

PROVINCIAL PATTER

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 109

NOVEMBER 2021

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



They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

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Editorial

Welcome to the 109th edition of the “Provincial Patter”.

Since the August edition there has been much activity in the Province. It all started with the Installation of our new Provincial Grand Master, Brother Raymond MacKeddie at the end of August. Brother MacKeddie’s installation was the first Provincial Installation to take place since the lockdown, so it was vital that we got it right. The arrangements made by the Province were first class and their effort was a good guide to assist the other Provinces who followed on.

Since Brother MacKeddie’s installation, he has been kept busy, first with the installation of the elected Office-bearers which was held in Lodge Seaforth and the Provincial Grand Lodge Divine Service held in Lodge Averon.

It is good to see the Lodges in the Province opening and business meetings now giving way to Degrees being worked. However, Covid is very much with us, and we must be mega careful to ensure that all rules and regulations are adhered to and that we do all we can to ensure the safety and well-being of our members.

Hopefully, the Lodges in the Province will now give serious thought to having their Installations thereby giving Office-bearers who have continued for three years a well-earned break or promotion. It may be that consideration might need to be given to use bigger better ventilated premises – an option that has much merit as a one off.

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



At the Heads of Orders meeting in August, it was unanimously agreed that Masonic Meetings could once again get under way with the proviso that Government guidelines be strictly adhered to.

Since then, I have been privileged to conduct Provincial Installations in Ross & Cromarty, East Lothian, Stirlingshire, Scottish Borders, Linlithgowshire, Lanarkshire Middle Ward, Moray and Nairn, Perthshire West, Forfarshire, Kincardineshire, and Orkney and Zetland. By the end of this month Bro David Collings will have been installed in neighbouring Sutherland and that will be the catch-up of Provincial Installations complete until we start all over again in February with those whose Commissions start on 3rd February.

In addition, six Rededication Ceremonies have been carried out during the same period.

On 28th October, the first Grand Lodge Communication took place since February 2020 – there was a long agenda, but we thankfully worked our way through it in reasonable time.

We now look forward to the Grand Lodge Installation albeit there will be no Festival of St Andrew. While there will be a restriction on numbers, all Provinces and Lodges will have the opportunity to be represented and I am delighted that despite the Covid general restrictions we will have representatives from some of our Districts in attendance.

We are slowly making progress.

Ed

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

Provincial Grand Master & Commissioned Office-bearer Installation

A bright sunny day in August seems a long time ago, but it was great honour for the Province of Ross and Cromarty to host the first Provincial Grand Master Installation since the Covid-19 Lockdown halted all Masonic meetings in March 2020.

On Saturday 28th August at the Ben Wyvis Hotel in Strathpeffer, around 60 Brethren assembled to witness the installation of the Provincial Grand Master and his commissioned Office-bearers.



The hotel venue provided a bright well-ventilated spacious venue to accommodate one of the first meetings of the restart of masonic work.

The Grand Master Mason, and his Grand Lodge Deputation, showed no signs of the enforced eighteen month lay-off, and conducted an excellent installation ceremony, conveyed in a very proficient manner.

Not only was the installation an historic event, being the first installation ceremony conducted by the Grand Lodge of Scotland since the Covid 19 Lockdown, but it was a particularly unique occasion, as in 2006, I was installed into the chair as Right Worshipful Master of my mother lodge, Lodge Seaforth 854, by the then Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty, Bro. Ramsay McGhee, which to me then was a great honour indeed. Little did I know then that fifteen years on, in 2021, the Grand Master Mason, the same Bro. Ramsay McGhee, would be installing me into the chair as the Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty.

What makes it further remarkable is that we are both members of the same lodge, Lodge Seaforth 854.

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Provincial Grand Lodge (cont.)



On 29th September, I chaired the first Communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge since coming into office. This meeting was also the Installation of the remaining Office-bearers of the Provincial Grand Lodge. I am delighted that nearly all the offices have been filled and all of the lodges in the Province are represented. I am very much looking forward to working with the new team going forward and wish them every success in their respective offices.

It should be noted that after nearly twenty-one years, and serving under five different Provincial Grand Masters, as Provincial Grand Treasurer, Bro. Roger Cundiff has decided to hang up his calculator and retire from this office. I would like to congratulate him on his amiable and approachable manner in which he carried out his duties, and the efficiency and skill exhibited during the annual inspection of the lodge books. We wish Roger all the best in his retirement and look forward to him continuing with another office with the Provincial Grand Lodge.

On Sunday 24th October, a good turnout of the Provincial Grand Lodge members and wives attended the Annual Divine Service held in Lodge Averon, Alness. The Reverend Heidi Hercus from the Parish of Lochbroom and Ullapool officiated and delivered an interesting and thought-provoking sermon on the value of being patient, particularly as we emerge from the struggles and difficulties, we have all faced during the lockdown period. Many thanks to Lodge Averon 866 for providing a suitable venue and the refreshments after the service.

October Communication of Grand Lodge Scotland in Edinburgh on Thursday 28th October at 2:00pm. Limited numbers attending by invitation only.

The next Communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty is to be held at Lodge Fingal 318 on Thursday 4th November at 7:30pm. All Master Masons in good standing welcome.

I look forward to catching up with you all soon, particularly during the upcoming Installation Meetings that shall be commencing soon.

Raymond A MacKeddie

PGM Ross and Cromarty

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From the Provincial Almoner

The following have sadly passed to the Grand Lodge above -

On Monday 25th October, Brother David Smith, Past Master of Lodge Seaforth No 854, after a long illness.

On Friday 13th August 2021, Bro. Robert MacKenzie of Lodge St Duthus NO. 82 passed away suddenly at his work.

On Thursday 2nd September 2021, Bro. Douglas Grant of Lodge Seaforth No. 854 passed away in the care of the Highland Hospice after a long illness.

On Thursday 16th September 2021, PM John Thomson of Lodge No 1213 Stepps in the Province of Glasgow passed away after a long illness. He was an Honorary member of Lodge Fingal 318.

We also have had obituaries for -

On Monday 16th August 2021, Lydia Wilson – wife of Bro. Ian “Tug” Wilson of Lodge Ness No. 888 passed away.

On Monday 3rd September 2021, Mary Gunn – wife of P.M. Donnie Gunn of Lodge Fingal No. 318 passed away.

I have spoken to the following very recently -

P.M. Angus Ross of Lodge Ness No. 888. He is in good spirit.

Bro Andy Farquhar of Lodge Duthus No.82 is still in Invergordon Hospital awaiting a placement in a nursing home.

Bro. Andy Sutherland of Lodge St Duthus No.82 is not in the best of health.

Bro Andrew MacDonald of Lodge St Duthus No. 82 is attending Raigmore Hospital thrice weekly for dialysis along with PM Ian MacLaren of Lodge Rosehaugh No1216 and they put the world to right.

Bro Gary Millar of Lodge Averon No. 866 is awaiting treatment.

P.M. Brian McGroarty of Robertson Lodge No. 134 has completed his treatment and has been advised by his physician that he can resume working again.

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From the Provincial Almoner (cont.)

Bro. Ian “Tug” Wilson of Lodge Ness No. 888 is now home and is making progress.

Donna, wife of RWM Donnie Matheson of Lodge Averon No 866 has had a fall and required a replacement elbow and is now receiving physio.

I will close by asking that, should any Brother require my assistance or know of any Brother who does, to please get in touch with me.

Fred Fraser

Provincial Grand Almoner

Young Masons Zoom Meetings

The young mason’s team have continued to meet via the internet by Zoom Meetings on a monthly basis, on the fourth Wednesday of the month, throughout the summer recess.

Over the past month’s we have had a presentation on the Widows Sons Motorcycle Association in Scotland from Andy Rankin, one of the founding members and past National President of the Association.

Andy gave a very interesting insight to the history of the Scottish Chapters, the organisation of the Chapters in Scotland and an outline of some of the events and the charity work they carry out.

We also had a presentation of the recent history of Freemasonry in Europe, and the oppression the Brethren faced at the hands some of the leaders of power that existed throughout parts of Europe.

It can easily be seen why such a cloak of secrecy was adopted by Freemasonry in Britain in the mid-20th Century, and we still see the reluctance to shake it off even now.

The Young Masons Team are keen to work a degree together and have been “signed up” by Lodge St Duthus No.82 to carry out a Fellow-craft Degree on one of their members, also a member of the Young Masons Teams, Bro Scott MacKenzie. Bro Scott is the son of the Right Worshipful Master of Lodge St Duthus 82, Bro John MacKenzie, and only managed to get through his Entered apprentice degree when the Covid Lockdown halted his progress.

The Special Meeting is planned to take place on Wednesday 22nd December at Lodge St Duthus, Tain. Hopefully, with Covid restrictions easing, the members will be able to start attending their lodges again and resume their masonic progress.

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



Lodge St Duthus is up and running after many months like other lodges being closed.

We have all the necessary precautions in place as per government guidelines for anyone wishing to visit.

The highlight for us so far this year has been the remedial work to the stonework that was long overdue. It looks like a new building again.

We are supporting Poppy Scotland and also a group called Tain Juniors. This group mainly comprises primary school pupils. The organisers are hoping to raise in excess of £2000. We are giving them a cheque for £1000 which will go towards equipment or jackets which will be much appreciated by the group.

Installation of the RWM and office bearers is today, November 1st. The December meetings consist of third degree on Monday 6th of December and the PGM Bro Raymond Mackeddie carrying out a second degree with his Young Masons team on Wednesday December 22nd.

Hope you all stay safe and well and hope to see you in the coming weeks.

John MacKenzie – Master

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 1999

Mother St Duthus is continuing to invest in the future of the Lodge by spending close on £1000 on the Masonic Hall this year. A recent structural survey commissioned by the Lodge revealed that the building was in good condition but, it did make several recommendations to sustain its condition for many years to come. During the summer, a specialist firm treated all the roof timbers. Fire extinguishers and fire blankets have been purchased. The Hall Committee have been extremely busy with Bro Laurie MacKay using his skill to repaint the front door with a special oak wood grain effect, Bro James Morrison has been re-wiring and Brothers Alan Waugh and Donald MacIvor have been busy with general maintenance duties. In addition to the structural work, the Lodge Room and Ante Room have been greatly enhanced during the summer months with two new hand-made hard-wood gavels being presented by Bro Iain Ross from Ardgay. The gavels have pride of place on the Wardens pedestals.

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Lodge Fortrose No 108

We've now had two meetings since we've been allowed to gather in the Lodge both of which have been purely business as there has been so much to formalise since we last met in March 2020. In the meantime, we are continuing with our Zoom meetings on the third Friday of each month instead of our emergency ones in the Lodge, this is also giving our brethren from overseas or those who would be unable to attend for any other reason an opportunity to join us.

At our last meeting we read an application form from a prospective candidate who will be balloted on Friday 5th November so hopefully it won't be too long before we can start degree work again. I've also been informed that there are other application forms out which hopefully can be read at the same meeting.

Election of office bearers will take place on Friday 5th November and on Friday 3rd December we are expecting quite a number of visitors to attend our festival of St John, so we are making arrangements to make the evening as Covid safe as possible. On the following day we would normally be heading down to Tarbert for the installation at St Clements, but as far as we know at this time, they are restricting the number of attendees to their own members and a small installation team. This being the case we are planning to have a special meeting on the Saturday afternoon.

As I haven't got any recent Lodge photo's I've taken this one from the archives, it was taken in 2014 which was the second time brethren from Finland paid us a visit. We have just received correspondence from our Finnish brethren telling us that they hope to visit us again in 2022 as long Covid restrictions permit.

Photo /

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Stay safe brethren.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod PM

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 1998

I had a grand crack with Bro Donald MacLean, Secretary of Lodge Fortrose who reported, with great enthusiasm, on the trip to Lodge St Kilda No 881 in Portree on Friday 18th September where they worked a Fellow-craft Degree. They had an excellent time and greatly enjoyed the hospitality of the Skye Brethren - so much so that it looks likely that the exercise will be repeated in future.

The following weekend, the Brethren from Lodge Prince of Wales No 426, Province of Renfrewshire East travelled across the Minch to work a FC Degree in Stornoway. Again, it was a tremendous success especially as the Renfrew Brethren worked a totally different degree to that normally worked by the Stornoway Brethren. As the Brethren and Ladies from Renfrewshire were having a long weekend on the Island, they were taken on a conducted tour of the Long Island on the Sunday before heading back south on Monday 28th August.

Bro Donald also informed me that The Brethren of Lodge Fortrose had given a sizeable donation to Lewis Castle College students with learning difficulties to enable them to spend two weeks at Tri County Technical College, Pendleton, South Carolina.

This is yet another excellent example of the high-profile image being adopted by the Brethren resulting in local groups benefiting from their generosity.

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Robertson's Lodge No 134

Sincere and Fraternal Greetings Brethren,

Robertson's Lodge is very pleased to advise that we have had two physical Meetings after the Covid 19 Pandemic. One in September and one in October. Brethren who attended were pleased to get back together again and meet face to face. As is the requirement, all Covid 19 requirements and guidelines were followed, such as the use of facemasks, and track and trace. As our Lodge currently does not conform to the Scottish Government and Grand Lodge Anti Covid 19 guidelines, the meetings were held at Lodge Seaforth, No 854. The Master and Brethren of Robertson's Lodge are very grateful to the Master and Brethren of Lodge Seaforth for their brotherly offer, welcome and assistance with all the necessary preparations.

Up to now we have had social and business meetings, with a practice for the next FC Degree at the last one. The next meeting in November is the AGM and to carry out a long-awaited FC Degree for Brother Alasdair Morrison.

Our Lodge Almoner, Bro Jim Tait PM, carries on advising all and communicating with the Members. Past Master Brian McGroarty is continuing with his treatment, Bro William Mackay (Buller) continues to get about in his active life. We did however lose a well know local Brother to the Grand Lodge Above who was in a residential home, Brother Andy Young, who was the father of one of our Past Masters, Bro Ronald Young. Our Master, Bro Jonathan Hill says he has recovered from his knee operation but will not tell us if he has taken up jogging.

We are keen to continue with face-to-face meetings and are working on planning the ongoing Meeting schedule for this Season.

Peter K. Ratcliffe.

Lodge Secretary.

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Lodge Fingal No 318

The Zoom meetings were arranged for August and September. October was our first face to face Regular Meeting in eighteen months.

On 10th August, after the business was concluded, we were treated to a very fine Lecture by Brother Peter Foster Senior, a Past Master of Robertson's Lodge No. 134 and District Grand Prior, for the Knights Templars. His theme was - **The Caledonian Canal**.

"How many of us have crossed the bridges over the Caledonian Canal, some even on a daily basis, without giving a thought about how it came to be?

Some structures are so much a part of the landscape and our experience that we tend to take them for granted as if they have been there for ever. And so it is with the canal. We see it and yet we don't see it! It has become such an integral part of the Inverness area. Research into its beginnings has been a fascinating and educational journey.

Let's travel back in time to the early 1800's, after the Battle of Culloden when the new style landowners (supporters of the Crown) were encouraged to replace the population of subsistence crofters with sheep. The Government became alarmed at the loss of manpower through emigration, especially since the Napoleonic wars were in need of recruits for the services.

Criticised by many on grounds of cost, the canal project was defended because of the great change it had achieved not only in the attitude of Highlanders to work but in the skills, they had acquired and the capital they had accumulated which enabled some of them to take up handicrafts and others to buy fishing boats. The opening in 1822 proved the critics wrong".

The Master thanked Peter for his talk, which lasted some 15 minutes and was followed by some crack which lasted a further 10 minutes. Bro Mike Turner mentioned that Thomas Telford was a Master Mason.

Due to the untimely death of Mrs Mary Gunn, wife of the Master, Brother Donald Gunn, the September meeting was cancelled as a mark of respect to a woman who had done so much for the Lodge over a long period of time. Mary carried out a myriad of tasks in the background for the Lodge and its members and she will be sorely missed. Our deepest condolences are extended to Brother Gunn and his family.

The October meeting saw us once again back in the Lodge, the first time since the 16th March 2020 and as the Master proclaimed – "what a feeling". Though the meeting was primarily a Business Meeting, to allow us to catch up, we also had the pleasure to affiliate Brother David Kinloch to Lodge Fingal. What an honour this is for Fingal. A man of his stature, in Freemasonry. The meeting was closed in due and ancient form.

Future events /

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Future events in the Lodge –

Tuesday 9th November - our annual AGM and nomination of Office Bearers.

Tuesday 14th December - an EA Degree for Mr David John Noble.

Tuesday 28th December - the Re-Installation of Bro Donald Gunn PM and Office Bearers at 6:30pm.
There will be a small harmony, in the Logie Lounge to follow.

Tuesday 11th January 2022 - Still to be decided.

As we approach the Festive Season, on behalf of the Brethren of the Lodge, may we wish all Brethren, Wives, Partners and Families a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year ahead as we go through these strange times. Take care and stay safe.

That's all Folks, watch this Space.

D. Gunn RWM

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 2006

What a tremendous effort by the Brethren of the Lodge – the final total handed over by RWM Brother David MacMaster to the Hospice was £22,574. It is disappointing to note however that despite the fact that the story and pictures were sent to all the local papers, not one of them saw fit to run the story.



However, despite the fact that we got little or no publicity from the exercise, we can take great pleasure from the fact that the money will be used wisely for the palliative care of those in greatest need. Well done to all Brethren throughout the Highlands who participated in the event – either on the day or before or after the event.

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LODGE ALLAN WILSON 851

With Covid 19 restrictions now being gradually lifted it is pleasing to see Lodges starting to open up and it is hoped if this continues, we will be able to have our normal meeting on the second Tuesday in June next year. I had the pleasure of attending the first Grand Lodge Communication since Lockdown last year, on Thursday 28th October, along with approximately 250 other brethren.

Before then, however, it is hoped that we will be able to celebrate, along with Lodge Seaforth No. 854, the 125th Anniversary of the chartering of both our Lodges. It has been suggested that Tuesday 3rd May 2022 would be appropriate for this celebration. I have had discussion with the Bro. Raymond MacKeddie, Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master and Secretary of Lodge Seaforth, regarding the matter. Enquiries are on-going about the production of a commemorative token/joint token and also other matters in relation to the proposed event. We will keep you posted and once arrangements are at a later stage call a ‘Zoom’ meeting.

Other than that Past Master Ramsay McGhee and Bro. Alex Craib, both members of the Lodge, have been involved, along with other brethren, including the Provincial Grand Master, Bro MacKeddie, in the provision and delivery of foodstuffs etc throughout the Black Isle Area and beyond.

David MacMaster - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 1999

The Master Can't Work Alone

An old fellow got the use of a piece of ground next to his house. He removed all the stones, weeds, and other rubbish and in due time planted seed. He made it an enviable garden.

One day the new Minister was passing by. He stopped and remarked - “You and the Lord have done a remarkable job with this old eyesore.” The old chap replied - “Yes Sir, but you should have seen it when the Lord was looking after it by himself”

The Master working alone cannot make Freemasonry flourish without the help of his Office-bearers and Brethren.

So, Brethren, during the forthcoming Installation season let us all strive to support our respective Masters in all their endeavour, thereby ensuring that our Lodges will continue to prosper and grow.

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LODGE SEAFORTH 854

Having spent the last eighteen months limited to meeting virtually by Zoom Meetings, the Brethren were delighted when the Lockdown Restrictions were eased in early August, and they could return to meeting face to face at physical meetings.

The first meeting back, on the third Monday of September, was a business meeting restricted to lodge brethren only, with a bit of housework required to catch up with many issues outstanding since the lodge went into abeyance.

The October meeting was opened to visiting brethren, and the lodge worked a Fellow-craft Degree for Brother Lewis Fraser, a real Lewis, being the son of the Senior Deacon, Brother James Fraser.

The next regular meeting, on the third Monday of November, shall be the AGM and Nomination of Office-bearers, followed by a Master Mason Degree.

The Lodge shall be marking its 125-year anniversary on 8th May 2022, and during discussions regarding planning for celebrations to mark the milestone anniversary, it was noted that it was almost twenty-five years since the Lodge Members assembled together for a group photograph, the last photograph being taken at the Centenary Celebrations in June 1997 -



Lodge Seaforth and Provincial Grand Lodge Members at Centenary Celebrations June 1997

The Lodge Members met at the end of August to pose for an up-to-date group photograph of the present-day lodge members, including the Grand Master Mason and Provincial Grand Master, who are both Lodge Seaforth members.

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Lodge Seaforth 2021

Back Row: Kevin Lumsden, Gareth Phillips and Donald Riggs

Middle Row: Donald Ferguson, Gwyn Phillips, Stan Campbell, Thomas L Thomas, Alistair Hossack, Billy Hossack, Kenny Hossack, Iain McGhee, David Munro, Fred Fraser, James Fraser.

Front Row: Tom Richards, Iain Sutherland, Hamish Keir, Ramsay McGhee, GMM, Graham Law, RWM, Raymond MacKeddie, PGM, David Roska, Donald Sutherland, Ronald Bruce.

The lodge Brethren were saddened to hear of the passing of one of the Lodge stalwarts, Bro. David Smith, PM on Monday 25th October. David was an excellent attender of the Lodge, and he could always be relied on to resolve issues relating to the Lodge Seaforth working of the ritual, due to his vast knowledge of the Craft and his willingness to assist the younger Brethren in any Lodge matters. David's career in freemasonry almost spanned sixty years, having joined Lodge Seaforth in December 1961. David will be sorely missed by the Lodge members, and our condolences go out to his family at this sad time.

Raymond MacKeddie PM - Secretary

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LOGDE AVERON No 866

Brethren

We held our first meeting on Thursday 14th Oct. It was sublime to be back and working and we have loads of plans in the making. We still have no visitors yet, but that will come in time, and we look forward to that.

Lodge Averon held its annual golf charity scramble on Sunday 29th October at Alness golf club in aid Mikeysline. A local mental health charity based in the Highlands. The total raised was a staggering £3165.00.

This was a superb effort by the whole team at Lodge Averon with special thanks and recognition to the two junior office bearers who organized this year's event. Bro Frazer McBeath Jnr and Bro Gary Miller. Thanks, were also given to the staff of the Club house and Alness Golf Club committee to all who attended to what was a fantastic day of golfing.

Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty Raymond MacKeddie and Mrs. Emily Stoke general manager of Mikeysline helped present the prizes to the winners. Emily was delighted and thanked all for such a fantastic amount raised. Provincial Grand Master Raymond MacKeddie highlighted the importance of the work being carried out by Mikeysline and pledged his support in the coming future.

Lodge Averon would also like to thank all the local business and individuals that sponsored and donated to the event. A list of sponsors is shown below.



Top Left – the Master, Brother Donnie Mathieson and PGM, Brother Raymond MacKeddie presenting cheque to Emily Stoke of Mikeysline.

Top Right – the participating golfers

Bottom Right – the winning team with Emily Stoke



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We also hosted a visit from the widow sons. It was great to see the lads as they did a small tour up the east coast. A few cups of tea, sausage rolls and the odd biscuit or two followed by some photos and they were off on their tour again. Was great to see the lads.



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

Donald Mathieson - Master, Lodge Averon.

GOLF SPONSORS

We would like to say a big thanks to the main sponsors of the event.

Home Hardwear who were the main sponsors.

Henry Cameron	Ardross Distillery	Lodge Fingal No 318
Global Energy Group	Firwood Cleaning Services	Highland Leisure Sport
Fraser Brothers Building Supplies	Lodge Seaforth 854	Home Hardware Alness
Royal Dornoch Golf Club	Invergordon Golf Club	Kingussie Golf Club
Hole Sponsors	Prism Lighting.	RWJ Haulage.
Lodge Robert Burns Initiated No 1781 Jim Reeves.		McDougall Plant Ltd.
Fyriish Bearings & Agricultural Supplies.	Old Inverness Kilwinning St. John's VI Alex Craib.	
Lodge St. John Fisherrow No 112 Tom Edgar.		
Lodge St Martin No 1217 Andy Ferrier.	Lodge Averon No 866 Alistair Ross.	
Lodge John O'Groat No 1333 Denny Morrison.		
And of course, all of you who donated towards the raffle to make it an outstanding one.		

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 2007

During our recess, on Saturday 18th August, a deputation from Lodge Stormont, Sccone, headed by Right Worshipful Master Ian Fairley paid Lodge Averon a reciprocal visit and worked a Mark Master Mason degree, which they carried out with their usual perfection. The candidates were Bro. Lee Gripton from Lodge Averon and Bro. Lee Cunningham from Lodge Stormont.

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LODGE NESS No 888

Bro Owen Wilson

Lodge Secretary

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LODGE KYLE No 1117

It was with happiness we returned to our Lodge in Kyle in October. The garden had been maintained by the brethren for 18 months and improved in some areas as had the fabric of the building and the interior. In fact, it was as if we had never been away! However, we have been away and as The Secretary read the minute from March 2020 it became all to obvious things have not been normal. We sat in our usual stations with a few changes. Secretary and Treasurer are now on opposite sides of the Master, social distancing is observed by non-office bearers and the Deacon duties and book, board, lights carried out ostensibly by one Brother (two at one point). Masks were always worn correctly covering the nose and mouth, even when speaking, and gels, sprays, spare masks, white gloves were available for anyone who needed them. The Secretary wrote the names of the brethren into the Attendance Book. Covid rules obeyed, so it does not rule us.

This gloom however was mitigated by the announcement that we have a potential Candidate as well as three Brethren wishing to Affiliate. All good news!

We are now trying to work out the details for our forthcoming Installation and the timing of Affiliations / Initiation. It was also noted at this juncture that 18 months away from our Lodge necessitates a wee book, close to hand and open at the correct page, even for the brethren best at Ritual. One final observation on the Covid recess. the ties on my Apron had shrunk considerably since its last wearing.

During the prolonged recess we have kept in touch by email, and to make sure this channel of communication is efficient we have some measures in place to ensure delivery and response.

1. Each email address to be checked by the Secretary once a year (minimum). A simple email that Brethren MUST respond to.
2. Email should be checked daily if possible and responded to immediately or as soon as is practicably possible.
3. A policy should be in place that should Brethren not have received email for a specified length of time (a month), whereby he contacts the Secretary to check if either his or the Secretary's email is not working.
4. Special care should be taken with GMAIL (Google) and HOTMAIL (and Microsoft email) email addresses as they are especially prone to non-delivery due to stringent spam policies. If secretaries are experiencing "bounces" or "rejected" email, then they should ask their email supplier to add an "SPF RECORD" to their email account (it is a TXT record in the DNS for the domain name for those techie people). This special record helps validate who you are and that your email is genuine. You can also ask any "difficult" email address owners to ADD the secretary's email address to their SAFE SENDERS LIST. This helps prevent email going straight to the JUNK or SPAM folders.
5. Instruction given to Brethren on what "REPLY TO ALL" is, and when to use it.

While there are alternatives /

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Lodge Kyle (cont.)

While there are alternatives to email which are more immediate or dependable, they are exclusive, and the use of multiple channels leads to chaos when Brethren have to be contacted using a plethora of differing apps. The one exception is a brother who has no smart phone or computer. He can be texted or phoned.

On a different note... At the Secretaries' Zoom Meeting it was noted that some brethren have problems with the Member Database e.g., Removing a deceased Brother, where he is still listed as an active member and seemingly not removed, despite following the procedure of selection > action > save. Often anomalies like this can be caused by using the Browser's BACK BUTTON. This button should NEVER be used when working with data or databases! Use the CANCEL or SAVE buttons instead. You should always move FORWARD, letting the application do its work, and move on to your next task.

Also useful ... If you do have to REFRESH a page, the shortcut is the F5 key at the top of the keyboard or simply click or tap the circle arrow on the browser icon. In special instances you may wish to FORCE a REFRESH, which is achieved by using the CTRL key + F5 or CTRL KEY + the refresh button on the browser. The procedure is: to hold down the CTRL key and while doing so, tap the F5 key once.

Ronnie Miller, PM
Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER - 2015

The retirement of two stalwarts of the Lodge becomes a time for reflection, especially if the brethren in question are in key offices and have been for some time. In our case The Secretary Donnie Gordon and The Treasurer John MacDougall have been in their offices so long, we just assume they have performed their duties flawlessly for the first portion of their 37 years and 32 years' service respectively, because none of the rest of us were there to witness the first time they were initiated into the two most responsible jobs in The Lodge. We simply know that from what we have seen of their work, it is exemplary.

However much we depend on these brethren, the change their retirement brings highlights the need to have replacements "eager to take part in the work" of running the Lodge... which in turn means we need to have a pool of reliable brethren from which to choose suitable new office bearers, as well as allowing the newer, younger brethren the chance to go through the various offices and ultimately The Chair of the Lodge before moving on to Treasurer and Secretary.

It should be said at this point, that to a man, we all appreciate Brothers Donnie and John's outstanding service, thank them both for their years in office and wish them a long and happy retirement in the body of the Lodge. Both Bros. John and Donnie have offered any and all assistance to the incumbents who no doubt they will accept their generous offer.

The new Treasurer will be PM Micky Moore who will be stepping down this year as Lodge Kyle's RWM. The new Secretary for Lodge Kyle will be PM Ronnie Miller.

Both are keen to serve but are the first to admit that it will be a very, very long time before they can fill the boots of such distinguished predecessors.

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

It was with great disappointment that following an online discussion amongst our active Brethren we made the decision to cancel all meetings for the rest of 2021. A number of Brethren had raised concerns about returning to the lodge with some indicating that their personal circumstances would not allow them to attend. This also included our Centenary meeting scheduled for 27th November. Our secretary Allan had the unenviable task of informing our GMM Ramsay and Grand Secretary of the decision that to hold the Centenary Celebration with very few Brethren in attendance would have been a complete anti-climax. Lodge Rosehaugh wish to offer apologies to all concerned.

Keith Patience, PM

Secretary

Brethren, there is absolutely no need for an apology – throughout the pandemic Grand Lodge has stressed that the health and well-being of members is paramount.

Ed

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 2002

November's meeting was our AGM and Nominations of office-bearers. Once again Bro Maclarens commenced the meeting with an obituary this time for Bro Ian Maywood. The Rev Bro Ian Ramsden was our guest and he provided us with an excellent lecture on the holy temple. We were also privileged to have the visiting party from the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago in our midst and a plaque to the Lodge was presented to RWM Bro Ian Maclarens from The Right Worshipful District Grand Master Bro Dr Wilbert Winchester.

Our December meeting on the 6th will be the Installation evening with Donald MacLennan being installed by Bro Robert Jack PM whilst Bro Sandy Rose PM will be installing the other office-bearers. This will be the final meeting of RWM Ian Maclarens reign as Master and the Brethren wish to congratulate Ian in his efforts. Ian will never forget his Installation with the vast crowd of Brethren assembled: he also has been fortunate to have Delegations from Nigeria and Trinidad & Tobago visiting the Lodge during his term of office. Ian has also excelled in his visiting duties and there will be rarely a Lodge in the North and beyond where his face is not recognised.

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Lodge St Martin 1217

St. Martin, No1217 celebrated its 100th anniversary on 6th May 2020; but due to the Covid-19 pandemic the planned celebrations were cancelled or postponed. However, on Saturday 23rd October 2021 with limited numbers due to the pandemic restrictions 16 members attended the Re-dedication Ceremony. The ceremony was carried out by The Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason of Scotland, Bro William Ramsay McGhee and his Deputation. Also in attendance was The Provincial Grand Master of Ross & Cromarty, Bro Raymond Mackeddie and his Deputation. Tea, coffee and sandwiches were served after the ceremony, and it is hoped to hold a larger social function when restrictions allow. The photographs show the visiting deputations with the RWM, Bro. Phil Ellis and the Office-bearers and members of St. Martin.

Regular meetings are still not taking place until we get the new window and fire exit installed to allow for good ventilation. Hopefully it won't take too long and perhaps the spread of the virus will have slowed considerably by then keeping everyone safe.

At this time, we would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a very Happy 2022.

All the best and keep safe

*Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary*



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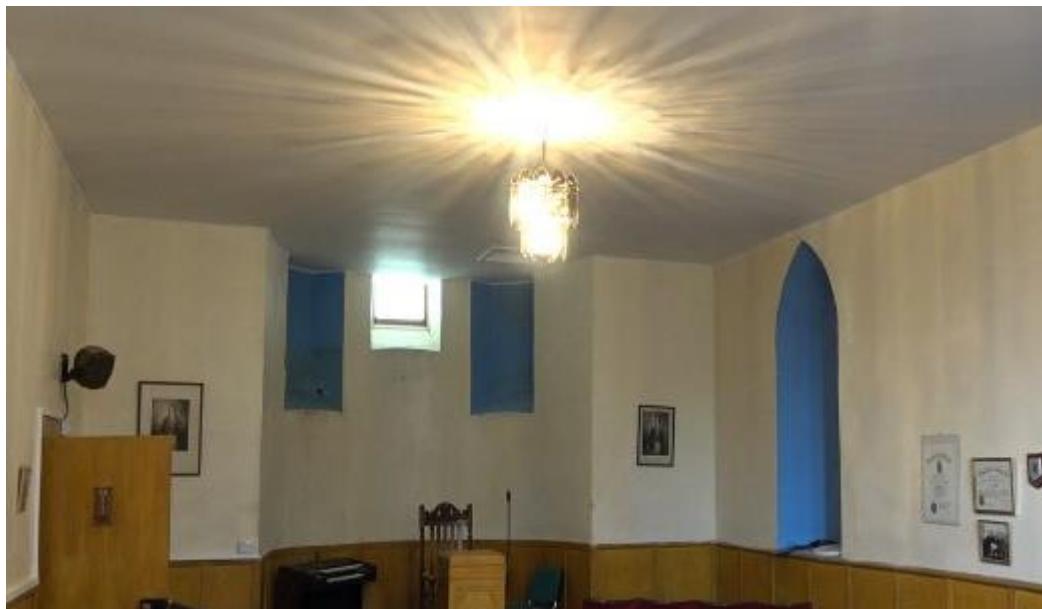
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Lodge Loch Ewe 1551

The new ceiling in the Lodge is now fully finished. It will certainly make a huge difference in terms of retaining the heat. However, its benefits will not be felt by us this winter as we will now be unable to meet until March next year at the earliest. Apart from our shortage of Members, there is no provision within the building at present for the required ventilation and if such requirements persist, we will need to address this. On the upside, we are carrying on with the repair and restoration work being carried out in the ante room and also plan to re-decorate the Lodge itself. Our RWM Ally Gault has also planted two trees outside the Lodge, a rowan and a holly. Hopefully they will survive the rigours of a West Coast winter. Meanwhile, those of us who are able to will continue visiting other Lodges in the Province throughout the coming months.

Michael Longley, Past Master – Lodge Loch Ewe



The new ceiling in Lodge Loch Ewe

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - NOVEMBER 2005

Lodge Loch Ewe had recently been presented with a superb picture of Depute Master Robert Burns. This has now been hung in a prominent place in the West.

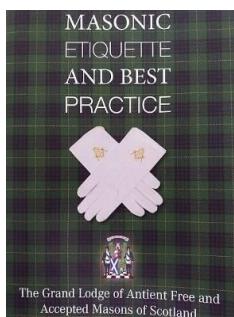
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BITS AND PIECES



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 had its Installation Meeting on 12th October when MEC's John MacKenzie and John I MacKay from Inverness-shire Province kindly conducted the ceremony of installing MEC David MacRae and his Office-bearers. It was good to be back in the Chapter and all present thoroughly enjoyed the excellent work of the Installing Team. Our next Regular Meeting will be on Tuesday 9th November.

St Clement RAC 244

Cromarty Firth RAC 310

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ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER HEBRIDES NO. 364.

Hebrides RA Chapter has now met twice since lockdown and at the September meeting MEC Donald Macdonald was elected as 1st Principal and was installed along with his office bearers at our October meeting. The attached picture which was taken after removing our masks shows Donald along with 2nd Principal Lesley Morgan and 3rd Principal James Smith PZ. Alan McPhee is also in the picture as immediate past 1st Principal and myself, as installing 1st Principal.

Best wishes to Donald and his team for a successful term in office.



PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES

The Preceptory held its first meeting since February 2020 on Friday 29th October, this meeting was the AGM and election of officers at which Alan McPhee was elected as Venerable Preceptor. The installation of the Venerable Preceptor and his officers will take place on the last Friday of November unless the District Grand Prior decides to visit in which case it will most likely be on the Saturday following.

Donnie Macleod

† Donald Macleod KCT

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