Keeping it in the family

At Coventry Foundation Lodge in October Richard Collins was assisted in installing his successor David Williams by Clifford Williams, David's father.

A day out in London

A visit is being arranged to the Installation Meeting of the London Warwickshire Lodge, which will be held on Monday 26 April 2004 at Great Queen Street. A coach will be provided, subject to satisfactory numbers, with suitable pick-up points. This is an opportunity not only to support our Brethren in London but also to see the magnificence of the home of the Grand Lodge. Anyone interested should contact the Provincial Information Officer.

The phoenix from the ashes

Hard work and stubborn insistence has paid dividends for Elkington Lodge. Just two short

years ago, with numbers dangerously low, members were considering the surrender of the Warrant. At the Installation meeting in October they were proud to add to their already swelling numbers by the proposal of six more joining members and four candidates for initiation.

Masonic Classic Car Run 2004

The third Masonic Classic Car Run, with sponsorship proceeds going to charity, will be held on 6 June 2004, with the finish at Drayton Manor Park. If anyone is interested, John Cole, the event organiser, will be pleased to hear from you on 01934 811116 or jcole1701@aol.com

Freemasons and the Burma Railway

Michael Batchelor, of Bedeword Lodge, has prepared a well-researched paper on the Burma Railway and the involvement of Freemasons in its construction. He is willing to deliver his paper to any Lodge within the Province and only asks for the proceeds of any collection taken on the evening to be donated to the Heritage Fund. Michael is available on 02476 370465 or m.a.batchelor@talk21.com

A splendid day for Freemasonry

The Royal Albert Hall on 1 October was the venue for the formal constitution of the Metropolitan Grand Chapter and the Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London. Some 4000 Companions were present in the morning and some 5000 Brethren in the afternoon to witness the pomp and ceremony of the occasions. HRH The Duke of Kent installed the Rt Hon Lord Millett as the first Metropolitan Grand Superintendent and the first Metropolitan Grand Master. Michael Ward, of St Barbara Lodge, was invested as the first Senior Grand Warden.

American Masonic Hall lost in fire

The Masonic Hall in Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York and the museum within it were destroyed

on 25 October by an early morning fire. This disaster has left the members of Matinecock Lodge without their home of 80 years. One of its most famous members was Theodore Roosevelt, who was also the only President of the USA to come from Long Island.

Heritage Fund put to good use

The Provincial Grand Master formally opened the new extension to the Solihull Masonic hall at Knowle on 27 September. The project has been funded in part by a loan from the Heritage Fund.

Guy's Cliffe

For those who enjoy the delights of the Chapel and grounds at Guy's Cliffe and who may wish to find out more about its long history, a visit to www.courts.fsnet.co.uk/guyscliff.e.htm will be rewarding.

Freemasons pay tribute

Sunday 29 June was National Service Day. Major General Bowen, a Freemason, dedicated the National Service Memorial at the Alrewas Arboretum in Staffordshire in front of over 1,000 people. The Provincial Grand Almoner, 23003281 Michael Irving (ex Royal Army Pay Corps) laid a wreath on the Memorial from the Freemasons of Warwickshire. A bench presented by the Province is also in place at the Memorial.

Freemasonry in Warwickshire 1978 - 2003

Produced to coincide with the 275th Anniversary of the Province, this authoritative and beautifully illustrated summary of the past 25 years is a 'must' for all Warwickshire Freemasons. Harry Owen will take orders for this volume and its predecessor, written about the first 250 years, if you call him on 0121 454 4422. £15 secures the latest book and an investment of the modest sum of £20 will reward you with both.

Freemasons promote good health

The Freemasons of New Zealand sponsor the Cancer Society's speech competition on an annual basis, which gives young people an opportunity to express their views on tobacco smoking and the benefits of a smoke free lifestyle.

Provincial Grand Master to lead the celebrations

The Provincial Grand Master is shortly to become a member of Trinity Lodge. Members of the Lodge have already agreed, however, to elect him as their Master for the year in which they will celebrate their 250th anniversary, 2005. Preparations are now underway for the formal meeting which will be held in December 2005 at Stirling Road. Details of this very important event in the life of the Province and of the Lodge will be published as soon as they are available.

Competition for ritual!

For the second year in a row Orange Park Lodge has won the State Ritual Championship in Florida. The team scored 970 out of a possible 1000 to take the number one spot. Are there any takers in Warwickshire?

Pat Pearson

All who knew Pat will have been saddened by his untimely and unexpected death in October. Pat played a critical and significant part in acquiring and running the Drapers Hall for the Coventry Brethren. He will be sorely missed.

Thanks indeed!

Familiar to all Brethren after the Festive Board: "For chicken young and chicken old, For chicken hot and chicken cold, For chicken tender and chicken tough, We thank you Lord that we had enough."

Recognition by local government

The Council of the City of Jacksonville in Florida recently passed these resolutions:

1. That the City Council does hereby recognize and commend Jacksonville's Freemasons for their longstanding history of civic contributions in our community; and

2. That the City Council does further thank Jacksonville's Freemasons for their exemplary and caring citizenship, wishing them all manner of personal and professional success as they continue to pursue their noble and exalted ideals of life and service.

Coventry City Council please note!

President is a grand chap

At the Warwickshire Grand Officers' Mess on 31 October, David Old passed on the Presidential mantle to Francis Jephcott. The new Vice-President is Peter Turner.

Long Service

Long Service Certificates have been or are about to be presented to Gordon Parsons, Alexander Thomson and Harry Sutton, all with sixty years service, and Victor Warham, John Carson, Norman Roberts, Jack Baker, Leonard Hill and John Austin, all with fifty years service. We wish them all many more happy years in Freemasonry.

Masonic Rugby

The front bar of the Freemasons Hotel in Molong ('the place of many rocks') is the watering hole of David Lyons, a member of the Australian Rugby Team during the World Cup.

Sponsorship

Sponsored by Bathroom World of 1205 Stratford Road Hall Green Birmingham. Contact details are: 0121 777 4444 or contact@bathroomworldhallgreen.n.co.uk, and their web site address is: www.bathroomworldhallgreen.co.uk/

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