

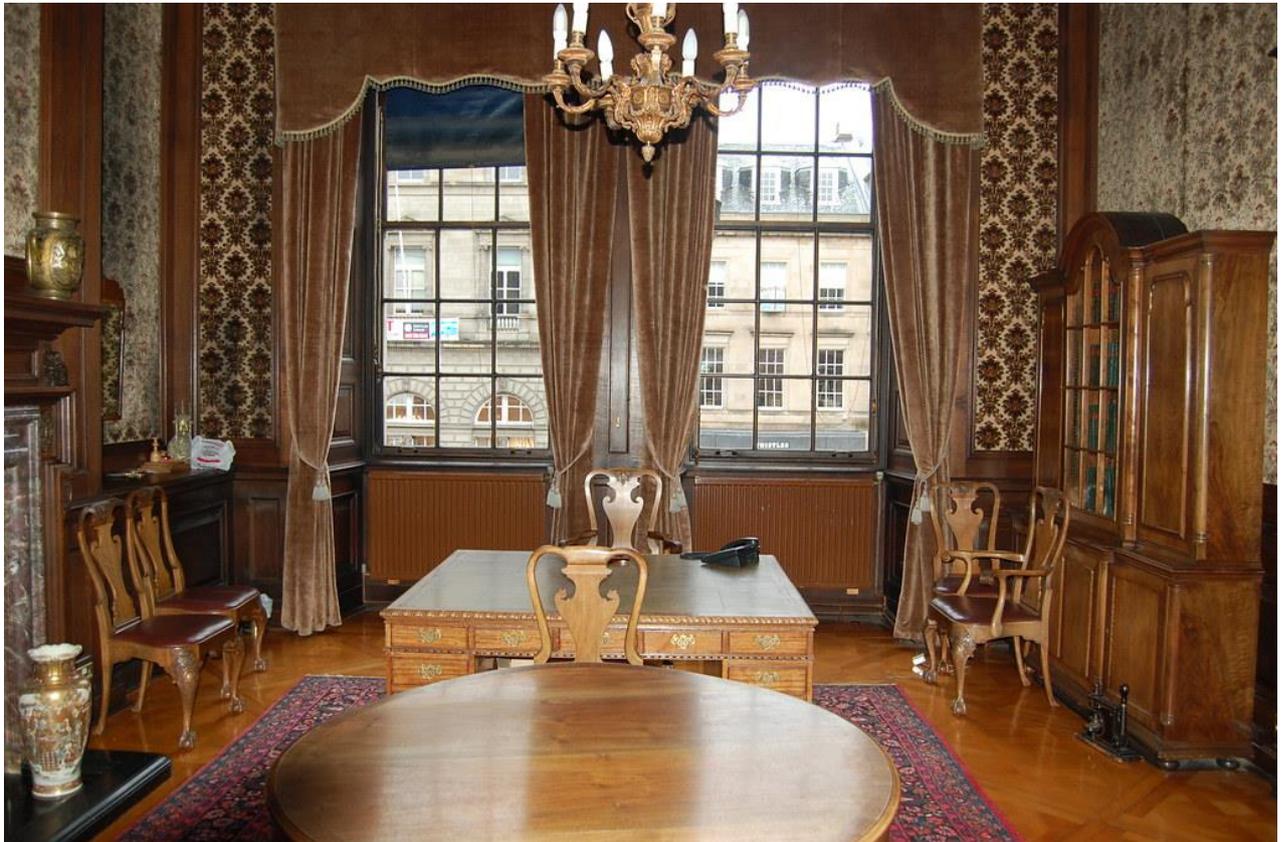
PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 108

AUGUST 2021

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



The Grand Master Masons' Office in 96 George Street, Edinburgh

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Editorial

Welcome to the 108th edition of the “Provincial Patter”.

The Covid-19 Pandemic is something of a roller coaster – one minute we are doing well, number of infections reducing, number of vaccinations increasing then suddenly, the infection rate escalates almost out of control again. We can all pinpoint various reasons for the escalations but listening to the news this morning, the First Minister seems reasonably confident that we can look forward to a reduction in restrictions from early in August which is good news albeit, we must be sensible and maintain the basics of hand cleansing, wearing of masks where necessary and the continual cleaning of premises to ensure that we prevent Covid from spreading any further.

If we adhere to the rules, I am confident that we will see our Lodges re-opening at the beginning of the new season and just prior to the reopening to the Installation of our new Provincial Grand Master in the Province, Brother Raymond A MacKeddie.

The Installation is likely to be somewhat restricted given the circumstances prevailing at the current time, but the important thing is that we will have a properly installed Provincial Grand Master along with his Commissioned Office-bearers.

I’m sure that all our readers will wish to join with me in wishing Brother MacKeddie and his Commission, a very happy, productive, and enjoyable term in Office.

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



While there have been no meetings of Grand Lodge the various committees continue to work away in the background communicating in the main through Zoom meetings.

If there is any kind of silver lining to the Covid outbreak, it has surely been the development of tools such as Zoom which have enabled continued communication not only for committees, but for Lodges, Districts and Provinces to continue to operate for business and social interaction.

While we still live with a feeling of uncertainty, I am reasonably confident that we will have a Grand Lodge Installation this year, probably with limited numbers and sadly with no Festival of St Andrew.

Hopefully, with the continuing roll-out of the vaccine we will be able to enjoy a full Installation and Festival of St Andrew in 2022 – that seems a long time to wait but it is only 16 months away which means planning must start soon.

Take care and keep safe.

Ed

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

Brethren,

This being my first report since becoming Provincial Grand Master for the Province of Ross and Cromarty, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the Brethren who supported my nomination in becoming Provincial Grand Master. It is indeed a great honour to follow those esteemed Brethren who have previously represented this venerable Province.

I would also like to thank those Brethren who have taken up the Commissioned Office posts, and I look forward to working with them during our term of office.

The Installation of the PGM and the Commissioned Office-bearers, albeit a slimmed down event, is still planned to for Saturday 28th August at the Ben Wyvis Hotel in Strathpeffer, Covid restrictions permitted, and further details and invitations shall be released shortly.

It is eagerly anticipated that, following the Heads of Orders Meeting on Wednesday 11th August, and the expected easing of Covid restrictions, we shall get the good news that we are hoping for, and we can start arranging the re-commencement of meetings of lodges. I look forward to getting out around the lodges and catching up with you all.

I must remind all lodge members that we must all conform strictly to the guidance that is issued, and will be updated, by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and take all the necessary precautions to avoid any risk of spreading the Coronavirus. We cannot risk the negative publicity that the Craft would suffer if we were seen to cause an outbreak or be seen to be a spreader of the virus.

Recently the Provincial Grand Treasurer has released some further funding to the administration team in Malawi, to pay for the recurring fees for the Woodwork Tutor and to pay for a lawn mower to cut the grass around the campus. There has been a marked increase in the incidence of snakes getting into the buildings, and it is thought that if the grass was maintained at a shorter height, it would make it easier to see, and remove the snakes, in the open rather than them getting to the buildings.

During my term of office, I shall be continuing to support the Mountain View School in Malawi, as this is such worthy cause and the benefits we are providing is being demonstrated by the improvement of the educational standards of these profoundly deaf and disadvantaged children. The Province should be proud of the valued work that has been supported over the past thirteen years.

I am also concerned that this pandemic is going to exacerbate the problems of Mental Health issues, and I am pledging my support to do what I can to help increase the awareness of mental health issues, provide information of how we as individuals can help others, provide information where we can, or direct others, to access assistance, and to support local mental health charities.

I must congratulate the Immediate Past Provincial Grand Master on his excellent record of the number of Annual Visitations that he achieved during his recently completed term of office, and not being impeded by the Covid virus, he managed to virtually visit all the Lodges in the Province by the power of Zoom.

Well done, Robin, and happy retirement.

Stay safe Brethren and hopefully we can meet again soon.

Fraternal regards

Raymond A MacKeddie

PGM Ross and Cromarty

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From the Provincial Almoner

As this is my first report as Provincial Almoner, I trust that it is to the same high standard as my predecessor Past Master David A. MacMaster. I start my report by recording the passing to the Grand Lodge above of two well-known Brethren who will be sadly missed by all.

On Sunday June 20th, 2021, Past Master Fraser Mackay, Lodge St Duthus who had been a resident in Innis Mhor Care Home, Tain for some time passed away.

On Monday July 5th, 2021, Bro Angus "Angie Allan" Mackenzie, Lodge St Martin who served as Treasurer in the Lodge and was also the oldest member of the Lodge passed away.

Past Master Donnie Sutherland, Lodge Seaforth and his good lady are back to walking round Fortrose, which is good news.

Past Master David Smith, Lodge Seaforth, is back in Invergordon Hospital, awaiting a placement in a care home as he requires constant care.

Past Master Brian McGroarty, Robertson's Lodge, is due his final chemotherapy treatment this month.

Past Master Angus Ross, Lodge Ness, can be seen most days on his mobility scooter between his house and the traffic lights. He is in good form.

Past Master Ian MacLaren, Lodge Rosehaugh, attends Raigmore Hospital for dialysis 3 days a week. He is now the owner of a Kubota mini excavator, so could be open to small digging contracts. Brother Dougie Grant, Lodge Seaforth is still at home and is being attended to by palliative care nurses.

Past Master John Thomson, Lodge Steps No. 1213, and an Honorary Member of Lodge Fingal, is not in good health although he is at home.

Past PGM, Robin Cattanach, recently had an overnight stay in Raigmore Hospital but is back to his usual self.

Brother Gary Miller, Lodge Averon, had an accident at work and may require further treatment.

Cont. /

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Almoner's Report Continued

Brother Andy Farquhar, Lodge St Duthus, is now in Invergordon Hospital awaiting a placement in a care home.

Past Master Colin Matheson Lodge Fingal was recently in Raigmore Hospital to have a pacemaker fitted. He is now back home recovering.

This report has been compiled along with input from Past PG Almoner PM David A MacMaster. I wish to put on record that his help and advice which I have received, is greatly appreciated.

I will close by asking that, should any brother require my assistance or know of a brother who does, please get in contact with me.

Fred Fraser

Provincial Grand Almoner

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2008

Almoners Corner

The good weather seems to keep us all in reasonably good health but there is always someone whose life has been struck by tragedy and at this time I think of all the terrible accidents and loss of life which seems to have occurred in our area of late. It makes our material problems pale into insignificance.

I know that our thoughts go out to the wife and family of Brother Colin Forbes of Lodge Loch Ewe who died suddenly in May of this year. As has been mentioned, I hope the very large turnout at his funeral was of some comfort to his family and shows in what high esteem he was held.

I recently had reason to visit the widow of a well-loved brother, who had passed away, and she pointed out how much she still misses him and what effect his passing will have on her for the rest of her life. I think she enjoyed having someone to talk to even for a short time.

All this should always serve to remind us of how much we should keep in touch with the relatives of departed Brethren as much as our own Brethren and look after their needs and well-being.

So once again remember if you know of anyone who you think would benefit from contact let me know and be assured, I will arrange something even if it is just a card or telephone call

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New Provincial Grand Lodge Ties



The basic cost of the tie is £12 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.

Young Masons Zoom Meetings

With the longer summer nights, heavier work schedules and other commitments of the members, it has been difficult to maintain the higher attendance numbers at our meetings, particularly during a period when most of the Lodges would normally be in summer recess.

The young mason's team have agreed to reduce the frequency of meetings to once a month, meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month, to meet and converse about any news regarding returning to normal lodge meetings, to socialise, and to discuss any items of a general masonic nature.

The enthusiasm and commitment of the participating Brethren continues to develop an open forum, which has continued to be very entertaining and educational, and it is hoped that is filling a void in their masonic journeys until we can recommence our normal meetings.

The team were very concerned to recently hear that one of the members, Bro. Kevin Lumsden of Lodge Seaforth 854, who is based in Glasgow, had contracted Coronavirus. At the time of writing Kevin has been showing signs of improvement and we wish him well in his recovery back to good health.

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

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



It was good to see, in the middle of the month, long overdue work starting albeit for a couple of days on the external walls of the Lodge. Due to Covid, delivery of the replacement sandstone was delayed by approximately four weeks. Workmen from the quarry are not so efficient these days. From Monday 2nd July work on the building is kicking off again and will continue until the project is finished.

We are now in possession of a fogging unit and chemicals. Thanks to RWGMM for transportation of the unit north. We were able to assist the local St Duthus bowling club to purchase one through the Lodge.

Along with Brother Alex Craib, I had the honour and pleasure of donating cheques to the total of £3000 to the Highland Hospice on Friday 30th July. The money was raised at a recent Golf Competition held in Tain. Sadly, Mike Turner Depute PGM couldn't join us. However, Bro Michael Longley, who took a video of the competition, was there to video the cheque presentation for which we are most grateful. Our thanks go to the Tain Golf Club and their catering department for hosting the day, all the brethren from all over Scotland who played, the Grand Master Mason for presenting the prizes, and to all the lodges, brethren and companies who contributed to this fantastic sum of money which was gratefully received and will be faithfully applied by the Highland Hospice. Thank you all, brethren - same place, same time next year - see you there

John MacKenzie – Master



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Lodge Fortrose No 108

It is with great sadness I have to report the passing of two of our well-known brethren to the Grand Lodge above in the persons of PM Kenneth Nicolson (Aged 95) and Bro. Phillip E Smith (Aged 71).

As well as being a PM of Lodge Fortrose and a senior officer in the fledging Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Kenny Nicolson was recruited by MI6 during the second world war where he was trained to send and receive highly secure transmissions to and from the top-secret Bletchley Park and passing decoded incoming messages to MI6 senior officers. He was also part of a follow-up to the D-Day invasion of occupied France called Operation Anvil which began on August 15, 1944. Just a few years ago Kenny was awarded a badge, of which he was extremely proud, in recognition of his work at Bletchley Park. He regularly attended the Lodge and Social Club right up until ill health meant he was unable to get out and about.

Phil was a very popular brother of the Lodge, a very willing helper at all our functions and, although he had been unwell, his sudden death came as shock to us all. He passed away at the Golden Jubilee hospital while undergoing what is considered nowadays to be a straight-forward repair to stents at his heart.



Bro Kenny Nicolson



Bro Philip E Smith



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Congratulations from Lodge Fortrose to Bro Raymond Mackeddie on his election as Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty and to IPPGM Robin Cattanach on his retirement as such and for his good work over his 5-year term. We are looking forward to working with Raymond during his term of office.

The Widows Sons Scotland West paid a visit to the island on their motor bikes on Friday 16th and Saturday 17th July, a great bunch of lads some of whom were accompanied by their wives. They do great charity work. Our Past Master Iain Campbell hosted them. They made a collection on Saturday evening and the cash was presented to PM Iain Campbell for a charity of his choice.



Widows Sons presenting a cheque to Western Isles Mentally Handicapped Ass.



Widows Sons Plaque presented to PM Iain Campbell



Visiting Callanish Stones

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Yet another quarter has gone by, and we still don't know for sure when we can start meeting again so it's just as well that we are able to meet virtually through Zoom and keep each other up to date with what is happening in Masonic circles worldwide. I can see zoom meetings being used even after this pandemic comes to an end as a tool that will enable far flung brethren to give input to committees etc. which will save time and expenses travelling although it cannot replace the harmony of socialising.

Just when we were about to enjoy a blether after one of our recent zoom meetings and some of the brethren had poured a dram in anticipation Bro Derek Mackay who was hosting it dropped a spring roll on his keyboard bringing the meeting to sudden close.

The social club is now open from late afternoon from Wednesday to Saturday so there is an opportunity for socialising albeit with social distancing. Work is ongoing on repairing the roof, chimneys and paths at the Lodge and it has been agreed that the Lodge will plant a tree to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Stay safe brethren.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod PM



The late Bro Philip Smith entertaining the Chernobyl Children.



Robertson's Lodge No 134

Sincere and Fraternal Greetings Brethren,

Our Lodge Almoner Past Master Jim Tait carries on dutifully with his responsibilities, advising all and communicating with the Members. Past Master Brian McGroarty is receiving treatment at Raigmore and awaiting further investigation; Brother Andy Young is in Wyvis House; Brother William Mackay (Buller) keeps up with us all and continues to get about in his active life.

As with other members of the Craft, Lodge members continue to live under the Government and Grand Lodge guidelines relating to the current Covid 19 Pandemic. Most of the correspondence received is by email, which includes all the weekly uplifting Coronavirus update letters from the GMM, Bro. Ramsay McGhee, and passing on information on the charitable activities by other Lodges in the Province, such as the Golf Outings. However, we also continue to hold Zoom Meetings on the Regular Meeting Night, the 3rd Wednesday of the month, which is attended by members of other Lodges also. The RWM, Brother Jonathan Hill, and other members of the Lodge have decided to continue with Zoom Meetings over what is usually considered as the "closed season". Members also attend as invited visitors to other Lodge's Zoom Meetings with great interest and enjoyment and also keep in touch using social media such as WhatsApp, Email, phone and of course the Facebook Masonic Pages. Although no concrete preparations have been made for the upcoming forecast reopening of the Lodge, the matter continues to be under discussion. Members of the Lodge also attended the recent Zoom Meeting held for the Provincial Grand Lodge Visitation to Lodge Allan Wilson No. 851, which was the first one to be held by Brother Raymond MacKeddie as PGM.

We recently had a visitation to the Lodge by members of that great charitable and fund-raising body of the North Chapter of the Widows Sons of Scotland, this was led by Brother Paul Wilson, PM, of Lodge Drum Mossie 1438. The visitors were from a mixed bunch of Lodges from over the North and some interesting conversations were held, with some admiration of their motor bikes and gear. Photos were taken and one was posted on the Facebook Highland Masonic Page.

Peter K. Ratcliffe.
Lodge Secretary.

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The "Widow's Sons" visiting Robertson's Lodge in Cromarty

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2002

Sincere congratulations are extended to PM Bro Andrew MacIvor on his engagement to Rachel MacDonald from Inverness. Andrew popped the question on 5th July and the answer in the affirmative means that we will witness the first "Masonic Wedding" to take place in the Province in living memory probably in August next year. We wish them both every good health and happiness for a long and happy marriage.

There's no truth in the rumour that Andrew's father, Bro George MacIvor, has been grinning like a Cheshire cat ever since the announcement - getting Andrew out the house will increase his disposable income by approximately 70%!!!!

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2008

Once again, I am indebted to Bro Kenny Jack, not on this occasion for his usual poems, but for a very interesting article from Perthshire with Ross-shire connotations:

In 1864, George Augustus Frederick John Murray, 6th Duke of Atholl, and Grand Master Mason of Scotland passed away. In 1865, his family, friends and tenants decided to erect a Memorial for him at Logierait in Perthshire. The Monument would subsequently be built at a cost of £1500.00 and take the form of a large Celtic cross designed by noted Edinburgh Architect, Robert Rowand Anderson (1834 – 1921). The crumbling edifice still stands proudly today, shrouded by trees atop what is known locally as Tom- Na- Cloigh hill.

Prior to its construction, the Grand Lodge of Scotland were invited by the Memorial Committee to lay the foundation-stone of the Monument; and, on 10 August, 1865, the Grand Master Mason, John Whyte-Melville and a Deputation of Grand Lodge officers carried out the ceremony with great dignity. A total of 45 Lodges from all over Scotland attended- including the Lodge of Journeymen Masons No. 8, carrying their famous 'Blue Blanket'- one of only four occasions on which they have carried the ancient craft banner. A total of 564 Freemasons are believed to have attended the ceremony.

Six of these brethren were from Robertson's Lodge No. 134, in Ross and Cromarty. A Bro MacKay led the Deputation from Cromarty, but no further information is given about him. In his address, The Grand Master Mason singled out these intrepid, far-travelled brethren for special mention stating:

“To the brethren present, I beg to tender my thanks for their assistance and co-operation. Many of them have come from far to do honour to the late Grand Master, and one Lodge I feel called on to refer to specially, which has come as far as from a distant point of Cromarty. To the deputation of that Lodge, I beg to tender my most sincere thanks. I don't know if it is on my right or on my left, but I beg to thank it. At all events, I am very thankful to the large deputations that have come forward to assist me on this occasion-to the number, I understand, of deputations from 40 Lodges.”

Of course - as the recent successful trip to Malawi demonstrates, the brethren of Ross and Cromarty are still prepared to travel great distances today - just as their predecessors did, so many years ago, and furthermore, they will always find a warm welcome awaiting them in Highland Perthshire!

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Lodge Fingal No 318

We were treated to very fine Lectures by Brothers Alex Craib, Raymond MacKeddie and James Tait for the Zoom meetings in May, June, and July.

On 11th May, after the Business was completed, Brother Alex Craib JD gave a short history of **Lodge Fingal 318 Dingwall**, in the Province of Ross and Cromarty. During his presentation, he spoke of the creation of the Lodge, who the Founder Members were, the connection with Lodge Old Inverness Kilwinning St. John No VI, and the similar link with Lodge St. Duthus No 82.

The Master, Brother Gunn, thanked Alex for his talk, which lasted some twenty minutes. The presentation, greatly enjoyed by all present was followed with discussion the main thrust of which centred round where the name Fingal came from. Despite several theories, the definitive answer remains a mystery.

On June 8th at the conclusion of Lodge business, the guest speaker was the Provincial Master Elect Brother Raymond MacKeddie who talked about "**The Yankee Grave That Dixie Decorates**", an interesting masonic story from the American Civil War which lasted from 1861 until 1865. The story revolved around **Commander John Elliot Hart** but covered the history of the American Civil War, the connection with St. George`s Lodge No 6, how Hart was appointed a Lieutenant Commander on the Steamer Albatross, and its exploits during the War and ending with the Funeral of Commander Hart and the Masonic involvement.

The Master thanked Raymond for his talk, which lasted some twenty minutes, to be followed by some craic which lasted a further ten minutes.

The July lecture was given by Brother James Aitcheson Tait, Past Master, Robertson`s Lodge No 134, and Past Substitute PGM of Ross & Cromarty. Brother Tait`s theme was "**Robert Burns and the Cursed Drink**". He gave a brief history of Robert Burns (born 25.01.1759 died 21.07.1796) which included his working life, his Masonic connection, and his love of poetry.

The Master thanked Jim for his talk, which lasted some twenty-five minutes, e followed by a question-and-answer session, with some Brethren giving quotes from Burns - a very interesting evening.

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Future Zoom Meetings:

August 10th Our guest speaker will be Brother Peter Foster Snr. Past Master, Robertson`s Lodge No. 134 and District Grand Prior, for the Knights Templars. Theme being, **The Caledonian Canal.**

September 14th Our guest speaker will be Brother Alex Craib JD. The talk is a short history of Brother Lt. Col. Sir Hector Munro of Foulis PPGM. We start at his birth and cover his military and Masonic career then his passing at the age of 85 in 1935.

October 12th Hopefully the Lodge will be back at Work. Since we shut down 16th March 2020.

Finally, on Sunday June 13th we were honoured with the visit of six brethren from “The Widows Sons” North Chapter. They were treated with bacon rolls, a cup of tea, prepared by the boys in the picture, Brothers MacMaster, Gunn, Cameron, Gault and Mackintosh (who left on his pinnie). Missing from the picture is Brother Craib, who pressed the button to mark this occasion. Some of these Brethren would have been at Fingal on Saturday 18th August 2018, the last time they were in Ross-shire. On that day there was a wreath laying ceremony up at the Macdonald Monument, Mitchell Hill Cemetery.



As we go through these strange times. Take care and stay safe.

That`s all Folks, watch this Space.

D. Gunn RWM

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LODGE ALLAN WILSON 851

Like all other Lodges we have been unable to hold our Regular Meetings, but we were able to hold, via 'Zoom', our July Meeting on Tuesday 13th July which was our annual Provincial Grand Lodge Visitation. It was the first visit under the leadership of our new Provincial Grand Master Bro. Raymond MacKeddie. Raymond was accompanied by several members of his new team and was welcomed by our Right Worshipful Master Bro. Allan Baker.

The Lodge continues to be involved in the distribution of a considerable number of foodstuffs, clothing, and disability equipment to local caring sheds in the Black Isle area and in Inverness and as far north as Tain and Bonar Bridge. This is done in conjunction with the Inter Province Charity Programme set up by Bro. Kevin Taggart, Lodge Buchan St John No. 636 in the Province of Linlithgowshire. Prior to the Covid 19 Lockdown Kevin had made application to affiliate to Lodge Allan Wilson and his affiliation will take place at the first available opportunity. We are particularly grateful to Brothers Ramsay McGhee, Grand Master Mason, and Alex Craib, both members of the Lodge, and to our new Provincial Grand Master, Bro. Raymond MacKeddie for their involvement and sterling work in this project.

We were made aware recently that Past Master Roddy MacCormick and his good lady, Evelyn, had both been ill with Covid 19. I sent a card to him on behalf of our Right Worshipful Master and the Brethren of the Lodge. I received an e mail in return from Roddy thanking us for the card and informing me that both he and Evelyn were now on the mend, albeit slowly. We wish them both well in their recovery.

Our next meeting on Tuesday 10th August will also be held via 'Zoom' when we will have an address from the Grand Master Mason, when we hope he will be able to inform us of the way forward considering the continued lifting of the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions.

We will also discuss our 125th Anniversary which falls next May (2022). Given that it is the same day as Lodge Seaforth, we are looking at a joint celebration of some sort depending on the current state of the pandemic. Hopefully by next May the vaccination programme will have kicked in properly and new cases will be diminishing. It will be good to celebrate with the Brethren of Lodge Seaforth.

In the meantime, brethren please stay safe and look after yourselves and your families.

David MacMaster - Secretary

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BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2008

Provincial Grand Lodge were well represented when we marked another momentous event in the Province – the Reopening of Lodge Allan Wilson No 851. Tuesday 24th June – exactly 111 years since the Lodge was founded in Bulawayo, it was reopened here in Fortrose.



The Depute Grand Master, Bro Charles I R Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont, carried out a very impressive Reopening Ceremony after which I had the pleasure of Installing the Master of the Lodge, Bro Malcolm Stewart Robert Smith, a Past Master of the Lodge during its days in Bulawayo.

The Lodge has an impressive 50 Reopening Members and 2 Members who joined Lodge Allan Wilson during its time in Bulawayo.



LODGE SEAFORTH 854

Zoom Meetings

As lockdown restrictions remain in place, the RWM, Bro Graham Law continues to host an online Zoom Meeting, held on the third Monday of each month. The meeting frequency has been reduced over the summer months as other activities are keeping all busy.

The meetings continue to be well attended, and allow the Lodge to conduct some administration, discuss maintenance of the lodge building and generally socialise with brethren and visitors.

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Recent discussions have commenced on plans to mark the Lodge's 125-year anniversary, which will be on 8th May 2022. The Lodge was also chartered on the same day as Lodge Allan Wilson 851, so a possible joint event may be planned to mark the anniversary of the two lodges.

60 Year Jubilee Certificates

The Grand Master Mason, Bro. Ramsay McGhee, accompanied by the Right Worshipful Master, Bro Graham Law had the very pleasant duty to present the Brothers Billy Hossack and Alastair Hossack with their 60-year Jubilee Diplomas.



Thomas Lincoln Thomas BEM

The lodge members were delighted, and honoured, to hear the news that one of our brethren, Brother Thomas L Thomas was recently awarded the British Empire Medal the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to Education, Horticulture, and the community in Maryburgh.

Quiz Night

The Lodge has continued to host an online quiz on the third Friday night of each month. These quizzes have been run by our esteemed quizmaster, Bro. James Fraser, SD, and are open to friends and families.

Many thanks to the regular contingent of quizzers, from all parts of the country, who are providing an exciting and challenging event each month.

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Whisky Tasting Night

Brother Donald Ferguson hosted a successful Online Whisky Tasting Night on Friday 28th May 2021, with fine malt whisky samples from all corners of Scotland, expertly described with interesting tasting notes. A good night was had by all.

Return to Meetings

The clubrooms have now been able to re-open and local groups have now started to recommence activities and meetings.

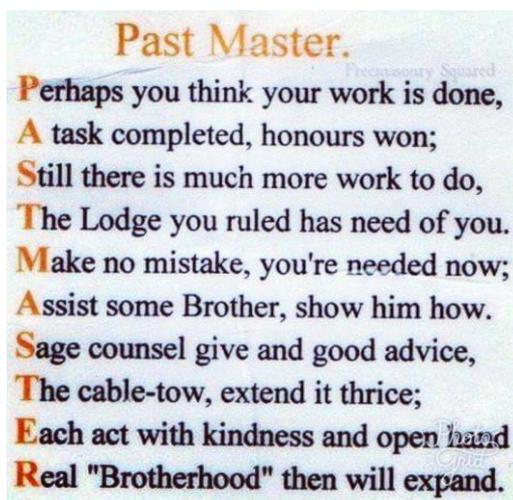
The lodge has recently purchased one of the Edge Protect fogging machines for sanitising the interior of the building after each meeting or event.

It is hoped that this fogging unit should assist greatly in the protection against the virus when the much-anticipated go-ahead is announced to allow us to re-commence meetings.

Raymond MacKeddie PM - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 1996

The Fortrose Brethren travelled north to Castletown on Saturday 22nd June where they worked an EA Degree for the Brethren of Lodge John o' Groats No 1333. As usual, the hospitality purveyed by the John o' Groats Brethren was outstanding, and a very enjoyable time was had by all.



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LODGE AVERON No 866

Hi Brethren, it has been a relatively quiet quarter for Lodge Averon. However, we have been preparing ourselves for our return in Oct and hopefully resuming normal meetings and activities. We have taken as much advantage of the unexpected downtime and carried a lot of maintenance and redecorated. The lodge is now back together and looking great, one or two little jobs to be done and it will be in pristine condition and ready to get back to work fully.

This year we have decided to reinstate our annual Lodge Averon Golf scramble, after a few years break as our main fund raiser. This year we will be supporting Mikeysline. This event was one of the most popular events Lodge Averon had in the calendar and I am delighted to say that two of our younger brethren Bro Gary Miller and Bro Fraser McBeath Jnr have stepped up to the plate and taken on the organisation of this year's event.

Lodge Averon will be licensing the event and running our own bar including mobile bar and refreshments, there will be prizes for 1st 2nd 3rd, longest drive, nearest the hole and some surprise prizes in the mix. There will also be an auction. One of which will be a 4 ball at royal Dornoch and of course the raffle supported by local business will as always, be superb and not to be missed.

It will be a shotgun start in teams of 4. Slots are filling up fast so if you have a team and want a slot then please get in touch.

It been a testing year or two for Lodge Averon however I feel we are coming out the other end much stronger and wiser as a Lodge. I, along with the Office-bearers of Lodge Averon, are looking forward to welcoming you all back into our Lodge as much as we are itching to go visit.

Take care, stay safe and we hope to see you all soon

Donald Mathieson - Master, Lodge Averon.

The Lodge Almoner, **Bro George Robinson** has been telling me about the cycling success of one of Lodge Averon's younger members, Brother Kyle Gordon. Kyle has very kindly written the following to give us a first-hand insight to international cycle racing at the highest level –

“I have just returned from St Petersburg Russia where I was representing Scotland in round 2 of the Nations Cup Track Cycling event. The event was indoors on the Velodrome and is attended by Nations from around the world.

I was competing in the 4km Elite individual pursuit on Friday the 9th of June and the Elite Omnium on Sunday 11th.

The Individual pursuit is basically a time trial, you start from a holding gate and then race individually over the 4km the 4 riders with the quickest time go through to the finals later in the day. It is absolute

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torture as the effort is so intense on the body everything is telling you to stop but it is mind over matter and all the training you do kind of helps prepare you for the pain.

In qualifying rounds, I posted the fastest time over-all, a personal best which secured me into the finals later in the day. My time of 4minutes and 12 seconds I am told is the 4th fastest time ever recorded by a British rider. I was absolutely delighted with how the qualifying went and was very excited for the finals.

Later in the finals I made sure I was fully hydrated and fuelled and warmed up for the race legs feeling good and I was hungry for that gold medal. I was up against Russia (1 rider either side of the track) I gave it my all and more, but he proved to be the stronger rider in the final and I crossed the line to take the silver medal.

The omnium consists of 4 events - Scratch race, Tempo race, Elimination, and Points race. You gain points for placings in each event and the rider with the most points at the end is the winner on the Omnium. It is kind of like a road race, you have 24 riders all on the track at the same time racing around shoulder to shoulder it's fast and furious!!

I was in good company in this race, World, European & National Champions, Olympic Champions, and the likes.

I was active throughout the omnium scoring points, attacking with some moves, and showing I was able to contend with the others.

I was sitting 9th over-all going into the elimination race but with another riders' foot hitting my front wheel and snapping 4 spokes I was out of that race early. It destroyed the wheel, my right foot also came off my pedal and I was going around the 47-degree banking at 30 mph with only one foot in the pedal with a completely buckled wheel, how I managed to stay upright I'll never know. But it gave the crowd some excitement.

I finished the omnium in 12th overall, happy enough with how it went, learnt a lot, and got exposure racing at the top level.

The whole weekend of racing was savage, the inside temperature of the velodrome was 33 degrees, so it made the racing extra hard.

I am back in Scotland now and in travel quarantine for 10 days. Looking forward to the next big race in a few weeks' time".

Kyle Gordon



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Left – Kyle pointing out his 1st place on the leader board.

Below – Kyle ready for the off



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TEXAS SCRAMBLE
IN AID OF
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AUGUST 29, 2021. 10AM TEE OFF (ARRIVE BY 9AM)

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LODGE NESS No 888

Delighted to report that the brethren have been working on our building and it has now been painted. Likewise, much work has taken place in the garden while inside the Lodge, the roof has been fixed painted. It is all looking good for a hopeful re opening soon.

Bro Owen Wilson

Lodge Secretary



BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2006

Gordon Ness the Bear from Lodge Ness who featured in the May edition of the Patter is well and truly on his travels. He has visited Lodge Kyle No 1117, Lodge Rosehaugh No 1216, and Lodge St. Andrew 601 and was last seen heading in the direction of Fort William. Remember – his aim is to collect as much as he can for local children’s charities – he is due back in Lodge Ness before the middle of November but hopefully he will cover a good few miles in the intervening period.

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LODGE KYLE No 1117

With the prospect of returning to the Lodge in the Autumn, we conducted a poll among the members of the Lodge. The result was overwhelmingly positive, in that most of the brethren wished to return to the Lodge in September with most men also thinking that in addition, an outdoor informal meeting in the fresh air was a positive option to nail down the actual procedures (collection, signing the book and entry into the Lodge etc. and how to follow the guidelines for Ritual) for the formal Meeting.

At the Province level, the new JOIN FREEMASONRY page on the Province Website, has gathered a couple of men who are keen to become candidates when things return to normal. Both showed a good level of research and initial impressions are that they would make good candidates. Typically, a "prospect" will fill in the form on the Join Page with his name and the town in which he lives. An email with the responses will go to the PG Secretary for Ross and Cromarty, who can decide which Lodge would be nearest to the prospective candidate and contact the Secretary of that Lodge who can then approach the "prospect". If the town is outside the Province, then this Province's Secretary is contacted, and the procedure continued as before. The next steps are: - To increase visibility of the JOIN FREEMASONRY option on the website using Search Engine Optimisation, prepare electronic documents so that potential candidates can read about Becoming A Freemason, and to extend the reach of the initiative to Social Media via Facebook, and latterly encourage the creation of Province "nodes" for membership on other Province websites.

The Join option is on the Province's website at www.pglorac.uk.

Also, on the website is the new PGM of Ross and Cromarty, Bro Raymond MacKeddie's message and a picture taken post Installation. We wish him well for the coming years in his new office.

For those wondering about the older URL for the Province website <http://www.pgrossandcromarty.org.uk/>, there are TWO addresses both leading to the same website. The purpose of the new address is to shorten the URL and offer simpler email addresses as required. The new address utilises the first letters of the words: Provincial Lodge Of Ross And Cromarty with a simple .uk at the end.

Finally... Our Fraternal Greetings to all Brethren in the Province from all of us here in Lodge Kyle and hopefully we will be able to welcome visitors once again to the Lodge in the near future.

Ronnie Miller, PM
Secretary

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

Not too much to report from Lodge Rosehaugh. We are like other lodges awaiting to see if we get the green light to open in October. This is usually our AGM and not normally a well-attended meeting so may well be an opportune way to start. We will hold some sort of committee meeting prior to decide on what is best way forward.

We welcomed The Widows Sons of Scotland to Lodge Rosehaugh on Sunday 25th July. The group were on a visit to the Black Isle Lodges and following on from Robertson's Lodge and Lodge Seaforth they made their way to Avoch. Thanks to Bro Maclaren for being on the phone very promptly to offer hi services to show them around the Lodge. Thanks to also to Donald and Brian for coming along.

Monthly draw results.

Feb. 1st = £85.00 Arthur MacArthur. 2nd = £50.00. Garry Patience. 3rd = £25.00 Helen Peattie.

March. 1st = £85.00 Dennis Hossack. 2nd = £50.00 Gordon McLeman. 3rd = £25.00 Shaun Kerr

April. 1st = £85.00 Tommy MacAllister 2nd = £50.00 Brian Carmichael 3rd = £25.00 William MacLeman

May. 1st = £ 85.00 Brian Carmichael. 2nd = £50.00 Allan Carmichael. 3rd = £25.00 Henry Cameron

Thanks to Scott and Allan for arranging these.

Finally, congratulations to Raymond Mackeddie in taking over the role of Provincial Grand Master. We trust he has a very successful period of office. Thanks also to Bro Robin Cattanach for his support over the last five years along with Bro Mike Turner for his very hard work.

Keith Patience, PM
Secretary

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Lodge St Martin 1217

It was with much sadness that we report that our oldest member has passed to the Grand Lodge Above. Brother Angus Alan Mackenzie was initiated into the lodge on 4th April 1957, he was passed on 18th April 1957, raised on 3rd May 1957, and was Marked on 3rd November 1961. He had travelled extensively during his career and on returning to Ullapool from America took on the position of Lodge Treasurer, which he held until recently. He had suffered ill health over the last few years and passed away on the morning of 5th July 2021. His funeral took place in the Church of Scotland, Ullapool and thereafter to Ullapool cemetery. All our condolences go to Angie's wife Pam and all the family at this difficult time.

The brethren are still working on the modifications to the lodge to allow meetings to recommence. We are installing a fire exit double door within the lodge room for ease of escape in an emergency but also to allow a through draft of air.

Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 1995

PM Mike Turner tells me that they are starting off the new season with the election of Office-bearers at the Regular Meeting on Tuesday 17th October but the big news from Ullapool is the 75th Anniversary Celebrations which will take place in the Lodge Room on Saturday 23rd September. Brethren are asked to assemble at 2.30 pm to facilitate a prompt 3.00 pm start to the Ceremony. The celebratory dinner will follow the Meeting at 5.00 pm in the Far Isles Hotel. Tickets for the dinner can be ordered from Brother Mike on 01854 612895.

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Lodge Loch Ewe 1551

With the old, corrugated roof on the anteroom having been replaced, and repairs to the rotten sections of the flooring, caused by the ingress of damp, now well under way, work is about to start on the lodge-room itself.

Given the size of the former church building, especially the height of the ceiling, and a total lack of any insulation, heating has been a major issue, especially during the winter months. We did consider several alternatives to the bottled gas heaters which have been wheeled around (to little effect!) for several years, but it was the volume of the interior – some 475m³ – that was the problem to finding an economical solution.

We have therefore decided that the best way forward is to cut the space down to size by putting in a false ceiling. This does mean a big investment ‘up front’, but it will lead to long term benefits. The Members will be more comfortable – and, most importantly, visiting Brethren will receive an even warmer welcome!

Michael Longley, Past Master – Lodge Loch Ewe

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2007

The Lodge is, of course in recess however on Saturday 28th of July, we are taking part, for the first time, in the Aultbea Fun Day. This is held every year to raise funds for Aultbea Village Hall. The Lodge felt that it would be good public relations for us to take part. We are very grateful to Lodge St Martin for the use of their stall equipment.



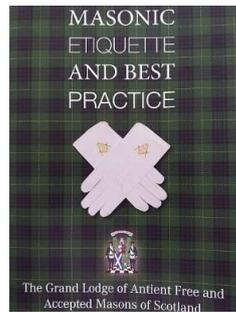
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BITS AND PIECES



This 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.

PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

Tain & Ross RAC 63

The Chapter have been holding regular Zoom meetings and look forward to hopefully getting back to normal for the Installation meeting in October.

St Clement RAC 244

Cromarty Firth RAC 310

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ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER HEBRIDES NO. 364.

ME First Principal Alan McPhee has expressed his sadness at the passing of IP 1st Principal Phil Smith stating that he will be sadly missed as he was a very regular attendee at Chapter meetings and expressed his thanks for the assistance Phil gave him before taking up his office as 1st Principal. He would once again like to pass on his regards to all the companions and is looking forward to the resumption of our chapter meetings.



1st Principal Phil Smith and his office bearers

PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES

Venerable Preceptor James Smith is again passing on his best wishes to all the fratres and is looking forward to when we can all meet again. He has also said that he has been saddened by the sudden death of Frater Phil Smith.

Donnie Macleod

†‡ Donald Macleod KCT

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