

PROVINCIAL PATTERN



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 95

MAY 2018

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



 **3RD INTERNATIONAL
SCOTTISH MASONIC
CONFERENCE 2019** 

**ATLANTIS.
PARADISE ISLAND, BAHAMAS
MAY 15, 2019 - MAY 19, 2019**

District Grand Lodge of The Bahamas

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Cover Picture: Notification of the 3rd Scottish Masonic Conference in Bahamas 2019

Editorial

Welcome to the 95th edition of the Patter.

As another Masonic season draws to a close, it gives us all a chance to reflect on what our Lodges have achieved and what we as individuals have achieved over the past year. It is also a good time to start planning ahead, either in general terms or specific terms. Two of our Lodges will be celebrating Centenaries in 2020 – might seem a while away yet but it will be upon us in no time at all.

Personally, it has been quite an incredible Masonic season. Back in October I had the privilege of attending the 300th Anniversary Celebrations of the United Grand Lodge of England in London, then we had all the filming for the BBC documentary, in March I had the privilege of installing the Provincial Grand Master of Renfrewshire West and I have just returned from Australia where I had the honour to lead a very large and influential Deputation from the Grand Lodge of Scotland to witness Brother Keith Murray being installed as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria.

During all those events one thing shone through – Freemasonry is alive and kicking. Numbers may be down on previous decades but there is so much enthusiasm, passion and excitement being generated which can only give tremendous hope for the future. We may not have the quantity of days gone by, but those who are involved certainly provide the quality.

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



The next meeting of Grand Lodge will take place in Freemasons' Hall. 96 George Street on Thursday 14th June

Since the last edition of the Patter two new Provincial Grand Masters have been installed in Ayrshire and in Renfrewshire West

There has also been a significant number of Re-dedications with more to come in the coming weeks – Lodge St John Mid Calder celebrate their 200th Anniversary on 5th May, Lodge Tay Union 273 have their 200th a week later on 12th May. Lodge Georgetown 1170 celebrate their Centenary on 19th May and Lodge Granite Union their 150th on 26th May.

30th June sees the Installation of the new PGM of Kilwinning with the new PGM of Argyll and the Isles happening on 22nd September. In between, Lodge St Clement 202 celebrate their 250th on 15th September.

I'll list the other celebrations in the August edition of the Patter.

Ed

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

Hi Brethren

Here we are coming nearly to the end of the Provincial visiting season, just lodge Kyle on Monday the 7th May for 8pm (a lovely run on a nice night) and Lodge Fortrose 108 in Stornoway Friday 18th May at 8pm.

A Reminder for the Provincial lodge of SORROW on Sunday 6th May 3pm in Lodge Fingal Dingwall, this meeting is to remember all the Brethren who have passed through the veil to the Grand Lodge above, it would be nice to have a good turnout from all the lodges as the names of the deceased are called out, we will be working in the 3rd Degree.

Many thanks to ALL the BRETHREN who have supported the PROVINCIAL LODGE on all the other visits we had a great response at all meetings.

The Provincial AGM and Installation of Office-bearers takes place in lodge Averon on Wednesday 23rd May at 8pm prompt. We are looking for a good turn-out of master masons as usual.

And a final notice; in December we are having another visit from our friends from Trinidad, Tobago and Granada. They are visiting Grand Lodge on Thursday November 29th for the Installation of the new Grand Master Mason. They will then be travelling north to Ross and Cromarty. On Saturday 1st December they will join with us when our Reigning Masters will be working a third degree which is being organised by our Grand Director of Ceremonies, Brother Stephen Smith. This will take place in Lodge Fingal, with a dinner to follow. All proceeds from this day will go to Mountain View School.

Many thanks to everyone for the Donations for Mountain View School to date. It has been VERY WELL SUPPORTED to date by all the lodges and members in our Province and beyond, this has been and continues to be a worth-while project

Fraternal greetings and very best wishes.

Robin Cattanach.

Provincial Grand Master

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PROXY MASTERS

Have you ever given any thought to becoming a Proxy Master? There are currently vacancies literally throughout the world and this is a good time to give it some consideration. The system has been struggling but we have managed to breathe some new life into it and are asking a bit more from the Proxy Masters.

In general terms, the Proxy Master may wish to consider the following:

- Communicate regularly with the Secretary or nominated Brother of the Lodge of which he is Proxy Master.
- Communicate with the Proxy District Grand Master.
- Attend an annual meeting with the Proxy District Grand Master.
- Attend Communications of Grand Lodge.
- Ascertain how the Lodge wishes to vote on any given issue.
- Meet with Brethren of the Lodge when they visit Scotland – e.g. Festival of St Andrew.

Those are some of the duties you'd be expected to carry out. If you are an existing Proxy Warden and would like promotion or whether you have never considered Proxy Master-ship before but would like to become involved, let me know and I'll arrange to get the appropriate form to you.

Ed

Blast from the Past – August 2003

The Stornoway Brethren must be congratulated once again for their innovative approach to charity. This time they have filled a number of *aqua boxes* which have now been handed over to the Rotarians at a function in the Sea Angling Club Stornoway. Fortrose Lodge bought 5 boxes @ £45 each in the first instance and the Lodge line-dancing ladies were pleased to fill them with a variety of items such as clothes, toothpaste, torches, small buckets in fact almost anything that will be useful in a disaster zone. The boxes come with a water purifying kit and this is the main object of the aid, 1 box with this kit can purify up to 1,100 litres of polluted water, that's enough water for a family of 4 drinking 10 cups a day for 4 months. If any other Lodge would be interested in this venture, details can be received from our Substitute PGM, Bro Donald MacLeod

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From the Provincial Almoner

Yet again I start my report on a sad note to record the passing to the Grand Lodge Above of one of our brethren.

Brother Robert Taylor, Robertson's Lodge died suddenly at his home in Dingwall on Sunday 22nd April. Robert had not been in good health for some time. He had not been a regular attender at his lodge in recent years.

Past Master Angus Ross, Lodge Ness continues to progress after his leg amputation and was recently able to travel abroad on holiday with members of his family.

Past Master Victor Shepherd, Robertson's Lodge is still resident at Urray House Care Home, Muir of Ord and there has been no sign of progress in his current health condition. The last time I visited him he was very confused and did not know me.

Bro Dougie MacDougall, Lodge Fingal is still resident in Redwoods Care Home, Alness. He was in very good form on the last occasion I visited him. In fact, I would say that it was the best I had seen him for some time. He was totally coherent throughout my time with him and was able to hold a good conversation and talked about the Lodge and his interest in the British Legion and the ongoing refurbishment of local War Memorials.

Past Master Fraser MacKay, Lodge St Duthus is still resident at Innis Mhor Care Home in Tain, but his condition is unchanged.

Past Master Colin Thomson, Lodge Ness continues to progress but does undergo treatment.

Past Master Andy Henderson, Lodge Fingal has recently undergone major surgery but is now recovering at home. He is soon to commence a course of treatment.

Bro Colin MacPhee, Lodge Fingal is still not too well and has been in and out of hospital recently. He was treated with intravenous antibiotics due to a blood infection and will have to undergo surgery to remove his failed transplanted kidney.

Past Master Dave Franklin, Robertson's Lodge is progressing, and he also was recently able to go on holiday.

Bro Alex. Ross, Lodge Fingal is now home from hospital.

Brother David Bennett, Treasurer of Lodge Allan Wilson has been in and out of hospital but is currently at home. He finds the mornings difficult, but things improve as the day goes on and he feels at his best in the evening. He was able to get to a meeting recently which was good for his morale.

I have visited Brethren at home or in hospital where and when possible and have sent cards where appropriate conveying the best wishes of the Provincial Grand Master and Brethren.

.

David A. MacMaster, PM

Provincial Grand Almoner

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



One of the main features from Lodge St. Duthus over the past few months has been the RWM James Morrison awarding a fifty-year certificate to PM Dan Patience. Dan has been our treasurer for a long time and continues to fulfil this role in both the craft and the RAC. Congratulations and thank you Dan.

The lodge continues to hold quiz nights for various sections of the community.

We will shortly be holding an indoor table sale this month and in July we are having a family fun day within the lodge. Already some sixty families are showing interest as it is for the kids and there will be face painting along with other games.

Since the television programme on Freemasonry we have interest shown in joining. I will be sending a form out shortly.

The forthcoming season is looking promising with a new candidate in the wings and an entered apprentice ready to move forward.

John MacKenzie

Acting Secretary

The Horse

The horse has had his day they say,
The tractor rules the land;
But where's the tractor that will take
An apple from my hand;
Or when the ploughing match is done
Share my pleasure that we've won.

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FORTROSE LODGE No. 108

In the last quarter we passed & raised two brethren i.e., Bro. Donald John Macaulay and Bro. George Hugh Morrison, they were subsequently advanced to Mark Master Mason degree along with Bro. Graham Maciver. We have also initiated Bro. Scott Maciver.

We have now started archiving our old lodge records and moving them to the safety of Tasglan nan Eilan which is the new local museum. Because of data protection and without special permission the public will only be allowed access to material that is over 50 years old. The Royal Arch is also taking advantage of this facility which is currently being done at no cost to us.

We are currently investigating the possibility of fitting a hearing loop in the lodge room, we are being careful to ensure that non-members who wear hearing aids and who may be down stairs or outside are unable to listen in to our meetings.

A deputation from the lodge are heading to West Calder on Saturday 28th for the 200th anniversary of Lodge Thistle No. 270.



RWM Donald J Smith with 5 of the 6 brethren who accompanied him to Lodge Thistle in West Calder on Saturday 28th April and of course our Grand Master proudly posing with them.

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Just thought I would throw in this next picture taken at a 70s style fancy dress party on Saturday 3rd March to celebrate Bro John (Fish) Macleod's 60th birthday, he's here with his wife and a very peely-wally guy holding his hand.



Back in 2004, Brother Sinclair Bruce used this poem in his column in the Patter – it's just as valid today.

Food for Thought

The man's no bigger than the way
He treats his fellow man
This standard has the measure been
Since time itself began

3. He's measured not by social rank
When character's the test
Nor by his earthly pomp or show
Displaying wealth possessed

5. These are his measures, ever near
To serve him when they can
For man's no bigger than the way
He treats his fellow man.

2. He's measured not by race or creed
High sounding though they be
nor by the gold that's put aside
nor by his sanctity

4. He's measured by his justice, right
His fairness at his play
His squareness in all dealings made
His honest upright way

6. When I read this poem, I ask myself
Could I measure up?
Could You?
That sure is food for thought.

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Robertson's Lodge No 134

Like many lodges we are now in recess, having worked a third degree at our April meeting. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 19 September 2018 when we are planning to work a first degree. Due notice will be sent out prior to the meeting.

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Sorrow, will be held in Lodge Fingal, at 3 p.m. on Sunday 6 May 2018. We have three of our brethren who have passed away over the last year, i.e. Brothers Alexander Morrison Mackay, Robert (Robbie) Taylor and William Shepherd. Their names will be mentioned on the Roll at this meeting. It would be nice if a good turnout of our members were in attendance to mark the sad passing of those Brethren along with other Brethren of this Province.

The following message is from our Right Worshipful Master, Br. Andrew MacIvor: -
Brethren

As my two years back in office are nearing an end, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members and Office Bearers for their continuous support and to our visitors who help to keep our lodge going.

A very memorable moment for me was when Brethren of our lodge went to Lodge St Duthus No 82, in Tain, to work a Mark Master Masons Degree. The candidate was my cousin, Brother Bruce MacIvor and it was an honour for me to lead the deputation of 14 Brethren. PM Ronnie Cooper was the Mark Master for the night with other Brethren, all doing their parts. I thought it was a well worked degree and I hope it went down well with the Brethren of Lodge St. Duthus and our Provincial Grand Master, Brother Robin Cattnach, who was present. My thanks go to all who supported me on that visit.

I look forward to the 3 meetings in the new session, prior to our installation meeting in December 2018.

Once again thanks to all,

Andrew MacIvor,

Right Worshipful Master.

Thanks Andrew and I know we all wish you well for your remaining time in office.

Just an update on the health of our Brethren. P.M. Victor Shepherd is still in care in Urray House. Muir of Ord. I know he appreciates visitors so spare a few minutes if you are passing. PM David Franklin is still receiving ongoing treatment. On behalf of all, I pass on best wishes.

I hope all enjoy the break and successful holidays with plenty of sunshine.

James A Tait, Secretary

Here's some advice: At a job interview, tell them you're willing to give 110 percent. Unless the job is a statistician.

Comedian - Adam Gropman

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Lodge Fingal No 318

The Lodge held regular meetings on:

Tuesday, 9th January, when a FC Emulation was worked;

Tuesday, 13th February, when the FC degree was conferred on Brother John Robertson;

Tuesday, 13th March, when we received our annual visit from the Provincial Grand Master and his deputation from Provincial Grand Lodge. A FC Emulation was worked;

Tuesday, 10th April, a Lecture was to be given by PM, Brother Robert Scott but this was cancelled, due to a family illness, and a Business Meeting was arranged instead. On all occasions a harmony was held within the Logie Lounge after the meeting.

On Saturday, 24th February 2018, a Quiz Night, was held within the Logie Lounge. A total of fifteen teams took part. The quiz master being our very own David MacMaster, who also made up the questions. At half time an excellent tea was provided and served by the Ladies of the Lodge. A raffle was also held. The winning team being one of four from Strathpeffer and Dingwall medical practice. An enjoyable evening was had by all who attended. Thanks to all that donated prizes and assisted in making the evening such a success.

A Ladies Night was held, again in the Logie Lounge, on Saturday, 24th March 2018. It was a sell out with a three-course meal provided and served by Brother Sean Kennedy, (formerly of the National Hotel, Dingwall and now of the Mallard, Dingwall), and his staff. Entertainment was by Mike Samms. The floor was always full of budding dancers. At half time a magnificent raffle took place. A good night was had by all. Thanks again to those that donated prizes and assisted in any way.

A Race Night was held within the Logie Lounge on the evening of Saturday, 21st April 2018. This was run by Brother Ali Matheson, Conon Bridge, who was assisted by Brother David MacMaster, who accepted all the bets but was slow in paying out. At half time the whisky board was used and a sum of £60 raised. At the end of the races a bottle of Dalmore whisky was auctioned and raised the sum of £105. This bottle was donated to the Lodge by a recent visitor, namely a David Kinloch. Thanks David. Many thanks to Ali, David and those that donated prizes and assisted in any way.

Since November 2017, the Lodge has made the following Donations: -

Strathpeffer/Dingwall Medical Practice towards a defibrillator.	£500.
Dingwall Senior Citizens. Christmas Parties	£200.
Conon Bridge Senior Citizens.	£100.
Maryburgh Senior Citizens.	£100.
Strathpeffer Senior Citizens.	£100.
Island & Highland Kidney Association per Brother C Macphee.	£500.
PGL Malawi School.	£200.
Marie Curie per Jillian Walker and Tina Walker.	£500.
Miss Mullen per Fairburn Scouts.	£150.

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Ross County Ladies Football.
Some of those receiving donations are shown below.

£150.



Brother Colin
MacPhee.

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Marie Curie per Jillian Walker and Tina Walker and Miss Danielle Mullen per Fairburn Scouts.

Planned future events are: -

Saturday, 19th May, – visit to Lodge St., Peters, Thurso.

Saturday, 26th May, – Lodge Day Out – train trip to Plockton.

Saturday, 18th August, – Lodge B.B.Q. and dancing to Mike Samms.

From us all at Lodge Fingal I wish you all a happy summer break.

Colin Mackintosh
R.W.M

That`s all Folks, watch this Space.

D. Gunn PM

Secretary.

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Lodge Allan Wilson No 851



The Master, Brother Roddy MacCormick extends a warm welcome to all Brethren to attend the Installation Meeting on Tuesday 12th June at 11.00 am for coffee with the Lodge tiling at 11.30 am. The Installation will be carried out by Brother Rev Andrew E Paterson, Past Senior Grand Warden, Past PGM of Fife and Kinross who will be assisted by our own Brother James A Tait who will install the Office-bearers and we will also be blessed with a Deputation from the United Grand Lodge of Victoria headed by the new Grand Master, Brother Keith Murray – what a fillip for our wee Lodge in the heart of the Highlands.

If you know of any older Brethren who have trouble getting to Lodge meetings in the dark winter nights, please bring them along to Lodge Allan Wilson where they will receive a warm welcome.

We encourage all Brethren to stay for lunch which is very modestly priced – it's an integral part of the Allan Wilson meeting and we love to have a full house.

Brother Roddy MacCormick looks forward to welcoming you on the 12th June.

Lodge Seaforth 854

The Master, Brother Fred Fraser would like to thank all those who supported the recent Race Night. It was a great night enjoyed by all who attended.

On 25th March the Lodge was delighted to welcome back a very large and influential Deputation from Lodge St Bryde 579 headed by their Master, Brother Duncan Mulholland. The Uddingston Brethren worked a tremendous FC Degree which was greatly enjoyed by all present.

After the meeting, all Brethren enjoyed a meal together in the Seaforth Club.

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Lodge Averon No 866

Hello Brethren.

It's been a very busy quarter once again for Lodge Averon, kicking off with a superb Old Folks Party held in the bowling club. We had a record number attending this year and a fabulous time was had by all with music from Tommy Stirling and Tug Wilson and once again a superb performance by Anne Nolan Highland dance group. Thanks' must go to all the brethren and their ladies that pulled out all the stops to help on the day and a special thanks to our WSW Bro John McRae for all the hard work in the back ground to make it happen. Quite possibly his last time organising the old folks party.

We worked a few excellent degrees also. A 1st degree and a 2nd degree for Gavin Sutherland, a 3rd for Bro Dennis Pike and a Mark Master Mason for Bro's A Gulik, G Miller and D Pike. All superbly worked by every member of the team in Lodge Averon. We also, in the midst of all that, hosted our Annual Provincial visitation where a glowing report for Lodge Averon was greatly received and a billet for a new member and two new forms sent out to two potential candidates.

To close we held our now famous Lodge Averon Lady's night, which once again completely sold out and bursting at the seams. With music by Peter Johnston and table magic by Brian both excellent and most enjoyable, we made sure our ladies had a fantastic time. Special thanks must go to Bro Harry McCartney and his good lady Catharine for organising this year's event and thanks to those who found the time to lend a hand.

Moving into the next quarter we are still busy organising and doing with a Quiz Night organised for the Sat the 5th of May with plans for more social nights to be announced. A visitation is also planned to Lodge Stormont on June the 30th

Yours Fraternally

Bro D Mathieson

LODGE KYLE No 1117

Remember Ted?

Ted said - "The key to the Beale Cypher is the Declaration of Independence" and the errors it reveals. To decrypt it, one finds the word corresponding to the number (*e.g.*, the first number in the code is 115, and the 115th word in the Declaration of Independence is "instituted" and takes the first letter of that word (in the case of the example, "I") This slowly reveals the message in the second paper, describing the treasure.

But there is more! Ted, using his knowledge of Wren's Cypher (which he described a decade ago in his book *Astronomical Minds*), slowly unravelled the mystery I first met Ted over ten years ago when he walked into the office with his new book called *Astronomical Minds*. It is a true tale of scientific in-fighting with famous protagonists such as Isaac Newton, Edmund Halley and most importantly for our purpose, Christopher Wren; a Freemason. Brother /

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Brother Wren is important to the story as it was his Blackmail Cypher that ultimately led Ted to solve the Beale Treasure Cypher comprising three papers, one of which described a treasure worth, in today's money, at least 45million pounds. But more of this later because until today; I have been sworn to secrecy.

The story of the Beale Treasure goes something like this: -

A man called Thomas Beale who was a gentleman miner in the USA, amassed a fortune with a few other men, which they converted to gold, silver and jewels worth 45 million pounds. In 1816 they hid the gold and other precious commodities in a specially prepared chamber lined in brick which they subsequently sealed. The location is somewhere in Bedford County, Virginia.

Thomas Beale then left, in the safe keeping of "local" innkeeper called Robert Morriss, three coded papers describing the hoard, its location and the names of the family members to receive the gold. The sealed package (in a box) containing the papers were only to be opened in the event he (Thomas) did not return or in ten years' time. A key to the codes would be sent in due course if necessary.

Sadly, Thomas did not return and for many years Robert Morriss forgot about the box with the coded papers. For twenty and three years it lay gathering dust in his Inn. Finally, his memory jarred by some event, he remembered the box, opened it and tried, unsuccessfully, to decrypt the coded papers.

Decades later, before he died, he passed the papers to a friend who also tried to solve the puzzle. Robert is described in Masonic Minutes as being made a MM in 1863.

This friend (who remains unknown) then spent the next twenty years trying to decode the messages, and using the Declaration of Independence as the KEY, was able to solve one of the three papers, the one that gave details of the treasure buried and its general location in Bedford County. The unnamed friend then published all three cipher texts in a pamphlet which was advertised for sale in the 1880s and thus the papers and the treasure described therein became common knowledge.

Many have tried decoding the papers; the finest brains both human and electronic and all have failed... until now.

He discovered a code within a code, a false message and ultimately the true meaning of all three papers which you can read at leisure on Ted's Website where he has just published the papers, the methods employed and of course what he found out. But let us return to Freemasonry. Ted asked me recently as part of his research to find some information about Bedford County, Virginia in the USA which as you will recall is the location of the treasure. He asked specifically to find out some information about Masonic connections of a certain individual(s). I duly contacted the Secretary of Liberty Lodge No. 95, Bro. Bob Riggle, outlining Ted's purpose and the fact he is not in The Craft, but a "good and genuine fellow".

Bro. Bob wrote back within 24 hrs with the information requested and said that he had searched the archives for the entire Province of Virginia, some 300 Lodges and more. A remarkable achievement in such a short time period and testament to the organizational skills and good will of the Virginian Masonic Community!

As an aside. So far as can be determined from the available records, Liberty Lodge No. 95 has held a meeting on the date of each regular stated communication since its establishment in 1813, this despite Civil War which raged in this area and of course two World Wars.

Finally, Ted contacted me a few days ago to let me know that he is now studying Benjamin Franklin, his visits to the United Kingdom (1724-26 and again in 1757-62, and again in 1764-75), The Royal Society and Sir Christopher Wren's work. Sadly, this must wait until the research is complete but, in the meantime enjoy Ted's story of the treasure found on his website

http://www.samosbooks.org/THE_BEALE_BURIED_TREASURE_CODE_BROKEN.pdf

Ronnie Miller, PM
Secretary

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

We were very pleased to have a couple of candidates Calum Bassindale (grandson of PM David Patience) and Jordan Hossack this enabled us to hold EA degrees on our February and March meeting. This also gave the RWM and office bearers a chance to show their spurs and they did an excellent job at both meetings. April's meeting was our annual visitation of PGL and we worked a second degree on this occasion for Bro. Bassindale. With a few Brethren attending the Cancer Research Golf day on Friday 4th May it has been decided just to have a business meeting for this meeting.

The meeting of Lodges 1212-1219 all who received their charter in May 1920 will be held this year in Lodge Stepps, Glasgow on 12th May. There was a hiccup last year when the meeting failed to materialize so good to have this back on the agenda especially with the centenary of the lodges so close. On this subject Lodge Rosehaugh are very pleased to have booked Grand Lodge to come up north for our celebrations on 2nd May 2020.

Keith Patience, PM

Lodge St Martin 1217

Lodge St Martin has been a little quieter this season, however at the last meeting, our Provincial visit, we worked a second degree for a candidate from Lodge Laxford.

Arrangements are ongoing for our centenary celebrations to be held on Saturday 9th May 2020.

Our last meeting of the season will be held on Tuesday 15th May when it will be a business meeting.

*Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary*

Pictured on the next page is RWM Mike Peterson and PM Charlie Macaulay during the defibrillator training in the Morefield Motel, Ullapool.

Lodge St Martin donated £200 with a further £300 if required to reach the total of £1200 necessary to purchase the unit which will be located outside the Morefield Motel.

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Lodge Loch Ewe No 1551

Andrew Miller Henderson IPM.

Lodge Loch Ewe No. 1551.

We normally have a very full and informative input from Lodge Loch Ewe via their IPM, Brother Andrew Henderson. For those that are unaware, Brother Henderson has recently undergone major surgery and while he is improving, his recovery will take a considerable time.

On behalf of all the contributors and readers may I wish Brother Henderson a full recovery to good health and we sincerely hope that you will be strong enough by August to contribute to the Patter in your own inimitable style. Stay strong.

Ed

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BITS AND PIECES

A SONG OF FREEMASONRY

From 'Songs of Religion & Life' By John Stuart Blackie (1876)

Transcribed by Bro. Kenneth C. Jack, P.M. Lodge St, Andrew, No. 814, Pitlochry, Perthshire (West)

1.

God save me! at last the grim waste I have passed
Of a prickly scholastic theology,
And now in a region I float, where religion
To common sense owes no apology.
But pray don't expect I shall found a new sect,
No pulpit on earth I've an eye to!
My new patent plan's to be merely a man
And as I was born live and die too!
Orthodox, heterodox,
Luther, and Laud, and Knox,
Squabbles of High Church and Low Church,
'Tis my present plan
To be merely a MAN,
and laugh both at High Church and Low Church.

2.

I looked, and I wondered, I battled and blundered
With much metaphysical struggle,
With saintly desiring, and pious aspiring,
Till reason itself seemed a juggle.
And now the poor swimmer, with every vain glimmer
Of hope sank more deep than before, Sir!
Till I fell on this notion of healthy devotion,
That a man is a man, and no more, Sir.
Orthodox, heterodox,
Luther, and Laud, and Knox,
Squabbles of High Church and Low Church,
If no wisdom you see
In my Masonry free,
Then go to the High or the Low Church!

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3. 'Tis new and 'Tis old, to no Churchman 'Tis sold,
This gospel all true hearts believe it,
And blessed are they, 'mid the sons of the clay,
Who with hearty good welcome receive it.
O' seek not a spell from the dark depths of hell,
Nor let not the bright starry host win you!
The gospel of God is at no bishop's nod,
'THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS WITHIN YOU!'
Orthodox, heterodox,
Luther, and Laud, and Knox,
Vain wisdom of High and of Low Church;
Though the cock on the steeple
Is gilt for the people,
And bells ring for High and for Low Church.

4. A poor Arab maid may with faith undismayed,
Her heart in the desert sustain, Sir!
And a Christian may tread on a poor brother's head,
And all for most heathenish gain, Sir!
In Christian and Turk, the deep devil may lurk,
In Kaiser and Tartary Khan, Sir!
But I know a spell that will blast him to hell,
'Tis to swear by the GOD that's in MAN, Sir!
Orthodox, heterodox,
Luther, and Laud, and Knox,
Harsh dogmas of High Church and Low Church,
For what's in a name,
'Tis smoke round the flame,
To bemuddle both High Church and Low Church.

5. Of eternal degrees and election I can
Know as much and as little as you, Sir!
But that I'm a man who can purpose and plan,
'Tis true, by the Powers, 'tis true, Sir!
And 'tis my intention, I modestly mention,
To cleave to my kin and my clan, Sir!
And do some small good, to the brave brotherhood,
That graces the title of man, Sir!
Orthodox, heterodox,
Luther, and Laud, and Knox,
Mere quibbles of High Church and Low Church,
Your wits run aground,
Or in misty profound,
You are swamped by the High and the Low Church.

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6. My fancy bright weaves it, my firm faith believes it,
The time is not far but is near now!
When strong hearts with glee, shall shake their wings free
From crotchets and whims that are dear now!
When every true man shall bless brother man
By bible-law and by Koran, Sir!
And each true heart brim with free worship to Him,
Whose image shines brightest in MAN, Sir!
Orthodox, heterodox,
Luther, and Laud, and Knox,
Vain squabbles of High Church and Low Church,
In God and in Man
I believe; but I can
Subscribe to sheer nonsense in no church!

ROYAL ORDER



*The RW Substitute
Governor presenting
the RWPGM Bro.
Stephen J. Smith with
his Patent of Office*

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The Installation of Brother Stephen J. Smith as the Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master of Inverness and the Highlands took place in a packed ceremony in Inverness Masonic Centre on Saturday 14th April 2018.

Many Brethren from around the Province, from all over Scotland, England and overseas were present to see the PGM and his team of Office-bearers installed by the Right Worshipful Substitute Governor, Brother Charles Iain Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont.

The Provincial Grand Lodge was opened by RWPGM, Bro Stephen J. Smith who welcomed a large deputation of visitors representing the following Provincial Grand Lodges: Aberdeen and Kincardine, Counties of Stirling and Perth, Carrick and Annandale, Glasgow and West of Scotland, Cumbria and Westmoreland, County of Cheshire, Western Australia.

The Substitute Governor and Grand Office-Bearers were then received in due form by RWPGM Bro Stephen J Smith

Following his acceptance of the Emblem of Authority, the Substitute Governor warmly congratulated Bro Stephen J. Smith for all his efforts over the past five years in leading the Province so successfully. The Emblem of Authority was returned to the RWPGM to enable him and his Office-bearers to admit two Brethren to the Order, namely, Bro William Sutherland Durrand, Master Mason of Lodge St. Peters Op No 284 and Bro Stewart Macleod, Master Mason of Lodge Fortrose No 108.

The Candidates were welcomed by RWPGM and admitted to the degree of Heredom of Kilwinning, and Constituted Knights of the Rosy Cross by the RWPGM Bro Stephen J Smith

The ceremony of Re-Installation of Bro Stephen J Smith, RWPGM of Inverness and the Highlands then took place.

Following the ceremony, the Substitute Governor offered his congratulations and wished RWPGM Bro Stephen J Smith another very successful term of Office.

RWPGM, Bro Stephen J Smith said that he had found the ceremony a “Special” experience and was humbled to be appointed for a second term of Office. He then thanked the Substitute Governor for the dignified way it had been carried out.

He also thanked the Grand Lodge Office-Bearers and all the visitors from near and far for their attendance and asked all brethren in the Province for their continued support.

Following the ceremony, a well-attended and enjoyable Installation Dinner took place in Inverness Masonic Centre

*The Installation
Dinner concluded
with the singing of
Auld Lang Syne
followed by the
National Anthem*



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Australia 2018

Masonically, the prime aim of our trip to the southern hemisphere, was to attend the Installation of Brother Keith Murray as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria. However, within a day of arriving at my son's home in Albury, I had an email from a dear friend of mine in Wodonga, Brother Frank Walsh, PM of Lodge Belvoir. Frank has looked after my Masonic interests in Victoria ever since we first visited my son in Albury some ten or so years ago. He is a true Mason and friend.

Brother Frank informed me that during our first week in Albury there would be two meetings we could attend – both in Lodges I had never been to before. On the Tuesday night, I met Frank and Brother Keith Spurr, also a PM of Lodge Belvoir in Wodonga and we headed off on a 40-minute drive to Wahgunyah Lodge No 56 where we received a very warm welcome from Worshipful Master Brother Gary Reeve and his Brethren. In Victoria they have a very welcoming way to introduce visiting Brethren. Once the Lodge is open, all visitors are taken into the Lodge by the Director of Ceremonies. Prior to entering the Lodge, you fill out a card with your name, lodge and rank which you take into the Lodge with you. One by one you hand the card to the D of C who then introduces you to the Master and Brethren. The meeting was the Obligation meeting that Victorian Brethren have prior to the Installation meeting. This was something new to me, so I looked forward to it with great interest. The Lodge was passed to the second degree and the Master Elect (Brother Gary Reeve once again) was presented to one of the Past Masters, Brother Magill, who basically carried out what in the Scottish Constitution we would do as the first part of the Installation Ceremony including the Obligation. At the Installation meeting in May, Brother Gary will be installed by one of the Grand Lodge Installation Teams. From what I could gather, this will be more or less everything we would do at an Installation meeting after the first Obligation. Once Brother Gary had been Obligated, the Lodge was closed, and we moved to the adjacent where we were joined by the ladies and over a delightful buffet prepared by the ladies we all enjoyed an illustrated talk by Brother Neville Wiggins on his time in Vietnam with the Royal Australian Air Force. A truly memorable night and of course, equally enjoyable, was the run to and back from Wahgunyah in the company of two fine Brethren.

The following evening, I again met up with Frank in Wodonga and the two of us made our way on a slightly longer journey to Yarrawonga to attend a meeting of Lodge Yarrawonga St David No 103. Again, the welcome was very warm and genuine. The Master, Brother Bruce McCallum, explained that the work of the evening would be the Ceremony of the Vacant Chair. This was something else that I had never experienced but it is a regular occurrence in Australian Lodges as they approach Anzac Day on 25th April. The Lodge, after concluding all administrative business, was closed but we remained in regalia and we were joined in the Lodge Room by wives and friends. There was a chair sitting in the north of the Lodge draped with the Australian Flag and an Entered Apprentice apron folded neatly on the seat. The Deacons perambulated around the Lodge and carried the chair to the south where the Junior Warden gave a short lecture based on the Pillar denoting Beauty; the chair was then ceremoniously carried to the west where the Senior Warden gave a short lecture based on the Pillar denoting strength; the chair was then taken to the east where the Master gave a short lecture based on

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the Pillar of Wisdom. He then descended to the floor of the Lodge where he placed a wreath under the chair. We all joined in the singing of a hymn to the well-known tune Melita – I had never heard the words before, but they were –

*God of our fathers known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle line;
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine,
Lord, God of hosts, be with us yet
Lest we forget, lest we forget.*

*Our Brethren who have paid the price,
The greater love to us have known;
A noble, willing sacrifice
That right, not might, the world may own,
Their memory dear, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget.*

The Last Post was played followed by Reveille after which the Lodge Almoner, W Brother John Burn, read a very moving tribute based on the Flanders fields. The entire ceremony was a very poignant, emotional yet inspiring one. We all then adjourned to the adjacent where we enjoyed harmony during which Brother Burn graciously presented me with a small wooden jewellery box with the insignia of the Returned Services League on the lid. An exceedingly nice gesture which I greatly appreciated.

The next day, Thursday 5th April, Ann and I headed south back to Melbourne. We arrived in Melbourne 20 minutes late, jumped in a taxi to the hotel, got changed and asked the concierge to get a taxi for us to take us to the new Bayside Masonic Centre at 237 Nepean Highway, Gardenvale. We got into the taxi, gave the driver express directions to get to the Masonic Centre. After 15 minutes we had gone less than 100 yards with the driver faffing about with a satnav telling us that the address didn't exist. Keith Murray had provided me with the exact address of the centre so, as we approached 20 minutes of going nowhere with the meter clocking up all the time, I finally had enough, got out of the taxi, walked back to the hotel and asked the concierge to try and get me a taxi with a driver who knew where he was going. The result was that with the rush hour traffic, we were late in arriving at the centre where I was to attend the Installation of Brother Ross James Kennedy as Master of Seavic Lodge No 8 while Ann joined the Ladies for a talk on diamonds. I was so late that I entered the Lodge with the Master Masons after the inner workings. However, late or not, it was an absolute pleasure to witness the remainder of the ceremony. I find it hard to describe, but the Installation Ceremony ritual was very similar to the Scottish ceremonial, but the process was entirely different – if that makes sense? For those unfamiliar with Seavic Lodge, half the Brethren belong to Victoria in Australia and half belong to South East Asia, so it was an absolute joy at the subsequent banquet to meet up with Brethren that I had met on my first visit to Seavic Lodge and also a large contingent of Scottish Brethren from our Middle East District including the District Grand Master, Brother Kang T Yong, and Past DGM's, Dunstan Fernandez, Daljit Singh Nagreh, Neoh Ho Keat along with many other well known faces such as Yip Wing Kong, John Teh and William Lai and of course their wives, sisters and partners. It was after midnight when we got back to the hotel, tired but exceedingly happy after a tremendous night with the Brethren of Seavic Lodge No 8.

Friday 6th April, we had the day to ourselves until 6.00 pm when we met (approx. 500) in the River Suite of the hotel for the official Delegates Reception. This was an informal event at which the Grand

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Master, Brother Don Reynolds welcomed us in fine style and I was privileged to respond to his welcome in which I concluded with an improvised “ceremony of the Quaich’s” which effectively allowed Don, Keith and I to have a dram while the other 497 looked on. The night finished with a lovely meal in one of the local Italian restaurants.

Saturday 7th April was the big day for Brother Keith Murray, a Master Mason of Lodge Paisley St James No 1116, who was to be installed as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria. However, before that event, we attended the re-installation of Most Excellent Companion Gregory M Harmer as First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons Victoria. The Installations are totally different from ours in that the wives and families of the Companions and Brethren attend the entire Ceremony. In fairness, the Australian Installation of both the 1st Grand Principal and the Grand Master are more likened to Investiture Ceremonies rather than our traditional Installation Ceremonies. The only sign used in both ceremonies was the sign of fidelity – that apart there were no other signs, tokens or secrets used. For the Royal Arch Installation, there would have been around 500 in attendance in the magnificent Palladium Room of the Crown Complex in the heart of Melbourne.

In the afternoon however, there was something in the region of 1200 Masons, friends and wives present to witness Keith Murray being installed for the first time as Grand Master.



Scottish Constitution Deputation entering Grand Lodge

I had the privilege of representing the Grand Lodge of Scotland leading a fine Deputation of Scottish Masons from the Province of Renfrewshire East, the District Grand Lodges of the Middle East, Central South Africa, the Far East, North Island New Zealand and the Bahamas. We were the final Deputation to enter Grand Lodge. A total of 21 Deputations from Grand Lodges and other Orders throughout

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Australia and from many Grand Lodges throughout the world including New Zealand, France, Hawaii, India, Japan, China, Philippines, Alberta and from British Columbia and the Yukon.



Brother Keith Murray being escorted into Grand Lodge to be installed as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria – wearing the apron of his Mother Lodge – Paisley St James 1116

Keith was escorted into Grand Lodge by a mini Pipe Band of six pipers, two side drummers and a bass drummer – anyone in the hall who was not emotionally moved by the spectacle must have passed out or passed away. A tremendous entrance into Grand Lodge. Keith was obligated and installed in the Chair by the outgoing Grand Master, Bro Don Reynolds and thereafter Brother Keith obligated and invested his Depute, Brother Richard Elkington into office. Following on was the investiture of the Grand Lodge Officers, all done with great military precision under the direction of the superb D of C, Brother Myles King.

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Brother Myles King – Grand Director of Ceremonies

It was a spectacular ceremony, totally different in content and atmosphere from our Scottish Installation Ceremonies which are, to try and differentiate, masonic ceremonies as compared to masonic investitures. In the evening the same 1200 returned to the venue for the Banquet. During the Banquet an auction and raffle were held for the Grand Master's Charity – “*Bacpacks 4 VIC Kids*” which raised, on the night, an amazing 75,000 Australian Dollars (over £40k) and which was presented on the night to the founders of the charity. The meal, the music, the harmony was all of the highest order – a truly memorable night.

On Sunday morning the United Grand Lodge of Victoria attended a Choral Eucharist in St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne – a magnificent church right in the centre of the City. The service was conducted by the Rev Canon Heather Patacca and the sermon preached by Rev Canon Dr Ruth Redpath while Brother Keith Murray read the first lesson. We all enjoyed the service (it was a wee bit too high church for me) and the welcome we received from the Clergy was much appreciated. While my mind should have been on higher things, I was particularly intrigued by the fact that the collection plates were all fitted with tap and go devices set at A\$20 so that you could use your credit card if you so wished!

After the service we all congregated in the Blue Train Restaurant where we enjoyed lunch. It was then back to the hotel and a wee spell in the gym again before we left for the Overseas Delegates Dinner.

The dinner at night was impressive – it was held in the “Supernormal Japanese Restaurant”. We enjoyed a 10-course meal, washed down with a very pleasant Japanese beer.

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And so, a tremendous weekend came to an end and for Ann and me it was a four-hour train journey back north to Albury to meet up with the family again and prepare for the next round of rural Masonic activity. That started on Thursday 12th April when the brand new Grand Junior Warden, Bill Schultz, picked me up from Albury and we made our way to Rutherglen Lodge No 188 accompanied by the Lodge Junior Deacon and Inner Guard, Alan Ward and Steven Ring respectively.

This was a meeting like the one I had attended in Wahgunyah Lodge No 56, the Obligation meeting which, on this occasion, was carried out by the Master of the Lodge, W Brother Peter Weir, who obligated his step-father W Brother Stan Newnham in a very dignified manner. Thereafter, W Brother Perry Wright, a PM of Wahgunyah Lodge did a presentation of the FC Tracing Board in a likewise dignified and professional manner. It was interesting to note that apart from the start, it was almost word for word with the Scottish version. When we moved to the adjacent for harmony, the Junior Deacon gave a short but very interesting lecture on his time as a prison warder in England back in the 1970's. Another superb night in the company of very welcoming and friendly Brethren.

On Friday morning, Bill Schultz again called for me and we set off back to Rutherglen to meet up with the Grand Master, Brother Keith Murray and several Brethren and their wives on a visit to Campbells Winery where they make the famous Robbie Burns shiraz. After which we had a lovely outdoor lunch before heading back to Albury.

On the Friday evening, Bill Schultz very kindly picked Ann and I up again, this time to go to a meeting of Wodonga Lodge No 156. The ladies disappeared to a local hotel for a meal and I was privileged to enter the Lodge with the Grand Master's escort. After the introductions had been completed and the administrative business dealt with, we got down to the business of the evening – "*A tableau of the unknown soldier*". While this ceremony was associated to Anzac Day, the content was different from the "*Ceremony of the Vacant Chair*" I had witnessed at Lodge Yarrawonga St David No 103.

Before the ceremony started, members of the local Returned Soldiers League and members of the local Rotary Club were welcomed into the Lodge. The ceremonial team then entered carrying a flag draped coffin which was placed on a base in the centre of the Lodge. The team then orated a dialogue, accompanied by a slide presentation explaining in detail the tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Westminster and subsequently the same tomb situated in Canberra. At appropriate times during the dialogue, a World War 1 helmet and bayonet were placed on the coffin and later in the ceremony, the Grand Master, Brother Keith Murray laid a poppy wreath on the coffin. During the ceremony we all joined in the singing of two hymns - *God of our fathers known of old* and *Lead kindly Light*. This was followed by the bugler playing the Last Post and Reveille. Laurence Binyon's Ode of Remembrance taken from his poem, "For the Fallen" was recited and the tableau finished with the showing of two archive films relating to the two Unknown Soldier ceremonies in Westminster and in Canberra.

It was a very moving tribute to all those who had given the ultimate sacrifice and those who orchestrated the evening must be commended for the manner in which the information was collated and presented.

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We brought the evening to a close with a fine harmony to which all the non-masons who had attended the presentation were invited and they were encouraged to split up and sit beside any of the Masons present who would give them a tour of the building and explain any of the ornaments of the Lodge – a nice touch to finish the evening.

My final Masonic duty was on Saturday 14th April when I accompanied the Grand Junior Warden, Brother Bill Schultz on his first official visit as the head of a Grand Lodge Deputation to carry out the Installation of Brother Ross Smith as Master of Benambra Lodge No153 in Tallangatta. The Installation was carried out to a very high standard, orchestrated by Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies, W Brother Brendan Wallace. The ritual was almost identical to our own Scottish ritual but, as I have mentioned before, the process is entirely different – the Victorian Brethren are very intent on regimentation as a result of which the entire ceremony is carried out with strict military precision. It is a joy to watch and undoubtedly instils much self-discipline in each member of the team.

The entire trip was first class and Ann and I are indebted to Brother Keith Murray, his wife Fiona and the United Grand Lodge of Victoria for their welcome, generosity and hospitality. It was outstanding. I am equally indebted to Brother Frank Walsh and Brother Bill Schultz for looking after me so well and all who were involved in driving me around – I can assure you, it was greatly appreciated. I look forward to keeping in touch and to meeting up with all my old friends and the new ones in the not too distant future.



Grand Lodge of Scotland leading all visiting Deputations from Grand Lodge

Photographs courtesy of Sally Patterson

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HEILAN' SHED No 6

The Worthy Deacon Neil Cooper and Bri John Baillie presenting a cheque to Hayley Peace, Deputy Head of Merkinch Primary School which was John's nominated charity at the recent Annual General Meeting of Heilan' Shed - On the day the Shed gave out a total of £800 to eight nominated charities and over last Season distributed £1,810 to various good causes.



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Members of Heilan Shed No. 6, relaxing, prior to the visit to Wokingham Shed No. 11, London, led by the Worthy Deacon Bri Andrew Fraser when Grand Shed visited on Saturday 17th February 2018.

Morris M Downie

The next meeting of Heilan She'd No. 6 is to Rothes on Saturday 5th May.

Bus leaving Inverness Lodge at 12 noon.

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The Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland

On March 16th I attended the installation of our new 1st Grand Principal ME Companion Joseph J Morrow, CBE, QC, LLD and his Grand Office-bearers. I would recommend a visit to a meeting in Grand Lodge to all brethren and companions, it's good to meet up with brethren from all over Scotland and indeed from the four quarters of the globe.

The following day I attended Hermitage of Braid Cryptic Council No. 395 in Dalkeith on their 100th anniversary where ME Companion Morrow carried out his first official duty as 1st Grand Principal by re-dedicating the council. Here's a picture of him in full flow at the dinner following the re-dedication:



PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

All companions are welcome to attend the Grand Superintendent's dinner to be held in the Masonic Hall Stornoway on 14th July when we hope to hear Willie Macleod recounting his stories from Eriskay and Barra in 1941 when he was assisting in rescuing the whisky from the *SS Politician*.

For the information of the companions I'm noting below the remaining visitation dates for this season's meetings.

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Chapter	Visit
Hebrides 364	16 May 2018
Hebrides Lodge & Council	17 May 2018

AGM in Hebrides Chapter Stornoway on Friday 18th May 2018 at 2pm.

Donnie Macleod

Tain & Ross RAC 63

The next meeting of the Chapter will be the Installation Meeting on Tuesday 9th October.

St Clement RAC 244

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Friday 28th September. Please note that the St Clement Meetings are changing – they will be held on the last Friday of September, October, November, February, March and April.

Cromarty Firth RAC 310

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Wednesday 3rd October

The Hebrides RAC 364.

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Tuesday 16th May

PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES

Andrew Morrison DGP headed a deputation to the Preceptory on Saturday 28th April and as this was the last official visit of his term as District Grand Prior a special and more resplendent pilgrim's fayre to which he had invited other DGPs and fratres from across Scotland was held in his honour

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DGP Andrew Morrison's last visit as DGP. Accompanied by a Deputation from Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine headed by Alister Burgess and another from Forth Valley headed by DG Sub-Prior Alex Russell and several other fratres from throughout Scotland. We are now looking forward to Peter Foster Senior's Installation as our DGP on 26th May.

On the following page we have a commemorative photograph of VP Donald Macdonald accompanied by the IPDGP, Donald MacLeod, KCT, Andrew Morrison, DGP and, at the back, Ron Simpson, KCT and Alister Burgess, DGP Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine.

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Donnie Macleod IPDGP

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GUILD LODGES

Highland Guild Lodge

The next meeting of the Highland Guild Lodge will take place on Friday 11th May when the Apprentice Degree will be worked.

Alasdair Taylor

Kirkswarden/Scrivener
Highland Guild Lodge

And finally:

Why do bees hum?

-

They can't remember the words!