

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 116

AUGUST 2023

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ROLL CALL, 1899.



Old Highland Air.

- No. 82. Auld Granny St. Duthus, she's four score an' twa,
An' in virtue o' that taks precedence o' a';
Her sons they hae built her, a bein braw new hoose,
An' in her auld age, she is canty an' cruse.
- No. 108. In the Island of Lews, passing strange to relate,
Lodge Fortrose is found, where she sits in great state;
Lord Brougham ca'd her mither, a lawyer o' fame;
In a' pairs o' the globe her sons cherish her name.
- No. 134. In Cromarty, famous for Souters an' fish,
Lodge Robertson thrives, as I'm sure we a' wish;
Her Majesty's Navy there sometimes does ca',
An' the brethren are sad, when the ships sail awa.
- No. 318. In auld Bailechaul, Lodge Fingal we find,
In workin' The Craft, she's no way behind;
Her watchword is progress, aye true to the Square;
She's aye done her best, an' wha can dae mair.
- No. 854. In the City o' Fortrose, Lodge Seaforth is set;
That she'll prove a guid Dochter, ye safely may bet;
The Sun at Meredian, she marks in the South;
An' o' sons she has mony, tho' still in her youth.
- No. 866. Lodge Averon, oor Oe, ye gie promise o' worth,
An' muckle rejoicin' there wis at yer birth;
The Gran' Lodge Provincial, ye treated richt weel;
We hae cause to be prood o' yer sons a' sae leal.
- No. 888. Invergordon a Charter has got for Lodge Ness,
An' we're met a' th' gither tae speed her an' bless;
Richt soon in ilk Paroch a Lodge may we see,
An' men be a' brithers in Free Masonry.

MALLET.

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Editorial

Welcome to the 116th edition of the “Provincial Patter”

It was a great privilege to represent Scottish Freemasonry at the National Service of Thanksgiving and Dedication in St Giles on the occasion of the Presentation of the Royal Honours of Scotland.

The Service was a splendid affair organised and orchestrated by the First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, M E Companion Joe Morrow in his capacity as Lord Lyon King of Arms.

It was good to see many Freemasons present at the Ceremony representing a wide range of organisations, societies, charities, and associations. It brought it home to me just how much active Freemasons do in other walks of life.

And so it is in this Province. So many of our Brethren from the twelve Lodges in the Province are actively involved in a diverse range of organisations and charitable bodies out with Freemasonry but they proudly carry the principles and tenets of Freemasonry wherever they go or whatever they are involved in. By their actions, they promote Freemasonry in a very positive and constructive way.

Let us all learn from their actions – by so doing, we can easily encourage other like-minded men to join us in the worldwide fellowship of Scottish Freemasonry.

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



Since the May edition, in terms of visitations, I have had the pleasure of heading Deputations to Lodge St Thomas 306 in Larkhall, Lodge Fortrose 108, The Caledonian Lodge in London, Lodge Elgin & Bruce, the Grand Ball in the Province of Lanarkshire Middle Ward, the District Grand Lodge of Lebanon, the Young Masons Group in Peterhead, the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy, the Coronation Service in St Giles, the PGL of Kilwinning, the Midlothian Masters Dinner and Lodge St Andrew in Pitlochry.

Between now and the November issue, I'll be in Lodge St John 540 in Crossgates, Lodge King Robert de Bruce 304 in Cupar, the DGL of Sierra Leone, the DGL of Nigeria, the Ayrshire 250th Lodges Joint Meeting in Tarbolton, Lodge Journeyman Masons No 8 in Edinburgh, Trades House Lodge in Glasgow, Lodge St Patrick 1309, the PGL of Argyll and the Isles, the new Superintendency of Panama, Lodge Ythan in Ellon, the Young Masons Group in Perth, Lodge Roineach Mhor in Dundee, Lodge Tobermory St Mary's, Lodge Woodhall St John 305, Lodge St Andrew in Golspie and the European Grand Masters Conference in Dublin.

The Grand Lodge Communication on 26th October will be an important meeting at which the new Governance and Strategy Committee will make their first report to Grand Lodge.

I look forward to seeing many from the Province in Edinburgh in October.

Ed

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

I do hope all our brethren are enjoying a summer break with most of the lodges in the Province in recess.

Since my last report, at the end of May, we have held our AGM and Installation of Office-bearers Meeting, and it was pleasing to see the elective Office-bearers moving up in position and welcoming several new faces to the Provincial Grand Lodge. Congratulations to Brothers Donnie Mathieson, Steve Whittaker, David Roska and Donald MacDonald for taking up PGL Office for the first time. I very much look forward to working with all the team in the upcoming season.

In June we held our Lodge of Sorrow, which was again conducted in an exemplary manner by the Rev. Iain Ramsden, who brings such compassion and comfort to the ceremony, as we remember all of those who passed to the Grand Lodge Above in the past year. This year saw another well-attended event, which was also open to friends and families to attend.

Poppyscotland Cycle Event

In May we completed the North Coast 500 Cycle, an event that brought the four North Provincial Grand Lodges together, to complete a sponsored cycle around the North of Scotland on the on the legendary NC500 route to raise funds for Poppy Scotland.



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Many budding cyclists from the four Provinces took part, waved off from the Masonic Temple in Inverness in early May by the Grand Master Mason, Bro Ramsay McGhee, and some other well-known eminent Brethren. Each Provincial Grand Lodge supported the sections of the cycle that passed through their respective areas.

I was delighted to join some of the other representatives from the four Provinces in handing over a cheque to Robin Phillips from Poppyscotland for £4,544.



A subsequently submitted contribution from one of the Sutherland Lodges has increased that total to £4,849.

Well done to all that took part, assisted with logistics, and particular thanks to all those who supported with donations.

It was also gratifying to see the four Provinces working closely together and supporting each other for such a good cause.

Charity Donations

In June I had the pleasure to hand over cheques for £500 each to Mikeysline and the St Clements School, Dingwall. These funds were raised as proceeds from the Rangers Hospitality Raffle that was held earlier in the year.

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Prostate Champion

We are still looking for a volunteer to take on the role as a Prostate Champion for the East side of the Province. Due to our large geographical size, it is thought that we need two people to cover the role, one to cover the West and the other to cover the East. We currently have a volunteer in the West area.

The purpose of the Prostate Champions is to raise awareness of prostate disease in its various forms which is very prevalent in males over the age of fifty years and affects many of our Brethren. The raising of awareness will be achieved by the Prostate Champions speaking to Brethren, Lodges, Provincial Grand Lodges and distributing information literature. The Prostate Champions will be trained by Prostate Scotland via Zoom and will be provided with notes, lectures and probably PowerPoint presentations to assist them. Initially this outreach will be to the Brethren of the Craft but as things develop it is hoped that the Prostate Champions of the Scottish Craft will reach out to others within their communities to advance awareness and save lives as part of our community outreach.

Please also remember that prostate disease will affect, in the over fifty age group, one in two men may be affected by prostate disease and one in ten may develop prostate cancer. Early checking, diagnosis and treatment are key to improving the rates of cure.

If any Brother is interested in taking up this role, please get in touch with me or PG Secretary.

Dates For Your Diaries -

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The remaining Provincial Grand Lodge visits to lodges will be,
Tuesday 8th August 2023 - Lodge Allan Wilson No. 851

The next Provincial Grand Lodge Communication shall be on Wednesday 30th August 2023 at Lodge Fingal, Dingwall at 7:30pm. A good attendance of Provincial Grand Lodge Office-bearers and Daughter Lodge master's and Wardens will be appreciated. The meeting is also open to all Brethren in good standing.

The Provincial Grand Lodge Divine Service is to be held on Sunday 17th September 2023 at Lodge Seaforth, Fortrose at 3:00pm. Again, a good attendance of Provincial Grand Lodge Office-bearers and Daughter Lodge Masters' and Wardens will be appreciated. The Divine Service is also open to all Brethren, Spouses and Partners.

A Provincial Grand Lodge Ladies Night is to be held on Friday 10th November 2023 at the Ben Wyvis Hotel, Strathpeffer. Details will be sent out to all lodges in the Province shortly.

As the new season is about to restart, I very much look forward to getting out to visit the lodges and catching up with you all.

Fraternal Regards

Raymond Mackeddie

Provincial Grand Master

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 1998

At the end of July, Brother Ray Beikirch from Bavaria was on holiday in Gairloch with his wife and family. Through the medium of the Grand Lodge Yearbook, he contacted the Depute Provincial Grand Master, Brother Ian Fraser, who made arrangements to meet with him.

They met in Ullapool where the IPM of Lodge St Martin, Brother George Napier took the party on a much-appreciated conducted tour of the Lodge.

The following week, Brother Beikirch and his family travelled down to Fortrose where they were wined and dined by the Depute Provincial Grand Master and enjoyed a night of Masonic conversation discussing the similarities and differences between Masonry in Bavaria and Scotland.

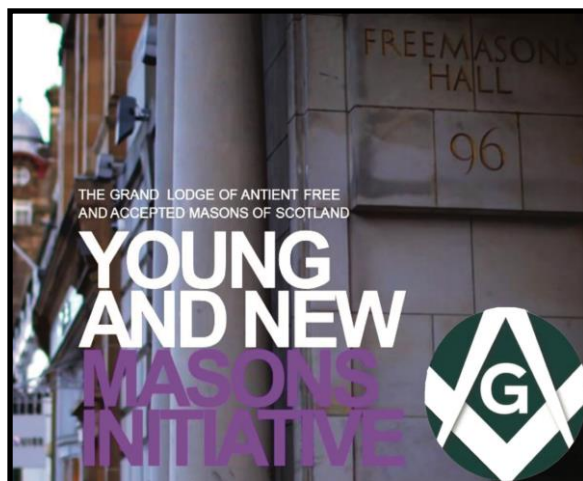
Young Masons Group

In a similar manner to the lodges, the Young Masons Group has suspended their Zoom Meetings for a summer recess.

As we get ready to return to Masonic activity, we reach an important time for the group as we develop the group into a more formal entity, physically meeting and working to the Grand Lodge of Scotland guidelines.

The Grand Lodge guidelines will assist the group with structure development, provide educational information and cross fertilisation of ideas between individual groups.

It is hoped that the initiative will provide a platform for Brethren of similar ages and/or Masonic experience, to meet and socialise out with the confines of the Lodge.



As the new season commences, a meeting shall be arranged for all new and young masons to attend and have their say on how they would like to see the group being implemented, management and frequency of meetings and how they should function. It is anticipated that the group will be managed and developed in the future by its own membership.

It is intended that the management and administration functions of this group are to be implemented by a committee created from members from within the group.

It is therefore important that as many young and new masons are encouraged to attend the inaugural meetings so everybody gets a say on how the initiative will function in our Province.

We would call on all lodge master's and Secretaries to ensure that the young and new masons in their respective lodges are encouraged to attend any meetings of the group.

The criteria for membership of the group are any member of the Craft under 45 years of age or having been a member of the Craft for no longer than seven years.

Due to the large geographical spread of our Province, and that we have many members who work away from home, it is anticipated that Zoom meetings will remain as part of the structure of the Young Masons Group.

Raymond MacKeddie, PGM

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From the Provincial Almoner

The following have sadly passed away to the Grand Lodge above.

On Tuesday 23rd May 2023, Brother William Waugh PM of St Duthus Lodge No. 82, passed away in Raigmore Hospital. He was a cousin of Brother Ally Waugh PM of the same Lodge.

On Sunday 9th July 2023, Brother Rev Bill Niven PM of St Kilda No. 881, passed away in Invergordon County Community Hospital. Brother Bill has been in poor health for some time.

On Saturday 22nd July 2023, Brother Gavin Mackenzie MM of Lodge Kyle No. 1117, passed away suddenly.

I also report on the following:

On Wednesday 28th June 2023, Mrs Linda Craib, the beloved wife of Brother Alex Craib, PM of Lodge Old Inverness Kilwinning St John's No. 6 and Senior Warden of Lodge Fingal No. 318, passed away at home.

Mrs Rosemary Sutherland, wife of Robert Sutherland PM of Lodge Averon No. 866, broke her hip and was admitted to Raigmore Hospital Inverness. Now out of hospital and making progress.

Brother Finlay Mackenzie PM of Lodge Averon No. 866, had a stroke mid-June. He is now back home and making slow progress.

Brother Donald Graham PM of Lodge Fortrose No. 108 is still awaiting further tests which are to take place in a week's time.

Brother Ross Campbell MM of St Duthus Lodge No. 82 is in Invergordon Hospital awaiting a care package.

Brother Duncan Munro PM of Lodge Averon No. 866 is not making much progress.

I will close by asking, once again, should any Brother enquire my assistance please get in touch with me. I would also ask that Lodge Almoners please keep me updated on any Brother with health issues.

Fred T Fraser PM Prov. Grand Almoner fraserft@yahoo.com 01463 870307

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



Brethren welcome to another report from Lodge St Duthus No 82. Where did July go to? It seems like only yesterday since I wrote the last report for the Patter.

Lodge St Duthus has, like most other Lodges, been in recess over the summer months however, some of the brethren have been working hard to maintain the fabric of the building, namely Bro D Johnstone WSW and PM J Mackenzie and the brethren of the Lodge are grateful for all their work.

Since our last contribution to the Patter Lodge St Duthus No 82 has had the privilege of welcoming PM Chris Jones a Past Master in the Province of Lincolnshire who embarked on a walk on New Year's Day in Skegness, determined to circumnavigate the country to raise awareness of mental health issues. During the visit Chris also met up with brethren from the Widows Sons who joined us in St Duthus for a cup of tea. For those of you that would like to follow Chris's adventures he writes a blog which can be found on www.walktheedgecmf.com These blogs make interesting and humorous reading. Also, see photo on next page.

Lodge St Duthus will also be part of the St Duthac Book & Arts Festival this year with 3 events being held in the building. On September 12th Catherine Jones will hold a workshop teaching the basic techniques of wet felting. Then on September 15th Lorraine Wilson a conservation scientist and award-winning author, will introduce her new book Mother Sea and will discuss the power of folklore in framing society's fears. This will be followed in the afternoon of the same day by T.L. Huchu, a multi award winning author of both literary and fantasy novels, discussing the role of cityscapes in fantasy fiction.

The brethren of Lodge St Duthus and Companions of Tain & Ross Royal Arch Chapter will also be attending Morangie Highland games on the 12th of August where we will have a stall to raise funds for Provincial Grand Superintendent Morris Downie's appeal to mark the 100th Anniversary of Provincial Royal Arch Freemasonry in Ross & Cromarty which will be celebrated on the 14th of October. We hope to be able to raise funds there that will be donated to local worthy causes, and we hope we might see a few well kent faces as well.

Bro Dave Macrae PM

Secy.

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The Widows Sons with PM Chris Jones a Past Master in the Province of Lincolnshire

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2005

In the billet sent out by Lodge Secretary, Bro Keith Kauffman, he includes definitions of various Masonic terms as found in the Grand Lodge of NSW. They will no doubt be of interest to our own Brethren and may hopefully stimulate some discussion.

GAVEL: Derives its name from its shape-that of the gable or gavel end of a house. It is a tool used by a stonemason and resembles a hammer having a pointed end for cutting.

JEWELS, MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE: The Movable jewels are the Rough and Perfect Ashlars and the Trestle Board and are so called because they are not confined to any particular part of the lodge whereas the Immovable jewels: the Square, Level, and Plumb, have definite locations. They are called "jewels" not because of their materials, but because of their meaning. The word "jewel" comes from the Greek meaning "bright or shining."

TRESTLE BOARD: The carpet or board upon which the Master inscribes the designs for guidance of the Craft. In the present day it refers to the meeting notice sent to the membership.

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Lodge Fortrose No 108

On 5 May the Lodge hosted a deputation from Lodge Doric Kilwinning 68, Cumberland Kilwinning 217, Firth of Clyde 626, Sir Michael 989, Crawfurdsburn 1121. Over 60 visitors were in attendance and an exemplification FC Degree was undertaken. The visitors stayed in Stornoway over the weekend and as you might expect a very good time was had by all.

Past Master Tom Paton represented Fortrose Lodge when he accompanied PGM Bro Raymond MacKeddie on the Ross and Cromarty leg of the NC500 charity cycle ride.

On 19 May the Lodge received its annual visitation from PGL. At the same meeting a deputation from Grand Lodge of Scotland led by MW GMM Bro Ramsay McGhee were in attendance to rededicate the Lodge building which was 200 years old. IPM Bro Henry W Macinnes gave a lecture on the history of the building including its role in the life of Stornoway. The meeting was followed by a celebratory meal.



Fortrose Lodge brethren at 200th anniversary of the Lodge building

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PM Donald MacLeod receiving his Jubilee Certificate

On 2 June a MMM Degree was undertaken and Bro's Ruaraidh MacLellan and Kenny Murray were advanced to the Degree of MMM. Bro James Macleod, who had recently been raised to the H&S Degree of MM, stood in as JD with great distinction.

At the Regular Meeting on 7 July PM Bro Archie Macdonald delivered lectures on The Masonic Dice and The Level and the Square. An Emergency Meeting was held on 21 July 2023 and Bro Scott Maciver was raised to the H&S Degree of MM.

Since fitting the new double-glazed windows around the building, we have noticed an immediate improvement in the heating, I hope this results in a decrease in our heating bills.

Donnie Macleod
Donald Macleod PM



Robertson's Lodge No 134

Sincere and Fraternal Greetings Brethren,

Robertson's Lodge members held their final meeting of the season 2022 to 2023 in April past. Since then, the Lodge has been on Summer Break. However, Members have been visiting other Lodges in the meantime.

The RWM, Brother Derek M. Rodway, his office bearers and the members are looking forward to the start of the new Season, 2023 to 2024 on 20th September 2023 where it will be again back in Duke Street, Cromarty.

While the first meeting will be a business Meeting, this coming season will be a busy one. The Lodge is having their 250th Anniversary on Saturday 27th April 2024, which mean that a lot of planning and work will have to be done. Past Master Andrew MacIvor is already calling for and reminding of the need for Committee Meetings to continue. The basics are done, Grand Lodge and the Premises are arranged and booked, but there is still much to do, and time moves on.

In the meantime, the Lodge Premises have to be prepared and arranged. Also, a General Committee Meeting will be called for to discuss what we need to do next.

Please stay safe and well Brethren.

Peter K. Ratcliffe.
Lodge Secretary.

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Lodge Fingal No 318

Saturday 8th August was the annual Gala Day in the Cromartie Car Park, Dingwall. Lodge Fingal acquired two stalls. There was a brief history of Freemasonry involving Lodge Fingal which also included the amounts of money raised over the years and given to various Charities far and wide, thereby helping the communities at large. We also had some masonic trinkets for sale.

Regarding the fund-raising, we had a Tombola, with 30 tickets per round, the lucky winner received a bottle of whisky, or some alcoholic beverage. There was a bottle of malt whisky in a lockable case, with a bag of keys. If you picked the lucky key, it opened the door up the door and the lucky key-holder got the bottle. On the adjoining table, we had a suite of hearts large playing-cards, with a bottle on each. This involved picking a card from a deck, and, if you were lucky and picked the matching card, the bottle was yours. However, the star of the show was undoubtedly our “Human Fruit Machine”. Everyone piled in to try it and there was no doubt that the Bairns voted it No 1.



The money raised will go to The Puffin Pool which helps a lot of families, not only from Ross-shire but in an area extending from Inverness up to Caithness. Indeed, the hydrotherapy pool has helped many people find relief from different aches and pains. The Puffin Pool is self-supporting and needs help.

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Here are the boys on the day –



Following on from our very successful day at the Dingwall Gala, the Brethren raised the amazing amount of £975.00 on the day. The brethren of Fingal Lodge added a further £225.00, making a total donation to the Puffin Hydrotherapy Pool of £1200.00. The photo shows a few of the brethren presenting the cheque to Brian Liddle of the Puffin Hydrotherapy Pool.



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Tuesday 10th October: The Lodge will return from Refreshment to Labour. After the Business has been completed from the correspondence gathered, during the summer recess, the PGM Brother Raymond Mackeddie, was press ganged, and will be giving a Lecture.

Forthcoming Events, Logie Lounge:

Saturday 26th August} B-B-Q. 5:30pm for 6:00pm. Admission cost £10 per person. As the Logie Lounge will only hold a maximum of 60 people, tickets will be sold on first come, first served basis, and can be purchased from Donnie Gunn by phone on 07903 618323 or E-mail donald@fingal318.co.uk.

Music by Willie Durrand. (Elvis will enter the building.)

There will be a Licenced Bar. Unfortunately, due to licensing laws no children under the age of 18 years, will be allowed at this function.

Saturday 23rd September} Quiz Night. 7:00pm for 7:30pm. Brother John MacKenzie PM Lodge St. Duthus being the Quiz Master, ably assisted by our very own Brother Angus Beaton PM Lodge Fingal, teams of four at a cost of £20 / team. Maximum no of tables, 16. Brother Donnie Gunn will take names by phone on 07903 618323 or E-mail donald@fingal318.co.uk.

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

That`s all Folks, watch this Space.

D. Gunn RWM

Secretary.

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 1999

I mentioned in the May edition that the Dingwall Brethren were working hard to raise funds for a Defibrillator for the Dingwall Health Centre. Having raised over £400 at the Quiz Night, they have since excelled themselves in raising almost £4,000 on their Coast to Coast walk which was held at the end of June.

Brothers Robert Scott, Roy MacKenzie, Roy MacIver, Rory MacKenzie, Colin Mathieson, Sandy Logie, Donnie Gunn, and John Miller supported by the back-up team of Dougie MacDougall, Charlie MacKay, Clayton Hudson, and Jimmy Walmsley walked from the Peffrey to Loch Broom with an overnight stop at Aultguish Inn. This was a tremendous effort by the Brethren of Lodge Fingal. Congratulations to all those involved and a big thank you to the many friends who donated to the venture by way of sponsorship.

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LODGE ALLAN WILSON 851

The July meeting of the Lodge was an outstanding success with over fifty Brethren attending to hear Grand Secretary, Brother Willie Semple give a very informative and interesting talk on the duties of Grand Secretary.

Grand Secretary commenced his presentation by referring to Law 19 of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland which details the duties of the Grand Secretary however he stressed the point that he and his staff were there, first and foremost, to serve the members, the public and the stakeholders. He explained that there were three units within Grand Lodge, namely, Administration, Finance and Benevolence & Care after which he led the brethren present on a verbal tour of each department, introducing the staff and explaining their specific roles. He highlighted some of the problems experienced in the past but explained that under the new governance structure the future is much more positive, and that Grand Lodge is being pulled into the 21st century in terms of technology, processes, and general management. He concluded his presentation by inviting questions from the brethren during which he elaborated on future computer development, promotion of Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge Museum and library.

This month, Tuesday 8th August we are delighted to welcome to Lodge Allan Wilson, Brother James A Coghlan, an acknowledged expert on Rosslyn Chapel. He will present an illustrated talk during which we will learn much about the architecture and symbolism to be found in and around the Church.

We will also welcome a Deputation from the Province on their annual visitation.

A warm welcome is extended to all Brethren to join us and remain for lunch at a modest £12.

Ramsay McGhee - Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2000

Another gem from the late Brother Roddy Cade –

After the meeting the RWM noticed a visitor standing alone so he went over to chat. “Hope you enjoyed the meeting,” said he. “It was super” replied the visitor, “nearly as good as our Lodge.” The RWM was a little perturbed by such a reply but continued, “we are rather proud of our old Temple” to which the visitor responded - “not as good as ours”. The RWM, a very patient man, continued, “well, at least you must have enjoyed the dinner, we pride ourselves on the quality of the festive board.” Straight back came the visitor, “Ours tastes much better”. By this time the RWM’s patience was exhausted. “Tell me, is there anything, anything at all, that you find our Lodge does equally well or perhaps better than your own”. The visitor pondered for some time and eventually said - “well, there is one thing. Your Lodge does seem to attract a better class of visitor than our Lodge does.”

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LODGE SEAFORTH 854

Since our last report in May, the lodge has been in summer recess.

On Saturday 17th June 2023, the Lodge Brethren were delighted to open the Lodge for a Special Meeting and receive a deputation from Lodge John O’Groat No. 1333, led by their Master, Bro. Denny Morrison.

The two Lodges, Lodge Seaforth No. 854, and Lodge John O’Groat No. 1333, have enjoyed a long-standing reciprocal meeting arrangement with each other, going back over twenty years, but these annual get togethers unfortunately had to be put on hold during the last four years due to the Covid 19 restrictions.

A well-attended meeting witnessed an impressive working of the Fellowcraft Degree by the Master and his Office-bearers from Lodge John O’Groat No. 1333, with the floorwork being delivered to a very high standard, as we have now come to expect from the Castletown Brethren.

Unfortunately, the planned candidate for the meeting had an unexpected unplanned commitment and was unable to attend, and Bro. Andy Ferrier heroically stood in to receive the Fellowcraft degree from Lodge John O’Groat. Many thanks to Andy for saving the day.

The Brethren and Visitors retired to enjoy Harmony in the clubrooms, and once the formalities and been completed, were able to rekindle old acquaintances and friendships.

It was a most enjoyable day and one we look forward to reciprocating next year and heading North over the Ord.

The next Regular Meeting of the lodge shall be on Monday 18th September 2023 at 7:30pm, when we shall be working a Fellowcraft Degree for Bro. Steven Campbell.

The Regular Meeting on 16th October 2023 at 7:30pm is intended to be a Mark Degree.

Raymond MacKeddie PM - Secretary

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LODGE AVERON No 866

Most of this article should have appeared in the May edition but due to an email mix-up – didn't!

Hi Brethren

I hope you are all well. Once more it has been a very busy quarter for Lodge Averon. We had our auld folks party in Ardrross and Alness bowling club which was very well attended. We had a young piper from the Black Isle who gave us a few tunes along with Ann Noble school of dance. As usual, the dancers were well received. Once again, the lodge women playing a significant role in making this event happen as always. We also had brother Paul Stirling and Belinda (Stirling and Silver) who entertained between performances.



Dancers from the Ann Noble School of Dance

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Brother Andy hunter from Lodge Oak 877 in Kelty made the journey north as part of the Lodge St John 636 inter province community food initiative through some very adverse weather. We met Andy and a couple of other well kent faces at Lodge Seaforth in Fortrose. We had a bit of assistance from a couple brethren from Lodge Ness 888 transporting the stuff back to Alness. The clothing was donated to two organisations who help clothe under privileged families in the Alness area. A couple food banks got a donation as well as Obsdale school getting a wonderful playhouse which the nursery is delighted with. (Thanks Ramsay).



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We continued with planned building work and improvements to the lodge with internal escape route lighting and linked alarms; we have also installed outside CCTV along with a new community defibrillator which is now online. Thanks must go to Alness first responders who came to the Lodge and gave some brethren some training.



We ended our season in March with Mark master's degree for Bro William Pew. This was a very well attended degree with visitors from outside the Province.

We are waiting for the word of approval about our new club alcohol license being approved in May, this will allow us to host a lot more events in the future. A fire walk being organised by Bro Gary Miller for anyone who is brave enough. This can raise funds for you own charity or worthy cause. Gary can be contacted on garym1983@hotmail.co.uk or 07858533877.

We are also planning a BBQ, a mystic night, and a quiz night again dates to be finalised once we have our new license in place. We will ensure that this information is sent out via the normal channels in due course.

Please enjoy your summer and we will update you all on the next one.

Brothers Donnie Matheson and Gary Miller

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LODGE NESS No 888

On sat 24th June Lodge Ness had the annual BBQ, in the name of the late Past Master, Brother **Tommy Stirling**. The theme was “Cowboys and Indians”. I am delighted to report that the event was very well attended, and a great time was had by all...

Owen Wilson - Lodge Secretary



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Harper, the wee four-year-old daughter of Brother Owen Wilson, the Lodge Secretary of Lodge Ness No 888, has sadly been diagnosed with a rare type of lymphoblastic leukaemia, by name of Philadelphia Positive.

Some friends of the family have set up a “Gofund.me” page, “HELP HARPER BEAT RARE LEUKAEMIA”. The page has been set up by their friend Tes Vapes, and Brother Owen, as you will see when opening the link below, where there is more information.



Photo of Harper from the GoFund.me page.

The target set for the fund is £4,000 which will be used to assist in travel costs for the 260-mile round trip to hospital and it is expected that the treatment she is receiving will take place over a two-and-a-half-year period involving lengthy stays in hospital. It is hoped to move nearer to the hospital, but a new home will need a new bespoke bed and other equipment for Harper while at home. The last 2 years has been a rough road for Bro Owen, losing his mother, his dad being seriously ill then losing savings to a con man. Now he is faced with fighting for Harper in the hope that she will come through what will be an incredibly tough time for her and indeed for the whole family. Brother Owen has a request to make, asking for help in reaching their target: -

Hello Brethren,

I thought you might be interested in supporting this GoFundMe, for my 4-year-old daughter and my family.

<https://gofund.me/ecf675cc>

Even a small donation could help reach the fundraising goal. And if you can't donate, it would be great if you could share the fundraiser to help spread the word.

Thanks for taking a look!

Owen Wilson

Secretary Lodge Ness 888. “

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LODGE KYLE No 1117

The summer recess is all about maintaining the Lodge: the garden, the fabric of the Lodge and of course Membership and Brotherhood.

To this end the Master has instigated some marketing initiatives which include Social Media, making the Lodge more approachable and having an Open Day as well as new signage with a QR code for passers-by to scan and take them to an info page on the Lodgekyle.co.uk website. We also have a "Where to eat in Kyle" page, which seems to be being used by non-masons as well as the intended target market. There is a link on our home page but here is the direct link.

http://www.lodgekyle.co.uk/places_to_eat_in_kyle_of_lochalsh.html

We are doing plenty to keep the garden in trim and the grass planted last year is doing well. We also had a nice show of daffodils at Easter, The roof too is being taken in hand with the Master presenting the Brethren with some ideas at the Meeting in September, this being the first Regular Meeting after the summer recess. There will be a first Degree with a visitation by some of the Windows Sons. Monday 4th September, Tyle 8pm.

It is distressing when one of our number unexpectedly lays down his tools and passes to the Grand Lodge Above. Sadly, I have to report that our Brother, Gavin Mackenzie died at his home, aged just 54, on 22nd July 2023. He will be missed by us and his Brethren in his Mother Lodge and the other Lodges including Lodge St Martin to which he was affiliated.

I was once asked by an Apprentice why we MUST learn Ritual; what secrets there are, and what does it all mean? I suggested that the words of the ritual are a complete system; not to be changed or taken piecemeal but as a progressive whole, and if possible, he should, over the years learn it all. As with all systems, Freemasonry won't work unless the pieces connect and act in unison. Synergy for the soul.

When people understand life's hidden mysteries but there are no words in their language that define these glimpses into the infinite, we use symbols and allegory. By learning Masonic ritual by rote, the mind absorbs the symbolism slowly over time. The meaning of the symbols of our ritual may not be immediately apparent, but by committing ritual to memory, we are setting our memory to distil the knowledge handed down by our Masonic forebears.

When a Brother in the Lodge passes, the Master rises, and calls for a minute's silence in which we remember him. A time for reflection and stillness. For seasoned Freemasons, something reverberates, connections to the ritual become more apparent, which can comfort, enlighten, and nourish us.

"What does Freemasonry give a man?" Perhaps the question should be, "What does it not?"

Ronnie Miller, PM - Secretary

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

We held our final meeting of the session on 5th May with just a business meeting. We did have however two Past Masters in attendance to receive their jubilee certificates being Bro Jimmy Grant and Jackie Morrison. Our RWM did the honour of presenting the jewels to both.



Past Masters' Jimmy Grant, Jackie Morrison, and Bob MacLean with their Jubilee certificates

Quite a number of Brethren are involved in the Avoch Gentlemen's Golf Society and on the 27th of May. We had the 26th playing of the competition, which was won by John Jack PM, this being second time John has won the event. We do try and raise funds for charity on the day and this year was no exception. With the news that Graeme Souness was involved in a charity swim across the English Channel to raise funds and awareness for Debra UK which assists children with a rare skin disease and with the young lady, Isla Grist from North Kessock, being the young lady fronting the interview on BBC this was too much for us to resist so we decided to make this charity our main target. We are pleased to report we did raise an excellent £2800 for the cause which was very pleasing to all involved.

We will resume meetings on 5th October. We had discussed changing to a September to April rota but have yet to make a firm commitment to this.

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Bro Arthur Macarthur, Bro Keith Patience Isla, Rachel Lewie Patience, and Andy Grist.

Finally, early on Sunday morning Bro William Jack (Tell) passed to the Grand Lodge above. Although not an active Freemason in recent years, he was still a great character in the village and beyond. A fine footballer and golfer in his day.

Keith Patience, PM

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Lodge St Martin 1217

It was a very sad day when we heard that Bro. Gavin C Mackenzie passed away in Lochcarron on 27th July 2023. A large turnout of brethren attended his funeral on Monday 31st July. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this difficult time.

The lodge starts the season on Tuesday 17th October with our AGM and election of office-bearers. The Installation meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st November where Bro. Gordon Mackenzie PM will be installed with his office-bearers. Both meetings tyling at 20.00hrs.

All the best from the west

Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2003

A lovely piece from the late Bro Sinclair Bruce –

Since I have given up my office as Almoner and now having the use of the *Provincial Buggy*, I thought I would relate to all readers how much this benevolent act has changed my lifestyle and given me a sense of independence that must be experienced to be believed.

My average day now consists of keeping myself up to date by reading the daily paper, delivered some days before breakfast. My priority is front page news after which I read from beginning to end of the Press and Journal.

My favourite columnist is Ron Ferguson who always has something topical to write about and written with a great sense of humour. I believe he is a retired Church of Scotland minister and one of his many stories that sticks in my mind is about students in Theology College -

At the entrance to the dining hall there was placed a beautiful bowl of delicious red, rosy apples with this warning "*Do not touch the forbidden fruit God is watching over it*" then inside the hall on each table was a large plate of fruit cake with a notice "*Eat as much as you like God is too busy watching the apples.*"

So much for mornings. Now, the afternoons, weather permitting it's on the buggy and downtown. I have now been in corners of Avoch that I did not know existed. I meet people that I used to know in my younger days when I worked in MacDonald's Bakery. To me the buggy has been a Godsend and I will be ever grateful to the Provincial Lodge for their thoughtfulness, kindness, and generosity; this surely is Freemasonry at the highest level.

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Lodge Loch Ewe 1551

Whilst still in the middle of our summer recess, we do have two pieces of good news to report. The first is that we, at last, have a candidate for Initiation. We will be holding a Committee of Enquiry on Saturday 5th August for a Mr Philip Callin, a resident of Lochcarron, who certainly comes “well and worthily recommended”. It is hoped that we will be able to ballot for his Initiation at our next regular meeting, which will be on Thursday 14th September.

The second is that the Aultbea Hotel has finally re-opened, giving Brethren visiting from the East – and further afield – the welcome opportunity of a little extra light refreshment before entering the Lodge!

Michael Longley, PM – Lodge Loch Ewe

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2012

In conjunction with the other daughter lodges within the Province of Ross and Cromarty, Lodge Loch Ewe No. 1551 was represented on 22nd June 2012 in the Logie Lounge, Fingal Lodge of Freemasons, Dingwall and gratefully received a cheque for £ 1,000 as part of the monies disbursed by Grand Lodge in Edinburgh to celebrate 275 years of Freemasonry in Scotland and in recognition of the charitable work continually done by lodges throughout Scotland in helping others.

The Lodge beneficiary was the Aultbea Regeneration Committee, which is actively engaged, as the name implies, in the community of this part of Wester Ross. Their representative Mr Murdo MacRae received the cheque from Lodge Loch Ewe Bro Mike Longley WJW on behalf of PGL. (see below)

Accompanying Bro Longley and Murdo on the evening were Lodge Administrators Bro Duncan MacLennan, Secretary and Bro Allan Maccrimmon, Treasurer.

Following the presentation there was a social evening for representatives and their wives / partners which was complemented with music provided by the Provincial Quartet comprising Donnie Ross, Jim Tait, Jonathan Hill, and Ramsay McGhee who freely gave up of their time to entertain after buffet nourishment very kindly furnished by the Fingal and Provincial ladies and friends.

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Ye Corporation O' Squaremen Hielan Shed

On 13th May we visited Lodge St Aethans in Burghead and were able to utilise their new Lounge for the Meeting – We had three new Candidates join the Corporation and we left a cheque for a Charity of their choice with RWM Mackie Tawse.



Worthy Deacon Douglas handing over a cheque to RWM Mackie Tawse at the Burghead Meeting

In June we had the Grand Shed visit, and the Worthy Deacon was delighted to invite the new Grand Worthy Deacon Bri Martin Kelly into the Shed – unfortunately we did not have any Candidates but did carry out a Mock Degree to their satisfaction.

In July we took a visit to Lodge Latheron and made our traditional call to leave a small Remembrance Wreath with Bob Sutherland in Latheron Cemetery

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It was disappointing that no one from Lodge Latheron turned up but we were delighted to have a Candidate from Lodge John O Groat to join us on the day.

On Saturday 5th August we will be having our last visit, on the “Mainland”, in Lodge Averon as our September Meeting will be across the ocean in Harris – it is hoped that we will get a good turnout at both Meetings.

On Saturday 12th of August our valiant Bowls Team will attempt to hang onto the Shield they won last year at the Inverness Provincial Bowls Competition at the Highland Bowling Club in Inverness.

VISITS FOR 2023

5th AUGUST - Lodge Averon – ALNESS – bus leaves Inverness 13:30
2nd SEPT. - Lodge St Clements – TARBET HARRIS – public transport to Ullapool

Overnight stay in Stornoway

Note anyone wishing to join us on the trip to the Western Isle should arrange their own accommodation.

*John & Mackay
Boxie*

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 1996

Freemasonry is ...

Kindness in the home
Honesty in business
Courtesy in society
Fairness in work
Pity and concern for the unfortunate
Resistance towards the wicked
Help for the weak
Trust in the strong
Forgiveness for the penitent
Love for one another and above all
Reverence and love for God
Freemasonry is many things -
but most of all
Freemasonry is a way of life.

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PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS MESSAGE.

The 100th anniversary of the Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross and Cromarty will be held in Tain on Saturday 14th October 2023, to be seated in Lodge St Duthus No 82 at 12.30pm. The Ceremony will be conducted by the 1st Principal of Grand Supreme Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland and his Office Bearers. A celebratory dinner will follow in the Royal Hotel, Tain thereafter.

Space May be limited so it is imperative that Companions in the Province who wish to attend should indicate their intentions ASAP, In order to avoid disappointment.

In order to mark the occasion the Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross and Cromarty have instigated a SUMMER CHARITY INITIATIVE.

All Chapters have undertaken to run a Special meeting or other function to raise funds for this initiative. This will be managed and administered by the PGRA Chapter and all monies raised will be distributed to the local Chapters in due course.

The whole exercise is to raise the profile of Royal Arch Masonry in Ross and Cromarty and also raise much needed funds for local needy causes.

Please communicate with Prov. Grand Treasurer with your £20 dinner fee as there will be no facility to pay on the day, viz:-

Bank Account No. - 00187361

Sort Code - 80-06-36

Account - PROV G R A CHP ROSS&CROMT

Reference using "100th" and name.

The Prov. Grand Scribe will be sending out notifications to Chapter Scribes in due course with his instructions.

Morris M Downie

Grand Superintendent

BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2007

24 children and 5 adults from Chernobyl arrived for their annual visit on Wednesday 11th July. This was a larger group than usual, but, nevertheless, we had a full programme, which kept them busy until they left on the Saturday. Special thanks to the Brethren and their families who gave of their time and effort over the 3 days to keep the kids entertained, fed etc. and to the local businesses and organisations that gave freely of their time and in kind to help those very underprivileged children.

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Provincial Grand Chapter:

Companions,

The Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross & Cromarty held its AGM on Saturday 27th May within St Clement Royal Arch Chapter, which was very well attended. Following the usual format for an AGM, after the preliminaries were dealt with, the Election of Office Bearers was carried out by Companion Alasdair Taylor, Provincial Grand Honorary Scribe E in his usual inimitable fashion, assisted by PG 2nd Principal James Tait.

PGS Downie informed the companions that The Province of Ross & Cromarty would be 100 years old on the 2nd of October 2023. It was proposed to have a Centenary Anniversary Celebration and Rededication Service on the 14th of October in the oldest Chapter in the Province, Tain & Ross. It is hoped that as many companions as possible would be able to attend this ceremony. Please note that seating both within the Chapter and at the meal to follow, in the Royal Hotel Tain, is to be capped at 70. Those wishing to attend should inform the Provincial Grand Scribe E Companion D Macrae Provincialscribee@outlook.com ASAP.

To mark the occasion Chapters were asked to consider a meeting/event/ fundraiser to be held during the summer recess to raise funds which would then be put into a pot and distributed evenly between all the Chapters to give to local good causes in their area, this would help to promote Royal Arch Masonry in the area.

The next Convocation was proposed to be on the 16th of September in St Clement Chapter at 12pm however this date has had to be changed to the 23rd of September at 12pm. It is hoped that we will see you all there.

Dates for the diary –

Saturday 16th September Quarterly Convocation St Clements Chapter 12pm

Saturday 14th October 100th Anniversary Celebration Tain & Ross Chapter 1pm (seated by 12.30pm)

MEC Dave Macrae

Provincial Scribe E

Tain & Ross RAC 63

Please note - The Tain and Ross RAC have changed their meeting night to the fourth Monday. This will alleviate clashes with Lodge Fingal and Lodge Ness.

The first meeting in the new session will be Monday 23rd October.

The Companions from Tain and Ross RAC would love to meet with you at

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We will be raising money for the Centenary Appeal – so please pop into our stall and have a go at the various opportunities to win a prize.

ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER HEBRIDES NO. 364.



Morris Downie's first visit as Grand Superintendent

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod IPGS R&C

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Royal Order of Scotland

Province Grand Lodge of Inverness and the Highlands

In Inverness Masonic Temple on Saturday, 10 June 2023, and at the third attempt, Bro Josh Gourlay was installed as the fourteenth Provincial Grand Master of the Province Grand Lodge of Inverness and the Highlands of The Royal Order of Scotland. He is the first Orcadian to have the honour to occupy the position.

Josh was appointed in February 2020 but his installation set for the following June was cancelled due to the pandemic. A second installation rescheduled for September 2022 was also called off due to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

A small deputation of Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland travelled for the installation led by its Head, Bro Ewan Rutherford, and a good representation of other Provinces was evident from Aberdeen and Kincardine, Stirling and Perth, Carrick and Annandale, Cheshire, Cumberland and Westmorland, South Wales, and Preussen in Germany.

The Royal Order has ninety-four provinces worldwide and Inverness and the Highlands covers the geographic areas of Caithness, Eilean Siar, Inverness, Moray, Nairn, Orkney, Ross and Cromarty and Sutherland; draw a diagonal line from Macduff, through Grantown on Spey, Kingussie to Kinlochleven and anything north and west is covered by the Province.

The Province of Ross & Cromarty is well represented among the office bearers in the Royal Order Province with Bro Stephen J Smith, Immediate Past PGM, Bros Ramsay McGhee and Jim Tait, both Substitute PGMs, Bro Mike Turner, PG Secretary, Bro Stewart Hiddleston PG Banner-bearer, Bro Fred Fraser, Deputy PG Marischal and Bro George M Macleod, PG Guarder.

The Royal Order meets three times a year in Inverness on the Second Saturdays in April, June, and September. This has been reduced from four meetings as Josh is keen to hold at least one meeting per annum outside Inverness in other parts of the Province.

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Above left - Deputy Grand Master & Governor, Ewan Rutherford and Provincial Grand Master, Josh Gourlay

Above right – L to R James Fraser, Deputy Grand Marischal, Alan Dickson, Grand Secretary, Ewan Rutherford, Deputy Grand Master & Governor, Josh Gourlay, Provincial Grand Master, Stephen Smith, Immediate Past Grand Master, Raymond King, Grand Marischal



*Back Row-
James Fraser, Deputy Grand Marischal
Robin Sutherland, PGM Carrick and Annandale
Andrew McKinnon, PGM Stirling and Perth
Carl Davies, PGM South Wales
Barry Kirkbride, PGM Cumberland and
Westmorland
Rod Geeson, PGM Cheshire*

*Front Row-
Alan Dickson, Grand Secretary
Ewan Rutherford, Deputy Grand Master &
Governor
Josh Gourlay, Provincial Grand Master
Stephen Smith, Immediate Past Grand Master
Raymond King, Grand Marischal*

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Back Row-

James Fraser, Deputy Grand Marischal, Henry Petrie, PPGM Aberdeen and Kincardine, Andrew McKinnon, PGM Stirling and Perth, Robin Sutherland, PGM Carrick and Annandale, Carl Davies, PGM South Wales, Barry Kirkbride, PGM Cumberland and Westmorland, Rod Geeson, PGM Cheshire, Jim Sutherland, Deputy PGM Inverness and the Highlands, Stewart Hiddleston, Provincial Grand Banner-bearer, Jim Tair, Substitute PGM Inverness and the Highlands, John I MacKay, Junior PG Warden, Inverness and the Highlands, John Hill, Immediate Past PGM Cumberland and Westmorland. Mike Turner, PG Secretary, Inverness and the Highlands, Fred Fraser, Deputy PG Marischal

Front Row-

Alan Dickson, Grand Secretary, Ewan Rutherford, Deputy Grand Master & Governor, Josh Gourlay, Provincial Grand Master, Stephen Smith, Immediate Past Grand Master, Raymond King, Grand Marischal

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BITS AND PIECES

Last weekend we were truly saddened to be advised of the passing of Brother Bomi Mehta, Past DGM of India, who was no stranger in this Province. Brother Bomi was a Masonic Legend not only in India but around the world. He was extremely proud to be a Scottish Mason and only a few months ago, in Mumbai, I had the pleasure of presenting to him, his 60-year Diploma and Jewel. He will be sadly missed by us all and we send, from the Province, our heartfelt condolences to daughter Diane and the entire family.

Back in August 2012, Brother Bomi contributed the following poem for the “Patter”.

My thanks to Bro Bomi Mehta, PDGM of India, for the following poem -

The Lodge Where I Belong – by *Arthur R. Herrman*

Though my lodge may lack the splendour
Of a Temple or a Shrine,
Or possess the gaudy fixtures
that are classed as superfine,

3 The handclasp firm, the word of cheer,
Oh, such meanings they impart,
The mystic ties of brotherhood
that links us heart to heart!

5 All my earthly travels end,
And at last, I'm borne to rest
Where mortal hands no longer toil
and I cease life's endless quest.

2 Yet the fellowship it offers
is in a price beyond compare.
And I wouldn't trade it ever
for life's treasures rich or bare!

4 You'd really have to travel far,
For the friendships quite so strong,
As those one always finds right here
In the Lodge where I belong.

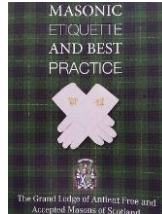
6 Why there's nothing I'd like better,
should I join the heavenly throng,
than to meet with all the Brothers
of the Lodge Where I Belong.

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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 an 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.

Grand Lodge of Scotland – On-line shopping



Here is a small selection of items available from the Grand Lodge Shop

