



THE PROVINCIAL PATTER

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

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ISSUE NO 91

MAY 2017

Cover Picture: *The mattresses arriving at Mountain View School for Deaf Children, Blantyre*

Editorial

Welcome to the 92nd edition of the Patter.

What a privilege it is to be part of this Province of Ross and Cromarty. The Province, under the leadership of the Provincial Grand Master, Brother Robin Cattenach, have really pulled out the stops and made a truly magnificent contribution to the pupils and staff of the Mountain View School for deaf Children. A full report of the visit to Malawi appears later in the newsletter but I congratulate and commend the Brethren of the Province on their immediate response to the problems that we discovered in the school.

It was somewhat distressing and worrying to be told during our first meeting at the school that the priority was food – the school had run out of food to feed the 140 profoundly deaf children resident there. This problem was about to become even more acute given that the Malawian Government had announced that they were going to place a levy on Maize, the staple diet of the Malawians, which would effectively more than double the price of the maize.

The Grand Superintendent in Malawi, Brother Gordon Sheppard swung into action and after contacting relevant Brethren secured 150 sacks of maize at a cost of 5,000 kwacha before the government raised it to 12,000 kwachas. Simultaneously, Brother Robin Cattenach sanctioned our Treasurer, Brother Cundiff to allocate sufficient funding. Given that the Bank of Scotland have closed the Lochcarron Branch, Roger immediately travelled down to Dingwall where he made all the necessary arrangements to have the money transferred to the Superintendency.

The District Grand Secretary of the Irish Constitution in Malawi straightway offered to supply the necessary treatment to ensure that the maize wouldn't be affected by weevils or worse.

This working together has gloriously illustrated Freemasonry working for the benefit of others in a truly international way.

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



After a somewhat hectic few months, things quietened down a bit for Grand Lodge during the summer months.

The GMM and I will be travelling to Largs on 5th August to re-dedicate Lodge St John 173 on the occasion of their 250th anniversary. Two weeks later, we have the PGM's meeting in Perth

On 1st September, I'll be heading for the Royal Musselburgh Golf Club to join with the Brethren and Ladies of Lodge St John at their annual Ball.

The following week we have Grand Committee on Thursday 7th September and that weekend the 200th anniversary of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter – a weekend of celebrations at which I'll be representing Grand Lodge while the GMM will be carrying out much of the ceremonial in his role as Past 1st Grand Principal.

Things quieten down then till the end of September when I'll have the honour of heading a deputation to Lodge Carron 139 when they celebrate 250 years of Freemasonry in Stenhousemuir.

A week later I'll be at the Past Master's Dinner in Lodge Cadder Argyll 147.

On 26th October, we have the Grand Lodge Communication.

Bringing the month to a close I'll be heading south to London to participate in the 300th Anniversary of the United Grand Lodge of England along with the GMM and several other senior Brethren.

Ed

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

Hi Brethren

It is over a year now since the Installation of the Provincial Master and commissioned Office bearers.

It has been a busy time with Installations and visitations to all the lodges and I am very grateful for the support from all the Office-bearers. Once again at our AGM in May, ALL the members of Provincial were installed into their offices with some welcome new members taking up office.

Although the summer is called the closed season, for some there is always something going on. Grand Lodge meetings and Provincial Grand Lodge meetings to attend.

There is good news from Ramsay's trip to the school in Malawi for deaf children that we support. Provincial Grand Lodge will be having a special meeting at which Ramsay will enlighten us as to what happened on this latest visit. WATCH THIS SPACE for a date and venue.

There has been a suggestion that a PROVINCIAL Ladies night should be discussed at the next quarterly meeting. This would be a night at which all the members and partners would get to know each other better (and not just a voice on the other end of a phone). Think about this and what would be the best time of year to hold it.

Thanks again to ALL the Brethren, Masters and Wardens who supported Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty, Bro Jim Tait for acting as Installing Master and especially to the admin team - Bro Mike Turner and Bro Roger Cundiff for all the great work they do and to the many visitors who came along to see us.

Kind regards and fraternal greetings.

Robin Cattanach.

Provincial Grand Master

Blast from the Past – August 2007

I have two main topics for this quarter's Editorial. First an invitation to join a Provincial Grand Lodge Deputation that I will have the privilege of leading in April 2008 to Malawi where the Province has been invited to carry out the Installation of the Master in Lodge David Livingstone on Saturday 19th April. The definitive cost of the trip is not yet known but it will certainly not be less than £1000 for fares and accommodation. At present six Brethren have indicated their intention to accompany me but I would be delighted to have as large a Deputation as possible from across the Lodges. In order that the best fare prices can be achieved, could any Brethren who are interested in going, please contact me as soon as possible but certainly before the end of October. We have also committed to taking with us a donation of £1000 from the Province to be used for non-Masonic charities in Malawi. To achieve this, it is intended to hold a St Valentine's Race Night in Lodge Seaforth in February. I would ask that Brethren and their wives from across the Province consider supporting this event. Full details will be published in due course.

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From the Provincial Almoner

Yet again I start my report by recording the passing to the Grand Lodge Above of several of our brethren.

Past Master Cochrane Donald, Lodge Seaforth passed away recently at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness. Cochrane had been in poor health for some considerable time and had been unable to attend Lodge meetings on a regular basis for some years. His last attendance at a meeting was in June 2016 when he was installed as Depute Master of Lodge Allan Wilson. He had been due to be installed as Master at the meeting in June this year but his ill health prevented that from taking place.

Bro. Jimmy Low, Lodge Averon also passed away within the last few weeks after a long illness. Jimmy had been, for many years, the tyler in his Lodge and was well known and highly regarded by brethren from his lodge and visiting brethren. You were always greeted with a very warm welcome from Jimmy.

Both these brethren were great supporters of their respective Lodges and will be greatly missed. Cards have been sent to the families concerned conveying the deepest sympathy of the Provincial Grand Master and brethren of the Province.

Bro. James Morrison, Master of Lodge St Duthus has recovered from his injuries sustained in a road traffic accident and is now back to work.

Likewise, Bro. John MacKenzie, Lodge St Duthus has now also recovered from the injuries he received in a road traffic accident and is also working again.

Past Master Victor Shepherd, Robertson's Lodge is still resident in Strathallan Care Home, Strathpeffer. There is no great change in Victor's health since I last reported. He is usually in good form when I visit and is happy to have visitors. He is at times confused although he still knows people when they call.

Past Master John Patience Lodge Rosehaugh is, as I mentioned in my last report, not in very good health, but is able to drive and get about. He is always in good form when I visit.

Bro. Dougie MacDougall, Lodge Fingal is still resident in Redwoods Care Home, Alness. His condition has not improved greatly but is always in good form. He enjoys an interest in the green house at the home.

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

Past Master Angus Beaton, Lodge Fingal recently had major surgery on his back at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. Angus is now home and recovering although not yet back to work.

Bro. David Bennett, Lodge Allan Wilson is also not very well at present. Bro. Ramsay is in contact with him and keeps me informed as to his situation.

PM Colin Matheson has been in Raigmore for a major operation but is now home and making good progress.

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

If any brother requires my assistance or any brother knows of any brother who does, please get in touch with me

David A. MacMaster, PM

Provincial Grand Almoner

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



As we head in to a new Masonic season, Lodge Secretary, Iain Sinclair looks back over the year that has gone.

After our annual meeting last October to nominate and elect Office-bearers for the year ahead, we held a Special Meeting to advance my two grandsons, J Sinclair and A MacRae, to the Degree of Mark Master Mason.

In November, Brother James Morrison was Installed as Master of the Lodge by the Depute Grand Master, Brother Ramsay McGhee. We were devastated later in the year to learn that James had been involved in a serious road accident but he is now making progress to recovery. Shortly after his Installation, James led a Deputation to Lodge Seaforth to hear a lecture given by one of the first firemen to attend the twin towers disaster in New York, Brother Moises Gomez.

Inter-lodge visitations have been very much part of the year, we travelled to Robertson's Lodge to confer the FC Degree on Brother Bruce MacIvor, a first cousin of the Master of Robertson's. Later in the year, Lodge Seaforth travelled to Tain and worked a MM Degree.

We once again welcomed the Rev Susan Brown and her husband, Rev Derek Brown to lead our annual Divine Service which they did with their usual expertise – they are both superb preachers.

During the year we have experienced horrendous problems with Scottish Water. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that we have now passed all the relevant documentation to the Ombudsman in the hope that he can bring an element of common sense into the issue.

The Brethren of Lodge St Duthus have taken a great interest in the Malawi Project being run by the Provincial Grand Lodge and were delighted to be able to contribute £200 to the scheme.

Likewise, the Lodge was happy to support PM Hugh Fraser, Secretary of the local RBLs Branch who held a coffee morning in the Lodge which raised £112.

Iain Sinclair, PM
Secretary

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FORTROSE LODGE No. 108

This June saw 250 years of Freemasonry in the Western Isles with Fortrose Lodge 108 celebrating that anniversary. On the Friday evening, we had a talk by Brother Alexander (Sandy) Matheson PM in the Stornoway Town Hall. The talk was entitled The Lodge and Lewis 250 years in amity. This was an open meeting and a lot of the seats were occupied by non-masons. The hall was quite full, with some of the audience upstairs in the balcony area. There was a display of Lodge memorabilia and old minutes and a list of charitable donations made over the last 40 years.

On Saturday 3rd June, we held the rededication ceremony in the Nicolson Institute. This was carried out by The Grand Lodge of Scotland, headed on this occasion by MW Grand Master Mason Brother Charles Iain Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont. This was a very dignified ceremony and one that will be remembered by the Brethren. Bro Colin Scott MacKenzie showed us an apron that belonged to his great, great grandfather who was a founder member and whose name is on the charter from Grand Lodge. Three members received long service certificates from MW Grand Master, Bro George N. MacLeod 60 years, Norman Smith and Sandy Matheson PM 50 years. They also received a Jewel. RWM Bro Derek MacKay presented MW Grand Master with a special bottle of Abhainn Dearg whisky. When the Lodge closed, in Gaelic, we all headed for Lews Castle for our celebration dinner. The foundation stone was laid by the members of Fortrose Lodge. We enjoyed a wonderful meal in great surroundings. The speeches were short and at times humorous. MW Grand Master presented RWM Bro MacKay with a photograph which now hangs in the Lodge.

Henry W. MacInnes PM (Secretary)



Members of Lodge Fortrose No 108 with the Grand Lodge Deputation

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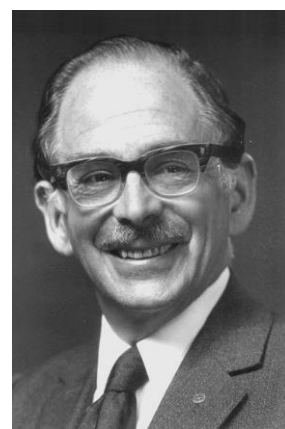
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THE BOTTLE

The bottle is a gift to Lodge Fortrose, Stornoway, from the glass collection of Peter Osborne Bennett of Wellington, New Zealand, (1924 — 2002).



Peter was a long-time Freemason and also collected old glass. When he bought an item that combined both he was doubly thrilled. He was a member and past master of Westminster Lodge 308 in Wellington, and also belonged to Waikanae Lodge 433, the Research Lodge of Wellington 194, and Rose Croix. His grandfather and two uncles belonged to Harmony 372, Budleigh Salterton, and his father joined Harmony in 1908, and later belonged to lodges in Australia and New Zealand. It would have given him great satisfaction to see the bottle returned home, especially for the Fortrose Lodge's 250th birthday.

New Zealand, May 2017

The back ground of how the bottle came back to Stornoway is explained in the dialogue of the following email messages between Diana Newbery in New Zealand and Henry MacInnes in Stornoway. I have deleted the greetings etc. Red is from Diana, blue is from Henry MacInnes

My father was a freemason in New Zealand, and collected antique glass. This bottle is in his collection. Does it have a connection to your Lodge?

Thank you for the photograph. Yes, that is one of a set of bottles that we use at dinners and Burns suppers. FLS is Fortrose Lodge Stornoway. I don't know how it got to New Zealand unless he was given it as a present when he left. If you tell me more about your father I could find out when he joined our Lodge.

Thanks for your reply. Dad lived all his life in New Zealand, and even on trips to the UK I doubt that he visited your lodge. Any connection to English Lodges would have been to ones in Devon, where his father came from. I'm pretty sure he bought it here in NZ so I suspect it may have come from the estate of someone who had been given it. It's great to know where it came from.

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I know that this is maybe not what you were expecting from me but, is there any chance of us getting the bottle back? We then have only to look for two as the original set was twelve. We have nine of them at the moment, we were using them at our Burns supper recently. It would be nice to get it back.

I realise there's been a long silence from this end. However, I hope you'll think it was worth the wait. My sisters and I have thought it through as we cleared the house, and we've decided that dad would have wanted to return the bottle to your Lodge. You'll need to cover the packing and transport etc from New Zealand, or maybe find a Freemason who's travelling in your direction to carry it. Whenever that can be arranged, the prodigal 10th bottle will return to your set.

That is wonderful news for us. We really appreciate what you are doing for us. Now I have a cunning plan, we are celebrating our 250th anniversary in June and there are members coming from New Zealand. We could arrange something in the next few weeks. Thank you once again. Kindest regards from all at 108.

And so, the bottle returned to Stornoway during the 250th Anniversary Celebrations – fantastic story and many thanks to Henry MacInnes for sharing it with us.

Robertson's Lodge No 134

Like most lodges we are at present in recess and with little to report. I am sure we are trying our best to enjoy holidays, cope with children on holiday or getting on with jobs outside that cannot be done in the winter. I see our RWM Brother Andrew MacIvor has been keeping himself busy with the Dingwall Gala week, organising various events etc. The week seems to have been a great success, and in no small way to Andrew's efforts. I am sure it will help prepare him for the work ahead in our lodge.

Our first meeting of the session 2017/2018 will be on Wednesday, 20 September 2017 at 7.45 p.m. when we will be having a business meeting to prepare our calendar of events. It would be great to see a return of absent brethren to restore our lodge to capacity. You will always be made most welcome. A billet will be sent out nearer the time. Visitors will be welcome to attend.

I know some brethren would like to be back among us, but health precludes. P.M. Victor Shepherd is still in Strathallan Nursing Home in Strathpeffer and Brother George (Dod) MacLeman is still in Shoremills Nursing Home. Both are in reasonable health and I know they would appreciate a visit from anyone who may be in their area.

If any brother knows of a brother who is ill or in need of any form of support please notify me so that we can help in any way we can.

Please enjoy the rest of the holiday recess and come back refreshed in September.

James A Tait, Secretary

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Lodge Fingal No 318

SPECIAL MEETING.

On Saturday, 20th May 2017, the Lodge received a visitation from Lodge St. Peter`s Operative No 284, Thurso. The Lodge tyled at 6 p.m. and was opened. The deputation of twelve Brethren, were admitted into the Lodge by their acting D of C, Brother Harry Rowsen PM, who presented RWM Brother Paul Cowan to our own Master, Bro MacIntosh. After a very warm welcome from all the Brethren present, the Maul of authority was handed over to Brother Paul Cowan who, assisted by his Office-bearers, worked an excellent Mark Degree. The fortunate candidate was Brother Joe Newlands of Lodge Fingal. Brother Newlands received congratulations from the DGM, Bro R. McGhee, R.W.P.G.M, R. Cattanach, RWM Cowan and RWM, Colin Mackintosh. On the completion of the workings of the Mark Degree the maul of authority was returned to the Master of Lodge Fingal who thanked Master Paul Cowan and his Office-bearers for the working of a most excellent degree.

PRESENTATION OF 70 YEAR DIPLOMA.

The Master of the Lodge then went on to state that a most worthy and honourable task now fell upon him. It was something that he had not had the privilege of ever doing before and doubted that he would have the opportunity of doing so again and felt most humble that it fell upon him so to undertake such a duty. At this juncture, the Deacons were requested to present PM John W Noble onto the centre of the floor. The Master went onto state that PM Noble had made a fantastic contribution to Freemasonry over the past seventy years. It all started just five days after John`s eighteenth birthday. He was initiated into Lodge Clinton No.1244, Sandhaven, Aberdeen-shire East, on 20th May 1947. He affiliated to



Lodge Fingal No.318 on Tuesday, 11th February 1958, and was Master of Lodge Fingal for the years 1967 and 1968. It was while Master in 1967 that he rewrote the ritual booklet which is still used today. It was during this stage in his masonic career that he became known as a first-class ritualist and in great demand to perform installations within other Lodges in the Province. Often on his own! He is still a very regular attender of Lodge Fingal and his advice is still sought on occasions. The DGM,

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Brother McGhee, then spoke of the worthy contribution made by PM Noble to the craft. He then presented PM Noble with his 70-year diploma and jewel. The RWPGM, Brother Cattnach, also spoke and congratulated PM Noble on a very fine achievement.

The Lodge was thereafter closed and the brethren retired to the Logie Lounge for a short harmony. Now members wives and partners joined the company and a DISCO was had courtesy of Brothers William Durrand & James Moodie, Thurso. An enjoyable day was had by all.

Colin Mackintosh

RWM

LODGE DAY OUT – DINGWALL TO PLOCKTON.

On Saturday, 27th May 2017, Lodge members accompanied by wives and friends, 22 in total, had a day out to Plockton by train. On arrival at Plockton the party walked from the Railway Station to the village. There they had a fantastic bar lunch.



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Then went on a local boat trip to see the seals. Some then went for a walk about the village and others returned to the pub for a wee top up. It was then a walk back to the station to catch the train back to Dingwall. The scenery, food and craic was excellent.

WALK and BBQ

On the afternoon of Saturday, 10th June 2017, members of the Lodge and friends did a walk from Strathpeffer to Dingwall.



On the completion of the walk they were joined by others and enjoyed a BBQ and jig. Music supplied by the ever-popular Mike Samms. (The heavy rain of the day failing to put a damper on the day.)

That`s all Folks, watch this Space.

D. Gunn PM
Secretary.

Blast from the Past – from PM Robert Scott, 318 in November 2004 edition of The Patter

Out of this world I shall never take things of silver or gold I make;
All that I cherish and hoard away after I leave this world must stay.
Tho' I have toiled for a painting rare to hang on a wall – I must leave it there,
Tho' I can call it mine and boast its worth
I must give it up when I leave this earth.
All that I gather and all that I keep
I must leave it behind when I fall asleep.
And I often wonder what I shall own
In that other life when I pass alone.
What shall they find and what shall they see
In the soul that answers the call for me?
Will the great Judge learn when my talk is thru
That my spirit has gathered some riches too?

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Lodge Allan Wilson No 851

It was with great sadness that we commenced the meeting with a silent tribute to our Depute Master Brother Cochrane Donald who passed to the Grand Lodge Above. In 2008, he was one of the first to sign up as a Reponing Member of Lodge Allan Wilson. A tribute to Cochrane is given in the 854 Column.

There was a good turnout at the June meeting at which Brother Robert Sneddon, Past Master of Lodge No 590 St James (Linlithgowshire) gave a most interesting and detailed lecture on his Lodge's magnificent Banner. The Right Worshipful Master Congratulated Bro Sneddon on the content of the lecture and the excellent way it was delivered and spoke of how it was very much appreciated by those present.

The August meeting (Tuesday 8th) sees a welcome return of PM, Brother Charles Winston, Lodge Montefiore. Last August, Charles gave a fascinating talk on a painting of the state visit of HM Queen Victoria to the Glasgow International Exhibition of 1888 based on the painting by the renowned 19th century artist, Sir John Lavery, one of "The Glasgow Boys". The painting contains a detailed image of 253 people all of whom are catalogued. Brother Winston highlighted a number of those in the painting all of whom were prominent Freemasons of their time including, principally, Sir Archibald Campbell who, in the painting, is seen giving the address to Queen Victoria in his role as Exhibition President. Sir Archibald was the 73rd Grand Master Mason serving in that office from 1885 until 1892. The presentation was full of interesting historical material all of which had great relevance to both the social and masonic history of Scotland.

Brother Winston's eye for detail and accuracy is renowned so we look forward with great anticipation to his 2017 lecture.

Brother Roderick MacCormick, RWM, extends a warm welcome to all Brethren to come along and hear Brother Winston and thereafter join in what is always a very sociable lunch. We look forward to seeing you all on 8th August.

WRM
Substitute Master 851

Blast from the Past – from Stornoway in the August 2008 edition

As reported in the May edition, the Grand Master Mason, Bro Sir Archibald Donald Orr Ewing and Grand Secretary, Bro David MacKay Begg paid the Province a weekend visit in May when, having visited our neighbouring Province of Inverness-shire, they made their way to Stornoway where the Grand Master Mason presented a 65-year certificate to centenarian, PM Bro John Gillies Macdonald. At night, they accompanied me on the annual visit to Lodge Fortrose No 108 where we witnessed an excellent rendition of the Mark Ceremony.

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Lodge Seaforth 854

We were all deeply saddened at the untimely passing of Past Master Brother Cochrane Donald to the Grand Lodge above.

Cochrane was initiated into Freemasonry in Lodge St John No 745 in Huntly on the 25th February 1971 and, when he moved to the Black Isle, he affiliated to Lodge Seaforth in Fortrose and was immediately welcomed as a potential Office-bearer. Soon, he took up Office and progressed steadily through the various offices and in December 2004 I had the pleasure and privilege of Installing him as Master of the Lodge.

He was extremely proud of his achievement in the Lodge and rightly so and from there he took up office in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty reaching the Office of Junior Warden before his health prevented him from progressing further.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the fact that Cochrane was not only active in the purely Masonic aspects of the Craft – he was heavily involved in fund raising for local charities and he contributed greatly to the Provincial charity work in Malawi and only a month or so ago I was able to witness the use to which the first aid equipment which Cochrane played a major role in getting out to them, was put. He played an important part in the social life of many Lodges in and around the Province entertaining not only the Brethren but many others in the Community as well - not to mention his starring role in organising and running the children's Christmas Parties.

Cochrane Donald was extremely well thought of as a Mason and as a Man. He will be sadly missed in our beloved Craft but he has left a personal Masonic legacy that we will all remember and treasure for many years to come.

Our first meeting of the season will be on Monday 18th September – a warm welcome is extended to all.



Normal is getting dressed in clothes that you buy for work and driving through traffic in a car that you are still paying for – to get to the job, you need to pay for the clothes and the car, and the house you leave vacant all day so you can afford to live in it.

—Ellen Goodman

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Lodge Averon No 866

Hello Brethren

Lodge Averon is having an unusually quiet break this season with only one welcome back night on the 24th June for PM Iain Duxbury, which was well attended and a good night had by all. He is now doing well after some minor surgery.

I would like mention two Brethren from Lodge Averon who have passed to the Grand Lodge Above. Bro Jimmy Muir in May. Jimmy was a well-respected member and was always available to give advice and support to the younger brethren. Then in July - Bro Jimmy Low, who was the Lodge Averon Tyler for many a year.

Both these Brethren were active Lodge Averon members for many years and will be sadly missed but never forgotten.

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel this year's Annual Lodge Averon Scramble. As my son is getting married in Oct and I will not have the time to organise. No one else was available so a difficult decision had to be made.

Bro Donnie Mathieson

Lodge Ness No 888

During the "Close Season," which seems to be shrinking rapidly (according to "She who must be obeyed"!) Lodge Ness had the first of this year's barbeques, and managed to get a reasonable profit. Music and entertainment were provided by Tug Wilson and Tommy and Michael Stirling. The Stirling Brothers were jumping between two sites on this occasion, as they already had another commitment in Invergordon, but they managed to appear at both sites seamlessly. Tommy puts it down to his split personality! Lodge Ness is planning another barbeque on August 19th, and all brethren, friends and family will be very warmly welcomed, as will our neighbours who live close to the lodge. We use the barbeques and other events to cement good relations with them as they then become positive ambassadors for the lodge.

Our first regular meeting will be on Tuesday October 10th at 8.00 pm This will be a business meeting to discuss the agenda for the forthcoming season.

Derek Rodway

RWM Lodge Ness 888

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LODGE KYLE No 1117

Lodge Kyle have had been busy during the Summer months, keeping the garden in front of the Lodge under control. It literally has a life of its own. Thanks to the members it is now more manageable. Sadly, we also received another astoundingly large bill from Business Stream – The Water Billing Company, again demanding 1000 times the appropriate water charge. Our Treasurer struggles on convincing them otherwise while Bro Mike (our Provincial Secretary) wrangles at a National level trying to gain exemption for Lodges as the fees are crippling and could cause closure of smaller Lodges.

We will be holding a meeting on Monday 4th September, the Lodge tyles at 8pm where the work will include a Third Degree. All MMs welcome.

MEMBERSHIP AND MILLENNIALS

Freemasonry is timeless and universal. It is a glittering jewel in the crown of man's achievements. Yet... membership numbers across Scotland are dwindling. Why?

After speaking with Brother Whitwell who is also considering membership and retention and confirms a similar situation in England, this article offers a few ideas as to why this is happening, and possible steps that could be taken to minimise losses and stimulate new membership of suitable candidates.

The following reasons for not joining the Craft have been identified: -

Prospective Candidates have existing interests which because there only so many hours in the day are in competition with a commitment to Freemasonry: other clubs and organisations, TV, digital devices etc.

There is no clear path to membership in their lifestyle.

A lack of engagement due to no knowledge of Masonic Benefits.

No willingness to join or a negative view of the Craft.

A perception it's all old guys and that Freemasonry isn't relevant in the 21st Century, especially in the minds of Millennials.

And of course, many more reasons ...!

Having outlined some possible reasons, we can proceed to address them one by one, but before engaging new members we need to ensure our "product" is as good as it can be, and presented in the best possible light.

To this end, Grand Lodge has produced Membership Forms and a Guide to Freemasonry for potential members. These are free on request and are an excellent source of professionally curated, printed information for a potential candidate.

This aspect of Freemasonry demonstrates we are an organisation with an infrastructure ideally suited to the purpose of "marketing". If needs be we can move quickly, efficiently and have the resources, both financially and in member skills to complete the task at hand.

Next our customer facing services: - Websites, Facebook, Literature and more often nowadays; Video. The National website for Scottish Freemasonry is at <http://www.grandlodgescotland.com/> and does a good job of directing Brethren to resources and streaming Potential Candidates to Membership. However, while we as Freemasons are familiar with terms like Grand Lodge, Freemasonry and Joining the Craft, potential "prospects" are not.

When researching Freemasonry, they are likely to type in "join masons" after doing so they will find Google most helpful in displaying the requirements but neglecting to show the nearest Lodge. It is therefore essential that Freemasons are known to be such in their local community and that they are always open to questions from potential candidates.

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LODGE KYLE No 1117 cont.

While websites can provide information, they need to be visible. Is there a need to have a Lodge's Web Address on the Lodge building or railings/wall etc? Probably.

Then we have Facebook; ideal for participating Freemasons to contribute their Meetings, Events and Ideas. You, as a Freemason can join a secure group and once approved - you are in... if and only if you are a Freemason. So, while Facebook is a superb platform for Masonic exchanges, its somewhat lacking in purpose in its present form when it comes to recruitment. How can this be remedied?

Facebook as a "Social" media an ideal platform for Brethren to declare their Membership of The Craft to anyone who asks or to post what a great time they had at such and such a Lodge, outwith closed groups thus stimulating interest and enquiries from potential candidates.

For better or worse younger people use Facebook on their phones frequently and as such this tool forms an important aspect of their daily lives connecting them with their peers, business associates and activities.

From a general web perspective, it may also be useful to generate more local recruitment pages with lists of Lodges within that area or Province. However, in implementing this the "granularity" would vary from urban to rural areas.

To explain in more detail. While the adoption of a common form of search in Google may be: - MASONIC LODGE TAIN. While this would be effective in identifying the single Lodge in Tain, a search of MASONIC LODGE GLASGOW would yield multiple Lodges. So, while not completely effective it could be a step in the right direction or a model for further research.

It should be highlighted at this juncture that while a website is relatively expensive and difficult to edit, A FACEBOOK PAGE is both simple and FREE.

On a positive note, I believe that using Email, Websites and Social Media - it should be easier, faster and more efficient to get our message out there!

Next. Competition for people's free time is fierce, so Freemasonry must be competitive. A value proposition as they say in Marketing terms, must be put to the public, describing the benefits of Freemasonry. To list these now would be out with the scope of this article, but one could succinctly say. "What doesn't Freemasonry offer?"

While its correct to say - Freemasonry is not intrinsically about what YOU get out of it, it's fair to say that Freemasonry does offer a great deal to its members AND the surrounding community.

It offers companionship, a better life view, an opportunity to HELP your fellow men and women, so it's a benefit to all those who meet its membership (the local community as well as nationally through organisations that benefit from funding).

Freemasonry is a wonderful self-improvement programme, kindled by like-minded Brethren who help you along the path. It is support group when times are tough or friendly faces when you arrive in a new community or country, and a philosophy second to none.

So is this relevant in the 21st Century. Yes, more than ever.

Many younger people live in a spiritual vacuum, where their upbringing didn't include basic religious precepts or mindfulness. Freemasonry can fill the need that most people have for a spiritual component that they are currently missing, one that makes when whole regardless of what race or creed their parents or ancestors may have adhered to.

However, we must be aware that young people are NOT like older generations of 50 years and more. Their values and beliefs are different as are their peer groups. We must learn what interests them and engage them accordingly. An old fisherman once said, "You must always bait the hook for the fish you want to fry". Essentially it is us old dogs that must learn new tricks if we are to succeed.

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LODGE KYLE No 1117 cont.

Assuming then that are keen to stimulate new membership, we must also maintain momentum and encourage new members to think likewise.

It's therefore essential that the drive to recruit ONE younger member doesn't stop with the first sign-up, we must persevere and ask if he has any friends who would be interested in joining so they can also join and bring a dynamic to the Lodge that is somewhat lacking when a Lodge is exclusively older members.

Finally, these are just a few of the issues regarding membership and retention. If you have any ideas or strategies that your Lodge employs successfully, I believe Freemasonry would benefit from hearing them.

Ronnie Miller, PM
Secretary

To All New Freemasons in the Province

Further to the above article, the Substitute Provincial Grand Master is keen to converse with all Brethren who have joined the Craft in the past two years to build up an understanding of what prompted you to join the Craft. Please contact Barrie on whitwellbarrie@gmail.com

It is hoped that initial contact will lead to an annual event for new Brethren in the Province.

LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

5th May. This clashed with a charity golf tournament and this dwindled numbers somewhat. We were indebted to David Patience for providing another of his lectures.

We return to the fore on 6th October and this will be our AGM meeting. We have been asked by PGL to host the quarterly communication in November. This is due on the 1st however, as our own meeting is due on the Friday 3rd we have made a polite enquiry to the secretary if they would consider conjoining both meetings on the 3rd. We feel this would be a benefit for both parties in terms of attendance especially with the lodge without available candidates.

Keith Patience, PM
Editor's Note

I can now confirm that there will indeed be a joint meeting. The PGL Communication will take place in Lodge Rosehaugh immediately after the Regular Meeting of Lodge Rosehaugh on Friday 3rd November

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Lodge St Martin 1217

The brethren of the lodge have once again been busy at the Ullapool Rotary Club Fun Day held on Saturday 22nd July, a busy day was had by all with the fisheries protection vessel “Jura” in attendance.

The lodge resumes business on Tuesday 17th October when the AGM and Election of Office-bearers will be held at 8.00pm.

A note for all your diaries, Lodge St Martin will be celebrating their centenary on Saturday 9th May 2020, the Lodge will be holding the meeting in the Ullapool Village Hall where the first meeting was held.



Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary

Lodge Loch Ewe No 1551



As on 3 previous occasions I have been fortunate in having photos published in the 'Ross-shire Journal'. Two months or so ago I took the above view of the inlet/bay at Diabaig above Torridon which made it into the Ross-shire on Friday 3rd June.

While it is the summer recess not a lot is happening in the West unless you are into jaunting along the 516-mile route that is the NC 500!

Now that the writer is using days off from taxi duties when not in the garden 'getting in the wife's way' by taking advantage of some of the fine days we have been blessed with recently I've decided to get out and about beyond the normal parameters of Achnasheen on a Sunday and have been along parts of the NC500 as far as Shieldaig and Applecross – if only to appreciate the wonderful scenery which was not visible during nightshifts when working at Kishorn in the mid-70s.

It can truly be said that many of us do not realise or appreciate the natural wonders which lie at our own doorstep.

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The new masonic session starts on Thursday 14th September, then on Friday 6th October we will see the autumn Lodge Quiz Night to be held in the Poolewe Hotel, Poolewe when the proceeds will be going to the local Poolewe Swimming pool which has been a grateful recipient on a couple of previous occasions.

Further details can be obtained through local channels and by contacting lodge secretary Barrie on barrie.whitwell@btinternet.com

I well remember a Burns Supper held in the same venue some years ago and can heartily recommend the local support which the QN may also enjoy added to the budding team competitors who can take the shorter low road access from Easter Ross via Achnasheen to the hotel.

Andrew M. Henderson IPM

BITS AND PIECES

My thanks to PM Andy Henderson for the following article.

Captain Bertram Dickson, Pioneer Military Aviator.

My fascination with the subject matter certainly gathered momentum since my affiliation in 2002 to Lodge Loch Ewe No. 1551 in Aultbea particularly after either an Installation meeting or PGL annual visitation – whichever it was it entailed an overnight stay in a couple of rooms organised by Joyce at the Aultbea hotel for both PM Gibby and Helen and Irene and myself when, the day following the meeting after breakfast we took in a few of the local sights as well as the signposted grave of Captain Bertram Dickson, Pioneer Pilot, Military Aviation en route to our homes in Strathpeffer and Dingwall. The original seeds of looking into the background of this individual would have taken place even before my affiliation 15 years ago when we befriended a couple who were in the hotel hospitality business and moved to Strathpeffer many years ago from Lincolnshire and first mentioned ‘The Captain’ to me probably around the same time that they told me about the nesting ospreys in the electricity pylon along the A832; I followed the progress of these wonderful birds for 16 years until last year when, after hatching and not far from fledging, a pine marten or buzzard ransacked the nest one weekend resulting in a non-return to the site this year. I have seen ospreys feeding at the nearby Grudie reservoir so can only hope my pair and others have successfully nested elsewhere in the area.

In the case of ‘The Captain’ I hope to be able to spend many more tranquil moments at his last resting place in addition to those spent to date.

The grave yard in the Cnoc na Bain Burial Ground at Achanalt, 22 miles from Blackwells, Dingwall, was last used for an interment 31 years ago in 1986 in respect of a local County Councillor. She (there’s a clue) is actually buried outside the cemetery gates as she probably wouldn’t want to spend any ‘warlocks and witches’ nights or shenanigans with the assembled company within the cemetery gates! That’s another story but I well remember refilling (and refilling) her glass in the old Viking Bar in the National hotel on the monthly occasions when all the councillors from far and wide in Ross-shire descended on Dingwall and, from the time they finished their lunch continually imbibed until their

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drivers were ready to go – in the case of the lady no driver for her as into her burgundy Alvis, doors tied with binder twine she would go and take off to the West – different days eh! She was different class too - I can tell you.

I digress:

The Captain's story can be found on various internet sites for your perusal but the pertinent points I like are that his grave records that he was a Captain in the Royal Regiment of Artillery; that he was a soldier, aviator and explorer; that he was born in Edinburgh on 21 December 1873; and that he died at Lochrosque Castle on 29 September 1913 after sustaining injuries in the first ever air crash between his plane a Farman biplane and that of an Antoinette flown by Frenchman, Rene Thomas in October 1910. Thomas was relatively unscathed, but Dickson was very badly injured, but despite this was, by late 1911, working with several British manufacturers to improve the design of their aircraft. Dying at a relatively young age of 40 years kind of runs parallel with Dingwall's Fighting Mac, Hector Macdonald and his monument tower at Mitchell Hill.

Save that the Captain appears to have been multi-tasked among the various armed forces and was thought to be involved in covert operations at times.

A nice touch, as will be seen from the accompanying photograph, is the presence of a Poppy wreath on the grave. Also, at the expense of being accused of plagiarism I've recaptured the photo on the plinth at the entrance path leading up to the grave of the River Bran and hills to the west but the reader will see that the Kyle to Inverness Sprinter service is arriving bang on time in Achanalt Halt at 18.34 hrs.

An equally nice touch and this was recounted by my Strathpeffer / Lincolnshire friends is that, in recognition of his early skills, aircraft will be seen dipping their wings in salute to Bertram Dickson as they pass Achanalt. On a couple of separate Sundays over the years I have had the pleasure of seeing (i) a turbo prop and (ii) the SAR helicopter (pontoons as opposed to wings) do that very thing.

The reference to Lochrosque Castle where the Captain died is presumably to nearby Lochrosque Lodge, which at the time was the home of Sir Arthur Bignold MP.

Within the burial ground there is a mausoleum to the Bignold family and Sir Arthur was MP for the Wick burghs which perhaps encompassed part or the whole of Ross-shire; the Bignold and Wick references certainly ring a bell with me as, in Wick, there is a Bignold Park near to the main Harmsworth football Park where in my Scout days and beyond in Thurso we played Junior football through in Wick at the 'Bignold', Harmsworth Park being the home ground of the Wick senior teams playing in the Caithness league. There is also an hospital near to the airport road called the Bignold hospital.

I hope this article is of interest to you and may even encourage visitors to the lodge leaving their homes 20 minutes earlier to take in a little of what I've written?

Right:

Plinth and bottom of path heading to grave

Next page:

Poppy and 18:34 arrival



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Andrew M. Henderson



Black Isle Show time again

To all Brethren, wives and families who'll be there – enjoy yourselves and may the sun shine on the show.

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VISIT TO KENYA and MALAWI

On Tuesday 20th June 2017, accompanied by my wife, Ann and Brothers Henry Cameron and Ian MacLaren, I headed from Inverness Airport to Schiphol where we spent a few hours before joining the onward flight to Nairobi in Kenya. While this was primarily a Provincial Visit to the Mountain View School for Deaf Children in Malawi, it was agreed that I would perform a few duties for Grand Lodge while in Africa which was an absolute delight to do.

The District Grand Secretary in East Africa, Brother Kalpesh Shah, had completed an inordinate amount of preliminary work prior to our arrival which made the entire exercise so much easier for all of us. The kindness, generosity and general helpfulness displayed to us by Kalpesh and his team was superb and we greatly appreciated the efforts by all for our benefit.

Our first duty on Friday 23rd June was to rededicate Lodge MacKinnon No 1531. This was somewhat different as the Lodge was celebrating its 60th anniversary which is not the normal timescale but, Lodge MacKinnon has gone through a somewhat difficult time, but is now back to a healthy state. It was thought therefore, that it would be good to celebrate their return to good health. It should be noted that the Brethren of the English Constitution in Mombasa were instrumental in helping to secure the turnaround. Their District Grand Master, Brother Dr Virendrakumar Talwar, did a marvellous job along with our own DGM, Brother Michael Craig. It's good to see both Constitutions working together for the betterment of the Craft.

On the Friday night, there was a good turnout to witness the ceremonial of rededication, eighty plus Brethren. The Lodge was opened by the Master, Brother Alex Macaron after which the various Deputations entered. I was supported and assisted by several Brethren including Brother Bomi Metha, Past DGM of India who stood in as Senior Grand Warden, Brother Ian MacLaren, Junior Grand Warden, and Brothers Henry Cameron and Kalpesh Shah who both did incredible jobs as Grand Chaplain and D of C respectively.



From Left to Right – WRM, Brother Maccarrone, RWM of Lodge MacKinnon and Brother Michael A Craig, DGM of East Africa.

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Brethren of Lodge MacKinnon along with the Depute Grand Master, Members of the District Grand Lodge of East Africa and visiting Districts from India, Central South Africa and the PGL of Ross and Cromarty.

After the meeting, we re-assembled in the refectory where we enjoyed an excellent meal (albeit Brother MacLaren was struggling a wee bit with the spices, chilli's and curry), speeches and company.

On Saturday morning, I attended the District Grand Lodge Committee Meeting and was, as usual, impressed by the methodical and well organised form it takes. I was especially impressed by the progress reported on the Intender Programme and have a folder full of information to feed back to Grand Lodge and to the Province of Renfrewshire East.

Next, was the main event. The re-installation of Brother Michael Anthony Craig as District Grand Master of East Africa. Five years ago, I was delighted to be involved as Grand D of C when Mike was installed for the first time. This time I had the great privilege and pleasure of installing him.

The Nairobi Masonic Temple was full. Every Lodge in the District was well represented, there were visiting dignitaries from India, Central South Africa, from Ross and Cromarty and from both the Irish and English Constitutions.

On this occasion, I was assisted by Brother Ramesh Shah as Grand D of C and Brother Henry Cameron as Grand Chaplain.

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The Ceremony went well and was followed by the Installation of the Elected District Grand Lodge Office-bearers after which we again made our way to the Refectory for another sumptuous meal followed by speeches and the exchange of gifts. It was a truly memorable and enjoyable day and the District Grand Lodge should be commended for its organisation skills. Everything went like clockwork.



Left to Right – Bro Kalpesh Shah, WRM, Bro Mike Craig and Bro Ramesh Shah

After the two days of ceremonial, the DGM and his charming partner, Maria, Brother Bomi Metha and the four of us from Ross and Cromarty were treated to two days in the Masai Mara to relax albeit the six-hour journey in a mini bus, especially when we left the tarmac roads, couldn't exactly be classified as relaxing. However, the discomfort of the mini-bus was well worth it. We were so fortunate in being there during the migration of the zebra and wildebeest – literally millions of animals that could be seen for as far as the eye could see.

We watched, at one point, hundreds of animals crossing a river on the migration route and, while we were there, we could see the crocodiles moving in but they must have been well fed earlier as we thankfully did not witness any carnage in the river.

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Left to right – WRM, Bro Dr Virendrakumar Talwar, DGM of East Africa (EC) and Bro Mike Craig, DGM of East Africa (SC)



Some of the zebra having a feed before crossing the river.



Picnic time on the Masai Mara

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Soon it was time to bid farewell to all our East African friends and head, from Nairobi, to Blantyre where we were met by Brother Gordon Sheppard, Grand Superintendent of Malawi and some of his team who transported us to our hotel in Blantyre. Gordon is very much like Kalpesh when it comes to organisation, every detail has been seen to. That night, apart from relaxing over dinner, we could study the very detailed itinerary prepared for us.

Priority of course, was to get to the Mountain View School for Deaf Children where, on arrival, instead of meeting with the children as we have done in the past, we had a meeting with Mrs Modester Jere, the Headmistress. It was quite a difficult meeting as, when asked what the priorities were, Modester looked me straight in the eye and responded with one word – food. The meagre income the school can generate was insufficient to feed the 140 children resident there. Second, the mattresses the children are sleeping on are over 20 years old and are well past the sell by date. Third, new blankets are needed, especially now when the temperature drops quite considerably. Fourth, the teachers are having to resort to hand writing exam papers as they only have one computer in the school and cannot afford the cartridges for the one printer they have. They have no transport either? That's where we stopped – quite a list of priorities. However, on a brighter note it was time to go and meet the children and young people.

I should say that Modester and the staff are eternally grateful for the response by the Province when the water supply totally failed and we covered the cost of the new solar pump which is working admirably. In her welcoming speech at assembly, Modester stated

“Education is the right of every individual regardless of their race, religion, gender and disability. Hence, learners with disabilities have equitable access to quality education.

Mountain View is for learners with hearing impairments. The school is situated in the Nthikira Village, Traditional Authority Bvumbwe, Thyolo District. It is 6km east of Bvumbwe trading centre off Limbe-Muloza Road.

The construction of the school was initiated by Brothers of the Immaculate Conception in 1996 and opened its doors in 1997. The school was initially established to train learners with hearing impairments in the basic literacy skills of reading, writing and numeracy as well as vocational skills that include carpentry, tailoring, poultry and dairy projects. With your generous aid, Mountain View has been able to continue these practices, using your sponsorship to pay wages and purchase necessary materials. Additionally, on behalf of all at Mountain View I would like to express our gratitude for your assistance with the solar pump, which is providing water to the school, a major challenge that we faced previously.

Since the school started administering the Primary School Leaving Certificate exams the school has sent 43 boys and 35 girls to local and national secondary schools.

Though several achievements have been registered, and of course many more are anticipated, the school has not been spared from insufficient funding. The school currently faces severe challenges in sourcing food for learners, inadequate mattresses for the learners in the hostels and inadequate blankets for learners.

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It is the wish of the school to try and minimise those challenges which affect teaching and learning processes. The school will continue to intensify its projects especially if there is support from well-wishers and donors such as yourselves.

Thank you

Modester E C Jere

It was also good to hear that thanks to our sponsorship of the technical teacher and the supply of tools and wood, two pupils have now secured full time employment because of the woodwork skills they were taught in the school. Modester is also convinced that there are a couple of older pupils who could possibly start up on their own such is the woodworking skill base they now possess. That was heartening news indeed.

We visited the woodworking class which is looking so much more professional than it did when we first visited in 2008. Much of the success can be attributed to our woodwork teacher.



In 2008 the classroom was cluttered, there was no structure, the tools were almost non-existent and all they were attempting to make were small wooden footstools, the quality of which was dubious.

Today, the youngsters are all far more confident in the woodworking classroom and they are producing quality products such as chairs, desks etc. There is a good working environment and the tools collected by our own Province and by the Province of Fife and Kinross are proving to be precisely what is required.

The current Master of Lodge Nyasa No 956, Brother MacLean is a technical teacher in one of the Colleges in Blantyre and he has been of great assistance to Mountain View by showing them how to care for and maintain the tools – this has been a tremendous help.

Again we can see demonstrable proof that if we all work together, much can be achieved.

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The woodworking instructor (right) instructing one of the older pupils on the benefit of square work. It might be difficult to make out, but the joints are all well-made mortice and tenon joints



Two pupils constructing a bed – the bed will be sold locally thereby generating a modest income; other products can be seen at the back.

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Past Master Charlie MacAulay, Past Provincial Grand Secretary, very kindly donated about 100 wee wrist bands which the children, old and young, were delighted to receive – Ann was hugged to bits by the children as she distributed them.

The older boys were delighted to get new footballs which Past Master Henry Cameron had taken with him

Much of our time during the remainder of the week was spent wheeling and dealing – with Gordon Sheppard shouldering the bulk of the work – to try and overcome the challenges that Modester had set. We learned very quickly that the bags of maize which we were working on were likely, at the Government's insistence, to more than double in price. It was important therefore, that we moved quickly. As a result, we could purchase 150 sacks of maize at 5,000 kwachas per sack instead of 12,000 which was the new government price. Our thanks to Bro Chirag Shah, Junior Deacon of Lodge Livingstone 1162, who provided and transported the maize to the school.

Thanks, are also extended to Bro Prashant Rajani, PM and current Senior Warden of Lodge David Livingstone 1162, who became the Master Overseer of mattresses, maize, laser cartridges and pointed us in the right direction as to who could best provide what we needed at best prices. We thought we had negotiated a good price for mattresses – they were coming in at 23,000 kwacha each. This was going to be a big spend, just over 2.5 million kwachas, or approx. £2600 in sterling, but they were badly needed. However, Brother Rajani put Gordon in touch with Brother Girish Kamath, Senior Deacon of Lodge David Livingstone who could supply superior quality 4" mattresses (we were initially looking at 3" mattresses) for a total of just under 1.8 million kwachas.

Through the good offices of Bro Sam Kulasinghe, PM Nyasa 956, the school was presented with five refurbished computers. Brother Sam is the Chairman and Brother Phil Pile, a Trustee of the "Computers for Malawi Schools" initiative, a UK - based charity supplying IT equipment to Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Sam's wife Sabina, is the full-time Manager of the Malawi project. Sam satisfied himself that the Deputy Head Teacher, Reme Chikwenda, is competent to install the computers and set up the memory stick link for the printer. On IT matters, apart from the above, Sam may also be able to direct funding from Rotary International for computer programmes for deaf students to learn by, if Modester and Remy can provide a "needs analysis", then Sam will arrange to supply the soft-wear.

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Other good news on the IT front is that Brother Robert MacPhee, Depute Provincial Grand Master of Renfrewshire East, is also involved in “Computers for Africa” and he will be in Malawi in September. Brother Robert hopes that he can add Mountain View School to his list and that he will be able to assist with the provision of further hardware.



Above: The maize being delivered to the school

Left: A happy Head Teacher – Modester Gere surveying the newly delivered Maize with Grand Superintendent Gordon Sheppard

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Head Teacher Modester Jere, Deputy Head Teacher Reme Chikwenda and Gordon Sheppard discussing the miracle of a newly installed and connected computer. Great joy.



Mattresses all safely stored for the start of the new term. More joy!

The time spent at the school and working with Gordon and the team was therefore very enlightening and satisfying. The four of us were extremely proud of all that the Province achieved in turning around what was a worrying and anxious time for Modester and her staff.

From the savings made thanks to the Brethren mentioned, it now means that the surplus will be used to purchase further food provisions for next term, such as red beans, salt and cooking oil. It will also help to burglar-proof the new computer lab and the ongoing Carpentry and Joinery vocational skills training. There is also an urgent need for blankets and while my daughter Fiona has already secured 75 ex-army blankets, we might be able to purchase some in Malawi to help the situation while we work out how to get the army blankets out there.

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From the school, our attention returned to matters Masonic and on the evening of Thursday 29th June, we attended a Regular Meeting of Lodge Nyasa No 956 where we witnessed a superb working of the FC Degree by the Master, Brother D R MacLean and his Office-bearers. We thereafter joined the Brethren at an excellent Harmony. The welcome and friendship generated at the Lodge was second to none.

On Saturday 1st July, while Ann was entertained by the ladies of the Brethren, Henry, Ian and I prepared for a marathon Celebration of Freemasonry as Brother Gordon Sheppard so aptly named the three ceremonies we were about to carry out. First, we opened Grand Lodge to Re-install Brother Gordon Sheppard as the Grand Superintendent of Malawi for his third term in office. On completion of the ceremony we spent fifteen minutes in the Refectory having drinks and snacks before we entered Lodge David Livingstone No 1162 where we had the pleasure of Re-dedicating the Lodge as it celebrated 100 years of Scottish Freemasonry in Malawi. It was then time for another break before the final ceremony of the afternoon when we had the further pleasure and privilege of Installing the new Master of Lodge David Livingstone, Brother Sirhaan S Karim, a young enthusiastic Mason who I have no doubt, will serve the Lodge well as its Master.

Throughout the three Ceremonies I was assisted and supported by several Brethren all of whom carried out their duties in a first-class manner. Brother Philip Pile, an old friend of this Province carried out all Secretarial duties, the Wardens Chairs were occupied by Brothers Costas Scordis and James Hinde, Organist was none other than Brother David Grimes. Henry Cameron was superb as D of C in the first and last Ceremonies and took, once again, the demanding role of Chaplain in the Re-dedication Ceremony. He alternated with Brother Laurie Arthur as Chaplain and with Brother Gordon Sheppard as D of C. Brother Ian MacLaren did a first-class job as Inner Guard and also presenting the working tools to the Master in the Installation Ceremony.

It was a long and exhausting day but all three ceremonies went well and were well received.

On the Sunday, we took our leave from Blantyre and travelled with Gordon up to Club Makokola on Lake Malawi where we relaxed for a couple of days – the Brethren who have travelled to Malawi with me in the past will remember being at Club Makokola – where they have the winding staircase and where Iain Ramsden and Raymond MacKeddie got heavily involved in a local board game!

Finally, on the Wednesday, Gordon drove us half way to Lilongwe where we met up with another old friend, Brother Mario Real who kindly transported us to our hotel in Lilongwe. That evening we were privileged to attend the annual Ladies Night of Lodge Angoni which was held in the palatial home of Past Master Jayesh Patel.

The four of us are indebted to so many Brethren and wives for making this trip such a memorable one and I hope that I have mentioned all of them as I progressed through the article but, most of all, this trip has brought home to me just how well Scottish Freemasons from around the world, working together under the banner of Relief, Truth and Brotherly Love can effectively change the lives of those who are less fortunate in life than we have been. In all the ceremonials we were involved in, we worked in harmony together – Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians, Hindu's – and together we were able to bring a wee ray of sunshine into the world of the children at Mountain View School.

If only the world could learn from Freemasonry what a wonderful place it would be.

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Lodge Angoni Ladies Night

While we were in Kenya, we met up with Brother Jilo Quraishy and our dear friends from Lodge Mount Longonot 1813 in Naivasha. They explained to me what they were doing with a local school in Naivasha – it makes for interesting reading. They too are doing a wonderful job for the community.

Lodge Mount Longonot No 1813 Charity Project

In 2015, The then RWM Adeel Quraishy and Bro Jayesh Sangrajka brought to the attention of the Brethren of the Lodge, a worthwhile charity project in a school namely Longonot Primary School based in Naivasha.

Although a Government school, it was and is getting very little support and upon a visit to the school after one of our meetings it became quite apparent that they were in dire need of our assistance. The school has almost 600 students with no access to running water, having to fetch water in dirty plastic tubs from nearby, the classrooms are disrepair, no windows no flooring, roofs leaking, and the list carries on.

The headmaster and teachers are to be also commended to turn up to work in these conditions.

It was the decided that we would take on the school as our Charity Project, but the size and scale of what needs to be done meant that we had to prioritize their needs and take things step by step. So now we have managed to deliver 2 water tanks to the school, the guttering for these is kindly being donated by The Current RWM Bro Pradeep S Giddie, which should be delivered and fitted by mid-June 2017. He also donated a computer complete with keyboard and printer in April.

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We have just started the ball rolling, and a committee is now set up to ensure we don't lose focus on this mammoth task ahead. The next step is for the committee to visit and look at the costs of this project and our next form of aid.

We will accept any donations in the form of monies or materials from individuals or institutions in aid of ensuring these children not only get a good education but enjoy learning in a safe and clean environment and will ensure accountability.

We are proud to have started this and wish to keep The School as The Lodge Mt Longonot's Charitable Project for the foreseeable future.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ANY OF THE MEMBERS BELOW FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Committee Members: Adeel Quraishy, Jayesh Sangrajhka, Pradeep Singh, Mansur Asaria, Sati Reel, Niral Bhatt.

Lodge Longonot Brethren with one of the new water tanks



The new computer being handed over to the school

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The Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland

VISIT TO GHANA 2017.

Thursday, 4th May. Along with my wife Joan I left Inverness on the mid-morning flight to Amsterdam where we had previously agreed to rendezvous with my other travelling Companions on this visit, M.E. Companion McEwan, Past Depute, his wife Sheila and M.E. Companion Smith, Grand Scribe E, who had travelled direct from Edinburgh. After a short delay, we boarded the flight for Accra arriving at Kotaka International Airport about 8 p.m. On arrival, we were met by senior District Grand Chapter representatives, taken directly to the VIP Lounge and expeditiously processed through local Customs and Immigration. On completing our checking in procedures at the very welcoming Golden Tulip Hotel we then spent an hour or so in social fellowship with our Ghanaian Companions prior to retiring.

Friday, 5th May. A visit to the Urology Department of the Korie-bu Hospital proved to be an extremely interesting and informative experience and it soon became clear that the medical staff were performing excellent work under somewhat restricted conditions.

After a relaxing and enjoyable lunch at the Alfa Beach Hotel we were taken to the Achimota Masonic Hall and went over arrangements for the forthcoming Installation Ceremony. We were later joined by the Ladies at the Naval Wardroom and treated to a most enjoyable meal.

Saturday, 6th May. A morning visit to the Mausoleum and an Arts Centre, followed by a tour of the city proved to be an extremely worthwhile experience giving an insight into both the history and culture of the country.

Early afternoon and we returned to the Achimota Masonic Hall. where, in the presence of many Companions we duly installed our new District Grand Superintendent, M.E. Companion Albert Ashong-Lampety and his commissioned Office Bearers. After the Ceremony, we were taken to the quite splendid Air Force Officers Mess the venue for the Installation Banquet. Most of the Companions were accompanied by their ladies and the evening turned out to be a most memorable occasion.

Sunday, 7th May. After checking out of the Tulip Hotel we attended an interesting and well delivered service at St Augustine Anglican Church. M.E. Companion Ashong-Lampety very kindly arranged for us to join the congregation for lunch in the Parish Hall. This was an extremely kind gesture which we all appreciated

We then travelled to the airport where once again, prior to departure the VIP facilities were made available.

Monday, 8th May. An early arrival at Amsterdam necessitated a two hour wait for our Inverness flight which enabled us to be home mid-morning while my other Companions journeyed home via Edinburgh

Another enjoyable overseas visit and once again we cannot thank our hosts enough.

Ian Fraser.

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PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

Donnie Macleod

Tain & Ross RAC 63

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Tuesday 10th October 2017.

St Clement RAC 244

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Friday 27th October 2017.

Cromarty Firth RAC 310

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Wednesday 4th October 2017.

The Hebrides RAC 364.

GUILD LODGES

GUILD OF MASONRY in SCOTLAND

On Saturday 17 June 2017, the Grand Sanhedrin of Guild Lodges of Scotland held its Annual Meeting in Lodge Scoon and Perth No. 3 in Perth

The day started at 10 a.m. with the working of the 7th Degree, with 8 Brethren from throughout Scotland put through. This included Br. Peter Foster of our Province (Highland Guild Lodge), and Br. David Dingwall of Moray Firth Guild Lodge. The 7th Degree lodge was then closed.

At 11 a.m. the Grand Sanhedrin was opened. This meeting invites all Guild Members from the 4th Degree upwards. Also in attendance were 3 representatives from the English Constitution under the leadership of Br. Nigel Willows, 1st Grand Master of the Guild, in England, who were there as invited guests.

After the usual business, the Annual Installation was carried out, with Brother Ian Duff from Scoon and St. John's Toune Guild Lodge, being Installed as Grand First Master of the Guild for Scotland. From the Province of Ross and Cromarty, Br. Jim Tait, Highland Guild Lodge was installed as Grand Second Master and Br. Fred Fraser as Grand Steward. Br John G. MacKay of Highland Guild Lodge was installed as Grand Director of Ceremonies, while from Moray Firth Guild Lodge, Br. Derek Milne was installed as Grand Third Master and Brother James Williamson installed as Grand Scribe and Scrivener. The meeting was closed at 1 p.m. and followed by an excellent 3 course lunch served within the club premises of the lodge.

Guild Masonry in the Province of Ross and Cromarty is held in Lodge Averon in Alness where the first to the sixth degrees are worked. The seventh degree is worked annually in Perth. Any Brother interested in joining or seeking further information should contact our Scribe and Scrivener (i.e. Secretary), Brother Alisdair Taylor at 01381 620799.

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Highland Guild Lodge

Alasdair Taylor

Kirkswarden/Scrivener
Highland Guild Lodge

The Moray Firth Guild Lodge.



Highland Shed No 6 – Grand Shed Installation



And finally:

Blast from the Past – February 1999 – a piece I received from my father shortly before he died -

Being old is not an age thing - it's a state of mind: you are only old if: -

- ▶ you sit on a rocking chair, but can't make it go;
- ▶ you turn out the light for economy, not romance;
- ▶ you feel like the morning after, but you haven't been anywhere the night before;
- ▶ your back goes out oftener than you do;
- ▶ everything hurts - what doesn't hurt, doesn't work;
- ▶ a dripping tap causes an uncontrollable urge;
- ▶ you know all the answers, but nobody is asking the questions;
- ▶ you look forward to a dull evening;
- ▶ you forget to remember.