

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 104

AUGUST 2020

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



Lodge Ness No 888, Invergordon

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Editorial

Welcome to the 104th edition of the “Provincial Patter”.

The nightmare that is coronavirus continues.

As we go to print with this August edition of the Patter, I was looking forward to catching up with all the missed meetings from September onwards but that is not going to happen. I have been working on rescheduling all of the meetings into 2021 in the hope that by then we will have a vaccine and things will begin to happen once again. There is still a bit of work to be done on the rescheduling but as soon as it is finished, I'll be getting in touch with all the Lodges involved including our own two Lodges – Rosehaugh and St Martin.

Every cloud has a silver lining and the cloud that is Coronavirus has proved that to be true inasmuch as we are seeing on a daily basis Scottish Freemasonry at its very best helping out in communities not only at home but throughout the world. Brotherly Love and Relief can be seen all around us and secondly, platforms like Zoom have come into their own keeping folk all over the world in touch and enabling us to keep the business side of our Lodges operating.

As we head into the sixth month of restrictions let's keep positive and give thanks for all that we have, the friends, the companionship our families, the National Health Service, our Emergency Services and all who have risked their health as drivers, shop workers, bus and train drivers and so on to ensure that we can all live as normal a life as possible.

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



Grand Lodge has been shut down since the start of the lock-down. However, Mrs Dawn Oliff, the Homes Manager and HR Manager, Sue Williams, PA to the Grand Secretary and Rev Andrew Paterson, Administration and Health and Safety have all been working from home to keep the wheels of Grand Lodge turning. It has not been easy, but they have done a marvellous job and the thanks of all Brethren throughout the Scottish Constitution will be recorded in due course of time.

It has been particularly pleasing amid all the fury about Care Homes that our two homes have remained Covid-19 free thanks to the sheer dedication of Dawn Oliff, our two managers Gillian and Wilma and indeed all members of staff in both Homes who have gone above and beyond the call to deliver an exceptional service to our Residents. Well done and sincere thanks to you all.

Grand Lodge has undergone a full deep clean, offices have been re-arranged, all possible measures to keep staff safe and sound have been implemented and we now await Government approval to start bringing all staff back to work. Asbestos has been found in the ceiling void in the basement – work to remove that starts on 3rd August and thereafter we will be able to start work on the installation of the new lift.

Ed

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

Brethren, who would have imagined that lock down would have lasted this long and it is not over yet. We might be a while before we are allowed any kind of meeting, apart from zoom meetings. A few Lodges have been keeping in touch with members and friends. and that is brilliant. The young Masons have been participating and keeping in touch with what's going on.

There is not a lot going on in the Province since March some Masons have been involved in raising money and food supplies. PM George Roberson was stuck at home so he spent his time making a tapestry which measures four feet by two and a half feet and has 16,000 odd threads in it and over 220-hours work to raise funds for the Highland Hospice. The draw will take place on the 4th Aug. He has raised over £2,500 so far. Most of the Lodges in the Province have supported him and a lot of individuals from across UK and some from abroad. There is still time to donate brethren.

The Provincial Grand Masters were invited by GMM to join in a Zoom meeting to give an update on what is going on in each Province and a report on Covid-19. Most reported not many Brethren were lost but Renfrewshire West in particular has been hit hard. The next zoom meeting from Grand Lodge will be a joint meeting with the Provincial and District Grand Masters. This will be a first and we all welcome this unique opportunity. Ramsay is doing his very best to keep us all informed as to what is going on with Scottish Freemasons.

Our Provincial Almoner has been on the telephone on a regular basis to me informing me about any sick members in our Province thankfully not very many to report.

Ramsay put out a plea for used carpentry tools to be sent to Malawi. I collected three boxes from Tain and Dornoch and delivered them to Ramsay on Friday 24th July where I met up with Alex Craib and three members of Lodge Allan Wilson who were up from Edinburgh with tools.

Brethren we will try and have a zoom meeting for Provincial members of Ross and Cromarty shortly to keep you updated.

Keep safe till we can meet again

Fraternal regards

Robin Cattanach

PGM Ross and Cromarty

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From the Provincial Almoner

Sadly, once again, I have to start by reporting on the passing to the Grand Lodge Above of two well-loved and well known very prominent brethren of the Province.

Past Master Robert Jack, Lodge Rosehaugh passed away on Sunday 10th May in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness having been a patient there for some weeks suffering from Covid-19. Robert was a stalwart of his Lodge having carried out the duties of Installing Master on many occasions. Such was his standing in Freemasonry that he served as Substitute Provincial Grand Master under Past Provincial Grand Master Morris Downie from 1996 to 2001. Due to current restrictions Robert's funeral was private. It was conducted by the Grand Master Mason, Bro Ramsay McGhee. A number of brethren were in attendance on the street in Avoch as Robert's funeral cortege passed. He will be greatly missed by his own Lodge and throughout the Province.

Past Master John Noble, Lodge Fingal, passed away on Tuesday 2nd June. John had been resident for some time at Redwoods Nursing Home in Alness. John was also a stalwart of Lodge Fingal and a member of many other Masonic orders. The Masonic Ritual currently used in Lodge Fingal was brought together in 1976 from the rituals previously used, by John. He had a great interest in the collecting Masonic related postage stamps and in a number of different Lodges presented a very interesting illustrated lecture on the subject. Again, due to the current restrictions John's funeral was private. However, several Lodge Fingal brethren stood outside the Lodge as John's funeral cortege passed. John will also be greatly missed by his own Lodge and throughout the Province. Cards have been sent to both families conveying the condolences of the Provincial Grand Master and brethren of the Province.

Past Master Angus, Lodge Ness is at home and being cared for by his wife Kay and a number of carers who come in daily to attend to his needs. During good weather he is able to get out on his mobility scooter. I spoke to him recently and he was in very good form and as always was very interested on what is going on in the Province.

Past Master Fraser MacKay, Lodge St Duthus is still in care at Innis Mhor Care Home in Tain. He remains the same.

Past Master Ian MacLaren, Lodge Rosehaugh still attends Raigmore Hospital, Inverness three days a week for dialysis treatment.

Brother Andy Farquhar, Lodge St Duthus, in the last few days, has had quite a bad fall on the street in Tain. Andy had not been too well recently but has not been hospitalised as a result of the fall.

Brother Andy /

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Brother Andy Sutherland, Lodge St Duthus was recently in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness again but is now home.

Bro. Colin MacPhee, Lodge Fingal has also been in Raigmore Hospital recently. He is also now home. Due to the current situation re Covid-19 neither hospital nor home visiting have been possible but I have been able to keep in touch with brethren by telephone, e mail etc and I have also been kept informed by Lodge Almoners and I would like to put on record the help received from them.

Cards have been sent where and when possible conveying the best wishes of the Provincial Grand Master and brethren of the Province.

Should any brother require my assistance, or know of any brother who does, please get in touch with me.

David A. MacMaster, PM

Provincial Grand Almoner

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 1998

On May 26 the Brethren of Lodge Rosehaugh attended Lodge Fingal No 318 to work a third degree especially for our visiting English Brethren when Brother Roger Silk, Worshipful Master of Lodge Ashmole, volunteered himself as the candidate.

Bro. Silk was presented with a Lodge tie for his assistance in the workings of the evening.

On Tuesday 2nd June Bro John MacKay of Lodge Seaforth held a photo session for three of the Past Masters of the Lodge namely - John Patience, Neil Wilson and Eoin Munro all of whom were unable to attend our May meeting, due to ill health. On that occasion Brother John photographed six Past Masters.

The Brethren, as part of our Millennium projects, intend to adorn the Lodge with these photos and trust the remaining Past Masters will endeavour to attend our Installation meeting in December when Bro MacKay will be present, camera in hand. The Brethren are delighted with the result of Bro. MacKay's skills and wish to thank him immensely for his assistance.

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PLEA from the PROVINCIAL GRAND TREASURER

The majority of Provincial Grand Lodge Office-bearers have paid their annual subscription to Provincial Grand Treasurer but there are still a few outstanding. I'm sure you know who you are but if not we'll print your names in the next edition!!! Could you please get in touch with Brother Cundiff and he will give you all necessary instructions for payment.

New Provincial Grand Lodge Ties



I have a large supply of the new Provincial Grand Lodge ties which are taking up a fair amount of my limited storage space. And knowing how the Brethren are proud of both the Province and their own sartorial elegance, I am happy to supply ties by mail order as well as bringing them to some of our meetings.

The basic cost is £12 per tie plus post and packaging - a very modest £1.50 – if you send me your cheque for £13.50, (made payable to Provincial Grand Lodge General Account) to – Roger Cundiff, Sealladh-an-loch, Lochcarron, Strathcarron, IV54 8YD – together with a note of your name and address, I will send your tie by return.

Roger Cundiff – Provincial Grand Treasurer

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Young Masons Zoom Meetings

Early during the Lockdown Period, an invitation was sent out by the Depute Provincial Grand Master, Bro Raymond MacKeddie, to all Lodge Secretaries in the Province, to extend an invitation to “Young Masons”, those brethren who recently joined the craft, who wished to meet together via the Zoom platform, to communicate socially and discuss various masonic topics.

The first meeting was held on the 23rd April and has continued on a two-weekly basis since then. Around sixteen “Young Masons” have joined the meetings over the period, from seven different lodges from within the Province. Being internet based, the Zoom Meetings have enabled brethren to join together from various locations, including the Western Isles, Glasgow and Germany.

Topics discussed have included, the History & Structure of Scottish Freemasonry, First Degree Tracing Board, Masonic Etiquette, a Walk Through of the First Degree, Famous Freemasons’ and a discussion with the Grand Master Mason.

There are four members have only attended one meeting, been through their First Degree, and then had their Masonic progress suddenly halted due to the Coronavirus Lockdown.

The enthusiasm and commitment of the participating Brethren has assisted in developing an open forum, which has proved very entertaining and educational, and has helped to fill in a void in their Masonic journey. It is envisaged that after lockdown, this forum will continue, as it allows Young Masons to meet together, share discussions and experiences, without the constraints of travelling great distances, which incurs a lot of time and expense, to meet at mutual venue.

The Zoom meetings have been chaired by Dep. PGM Bro Raymond MacKeddie and assisted by Past Sub. PGM Bro. Donald Oscar MacLeod.

If any Lodge has any Young Masons who have not already attended these meetings, and would wish to join these meetings, please get in touch with Raymond MacKeddie.

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1997

History was in the making on Saturday 21st December prior to the Installation at Lodge Averon. A trusty band of Brethren from Robertson’s Lodge decided to have a pre-Installation drink. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience having gone, just for a change and out of respect for their worthy driver, to a nice wee tea-room in Alness. Nobody believes them - but it is true - Jim Tait told me himself.

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



The St Duthus Brethren have once again been supporting the plea for tools for Mountain View School in Malawi resulting in the PGM delivering a goodly collection to the team who are sorting and packing them.

John MacKenzie – Master, Lodge St Duthus No 82

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1997

How often do we hear that visiting is the lifeblood of Lodges. Lodge Seaforth is rightly proud of two of their members who, in the past few months, have been to Cromarty, Avoch, Alness and Forres. Maybe nothing out of the ordinary there, you might think. But it is not a bad record for Brothers Harry Rodger and Maxwell McGhee whose combined age is an amazing 172. Surely there is a lesson to be learned by many of the younger and fitter Brethren in all our Lodges.

Brother Max McGhee's Mother Lodge, Lodge St Bryde No 579, will travel to Fortrose on Saturday 19th April to work a Fellowcraft Degree in appreciation of the fact that the Seaforth Organist is their oldest member. He was initiated into Lodge St Bryde in 1931 and has been active in Freemasonry ever since and is really looking forward to the visit from the Uddingston Brethren who, incidentally, visited St Duthus No 82 just a couple of years ago.

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Lodge Fortrose No 108

We may not have had any official masonic meetings over the past few months in Stornoway, but our brethren have been extremely busy with fund raising and charitable distributions.

A brief overview of our Covid-19 related benevolence is as follows:

£2,000 to Western Isles Mental Health to give 1st aid training to community volunteers.

£400 to The Samaritans to train 4 new volunteers.

£600 will be going towards the Mountain View School in Malawi

£2,000 to local food banks

£2,830 has already been raised on our Go-Fund Me page which is funding our face masks project.

We are most grateful for the £2,000 donated by Grand Lodge of Scotland through their Covid-19 Relief Challenge Fund to assist with these excellent projects.

I've posted below two of our recent press releases which will explain more fully some of the distributions we have been making.

Look out for further press releases to be issued over the next few weeks.

LODGE FORTROSE COVID-19 RELIEF

Lodge Fortrose has launched a fundraising drive to produce and donate face masks to local community groups for distribution to their volunteers and service users.

A Go Fund Me Page has been established <https://tinyurl.com/y6fp383k> and all funds raised will be used for the purchase of masks for community distribution and other COVID-19 relief projects, supported by Lodge Fortrose, across the islands. The Lodge has paid £600 to kick start the campaign and masks have already been distributed to a number of local organisations. The masks are locally produced, triple-layered and fully washable.

Master of the Lodge, Henry W Macinnes, said: "As part of the ongoing community response to the COVID-19 pandemic, members of Lodge Fortrose 108 have also been involved in a number of efforts to provide relief, including the donation of £1000 to Eilean Siar Food Bank.

"In partnership with the Western Isles Association for Mental Health, the Western Isles Voluntary Centre and Samaritans Stornoway, we are also developing a project to provide mental health first aid courses to train a minimum of 40 community volunteers across Lewis and to train 4 Samaritans volunteers. The Lodge will be donating a minimum of £2000 to this very worthwhile project."

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod PM

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Brother Archie Macdonald, Lodge Fortrose, hands over face masks to Iain McPhee from the Salvation Army

Master of Lodge Fortrose 108, Henry Macinnes, hands over 25 face masks to Rebecca Mahoney, Project Leader, Western Isles Mental Health Association, for use by staff and service users.



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Calmac staff sporting the face masks donated by Lodge Fortrose to essential services staff.

LODGE FORTROSE SUPPORTS MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

Lodge Fortrose has teamed up with Western Isles Association for Mental Health (WIAMH) and the Volunteer Centre Western Isles to fund a series of Mental Health First Aid training courses for up to 40 individuals and community volunteers. The course advocates that the concept of first aid can effectively be applied to mental illness in the same way as first aid is delivered in response to physical illness or trauma. The course will give participants an in depth understanding of the factors which can affect mental health wellbeing and provide practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues. Lodge Fortrose have provided funding of £2000, which includes £1000 from the Grand Lodge of Scotland's Covid Relief Challenge Fund, towards the cost of delivering the courses. The courses will be available on a no cost basis to local organisations and individuals to support the community response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Henry W Macinnes, Master of Lodge Fortrose, said: "Our Members recognise that the mental health impacts of lockdown and the inevitable economic contraction will become a real issue. With this in mind the Lodge is working with local voluntary partners to reinforce community resilience through the delivery of Scottish Mental Health First Aid training."

Rebecca Mahony, Project Manager for WIAMH, said: "We are absolutely delighted to be able to deliver mental health training to staff and volunteers from voluntary and third sector organisations across the Western Isles as a direct result of this project funding. We believe this will be a really positive community led initiative that will directly benefit people throughout the Western Isles who are experiencing mental illness or mental health issues as a direct or indirect result of the Covid-19 crisis."

Suzanne Macaulay, Manager of Volunteer Centre Western Isles, said: "The role and value of volunteers has never been more apparent than over the last few months, where volunteers have led the response to

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community needs during lockdown. We are delighted to work in partnership with Lodge Fortrose and WIAMH to support this valuable training.”



Members of Lodge Fortrose with Suzanne Macaulay, Volunteer Centre Western Isles, and Rebecca Mahony, Western Isles Association for Mental Health.

The social club is now open again, at the moment only on Friday & Saturday evenings and strict social distancing rules are in place and our members are being encouraged to pay by card if possible. Our new till allows you to set up a tab so you don't have to tap your card every time you buy a drink or a round.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod PM

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2006

The big news from Fingal must be the Mile of Pounds. The idea, developed by the Master, Bro David MacMaster and adopted by Provincial Grand Lodge, has been an out and out winner. At the time of going to press, the amount collected for Highland Hospice has reached the £20,000 mark – a magnificent achievement.

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Robertson's Lodge No 134

Sincere Greetings Brethren,

Since the last edition of The Provincial Patter like other Masonic bodies we have had no meetings in the Lodge. However, like a few other Lodges in the Province, Robertson's Lodge has entered the Technological Age and on Friday 17th July 2020 the first ever ZOOM Videoconferencing Meeting was held by the Master Jonathan Hill and Brethren of Robertson's Lodge. This first meeting was short and successful, and it was good to see other members and even some visitors from other local Lodges. We were pleased that our meeting was attended also by our Honorary Member Brother Ramsay McGhee, GMM, member Morris Downie, PPGM, and our most recently passed member Brother Alasdair Morrison.

One of the matters under discussion was regarding the 250th Anniversary of the creation of the Lodge in 1774. There is much to be done and planned for, and as early as possible as we were reminded by Brother Ramsay McGhee in his other role as Grand Master Mason. This is even more so as a result of the effects of COVID-19, which has caused so many Masonic Events, such as Lodge Rededications, to be postponed resulting in a backlog which will have to be resolved so that future Masonic events can continue to be scheduled successfully. We were advised that we must confirm and advise of our preferred date for the Anniversary Celebrations as soon as possible with Grand Lodge.

Robertson's Lodge looks forward to the next ZOOM Meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday 19th August 2020, which would have been normally in the Masonic Meeting downtime. All visitors will be most welcome.

Lodge members continue to follow Masonic News and Masonic activities by Social Media, Facebook and WhatsApp, and by visiting the ZOOM Meetings of other Lodges in and out with the Province.

In the meantime, the Lodge premises are briefly visited regularly even though they are not being used at this time. At all times the Lodge Almoner, Brother Jim Tait, P.M. continues dutifully with his responsibilities and keeping in touch fraternally with those who are in Homes or have had illnesses.

We all hope that there will be no serious COVID-19 or other casualties with Lodge Members in this or any other Province or Community.

Fraternal regards to All.

Peter K. Ratcliffe.

Lodge Secretary.

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Lodge Fingal No 318

As Fingal went into Lock-Down on the 16th March. Brother Henry Cameron PM suggested that we should have Zoom Meetings as other Lodges in the Province are doing as it keeps everybody in touch with what is happening. Well Henry went to work. These have a base from the Master's house.

May 12th Was the first of the Zoom meetings at which we experienced a few problems, with the Master not knowing what to do, this has now been rectified. Brother Ramsay McGhee, spoke about the Virus, the complications etc., and giving out weekly Grand Lodge updates every Friday, which have kept everybody in the Loop.

Brother Raymond MacKeddie spoke about the young Masons Group aimed at Brethren of any age but who have just joined the craft in the past three years. He reported that they have shown a lot of interest, asking various questions, about the Degrees of Masonry. How the story unfolded.

June 9th Some 25 members joined for this meeting. After various discussions about the Lodge etc., the speaker for the night, the Rev Bro Ivan Warwick, PM spoke about the lock-down and the various initiatives that had emerged from the lock-down citing as an example how Bro Alex Craib took the initiative to raise money for the NHS to give supplies to the various Wards at Raigmore Hospital. He continued to speak about the Church in the Community, inside the Church the Chancel Area, what this area in the Church represents. He then touched on the Boer War and, last but not least, Freemasonry Values. The talk lasted some 20 minutes and was well received by the Zoom members. Meeting all told lasted some 50 minutes.

July 14th Some 16 members joined for this meeting. After various discussions about the Lodge etc. the speaker for the night, Bro David Kinloch, Proxy Master of Lodge Si-Rusa No 1823 was introduced. He spoke about his father and his brother who was a Lewis, in great detail. He then explained that he went to a contract in Zambia and, while there, joined a Lodge in Lusaca. On his travels abroad, he came across Irish Constitution, English in Hong-Kong and Malta and the Scottish. The talk lasted some 15 minutes and was well received by the Zoom members. Meeting all told lasted some 55 minutes.

Due to the Zoom communication we are still able to hold the 50/50 Draw. Again, we are, as the Lodge, indebted to Brother Henry Cameron for carrying on this venture. The Lodge benefits to the sum of £2,500 per year. This scheme started in 2004 and runs from March to April each year and only costs £5 per month. This been a good earner ever since. The following are the winners this season –

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50/50 Club Winners Started March 2020 to February 2021.

	1st Prize £115	2nd Prize £50	3rd Prize £35
March	Andreas Kolle	Brian Ashbolt	Chora MacLeod
April	Miss M. Henderson	Jamie & Anna Cameron	Mrs Caroline Bain
May	Mrs M. Mackintosh	Mrs H. Gunn	Mrs J. Warwick
June	Mrs Irene Henderson	Ian Orne	Brian Crawford
July	Stewart Bain	David Campbell	Mrs Sharron Kolle

There is still time to book a slot with Henry, as there is still 7 draws to go. Maybe we could see your name on the winners' sheet.



D. Gunn – RWM

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LODGE ALLAN WILSON 851

It has been a great disappointment that 2020 will virtually be written off in terms of Lodge Allan Wilson Meetings. However, our current Master, Alan Baker along with Master Elect, Ian Russell and faithful companion Jimmy travelled north to Fortrose with a great selection of tools for Africa. It was good to see them and their contribution will make a tremendous difference.

One thing that has not been cancelled is the requirement to pay our annual dues and I would ask the Brethren to submit payment to the Lodge Treasurer, Bro Donnie Gunn as soon as possible. Payment can be made by BACS to the Lodge Allan Wilson General Account, Sort code - 80-06-83, Account number 06000956. The annual test fee is £40. It would be helpful if you could email the Treasurer to let him know that you have paid by BACS or contact him by email for alternative ways of paying at - donald@fingal318.co.uk

Editor

LODGE SEAFORTH 854

Meetings

As lockdown continues, and meetings are on hold, the Brethren have continued to keep in touch via Zoom Meetings held on the first and third Mondays of each month. They have been well attended and it is encouraging to welcome and socialise with visiting Brethren.

The meetings have allowed the Lodge members to approve charitable donations to Black Isle Cares and George Robinsons Fund Raising Appeal for the Highland Hospice.

Quiz Night

The Lodge also hosts an online quiz on the third Friday night of each month. These have been run by our Quizmaster, SD Bro. James Fraser, and are open to friends and families. There has been a strong showing from Lodge Fortrose 108, with both PM Derek MacKay and his wife, Ruth, presenting strong performances and running away with the awards. At last month's quiz, a young Morrison pairing from Caithness appeared and stole the limelight, and most of the prizes, with their outstanding knowledge.

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Craftsmen at Work

During the lockdown the Brethren have been able, working within the guidelines, to get a good deal of work done externally to the building but there is much to be done inside which is being assessed at the moment; the two major projects being sloping the roof at the entrance through to the Ladies toilets to try and sort the problem of water leakage and re-doing the ceiling in the kitchen to keep the Club compliant with environmental health inspectors.

What has been achieved so far is the installation of new security lights on the car park side of the building, varnishing the entrance woodwork and installing new lighting at the front of the building. The other major work was pulling back the stones in the car park and putting in black fibre membrane below them – the job was made much easier thanks to Donald Ferguson arriving with a mini digger and a bit of support from Fred Fraser, Tom Richards, James Fraser and Raymond MacKeddie. 90% of the job has been finished but we ran out of fibre and another load of stone is needed to finish it off. Maurice Downie completed the car park project by repainting the gates – they look magnificent in black, silver and gold.

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 1995

The principle Office-bearers will be: Grand Master Mason - Brother the Right Honourable the Lord Burton; Senior Grand Warden - Archibald D Orr Ewing and Junior Grand Warden - His Grace the Duke of Argyll. From the north, Brother R Iain MacLean, Past Provincial Grand Master of Ross & Cromarty and a Member of Lodge Fortrose 108, has been elected Grand Librarian while, from our neighbouring Province of Inverness, Past Provincial Grand Master, Brother John H G Herrick has been elected Grand Architect.

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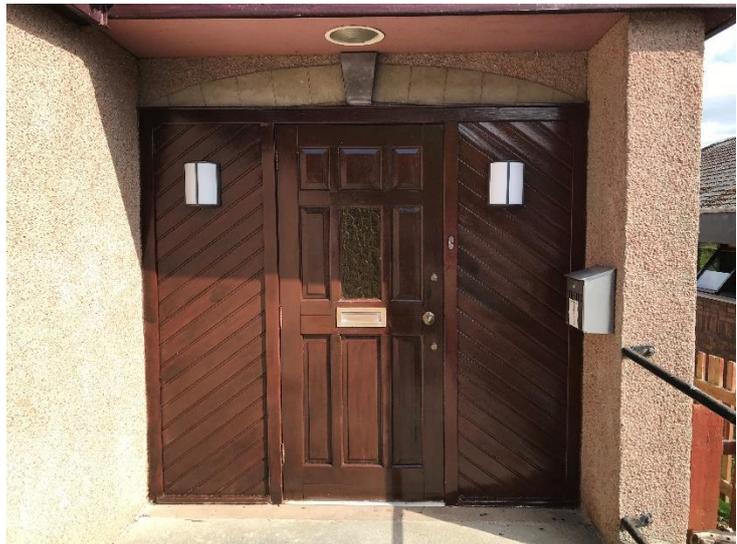
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Every good job needs a gaffer!

*The spruced-up
entrance to Lodge
Seaforth*



Raymond MacKeddie PM - Secretary

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LODGE AVERON 866

Lockdown I think has changed a lot of things for a lot of us, especially our Lodges and all those things we had planned for summer recess at Lodge Averon had to be cancelled. We had a full itinerary; however, we did not let it slow us down for one minute and I feel it brought the best out of a lot of the Brethren at Lodge Averon.

A lot of the Brethren volunteered for varying duties within the community delivering food to old and vulnerable, using their own transport to deliver medicine and deliver for the local hospitals and generally looking out for those that had to shield.

On the spurring of Bro Alex Craib and his superb efforts to help the front-line NHS staff, the members of Lodge Averon sprang into action and before I knew it there were bags of tea, coffee, biscuits and money on my doorstep. What a fantastic effort it was. And they are still at it! the latest being Bro G Miller who is pulling together food and drink baskets to raffle.

PM Bro G Robinson is raffling a tapestry/rug for the hospice.

Bro D Anderson has started brewing Gin with Cancer charity at its heart.

Please keep an eye out for information regarding those initiatives on Facebook and general communications any support for the guys would be most welcome.

We have as individuals been busy in the lodge with a lot of maintenance done. As Brethren took it upon themselves to use their sudden free time to do something in and around the lodge. Gate painted, grass cut, and tidy, new chips laid between wall and building, external and internal lights fixed, hearing loop reset and a load of other things. I would like to thank everyone of these guys who are just too many to list so I have added a picture of some of them instead.



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LODGE KYLE No 1117

It's been a quiet time for Meetings in Kyle as there have been none since the beginning of the year. However, the local builder has been busy, and we have made emergency repairs to the roof and chimney and can say now that the Lodge is wind and watertight once more for another 100 years of service.

We also received £10,000 in the form of a grant which we will of course put to good use. Thanks go to the people who not only advised us to apply but also one person in particular who advised us to set aside 2,000 pounds for HM Gov (the tax people's percentage) With the prospect of a meeting with Visiting Brethren before Christmas looking bleak, especially for our elder Brethren, we need to look at alternative methods of keeping in touch with each other.

The most common "group" tool it transpires is ZOOM, the VIRTUAL MEETING app for computers, tablets and phones. (Microsoft Teams and Google also make similar software). While we cannot "meet" as a constituted Lodge, we CAN look at each other, and discuss what's been going on, both Masonically and Socially... in other words; we just keep in touch with our Brethren.

Many of the Lodges in the Province of Ross and Cromarty have already had successful, well attended Zoom Meetings, some even with games. However, its assumed by many Brethren that Zoom is not for them, either because they don't have the technology or the know-how to get started.

Fortunately Zoom works on Phones and Tablets (as well as computers) and even more conveniently, phones have a camera and sound built in, so you have everything you need without having to spend a penny. The Zoom app itself is also free for most "amateur" users.

However, you need to install the zoom "app", and this is how you do it.

The APP is called ZOOM Cloud Meetings, a blue icon with a tiny white video camera inside.

You will find it in your App Store for Apple users and Google Play for Android users. Find the aforementioned Zoom Cloud Meetings App and click install.

This ... may take some ... time.... depending on how fast or slow your "connection" is. Be patient.

Once downloaded click install if Zoom App doesn't install automatically. Then click OPEN to start Zoom.

This is the START A MEETING SCREEN.

It's important the person who organised the Zoom Meeting knows who you are, so tap in your name in the box provided and then ... tap in your Meeting ID and JOIN MEETING if you are asked for a password – put in the one you were sent in your Zoom "INVITATION" email.

That's it. You should be in a meeting and able to see 1 or more (up to 4) faces on the screen

That's the long method. Once the ZOOM app is installed on your phone; If you receive email on the same phone, you can simply click the "LINK" in your invitation email asking you to join a ZOOM meeting.

Zoom Tips /

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Zoom Tips

Make sure you acquaint yourself with the Masonic rules for using Zoom. (What you can and can't do or say.) Use a sheet behind you as a back-drop if you don't want everyone to see inside your home.

Prop up your phone on a pile of books at an angle with some blu-tack in front to stop it sliding.

Make your first virtual meeting on Zoom with one with family or friends so that any mistakes are just laughed at and advice freely given.

Make sure your phone is fully charged before a meeting.

Use ear buds or headphones

IMPORTANT – make sure your phone is using Wi-Fi and not the phone network or you will be getting a large BILL for phone use (if zoom works).

Last but not least ... “un-mute” your microphone if you want to speak!

See you on the web Brethren!

Ronnie Miller, PM

Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 1995

Mitre Lodge No 7732 - Windsor

On Monday 22nd May I had the privilege of visiting Mitre Lodge No 7732 in Windsor in the Province of Berkshire. The Lodge sits in the shadow of Windsor Castle, built originally as a school for the poor in 1705. The building was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and became a Masonic Temple in 1864 when Lodge Windsor Castle No 771 bought the premises. The Temple is used by several Lodges, among them Mitre Lodge. The interior of the Lodge is well worth seeing. It is oblong, approximately twenty feet wide by about sixty feet long. The walls are panelled in oak at the top of which is a decorative frieze running into an ornate coping. The ceiling is painted olive green and is segmented by wooden squares. The lower edge of the wooden squares is red, ornamented by gold rivets.

The meeting commenced at three thirty in the afternoon with a Master Mason Degree. Most of the Degree was worked in an Inner Temple, access to which was through one of the wall panels in the main Lodge. At the conclusion of the Degree we adjourned for a cup of tea before returning to the Lodge to witness an Entered Apprentice Degree. The reason for two Degrees on the same evening was due to the large number of candidates presently waiting to be initiated.

Ed

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

May promised to be a big month in the history of Lodge Rosehaugh with the Rededication Ceremony and celebrations marking our 100th our Anniversary. However along with all other masonic activity this was cancelled. The GMM Bro Ramsay McGhee had hoped to reschedule this for September but having read his weekly report this seems unlikely although he has promised to fulfil at some point. We do intend holding some celebration in May next year if possible. The new ties have arrived and can be purchased for £15. Our other memorabilia has still to arrive but hopefully they will be soon. We have had some interest in our mark pennies and hopefully along with our 100th Jewel, glasses and key rings we can get these despatched. Please get in touch with me if you are interested. We will get these onto the Highland Masonic site when they arrive.

In the last patter we gave a report on Bro Robert Jack PM receiving his 50th certificate. At that time Robert was in Raigmore Hospital fighting the Covid-19 virus. Robert seemed to be making good progress, was clear of the virus but suffered a massive stroke and passed away on the 10th May 2020. Due to restrictions in place his funeral on 18th May was a private one however a large attendance lined the streets of Avoch to pay their respect to Robert and family. Bro McGhee once again helped out by conducting the funeral service. In that, Ramsay spoke of the high esteem the Brethren of Lodge Rosehaugh held him in. He had for many years been one of the stalwarts of the Lodge as well as being a Past Master and Secretary and an expert ritualist but always there to use his skill in helping keep the fabric in good repair. He was also one who gave good advice to the office bearers in the lodge. He was appointed Substitute Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty in 1996. Robert will be a great loss to the lodge to the Province and beyond. Robert was always keen at helping out in the village. He was President of the Avoch Amenities overseeing the building of the Community Centre, he was President and former manager of Avoch FC. He was a bit of a player in his day and played for both Ross County and Inverness Thistle. He also curled for Avoch and was a member of Fortrose and Rosemarkie Golf club. He even did a regular stint in the bar at the Avoch Pavilion (aka the pav) no bad for a 77 year old.

He was a clever guy, won the dux prize at Avoch School but did not go for an academic career. Left school and started as a mechanic in Fraser's Munloch. He decided this was not for him and started as a bricklayer and continued working at this to the end. John joined him when he left school and Robert's great friend George (Miles) was with him most of his career. In recent years trading as Jack and Patience

Robert and Sheena were married for almost 54 years and they enjoyed their holidays so much whether it was China, Canada, cruising or the racing at York. He took great pride in his family and they will miss him so much. The brethren would wish to pass on their condolences to Sheena, John (PM) and Alison, Amanda and John and the grandchildren whom he adored, and they adored him Keri, Kyle, Megan and Keira.

We will not forget you bud!

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During the funeral service for Brother Robert Jack, his granddaughter, Keri, recited a poem she had written about her beloved Bouba (grandfather). I am delighted to be given the opportunity to reproduce Keri's poem here – especially for all who knew Robert – as you will appreciate how Keri has portrayed him so very well in the poem –

My Bouba Robert

I wanted to write a poem, of a very special man
You may know him as Dad, Bouba or Robert, or the man in the wee white van.
A life like his should be celebrated, he just really had it sussed
Cruising many times a year and pav on a Friday was a must.
Football, golf and curling were just 3 things he loved to do
The friends and socialising that came with them were an added bonus too.

You see my Bouba Robert, he really was a gent
I know I'm very fortunate for time together that we spent.
His sarcasm and his humour, he gave everyone a laugh
The biggest wind up I know of, I'm sure you've all had the wrath.
The village has lost a good one, an Avochie through and through
He certainly was a character, will be missed by all he knew.
His wife, children and his grandchildren, of whom he thought were all so great
Will all miss him so dearly, and for now our hearts will ache.

He really was a trooper, he fought Covid weeks on end
And finally beat the virus, it was time for him to mend.
But just as we had our hopes up, it was too good to be true
His body couldn't take no more, it had done all that it could do.
I know staff were all as sad, as they had watched him getting stronger
I understand it was too hard for him to try for any longer.
Although I know that he wasn't ready, he had plenty of years to give.
Then Covid came and snatched him and changed the world we live.

But my Bouba Robert, I certainly won't forget
The strongest man I know of, and the funniest man I've met.
The smirk, the point, the 'watch yourself', I already miss it all
What I would do to speak even to his ear on another facetime call.
I will raise a gin to him tonight, remembering his fun
Because when it comes to Bouba Roberts, there really was just one.

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Lodge St Martin 1217

With all the Lodges being closed members are keeping in contact with Zoom and What's app. Just waiting to see when we will be able to re-schedule our centenary meeting as it doesn't look like the September date will be possible.

We have tentatively put in the diary some form of Ladies Night/Annual celebration for Saturday 8th May 2021 more details will be advised as the lockdown restrictions are eased.

Hope all brethren keep safe and well at this difficult time.

Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary

Lodge Loch Ewe 1551

May I on behalf of all members of the above lodge, most sincerely thank PPGM Bro Morris Downie and Provincial Secretary, Brother Mike Turner from guidance and assistance, which enabled us to claim the Highland Council Business Grant of £10,000.

This will enable us to carry on some much-needed maintenance, both inside and outside the Lodge.

Once again thank you both very much.

Ally Gault
Master, 1551

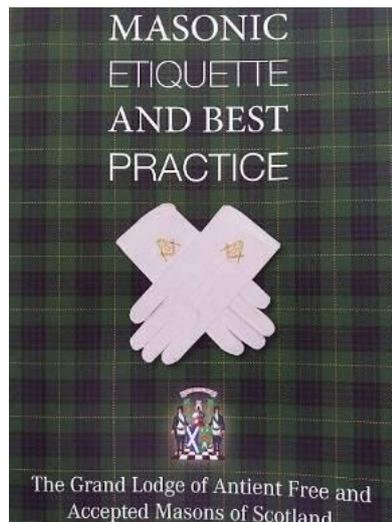
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BITS AND PIECES



This new booklet from the Grand Lodge of Scotland will be helpful to all but especially to those making their way up through the offices towards the chair of their Lodge. The new publication is available from Grand Lodge and priced at a very reasonable £3.00 per copy, £1.00 of which is going to Masonic Charities. The booklet is the work of the Information and Communications Committee and is a very easy guide to Masonic Etiquette and Best Practice.

It covers the A to Z of decorum within the Lodges from the correct positioning of the Altar to correct forms of Address, to Visiting. The booklet also contains guidelines for the use of Masonic Websites, Email and Social Media. One copy is currently being sent to each Master, free of charge and thereafter, the booklet will be available to all to purchase.

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Brethren, after watching all the tremendous charity work being done by Brethren all over the Province during this awful pandemic, and not being to participate because of illness and having to shield I realised if I wanted to help I would have to do it at home.

After reading on Highland Masonic News that the Highland Hospice were in desperate need of money as their own fundraising activities had all stopped because of the virus, I decided to concentrate my efforts to raising money for them as they provided such brilliant care when people most need it.

I went on to one of the social media *Buy, Swap and Sell* sites and asked if anyone had a kit for sale. A lady got in touch and sent me a picture and price of kit (I had the kit in my house an hour later).

I set myself a time limit of a month to complete this. At first each row of the tapestry was taking 2hrs and 15mins and with 165 pieces per row I knew I had my work cut out. Progress was steady and at half-way (50 rows) I had put in about just over 100hrs.

Not that much later I realised that the remaining packs of wool were all 1cm too long! This meant every piece had to be cut to size before going on the canvas. This now took the average row time to around 3hrs and I had to increase my work on it to about 12hrs a day to keep within my timeframe. Finally, the 16,335 pieces and 99 rows later, all the wool was in.

I went to see John Lockhart of Dalmore Furnishings in Alness to see about a backing for the tapestry. He not only told me he had some but that he would donate it. I am very grateful to John for this wonderful gesture.

Hand sewing the backing was quite time consuming and it was at 5am on the 28th day that my project was finally completed.

I called Emma who is the fundraising manager at the Hospice and told her my plan to do a fundraiser with the tapestry being used for the winner and all money donated going to the Hospice. I sent her some photos and she was delighted and gave me the go ahead to organise it and she said she wanted a photoshoot with the press to promote it. I designed a box which I could cover with polythene so I could display it.

Unfortunately, the press photoshoot had to be changed and was now to be Monday 28th July. I decided to make the fundraising live that afternoon. I posted the event on every Masonic Facebook page I could and on my own page. Alex Craib was a tremendous help to me at Highland Masonic News with all the advice I asked for, answered very quickly and expertly. My own RWM and Brethren also gave their support. I also contacted MWGMM Bro Ramsay McGhee and PGM Bro Robin Cattanach for their support and were both delighted to be associated with this. This is the time I got nervous. Would it get any donations? An anxious few minutes later the first donation was made, then another, and another. I could not believe the rate the donations were coming in. At the end of the first day the fund total was just over £600 and after 47 hrs it had reached the target of £1,000 not thinking we would get anywhere near it.

I am sure Ramsay will print the final total in the next edition and I would like to finish by thanking everyone who donated or helped me in any way to achieve this amount for such a worthy cause. I feel humbled by the generosity shown and very proud to be a Mason and part of this Province.

George Robinson PM Averon 866

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Brethren

George has agreed to do a second rug for a raffle – this time for the Mountain View School in Malawi
Details will follow in due course.

The rug for the Hospice has raised over £3,000 – well done George.

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When George completed his masterpiece, he also highlighted another issue – an issue that the Brethren in Lodge Fortrose 108 have also emphasised – and that is the issue of mental health. There is no denying that the mental health of many has suffered as a result of Coronavirus and as the prospect of a second wave cannot be ruled out, as the prospect of redundancy becomes a reality and that of bereavement also strikes home, it is something we should all be aware of. George has written a poem dedicated to it. Ed

THE HIGHLAND HOSPICE FUND STORY

BRETHREN, WHEN LOCKDOWN FELL UPON US,
IT WOULD BE FAIR TO SAY
THAT TO ME IN OUR WEE COTTAGE
WAS TO ME A NORMAL DAY

YOU SEE, I HAVE AN ILLNESS
THAT I CALL THE DEPRESSIVE BEAST,
WHICH HAD EVEN STOPPED ME
TAKING MY BELOVED SEAT, UP THERE IN THE EAST.

A PHYSICAL ONE I HAD TOO
I HAVE HAD TO FIELD
WHICH MEANT THAT WITH THIS PANDEMIC
THAT I HAD NOW TO SHIELD

THE MASON'S SWUNG INTO ACTION
THEY FELL IN ONE AND ALL
AND ALL OVER OUR BELOVED SCOTLAND
THEY ANSWERED THE CHARITY CALL

A TAPESTRY KIT WAS THEN PURCHASED
AND NOT THAT MUCH WAS PAID
AND I MADE IT FOR THE HOSPICE
WHO WERE DESPERATE FOR FINANCIAL AID
THE FUNDRAISER THEN WENT LIVE
THE DONATIONS STARTED ROLLING IN
HOW DO I THANK YOU BRETHREN
I JUST DON'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN

BRETHREN, THE HOSPICE REALLY NEEDS OUR HELP
AND I HAVE BEEN GIVEN GREAT WEALTH
BECAUSE THIS WONDERFUL FRATERNITY OF OURS
HAS GREATLY HELPED MY MENTAL HEALTH

My sincere thanks to Brother Kenny Jack for the following –

WHAT IS DEATH?

By Bro. James Hogg, (*The Ettrick Shepherd*), (1770-1835), Past Poet Laureate, Canongate Kilwinning Lodge, No. 2, Edinburgh.

From: *Dramas of Infancy*

GEORGE. Who is this fellow Death that kills so many people brother Tom?

TOM. I don't know who he is. I never saw him, but I have seen his picture. He is a fellow without either skin or flesh on his bones a mere skeleton. A very ugly fellow indeed, with a long scythe over his shoulder with which he cuts down and kills all the men and women of the whole world whenever he can get at them.

GEORGE. He must be a giant, and a very bad wicked fellow too. I do not understand him. Did not God make all the men women and children in the world brother?

TOM. Yes, God made them all.

GEORGE. Then what has Death ado to kill them? If Gorge were God him would fight him.

TOM. I have often thought that if I were a big strong man I would like to fight him and thrash him and smash him dead; for you know he killed our dear good sister George, our kind little Laura.

GEORGE. So, he did. And you are to let me help you to kill him Tom for I like him very bad. Did God make Death too brother?

TOM. I don't know. I do not think God would make him; for I think he would not make so many strong men, and lovely women, and good pretty children, and then make an ugly monster of a rascal to kill them all again. I rather think he is a ghost.

GEORGE. Hold your peace and don't say so brother else you will make me frightened for him, and that is what I cannot bear to think of; for if I live I intend to meet him face to face, and dare him, and smite him down, with a sharp sword, or a very long spear on the end of a pole. But if he be a ghost how can I do that?

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TOM. I expect he is the ghost of some wicked cruel king, or perhaps that of Cain the first shedder of human blood. But I really don't know who or what he is. However, yonder comes Cousin Mary to take us home to school we will ask her. Can you tell us cousin who death is, or who made him? For George and I want to fight him for killing our poor sister.

MARY. You are brave little boys, of manly and generous natures, but you speak you do not know what. And you must learn to speak of death with more awe and reverence.

BOTH. Who is he Mary? Who is he?

MARY. He is the Sovereign of the Grave and sends forth his invisible emissaries in thousands over the whole face of the earth to cut off mankind in every stage of their life. Yet no man needs to be afraid of Death, for there is one who is his master, and he can only take such as God hath appointed him.

GEORGE. Did God make him at first Cousin Mary?

MARY. No, my dear boy. Men brought death upon themselves. God made man at first pure and upright; but man brought sin into the world, and Death came with it; and so, Death still passes upon all men for all have sinned.

TOM. Who is it then who has mastered him?

MARY. It is Jesus Christ the son of the living God; he who came from heaven and redeemed us with his own blood. These our bodies who grow up here like flowers to perish and decay are all subject to death, and the grave. But Jesus Christ by the sacrifice of himself conquered both, and we shall all rise again in the vigour of youth and beauty, go to a better and more glorious country, and continue to improve in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness to all the ages of eternity.

GEORGE. Will we improve in strength too Cousin Mary?

MARY. Yes, both in strength and beauty.

GEORGE. Then poor little George likes nobody so well as Jesus Christ. He always loved him, but he felt that he loved his father and mother better. But they have not died for him and now George loves his Saviour better than all the world.

MARY. May the blessing of heaven rest upon my two little good cousins. And now come away home with me to school.

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HEILAN SHED No 6

PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

Tain & Ross RAC 63

The next meeting of the Tain and Ross Chapter is due on Tuesday 13th October 2020 however the Companions did have a Zoom get together on Tuesday 21st July.

St Clement RAC 244

The next meeting of St Clement is due on Friday 30th October

Cromarty Firth RAC 310

The next meeting of Cromarty Firth is due on Wednesday 7th October

The Hebrides RAC 364.

As mentioned in the last edition the lockdown means that although we have a candidate waiting for his EM degree we don't know when we'll be able to hold our next meeting and admit him.

Alasdair Taylor

Provincial Grand Scribe E

PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES

As previously mentioned, everything has come to a halt and we have no idea when our next meeting will be. When that takes place, we believe it will be a Malta grade.

Donnie Macleod

†‡ Donald Macleod KCT

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Another poem by Rudyard Kipling – maybe not so well known as his poem, “The Mother Lodge”, this one is nevertheless equally pertinent to us – it’s called My New Cut Ashlar

My New-Cut Ashlar takes the light
Where crimson-blank the windows flare.
By my own work before the night,
Great Overseer, I make my prayer.

If there be good in that I wrought
Thy Hand compelled it, Master, Thine--
Where I have failed to meet Thy Thought
I know, through Thee, the blame was mine.

The depth and dream of my desire,
The bitter paths wherein I stray--
Thou knowest Who hast made the Fire,
Thou knowest Who hast made the Clay.

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,
Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain--
Godlike to muse o'er his own Trade
And manlike stand with God again!

One stone the more swings into place
In that dread Temple of Thy worth.
It is enough that, through Thy Grace,
I saw nought common on Thy Earth.

Take not that vision from my ken--
Oh, whatsoe'er may spoil or speed.
Help me to need no aid from men
That I may help such men as need!

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BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2001

As many brethren will know our Lodge building was a Church sited in Union Street Inverness, with the last service being held on 21st. July 1901.

The building was then demolished and afterwards taken to Alness where it was re - built as our Masonic Lodge.

Earlier this year the Centenary Committee of Ness Bank Church wrote asking if they could hold a short service within the Lodge on Saturday 21st July 2001

Permission to hold the service was unanimously agreed to and so, on that day, a large number of the Ness Bank Congregation travelled to Alness for the service which was conducted by their minister Rev John Chambers.

At the end of the service Rev Chambers presented a framed painting of the original church as it was in Union Street Inverness to the Lodge and which was gratefully accepted by our RWM, Bro Kenneth M Sutherland.

Following the service, a barbeque was held by the congregation in the Lodge grounds and an enjoyable time was had by all.

And finally –

Past Master Keith Patience modelling the new Centenary edition of the Lodge Rosehaugh Tie -

