

Within Your Province

The Newsletter for Staffordshire Freemasons

ISSUE 19

AUTUMN 2007

Clearing up after Pop Festival to help International charity

Forty Royal Arch Freemasons, including the Grand Superintendent, E Comp David Hampson, and the Assistant Provincial Grand Master W Bro Keith Thomas, helped clear one of the campsites at Weston Park after the annual V Festival in August.

And they managed to dismantle and pack up around 250 tents and other camping equipment which will be sent overseas to provide shelter in a disaster area.



So where exactly did we leave our tent?

The Masonic contingent which linked up with local Rotarians helped to fill two large vans, a 7.5 ton truck and a 40 foot articulated lorry during the tent collection.

All the items collected have been shipped to the charity International Aid who will send them to an area where they are needed.

Rotary District 1210 International Committee Service chair Alan Holdcroft said: "It was good to see the group of Masons working with everyone. Please thank them all. I don't know where this year's collection will go but last year collected items went to Ukraine, Pakistan and Sri Lanka all within eight weeks."

Deputy Grand Superintendent E Comp John Winter said: "This was only the tip of the iceberg because the combined Rotary and Masonic manpower (and woman power) was only able to tackle one of the six campsites before the bulldozers moved in."

E Comp David Hampson said: "There is considerable benefit working with Rotary on this sort of project and it demonstrates that our charity is not confined to raising money. It also created a good team spirit, helping people less fortunate than ourselves."

He also said he hoped to repeat the operation again next year with an even greater number of Freemasons.

Promotion at 50 year celebration



W Bro Terry Adam pictured with W Bro Gary Read, centre, and W Bro Jack Robards.

When W Bro Jack Robards, Mercia Lodge, 3995, attended his December lodge meeting last year he arrived at a Past Provincial Junior Grand Warden, an honour bestowed 20 years ago, and left as a Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden.

The occasion was the celebration of his 50 years in Freemasonry which, apart from receiving the promotion and certificate

from Assistant Provincial Grand Master W Bro Gary Read, had a special significance for the Worshipful Master, W Bro Terry Adam.

W Bro Adam's who was initiated by W Bro Robards 40 years earlier - to the date - presented him with a suitably inscribed new Ballot Box which he in turn presented back to the Lodge.

Forum for Younger Brethren

A forum for younger brethren is being set up with a view to holding informal meetings where they can discuss and debate relevant issues, share concerns and knowledge. The Initiates Forum will hold its first meeting on October 24 at 8pm at the Wolverhampton Masonic Hall.

One of the Forum founders, W Bro Andrew Benion, Boscobel



Lodge, 6415, said: "The idea is to provide a forum for younger members of the fraternity to meet others of a similar status in an informal gathering. We want to give them the opportunity to share any concerns they might have and

to get a better understanding of Freemasonry and its history. We also think it is important to have an extended view of how others see Masonry.

"All will be welcome but we see it really as a forum for brethren below the chair."

It is also planned to have lectures from time to time and provide an

opportunity for research.

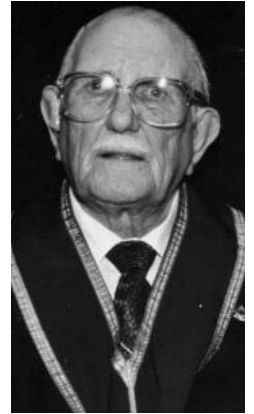
The founders are W Bro David Edwards, PAGDC, who this autumn is to be installed as Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons in Staffordshire and Shropshire, W Bro Benion and W Bro Graham Wilkes supported by a number of junior brethren.

Passed to the Grand Lodge above

It is with regret that we record the following Brethren who have passed to the Grand Lodge above since the last publication, as recorded on Wednesday, August 8, 2007, at Provincial Grand Lodge.

W Bro PA Clayton,	St Peter's Lodge, 419.
W Bro WV Cook,	Abbey Lodge, 624.
W Bro T Higginson,	Josiah Wedgwood Lodge, 2214.
W Bro TC Stowe,	St Michaels Lodge, 2484.
W Bro GH Stephens,	Lewisham Lodge, 2582.
W Bro HK Malpass,	Hanliensian Lodge, 3935.
W Bro JC Brassington,	Dieu la Cresse Lodge, 4169.
W Bro G Fisher,	St Modwens Lodge, 4850.
W Bro DT Deas,	Faith and Works Lodge, 5079.
W Bro JH Clews,	Old Eversley Lodge, 5259.
W Bro R Betts,	Old Masonians Midlands Lodge, 6762.
W Bro OH Dickenson,	Royal Wolverhampton School Lodge, 8170.

50 years since Harold was in the chair



A milestone in the history of Smith Child Lodge, 2064, was marked last year when W Bro Harold Bettany celebrated 50 years since he was installed as Master of the Lodge. Born in 1920, when his father Herbert was Master of the Lodge, he joined it in 1944, a year after qualifying as a solicitor.

12 years later he was installed as Master and four years later, in 1960, he became secretary of the lodge, a position he held for 30 years. He was also a director of the Hanley Masonic Hall for 37 years including the last 13 as chairman. He is now an honorary member.

W Bro Harold was first appointed to Provincial Grand Lodge in 1963 as Past Provincial Grand Registrar and in 1975 promoted to Provincial Junior Grand Warden. In 1987 he was promoted to Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden.

He is also the senior Past Master of Menturia Lodge, 418, where he was installed as Master in December 1968.

Museum up date

Freemasons across the Province are being asked to help W Bro Malcolm Jones get the Staffordshire Masonic Museum to the next stage of its evolution. Thanks to the support of the Hanley Masonic Hall management committee and staff the collection will soon be seen in an bigger way.

The museum room has now been expanded after various fixtures and fittings have been taken out by Malcolm. Now he needs more display cases to exhibit items and also two large pieces of toughened glass for more displays. Malcolm said: "I would be grateful to any brother who can help with any of these items and of course to anyone who has items which can be put into the collection."

The collection of Masonic jewels and pictures has been expanded and a lady in Sutton Coldfield has recently donated a solid silver rose bowl.

The next scheduled work on the museum is to the paint the room and lay a carpet.

If you can help in any way please contact Malcolm by email: malcolmjones@tiscali.co.uk

Patshull's £2,000 for hospice

Patshull Lodge No. 6592 have once again carried on their tradition of raising money for good causes by hosting several charity events during the past year. This year £2,000 was raised for the Mary Stevens Hospice, Stourbridge.



Pictured above presenting the cheque from left to right are: W. Master, W. Bro. Peter Coupe, Mrs. Elizabeth Coupe, Mrs. Ann Isherwood (Charity co-ordinator of Mary Stevens Hospice) and W. Bro. Lyndon Goddard (Charity Steward).

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Within Your Province

The Newsletter for Staffordshire Freemasons

Within Your Province is published twice yearly, in March and September and any contributions, ideas or suggestions will be welcomed by the Editor, W Bro Peter Atkins, by email to editor@pglstaffordshire.co.uk or by post to Peter Atkins, Information Officer, c/o Provincial Grand Lodge Office, 211 Tattenhall Road, Wolverhampton, WV6 0DD. He can also be contacted on his home telephone 01889 500635. Publication is made possible by the support of our advertisers and readers are requested to support them whenever possible. When doing so please mention that you saw the advertisement in Within Your Province. If you are a non-Masonic reader who would like to know more about Freemasonry please visit our website www.pglstaffordshire.co.uk or contact the Provincial Office at the address below.

Within Your Province is published on the authority of the Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Staffordshire, RW Bro Thomas DC Lloyd, TD, DL, Provincial Grand Lodge Office, 211 Tattenhall Road, Wolverhampton, WV6 0DD. Telephone and fax 01902 745151, email secretary@pglstaffordshire.co.uk

Printed by **David Bowyer Print and Design**, Stafford. 01785 253060.

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Provincial Diary Dates

- Sept 11:** Provincial Grand Masters Golf Competition at Ingestre Park Club.
- Sept 12:** Grand Lodge Quarterly Comm.
- Sept 18:** Provincial Grand Lodge General Purposes Committee, Hanley Masonic Hall.
- Sept 19:** Provincial Year Book and Calendar published.
- Oct 31:** Installation of W Bro David Edwards as Provincial Grand Master, Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Staffordshire and Shropshire.
- Nov 9:** Norah Mitchell (Minerva Lodge) Trust grant presentation, Hanley Masonic Hall.
- Nov 14:** Supreme Grand Chapter Quarterly Communication.
- Dec 4:** Visiting Grand Lodge Officers meeting, Wolverhampton Masonic Hall. Semina Scribe Es and DCs meeting, Rugeley and District Masonic Centre.
- Dec 13:** Grand Lodge Quarterly Comm. 2008
- Feb 7:** Provincial Grand Lodge General Purposes Committee meeting, Wolverhampton Masonic Hall.
- March 12:** Grand Lodge Quarterly Comm. Chapter Committee of General Purposes and Benevolent Fund, Wolverhampton Masonic Hall.
- April 30:** Grand Lodge investitures.
- May 1:** Supreme Grand Chapter Investitures.
- May 14:** Provincial Grand Lodge of Staffordshire, Staffordshire County Showground, Stafford.
- May 21:** Great Priory.
- June 11:** Grand Lodge Quarterly Communication.
- June 14:** Provincial Ball.

Lodge of Venture increases numbers



Members of Lodge of Venture, 6916, are hoping they have reversed the trend of falling membership. Three initiations took place in the first three months of the year and another is planned for October.

The Lodge, established 57 years ago, also has two more candidates in the pipeline and welcomed its first rejoining member, W Bro George Jenkins, who is now lodge secretary, last October.

At the April installation meeting in April the new Master, W Bro Brian Schofield, was supported by members of his family including his father, W Bro

W Bro Brian Schofield is pictured, centre, with, from left to right, his twin cousins W Bros Nigel and Miles Schofield, his father W Bro Francis Schofield and his uncle W Bro Viv Schofield, PPSGW.

Francis Schofield. His uncle Viv from Weymouth, Dorset and cousins, Nigel from Leamington Spa and Miles from Sheffield were also special guests.

Ompah Band night

Rugeley lodges are planning a 2013 Grand Charity Festival fund raising evening on Saturday, January 19, 2008, at Wolgarston High School, Penkridge. Tickets, £12 includes supper, are available on a first come first served basis from either W Bro Mike Reynolds (01785 713459 or W Bro Jeff Johnson (01889 584213).

There is a limit of 220 who can attend and music will be provided by Karl's Bavarian Band.

50 years certificate

W Bro John W Moren, PPrJGW, Bromwic Lodge, 6773, celebrated 50 years service on October 14, 2006. W Bro CB Denne, PAGDC, Provincial Grand Secretary, presented a 50 Year Certificate on behalf of the Province and on behalf of the Provincial Grand Master, promoted him to Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden.

Cooling down

Air conditioning is to be installed at the new Rugeley and District Masonic Centre at the Chase Golf Club.

It's a family thing!

There was nothing untoward about Friday, the 13th, when an initiation ceremony took place at Etruscan Lodge, 546.

Pictured, left to right are Bro Michael Barnett, Bro Malcolm Graham Harrison, known as Graham, Bro Mark Graham Harrison, Graham's son and

Worshipful Master, W Bro Ian Barnett, Michael's son.

Bro Graham was initiated on the night, a month after Bro Mark who was proposed by the Worshipful Master and seconded by Bro Michael who in turn proposed Bro Graham who was seconded by the WM.



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President wishes the 2013 Festival every success

Masonic relief grants in the last 12 months totalled £2.5 million, the President of the Grand Charity, VW Bro Grahame Elliott, CBE, told the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting. And 35 Staffordshire Masons and their dependants received more than £46,000.

Bro Elliott in his address gave a wide ranging précis of the work and the workings of the charity and highlighted the fact that hospices in the Province during the last 12 years had received a total of £198,924. He also said how pleased he was that the charity had funded a £49,000 research programme at Keele University into deafness.

He also made special mention of the valuable contribution to the Council of The Grand Charity of two Staffordshire Treasurer Brethren, W Bro Harold Hampton and W Bro Rod Mitchell who succeeded him.

Reporting on national activities he highlighted grants to youth work, medical research and emergency grants which included £150,000 in a three year period to support Skill Force which helps 14 to 16 year olds who are struggling with their education or at risk of exclusion. He also said £1 million over ten years to fund the Grand Charity of Freemasons' Chair of Molecular Biology for research into male cancers was making major advances.

Assisting the Red Cross/Crescent in war torn Sudan, most recently with a £50,000 grant, will provide shelter, food, health clinics, clean water and sanitation supplies for children and their families, he added.

Bro Elliott also pointed out the advantages of Lodges and now Provinces participating in the Relief Chest system to maximise effectiveness of their funds. He said approximately £30 million was held in the scheme at the moment for nearly 4,000 Lodges and Chapters.

Concluding, The President wished everyone in the Province every success and enjoyment in the lead up to and completion of the Festival in 2013 and said the charity would provide every assistance possible to help.

A year of consolidation and growth



Pictured at the official launch of the 2013 Grand Charity Festival are members of the committee with chairman Assistant Provincial Grand Master Gary Read and The President of the Grand Charity VW Bro Grahame Elliott, CBE, to the left and right of the banner. They are, left to right, W Bro Trevor Sleight, PrGStwd, W Bro John Edwards, PrJGW, Committee co-ordinator W Bro Mike Daniels, PAGDC, Bro Read, Bro Elliott, W Bro Mike Reynolds, PPrJGD, W Bro Gary Evans, PPrSGD and committee secretary W Bro David Wood, PPrGStwd.

W Bro John Francis, PPrGSwdB, who is running the 1,000 club, has been co-opted onto the committee.

Consolidation and steady growth were the key words used by the Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro Thomas DC Lloyd, TD, DL, in his annual address to members attending the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting in May at the Staffordshire County Showground.

One 60 year certificate and 12 certificates for 50 years were awarded during the year which also included the dedication of the Rugeley and District Masonic Centre, the dedication of a new Lodge banner and two significant lodge anniversaries.

"I am truly heartened by the enthusiasm, co-operation and upbeat approach where ever I go. You have all taken heed of the need to recruit the right candidates and I am aware that some lodges have waiting lists," he said, and went on to praise the Staffordshire Way education programme as an important aid to improving the retention of members.

The Provincial Grand Master also highlighted:

- The Masonic Garden at the National Memorial Arboretum and asked members to assist in the funding of a suitable impressive entrance.

- The Wilson Keys Court Masonic Housing scheme at Rugeley where the matron is soon to retire.

- The enormous contribution made by the Provincial Grand Almoner W Bro Maurice Williams, the Provincial Grand Charity Steward W Bro Alan Walker, MBE, the new secretary of the Staffordshire Masonic Charitable Association W Bro Jim Warburton and the Provincial Grand Secretary W Bro Colin Denne who will step down after three years at the end of this year.

- The success of the Visiting Officers scheme which is measured by the welcome given to the Grand Lodge officers.

He also congratulated all brethren who have been appointed or promoted and thanked those who were standing down for their valuable contribution and support. Looking to the future, the Provincial Grand Master said one of his priorities for the next year would be communications and he asked for a significant attendance from all those entitled to attend the Committee of General Purposes to do so (Tuesday, September 18, 7.00pm at Hanley Masonic Hall) in order to set the tone for further efficiency and well being within the Province.

Charity date

Following the successful fund raising night last year organised by Clarendon Lodge, 8023, and Boscobel Lodge, 6415, another event is planned for Saturday, November 24, at the Wolverhampton Masonic Centre in Tettenhall Road. In aid of the Acorns Children's Hospice at Walsall, it will start at 7.30pm and the entertainment arranged to date includes a disco and magician. A buffet is also included and more details can be obtained from one of the organisers, W Bro Andrew Benion, on 01952 253830.

First meetings

The two Uttoxeter craft lodges will soon meet for the first time at their new meeting place, the St John Ambulance HQ in Carter Street. Forrester's Lodge, 456, will meet on Thursday, September 20, and Dove Lodge, 8519, will hold the Installation meeting on September 27. The dedication ceremony will be carried out at a later date.

Photo request

All lodges in the Province are to be asked to supply a head and shoulders photo of the Worshipful Master after the annual installation meeting. They are needed as a reference at Provincial Grand Lodge and also for possible publication in Within Your Province. Where possible they should be saved as a jpeg and sent electronically to the Provincial Grand Secretary at secretary@pglstaffordshire.co.uk

Cheque for Air Ambulance

A cheque for £1,562.50 was presented to the County Air Ambulance Service by the Provincial Grand Master, who was accompanied by the Secretary of Staffordshire Masonic Charitable Association, at RAF Cosford in April. It represented the Province's part of a total donation of £12,500 from Grand Charity to the Air Ambulance Service covering Staffordshire and surrounding Provinces.

Later that day, at Foster Gough Lodge, the Provincial Grand Master presented a cheque for £10,000 to RW Bro Fred Cotton, Provincial Grand Master of Mark Master Masons of Staffordshire and Shropshire towards the Province's Mark 2007 Benevolent Festival Fund. This brought the total donated from the Craft Province to £15,000.

At the Annual General Meeting of the SMCA on June 27, W Bro John Brooke was elected President for the year 2006-7 and approval was given to donate £250 each to St. John's Ambulance, North Staffordshire Combined League of Friends, Children's Activity and Recreational Projects, and Tettenhall Wood School. The matched charity funding scheme advised in the last issue of Within Your Province will be completed by the time this issue is published and the Province will have advised Grand Charity of the non-Masonic charities who are to benefit from a grant of £5,000 available to the Province.

Applications have been received and forwarded to The Grand Charity from Acorns Children's Hospice, Compton Hospice, Douglas Macmillan Hospice, Katharine House Hospice, St. Giles Hospice, and the Donna Louise Trust, for their annual grant.

W Bro Maurice Williams, Provincial Grand Charity Steward, has recently written to all Lodge Charity Stewards re-emphasising the importance of the gift-aid scheme and tax recoverable resulting from the use of the scheme. Currently the number of brethren in Staffordshire who have completed a gift aid declaration form is under 35% of the total membership and W Bro Williams is anxious to gain as much benefit as possible from the tax recovery from personal donations.

At the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting in May, when the 2013 Festival in aid of The Grand Charity was launched, VW Bro Grahame Elliott, President of The Grand Charity, explaining the workings of the organisation urged all members not to forget our local charities and in particular the SMCA with its B fund. Staffordshire has a wonderful record of donations to many national and local non-Masonic charities and more than 150 separate organisations have been supported over the last few years assisting worthy causes of across a wide spectrum.

W.Bro. Jim Warburton, Secretary SMCA



The Provincial Grand Master and Secretary of the SMCA are pictured left, at the Air Ambulance presentation

Flooding grants

An emergency grant of £65,000 was made by The Grand Charity towards the British Red Cross UK Floods Appeal in July as the torrential rain and flooding continued to affect large areas of England. Another £35,000 had already been made available to boost Provincial Grand Lodge donations to various charitable organisations involved in flood response.

The Grand Charity also announced that it would be helping individual Masons affected by events, and their dependents, through Masonic Relief Grants which are given to relieve hardship.

In August The Grand Charity also gave an emergency grant of £50,000 to the British Red Cross Asia Floods Appeal.



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Commemorative Poem

Members of the International Masonic Poetry Society have been invited to submit a commemorative poem to mark the 150th anniversary of Staffordshire Knot Lodge, 726. The winning entry will be read at the Lodge's Sesquicentennial meeting in October 2008.

A past master of the lodge, W Bro Ken Rider, PPSGD, who is also President Emeritus of the Society, has also offered a £100 prize for the winning entry. W Bro Rider can be contacted for more details on: 01785 245485 or by e-mail at kennethrider@aol.com.

Sunday lunch

Following the success of the first Sunday lunch organized by Rugeley lodges earlier this year, another is planned, on March 30, 2008.

All surplus funds from the event, which will include another large raffle, will be donated to the 2013 Grand Charity Festival.

Morning Mercia

Mercia Lodge, 3995, which meets at Aldridge, has changed its meetings to the third Tuesday of the month and starts at 11am. The meeting is followed by lunch and says W Bro Terry Adam, Worshipful Master, it has proved to be a very popular move, particularly among older members who are not keen to go out in the evenings. It has also attracted some joining members.

Festival Memorabilia

The Grand Charity Festival 2013 committee have a number of items for sale to raise funds. Full details, they include so far, wallets, belts, braces, embroidered shirts and gloves, Festival lapel pins and cuff links, are on the Provincial website www.pglstaffordshire.co.uk

Successful Royal Arch forums

Two 'informal' forums covering various aspects of Royal Arch freemasonry during the last year resulted in around 100 attendees of which 30 were Master Masons showing a keen interest, said Grand Superintendent ME Companion David Hampson, in his address to Provincial Grand Chapter.

The success of the evenings, he said, was down to the hard work put into the events by everyone in the Order which supported the encouraging news that in the first four months of the year half the

Chapter meetings were exaltations. There were also a number of joining members.

He also asked Chapter representatives to investigate why members resign and also to encourage as many members as possible to take part in ceremonies.

The Grand Superintendent also made a personal thanks to all Companions who had helped him in so many ways during the year when, with his medical hiccup, he was unable to drive.

Congratulating newly appointed

officers, he also thanked the outgoing officers for their support particularly in Chapter visits which did so much to generate enthusiasm and bolster spirits. He ended by asking as many Companions as possible to join him in August, at the clear up of the V Festival at Weston Park, when Freemasons would be joining up with Rotarians, packing up abandoned tents and camping equipment, which would be packed and shipped to various strife ridden locations in the third world.

Chapter celebrates 150th year



Staffordshire Knot Chapter, 418, celebrated its sesquicentenary in March at a celebratory meeting at Shelton. Grand Superintendent, E Comp David Hampson, accompanied by the Deputy Grand Superintendent E Comp John Winter together with E Companions Norman Joughin and Tim Barrett, 2nd and 3rd Provincial Grand Principals and 15 other acting Provincial Officers were in attendance.

A commemorative booklet was produced and a special commemorative bowl which was kindly made and decorated by W Bro Dave Truman of Ceramic Chapter, 3827, was also produced.

The Grand Superintendent is pictured with Principal Officers and members of the Chapter displaying the commemorative bowl.

Support for High School student

Contributions from members of Sheltonia Lodge, 8557, and St Edward's Chapter, 966, together with match funding from the Staffordshire Masonic Charitable Association, have resulted in a severely deaf North Staffordshire student receiving a laptop computer.

Sheltonia Worshipful Master, W Bro Michael Ashcroft, PPJGW, first heard of the plight of the student from a friend through the Stoke on Trent Deaf Children's Society and he presented the facts to his own lodge and chapter with a request that they contribute towards the purchase of a laptop computer to help the student both with his school work but also with his

social life. The Lodge immediately responded with £100 and the Chapter raised £150 to which the SMCA also gave £250 - enough to buy the computer completely.

Accompanied by other Masons, Michael presented the computer to the student and described his reaction as "very emotional" which "touched us all."

Michael is pictured presenting the computer, watched by from left to right, W Bro Geoff Bean, PPSGW, Margaret Hawkins, head of the Hearing Impaired Unit at the school and W Bro Gordon Lancett, PPGSwdB.



The End of an Era

To mark his last meeting as Sub Prior of the Province of Staffordshire and Shropshire of the United Religious Military and Masonic Orders of Knight Templar, VE Kt Frederick A. Cotton, PGt Reg. presented a paper entitled "The Crusades" at his own Sir John Kent Preceptory No.369 at the end of May.

The meeting was attended by more than 40 Knights including the Provincial Prior, RE Kt.Ian Moxon, KCT, and the Sub Prior Elect, EM Kt.D.Gary Read, Provincial Grand Marshall, and many other distinguished guests.

At the conclusion of the Paper, EM Kt Colin B Denne, Preceptor, Sir John Kent Preceptory, on behalf of the Preceptory, presented V EM Kt. Cotton with a unique and purposely made ceramic statue of a Knight in the colours of the Preceptor in appreciation of the many services rendered to the Preceptory during 33 years.

In addition RE Kt. Ian Moxon, Provincial Prior presented a similar statue in the Malta colours on behalf of the Province, in respect to 14 continuous year's service, as Deputy Marshall, Marshall and for the past five years Sub Prior.

V EM Kt. Cotton, quite moved by the surprise presentations thanked the Brother Knights for their most generous thoughts and said the magnificent statues would take pride of place on his mantelshelf. VM Kt Gordon Hewitt told the assembled Knights of the history of the ceramic knights and the original ones were made for Crusader Lodge No.4107 and all have been numbered but the one in Sir John Kent colours was number one.

EM Kt Colin B Denne, V EM Kt Fred Cotton and RE Kt Ian Moxon at the presentation which also includes a whisky glass - which was embellished with a bottle of fine whisky - presented to V EM Kt. Cotton at Sir Robert Mavesyn Preceptory No.457, the previous week.

Hospital presentation

Illness prevented W Bro Dennis Maxwell Borman, Sutherland Lodge,451, receiving his 50 year certificate at the installation evening so W Bro Alan Lockett, secretary of the Lodge was asked to make the presentation on behalf of the Provincial Grand Master and promoted Bro Dennis to Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden. The ceremony took place in hospital in the presence of Bro Dennis' wife and daughter and two lodge members, W Bros Doug Course and Jim Leviston.

Bowls finals

The finals of the revived Provincial Crown Green Bowls competition are due to take place at Penn Fields Bowling Club, Wolverhampton, at 6pm on Wednesday, September 19. More than 30 bowlers took part in two area qualifying rounds earlier in the summer. Organiser W Bro Brian Tennant said: "We had a good take up and I know everyone is looking forward to the finals. Any brethren who would like to come along will be most welcome. Refreshments will be available."



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Tribute to Mitchell

Members of Jasper Lodge, 3934, paid tribute to one of their famous members, Bro Reginald Mitchell, in a unique ceremony at Hanley Masonic Hall in June. Closely timed to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the death of the designer of the Spitfire fighter aircraft, a framed photograph of him was unveiled by Past Provincial Grand Master RW Bro Kevin Chawner.

Lodge members were joined by more than 100 other Freemasons and guests, which included the Lord Mayor of Stoke on Trent, Councillor Bagh Ali, the Mayor and Mayoress of Newcastle under Lyme, Councillor and Mrs David Clarke, Deputy Lieutenant Anthony Wood, Stoke North MP Joan Whalley, Mr Ross Mitchell, the great nephew of Bro Mitchell and Provincial Grand Master RW Bro Thomas DC Lloyd, TD, DL.



W.Bro. Peter Hughes, R.W.Bro. Kevin Chawner, R.W.Bro. Thomas D C Lloyd, TD, DL, and Mr. Ross Mitchell, great nephew of Bro. Reginald Mitchell at the unveiling ceremony

Other guests included Mr Mike Sassi, Editor in Chief of The Sentinel, who provided the photograph. A front page picture and report appeared in the next day's Sentinel and BBC Radio Stoke broadcast from the event. Two magazines, Staffordshire Life and Staffordshire County Magazine, both published full page reports with photographs.

W Bro Peter Hughes, secretary of the Lodge, whose idea the ceremony

was, described Bro Mitchell, 'the aircraft designer' and the Provincial Grand Master spoke of his Masonic career.

W Bro Norman Wright, vice chairman of the Hanley Masonic Hall Club, who welcomed everyone to the event also extended an invitation to a buffet lunch. Donations to the Hanley Museum Spitfire appeal are expected to raise several hundred pounds

Paddling, pedalling and running for charity

W Bro Alan Smart, treasurer of St John's Lodge of Lichfield, 1039, knows a thing or two about going the extra mile for charity. So much so that last September, with three friends, he completed 49 miles for charity and personally raised £3,000.

The distance, it was on the annual Jersey Triathlon, meant a one mile sea canoe trip across St Katherine's Bay, a 40 mile bike ride around the island, a four mile road run and a four mile cross country run. And he completed it all in five hours and three minutes.

But not content with his achievement he has been in training during this summer to do it all again - to see if he can beat his time. It is also part of his preparation for competing in an even bigger charity challenge next year - walking part of the Great Wall of China.

Alan, 54, took up the first challenge which raised the £3,000 for St Giles Hospice, Lichfield, to which his friends added another £1,000, in memory of a friend, Mrs Joe Hilton, who died of cancer at the age of 49.

Italian Masonry Talk



Members of Boscobel Lodge 6415, have an insight into Freemasonry in Italy following a lecture by Assistant Grand Master R.W.Bro. Nicholas Emerton-Court of the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy

50 Years in Mark

W Bro Alfred T Southwell's 50 years in Mark Masonry was celebrated in March at Staffordshire Knot Lodge of MMM, 541, when Provincial Grand Master RW Bro Frederick Cotton led a Provincial visit and presented certificates from Mark Grand Lodge and the Province.

Bro Alf has completed 50 years in Craft, Royal Arch and Mark. He is 93 years old.

Reverend Bro. Ken

W Bro Ken Rider, PPSGD, a Past Master of Staffordshire Knot Lodge, 726, and a member of Foster Gough Lodge, 2706, is to be ordained into the Church of England and appointed a Deacon

A retired Health Authority Director of Nursing, Bro Ken has recently been working within the Prison Chaplaincy Service.

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Mark Benevolent Fund 139th Festival

**By RW Bro Fred Cotton, Provincial Grand Master,
Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons
of Staffordshire and Shropshire**

It was in 1868 that the then Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Mark Master Masons, the Rev George Raymond Portal, decided that the Mark degree should have its own Benevolent Fund in order that charity, to be most effective, should be dispensed quickly and without the bureaucratic formality which other Masonic charities seemed to suffer from. He also wanted to give the Order a positive charitable motive above the ritual and ceremonial of the degree.

The first grant, £5, was made in the same year, to a Mark Brother who had lost virtually all he possessed in a shipwreck. Since then the Fund has distributed more than £16 million to individual petitioners and worthy causes - the most recent being £3 million to the National Osteoporosis Society to provide mobile scanner units, which

was celebrated at the Sesquicentennial of Mark Grand Lodge in London's Royal Albert Hall.

At eight years notice every year a Mark Province is invited to begin raising resources for the Fund and to host the annual Festival. This year it was our turn, the last one being in 1971 - just remembered by your correspondent.

Held at International Centre in Telford during the weekend of July 6 and 7, we were well supported by brethren from all parts of England and Wales with 345 enjoying a Friday evening buffet and entertainment by folk group Bedlam.

During Saturday, 07.07.07, various excursions had been arranged and in the evening no less than 709



MW Pro Grand Master John Hale and RW Bro Fred Cotton, Provincial Grand Master and Festival President.

Brethren and their Ladies attended a VIP reception I was pleased to host in my capacity of Festival President which was attended by the MW Pro Grand Master John Hale, our Guest of Honour, Assistant Grand Maser RW Bro Benjamin Addy, President of the General Board RW Bro Michael E Herbert, Grand Secretary RW Bro

John Brackley, Grand Director of Ceremonies VW Bro GT Herbert and four other Mark Grand Lodge officers, 35 other Right Worshipful Brethren, the Festival Committee and their ladies. We were also pleased to welcome the Provincial Grand Master of the Craft Province of Staffordshire, RW Bro Thomas DC Lloyd, TD, DL.



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After the Loyal Toast and toasts to the MW Grand Master and the Fund, the moment arrived which we had all been awaiting for, time for the Grand Secretary to announce the result of all our efforts. It was a lovely moment for we had exceeded our highest hopes with the magnificent sum of £562,820.

One way or another the Province contributed approximately £400,000, a wonderful result from our 850 members and an "inheritance" of some £30,000 in October 2002. We are deeply grateful for the assistance and support given by other Orders, other Provinces, personal donations and some other organisations. Mainly it represents a tremendously successful campaign by all the members of the Province. Well done to everyone.



RW Bro John Brackley, the Grand Secretary, announcing the result of the Festival.

Much ingenuity and effort went into the various fund raising efforts both by Lodges and individuals, from gourmet meals and grand draws to holidays, to name just a few. While many lodges did very well pride of place must go to Gough Mar Lodge, 45, which from a membership of only 15 raised a staggering sum of £18,032.

The President of the General Board proposed the health of the Festival President who, when responding, presented cheques to the value of £5,000 to RW Bro Tony Morris, Provincial Grand Master for the Province of Leicestershire and Rutland who will host the 140th Festival next July. Bouquets were presented to Mrs ME Herbert, wife of the President of the General Board and to Dr BJ Mehentee, daughter of the Festival President who had deputised for her late mother.



The Provincial Grand Master, Deputy Provincial Grand Master W Bro David Edwards, Assistant Provincial Grand Master W Bro Alan Sykes and the contingent from Grand Mark Lodge.



The Staffordshire and Shropshire 2007 Mark Benevolent Fund Festival Committee.

Finally, and to great applause, I was delighted to announce that on my retirement in September, Grand Lodge has been pleased to appoint my deputy, W Bro David Edwards to succeed me.

A great deal of credit must go to Provincial Grand Charity Steward W Bro RE Wibberley, PGSD, for his tireless efforts during the entire eight years and to my deputy and his committee: Assistant Provincial Grand Master W Bro Alan W Sykes, Festival Secretary W Bro Alan T Howls, Provincial Grand Secretary W Bro Barry C Clark, Provincial Grand Treasurer W Bro Colin Hutchinson, Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies W Bro Timothy P Cashin, Deputy Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies W Bro David Wall, Deputy Provincial Grand Secretary W Bro Michael Daniels, W Bros Michael JA Barratt, John B Edwards and Peter C Hulme and Bro Ernest S Storie.

It will probably be either 2042/43 before Staffordshire and Shropshire will hoist another Mark Benevolent Fund Festival and the request will probably come in 2034/35 by which time most of the current experience will have "passed on" so it is my fervent hope that the Lodges and members will continue to raise significant sums for charity to periodically enable my successors to make donations to worthy causes in the province and so keep the wonderful spirit now engendered alive to the benefit of those less fortunate than ourselves.



The Festival President presents cheques for £5,000 to RW Bro Tony Morris, Provincial Grand Master, Leicestershire and Rutland, for the 2008 Festival.

Pictures by George Jenkins

Arthur organised cruise do

When Bro Arthur Darlaston and his wife Megan booked a Mediterranean Cruise little did they think he would be organising Masonic meetings. Not only was the meeting a great social success but it also raised £600 for two charities.

Arthur, who is no stranger to organising Masonic meetings, he is secretary of Bacchus Lodge, 9068, described it as a pleasurable task on board the 45,000 ton P & O child free liner Artemis

The 24 masons, wives, guests and ships officers who attended the cocktail's and canapés party included another Staffordshire Mason, W Bro Trevor Wills, Ashmole of Lichfield, 8405, and his wife Janet. The honoured guests were actress Prunella Scales and her husband Timothy West. Miss Scales responded to the Ladies Toast and Arthur proposed the toast to the Captain and Ship's Company to which Captain David Pembridge responded.

Arthur said it was a tradition on the Artemis to hold a Masonic get together. The ship even has its own minute book and during the past two years more than £3,000 has been raised for charity. The ship also produces a souvenir programme which lists all those who attended the party.

Ladies Who Lunch (The Wednesday Club)

In the spring of 2000 the then Provincial Grand Master of Staffordshire, R. W. Bro. Kevin Chawner, suggested, to three ladies, Pat Joughin, Doreen Lancett and Sheila Savage, wives of Masons whose Lodges met at Shelton Masonic Hall, that it could be beneficial for the ladies of Masons to meet socially as a group. Thus 'The Wednesday Club' arrived at its embryonic stage.

The name of the proposed group was discussed and Kevin declined the offer to use his name in the title of the 'club' even though he was the inspiration behind the formation of it. As we were to meet on a Wednesday we decided on the title of 'The Wednesday Club'. After much discussion it was decided that membership should be available to ladies with a Masonic connection i.e. any male relative - husband, father, brother, son, uncle, etc. as a member of the Craft. The members could, if they so wished, invite a friend, or friends, who need not have a Masonic connection, to attend meetings.

The administration of the group was shared between the three ladies with Sheila Savage accepting the Office of Secretary, Doreen Lancett that of Treasurer and Pat Joughin that of Chairman.

The costs involved in membership are not great; at present (2007) we have a joining fee of £5.00, an annual membership fee of £10.00 plus the cost of the meal on the day (usually about £10.00). Current membership is in excess of 55 with the majority of members from the Stoke-on-Trent area, but some



Members of The Wednesday Club at one of their recent meetings

travel from Wolverhampton and the adjoining Provinces of Cheshire and Shropshire. The Club meets on the third Wednesday of each month, from September to June. The February meeting is held on the fourth Wednesday of the month to avoid clashing with half-term holidays when many of the members, who are grandparents, have duties to perform looking after grandchildren. Our meetings are held at Hanley Masonic Hall, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent and we meet at 12.15pm for 12.45pm usually having a speaker or demonstration.

The topics for speakers began with suggestions from the committee but now involve suggestions by all the members.

Topics covered have included The Millennium Tapestries, the Local Radio Station, the County of Staffordshire, North Staffs Heart Committee, the role of an Almoner and imaginary visits to different countries to hear about life in Saudi Arabia, the Eye Hospital in Jerusalem and the Tibetan borderlands of China. At one of our first demonstrations a local artist Tom Hinks, who was also a Mason, came and demonstrated how to paint with water-colours. After he had completed the painting he donated it to the club to be raffled. Over £1,000 was raised and was used to improve facilities at the Masonic Hall. Other demonstrations have included cake decoration and flower arranging.

We now hold a Christmas Fayre and Easter Lunch biannually and organize annual outings. These have been well supported by husbands and friends of the members. The outings have varied from day trips to Liverpool, Southport, Salford Quays, Chester, Nottingham, Hereford and

Shrewsbury to evening jaunts to Halfpenny Green Vineyards, a canal trip from Sutton Cheney Wharf in Warwickshire, including a meal and entertainment, Tutbury Castle (Oliver Cromwell) and, this year, Tutbury Castle to experience 'an evening with Nell Gwyn'.

Since our inception in 2000 we have donated over £8,700 to the Masonic Hall and hopefully, made it a more welcoming venue for outside functions and the ladies. We have also raised funds for many local, non-masonic, charities.

In order for us to be recognized by the Brethren we decided to adopt The Broken Column Brooch as our badge. This brooch was adopted as an identifying emblem after being first given to the ladies of Masons in the American Civil War and they continued to wear it afterwards when so many failed to return. It was first introduced into England by a member of the Earl of Chester Lodge No. 1565 and is having wide acceptance throughout the United Kingdom. We wear it because, although most of us are not widows, the sentiments behind the brooch reflect ours; 'to assist in building relationships where you will find friends who will assist you in times of need and join with you in times of gladness'.

We are still open to new members so if you are interested in hearing more about us then please make contact and we will do our best to make you feel welcome.

Pat Joughin: - 01782 302158,
Sheila Savage: - 01782 392601
The present Committee members are:-
Pat Joughin - Chairman,
Sheila Savage - Secretary,
Josie Mitchell - Treasurer,
Eve Cooper - Vice-Chairman,
June Wall - Minuting Secretary,
Norma Ashcroft and Lynn Wright.

Successful Open day at Wednesbury

More than 30 people visited the Open Day at the Wednesbury Masonic Hall in Russell Street on April 21. And one applicant has resulted with interest from two other visitors.

The day was organised by members of St Bartholomew Lodge, 696, and Old Eversley Lodge, 5259, who welcomed visitors and showed them around the building. Refreshments were also served and Provincial Education Officer W Bro George Arblaster provided a visual display about the Staffordshire Way education programme which gave visitors an insight into the aims and objectives of Freemasonry in Staffordshire.

W Bro Bill Gwilt, Worshipful Master of St Bartholomew Lodge, said: "We had our first visitor within 30 minutes of opening the doors and the whole day went very well. We had no idea who or how many would come along and I think managing to get some publicity in the Express and Star helped us. We had a good turn out from members of both lodges we were all pleasantly surprised with the number of visitors, particularly with all the road works and road closures in the area"

Hospital presentation

Illness prevented W Bro Dennis Maxwell Borman, Sutherland Lodge, 451, receiving his 50 year certificate at the installation evening so W Bro Alan Lockett, secretary of the Lodge was asked to make the presentation on behalf of the Provincial Grand Master and promoted Bro Dennis to Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden. The ceremony took place in hospital in the presence of Bro Dennis' wife and daughter and two lodge members, W Bros Doug Course and Jim Leviston.

Grand Meeting

Ten officers of Grand College, led by Grand High Priest MIIIKtPt Ernest Peter Donnison and accompanied by his deputy, MEmKtPt Jonathan Terrence Crompton, visited the Zadok Tabernacle, 33, in the Order of the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests in April when RtIIIKtPt Frederick Arthur Cotton was invested as Grand Superintendent of 38 District, North Midlands. IIIKtPt F John Singer was invested as District Director of Ceremonies and VEmKtPt Andrew Beckingsale was installed as High Priest of the Tabernacle.

Funds for Special Charity

When W Bro Dennis Harvey and his wife Chris held their Lodge Ladies Night they decided to make it a charity event and help a charity which supports people who are affected by a not very well known medical problem. But they know well what Tracheo-Oesophageal Fistula is and what its support organisation can do.

Their eight year old grand daughter Phoebe was born with TOF which meant there was no connection between the oesophagus and the stomach but fortunately surgeons were able to operate within a few hours of her birth to create a channel between her throat and stomach.

And despite other medical problems her proud grand father describes her as a bright and happy little girl who now lives with her parents and two brothers in Brazil, although she still has to visit Alder Hey Children's Hospital, near

Liverpool, for check ups and treatment. Dennis said : "We have been lucky but other children are not and have great difficulty during their early years and their parents need a lot of support. We were delighted to present TOFS with a cheque for £500 to help them with the excellent work they do."



Denis Harvey, Past Master of Abbey Lodge, 624, presents a cheque for £500 to the chairman of TOFS, Gren Shepherd.

Friendship Book

Amazing Friendships is the title of a book published by Bro Paul Barrass, a member of Dove Lodge, 8519 and Sure and Steadfast Lodge, 9130, in Derbyshire. An Occupational Therapist who specialises in older people's mental health, Paul's subtitle for the book (£3 from each copy will be donated to the Provincial Charity) is How to make and keep good friends the friendcraft way. For more information visit his web site paulbarrass.com.

Applicant is 96

St John's Lodge of Lichfield is to consider an application for joining membership from retired school teacher and musician W Bro James Pinder, a past master of Lodge of Loyalty, 86, and St Nicholas Lodge, 3620, both in the Province of West Lancashire. He has recently moved to Staffordshire and is 96 years old.

MQ on disc

MQ magazine is now available on CD disc for members who are blind, partially sighted or have problems reading. It has been available on tape for some time and any member who would like to take advantage of this service should contact the Provincial office.

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Grand Council of the Order of Royal and Select Masters

There are four degrees in the "Cryptic series" which are worked in Councils under the jurisdiction of the Grand Council of the Order of Royal and Select Masters.

The Cryptic Rite was introduced into England in the 1870s. Whilst part of the ceremonies had been worked in the North of England in the 18th / 19th Centuries the complete rite as a sovereign body existed only in the USA and formed part of the "York" or American rite.

The first Book of Constitutions was published in 1874 although it was not until 1930 that the regalia was standardised.

The Cryptic degrees can be said to fill part of the void in the progression between the Craft ceremonies and the Royal Arch ceremonies. The four degrees worked are the Select Master, the Royal Master, the Most Excellent Master, and the Super Excellent Master.

To many members of Royal and Select Masters, the ceremony of the Royal Master includes one of the most impressive pieces of ritual, undertaken by the Principal Conductor of the Work, surpassing even that of Principal Sojourner in the Royal Arch.



Cryptic Degrees - the essential link

The Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of England and Wales, was formally constituted on July 29, 1873, by four Councils chartered just two years earlier by the Grand Council of New York. They organised themselves into a sovereign body under the patronage of the Rev Canon G. R. Portal, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, who was installed as the Grand Master of the Order.

This Grand Council continues to prosper and today has many Councils overseas which are controlled by District Grand Councils. The degrees in this group are frequently referred to as 'Cryptic Degrees' although only two actually refer to a crypt. They are, the essential link between the degrees of Master Mason and Royal Arch Mason.

The Order is administered from Mark Masons' Hall, and Grand Council governs over 200 Councils and exercises authority over the following degrees:

Select Master

This degree is supposedly held in the secret vault which has been constructed beneath the Temple, consisting of several arches, into one of which the secrets were deposited and later discovered. It relates how a well-known mason employed by KS accidentally intrudes into the crypt

where the three GMs were wont to meet and confer, and illustrates the consequence of this intrusion. The symbolic colors are red and black. (A similar legend may be found in the Allied group and is also in one of the degrees under the A & A Rite.)

Royal Master

This degree is set in time just prior to the completion and dedication of the first Temple; it highlights the completed vessels pertaining to the House of the Lord and refers to a certain fellow craft making diligent enquiry of HA as to when he might receive the secrets of a MM. The subsequent disquisition by our Grand Master on the subject of death is one of the most enthralling pieces of ritual in freemasonry. It also shows how the secrets came to be deposited in the crypt where they were subsequently found. The symbolic colors are black and red.

Most Excellent Master

This degree deals with the completion and dedication of the first Temple; it celebrates the completion of the whole edifice and mentions the installation of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy Place. It constitutes a fitting ceremonial and dramatic preface to the Cryptic Degrees. The symbolic colour of the degree is purple.

Super-Excellent Master

The legend around which this degree is built brings the story of the first Temple down to the time of its imminent destruction and refers to the siege of Jerusalem by the troops of the enraged Nebuchadnezzar, following the rebellion of the tributary Jewish king, Zedekiah. The symbolic colour of the degree is crimson. Besides these degrees, there is also a Ceremony for the installation of a Master of the Council.

District of Staffordshire & Shropshire

Until September 22, 2006, the Central District covered the Craft Provinces of Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Staffordshire and Shropshire and had 16 Councils. Since that date the Central District was divided into three separate districts. Warwickshire, Wyvern and our own Staffordshire and Shropshire when the following rulers in our Province were appointed:-

District Grand Master - Rt II. Comp. Brian William Price.

Deputy District Grand Master - III. Comp. Clifford Howard Bull

District Principle Conductor of the Work - III. Comp. Harold Wilford Hampton.db

Those who are already members of the Order in this, our new District don't need to be told how strong are the ties of brotherhood and support, both between individual members and of the various Councils. It is a masonic degree that is well known for its magnificent ritual and its expression of the fraternal friendship and support of its members.

Being a new District we face the challenge of bringing the degree and its qualities to the door of every mason in the Provinces of Staffordshire and Shropshire so that they may have the opportunity to enjoy its many facets but above all to complete the ancient circle of Freemasonry.

At the present time, we are in the process of exploring the provision of a new Council within the District to be held at Tamworth. We hope that interest and demand for this essential degree will allow us to form other councils in different locations within our District to serve the needs of potential as well as current members of this Order

Come and choose your Council and come and experience the best ritual in Masonry. Candidates must be Royal Arch Masons as well as Mark Master Masons.



Deputy District Grand Master,
III. Comp. Clifford Howard Bull

Interested Brethren should contact any of the following: Deputy District Grand Master, Clifford H. Bull on 01283 790322 or cliffhbull@tiscali.co.uk, District Recorder Geoffrey M. Lates on 0121 248 4999 or any Council Recorder.

Councils meet at the following venues:-

Council	No	Meeting Dates	Venue	Recorder	Telephone No
Phipps Dorman	32	2nd Sat Mar, 1st Sat May & Oct	Wretham Rd	Malcolm R S Thomas	01827 830250
N Staffordshire	150	1st Mon April, Oct & Dec	Stafford	Ken Williamson	01782 782 682
Wretham	188	3rd Wed July, 1st Tues Oct, 2nd Tues Dec	Wretham Rd	John F R Handley	01564 777578
Westune	241	1st Tues Jan, 4th Tues May, 4th Thurs Sept	Whitchurch	Ken Williamson	01782 782 682

Significant advances

We are now in our third year of the Staffordshire Way education programme and the information on this page will, I hope, fully inform you of the significant advances which have been made and will continue with the emphasis on conveying the message of Freemasonry to all initiates.

It is therefore fully expected that all lodges will make available to initiates the wealth of information provided in our publications and thereby encompassing the benefits to be obtained from the establishment of good mentoring practice for junior brethren.

You will find that great pleasure can be derived by acquiring and disseminating a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.

W Bro J Keith Thomas, PJGD, Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

Welcome to team

To further the work of The Staffordshire Way and meet the demand from lodges, we are delighted to welcome a number of brethren who have offered to help Provincial Information Officer W Bro George Arblaster. They include W Bros Charles Ambrose, Paul Arrowsmith, Paul Ashcroft, Philip Baker, Geoff Bean, Ian Botham, Maurice Downes, Chris Hibbs, Stephen Jeremy, Kevin Parkes, Geoff Wright and Bro Mike Santopietro.

On the web

A meeting has been arranged for Tuesday, November 27, at 7.30pm at the Aldridge Masonic Centre to assist lodges who want to explore or develop a website. The Provincial Webmaster, W Bro Chris Priestley, will lead the meeting and fully supportive documentation will be provided. Bookings can be made via the web site or lodge secretaries.

Mentor Phase 3

Three more meetings have been arranged for brethren who are interested in finding out more about mentoring or becoming a mentor in their own lodge. All attendees will receive a set of the four Education Booklets for their own use. The meetings all start at 7.30pm and will be held at Kids Grove on Wednesday, October 17, Wednesbury on Thursday, October 31 and Burton on Trent on Thursday, November 29. Places can be reserved either through the web site or lodge secretaries.

To date more than 100 mentors have been trained from 60 lodges.

Update...Update...Update...Update

- During 2006 and 2007 all Entered Apprentices have been provided with a copy of Booklets 1, 2 and 3 and all attendees at Mentoring Training courses have also received the booklets and a copy of the Mentor's Handbook.
- More than 100 brethren from 60 lodges have received Mentor Training.
- The Staffordshire Way education programme has been presented to 20 lodges covering half of the Province's Masonic Centres.
- The education team has been expanded by 12 brethren volunteering to be responsible for an aspect of the programme.
- Support has been given to several Masonic Centres and Lodges who have held Open Days.
- Other Provinces which have Open Evenings have been visited to observe best practice. These will be included in the Staffordshire approach.
- A register of Lodges of Instruction is being compiled and will be incorporated into the 2008 Provincial Year Book and Calendar.
- Lodge secretaries have been kept fully informed about courses and the development of the programme.
- A comprehensive Staffordshire Way section has been developed on the Provincial website which contains all the latest news and developments and also enables Brethren to book places on courses electronically.

THE STAFFORDSHIRE Freemasons Education Project



Speakers' scheme launched



Pictured at the meeting are, left to right, W Bros Harold Hampton, George Arblaster, Bob Crundwell, Keith Thomas, Alan Walker, Graham Lloyd and Robert Smith.

A meeting for those interested in taking part in the Provincial Speakers Scheme was held at the National Memorial Arboretum in July when Assistant Provincial Grand Master W Bro Keith Thomas welcomed 20 brethren.

A short presentation was made by the Provincial Education Officer, outlining how the scheme fitted into the programme and how it would operate. Full details are to be sent to all lodges.

W Bro ED Humphries has offered to co-ordinate the speakers scheme which already has more than 30 volunteers.

Info Packs

Lodge secretaries have all been advised that from September the three booklets published as part of the programme for Entered Apprentices, Fellowcraft and Master Masons will be available from The Provincial Office in a plastic wallet accompanied by other literature from the United Grand Lodge of England, at a subsidised cost of £5. Lodges are encouraged to present all initiates with their own pack.

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The following article describes the Masonic Ceremony performed during the laying of the foundation stone of The Sutherland Institute, Longton by W. Bro. Graham Deeth, P.Pr.G.Reg. Secretary of Sutherland Lodge of Unity No 460. Thanks due to Andrew Dobraszyc a local lecturer and The Staffordshire Advertiser of 9th January 1897.

Foundation Stone Laid in Masonic Ceremony

In 1895 the Technical Instruction and Free Library Committee of the Longton Borough Council were authorised to make the necessary enquiries and to prepare a scheme for the erection of a Free Library and Technical Schools. The new project was to commemorate the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign in 1897. The Duke of Sutherland was the largest property owner in Longton where he owned about a third of the land in the early 1890's was elected Mayor of Longton in November 1895. The Duke of Sutherland offered to donate land for the new institute and the proposed site was located on the corner of Stone Road, (now Lightwood Road) and Rosslyn Road.

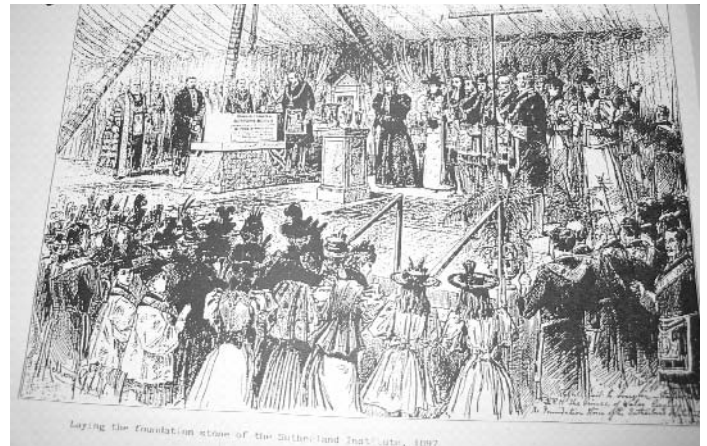
By all reasonable minds it must be regarded as an appropriate procedure that the Prince of Wales, on being invited to lay a foundation stone, should conduct the ceremony in his capacity of Grand Master of England, a position which he had filled since 1874. George, Prince of Wales, was Grand Master in 1790 and their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of Sussex and Kent filled the same office at a later period. Masonry, which had flourished as a distinguished guild during the Middle Ages, rapidly declined in Staffordshire after the Civil Wars in the 17th Century. Several Lodges, lingered in Cheshire, and in 1805 one of these, the "Independent" of Congleton, migrated to Lane End or Longton, but it was erased in 1828. In the same year a military lodge, the "Athol," which was originally constituted in the Royal Artillery in 1774, was transferred to and became the "United Potteries Lodge," held at the White Lion Inn, Lane End. This lodge was erased in 1829.

It is singular that two Lodges should have migrated to Longton in the same year. The present Longton Lodge, the "Etruscan" No 546 on the roll of the Grand Lodge of England, dates from 1847, and will celebrate its jubilee this year. Thus Burslem, which is sometimes spoken of as the "Mother of the Potteries" also takes a senior position in Staffordshire Freemasonry. St. Martins Lodge, Burslem is No. 98 on the roll of Grand Lodge, and its warrant dates from 1764. It may be added that this is only the fourth occasion on which the Prince of Wales as Grand Master has performed a similar

office, the other occasions being Truro, Wanstead and Oxford. As soon as it was announced that the Prince of Wales was coming to Longton to lay the foundation stone of the Sutherland Institute, the members of the Etruscan Lodge of Freemasons (546) began to consider the question of respect being paid by the fraternity to their Grand Master, as well as assistance being rendered in the promotion of such a good object. The proposal was favourably received by the Earl of Dartmouth, R.W.P.G.M., Lieut-Col. J.A. Bindley, W.D.P.G.M. and P.G.D. England, and Masons generally throughout the Province of Staffordshire. It is a somewhat singular circumstance that about the same time it became known that the Grand Master of English Freemasons and future King was coming to North Staffordshire, a member of a literary society should have read a paper in which he denounced Freemasonry as a dangerous secret association. Whatever may be said of other institutions, it must be a misguided notion for anyone at the present time to imagine that there is anything inimical to the interests of the community in the principles and practice of English Freemasonry.

Speaking with a full knowledge of the subject, we are able to say freemasonry is neither an ecclesiastical or a political association, and has nothing to do with the disputes of sects and parties; but it aims at developing the virtues of benevolence and good fellowship, and the members of the Craft take a pleasure in declaring that a good Mason cannot be a bad citizen.

However they differ in tastes, disposition, education, and occupation, they respect each other in lodge, and can recognize one another the world over. English Masons have in innumerable instances experienced the advantage of this in far-off lands and amongst men of various nationalities. The Masonic charitable institutions of England are a standing and sufficient reply to those who, knowing nothing of Freemasonry, are sometimes found trying to decry it. The strength of the Craft was pretty well manifested on Thursday when the Provincial Grand Lodge of Staffordshire was held at Longton - on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the Sutherland Institute.



An illustration of the ceremony

The brethren assembled and clothed in the Zion Methodist New Connexion Chapel, and then passed into the Queen's Theatre, where Provincial Grand Lodge was opened. Before the opening of the Lodge, Wor. Bro. A.D. Parker, of Lichfield, the Provincial Grand Organist, extemporised during the assembling of the brethren, introducing the National Anthem. "God Bless the Prince of Wales," and a new patriotic song. "God Bless Victoria," written and composed by himself. The stage of the beautiful theatre was used as a platform, and the Earl of Dartmouth, as P.G.M. presided, and was supported by Lieut-Col. Bindley, D.P.G.M. The Warden's chairs were occupied by Bros. E.V. Greatbach, acting S.W.; before adjourning, and W. Bro. Caddick, P.S.G.W; afterwards; W. Tunnicliffe, J.W. and on the platform were the officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Staffordshire.

After the Lodge had been formally opened, the Earl of Dartmouth and Col. Bindley were duly saluted according to Masonic custom, and the same compliment was paid to the officers of the Grand Lodge of England. The Provincial Grand Master then moved that an address of welcome be presented to HRH the Prince of Wales from his brethren of Staffordshire. The address was agreed to at once, and the brethren then adjourned to the streets, formed a procession and marched by way of Market Street and Stafford Street to the site where the ceremony of the day was to be performed by the Prince.

The council had provided a large marquee suitably decorated with flags, plants, poles with Royal tartan drapery and shields and escutcheons bearing the Royal arms and heraldic devices appropriate to the borough. In the afternoon a Masonic luncheon was provided at the Town Hall, under the presidency of the Earl of Dartmouth and about 160 brethren were present. The order of the Masonic procession was juniors in front till

the site was reached, where they opened out and entered the marquee in reversed order, seniors in front. Six Lewis's attired in white surplices carried the Volume of the Sacred Law. The Prince of Wales was greeted by Lord Dartmouth, Provincial Grand Master and acting as Deputy Grand Master and W. Bro. Walton Walker, Provincial Grand Secretary with a Masonic address. The Prince's reply was taken as read and handed to the Provincial Grand Master. It should be stated that the address is a large vellum scroll, magnificently illuminated in gold and glowing colours.

The Prince was accommodated with a raised seat immediately behind the stone. The Grand Officers who led the Royal procession into the pavilion were The Grand Tyler; the Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies; the Grand Director of Ceremonies; three Masters of Lodges, bearing the cornucopia and ewers with wine and oil, they were W. Bros. J.W. Bromley, of Longton, W. Brickel of Cheadle, and Major Harding of Stone. The Grand Secretary bearing a plate with the inscription for the foundation stone, Bro. E. Letchworth; the President of the Board of General Purposes, with mallet; the acting Grand Secretary bearing the Great Seal; the Grand Treasurer bearing a phial containing coins, the Grand Chaplain; the Junior Grand Warden with the Plumb Rule; the Senior Grand Warden with the Level; the Deputy Grand Master with the Square; the Earl of Dartmouth; the Grand Sword Bearer; and the Senior Grand Deacons.

The chairs, pedestals etc used on the occasion were from St. Michael's Lodge, Stone, which possesses handsome Lodge furniture.

The ceremony commenced for the laying of the Corner Stone with addresses between the Mayor of Longton, the Duke of Sutherland and the Prince of Wales. At the request of the Prince, the Grand Treasurer deposited in a cavity in the



The Sutherland Institute, now being used as a library and, below, the foundation stone laid by the Prince of Wales.

lower stone, a casket containing the current coins of the realm, from the sovereign downwards, and copies of The Times, The Staffordshire Advertiser, The Staffordshire Sentinel and The Longton Times and Echo.

The Prince having accepted the Mayor's presentation of a beautiful gold trowel and ornamental mallet, and mortar having been spread over the surface of the lower stone, he levelled the mortar and the suspended block was slowly lowered into position, three distinct stops being made in the process.

The Gavel, Plumb Rule, Square and Level belonging to Sutherland Lodge of Unity No 460 were used by the Prince of Wales to lay the foundation stone.

The inscription on the gavel reads, "This Gavel was used by HRH. Prince of Wales, Most Worshipful Grand Master, at the laying of the foundation stone of the Sutherland Institute, Longton, with Masonic Ceremonial on the 7th Jan 1897".

Having used the Plumb, Level and Square the Prince announced, "I find this stone to be plumb, level and square, and I declare it to be duly prepared and truly laid, and that the craftsmen have worked well." He then struck the stone thrice with the Mallet, and having been handed a gilt

cornucopia emptied its contents of grain upon the stone and then poured wine and oil onto the stone. This concluded the Masonic ceremony, which throughout was most impressive. Purses were then presented and graciously received by the Prince of Wales. The following lodges made donations: Etruscan of Longton, St. Giles of Cheadle, Portland of Stoke, Minerva of Fenton, St. Michaels of Stone, Foresters of Uttoxeter and Menturia of Hanley.

After the presentation of purses the Grand Chaplain pronounced a blessing, after which the Prince of Wales was conducted round the pavilion by the Grand Officers amid a scene of great enthusiasm.

The Sutherland Institute was formally opened by the American Ambassador, Mr. Choate and the Duke of Sutherland on 27 October 1899.

The Sutherland Institute is still standing and used as a library at the present time. I have visited the premises and reproduce herewith a photograph of the foundation stone and the Sutherland Institute.

For a history of the Ancient Working Tools owned by Sutherland Lodge of Unity No. 460, please see article in a recent copy of "Within Your Province"



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*Cynthia Mirza.
Retiring Warden,
Wilson Key's Court.*

Jayne takes over from Cynthia

After four years as Warden at Wilson Keys Court Cynthia Mirza has retired and a new Scheme Manager, Jayne Thacker, has taken over. Rugeley born Jayne's last post was a Senior Care Worker with the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund in Sussex. House committee chairman RW Bro Kevin Chawner said: "Cynthia has served the house well and will be a hard act to follow. We have had an excellent service from Cynthia and we have great hopes for the future with Jayne who comes to us with considerable

experience and great enthusiasm." Cynthia said: "I have been very happy at Wilson Keys Court. I have always found the Freemasons involved with the house to be a real pleasure to work with. They have always been helpful and friendly. Jayne will have lots of immediate friends and never be alone."

Jayne, who works part time at the Katherine House Hospice in Stafford, said: "I have a hard act to follow but relish the prospect. It is an exciting challenge."



*Jayne Thacker
new Scheme Manager,
Wilson Key's Court*

Popular Sheltered Housing Scheme

The waiting list at Staffordshire's Masonic sheltered housing complex is testament to its popularity. And suitable applicants who are considered eligible by the management committee are accommodated as quickly as possible.

It is now 12 years since the Wilson Keys Court in Rugeley's Deanery Close was opened as part of the Masonic Housing Association and it as popular with tenants as it has even been. There are 34 flats in the purpose built complex, one side of which overlooks the canal.

The purpose of the 23 single persons flats and 11 two person flats is to provide sheltered accommodation for elderly people and includes some with Masonic connections and others who don't.

Each flat has its own kitchen, lounge, bedroom and bathroom and each opens onto an internal corridor. Tenants must be able to look after themselves, be able to live a completely independent life and benefit from the type of accommodation provided.

The daily running of the building is carried out by the House Committee,



The front of Wilson Keys Court in Rugeley

a voluntary body which operates on behalf of the Masonic Housing Association and the Masonic Province of Staffordshire who own it. It is currently chaired by Past Provincial Grand Master RW Bro Kevin Chawner who took over from Past Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies W Bro Jack Hill, who chaired the committee for its first ten years.

The committee considers all tenancy applications and supervises lettings. It is also responsible for repairs and decorations, the well being of all tenants and maintenance of the building and grounds. It also supervises the work of the scheme manager. Outside normal office hours an emergency care call system is linked to a local control centre so

that tenants can speak directly to trained staff at the centre.

There are two elements to charges for tenants: Rent and a Service Charge. They are reviewed annually and the rent is set by Masonic Housing Association in line with a formula stipulated by the Housing Corporation and as required by the 1998 Housing Act.

A number of lodges maintain links with the tenants and outings and entertainment are laid on from time to time. Any brethren who are interested in finding out more about the complex should contact the new scheme manager Jayne Thacker on 01889 576544.

House Committee

The Wilson Keys Court complex house committee is chaired by Past Provincial Grand Master RW Bro Kevin Chawner and his vice chairman is Provincial Grand Almoner W Bro Alan Walker, MBE. The secretary is W Bro Ron Attwood and the treasurer is W Bro Granville Evans, a former bank manager.

Other members of the committee, all bring an expertise to the meetings, include W Bro Ray Trueman, former committee secretary, W Bro Eddie Ford, a builder, W Bro Dr Percy Grero, Provincial Grand Charity Steward W Bro Maurice Williams and Past Provincial Grand Secretary W Bro Stanley Loweth, a trustee of the Wilson Keys Memorial Fund. The President of the Committee is the Provincial Grand Master.

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Golf Society halved first match

FINE weather has helped members of the Staffordshire Masonic Golf Society have an enjoyable season with some good social golf. The season started at the North Worcestershire Golf Club at Northfield, Birmingham, on May 18, when Staffordshire halved the match against Worcestershire.

A couple of weeks later the annual Spring Competition took place at Ingestre Park Golf Club, near Stafford, when 27 members participated. The Stableford Competition was won by W Bro Bev Nicholls, Round Table Lodge, 8273, with 36 points, three points ahead of runner up Bro Mark Ashton. A dinner and prize presentation by the Provincial Grand Master followed.

The annual fixture against the Province of Nottingham was held at Erewash Valley Golf Club at Stanton by Dale, Ilkeston, on June 26, which the home team won 4 and 2.



W Bro Bev Nicholls with the Provincial Grand Master after winning the Spring Competition.



Bro Mark Ashton who was the runner up in the Spring Competition.

Heavy rain flooded the course at Seedy Mill Club near Lichfield when the annual Staffordshire Wardens Golf Competition was due to take place and it was re-arranged for July 19 by secretary W Bro Malcolm Phillips. The prize presentation and dinner was held at the nearby Royal Oak at Kings Bromley when several nonplaying Past Wardens attended together with Provincial Junior Grand Warden W Bro John Edwards. The Provincial Grand Master presented the prizes and he was joined by Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, W Bro Gary Read and W Bro Keith Thomas who played in the Senior Warden's team.

The trophy, which was won by the Senior Wardens team, was presented to W Bro Geoff Bean who accepted it on behalf of W Bro John Lockley who was unable to attend.

The Six Counties Championship which was hosted by the Province of Derbyshire was played on July 27 at Ashbourne Golf Club. Teams from South Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire took part and the Staffordshire team of 13 players took third place.

W Bro Mike Baggaley, Castelum Lodge, 6710, won the individual runner up prize with a Stableford score of 32 points.

Nottinghamshire won the competition.

Next year the Six Counties Competition will be hosted by Staffordshire at Brocton Hall Golf Club on Thursday, July 28.

The last two events of the season are the match against Warwickshire at Oxley Park Golf Club, Wolverhampton, on Thursday, August 23 and the Provincial Grand Masters Golf Trophy which will be played at Ingestre Park Golf Club on Tuesday, September 11.

Any golfers who would like to join the Staffordshire Masonic Golf Society or who would like more details should contact W Bro David Hadler on 01902 429707 or email him at dhadler@btinternet.com

St Martins A Team Win Chawner Cup

The A team from St Martins Lodge, 98, won the Chawner Cup with 68 points on a back nine count back from Forrester's Lodge, 456. This year's competition, which included Past Provincial Grand Master RW Bro Kevin Chawner, who gave the Cup in 1986, attracted 24 players. The Forrester's Lodge team of two included Assistant Provincial Grand Master W Bro Keith Thomas and W Bro Malcolm Phillips, organiser of the Provincial Wardens Golf Competition. The St Martins team of three, the lodge actually fielded seven players and the best two scores in any team of up to three players, count, was made up of three recently initiated friends, Bro Trevor Ecclestone, a 39 year old project manager, Bro Robert Bunt, 54, a Construction Manager, and 43 year old Contracts manager Bro Mark Robinson. They were initiated in February, March and April this year.

Division 1 winner was B Cockersole and the Division 2 winner was RW Bro Kevin Chawner.

The competition took place at Newcastle Golf Club on June 6 and the organiser is W Bro Jim Macfarlane.



St. Martins A Team with the Chawner Cup, Bros. Trevor Ecclestone, Robert Bunt and Mark Robinson

It is open to all members of North Staffordshire craft lodges who can enter as many teams as they wish. It is a Stableford competition, full handicap, max 24. Members of the host club have an additional two shot penalty on their handicaps. Rules of the popular competition also state that lodges entering

more than one team must name their teams before play commences and individuals who don't play in a team and are therefore not eligible to win the Trophy, are entered into the two divisions. The Cup winners are not eligible to win a further prize.

Norman at Buckingham Palace

Masonic Caravan and Camping Club chairman W Bro Norman Wood, a member of Sutherland Lodge of Unity, 460, and his wife Patricia, were among a select group of members who celebrated the Centenary of The Caravan Club at a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in July. The Duke of Edinburgh is President of the Club and welcomed everyone. Norman reports an excellent buffet but not such a good day, weather wise.

In April, six brethren and their families met up in the New Forest when the weather was magnificent and they visited Bourne Lodge, 6959, in Bournemouth, where they were made very welcome.

The next Masonic get together is in September when six brethren have booked to meet up at Teversal, near Mansfield. A visit to the installation meeting of the North Notts Rotary lodge, 8176, is also planned.



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