

# PROVINCIAL PATTERN

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

ISSUE NO 127

MAY 2026

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



*Lodges of the Province*

*Lodge Seaforth No 854*

*Charter Granted*

*6<sup>th</sup> May 1897*

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## Editorial

Welcome to the 127<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Patter.

On Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April I was afforded the great privilege of being made an honorary member of the Widows Sons at a ceremony held in Duncarron Fort near Denny.

Over the years I have had a lot of dealings with members of the Widows Sons but when the gardens and garden furniture at the Masonic Home in Bridge of Weir was seriously vandalised, I was deeply impressed by the immediate response from the Widows Sons – they were in attendance that day and worked incredibly hard to restore order in the garden.

Later this year they will be making an announcement regarding the tremendous amount they have raised for charity – all in the name of active freemasonry.

At the Black Isle Show in August, we will have members of the Widows Sons in attendance at the Provincial Grand Lodge stand – they along with our Prostate Team and plenty of pictorial information about all that happens in our Province will hopefully help to dispel the myths that abound about Freemasonry with the public and let them see what really happens. We may even get a few candidates as a result.

If not this year, certainly next year, we will have Brother Stephen MacGregor of the Widows Sons coming along to Lodge Allan Wilson to give us a talk on how they started and how they've grown over the years – we had over 200 present at Denny on the 11<sup>th</sup> and they came from all over Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, America, Italy and Canada to celebrate with the Scottish members. They do a great job for Scottish Freemasonry.

*Ramsay McGhee*, Editor

## Grand Lodge of Scotland



THE GRAND LODGE  
OF ANTIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS  
OF SCOTLAND

Grand Lodge continue through May and June with plenty of visits, but July is a month of little or no activity.

On 9<sup>th</sup> May, Grand Lodge will be attending two events – the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Province of Lanarkshire Upper Ward which will be conducted by the GMM while a wee bit further northwest, Lodge Callendar No 588 will be celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Likewise on 16<sup>th</sup> May, Lodge St Thomas 576 will celebrate their 150<sup>th</sup> and two days later in Gibraltar, the new District Grand Lodge of the Western Mediterranean will be Consecrated and the Office-bearers installed.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May, Lodge Western 1346 celebrate their Centenary.

On 6<sup>th</sup> June, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East will celebrate their Bicentenary.

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June – Regular Meeting of Grand Lodge.

June comes to an end with two Provincial Installations. Firstly, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Lanarkshire Middle Ward on 13<sup>th</sup> June and finally the Provincial Grand Lodge of Kincardineshire on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>.

I cannot end this report without saying a massive thankyou to Bro **Raymond MacKeddie** as he comes to the end of his tenure as PGM. He has worked incredibly hard and achieved so much during the past five years ensuring that this Province remains highly thought of and an inspiration to others both at home and overseas. Well done Raymond – you should be very proud of all that you have achieved. Thank You.

*Editor*

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## The Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty

As my term office is quickly coming to its end, and as this will be my last message as Provincial Grand Master, can I take this opportunity to thank all who supported me in my term of office, and can I express how privileged and proud I felt representing this prestigious Province. Each Province is only as strong as its Daughter Lodges, and we are very fortunate in Ross and Cromarty to have such enterprising and diverse lodges in our Province.

My tenure of office started quite differently from normal, with masonry just starting to meet again after a long Covid lockdown, and I was the first Provincial Grand Master in Scotland to be installed after the enforced break in masonic activity, which unfortunately resulted in a much reduced attendance at the installation ceremony, but it took away none of the pride I felt in taking up office to lead this Province. I was indebted to the Grand Lodge of Scotland Installing Team, led by the Grand Master Mason, Brother Ramsay McGhee, for their support and the inspirational way they conducted the installation ceremony.

Since that tentative start, things picked up quickly and we resumed to a busy and eventful time, with many memorable events throughout my tenure. Some of the highlights included, cycling and rowing around the Province to raise £13,000 for the Make It A Million Appeal, and hosting the first Young Masons Degree to be held in Scotland, when the Ross & Cromarty Young Masons team filled of the Offices to confer a Fellowcraft Degree for Bro. Scott MacKenzie.

I cannot forget the challenge of hosting 62 guests from the District of Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada, when the train conveying them from Edinburgh left them stranded at Perth Rail Station. From that calamitous start, the rest of the weekend was a great success with the Provincial Grand Lodge hosting a fantastic welcome dinner dance at the Ben Wyvis Hotel, which has now turned into an annual event. And who can forget the Special Meeting at Lodge Averon No.866, with the exceptional delivery of the First-Degree Tracing Board lecture by Bro. Damian Lyder from Lodge United Brothers No. 251. (See the latest report on the trip to the Caribbean on page 43)

I enjoyed many visits during my term of office, including leading three deputations to the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago & Grenada, witnessing the installations of District Grand Masters, Anniversary Meetings and many other events, reinforcing the long standing and cordial relationship we have with the District.

I also had the pleasure of leading a Provincial Grand Lodge Deputation to a Centenary Meeting of Progress Lodge No. 4584EC, in the Province of Cheshire, which was a very interesting trip as the lodge was founded by Bro. Lord Leverhulme, who was a Past Master of Lodge Fortrose No.108. It was very enlightening to visit the historic village of Port Sunlight and see the impact that Lord Leverhulme's business enterprises had on that area in particular, the Western Isles, and his extensive involvement in Freemasonry.

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At home, there were many trips to Provinces, to witness the Installations of the new Provincial Grand Masters, and as I near the end of my tenure, it was gratifying to attend the memorable Bicentenary

Rededication Meeting of Lodge Fingal No. 318, which was a very historic, interesting and sociable event.

I also extend my grateful thanks to the Brethren of Lodge Fingal No.318, as I was profoundly humbled and honoured to be made an Honorary Member of this very historic and renowned lodge in December 2025.

The Young Masons of our Province were always inspirational and enthusiastic, and we enjoyed many interesting events over the last five years, including over seventy Zoom meetings, where we had many interesting presenters, from all over the world, who shared their masonic experiences, and gave us a valuable insight to the huge and diverse organisation that Freemasonry is.

They also hosted, and delivered two Fellowcraft Degrees, each conferred to the highest standard of ritual and decorum, which gives us confidence that the future of Freemasonry in our Province will be in good hands.

I would take this opportunity to wish my successor, Bro. David MacMaster, every success and fulfilment in his term of office, and have no doubt that Bro. David will receive the same support from the members in the Province as I, and previous Provincial Grand Masters enjoyed.

I hope to get around all the lodges in the Province, to personally thank all the members of each of the Daughter Lodges for the tremendous support that I received as Provincial Grand Master, it was very much appreciated.

## **Provincial Grand Lodge**

With many of the annual visits to the lodges complete, it is gratifying to see that high standard of ritual in each lodge and that the general upsurge in new members continues.

I have no doubt that the hard work of our lodges in opening our doors to the public and getting involved in community events is helping raise the profile of Freemasonry in general and awakening a desire in men to take an interest in Freemasonry and have the opportunity to improve their moral standards and to give something back to the communities that they live in.

This year the Provincial Grand Lodge will host a stand at the Black Isle Show, following on from the success that the Grand Lodge hosted stand enjoyed last year, which will further advertise what we as Freemasons contribute to our communities.

I look forward to catching up with you all soon, and the dates of the remaining annual visits to lodges are appended below.

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Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026 shall be the next Provincial Grand Lodge Communication, which will also be the AGM and Installation of non-commissioned Office-bearers.

This meeting will be held at Lodge Fingal, Dingwall, all Freemasons are most welcome, and I look forward to updating all on what is going on, and planned, in the Province.

It will be pleasing to see a good turnout of Masters and Wardens from our Daughter Lodges, as by virtue of their office, they are all members of the Provincial Grand Lodge.

As I shall be remitting office on 10th June 2026, Bro. David MacMaster shall assume the post of Provincial Grand Master on Thursday 11th June.

The Installation Meeting of the PGM and his Commissioned Office-bearers is being arranged for Saturday 29th August, at the Spa Pavilion, Strathpeffer. There will be further details of this event and arrangements for tickets, etc. released shortly.

## **Key PGL Dates**

**Provincial Grand Lodge AGM & Installation of Office-bearers - Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

## **Dates of Provincial Grand Lodge Visits**

**Kyle 1117 - 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Lodge Loch Ewe - 9<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Fortrose 108 - 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Allan Wilson 851 - 14<sup>th</sup> July 2026**

**PGL Lodge of Sorrow - Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

**Installation PGM - Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2026**

Fraternal Regards

*Raymond Mackeddie*

Provincial Grand Master

### **Provincial Grand Lodge Installation**

The Provincial Grand Lodge Installation will take place in the Spa Pavillion on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2026. The Ben Wyvis Hotel are offering a limited number of rooms - £120 twin or double, £80 single per night – but they will not be available for long. If you want to book for the Friday and or Saturday, contact the Ben Wyvis Hotel on 01997 423 387 and give the reference – *Masonic Installation*. The Ladies will be welcome at the dinner but need to be included in reservations for the Installation dinner.



## Young Masons Group

The group has continued to meet on a regular basis, for over six years, and following an earlier proposal they continue to meet informally as a group at various lodge meetings in the Province.

### **Fellowcraft Degree - Lodge Fingal No. 318 - Tuesday 14th April 2026**

The group met at the Lodge Fingal No. 318 February meeting, at the kind request of the Master, Bro. Stewart Bain, and were invited to work a degree on one of the Lodge Fingal progressive candidates. The Degree was entirely delivered by young masons, with the Master, Bro. Frazer McBeath, the reigning Master of Lodge Averon No. 866, accepting the maul from the Master of Lodge Fingal No. 318. He was assisted by Bro. Alick Graham, the reigning Master of Lodge Fortrose No. 108.

The team confidently conferred the Fellowcraft Degree, which was a collaboration of rituals from the various lodges represented, on Bro. George MacDonald of Lodge Fingal, displaying ritual work of the highest standard, and afterwards deservedly receiving very complimentary comments from the full house of Brethren present.



From the high standard of work and commitment displayed, the future of Freemasonry in the Province is certainly proving to be in good and safe hands.

*Raymond MacKeddie*, PGM

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The Province continues to support our participation in the TLC Teddies for Loving Care (TLC) scheme, aiming to donate teddies to the A&E Departments in Highland hospitals, to help assist children who find themselves in traumatic circumstances.

We are working with our neighbouring Provinces, with Caithness, Sutherland and Inverness-shire, collaborating with us to support the five A&E Departments in the Highlands and Western Isles.

We have been busy over the last few months topping up supplies to each of the hospitals, and it is great to hear from the nurses that the teddies have been very much appreciated by the children who received them. We note that demand is starting to increase as the nurses realise the assistance that the teddies provide when they are dealing with children in difficult situations.



*The four PGMs representing the Provinces in the Highlands met with the very busy nurses at the A&E Department at Raigmore Hospital*

Going forward, we shall be continuing to look to providing TLC teddies to other organisations including remote ambulance services, women's refuges and other children's support groups.

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## From the Provincial Almoner

On 28th February 2026, Brother Alasdair Gault, PM of Lodge Loch Ewe, No. 1551 and a member of other Masonic orders in the Province, passed away after a period of illness. Brother Ally was a well-known visitor to many other Lodges and will be sadly missed.

I report on the following:

On Saturday 24th January 2026, Carole Riggs, the dearly beloved wife of Brother Donald Riggs, MM of Lodge Seaforth No. 854 passed away. Our thoughts are with Brother Donald and his family at this sad time.

Brother Robin Cattenach, PM of Lodge St Duthus, No. 82 and Past Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty, recently spent some time in Raigmore Hospital but is now staying with his daughter recuperating.

Brother Peter Ratcliffe, MM of Robertson's Lodge No. 134, is awaiting word to attend Raigmore Hospital for a procedure.

Brother Kenneth McDermott, MM of Lodge Ness No. 888, is at present suffering from a ruptured Achilles tendon but is managing to attend meetings. This will take some time to heal.

Brother (Tug Wilson), PM of Lodge Ness, No. 888, is awaiting further consultation with his consultant.

Brother David Roska, PM of Lodge Seaforth, No. 854, has recently had a hip replacement. He is now back to his normal daily chores and attending meetings.

I now close by asking once again, that should any brother require my assistance, please get in touch with me. I would ask that Lodge Almoners and any other Lodge member, please keep me updated on any members with health issues.

**Fred T Fraser** PM

Provincial Grand Almoner

[fraserft@yahoo.com](mailto:fraserft@yahoo.com) or 01463 870307

## BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1999

**Strive to be an Are (from Bro Robert Scott, Lodge Fingal)**

I'd rather be a *Could Be* if I could not be an *Are*,

For a *Could Be* is a *May Be*, with a chance of touching par.

I'd rather be a *Has Been* than a *Might Have Been* by far;

For a *Might Have Been* has never been, but a *Has* was once an *Are*.

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The Prostate Champions will be in attendance in the Provincial Gazebo at the Black Isle Show – come along and support them. The Show will be on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August.

## TOOLS FOR MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL for the DEAF in MALAWI

Brethren,

We have once again received a request from our old friend, Brother Gordon Sheppard, Past Grand Superintendent of Malawi, to ask if we can assist with a fresh batch of unwanted but useable **woodworking tools** for use in Mountain view School. I stress the fact that it is woodworking tools that are sought.

We have risen to the occasion before – if you have any unwanted tools lying in the shed, garage or workshop and would be willing to contribute them to us, please contact either the PGM, Brother Raymond MacKeddie or myself and we will arrange collection of them. Thank you.



*Students at work with tools provided by the Province in the past.*

## Around the Lodges

### Lodge St Duthus No 82



Lodge St Duthus No 82 is delighted to announce the conclusion of another productive masonic season, marked by significant accomplishments and vibrant participation. The highlight of March was the Provincial Visitation, during which a Master Mason Degree was expertly worked, reaffirming the Lodge's commitment to masonic excellence. April brought the conferral of the Mark Master Mason degree upon Bro Tommy Gordon, further enriching the Lodge's legacy of brotherhood and progress.

On 14th April, the Young Masons of Ross & Cromarty gathered at Fingal Lodge for a notable Fellowcraft Degree ceremony. St Duthus No 82 was especially proud as three of its brethren—Bros Steven O'Donnal, Jaye Sinclair and Tommy Gordon—distinguished themselves in the floor working of the degree. Their exemplary performance was a credit not only to themselves and the Young Masons team, but also to the enduring standards of St Duthus No 82.

As the Lodge enters its summer recess, members will continue their tradition of community engagement through various fundraising initiatives. Brethren will be actively involved in local markets, boot sales, Tain Gala week, the Tain Vintage Car Rally, and the Glenmorangie Highland Games. These activities not only support local causes but also help to raise the profile of Freemasonry within the community, strengthening the bonds between Lodge St Duthus No 82 and the people of Tain.

Lodge St Duthus No 82 extends its heartfelt gratitude to all brethren and supporters for their dedication and looks forward to another season of fellowship, achievement, and service.

Yours Faithfully & Fraternally

*D Macrae*

Bro. D Macrae PM Secy

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## Lodge Fortrose No 108

At our February meeting David Morrison was passed to the Fellowcraft degree and he was subsequently raised to the degree of Master Mason at our meeting on 6 March.

The bicentenary of Lodge Fingal on 7 February 2026 was attended by RWM Alick Graham and five brethren from Lodge Fortrose.



*Alick Graham RWM and Lodge Fingal brethren prior to the re-dedication.*

Our open day was held on Saturday 28 Feb and approximately 15 visitors, who were impressed with the place, were shown around the building and Lodge Room.

On the same day I attended Lodge Pitgaveny No 681 for the installation of Robert Maciver as RWM. Robert is a native of Point Isle of Lewis and I was honoured to be able to take part in his installation ceremony.

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*Brethren of Lodge Pitgaveny, RWM Robert Maciver front centre.*



*Some of the Ross & Cromarty Deputation with their hosts in Trinidad*

*Donnie Macleod*  
Donald Macleod PM

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## Robertson's Lodge No 134



With Sincere and Fraternal Greetings Brethren, I hope you are all well.

Since our last report some members of the Lodge have also been going through some health scares and illnesses. Our Master, Brother Peter Foster Senior has been feeling better and is back in the Lodge leading us through this season. Our Past Master Brother Derek Rodway is still working through with his health problems. Our Senior Warden, Brother Kenny MacFarlane is looking after himself and is at meetings and keeping us all right. Our Lodge Treasurer, Past Master Alasdair Taylor is his stalwart self. Our Lodge Secretary, Brother Ratcliffe, is following up with treatment. Brother Morris Downie is getting about more.

Since the last Patter submittal, Robertson's Lodge have continued to keep track of the correspondence and emails from Grand Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge and Sister Lodges. Members have been visiting other Lodges. At Meetings we have been working on Emulation Degrees and main Lodge business.

On 14<sup>th</sup> February the Lodge held an Open Day with members in attendance. We had publicised it, and thanked visitors after with local notices. It was well attended, with a mixture of people, with a good number of ladies who had many questions, Past Master Hill was on hand to assist with history, being in good form. There were also some touring members of the Craft who were on holiday in the area. We did not manage to receive any applications though, yet. After discussions members have decided to do that again, with more planning.

The Provincial Grand Master and his deputation visited the Lodge on the Annual Inspection when we understand the working of the emulation degree was well received.

The Lodge has a petition form out for a new candidate. It has been decided to work an emulation First Degree for our first meeting in September 2026, with the intention to carry out a full EA Degree on a following meeting in the New Year, after the AGM and Installation Meetings.

Robertson's Lodge are hoping for a brighter future as the new Season will be starting in September. During the now closed Season the members will be also looking at completing works on the Lodge Premises and being on holiday with their families. However, we are all looking forward to the main Masonic function at the end of August with the Installation of the new Provincial Grand Master in Strathpeffer.

Stay Safe and Well Brothers.

*Peter K. Ratcliffe, Secretary*

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## Lodge Fingal No 318

### Saturday 7th February 2026 – Lodge Fingal Bicentenary Event

Our 200th anniversary started in the Dingwall Town Hall where around 200 brethren from all over the country attended.



For the rededication of the Regalia, the Immediate Past Grand Master Mason asked seven Entered Apprentices and one Fellowcraft to the floor to witness this part of the ceremony. The four Entered Apprentices from Lodge Fingal assisted the Immediate Past Grand Master Mason by presenting the RWM with his regalia. The Fingal Entered Apprentices were, Bros. Jason Smith, Michael Nicolson, Jordon Mackenzie and Greig Meikle. This was a unique and an unforgettable part of the ceremony.

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*Lodge Fingal's four Entered Apprentices, pictured in back row.*



*Fingal Master, Past Masters and Sub. Master.*



*IPGM, Master & PGM.*

The Anniversary Dinner was at the Ross Hall, British Legion, Dingwall. Around 150 brethren sat down to a wonderful meal supplied by the Red Poppy Events Catering team from Muir of Ord.



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*The specially made table settings for all 150 in attendance*

On the 14th of February Lodge Camperdown No 317 from Dundee celebrated their 200th anniversary. The Master, Brother Stewart Bain, accompanied by D Gunn PM, R Sutherland PM and D Cronie WJW, ventured down to Dundee to witness their bicentenary.



*On 6<sup>th</sup> February 1826, Five Lodges received their Charter from Grand Lodge.*

*They were Lodge Camperdown 317, Fingal 318, St Machar Bon Accord, 319, St John Royal Arch 320 and Bonhill and Alexandria St Andrew's Royal Arch 321.*

*Representatives from Lodges, 317, 318, 319 & 320 were at Lodge Camperdown celebrating their 200th anniversary.*

*Pictured from Lodge Fingal – Brother Stewart Bain, Master, Brother Alex Craib IPM and Brother Ronnie Sutherland, PM*

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On Saturday the 14th of February 2026 – Brethren from Fingal helped with marshalling duties at the Snowman Rally event in Dingwall.



Two members of Lodge Fingal, Alex Craib IPM and Ivor Munro, SM recently travelled with a Provincial Deputation to the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago and Grenada to witness the installation of Brother Warren Sookdar as District Grand Master.



Left - Brother Ivor Munro (SM) pictured with Brother Johnelle A.H Simon, Master, Lodge Saint Andrew No. 1794. Right - Ivor and the brethren from Lodge St Andrew No. 1794, chilled afternoon.

While in Trinidad, Brothers Alex and Ivor took the opportunity to attend an EA Degree at The Lodge United Brothers, No 251 SC. The working of the 251 Degree is unique in the Scottish Craft and is well worth witnessing.

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*Brothers Alex and Ivor at 251 – Brother Craib (Grand Librarian)  
was part of the Grand Lodge Deputation*

*Thursday 2nd of April 2026 –*

*Brethren of Lodge Fingal presenting Easter  
eggs to the children of St. Clements School,  
Dingwall.*



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Ladies Night Dinner Dance – 11th April 2026

Around 35 people enjoyed a fantastic Ladies Night with a first-class meal and entertainment by the Travelling Siblings.



Tuesday 14th April –

The Provincial Young Masons Group worked an excellent FC Degree for Brother George MacDonald. The Lodge was full to witness the Young Masons at work.

Also in attendance on the night were six members of the Widow's Sons, North Chapter.

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Saturday 18th April –

Volunteers from Lodge Fingal helping with marshalling duties at the Great Seed Giveaway and Pollinator Puppets Parade in Dingwall High Street. This was part of Dingwall's 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.



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## **Dates for your diaries.**

Saturday 2nd May @ 3pm - Lodge Fingal host Lodge St. Buchan St. John No. 636 who will be working a

MM Degree for Brother Michael Nicolson.

Saturday 22nd of August – Lodge Fingal annual BBQ with Edwin’s Music.

Saturday 29th August – Installation of Bro. David MacMaster as RWPGM at the Strathpeffer Pavilion.

*Angus Beaton* - Lodge Fingal No. 318 Secretary,

Email - secretary@fingalodge318.org.uk –

Mobile 07775 837998

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1996**

### **Visitor from Bulawayo**

It was a real pleasure to welcome into the Province, Past Master Angus Bridgeford, Secretary of Lodge Alan Wilson No 851, Past Grand Senior Warden of the District Grand Lodge of Zimbabwe and Honorary Grand Standard Bearer.

Brother Morris Downie and I met Brother Bridgeford on our sojourn to Africa last year and we were both delighted to learn that he was to pay a visit to his native soil. Brother Bridgeford arrived in Inverness on Thursday 16th May and accompanied the Provincial Grand Lodge Deputation to Stornoway on Friday 17th May. He attended the Regular Meeting of Lodge Seaforth on the 20th May and of Lodge St Martin on 21st May prior to his departure to Orkney on 22nd May where he was to visit relatives.

It was good to hear the news and gossip from Bulawayo and be reminded of all the Brethren with whom we came in contact a year ago. Brother Bridgeford thoroughly enjoyed his time with us in Ross & Cromarty and he has asked me to express his sincere thanks to the many Brethren throughout the Province who contributed in any way to the success of his trip and the pleasure he derived from meeting them.

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## *LODGE ALLAN WILSON 851*

The Installation of Brother Alexander John Craib will take place on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June at 11.30 but, as usual, tea, coffee and shortbread will be on offer from 11.00 hours.

The remainder of the programme has still to be finalised, but we have two excellent speakers lined up – as soon as I get confirmation, I'll circulate the information.

After the Installation lunch will be served and closer to the day, I'll be looking for numbers.

*Ramsay McGhee* - Secretary

### **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1996**

The Annual General Meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge took place on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May in Dingwall, courtesy of the Brethren of Lodge Fingal. The Lodge was opened by Past Provincial Grand Master, Brother Iain MacLean in the absence of the Provincial Grand Master, Brother Kenneth Bisset who, the previous week, had suffered a mild stroke. The Brethren present were delighted however, to hear that Brother Bisset had been discharged from Raigmore that afternoon and was making good progress.

The following Provincial Grand Lodge Office-Bearers were elected and duly installed into Office by Provincial Grand Secretary, Brother Ian Fraser. who carried out his duties in his normal proficient and able manner.

Snr Warden - Bro Bob MacLean, 854

Treasurer - Bro Bob Beveridge – 82

SD - Bro Robert Sutherland – 866

D of C - Bro Brian Morrison – 1117

Jeweller - Bro Peter Nieto, 1217

Bard - Bro Colin Forbes, 1553

Dir of Music - Bro Richard Cunningham, 1553

Std Bearer - Bro D Sutherland, 854

Pres. Of Stewards - Bro Alastair Taylor 134

Jnr Warden - Bro Billy Ross, 866

Almoner - Bro Donald MacKay - 318

JD - Bro Hugh Skinner, 82

Architect - Bro Tom Anderson, 82

Bible Bearer - Bro Ronnie Cooper, 134

Sword Bearer - Bro Sinclair Bruce, 854

Marshall - Bro D Bisset, 854

IG - Bro Leslie Ross, 888

Tyler - Bro Andrew MacIver, 134

By my reckoning nine of the Office-bearers from 30 years ago have passed to the Grand Lodge above plus, of course the Installing Master on the day.

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## LODGE SEAFORTH 854

### 50 Year Jubilee Certificate

The Master of the Lodge had the very pleasing duty of presenting Bro. Stewart Hiddleston with his 50 Year Jubilee Certificate and Jewel. Bro. Stewart joined Lodge Kirkliston Maitland No.482 on the 19th of January 1976 and later affiliated to Lodge Seaforth No.854 in March 1989.

Coincidentally Bro. Sinclair Bruce, the father of the current Master, was the Master in the chair of the lodge at that time.

The Master praised Bro. Hiddleston for being a great attender at lodge meetings, social events and fundraising activities, and for being a great ambassador for Lodge Seaforth.

### Doors Open Day

The Lodge took part in the Grand Lodge sponsored Open Doors Days, in a joint event with the other Black Isle based lodges.

The theme was to promote a “Masonic Journey” around the Black Isle lodges, each promoting the work they carry out in their respective communities.

The event received a mixed attendance from the public with Robertsons Lodge and Lodge Rosehaugh reporting a high number of inquisitive visitors

### February Regular Meeting

At the Regular Meeting in February, as well as the presentation of the 50 Year jubilee Certificate to Bro. Stewart Hiddleston, the Brethren enjoyed an interesting lecture from Bro. Steven O’Donnell entitled “The Maul, the Gavel and the Mallet”.

### March Regular Meeting

At the March Regular Meeting, Bro. Matthew Ross was passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft. This was also the Provincial Grand Lodge Annual Visitation, which marked the last visitation by Bro. Raymond Mackeddie PM as Provincial Grand Master.



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## **April Regular Meeting**

Bro. Alex Craib, Past Master of Lodge Fingal No.318 presented a thought-provoking paper on why we as Freemasons close our lodges with the phrase “Fidelity, Fidelity, Fidelity”.

The Lodge will now be in recess until the next Regular Meeting on the third Monday of September 2026.

There will be a visit planned to Lodge John O’Groat No.1333 on 27th June 2026, where Lodge Seaforth will be invited to work a degree on one of their candidates. These reciprocal visits have been long established, and a much-anticipated event in our respective lodge calendars.

## **Bingo Nights**

The lodge was successful in hosting Community Bingo Nights throughout the winter months.

There will now be a break over the summer months, and it is planned to host the Community Bingo Nights from October to April, on the third Friday of each month, £1 per entry, great raffle with loads of fantastic prizes, and good craic guaranteed.

All members and visitors most welcome.

*Raymond Mackeddie*

Lodge Secretary

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1996**

### **Stornoway insomnia**

Thanks to a small presentation from Brother Roy MacIver, Lodge Fingal, at the meeting of Lodge Seaforth on Monday 20th May, I am now looking forward to next year’s visit to Stornoway. Having returned from this year’s visit to Stornoway completely shattered, due to a total inability to sleep in a room with a certain Brother whose nocturnal noises resemble a sawmill during a thunderstorm with the drum corps of the Scots Guards playing in the background, the ear plugs from Brother Roy will no doubt do the trick next year.

Out of courtesy, the Brother in question will remain nameless - suffice to say that he is a Past Master in Robertson’s Lodge, lives in Contin and is now an Honorary Member of St Martin.

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## LODGE AVERON No 866

Hi there Brethren, hope you are all well.

I finished up the last edition with the line - 'I wonder how long it will be till the May edition' - well the answer is, not very long..... how this year is flying already. From when I was about 18 years of age and right up till i joined the craft, pretty much all the brethren I met told me, 'It wouldn't do me any harm!!!' At the same time, I took the mickey out of my friends who had already taken the plunge, saying things like your only up there to dish out the soup. It's funny how things are so different, yet still the same, I now find myself saying 'it won't do you any harm', I dish out the same soup, and now as I get older find myself saying 'Aye the days are fair stretching, and the grass has started growing. Times may be different, but in reality, things stay the same.

And now for the weather.....changeable for most but a warm front incoming at some point to help the grass grow.....

February got off to a flier, with our annual Provincial visitation, led by the PGM Brother MacKeddie and his distinguished deputation. The business of the evening was passing Brother Fraser McDougall to the Fellowcraft Degree. On conclusion of the work Brother MacKeddie delivered his report and I am happy to say it was very favourable and showed Lodge Averon in good light. This being Brother MacKeddie's final official visit as PGM before he demits office on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, can our Lodge take this opportunity to thank you for your leadership, friendship and direction over the last five years it has been greatly appreciated, enjoy your retirement, Raymond.

Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> of February was the date in the diary for our annual senior citizen's party, once again held down at the Alness Ardross Bowling club. The way the date was this year meant that there were a few clashes with other events that brethren were committed to and it was Valentine's Day to boot. A massive thanks to all the brethren and ladies who contributed and assisted on the day. In a change this year the music and song was provided by Iain and Jackie, which went down well, Pipe Major Bro Callum MacKenzie on the pipes and the Highland Dancers from the Ann Noble School of Dance. Again much appreciation to the Bowling Club for allowing us to use your facilities.



*Above – Iain and Jackie entertain.*



*Above right – Mrs MacBeath & Mrs Miller doing the catering*



*Right -the Dancers*

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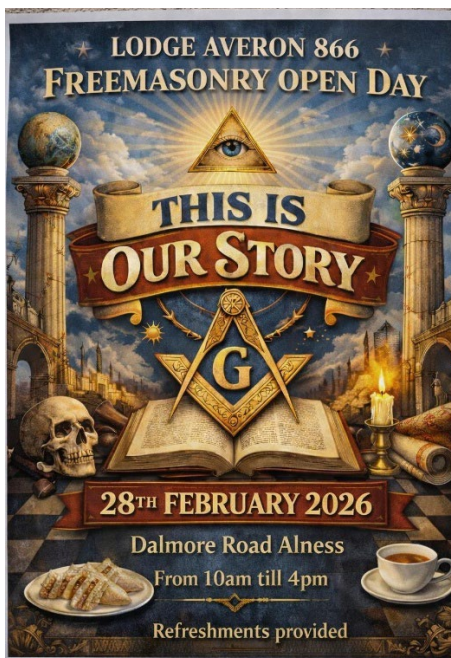


*The Dancers in action*



*Bros Robinson & Hermitage in action*

Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> February saw us support the Grand Lodge of Scotland Open Doors ~*This Is Our Story* initiative. This event had our lodge set up ready for work, and a band of brethren willing to explain what we are about and show our many visitors around. The visitors on the day were a wide mix of people from the communities ranging from family members, social night attenders and a lady who saw it advertised in the chemist! Hopefully these visitors will spread the word as to what we do.



Our last fundraising event of the session was a fundraising quiz night for Nicky Logan who is taking part in Strictly Inverness on the 15<sup>th</sup> May raising funds for Highland Hospice. This event came to fruition when IPM Charlie Carrison was approached by Nicky's team to see if we could help in any way. Brother Carrison took this to open lodge and the foot tapping was thunderous. The quizmaster was Mr Cool PM John MacKenzie from Lodge St Duthus, his craic went down great as usual. Now on to the important bit the fantastic sum of £1030.00 was raised on the night including a £250.00 donation from Lodge Averon, a substantial raffle..... and the best bit..... the Big TLC Teddy previously auctioned, won and very kindly donated back to the Lodge, was the subject of a raffle board with 100 squares with names of teddies in each one at a fiver a go, all sold £500.00, was won by John Douglas, who after listening to an impassioned story about the TLC Teddies initiative with the four north provinces and an even more emotive tale about a gallon bottle of Famous Grouse from 'Rob the Raffle' (if you know you know) very kindly donated the Big Ted back to the Lodge for some future fundraising activities. To date Big Ted has raised a fantastic amount of £620.00 between his two outings, he has

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when interviewed later in the evening, said he would like to reach £1000.00 by the end of the year and maybe even more. Nicky took time to explain her journey with the dancing and her motivation, we were quite shocked, when informed it takes £1000.00 per day per patient to run the Hospice and with 11 beds that's £11000.00 per day, and the beauty of her fundraising, is it goes straight to source. Well done Nicky and thanks to all who come to support the event whether taking part, setting up working behind the bar, raffle donations and food for the half time buffet.



*The Quiz Teams*



*John & Nicky with the Big TLC*



*Quizmaster John 'Cool' MacKenzie*

On top of our fundraising work we do also have our regular masonic business to attend to, Brother McDougall was passed to the degree of fellow craft in February, Brother McColmbe initiated in March and finally Brothers Brannan and Hunter were advanced to the degree of Mark Master Mason in April. We have also had three successful ballots carried out recently so the future for Lodge Averon looks to be busy.

Some dates for your diary's.

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00 pm.** Cromarty Firth Royal Arch 310, are having a Mr and Mrs night, hosted by Brother Brian Jay our resident magician, Music by PM McBeath and the usual raffle all complimented by the Averon Bar. Contact Frazer McBeath for more information and tickets 07752 791743.



*Left – get the date in your diary – a night of fun and laughter.*

*Right – winners of one of the Christmas Hampers.*



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**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August.** Community Family Barbeque in the lodge grounds.



*All set for the bar-be-que*

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August.** Special meeting the night before the installation of our PGM elect Brother David MacMaster, we will be raising Brother Fraser McDougall to the degree of master mason. Hopefully if everything goes according to plan, we will have a smallish deputation joining us from Trinidad and Tobago & Grenada which is always good craic.

It always amazes me when I start writing the patter contribution, I think, what will I write about, then it all comes back and I realise how active we and our sister lodges are in our community. That's us in our summer recess now, but the work doesn't stop really with various lodges having special meetings and visitations throughout the summer period and we look forward to seeing you all in 'daylight'.

I hope you all take away a smile from our contribution to the 'Patter's' 127<sup>th</sup> edition; can Lodge Averon take this opportunity to thank the editor, Bro Ramsay McGhee for his efforts – it's greatly appreciated by the brethren of the Province.

Kind regards and all the best.

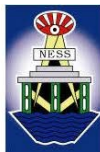
*Brother James McDougall S.M.*

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**LODGE NESS No 888**

16th May 2026: **Lodge Ness Cars and Country.**

Subject to final confirmations, plans are well advanced for the Lodge Ness Invergordon Cars & Country Fair, with all key elements in place to support a successful event. Once confirmed, the fair will include live music, a wide selection of vehicles, local traders, and attractions for all ages, offering a fantastic day out for the community in Invergordon and beyond. Brethren wishing to be involved are encouraged to contact the Lodge.

October to March: **Regular meetings of Lodge Ness 888, Invergordon.**

Regular meetings of Lodge Ness 888 are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays, from the beginning of October to the end of March, assembling at 19:45 for 20:00 Tyle.

Lodge Ness 888 contact details: E-Mail: [LodgeNess888@outlook.com](mailto:LodgeNess888@outlook.com) | Website: [www.LodgeNess888.co.uk](http://www.LodgeNess888.co.uk)

Cheers for now, *Robert Donaldson* - Lodge Ness 888

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2001**

### ***I'm Tired***

Yes, I'm tired. For several years I've been blaming it on old age, iron deficiency, poor blood, lack of vitamins, air pollution, saccharin, obesity, dieting, under-arm odour and a dozen other maladies that make you wonder if life is really worth living.

But now I find out - 'tain't that.

I'm tired because I'm overworked.

The population of this country is 60 million. 20 million are retired. That leaves 40 million to do the work. There are 12 million in school which leaves 28 million to do the work. Of this total, there are 6 million employed by the Government and there are 4 million unemployed. That leaves 18 million to do the work. 3 million are in the armed forces which leaves 15 million to do the work. Take from this total the 14,800,000 people who work for County and City Councils and that leaves 200,000 to do the work. There are 188,000 in hospitals, so that leaves 12,000 to do the work. Now, there are 11,998 people in prison - that leaves just two people to do the work - you and me - and you, yer idle - sitting there reading this. No wonder I'm tired.

***Another we gem from the late Brother Roddy Cade.***

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## LODGE KYLE No 1117

Lodge Kyle will be active during the summer with two main projects / events and a possible visit from another Lodge out with the Province.

### PROJECT 2026

We will kick off with Project 2026, although names for the year 2026, it's likely to take a little longer than the summer months of June, July and August. The plan is to task each Brother with responsibilities akin to his skillsets. The older brethren can therefore refrain from clambering around the roof with a bucket of cement repairing the chimney's flaunching! Their talents may better lie in wielding a paintbrush or deep cleaning each of the Lodge rooms.

With the help of expert advice, and information from the Treasurer, we realised that the roof is unlikely to be completely replaced, with a more realistic approach of "maintaining" the roof at regular intervals as and when necessary. The current issue is the harling on the chimney's brickwork, and the flaunching around the pots. With these items addressed, we can easily survive another few West Coast Highland winters.

### OPEN DAY

We are also going to hold an Open Day where members of the public can enter the Lodge, speak to Freemasons and ask any questions they might have. It's an ideal opportunity to dispel myths and advance Masonic principles. While we have several new younger members in the Lodge, we need to constantly target specific age groups, 25-50 years old being ideal prospects. The Open Day will be held during the summer on a Saturday so that our target demographic is more likely to come and see what Freemasonry is all about. Word of mouth, Social Media, Website and traditional advertising will ensure visitors and locals at least will be aware of the event.

### PHISHING ATTACKS

Recently there has been an uptick in targeted Phishing attacks. For those who do not know, a Phishing Attack is akin to a Con Artist in an email. Typically, the purpose is to try to get your money or personal information. But the latest "cons" mentions one of your friends, relative or associate in the email thus lending an extra degree of believability to the scam. It's as though someone or something has researched your on-line persona and social media; and they have! Associations like Freemasonry are easy targets because information needed to create scam emails is freely available in the media, social media and websites. Software is now available that can analyse potential targets and who they are connected to. Using AI, the software can set up draft emails, cloned email addresses, so that you think the email is from a friend or family member. Then ... the AI software will send out emails by the thousand. In the past scam artists relied on cheesy stories about a Nigerian Prince and how you can share in his good fortune. These days a teenager can download state of the art software, send out thousands of targeted emails at the push of a button and watch the money roll in. Rule number one – never click a link in an email! Rule number two – phone or message a friend and ask them if their request for money or a gift card is real. Hint: it's probably not! Be aware and stay safe.

*Ronnie Miller*, PM - Secretary

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## LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

We were pleased to be able to work an 1<sup>st</sup> Degree for our February meeting with local contractor Russell Mackenzie being our candidate. Good turnout for excellent meeting. In March we were able to welcome Fraser Patience from Aberdeen into the craft. Not long passed his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday Fraser followed the footsteps of his Grandfather, Father and 2 uncles in joining Lodge Rosehaugh. Fraser did very well for his young age. Again, a good turnout as we had for our April meeting which was Fraser's 2<sup>nd</sup> degree and the visitation of PGL led this year by Substitute Master Bro. David Macmaster.

We decided at our AGM not to hold a May meeting this term due to lack of numbers in the last few years. However, we plan to have a whisky tasting evening instead. We also have a local photographer who came along to our open day in attendance as he is keen to take some portrait photos. Hopefully something to show in next patter.

Lodge Rosehaugh received their rates bill last week showing that we are due £1972. We have gone online to the Highland Council small business bonus scheme to get relief from this bill. Lodges who previously got relief MUST re-apply by 31 Jul 2026.

*Keith Patience*, PM

### **BLAST from the PAST – from – February 2001**

PM, Bro Donnie Ross from Lodge Ness has been at the poetry once again. For those present at the Provincial Meeting to St Martin, this will ring a bell!!!

#### *The Cuff*

Well Morris was a Policeman,  
This we all know.  
We follow him to meetings,  
We go to and fro.  
When we went to Ullapool,  
He must have been in the huff,  
Cos, he pulled up poor George Napier  
For the way he wore his Cuff.

When the meeting was over,  
Hi Coff, he says to me.  
Can you write a poem about this,  
No prob says I to he.  
And as I think it over,  
He was probably right enough,  
Poor George Napier got it wrong,  
The way he wore his Cuff.

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## Lodge St Martin 1217

The lodge has been busy with two candidates coming through. We will be doing a MM degree on Tuesday 19th May, starting at 8pm. This is the last regular meeting of the season.

We also applied for funding assistance from the Grand Master Mason's matching funding initiative and have since installed a defibrillator on the exterior of the lodge available for use 24/7 by anyone in need. Our thanks to The Order of St John and all the donors of monies and assistance.

We are doing an "Open Doors" event on 23rd May 2026 as part of the "Ullapool Luggerfest" event. The lodge will be open and a BBQ and jamming session will hopefully take place.

Proceeds from the BBQ is for the defibrillator maintenance.



At the meeting in March, Bro. David Johnston was presented with a 50-year certificate and jewel. Bro. David has been a member of the craft in his Mother lodge of Coquetdale Lodge 5122 EC and St Martin in excess of 50 years.

Bro. David is pictured with RWM Bro. Gordon Mackenzie PM on the next page.

All the best

*Charles MacAulay, PM*  
Secretary

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*Brother David Johnstone with the Master of 1217, Bro Gordon MacKenzie*



Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup> saw our first Regular Meeting in our new home in Dingwall; warm and dry! Whilst the main business of the morning was working a 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree for Bro Jordan Mackenzie on behalf of Lodge Fingal, sadly it was preceded by an obituary for the passing to the Grand Lodge Above of Brother Alastair (Ally) Gault, who, as a Past Master and staunch supporter of Lodge Loch Ewe, will be sorely missed.

On a brighter note, we welcomed back into the Lodge Bro Richard Cunningham, whom many of the brethren throughout the province will remember as a Past Master of the Lodge in the late 1990s. It is great to see him attending the Lodge again after many years' absence – and we shall certainly look forward to having him at the organ once more.

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Our next meeting will be held in the MH Dingwall on Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup>, tiling at 11:30. This will also be the annual Provincial Grand Lodge visit to the Lodge, and we will again be working a 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree on behalf of Lodge Fingal.

*Michael Longley*, PM – Lodge Loch Ewe



## Ye Corporation O' Squaremen Hielan Shed

On 15<sup>th</sup> November we accompanied the GWD Neil Cooper to the Deacons Court and Visit to Angus Shed in Dundee – they hadn't got any Candidates, but we were made welcome as usual

20<sup>th</sup> February 8 Brither's accompanied GWD Neil on the Grand Shed Visit to Wokingham Shed in London – Bri Boxie had the pleasure of Installing Bri Ian Cairns and his Officers for 26/27 and although some of the travelling Brither's managed a four-day holiday others had just a couple of days but all had a great time and were made very welcome and of course what happened in London stayed in London !!!!

On 7<sup>th</sup> March we held our AGM where Bri Mike McInnes was Installed as Worthy Deacon by Bri Boxie and his Officers were Installed by GWD Neil – at the Meeting we Donated £900 to 9 local Charities plus £300 to the GWD Neil's Charity for Archies Bereavement Fund which helps children who have lost a parent

4<sup>th</sup> April we went to our first venue of the season at Lodge Fingal where we had one Candidate from Lodge Ness join the Corporation but were disappointed by the low turn out

GWD Neil travelled to Ayr Shed in Gourock on 11<sup>th</sup> April for the Grand Shed visit and was made an Honorary Member

On 25<sup>th</sup> of April we are due to go to the Grand Shed AGM and Installation where Neil will hand over the Mallet to Bri David McLay of Ochil Shed who is to become the next Grand Worthy Deacon of Scotland.

Our next Heilan Shed Meeting will be in Lodge Ness in Invergordon on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and it is hoped for a good turnout.

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*WD Ian Cairns (in the middle) and his Offices in Wokingham Shed (note the new Brithers on the left have not been told how to tie their ties yet).*

## VISITS FOR 2026

2<sup>nd</sup> MAY - Lodge Ness – **INVERGORDON** – bus leaves Inverness 13:30

6<sup>th</sup> JUNE – **GRAND SHED VISIT** – GORDON TERRACE – **INVERNESS 3:00 p.m. sharp**

4<sup>th</sup> JULY – NO MEETING

1<sup>st</sup> AUGUST – Lodge St Johns (Operative) - **FORRES** - bus leaves Inverness 13:00

5<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER –Lodge St Clements – **TARBET, HARRIS - PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO Ullapool**

**Overnight stay in Stornoway**

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1998**

### **The nine o' clock Toast**

During our frequent trips south of the Border and when visiting English Constitution Lodges abroad, both the Provincial Grand Master and I are always impressed with the formality of the Festive Board and the different Toasts we are made aware of. One such Toast that we often hear is the "Nine o' Clock" Toast (although in some Lodges it is proposed at ten o' clock). However, I have come across a version of the Toast that I have never heard before and which I thought might be of interest to the many readers we now have in English Lodges throughout the world - here it is:

If at nine o'clock you listen when around the festive board,

If you listen very closely with hearts tuned in accord,

You'll hear from in the West and South,

You're charged in fullest measure -

Some distant voices calling - "*Brother may I have the pleasure*".

For at nine o' clock we toast you wherever you may stand,

At home or maybe out of town or in some distant land.

With brimming hearts and tearful eyes,

We steal a moment's leisure,

To call our ancient challenge - "*Brother may I have the pleasure.*"

For we are bound together by a universal link,

We drink of that masonic cup from which we all may drink,

So, to that far flung Brotherhood whose fellowship we treasure,

The old Masonic greeting - "*Brother may I have the pleasure.*"

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## **News from the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland**

On Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> April, I made my way from Inverness to Sofia via Amsterdam, to attend the Inauguration of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Bulgaria.

Along the way either KLM or Bulgarian Airlines managed to lose my luggage. I arrived with basically what I stood up in.

On Tuesday evening there was a black-tie dinner which I missed as I would have been totally improperly dressed however, on Wednesday morning I took a taxi to a shopping mall to acquire a new suit, shirt etc. As Mrs McGhee would confirm, I have a total dislike of shops, so it wasn't the happy boy who, unable to converse in Bulgarian, had to find a suitable shop in the midst of the Mall. I ended up in Peek & Cloppenburg which, personally, I'd never heard of but a young lady, whose English was much superior to my Bulgarian very ably assisted me.

Back in the Hyatt Hotel, I joined the other "Distinguished Guests" to witness the Supreme Grand Chapter of England carry out a most impressive ceremony during which MEC Borislav Sarandev was installed as the first, First Grand Principal.

The English Deputation was headed by MEC Sir David Wooton, Second Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Chapter of England, who was ably assisted by MEC George Pipon Francis as 2<sup>nd</sup> Grand Principal, MEC Gareth Jones, OBE as 3<sup>rd</sup> Grand Principal, EC Oliver James Coddington, Scribe E, EC Antony Paul Grier as D of C, EC Dr Giles Robert Evelyn Shilson Assistant D of C, EC David Cynrig Timothy Roberts-Jones, Organist and EC John Antonio Vazquez, Janitor.

The singing during the ceremonial was excellent with some good Hymns to get everyone involved - "Hail Eternal by whose aid" to the tune St Bees, "Guide me O thou great Jehovah" to that favourite tune, Cwm Rhondda and "Ye that know the Lord is Gracious" to Hyfrydol.

After the ceremony, we enjoyed dinner during which the Installing Officers were all made Honorary Members of the new Grand Chapter.

The saga of the missing luggage – I eventually retrieved my luggage from Inverness Airport on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

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*The Installing Team with the new Grand Principals – was most impressed with the new robes*



*Consecration Vessels*



*The Sojourners Stations*

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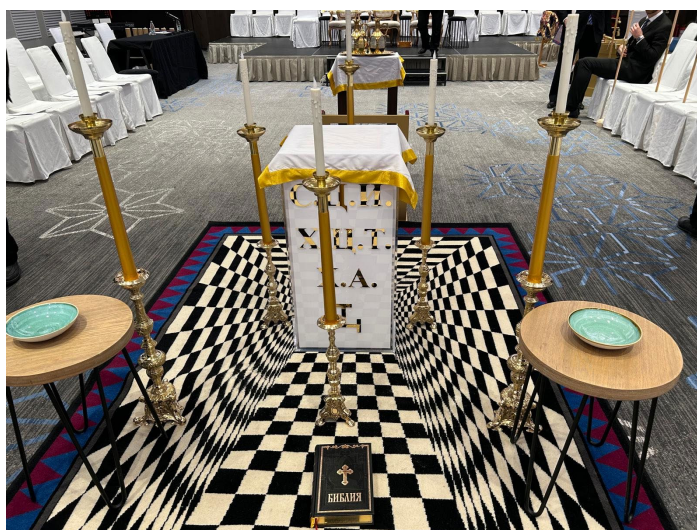
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I borrowed a Grand Inspectors Apron from England a collar from Bulgaria, Bulgarian tie and my new Peek & Cloppenburg suit - a wee change from the usual!!!!!!



*Ready for Corn, Wine and Oil*

## **Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter Dates**

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May      Installation of new Grand Superintendent – Banff, Moray and Nairn in Forres

## **PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of ROSS & CROMARTY**

### **GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS MESSAGE**

It's been a great honour to lead the Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross and Cromarty but sadly report that this is my last communication to you as Grand Superintendent.

I haven't received all the nomination papers to hand yet but the Chapters in the Province are firmly behind the one candidate.

It's great that we are united, and I extend my congratulations to my successor who will take over the reins on 1st June, subject to approval of Grand Supreme Committee who meet this month (May).

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Can I thank the Chapters within the Province for their welcome/hospitality on the occasions of my official visits and ask you give my successor even more support in any initiatives which may be introduced.

Can I remind all the Companions of the visit to Hebrides Royal Arch Chapter in May and the Provincial Grand RA Chapter of Ross and Cromarty AGM at 12 noon on Saturday 23rd May, in Lodge Fingal No 318 Dingwall, when it's hoped to have a visiting Speaker in attendance.

*Morris M Downie*

Grand Superintendent

## **From the Provincial Scribe E**

As the masonic season draws to a close, the Provincial Royal Arch Chapter of Ross & Cromarty reflects on a period marked by camaraderie and tradition. Recent Provincial Visitations included Tain & Ross No. 63 on Monday, 23rd February 2026, Cromarty Firth No. 310 on Wednesday, 4th March 2026, and St Clements No. 244 on Friday, 27th March 2026. The Chapter now looks forward to the final visitations: Hebrides No. 364 on Wednesday, 13th May 2026, and the Cryptic & Ark Mariner Councils on Thursday, 14th May 2026.

The culmination of the season will be the Annual Convocation of the Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross & Cromarty, taking place at Fingal Lodge, Dingwall, on Saturday, 23rd May 2026 at 12 Noon. The afternoon's business will include the important nomination and election of the elective office bearers, a key event in the Chapter's calendar.

All suitably qualified members are warmly invited to attend these meetings and participate in the vibrant life of the Chapter. The Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter extends its gratitude to all who have contributed to a successful season and looks forward to continued fellowship in the coming year.

## **Provincial Dates**

The Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Ross & Cromarty is pleased to announce the schedule for its remaining annual visitations. The following dates have been confirmed for the respective chapters:

- Hebrides No. 364 – Wednesday, 13th May 2026
- Cryptic & Ark Mariners – Thursday, 14th May 2026

All Companions are warmly welcomed to attend these visitations. We look forward to strengthening the bonds of fellowship and celebrating the achievements of our chapters during these important occasions.

For further information, please contact the Provincial Grand Scribe E

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**Tain & Ross Royal Arch Chapter No 63**

**St Clement Royal Arch Chapter No 244**

**Cromarty Firth Royal Arch No 310**

**Royal Arch Chapter Hebrides No. 364.**

Donald Macdonald was made an Excellent Master at our March meeting and will be the candidate for our Royal Arch degree in May.

*Donnie Macleod*

Donald Macleod IPGS R&C

## **ST ANDREW CRYPTIC COUNCIL AND LODGE AND COUNCIL NO 115. INVERNESS**

Many Companions throughout the Province of Ross and Cromarty have, over many years joined the Cryptic Council and Lodge and Council in Inverness because it was easier to access than our own Hebrides Council in Stornoway.

Unfortunately, due to lack of support, St Andrew 115 has ceased to function but the new Grand Superintendent Elect for Inverness-shire, MEC Ian Woolley is keen to see it reinstated and flourishing once again.

This is an appeal to all Royal Arch Masons in Ross and Cromarty who, over the years, have been admitted to St Andrew Lodge and Council and St Andrew Cryptic Council – we need you to return and support the Council in the new Masonic Year – do not worry if you have no recollection of the signs and tokens, no recollection of the marvellous story portrayed in Cryptic and Ark Mariner Degrees – we will initially hold an informal get together of all former members and gently take you through the various stages. The important thing is that you return to the fold.

The intention is to hold only one or two meetings a year until we can build up the membership from lapsed and new members.

Please get in touch with either Ian Woolley or me if you feel inclined to return and help us reinstate St Andrew 115 – likewise we welcome Companions from throughout the Highlands and Islands who can assist as Office-bearers or who would like to further their Masonic Knowledge

# PROVINCIAL PATTERN

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MAY 2026

## PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Preceptory was celebrated on 21 March when The Most Eminent and Reverend Grand Master William Raymond King GCT and his team carried out an excellent re-dedication ceremony. Three of the surviving 6 charter members were able to attend.



*Front: RE DGP Eric Macgregor, VP Henry Macinnes & ME&R Grand Master W Raymond King GCT  
Behind: Charter members D Macleod KCT, Fr Sandy Matheson & Fr John Steven*

†‡ Donald Macleod KCT

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## DISTRICT GRAND PRIORY OF THE NORTH IN SCOTLAND.

### District Programme for remainder of 2025 - 2026

Preceptory	Installation Date
Maison Dieu No.101	14 <sup>h</sup> November 2025 Re-installation
St Fergus No.44	20 <sup>st</sup> November 2025 Re-installation
Lochaber & Lorn No139	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2025 Re-installation
Western Isles No.124	24 <sup>th</sup> October 2025 Re-installation
Highland No. 39	17 <sup>th</sup> October 2025 Installation
Ross No 138	Dormant

†† Eric Macgregor DGP

†† Donald Macleod KCT

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 2010**



*The Squaremen in Ullapool*

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## Royal Order of Scotland

### Provincial Grand Lodge of Inverness and the Highlands

Provincial Grand Secretary: Bro. Michael Scott Turner

Provincial Grand Lodge of Inverness and the Highlands held their first meeting of the new Masonic season on 11 April 2026, after a rest period of seven months. Three brethren were Advanced and Promoted, and the brethren enjoyed the comradery and brotherhood of the occasion.

As there are several members from the Outer Isles who are restricted to the time they can be at the meetings by the timing of bus and ferry sailings, the starting time for the ensuing year is 13:00, so please make a note in your diaries.

The Province of Inverness and the Highlands covers quite a large territory, including the counties of Inverness, Nairn, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, Orkney, Moray and Lewis and Harris. It is the plan of the Provincial Grand Master, Bro George A Mackay, to hold a special meeting in one of the outlying areas in the Autumn.

The next meeting will be on Saturday, 13 June 2026 (Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> is on a Saturday this month), tiling at 13:00. All members and visitors will be most welcome.

*Michael Scott Turner*

Provincial Grand Secretary



*Lodge Fingal on Fyrish*

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## BITS AND PIECES

### PROVINCIAL DEPUTATION TO THE CARIBBEAN

On Monday 9th March 2026 seven brethren from the Province of Ross and Cromarty left a cold, wet Gatwick Airport, hoping to enjoy some sunnier weather and meet up with our friends from the District Grand Lodge of Trinidad and Tobago & Grenada.

After a long ten-hour flight, we were warmly and cordially met by several of the local District Grand Lodge Brethren, and after the usual welcome formalities and catching up with old friends, we were whisked off to Port of Spain to get checked in to our accommodation.

After check in formalities, we met for some light refreshment with some of the local Brethren and caught up with other arriving visitors, including the Grand Master Mason, Bro. Alexander Moncrieff, and Grand Director of Ceremonies, Bro. Ronnie Forbes.

On Tuesday 10th March we were invited to attend an Entered Apprentice Degree at Lodge United Brothers No. 251, the second oldest overseas lodge in the Scottish Constitution, which meets at the Temple at Mount Moriah, one of the oldest buildings in



continuous Masonic use in the world. This degree retains part of its ritual from an old French form, from the lodges origin before it was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, which involves the candidates taking part in unique Symbolic Voyages, which certainly leaves a distinct impression on any candidates' mind. Afterwards we retired to a very well attended and harmonious dinner, with many interesting toasts and replies.

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The Provincial Grand Master presented the Master of Lodge United Brothers with a comparative plaque of behalf of the Deputation from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty.



The main purpose of our visit was to attend the installation ceremony of the District Grand Master, Bro Warren Sookdar, a brother well known to us in Ross and Cromarty, from his many visits here.

A huge crowd assembled in the luxurious surroundings of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, with one of the Ballrooms converted to a Lodge for the purposes of installation.

The installation of the District Grand Master and his commissioned Office-bearers was ably carried out by the Grand Master Mason, Bro. Alexander Moncrieff, assisted by Grand Director of Ceremonies, Bro. Ronnie Forbes, and acting Grand Secretary, Bro. Alex Craib.

After the formal proceedings and the obligatory photographs, we all retired to an excellent Banquet, and the formal Toasts and replies. During the evening there was some lighter entertainment with some very enjoyable musical interludes.



On the Thursday, after the excitement on the preceding day's events, some of the local Brethren took our party on a boat trip to one of the small islands to the west of Trinidad.

It was a beautiful and peaceful location, which gave us a chance to unwind and enjoy some local hospitality and swim in the warm Caribbean waters.

Such a relaxing day was very welcome after such a hectic schedule of events.

Brother James MacDougall, Substitute Master of Lodge Averon and the PGM, Brother Raymond MacKeddie relaxing in the Caribbean sunshine.

No truth in the rumour that they have signed up with a modelling agency!!!





All to soon our trip came to an end, and we had to make our plans to leave, and say our goodbyes to old friends and new acquaintances made and look forward to the next time we can meet and enjoy our time together again.



We left behind Bro. Ivor Munro and his wife Sheelagh, who continued onto Grenada to enjoy a well-deserved holiday break.

Bro Ivor met up with the Brethren in Grenada and attended a meeting of Lodge St Andrews No. 1794, where he very kindly presented the Master with Lodge Fingal Bicentenary Anniversary Bottle of whisky, which I am quite sure will have been well received.

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - AUGUST 2006**

*Our PGM Elect presenting a cheque to Highland Hospice as a result of his "Mile of Pounds" initiative*



## **BLAST FROM THE PAST - FROM - MAY 1996**

### **"I Sat in Lodge with You".**

There is a saying filled with cheer,  
Which calls a man to fellowship.  
It means as much for him to hear,  
As lies within the Brother grip.  
Nay more. It opens wide the way  
To friendship deep and true:  
There are no strangers when you say,  
"I sat in Lodge with You".

Though in far lands one's needs must roam,  
By sea and shore and plain,  
These words bring him a touch of home  
And lighten tasks which seem in vain.  
Men's faces are no longer strange,  
But seem as those he knew,  
When someone brings the joyous change,  
"I sat in Lodge with You".

So, you my Brother, now and then,  
Have put me in your debt,  
By showing forth to other men  
That you did not forget.  
And when the world seems grey and cold  
And I am weary worn and blue,  
Then comes this golden thought I hold,  
"I sat in Lodge with You".