

# PROVINCIAL PATTERN

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

ISSUE NO 77

NOVEMBER 2013



## What's in the November Edition?

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*Bits and Pieces including:*

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*Cover picture: Lodge Ness No 888, Invergordon*

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## Editorial

Welcome to the 77<sup>th</sup> edition of the Patter.

Now that we are back in the swing of things after the summer break, we can look forward to the Installation season during November and December and that of course will be quickly followed by the Provincial Visits starting in February.

The first Provincial Event of the season was the annual Divine Service for Brethren and families and also for members of all other Orders who wished to come along. It was an excellent service conducted by Bro Rev Bill Niven – just such a pity that there were not a lot more present – the service was very poorly attended which was somewhat ironic in that Bro Niven was labouring the point that there needs to be much more commitment from not only Lodge members but from Church members as well.

Yes, church attendances are down, just as many Lodge attendances are down – where then are we going wrong?

I don't think there is any one point or issue that we can all latch onto but, in the first instance, would it not be much more positive if we looked at the Lodges that are doing well and find out how we can emulate them. It would undoubtedly mean change but, if we wish to maintain and increase Lodge membership, the vast majority of Lodges will need to change – or sink.

No one has ever suggested changing the basic tenets of our order – that is just not going to happen but we need to change our outlook, our perceptions, and our *“it has been done this way for the past 100 years so we ain't changing”* attitude.

Last week I was at a meeting in Fauldhouse – over 130 Brethren signed the attendance sheet to witness a Reigning Master's Degree – an absolutely brilliant night – why are all Provinces not thinking about it? Because in many places they will face the *“we never do that in this Province”* response. Later in the newsletter Keith Murray highlights the need to do things in a way that will attract not just the prospective new candidate but his wife and family too.

Change can be difficult but a lot less difficult than closing a Lodge down.

*Ramsay McGhee*, Editor

## Grand Lodge of Scotland

The main event at Grand Lodge will be the Installation Ceremony followed by the Festival of St Andrew on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November.

I am aware that there are a number of Brethren from the Province travelling down to Edinburgh to join in the celebrations which is always very welcome. At the moment there are over 400 tickets sold for the Festival of St Andrew which will once again be held at the Corn Exchange. There are however still tickets available if any Brethren would like to attend. Application should be made through your Lodge Secretary. The tickets cost £55.

In addition to the Installation Grand Lodge Office-bearers continue their travels – it has been a busy couple of months and November is no exception. On 2<sup>nd</sup> November we attended the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations of Lodge Union No 250. The Lodge meets in Dunfermline but the celebrations were held in the larger Lodge at Rosyth.

Next Saturday we travel to Montrose where Lodge Montrose Kilwinning will celebrate their 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – a really tremendous achievement – and a celebration that we are all really looking forward to.

On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November, it's back down the A9 to Glasgow where Lodge Eastmuir No 1126 will celebrate their Centenary in the Masonic Hall in Shettleston.

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

By The Glasgow Phoenix Choir

The concert will take place in Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00 pm.

This will be a really wonderful occasion – I have had the opportunity to hear them before but I fully appreciate that it is very difficult for Brethren and their families who live outside the Central Belt to be able to get to Edinburgh by 2.00 pm on a Sunday – certainly if we have Church commitments in the morning – however, if you can get along it will be well worth the effort – tickets are £10 from Grand Lodge.

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## Provincial Grand Lodge:

Brethren

I am pleased to announce that the Provincial Diary has now been circulated to all Lodges – your Lodge Secretary will be able to provide a copy for you. Please try and attend as many of the Provincial Events as you can – your support is greatly appreciated. The first of those events is our Quarterly Communication, which will be held in Lodge Averon this coming Tuesday (5<sup>th</sup> November) at 8.00 pm.

May I take this opportunity to wish all Brethren in the Province and their families a very Happy Christmas and a very prosperous and healthy New Year.

*William Ross*  
Provincial Grand Master

## From The Provincial Almoner

Fortunately, on this occasion, my report will be fairly short, but, sadly, once again it starts on a sad note.

PM Donald George Ross, Lodge St. Duthus, Tain, passed suddenly to the Grand Lodge Above on Wednesday 2nd October while undergoing treatment at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness. Donald had not enjoyed the best of health for some years and was in and out of hospital and attending clinics at various hospitals throughout the country, on a regular basis. Donald was latterly the Lodge Almoner in his Mother Lodge and was also a Past First Principal of Tain and Ross Royal Arch Chapter as well as a member and office-bearer in a number of other Orders. Donald is survived by his wife, Maria, elder daughter, Marylyn and her husband, Will, and his grand-daughter Michaela. Donald's younger daughter, Kerry, passed away a year or two ago after a long illness at the age of 26 years. Donald will be very much missed by us all. His funeral service was largely attended by Masonic Brethren. A card has been sent to the family conveying the deepest sympathies of the Provincial Grand Master and brethren of the Province.

PM Malcolm McGougan, Lodge St Duthus, Tain, has recently been in Raigmore Hospital and is now recovering at home.

PM Andrew MacIvor, Robertson's Lodge, Cromarty has also recently been in Raigmore Hospital and is now home and out and about again attending to his usual Masonic duties.

Mrs Margaret MacKintosh, Dingwall, wife of Bro Colin MacKintosh, WJW, Lodge Fingal, has recently completed a course of radiotherapy at Raigmore Hospital and is now home. Bro. Colin, himself, has also been in Raigmore Hospital recently but is now also home and awaiting the results of various tests and a scan.

Bro Denis Aldrich, Lodge Loch Ewe, Aultbea has also been unwell recently but is now on the mend.

I'm sure you will all join me in extending good wishes to them all.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require my services or know of anybody who does.

*David MacMaster,*  
Provincial Grand Almoner  
Tel: 01997 421306 email: [david@strathpeffer.net](mailto:david@strathpeffer.net)

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## FROM THE LODGES

### Lodge St Duthus No 82



PM Robin Cattenach kindly sent me the following article which recently appeared in the local press –

Freemasons in Tain this week set the wheels in motion for a big fundraising campaign by a local care home to buy a minibus for its residents.

Duthac House has a mammoth task ahead in raising the £18,000 needed to purchase a decent second hand minibus to get residents to the local swimming pool, the cinema, their monthly ceilidh and for trips out.

But big hearted Masons from Lodge St Duthus this week kick started the campaign by handing over a cheque for £800, the proceeds of several fund raisers over the year.

The Master, Bro Alan Pett said – “normally at the end of the year we distribute the cash we have raised to around four local charities but this year we were approached by Duthac House and we felt the case was so deserving that we gave them all the proceeds we raised this year, Hopefully this will give them a start and more donations will follow.”

Highland Council withdrew the minibus which had been used by residents when it transferred ownership and running of Duthac House to private care company, Parklands Highland, this summer.

Duthac House manager, Eileen MacKay said: “we have identified two busses we can get first shout at but we need to raise the money fairly quickly. The residents go swimming each week and enjoy various other activities outside the home, but at the moment staff are taking residents in cars, which is not ideal. Trying to get somebody who is disabled or who has had a stroke in and out of a car is tricky. We manage between us but a bus would be so much more accessible. Duthac House has just won the Scottish Care Awards Most Meaningful Activities award so we are committed to giving our clients interesting and enjoyable activities. We would be delighted to hear from any local business who would like to donate to our fundraising because it makes such a huge difference to residents’ well-being if they can get out and about doing things.”



Front left to right:

Master of Lodge St Duthus, Alan Pett, Norma Gordon, Eileen MacKay (manager of Duthac House Care Home) and Caroline McCormick are joined by members of the Lodge as they present a cheque towards the new Duthac House minibus fund.

Photo: Bobby Nelson

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## **FORTROSE LODGE No. 108**

Nothing to report from Stornoway at the moment, no degree work has been carried out this season so far, but there are candidates waiting in the wings.

The Installation meeting will be Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December.

## **Robertson's Lodge No 134**

Our season started on Wednesday 18 September 2013 when we worked a 3rd Degree for Bro Douglas Cooper and on Wednesday 16 October we worked a MMM Degree for the same brother. This was by way of a practice as on Thursday 14 November 2013, the same team will be going over to Lodge Averon to work a MMM degree there. A visit we are looking forward to.

Our meeting of 20 November 2013 will be our AGM and nomination of Office Bearers. Visitors are always welcome but this meeting may be of little interest to them, so you will be forgiven for your absence.

Anyone who visited our lodge recently will have noticed the work and refurbishment that has been carried out over the closed season. This has been a big improvement to our lodge and although there will always be more to be done as with any older building, at least we are on the way. The organisation and provision of materials as well as hard work must be accredited to PM Andrew MacIvor, Bro Peter Foster Snr., who I believe managed to coerce Bro Peter Foster Jnr. Lodge Spey, and Bro William Mackay, who is always there, to lend a hand. Our thanks must also go to PM Roy MacIver, Lodge Fingal who did some electrical work (and this is not the first time) and to Bro Ian Fraser who did plumbing work at his own expense. Ian had not been in the lodge for some time but I know he intends to remedy that and we look forward to seeing Ian back soon. Our thanks also goes out to Bro Donald MacIvor, Lodge St. Duthus who did pointing and painting at no cost. This type of harmonious working is in the true spirit of Freemasonry and the sincere thanks of all in the lodge must go to those named.

Many ask how PM Roddy MacBeath is doing. His health is good. He does not manage to the Lodge at present but his name is always to the fore and he and his wife Jean recently celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. We sent our congratulations but I am sure all would wish them well.

PM Victor Shepherd is still not at his best and is awaiting further tests and Bro Frank McKellar has had health problems over the past year but tells me he is now on the mend. We wish them well.

For those who we may not see before next year, may we pass early Festive best wishes from all at "134".

With every best wish

Regards

*James A Tait*, PM  
Secretary

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## Lodge Fingal No 318



**October meeting:** Opened in the EA° by the RWM Bro Rev Ivan Warwick with 21 Brethren and 15 visiting Brethren present from the following Lodges - No's 134/601/854/1120/1213/1216/1217 and 1235. They were all charged to convey the fraternal greetings of Lodge Fingal on return to their respective Mother Lodge. The RWM called upon the Brethren of Lodge Fingal too afford our visitors the usual hearty Fingalian welcome. The RWM said that he looked forward to seeing everyone in the Logie Lounge for the Harmony, after the meeting.

**Business:** To work a MM° for Bro Robert Donald Cassie.

At the third rising there were five speakers who stood up, all speakers mentioned how much they enjoyed the Degree work and congratulated Bro Cassie on taking his third regular step in Freemasonry and on return to their respective Mother Lodges would convey the fraternal greetings of Lodge Fingal as charged.

During the degree work however, the JD Bro David Ross took a turn and collapsed onto the floor, by good luck the PM of Lodge Rosehaugh Bro William MacLeman, who is a nursing manager at Raigmore Hospital, was able to give his support.

**November meeting:** 12<sup>th</sup> will be our Annual General Meeting and nomination of Office Bearers.

**December meeting:** 10<sup>th</sup> will be a MM degree for Bro David Robertson.

**Special meeting:** On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December, where it will be the Re-Installation for the RWM Bro. Rev Ivan Warwick and Office Bearers at 6.30 p.m.

**January meeting:** 14<sup>th</sup> Paper to be given by PPGM Bro Ramsay McGhee on Malawi.

**February meeting:** 11<sup>th</sup> MMM degree for Bro David Robertson.

**March meeting:** 11<sup>th</sup> MMM degree for Bro Robert Cassie, also our annual Provincial visit. Lodge will Tyle at 7.30 p.m. to do the minutes, etc.

**April meeting:** 8<sup>th</sup> Paper to be given.

**Events Logie Lounge:** Festival of St. John, in the Logie Lounge, after the meeting 28<sup>th</sup> December.

As we approach the Festive Season, on behalf of the RWM and Brethren of the Lodge, I wish all Brethren, Wives, Partners and Families a very happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year. That's all Folks, watch this Space.

*D. Gunn P.M.  
Secretary*

### PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE WEBSITE

For up to the Minute information and back copies of the Provincial Patter – access the Provincial Website on - <http://www.pgrossandcromarty.org.uk/>

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## Highland Hospice - (STILL TIME TO ENTER)

The Hospice Brain Game will take place in the Iron Works on **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November**. It would be good to see either teams from some of the Lodges or a team from the Province taking part – there are a significant number of Quiz participants throughout the Province – why not get together and get an application form from Amanda Burt at Highland Hospice or let me know and I'll organise one for you. *Ed*

## Lodge Allan Wilson No 851

Congratulations are extended to two members of Lodge Allan Wilson – PM the Rev Iain Ramsden and Lodge Tyler elect, Bro David W Bennett – both of whom have been successful in being elected to Grand Committee for the next three years.

We wish them both well for a successful and enjoyable term in office.

## Lodge Seaforth No 854

At the end of last season we visited Lodge John O'Groat with a good size delegation and worked a mark. Their comments were very favourable and they were especially interested to see how our ritual differs from theirs.

We have got off to a good start this season with a Mark degree in September for my son Gareth and a first degree in October for Bro. Andy Morrison, well known as the landlord of the Plough Inn, Rosemarkie. I have promised to help him with his questions for the second, over a pint, and if I can go slowly enough, I might even get a second.

We have our AGM in November and, following the practice of the last few years, a service of carols and readings in December.

Into the new year and we will be resuming our degree work with another new candidate and continuing to the end of the season with two seconds and two thirds.

Thanks to all the brethren who have helped and supported me in my first year and yes, it has gone by in a flash.

*Gwyn Phillips*  
RWM

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## Lodge Averon 866

We resumed labour on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October with a business meeting. Our next meetings are as follows:-

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> Oct Master Mason Degree (Kris Bauer)

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> Nov Nomination of Office Bearers and a MMM degree worked by Brethren of Robertson's Lodge 134.

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November is the Election of Office Bearers and an explanation of the Tracing Boards.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> Dec is our AGM with accounts. I don't know at the moment what else we are doing that evening.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Dec is a regular meeting and the Annual installation of Office Bearers to follow.

There will be a St. Andrew's Night held in Lodge Averon on Saturday 30th November. I attach a poster for your perusal. Tickets are on a "first come" basis and are very reasonably priced. Any Lodge Averon member who wishes to donate a prize is more than welcome to do so. Send your names and number of tickets required to Bro Harry McCartney [harry\\_mcc@btopenworld.com](mailto:harry_mcc@btopenworld.com)

Kindest Regards,

*Henry W MacInnes*  
Secretary

## Lodge Ness No 888

Well brethren,

Hope you all had a good break and are feeling well and refreshed for the season ahead with all the installations and AGM's that are about to take place.

We have started the season very calmly, with our first meeting being a business meeting and the second being a Fellow-craft degree. On the 12<sup>th</sup> November we hope to work a Third degree and on the 26<sup>th</sup>, it will be our AGM and nomination of Office-bearers for the following two years.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> December it will be the Installation of the elected Master and his office bearers and the 24<sup>th</sup> December will be a Lodge business only meeting.

In January we think that it will be a couple of second degrees but this will be in the hands of the new Master.

We look forward to an enjoyable season and no doubt a few of us will be doing some visits and look forward to meeting up with you all again.

As this edition covers the festive season, I and all at Lodge Ness take this opportunity to wish all brethren and their families the very best for Christmas and the New Year. *R.W. Morrison*. PM - Secretary.



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## LODGE KYLE No 1117

Our installation is on the second Monday of December which is 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2013 at 8pm Kyle Masonic Hall. Bro Callum Mackenzie will be going into the chair. Callum is a Past Master of Lodge Kyle and is looking forward to his tenure in this the second half of our Centenary Year.

We were also very pleased to complete the exterior repairs of the Masonic Hall's leaky roof. The joiners who effected the repairs commented that the damage would have been far more serious had it not been for the craftsmanship of the original builders all those years ago.

Warmest regards from a somewhat colder Kyle of Lochalsh with just a sprinkling of snow atop the high Cuillin Ridge,

*Ronnie Miller*, RWM Lodge Kyle No. 1117

## Lodge Rosehaugh No 1216

We resumed after the summer recess with a third degree in October for Bro Garry Patience with Bro Allan Carmichael in the chair as Bro Scott Patience RWM was working abroad. Garry also works off-shore so has a bit of a wait to get his third but well worth it. The responses to the test questions were of the highest order and set up an excellent degree. Scott was home for our November meeting which was our AGM and business meeting. Bro John Patience delivered a lecture on the Sumar and Tubelcain. As usual with PM Patience's lectures this was very well received by the Brethren.

The new cushioned seating which the Lodge decided to get following the Legacy received from the late Roddie Cade have now been installed and are a great and comfortable enhancement to the Lodge.

One thing which did come out at the meeting was that the Lodge is starting to find that costs have overtaken income received. The committee have decided to not only try to reverse this trend but in order to meet the expected requirements of the Brethren for our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary (only 6 years away) to try to set up a 50/50 draw. We are very hopeful we can get this up and running by February and are really needing all the Brethren of 1216 (old and new) to support this project. Of course it is open to all and the first name forward was a visitor but well supporting Past Master. We are looking for a minimum of 40 and to date we have got 16 confirmed. So a good start.

We also will be holding a Quiz night on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm with teams of up to 4. The senior citizens party will be on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December.

We have a change of Installation date this term and this will now be held at 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 7.30pm. We will hold a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree on the 6<sup>th</sup> December with an 8.00pm start.

*Keith Patience*, PM  
Secretary

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## **Lodge St Martin 1217**

Our installation will be on 19 November ruling at 7.30 pm for normal business and admitting visitors at 8.00pm.

On the 17th December we will be carrying out a 1st degree ceremony and on the 18th December the Lodge will be assisting Santa tour the village to raise funds for the children of the local area.

The Brethren of the Lodge will also be erecting and lighting the village Christmas tree as has been done over the past 30 years.

*Charles MacAulay, PM*  
Secretary

## **Rosicrucian College – Inverness**

The November meeting of the College (11<sup>th</sup>) will be the working of Grade 3

On 9<sup>th</sup> December there will be a lecture.

The meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February will be a working of Grade 4

On 10<sup>th</sup> March there will be the Annual Peter Ross Lecture

And to bring the season to a close – the Installation of Peter Foster as Celebrant – this will take place in Lodge Seaforth, Fortrose.

## *Excerpts from the Past – February 1998*

Brother Norman Fawcett of Lodge Seaforth can always be relied upon to come up with snippets of information that make us wonder how we ever managed without them. His latest gem is a cracker -

There are 56 words in the Lord's Prayer; 297 words in the Ten Commandments; 300 words in the American Declaration of independence and 29,911 words in the EEC Directive on the export of eggs.

Thanks Norman !!!

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## Lodge Loch Ewe 1551

Our season opened in September 2013 with a couple of business meetings and was followed up by another at the start of October when those appointed for the forthcoming Second Degree ceremony were nominated. Between now and the PGL visitation in April 2014 this will be our main focus in relation to our Craft activities.

The regular meeting of Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013 will be our annual Installation ceremony for the Office-bearers carrying forward the work of the Lodge during RWM Gibby Hassell's second year in the Chair along with the Affiliation of Alastair Gault who is cementing his monthly visits to us in a tangible manner. The welcoming hospitality of '1551' goes before it and we look forward to seeing as many of you from within and from outside Ross-shire on that particular Thursday and at the Harmony (and Raffle!) in the hotel afterwards – perhaps there may be a sprinkling of new faces along the lines of those referred to in the next paragraph.

In the last issue of the 'Patter' it was intimated that it is always good to see visitors to the West of the Province and, in Aultbea, we have had three first time visitors since meetings restarted in September viz. Bro. T. Chris Shaw from North Wales – Lodge Fleet No. 454 (E.C.) on 26<sup>th</sup> September and Bro. Peter Jackson from Lodge No. 1561 (E.C.) in Northumberland who accompanied Bro Murdo MacGregor of Lodge Oatlands No 1005 in Glasgow on 10<sup>th</sup> October. Murdo is a cousin of our secretary Duncan MacLennan and it is worthy of note that both their fathers (and Brethren naturally!) were founding members of Lodge Loch Ewe 55 years ago.

With north Wales, Northumberland and Glasgow being named it seems appropriate to mention that the RWM Gibby Hassell, IPM Barrie Whitwell and Almoner Andrew Henderson are looking out their overnight bags for 28<sup>th</sup> November when their Megabus entitlement cards will be assisting them to attend the Grand Lodge Installation with the Festival of St. Andrew in the Corn Exchange in the evening. The RWM enjoyed it so much last year with one of his cronies of former years at the table of Alex Huskie of Millennium Mark (a crony of the Almoner from N. Sea era of the eighties) that the IPM just could not pass up the opportunity of forming an Aultbea assault on the capital this time round!

As a follow up to the July visit of the Heilan' Shed No. 6 of the Squaremen the £120 raised on the day has been donated to the local nursery.

We, as indeed all Brethren in the Province, were saddened to hear of the death of the very prolific Bro. Hector Morrison P.M. from our near neighbouring Lodge Kyle No. 1117 on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2013 after a short illness. The funeral on 16<sup>th</sup> August and very well attended by a great many Freemasons and Hector was also SPGM (a fitting accolade to his sterling work for the Craft) to the 'Patter' editor while he was RWPGM of Ross and Cromarty.

*Andrew M. Henderson*

Almoner

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## **The Sinclair Bruce Diary**

It's now Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> of August and our final meeting of Lodge Allan Wilson for year 2013. Looking back on the year shows that we are progressing in a very favourable manner and it is great having these meetings, if only to keep our minds active during the recess period. Lodge Allan Wilson attracts masons from all over Scotland and beyond - in fact today I received Dues from the Columbia State bank in Oregon - consequently I will keep an eye on finance programmes so that I will have a better idea on values of the dollar to the pound when banking before confirmation from the bank. It's an ill wind that does not blow somebody a measure of knowledge!

During the Allan Wilson meeting we were all deeply engrossed in a lecture by Bro John Noble, a Past Master of Lodge Fingal, on Masonic Stamps. Such was the nature and knowledge displayed in this lecture, you could have heard a pin drop, even on the closely weaved carpets within our Lodge. We then adjourned to the club room and enjoyed a three course Lunch

It's not that long since I mentioned our last meeting of the Allan Wilson Lodge and the drums are starting to roll for the beginning of our regular craft meetings with my mother Lodge commencing with a mark degree on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September. So let's hope we all return refreshed and ready for a successful masonic journey.

Our first notice for next session has just arrived from the secretary of the Highland Guild lodge to be held in its usual venue within the premises of Lodge Averon on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September with Peter Fannon in the chair – I'm sure we will get off to a grand start.

On Sat 7<sup>th</sup> Sept the Royal Arch Provincial Chapter held their Installation Meeting in Stornoway where the new Provincial Grand Superintendent of Ross and Cromarty, MEC Donald MacLeod, was installed by the First Grand Principal for Scotland, MEC Ian Fraser. There was a good attendance at the meeting and all enjoyed this very important date on the Royal Arch calendar. We all wish Donnie a happy and successful five years in this exalted position.

Last night, Monday was our first meeting of the season in my mother Lodge - Lodge Seaforth, when we worked a mark for the Masters son. Once again all went well but we could do with better turn outs. That said, we had six visiting Lodges, however we totalled only twenty four attendees. Let's hope that will be improved on as the year goes on.

My second meeting for the coming season was my usual visit to Lodge Rosehaugh who were working a third degree and I must say, without fear or favour, it was one of the best workings I ever witnessed. At the conclusion of the degree, one of their own Past Masters said, that although this was an excellent degree he felt with the volume of young members they were attracting the time was ripe for the Past Masters to encourage the young members to start doing parts on the floor. I would support these comments as the future of all organisations lies with our youth.

Last night was our October meeting of my mother Lodge. The turn out certainly has room for improvement with only twenty one including Office-bearers present, As I see it, it is up to all members to promote their Lodge simply by visiting other Lodges and when giving fraternal greetings extend a warm welcome to all and sundry to their next meeting.

I do not appear to have a lot of news for this issue but hopefully the coming months will get me away from the doom and gloom scenario and lead us all to more success and cheerfulness.

*Sinclair Bruce*

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## BITS AND PIECES

### View Points from Australia

In the Editorial of the August edition of the Patter I alluded to the fact that many of the more successful Lodges I encountered in Malaysia and Australia were those where they had an active social programme and where wives and girlfriends became actively involved. On reading the Editorial, Bro Keith Murray whose Mother Lodge is Paisley St James No 1116 in the Province of Renfrewshire East but who is now very much involved in two Lodges in Melbourne as well as the United Grand Lodge of Victoria, sent me the following observation. However, he also very kindly sent me an article which his wife had written for their Grand Lodge magazine. I am indebted to them both for allowing me to reproduce both articles which I'm sure you will find enlightening.

In Victoria, the craft has generally seen a trend where we are now getting younger, better educated and certainly more involved men joining. They have already researched and understood much more about freemasonry than possibly the majority of members in the lodges. Still, what is also noticeable is that they can quickly leave, if they do not find what we tell them freemasonry is really about. By that I mean, we promise them that they will become better men, that their priorities must be to their family first and that we support one another; that we promote quality in everything we do, including ceremonial but also in our surroundings and our meals/drinks. Both lodges that I am actively involved in only meet ceremonially 6 times a year but in the odd months, we usually have a social activity involved.

What we therefore are seeing is that those lodges that are not just talking about these principles, but actually do them are seeing a resurgence in membership and those that don't are withering. One lodge here had 19 candidates in a 12 month period and my other, Lodge Amalthea, had 10 candidates last year and has more in the wings, with 6 joining members also coming along. These are two new lodges and part of their success is that members who were disenchanted with the traditional lodges not doing anything, decided that rather than manage decline, they needed to do something different and ensure the continuity of the craft. The more traditional lodges that haven't moved with the times are suffering a declining level of participation, poor ceremonial, poor quality meals, few or no social activities and have almost adopted a suicidal tendency to see their lodge disappear over time.

It is not easy, takes effort, but the rewards are definitely there. The average attendance rate at lodges such as the two I attend is about 75% of members, whereas at a traditional lodge the average attendance rate is closer to 40-45%. So it shows that if we do what we say we do, but by making the changes it needs to suit the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we can have many young men joining lodges thereby ensuring its future prosperity.

To do this we do need to actively involve wives and partners. Don't expect them to be the ones to prepare the meals, rather pay a caterer. Ensure music is included in the ceremonies and the officers doing the work know their stuff and there is an active social committee that really gets the men and wives/partners involved. Many join a lodge to build a network of friends and if we assume one uninspiring meeting everyone/ two months or rehearsals will achieve that we are kidding ourselves. The lodges in Scotland in the past, often did these things right and repeated it, but seemed to have lost the knack, but equally didn't move with the times to recognise that the modern man/woman are looking for different things to encourage them to participate.

I was a mason before I got married, but Fiona is now a great supporter of the organisation, not because she sees what I get out of it, but because what she gets out of it!

Anyway, not wanting to give you a sermon, even if it is a Sunday, but thought you might like to hear a viewpoint from someone that has been in the craft for 30 years and experienced both the good and the not so good in both Scotland and here in Victoria.

*Keith Murray*

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The following article is kindly reproduced from the Grand Lodge of Victoria Magazine in which Keith Murray's wife, Fiona, answers a number of very pertinent questions – hopefully her views will give many Brethren some food for thought.

## **Which Lodges does he belong to?**

Keith is a member of a number of Lodges and Orders in both Australia and Scotland. SEAVIC Lodge and Lodge Amalthea, both based in Melbourne, are the ones I have become involved in. He is also a current member of the Grand Lodge team.

## **His joining year**

Keith joined Freemasonry in 1983. He had already been a mason for several years before we met. At that time, I knew absolutely nothing about Freemasonry and that situation remained broadly unchanged for a long time as Keith's Lodge did not have mixed events. I was happy for him to go to his regular meetings with his friends. I believe there has been a significant shift in thinking within Freemasonry since that time, and the organisation is now much more inclusive of family. More recently we have become involved in Lodges where, in addition to the standard masonic elements, there are regular social events including partners and families. Some events are solely for socialising, whereas others are fundraisers for the Lodge's chosen charities.

## **What do you feel Freemasonry has done for your partner?**

As he was already a Freemason when he arrived from Scotland, Keith was immediately able to meet a diverse group of likeminded men and now has many friends both in Australia and overseas. Ceremonial work has developed Keith's presentation and public speaking skills though some may argue his accent still needs work! He also enjoys the opportunity to escape from his work and meet with his masonic friends in a mutually supportive environment. Travel and international fraternity is also a benefit as Freemasonry is a worldwide network as evidenced by Keith's recent trips to Scotland for his mother Lodge's centenary and to Malaysia for a Lodge visit with some golf thrown in for good measure.

## **What would you say to other women whose partners are looking at joining?**

Decide with your partner what his objectives are in joining the Lodge and make sure that you both agree that Freemasonry fits with your lifestyle and your other commitments. If you want to be involved with the Ladies, explore the opportunities for involvement by visiting ladies' events and speaking to existing members' partners before committing to a Lodge as each is a little different and each offers different opportunities. Some Lodges may only have a "Ladies Function" once or twice a year, whereas other ladies arrange their own entertainment during each Lodge meeting and then join with the men for dinner afterwards. Some Lodges also arrange more extensive social programs such as weekends away, after dinner speakers and visits to the theatre and galleries. There are fabulous opportunities to expand your own social network with other women from a very diverse range of backgrounds and you will be made welcome by the Lodge ladies.

## **A few tips for surviving as a masonic wife**

Do not get talked into belly dancing. It is a once only experience, never to be repeated, ever.....

Even with two left feet, Greek dancing is much more fun and burns more calories than going to the gym.

If there is a chance to travel, go. Just book it and tell him he is going. Always allow at least an hour to leave a masonic function – that is how long it will take to say goodbye to all your friends.

I am indebted to both Fiona and Keith for sharing the two articles with us – we look forward to welcoming them both into this Province next time they are back in Scotland visiting relatives.

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## TOOLS for MALAWI



*Our Depute PGM, Bro Robin Cattenach along with (l to r) SPGM Craig Thomson, PGM Rev Andrew Paterson and SPGM Bill Rocks and the collection of tools from both Provinces – now in safe custody at Tain until we can finalise arrangements in Malawi.*

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## **Bro David Lai – Past District Grand Master – Middle East**

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Bro David Lai in Malaysia. His death was quite sudden after he had collapsed at his office. Bro Lai was well known to quite a number of Brethren in the Province of Ross and Cromarty.

Bro. David Lai was a Past District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of the Middle East and an Honorary SG Warden of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. He was also a foundation member of SEAVIC Lodge. The condolences of the Province are extended to David's wife and the entire Lai family.

## **Royal Arch**

### **PROVINCIAL ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of Ross & Cromarty**



*Most of the companions at the installation of the Commissioned Office-bearers by Ian Fraser and his team from Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter in Fortrose Lodge, Stornoway on 7th September.*

There was an excellent turnout of Companions in Stornoway to see MEC Donald MacLeod being installed as the new Provincial Grand Superintendent of Ross and Cromarty.

The Installation was carried out by MEC Ian Fraser, 1<sup>st</sup> Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Chapter.

MEC MacLeod succeeds MEC Donald Sutherland who completed six years as Grand Superintendent. He was warmly congratulated on his leadership and stewardship of the Province during that time.



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## **St Clement RAC No 244 –**

Our next meeting will be on Friday 29th November.

## **Cromarty Firth RAC**

Well companions,

Once again we are into a new season and look forward to it with what appears to be a busy season ahead.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October MEC Colin Thomson was reinstated to his office in the chair and his office bearers were all reinstated. On the 6<sup>th</sup> November it is our intention to carry out an EM degree and on the 4<sup>th</sup> December it is hoped that we will carry out the RA degree. As usual we look forward to meeting other companions, whether it be us visiting your chapters or visitors coming to our chapter.

As this copy of the Patter covers the festive season I and the Companions of Cromarty Firth would like to wish all companions and their families the very best coming season.

*Raymond Morrison*

## **FROM THE CAPE TO NATAL. 2013.**

Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May

The lure of South Africa continues to attract me and early this morning I am once again departing on another reasonably lengthy overseas trip. On this occasion I am being accompanied by M.E. Companion Grahame Smith, Grand Scribe E, M.E. Companion William McEwan, Second Grand Principal and his wife Sheila.

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Having previously arranged to meet up at the Emirates Desk at Glasgow Airport we were quickly processed through “check in” and able to relax for a couple of hours or so prior to boarding our seven hour flight to Dubai.

Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

Having passed through Dubai International Airport on several previous occasions I still marvel at the magnitude of the concourse with its numerous twenty four hour “shopping” attractions and what appears to be a multitude of departure gates all manned by highly efficient staff. Certainly, on the surface anyway, Emirates appear to be in the top bracket of Airlines.

Our onward flight departed on schedule and we prepared ourselves for the nine hour flight to Capetown where we arrived shortly before midday. Being rapidly dealt with by Immigration and Customs we emerged into the Arrivals Hall to be met by Past Grand Superintendent, M.E. Companion John Snell who extended to us a most warm welcome.

Luggage was duly collected and we were driven to our Guest House. Having stayed here on a previous visit I am familiar with the location and look forward to a few days in very comfortable surroundings.

A few hours to unpack and refresh ourselves and we held an informal meeting with the current Grand Superintendent M.E. Companion Chris Turner and his successor M.E. Companion Craig Dobson. During this very useful discussion we were fully appraised of the current position of Royal Arch Freemasonry in The Cape Province of South Africa (Western Division).

Being most hospitably entertained this evening at one of the many Capetown Waterfront Restaurants we experienced an introduction to the culinary attributes of the City. Undoubtedly a fitting end to our first day in South Africa.

Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> May.

Collected by M.E. Companions Snell and Turner we duly set off on our initial sightseeing tour of the Capetown area. Unfortunately thick fog restricted a full appreciation of the many sights of interest. Tickets having been obtained for a “Red Top” city tour enabled us to disembark at scheduled “stops” and an excellent commentator explained the significance of many points of historical interest. One of these stops provided an opportunity for a leisurely walk through the Company Gardens, and while we marvelled at the variety of trees and plants we also tried to visualise what it had been like as a productive farm many years previously.

Any visit to Capetown would be incomplete without a trip up its iconic Table Mountain. Fortunately the fog lifted and without delay we entered the revolving Cable Car and within seven minutes we emerged into glorious sunshine to marvel at one of the “wonders of the world”

Early evening we were once again collected and driven to the home of the new Grand Superintendent where we were most cordially welcomed and generously entertained by M.E. Companion Dobson and his fiancée Arlene.

Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup>

Shortly after breakfast we were collected by M.E. Companion Snell and his wife Gail who very kindly took us on a tour of the area culminating in being present at the firing of the Noon Gun.

De Goede Hoop Masonic Temple, one of the finest in the world, had been booked for our Ceremony this afternoon and it was an absolute delight for me personally to meet up with so many “old friends” some of whom I had met on my first visit to this beautiful city some thirteen years ago.

The new Grand Superintendent, M.E. Companion Dobson along with his commissioned and elected Office Bearers were duly installed in the presence of a large number of Companions, several of whom represented other Orders and Constitutions. A most enjoyable harmony, enhanced by the presence of ladies, concluded another memorable occasion.

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Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> May.

M.E. Companion Snell and his good lady Gail very kindly offered to drive us to Cape of Good Hope, an area which comprises a considerable part of Table Mountain National Park. Unfortunately fog persisted during part of the journey but by the time we arrived at the “Cape” it had cleared and we all enjoyed the spectacular views from the top having all taken advantage of the funicular railway facility.

Lunch at Groot Constantia Winery Restaurant in the company of the Snells. Turners and M.E. Companion Dobson and his fiancée proved to be another enjoyable interlude during this visit. Too soon it was time to depart, say our farewells, and go to the Airport to collect the hire car we had booked on our arrival. Unfortunately, the documentation having been laboriously completed, could not be found but after considerable delay and diplomatic persuasion we were allowed to drive away on the understanding that we would report for final authorisation at one of Europcar’s city offices. A somewhat frustrating end to an otherwise excellent day.

Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> May.

Packed and ready to go only to discover that, although the passengers were quite comfortable in a Toyota Corolla, our suitcases, in spite of valiant efforts, would not all fit into the boot space. Nothing really lost as our pre-arranged visit to Europcar’s city depot enabled us to upgrade to a Kia Sportage, clearly a more suitable vehicle albeit at an increased cost.

The inclusion of a “Sat Nav”, if not absolutely essential, is advisable on the type of journey we are about to undertake and it was with a feeling of self-assurance that we left Capetown having been assured by the depot employee that he had correctly set it for the route we wished to follow. We left Capetown confident in the knowledge that modern technology had eliminated the need to concentrate on old fashioned road map “route planning”. About two hours after departure we entered a small town to be advised by the Sat Nav “voice” that we had “reached our destination. Clearly this was wrong and as M.E. Companion McEwan was familiar with the model of GPS he soon had us driving in the right direction through very spectacular scenery.

At exactly 6 p.m. we arrived at the very comfortable Oakhurst Hotel in George which had been pre-booked. Time to relax and enjoy a light refreshment and dinner. Day one of our four day road journey is over.

Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup>.

Having enjoyed a leisurely breakfast we set off for Port Elizabeth and arrived at Deer Park Farm Guest House mid-afternoon. M.E. Companion Basson, our local Grand Superintendent, having agreed to meet us at a pre-arranged rendezvous point on the outskirts of the city escorted us to this very comfortable and welcoming accommodation.

During the evening we attended a Meeting at Caledonia Lodge No 796 where we witnessed an excellent third Degree. This proved to be a most interesting location from my point of view as it was the first Lodge premises I had ever visited in South Africa many years ago and my small Deputation was made extremely welcome. It also provided me with an opportunity to meet up once again with several old friends and acquaintances I had met on previous visits.

Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup>

Being advised that today’s schedule involved a fairly long drive we set off in the direction of Grahamstown. An invitation from Past Depute Grand Superintendent Fergus Miles to break our journey at his farm near Cathcart was readily accepted. Mrs Miles had clearly gone to considerable trouble to prepare an abundance of food and we did justice to an excellent meal.

An interesting feature on this farm is a small church (originally Methodist), and now the property of M.E. Companion Miles in which weddings and Masonic church services are held. Onwards to the town of Cathcart where we stopped for a short time at the Lodge and met two senior Companions from Frontier Royal Arch

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Chapter. A very well preserved building and it was obvious that the Companions are enthusiastic and well advanced in their preparations for the Chapter Centenary Ceremony to be held in 2014. An invitation for representatives from Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland to be present has been extended.

Being reminded of the length of the journey ahead and the advisability of reaching our destination before dark we took our farewells and drove off on the remainder of today's route. Lengthy delays occurred due to several road improvement schemes and we soon realised that our objective of being in MacLear before darkness fell could not be achieved.

We eventually did arrive at Fairbairn Farm Guest House which proved to be an excellent location, the property having recently been completely renovated and modernised. Having pre-booked an evening meal we heartily partook of a typical South African braai. A long day called for an early night.

Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup>

Now that we are able to view the surroundings in daylight we are able to appreciate the beauty of the area in which Fairbairn Guest House is situated. However as we faced another fairly length journey we did not delay our departure.

Accepting the advice we had been given by the Guest House owner regarding the most suitable route we should take to Pietermaritzburg, and once again having passed through some outstanding countryside we arrived at our final destination, the home of our new Grand Superintendent Designate, M.E. Companion Ken Tucker where we were warmly welcomed by both he and his wife Margaret who very kindly offered to host Grand Scribe E and M.E. Companion MacEwan and his wife Sheila during our sojourn here.

I had readily accepted an invitation to stay with our outgoing Grand Superintendent M.E. Companion Desmond Sykes and his good lady Janet. It was a distinct pleasure for me to do so as my wife and I had been their guests on several previous occasions. We then drove to their home where we were all entertained to dinner.

Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> May.

A suggestion that we visit an African Bird of Prey Sanctuary was readily agreed to and within half an hour's journey from the city we were escorted around this facility which is a place of safety for indigenous raptors. Many have been rescued in response to requests to care for trapped, injured or sick birds and when brought to the onsite hospital are examined by a veterinarian, treated, and if possible released back to the area in which they had been found.

Several birds have been bred in captivity, trained to a very high standard and we witnessed a display demonstrating a remarkable bond between bird and handler.

During the afternoon we met at Pietermaritzburg's impressive Masonic Temple for an informal discussion with several of the senior Companions from the District.

An exceptionally pleasant and relaxing evening was spent at the home of the District Grand Scribe E., M.E. Companion Watson and his wife Una who very kindly entertained us to dinner.

Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> June.

A relaxing morning and early afternoon we again assembled at the Masonic Temple in preparation for today's Installation Ceremony. I was delighted to meet several Companions whom I had met on previous occasions while visiting this District. In the presence of a good number of Companions, supported by representatives of the other Constitutions and Orders operating in this area M.E. Companion Tucker and his commissioned Office Bearers were duly installed into their respective offices. I also obligated and invested his elected Office Bearers.

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A beautifully decorated dining room, reflecting the work of several of the ladies who also graced us with their presence provided the setting for another memorable harmony.

Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

Shortly after 9 am, along with M.E. Companions Tucker, Sykes, Watson and their ladies we all met at the iconic viewpoint overlooking Pietermaritzburg from where we were able to admire a panoramic view of the city before setting out on a tour of the Midlands Meander with frequent stops at several of the well positioned “craft” outlets.

Having previously reserved a table at St Ives Restaurant where we were able to relax and enjoy a somewhat lengthy lunch.

Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

Farewell to our hosts and we are on our way to Durban International Airport. First stop Europcar’s Returns and having cleared our contract with the hire company we check in and await the announcement of the Emirates flight to Dubai. Departing, as usual, on time, we are able to reflect on another truly memorable overseas visit. Wonderful hospitality, old friendships renewed and new friends made during the four days drive from Capetown to Natal we travelled through areas of breath-taking scenery, compared the vast contrasts between cities and rural townships and drove on roads ranging from three lane highways to gravel surfaces.

All the Companions and Brethren we met are most enthusiastic and very keen to continue their allegiance to the Scottish Constitution. They all deserve our support and I am more than ever convinced that frequent visits to our overseas Districts are an important aspect of my responsibilities.

Ian Fraser.  
Grand “Z”

## **BOLIVIA & CHILE.**

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>/Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> August.

Scheduled to depart Edinburgh Airport at 9.10 a.m. en route to Amsterdam on the first leg of our somewhat lengthy flight to La Paz, Bolivia, Grand Scribe E and I left the Quality Inn shortly after 6 a.m. and having “checked in” and passed through security we emerged into the departure lounge area and noticed that our gate number would not be displayed until 9.30 a.m. Clearly this information indicated signs of a potential problem as we were aware that we only had forty minutes between our anticipated arrival and departure of the connecting flight. Eventually we left Edinburgh about 10.30 a.m. resigned to the fact that the “potential problem” had been upgraded to the “mission impossible” category.

The Transfer Desk at Amsterdam was obviously our first port of call and the KLM representative we approached could not have been more helpful. An overnight stay at their expense in a hotel with a confirmed booking on tomorrow’s flight was suggested. An attempt to re-route us on alternative flights later in the day was also offered. After careful consideration we agreed to accept the offer of the alternative flights via Madrid necessitating a four day delay while there, an onward flight to Lima with an arrival time of 5.10 a.m. After a five hour delay there we departed for La. Paz, via Santa Cruz eventually arriving at our final destination at 4 p.m. Fourteen hours later than we had anticipated.

On arrival at La Paz we were met by the Depute Grand Superintendent M.E. Companion Roberto Inchauste Varela, several senior District Office Bearers and M.E. Companion Seppo Ainamo, Past Grand Superintendent of Zimbabwe who was to form part of my Deputation on this visit. Being warmly welcomed by the local Companions we set off on a relatively short car journey and booked into the well-appointed and reasonably

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familiar Casa Grand Hotel as I had been allocated the same room I had occupied on my last visit five years previously.

An unforeseen problem arose due to our re-routing via Madrid in that M.E. Companion Smith's luggage failed to appear on the carousel at La Paz. The assurance that it would be on the next appropriate flight was duly proved correct.

During the evening the Grand Superintendent M.E. Companion J. Marica Prudencio and several other senior Companions entertained us to a most enjoyable dinner in a local restaurant.

Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup>.

Arrangements having been made for us to visit Lake Titicaca recognised worldwide as one of the classic images of Bolivia located at an altitude of 3810 metres and measuring 190 kilometres by 80 kilometres, it is by far the largest high altitude body of water in the world. M.E. Companion Hernan Jimenez Rivero, Depute Grand Superintendent Designate very kindly provided transport and the journey provided us with an opportunity to admire quite spectacular scenery.

Friday, 26<sup>th</sup>.

Once again we were given an opportunity to participate in another sightseeing tour involving a guided visit to the Presidential Palace. A building of remarkable beauty and fascinating historical importance.

Early evening we attended at the Masonic Temple, where in the presence of a large number of Companions we duly installed our new Grand Superintendent M.E. Companion Roberto Inchauste Varela and his commissioned Office Bearers. A most enjoyable harmony concluded another memorable day.



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Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup>

Today had been identified as a “free day” for relaxation with the very kind invitation from our new Grand Superintendent to visit his home where he provided a barbecue meal. He proved to be a most generous host and along with most of his Office Bearers we thoroughly enjoyed this informal “get together”

Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup>

A mid-morning check out from our hotel and we then enjoyed an excellent lunch at the home of our Depute Grand Superintendent, M.E. Companion Rivero and his wife Fernandez who also proved to be excellent hosts. A return trip to the airport to undertake the short flight to Tarija where we were met by the First Principal, M.E. Companion Raul Aguila Tarija Royal Arch Chapter, No 884 and a large number of local Companions who all extended a very warm and sincere welcome. After checking in at the Sur de Vino hotel we were quickly driven to a “down town” restaurant for another enjoyable meal.

Monday 30<sup>th</sup>

Shortly after 9 a.m. we were driven to the Kohlberg Winery where we had an interesting and informative tour of this establishment which also included a ‘tasting session’. Thereafter we were entertained by the Grand Master M.W. Brother Anuar Awad at his luxurious home. A large number of Brethren and Companions were present and we spent a few hours being most hospitably entertained to a Bolivian barbecue enhanced by three accomplished Companions playing a selection of Bolivian music.

The main purpose of our visit to Tarija was to dedicate and consecrate the newly constructed temple of Tarija Royal Arch Chapter No 884. This ceremony was conducted with all due solemnity and we then adjourned to the palatial banqueting hall of the Marquesas’ Restaurant where a sumptuous meal was enjoyed by all present.

Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup>

Farewell to the Companions of Tarija and after a reasonably short flight with a brief stopover in Copabana we were soon in the Casa Grand Hotel in La Paz. No further commitments today.

Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup>.

A suggestion that we visit the iconic town of Coroico, located approximately one hundred kilometres from La Paz was readily agreed to and accompanied by M.E. Companions Varela and Rivero, who had offered to drive, we left La Paz shortly after breakfast. Previously the only road to this area was along a route described as the world’s most dangerous road engineered out of near vertical mountains descending more than three thousand, five hundred metres. Thankfully the road we travelled on was a multibillion dollar by pass, opened in 2006 and follows a route high over the old road and tunnels intermittently through the mountainside. Today’s journey, while avoiding journalistic licence, could accurately be described as an adventure.

During the evening we enjoyed a farewell dinner with the Grand Superintendent, several senior Companions and their Ladies.

Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> August.

Once again our hosts very kindly arranged transport and we are en route to Chile. The journey involved brief stops in Arica and Iquique before we finally landed early evening in Santiago. We were met at the airport and warmly welcomed by the First Principal of Pioneer Royal Arch Chapter No 599, M.E. Companion and two other Companions who drove us to our conveniently situated city centre Cambiaso Hotel.

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Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup>

Shortly after breakfast we were met by M.E. Companion Cotone Nicoreanu who had arranged for us to travel by Santiago's very efficient Metro system to the Grand Lodge of Chile. An extensive guided tour of the premises followed by lunch hosted by the Grand Master V.H.Luis Riveros Cornejo accompanied by senior Brethren and Companions proved to be a very fitting introduction to Masonic activities in Chile.

Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup>

Collected by the Scribe E of the Chapter, M.E. Companion Biggs and Companion Dr Fischer we were taken on a sightseeing tour of the city which included a visit to a local craft market.

Later in the day Companion Fischer conveyed us to the Grand Lodge of Chile where we conducted the Re-Dedication Ceremony of Chapter Pioneer No 599. It is very encouraging to witness the excellent relationship which exists between the Companions of this Scottish Constitution Royal Arch Chapter and the Grand Master and Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Chile in whose premises they hold their meetings.





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Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup>

Along with several of the Chapter Companions we assembled outside our hotel before boarding a minibus to the city of Valparaiso. This proved to be another fascinating journey through the varied Chilean countryside. Prior to the building of the Panama Canal Valparaiso was the most important seaport in South America and although the passage of time has altered its importance it still appears to be a flourishing city.

One of the Companions, being a member of the exclusive Naval Club, had very kindly arranged for a private room to be set aside for our use where we were entertained to a most enjoyable lunch.

Monday, 5<sup>th</sup>

We took advantage of a “free day” by spending a few hours on a City Tour and the commentary certainly portrayed an illuminating insight into many of both the historical and modern aspects of a flourishing and busy city. In the evening we met up once again with several Companions and enjoyed another “farewell” meal.

Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup>.

We take our leave of those local Companions who had met us at our hotel prior to our departure for the airport and look forward to a long flight home via Paris including a five hour wait for our onward flight to Edinburgh. Fortunately the thirteen and a half hour flight from Santiago did not feel too tiring but I was quite relieved to finally arrive home, having been travelling for almost thirty hours.

On reflection our Companions in both Bolivia and Chile are to be admired for the enthusiastic manner in which they project the image of Royal Arch Freemasonry under the Scottish Constitution. They deserve to be visited.

Ian Fraser.

First Grand Principal.

## *Excerpts from the Past – February 1998 - Tylers Toast*

I can't honestly remember where I picked this one up but I thought it might be of particular interest to the Tylers in the Lodges. Part of it is used in various Lodges, but the first two verses are not terribly common.

In the midst of our mirth we drink to poor Masons all over the world,  
On every shore our flag of love is gloriously unfurled,  
We prize each Brother, fair or dark who bears no moral stain,  
Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again.

Freemasons feel the noble truth that Robert Burns told,  
The rank is but the guinea stamp, the man himself the gold,  
With us the rich and poor unite, and equal rights maintain,  
Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again.

Dear Brethren of the mystic tie, the night is waning fast,  
Our duties done, our feast is over, this Toast must be the last,  
Goodnight, goodnight, again we repeat that well known refrain,  
Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again

To all poor and distressed Masons, scattered over land, sea and in the air. May God bless them and grant them a speedy return to their native land, should they so desire it.

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Donald Macleod, Past District Grand Prior of The North of Scotland (centre, front), was presented with a cheque for £500 by The Great Priory of Scotland on the completion of his five year term of office. This money was distributed to his choice of charities The Hebridean Men's Cancer Group, The RNLI, The Bethesda Hospice, Western Isles Kidney Patient Group and Macmillan Nurses all received £100.00. Photo, Rod Huckbody.

## Guild Lodges

### Highland Guild Lodge

The Guild Lodge Installation will take place in Alness on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014.