

PROVINCIAL PATTERN

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Province of Ross and Cromarty

ISSUE NO 94

FEBRUARY 2018

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Cover Picture: The Irish and Scottish Representatives in the Royal Box, The Royal Albert Hall

Editorial

Welcome to the 94th edition of the Patter.

First, a somewhat belated Guid New Year to all readers wherever you happen to be. May 2018 be a very happy, healthy and fulfilling year for you all.

As the November edition went to print, I was heading to London to attend the 300th Anniversary Celebrations of the United Grand Lodge of England. What an event! I can only say that the United Grand Lodge of England pulled out every available stop to make the occasion a truly memorable one.

I described the programme in the November editorial, but words cannot express the absolute joy of having had the privilege to attend. The singing of 4,000 Freemasons in the Royal Albert Hall accompanied by Carl Jackson playing the Royal Albert Hall Organ and the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra was an unbelievable experience. In fact, the three days of celebration were extremely well planned and orchestrated and massive congratulations must be extended to all the various committees who brought the entire event together.



The finale of the UGLE Celebrations

Ramsay McGhee, Editor

Grand Lodge of Scotland



The next meeting of Grand Lodge will be held in Freemasons' Hall, 96 George Street, Edinburgh on Thursday 1st February at 2.00 pm.

The Agenda looks to be straight forward with two appointments being made for new Provincial Grand Masters. Brother Thomas Wood to be appointed as Provincial Grand Master of Kilwinning and Brother Douglas Trevor Philand to be appointed Provincial Grand Master of Argyll and The Isles.

For those who attend Grand Lodge, you will know Thomas Wood the current Grand Bible-bearer and many of the Brethren in this Province will know Douglas Philand. Douglas was D of C in Supreme Grand Chapter for many years and is currently Depute to our own Ian Fraser. I have no doubt that both Brethren will do a marvellous job in their respective Provinces and we wish them well.

There will also be a vote on changing the name of the present Provincial Grand Lodge of Roxburgh, Peebles and Selkirk-shires to the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Scottish Borders and changing the Provincial Grand Lodge of East Lothian and Berwickshire to the Provincial Grand Lodge of East Lothian. Accordingly, it is proposed that six Lodges currently in East Lothian and Berwickshire transfer to the new Province of the Scottish Borders. This is a pragmatic change and I'm sure it will augur well for the future.

Ed

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Provincial Grand Lodge:

Hi Brethren

A good new year to all the people that I have not spoken to.

Another year starts after a very busy 2017; could I thank you all for your support in the past. Grateful thanks to the admin team Mike and Roger for all the hard work you have done, and to Depute PGM, Raymond MacKeddie for covering for me from time to time due to call outs at work, we have had a very busy time at the undertaking.

Brethren, I look forward to your support on the following Provincial Grand Lodge visitations, that includes all Masters and all Wardens and any Master Masons who would like to come along to the meetings, you will be made very welcome.

PGL. of Ross and Cromarty visitations for 2018 are as follows.

Lodge Averon	-	Alness, Thurs 8 th Feb at 8pm.
Lodge Ness	-	Invergordon, Tues 27 th Feb 8pm.
St. Duthus	-	Tain, Mon 5 th March 7.45 pm.
Fingal	-	Dingwall, Tues 13 th March 8pm.
Seaforth	-	Fortrose, Mon 19 th March 7.30pm.
Robertson's	-	Cromarty Wed 21 st March 8pm.
Rosehaugh	-	Avoch, Fri 6 th April 8pm.
Loch Ewe	-	Aultbea, Thurs 12 th April 8pm.
St Martin	-	Ullapool Tues 17 th April 8pm.
Kyle	-	Kyle of Lochalsh, Mon 7 th May 8pm.
Fortrose	-	Stornoway Fri 18 th May 8pm.
Allan Wilson	-	Fortrose, Tues 10 th July 11am. (Day lodge) All master masons welcome.

PGL Lodge of Sorrow - Sun 6th May 3pm in Lodge Fingal. Please come along this is the meeting where we remember all the Brethren who have passed through the veil over the last year.

PGL AGM/ INSTALLATION of office bearers - Wednesday 23rd May 8pm. in Lodge Averon.

Looking for a good support of office bearers on these visits.

Grand Lodge of Scotland meeting on Thurs 1st Feb at 1.30 pm.

I hear on the grape vine that the Province of R & C are going to have a visit from our friends in Trinidad, Tobago and Granada. They are coming over in November to Grand Lodge Installation then up north for the weekend. More details nearer the time.

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Provincial Grand Lodge cont.

The Province are running a seminar for newer Masons, to learn MORE about Freemasonry and what you think it is all about, and explain some issues that you would like to know. We have quite a few names who would like to attend, if you want to join in, please phone the Substitute Provincial Grand Master, Barrie Whitwell on 01445 731628 or provincial Grand Secretary, Mike Turner on 01854 612551. They will be in touch with a venue and date.

Provincial Grand Lodge are also going to run a reigning Master's Degree at a date yet to be announced. This will be organised by Provincial Grand D of C, Steven Smith, who will speak to the Masters to discuss which part you will be doing.

Kind regards and fraternal greetings

Robin Cattanach.

Provincial Grand Master

To All New Freemasons in the Province

The Substitute Provincial Grand Master, Brother Barrie Whitwell, is keen to converse with all Brethren who have joined the Craft in the past two years to build up an understanding of what prompted you to join the Craft. Please contact Barrie on whitwellbarrie@gmail.com

It is hoped that initial contact will lead to an annual event for new Brethren in the Province.

PROXY MASTERS

A few members of this Province are already Proxy Masters of Lodges in our Districts. Over the past eighteen months a lot of work has gone into bringing Proxy Master-ships up to date and, while there is still much to do, we are now almost at the stage of putting out an appeal to existing Proxy Wardens and to Brethren in general to apply for vacancies that have arisen. The duties will include

- Communicating regularly with the Secretary or nominated Brother of the Lodge of which he is Proxy Master.
- Communicating with the Proxy District Grand Master.
- Attend an annual meeting with the Proxy District Grand Master.
- Attend Communications of Grand Lodge.
- Meet with Brethren of the Lodge when they visit Scotland – e.g. Festival of St Andrew.

The annual fee is currently £30, and the duties are not too onerous, but it does give the opportunity to get involved with a Lodge in one of our Districts and, in effect, be an integral part of the structure of that Lodge. There are also opportunities to visit the Proxy Lodge. There will be vacancies in my own Proxy District of East Africa. If anyone is interested, please get in touch and I'll be happy to assist.

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From the Provincial Almoner

Yet again I start my report on a sad note to record the passing to the Grand Lodge Above, in recent weeks, of two well-known and well-loved brothers.

Past Master Donnie Bissett, Lodge Seaforth passed away in Mealmore Nursing Home, Inverness where he had only been resident for a few days. Although not very active in the Lodge in recent years he will be remembered for the huge interest he took in the past and will be particularly remembered for the casting, in bronze, of the two magnificent pillars which are a very dominant feature within Lodge Seaforth. Donnie's funeral service was held within Inshes Church of Scotland, Inverness and was attended by many brethren from throughout the Province.

Past Master Donnie MacLennan, Lodge Kyle was formerly Substitute Provincial Grand Master during the term of office the Late PGM Kenny Bissett from 1991 to 1996. Due to failing health he also had not been a regular at Lodge Meetings in recent years. His funeral service was held within Lochcarron Church of Scotland at which many brethren were present.

Past Master Angus Ross, Lodge Ness, is home from hospital after the amputation of his lower left leg to allow the healing process to continue. He is always in good form and very positive when I visit.

Past Master Victor Shepherd, Robertson's Lodge is now resident in Urray House Care Home, Muir of Ord. There has not been any significant change in his condition. He does know people when they call and is initially able to hold a conversation but then gets confused after a while.

Bro. Dougie MacDougall, Lodge Fingal is still resident in Redwoods Care Home, Alness. He is also much the same as he has been but is sometimes quite confused. He enjoys having visitors.

Past Master Fraser MacKay, Lodge St Duthus has moved from his care in Invergordon and is now resident in the new Innis Mhor Care Home in Tain. He is still not making much progress.

Past Master Colin Thomson, Lodge Ness recently had his surgery and is recovering at home.

Bro. Colin MacPhee, Lodge Fingal is still not too well and has been in and out of hospital recently for treatments and surgery. He was, however, able to go to his office for a few hours this week.

Past Master Dave Franklin, Robertson's Lodge has also been in hospital recently and although now home he is attending hospital regularly for treatment. However, happily, he was well enough last week to attend a masonic meeting in Lodge Averon.

Bro. David Bennett, Lodge Allan Wilson, is still not very well and was in respite care in the Masonic Home in Bridge of Weir over Christmas and New Year. He is now back home.

Bro. Alex. Ross, Lodge Fingal recently had a leg amputation and is currently in the County and Community Hospital, Invergordon. I visited him while he was still in Raigmore Hospital, after his surgery, and he was in good form and very upbeat about his situation.

I have visited brethren at home or in hospital where and when possible. Unfortunately, hospital visits have been restricted recently due to the flu epidemic. I have sent cards conveying the condolences or best wishes, as appropriate, of the Provincial Grand Master and brethren.

I would ask that should any brother be aware of anyone wishing or requiring my assistance to please let me know.

David A. MacMaster, PM

Provincial Grand Almoner

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FROM THE LODGES

Lodge St Duthus No 82



The Brethren of St Duthus are looking forward to the impending visit of Robertson's Lodge to work a Mark Master Degree on Monday 5th February. The candidate is Brother Bruce MacIvor, a cousin of the Master in Robertson's Lodge, Brother Andrew MacIver but, on the night the office of Mark Master will be filled by PM Ronald Cooper.

The Provincial visit will take place on Monday 5th March when the Lodge will be working an EA Degree for one of several candidates currently processing through the system.

On the fund-raising front, Brother John MacKenzie had the pleasure of presenting a cheque for £50 to MFR's Cash for Kids campaign.

On the 3rd February, Brother John MacKenzie will run a quiz on behalf of the local Tennis Club in Tain Golf Club then he'll be conducting another Quiz in the Lodge on 17th February on behalf of "Perfect Paws" a Ross-shire Dog agility group. John would appreciate your support at all the events.

The indoor car boot sale held in the Lodge in December raised the sum of £290.

Finally, the Master and Brethren extend a warm welcome to their Regular Meeting on 5th February.

John MacKenzie
Secretary

What is Freemasonry? In the Home it is Kindness, in Business it is Honesty, In Society it is Courtesy, in Work it is Fairness, toward the unfortunate it is Pity, toward the wicked it is Resistance, toward the weak it is Help, toward the strong it is Trust, toward the fortunate it is Congratulation and toward God it is Reverence and Love.

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FORTROSE LODGE No. 108

Happy New Year from the Outer Hebrides to all our brethren.

At our installation on 1st December Donald John Smith (Binnie) was installed into the chair of King Solomon in first class style by installing master Donnie Graham PM and his team. We're confident in Binnie's ability to lead the Lodge well during his term of office



D J Smith RWM

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible -- Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the verse. Little Bobby was excited about the task, but he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Bobby was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my shepherd . . . and that's all I need to know!"

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Office bearers, brethren & visitors after the installation



Our annual Burns Supper was held on 19th January at which we all enjoyed a first-class meal prepared by Donna Beaton and the usual clever and witty toasts. Donnie Video toasted the haggis and RWM Binnie gave a very informative toast to the immortal memory of Robert Burns.

I couldn't find anyone who had taken pictures during the evening and so the only one I could get a hold of was this one of the table settings.

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On a Saturday evening last November Donald Smith who's a cousin of Donnie Graham's and who works for Glenmorangie in Glasgow brought along samples of new bottlings by Glenmorangie in order that we could pass on our thoughts on the different flavours. I can assure you they were thankfully received and faithfully applied



Last October during a visit he made to the Ranger's club in Stornoway, the well-known referee Bobby Tait, better known as "The Mason in Black" paid a visit to the lodge premises. He's a very witty guy and regaled us with some amusing stories. Ian Fraser and I were at a Grand Superintendents dinner in Hamilton at which he was the guest speaker and where he displayed a card complete with his name and Ranger's logos. No favouritism there then!!

I'm often asked at what Books should the VSL be open at in the three Degrees.

EA Degree	Psalm 133	Verse 1
FC Degree	Amos 7	Verse 7
MM Degree	1 st Kings 17	Verse 20

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A photo of some of the local charities who received a proportion of the Lodge benevolence in this year's distribution. In total over £2,000 was distributed.



GRACE

An appropriate Grace for a meal after the Candidate has been Raised:

The hour has come: we should be praising
The Great Architect for this evening's raising
A progress fraternal and amazing;
So, let us then in one full voice
Thank the Lord and so rejoice
For food and wine of fitting choice
Forgetting not, though out of sight
Those without Masonic Light.

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Robertson's Lodge No 134

Hi All. A very Happy New Year.

We had our Installation meeting on Wednesday 20 September 2017, when PM Andrew MacIvor was re installed into the chair. His Office Bearers were also installed on that date. The Offices were filled by the same Brethren as last year, but with one exception. Brother Peter Ratcliffe a lodge member for many years but who has been absent for some time because he was working abroad, but always kept in touch. He is now back home and attending regularly so was glad to take up office again. He was installed as Junior Deacon, the office he last held before his absence. We all welcome you back among us Peter, and wish you well in your office.

It should be noted that our Lodge will be visiting Lodge St Duthus No. 82 on Monday 5 February 2018 when we will work a MMM Degree on a candidate of St. Duthus, Bro Bruce MacIvor who is a cousin of our RWM. In January 2017 we had the pleasure of working a first degree with Bro Bruce MacIvor being our stand in candidate. On 19 April 2017 Lodge St. Duthus Brethren visited our lodge and worked an excellent third degree with their own candidate. Yes, you guessed it Bro Bruce MacIvor. Bruce's father had been a member of our lodge, so it was a great privilege to all for Bruce to be associated with us and we look forward to working his MMM degree in his own lodge.

Many have asked after PM Victor Shepherd. Victor is still in Urray House, Muir of Ord. On a recent visit he told me he was happy with his new surroundings. His movement is very limited because his legs are weak, and he gets confused at times but recognises his visitors, so if you are in the area, call in and see him. He would appreciate it.

PM David Franklin is not at his best, health-wise, and had been in Raigmore Hospital. He is now home but attends the hospital for treatment. I know I speak for all when I say we look forward to his improving health and to see him back among us soon.

I heard Br. Kenny MacFarlane had been unwell and receiving treatment but hopefully is now on the mend.

Bro Douglas Cooper took unwell, over the festive season, but is now recovered and out and about. Take care Douglas.

Bro George MacIvor had a recent fall. No bones were broken but he is now at home recovering.

Best wishes to all these brethren, and any other brother who have not been in the best of health recently.

If any brother who has been absent for some time, wish to come back and are thinking about fees due, please contact me or P.M. Alasdair Taylor, Treasurer, and we can sort things out.

James A Tait, Secretary

A Sunday school teacher asked the children just before she dismissed them to go to church, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"

Annie replied, "Because people are sleeping"

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Lodge Fingal No 318

Since the last publication of the 'Patter' I have endeavoured to attend as many installations within the province as possible. I failed to attend three of them due to adverse weather conditions and other Lodge engagements. The Lodges missed being Lodge Ness, Kyle and Fortrose (Stornoway). I apologise for having missed these Lodge installations and hope to pay them a visit soon. The installations that I did manage to see were a joy to watch and it was a privilege to witness some excellent ritualists at work. The time and effort these individuals put into learning their craft is most evident and there for all to see. I wish I had that ability and skill.

I also managed to attend two installations out with the province. On Wednesday, 27th December 2017, I travelled to St. Peter's (Operative) Lodge No.284, Thurso, accompanied by three other brethren of Lodge Fingal, to attend the installation of Brother William Durrand. Again, this was a first-class installation with the Lodge filled. At the end of the installation the lodge was put to REFRESHMENT and all adjourned to the lounge area of the Lodge for the Festival of St. John. A three-course meal was then had followed by the toasts. The Lodge was then closed. A large raffle followed. We then beat a retreat for home as the weather conditions had turned for the worse. Henry, our chauffeur, had the task of driving through blizzard conditions to get us over the Ord. This installation was different to anything I had seen in our province and a joy to watch. The hospitality being second to none.

On Friday, 5th January 2018, along with three other brethren of Lodge Fingal, I attended the reinstallation of brother Mark Henry Bruce, Lodge St. John (Operative) No.37, Forres. This again was an excellent installation. The Provincial Grand Master for Moray and Nairn being present along with his office bearers. I learnt that the Provincial Grand Master and office bearers attend all the nine installations within the province.

On Saturday, 30th December 2017, I had the honour of being reinstalled into the chair of Lodge Fingal. My installation being arranged and carried out by P.M. Rory MacKenzie, assisted by P.M. Donnie Gunn and others. I wish to thank those that carried out the installation and those that took the time to attend. After my installation I had the delightful task of presenting Mrs. Irene Henderson with a small token of esteem from the Lodge. Mrs. Henderson has run whist drives, each month, within the Lodge, over the past 20 years. It is estimated that she has raised approximately £8,000 for the Lodge. However, due to dwindling numbers attending and her husband's present illness she has decided to retire. Well done Irene and THANKS from us all at Fingal.

Colin Mackintosh

RWM

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Lodge Fingal No 318 – cont.

January meeting: Opened in the EA° by the RWM Bro Colin Mackintosh with 15 brethren and 4 visiting brethren present. Lodges represented from Nos. 37 / 134 and 1217. The main business of the evening was an EA Emulation.

February meeting: 13th. FC Emulation.

March meeting: 13th. FC Emulation, also our annual Provincial Visit. Lodge will Tyle at 7:30pm, to put forward the minutes, etc.

April meeting: 10th. Lecture to be given by Bro. Robert Scott PM.

Events in the Logie Lounge organised by our Master Colin Mackintosh:

Saturday 24th February at 7:30pm} **Quiz Night.** Usual entrance £20 per team / finger buffet at half time. Those who are not driving, Bro Henry Cameron will be on Bar Duty.

LADIES NIGHT.

Saturday 24th March 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Music by Mike Samms.



Catering by Sean Kennedy [ex National Hotel]. His Culinary Delights are:

Starter: Broth (with produce from the *Master's* veggie patch) or Prawn Cocktail or Fruit Juice.

Main Course: Roast Beef (from Roy's Croft) or Salmon (straight from Gunners monofilament nets on the River Conon or a Vegetarian Dish if required. All served with hearty trimmings.

Desert: Sticky Toffee Pudding (to keep the women quiet) or Cheese Cake served with cream, ice cream or both.

Finished off: with Tea / Coffee and Shortbread.

Saturday 21st April at 7:30pm} **Race Night.** [Organised by Bro. Ali Matheson]

That`s all Folks, watch this Space.

D. Gunn PM
Secretary.

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Lodge Allan Wilson No 851

A date for your diaries: Tuesday 12th June – the Installation Meeting of Lodge Allan Wilson in the Masonic Hall, Station Square, Fortrose.

As this will be the tenth anniversary of the Reponing of the Lodge, the Brethren have very kindly nominated me as the Master Elect and I am deeply honoured by their gesture.

The Installation will be carried out by Brother, Rev Andrew Eadie Paterson, JP, Past Senior Grand Warden, Past Provincial Grand Master of Fife and Kinross and Proxy District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of Lebanon.

It is also hoped that the Grand Master Mason might be able to attend, which would be tremendous as he Reponed the Lodge in 2008 while Depute Grand Master.

Could I take this opportunity to commend Lodge Allan Wilson to all Brethren but especially to those older Brethren who find it difficult to get out during the winter nights. The Lodge only meets three times a year (June, July and August) at 11.00 am in the morning when we start off with tea and coffee. The Lodge tyles at 11.30 am. The June meeting is the Installation Meeting, the July meeting is a presentation / lecture and is also the Provincial Visitation and the August Meeting is a presentation / lecture. After the meeting we assemble for a very modestly priced two course lunches followed by the customary Toasts and Responses – all very civilised. The Lodge is ideal for those who cannot get out during the winter nights, for those who no longer wish to drive at night and for those on shift work who might otherwise miss their own Lodge meetings.

During 2018, as stated above, the June meeting will be the Installation, at the July meeting we hope to have a presentation by a prominent member of one of the Scottish Constitution Lodges in the Lebanon and at the August meeting we will welcome back Brother Charles Winston, Past Master of Lodge Montefiore, to give the third part of his trilogy based on the painting by the renowned 19th century artist, Sir John Lavery, one of “The Glasgow Boys”.

So, a very warm welcome awaits all Brethren from both within the Province and indeed, from all over the country. We will be delighted to welcome you into the Lodge.



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Lodge Seaforth 854

FRIDAY 16th February – please get a note in your diary – the night of the Seaforth Race Night. Please come along and support this social occasion – great family fun – bring Brethren, their families, neighbours and work colleagues for a great night out

If anyone would like to sponsor a horse (£3.00) just give me your name and the name of your horse(s).

Otherwise, the Master, Brother Fred Fraser, looks forward to welcoming as many of you as possible along to the Race Night.

Our next Regular Meeting on Monday 19th February will be a mock FC Degree unless our candidate returns early from serving in Iraq

Again, our Master extends a warm welcome to come along and join us on the Monday night,



The late Brother John MacKay, Lodge Seaforth, spent a significant part of his life as Chief Photographer in the Glasgow Herald. When he retired, he religiously read the Herald every day and had a habit of taking cuttings from it, some of which I inherited – thought the following one would bring a smile to your faces:

“Alan Morrison, our Morals Correspondent in Greenock, has been in telephonic contact regarding a scene which he witnessed during the departure of the Tall Ships from the town. He says: “I was on the Esplanade, the place was absolutely mobbed, I was standing beside three teenage girls. As the Russian ship went past, a magnificent sight with about a hundred Russians in the rigging, one of the girls yelled – ‘Haw Ivan, whit are we gonny call the wean?’”

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Lodge Averon No 866

Hello Brethren,

Lodge Averon is once again becoming very busy and we are starting to get into the full swing of things once more. We hosted an excellent re-installation of PM Bo Calum McKenzie who will keep the chair warm for this year whilst I prepare myself for the honour next December. This brings Lodge Averon back into line regarding office bearers. The installation was carried out by our very own PM Bro George Robinson to an extremely high standard, this was George's second only Masters Installation and very impressive and well attended ceremony it was too with an excellent harmony afterwards.

We also had our first degree work this year with a 3rd degree for Bro Gary Miller. The floor work was superb as always and what we have come to expect from the lodge Averon team. Our next degree will be a 2nd degree for Bro Denis Pike on the 25th Jan all visitors welcome.

We are also preparing for our annual old folk's party on Sat the 17th Feb in Alness Bowling club and a lot of hard work already done by Bro John McRae and we are pretty much ready to go. If I may remind the brethren that any presents or donation of food, sandwiches, cakes, baking and as many volunteers as possible on the day would be most welcome.

Tickets for our now famous ladies' night will be going on sale soon, we have a date of March the 24th and planning and preparation is well under way. This year's event is being organised by Bro Harry McCartney. I recommend any brethren interested order their tickets now, we run out last year!

Yours Fraternally

Bro D Mathieson

IRISH LOGIC

There are only two things to worry about, either you are well, or you are sick. If you are well, there is nothing to worry about. If you are sick, there are two things to worry about. Either you will get well, or you'll die. If you get well, there is nothing to worry about. If you die, there are two things to worry about, either you'll go to heaven or hell. If you go to heaven, there is nothing to worry about but, if you go to hell, you'll be so damn busy shaking hands with your friends, you won't have time to worry.

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LODGE KYLE No 1117

We begin our year with the sad news of the passing to the Grand Lodge Above of Bro. Donald MacLennan, Past Master of our Lodge and stalwart member of The Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty.

Donald left us peacefully, after a short illness, on Monday, January 1, 2018. Husband to Lexie and father of Colin, he was 90 years of age.

His funeral service was held within the Church of Scotland, Lochcarron on Wednesday 10th January and which was well attended by friends, family and two Brethren from Lodge Kyle as well as The Provincial Grand Lodge of Ross and Cromarty.

Donald was born just outside Aultbea in Mellon Charles and lived most of his life in the Highlands. Although tending the Stromeferry Hotel, he probably best known for his time at The Rockvilla Hotel in Lochcarron, which is why he was known as Donald "Rock" by the good people of that village.

In the Craft Donald rose to become Master of Lodge Kyle No. 1117 where he attended to his duties keenly and with a sense of humour. He is responsible by his good example, for getting brethren to participate in visiting other Lodges and in the work of the Province. He served as Substitute Provincial Grand Master in the time of the late Provincial Grand Master Bro. Kenny Bissett from 1991 to 1996.

Donald will be missed by all who knew him.

Lodge Kyle will meet on Monday February 5th at 8pm, when The RWM Rob Wilson and his team will be working a First Degree for Mr Ian Williams. This will bring the number of Brethren moving through the ranks to two, as we also have a Fellow waiting for this Third.

Sadly, however The Secretary received a letter of resignation from a young Brother who is living a considerable distance from the Lodge (on the East coast) and finds it difficult to attend. With his work, Church commitments and a new baby to look after, it's understandable why he decided to tender his resignation. We were of course sorry to see a member leave the Craft, but considerably heartened when he asked for the correct procedure to do so, that he might re-join in the years to come when his circumstances change.

He made sure he was in good standing, provided a formal letter of resignation, and a genuine desire to re-join allowing the Secretary to issue the appropriate Certificate for his safe keeping that he can present it to a Secretary in years to come that will gain him re-admittance. We wish him all success and happiness with his new family.

In a world where it's common not to receive an apology for a missed meeting, when a text, phone call or an email would suffice, this kind of gentlemanly and considerate (dare I say Masonic) behaviour is rare these days and very much appreciated.

Ronnie Miller, PM
Secretary

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216

Several years ago, at a PGL Quarterly Communication in Avoch it was suggested that PGL should meet on Lodge nights to try and help fill the calendar in times of no candidates. So, when PGL Secretary contacted us about us hosting the PGL meeting in November two days prior to our own meeting we felt this was an opportunity to hold the meeting on our Friday evening and many thanks to PGL in agreeing to our request. Not only did it mean we had a good crowd, but it also enabled a lot of Brethren to hear an Obituary for the late Bro John Patience PM Lodge Rosehaugh No 1216.

Our Installation meeting was held on 1st December with Bro Gary Munro installed into the chair by Bro Allan Carmichael PM. The Office Bearers were once again installed by Bro William Macleman PM.

Our January meeting was scheduled as normal for second Friday of month being the 12th however it was decided to move to normal first Friday 5th. We were especially pleased to have a ballot for our 2 prospective candidates.

Our February meeting will be held on the 2nd and after a stop/start issues with candidates previously we are looking forward to the start of a full programme of degree work.

Our annual Senior Citizen's party was held on Tuesday 10th December. Weather wasn't great, and numbers were lower than in previous years but still an excellent evening. Thanks to all who helped on the evening.

Bro John Patience PM Lodge Rosehaugh No 1216.

John joined Lodge Rosehaugh in January 1955 having been proposed by Bro John Patience (Pon) and his great friend Bro H J McIntosh PM. This was a period when meetings were being held at the Cathedral in Fortrose. He went through his 2nd and 3rd in February 1955. He was RWM for 2 spells (quite unique in these days he would tell me!) this being from 1961/1964 and 1969/1970. He also was an affiliate member of Lodge Seaforth. He was always keen to emphasise that both his Father and Grandfather were Founder Members of 1216. He was majorly involved in the building of our current lodge in the late 1960's and ably assisted in the extension and kitchen redevelopment in later years. His words of wisdom were always abundant especially in the many lectures which he prepared in a meticulous fashion, all prepared from his own careful research. The www not quite in his grasp in these days! In masonic terms he was a great advocate for Freemasonry in general and Lodge Rosehaugh in particular. There are not many who did not benefit from his advice and kind words and he was always promoting the lodge as best he could which of course included those who had not attended for a while with a quick when are you coming back! His final duty for the lodge was to be a proposer for his Great Nephew a role he was unable to complete.

I think it fair to say that although freemasonry had a major involvement in John's life and although there are many similarities in both this and his private life he was very much a family man. He was a major influence not only in his own family but our family also. We all benefited from his words of wisdom.

He worked In Dingwall as the district valuer and when he retired from this he stood and won the Council election in the days of District Council. Amongst his achievements as Councillor was the building of the Doctor Surgery in Avoch (now a business) and the children's playground in Park Street. He was also very adept at preparing CV'S and many have said this has a big bearing in attracting a significant interview and job offer to follow.

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LODGE ROSEHAUGH No 1216 cont.

John's funeral service was held on Thursday 2nd November in the Church of Scotland and it was packed to capacity. The collection for Cancer Research UK and Diabetes UK raised £1300. Catherine and family are indebted for the great support received from many including over 200 cards from all over the country.

John's passing was a great loss to many and he will be fondly remembered by all including the Brethren of Lodge Rosehaugh. Finally, I know John would have wished we thank Bro David Macmaster for all his support and visits.

Keith Patience, PM



PM John Patience

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Lodge St Martin 1217



Lodge St Martin has again been busy with assisting Father Christmas to tour Ullapool. The evening could not have been better with an unseasonably warm and dry evening enabling the Santa's elf's and helpers to collect more than £900. All monies are put back to different local good causes for children of all ages. The photo (above) shows the "Santa Float" beside the now famous Ullapool "Creel Tree".

The Lodge is quiet now with no candidates soon (although several possible candidates in the pipeline) however we are intending to hold a Practice 1st degree for our 21st February meeting.

Charles MacAulay, PM
Secretary



The Santa Float Team – ready for action

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Lodge Loch Ewe No 1551

Since the last contribution from the lodge our gatherings have been affected by some unfavourable weather (December 14th) and health status of travelling members (November 23rd) and business / work commitments affecting meeting of October 26th resulting in the remaining meetings being very informative / interesting lectures from a) Bro Barry Whitwell, Secretary giving a talk on the Forget-me-not and its significance to Freemasonry on 9th November 2017, and b) Bro R MacDonald WJW giving a talk on 11th January 2018 asking the question 'Was Father Christmas a Freemason' which was originally planned for a more seasonable 14th December 2017.

For readers who were intrigued by the behaviour of the pair of otters reported last edition Bro 'Attenborough' Gault did some research which informs us that this is one of the traits of the mating season! On Boxing Day an otter was spotted in George Street, Dingwall bounding towards Cromartie car park but, on seeing the writer, thought it more prudent to head back to the High street from where it had emerged.

Lodge activity is geared towards the preparation for the PGL visit on Thursday 12th April 2018.

The lodge is considering changing to 1 meeting night per month on the 2nd Thursday in the month and this would be added to the proposed changes to the lodge Byelaws to be submitted for ratification by PGL and GL in due course.

Let's hope both weather and health fronts improve over the next quarter and that a more informative submission for the 'Patter' will be available for the June issue.

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the 12th April 2018 meeting with its raffle and harmony.

Andrew Miller Henderson IPM.

Lodge Loch Ewe No. 1551.

WHO?

Once upon a time there were four people. Everybody, Somebody, Nobody and Anybody. When there was a job to be done, Every-body was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did. When Nobody did it, Every-body got angry because it was Anybody's job. Everybody thought Somebody would do it, but Nobody realised it would not be done by Anybody. So, Every-body blames Somebody because Nobody had done what Anybody could do.

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BITS AND PIECES



On Saturday 9th December 2017, I had the pleasure to accompany the Grand Master Mason to Washington DC to attend the Installation of the new Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia.

The Celebrations started on the Friday night with a Banquet in the J W Marriott Hotel, Washington. This was a splendid occasion at which the Grand Master Mason and I were able to meet with a significant number of Grand Masters from various parts of the United States and their wives and partners. It was pleasing to note how delighted they were that the Grand Lodge of Scotland was in attendance.

On a bitterly cold Saturday morning we travelled out to Arlington National Cemetery where the Grand Master, Brother Roman Volsky was to lay a wreath at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

This was a very moving and poignant ceremony at which our Grand Master Mason was asked to participate. I doubt if he has thawed out yet, but he did the Scottish Craft proud.

Arlington National Cemetery is massive. It covers an area of 624 square acres and to date, over 420,000 people are buried there. Included in that number are two American Presidents – President John F Kennedy and President William Howard Taft who was President from 1909 till 1913.

Today, there are between 25 and 35 funerals per week in Arlington.

That afternoon we were all bussed to the Scottish Rite Centre where the Installation Ceremony was to take place. This was totally different to what we are used to in Scotland. Grand Lodge was opened in a small Temple at the top of the building by the outgoing Grand Master, Brother Roman Volsky. Once open, we all moved down to an ante-room next to the main amphi theatre style Lodge. Each Grand Lodge was introduced and we marched into the arena from the ante-room. The place was packed with the relatives of all those who were about to be Installed into Office. I think it would be fair to say that this was more an investiture rather than an installation. There was no ritual as we know it but everyone, starting with the new Grand Master, Brother Richard J Bautista, was presented and invested with their Jewel of Office.

It was very impressive but very different to our own Installation Ceremonies. We then moved to the Refectory where we enjoyed a superb buffet style meal which was somewhat novel as far as I was concerned but what it did allow was the ability to mingle and meet with people.

All in all it was a fantastic experience and I am delighted I had the opportunity to attend.

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*The Military Guard
carrying the
Masonic Wreath
onto the Parade
Square in front of
the Tomb of the
Unknown Soldier.*

*The Grand Master
Mason, Brother
Charles Iain
Robert Wolrige
Gordon, with the
Wreath Laying
Party.*



As a matter of interest.

Well hello Brethren, after a short break of a *Matter of Interest* due to one thing or another, I thought I would present a subject for discussion that is becoming more and more to the forefront of Masonry and the challenges being faced by many Lodges not only in the Province of Ross and Cromarty but throughout the UK.

Encouraging and retaining new brothers into Freemasonry.

Why is it that so few young men of today don't seem interested in Freemasonry? Why when we do initiate a new brother very often they just don't come back? What is it they see that they don't like, Religion? Boring ceremony, Repetition? Are we placing just too much pressure on people to perform on the floor? Or Dare I say it - Is It Lodge Politics they see and don't like? What is it that we are not fulfilling of these young men?

So many questions, so many opinions, so many initiatives.

However recently I have been asked on a few occasions - how does Lodge Averon seem to be bucking this trend? How do you do it?

Well yes, we have, and we will continue to do so. I thought that if I were to share some of the things we have done, along with some of the pros and cons we encountered on our journey it might help other lodges in the province? So here goes.

We have done this through **change** and believe me brethren that change has not been easy - it has been quite a long and sometimes rocky road. However, we are reaping the benefits of that now for all to see. We began by looking at fund raising and how we did that. We were raising funds for the lodge and local charity's, but, we were not letting people know that it was Lodge Averon members that were doing this. That we were masons. Also, the events that were being held, by and large were being attended by masons. So, the effect was the same guys were in fact providing all the money out of their own pockets. No wonder they stopped coming and events were poorly attended!

We started ensuring that friends, family and generally non-masons could attend our events, quiz nights, Race nights, Halloween parties, St Andrews nights, Mr and Mrs night, poker nights. We began hosting our own ladies' night which has now become famous in its own right. It is no longer restricted to masons! One of our best nights of the year and yes, our Ladies have a whale of a time. Not forgetting our kids Christmas party which is open to all. There were no party's being held for kids in Alness when we started now there are 3 others I know of.

We made sure that when we had charity events like our annual golf event we handed over the monies raised to the charity directly and on the day. This approach made sure that the handover of the money appeared in our community's newspaper, our website and local papers. Everybody saw where the money was going and more importantly who had raised it.

In short, we were no longer hiding. We are Freemasons, we are proud to be so, and this is what we do for this community and have been for over 100 years. Help ma Bob! Publicity!

PROS - The result of that is we raised our profile within our own community thus generating enquires from men who had no idea what we did or who we were. Interest in our Lodge started to grow and is still growing. We were giving the message we are open and transparent we have nothing to hide away from.

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The social side of the lodge is excellent, and we are actively developing this. I feel this is appealing to our younger generation, they seem to thrive within the friendship and camaraderie and yet the exclusiveness of being a freemason and being part of something unique. Our newer guys are up to putting something back into our community. We encourage them to do so.

CONS - There are a few cons to this.

It needs to be clear we were not a social club or a pub, we are a lodge. So, all the events we do are organised and well-run events and follow proper process of Committee recommendations and open lodge approval.

A lot of the young men that joined work away or work as many hours they are permitted to. We recognised this and adjusted. They may not be able to attend every meeting. Not all masons are comfortable being known as masons that needs to be respected.

Ceremony

We made a concise effort to back off the pressure on the guys having a go on the floor. It is no longer the be all and end all if you fluff your lines. We recognised that not everyone is going to be brilliant at it and as individuals must be allowed to find a way of delivering ceremony that suits them that makes them comfortable if indeed they want to work the floor. More importantly it is not compulsory.

Just as important we try not to give conflicting messages to the guys i.e. no don't do that - do this or most infuriatingly. "No, we don't do it like in the green book" We looked at how Lodge Averon did her ceremony historically and produced a book based on that. A lodge Averon book of ceremony that critically, also describes how we move, where to and when.

I can honestly say I'm not very good at ceremony, but I have never given up trying, well you all know that! I go into the chair next too!!

However, of the things that very nearly put me off was hearing. "We don't do it like that" or "We have always done it like that" or being told not to do something just to see that very person telling me this, do exactly that. I personally was and am convinced this is one of the biggest factors of turn over. The new guys do not want to go on the floor if they see this and as a result get bored or feel there is a need too, or pressure to do floor work. They "think" "so this is what masonry is about. No not for me and don't bother coming back

We promote delivering ceremony as helping to improve confidence, to help keep a century's old story alive, a personal challenge. We encourage, we don't berate or hoodwink guys on to the floor. More importantly it is understanding what the ceremony is trying to teach you that is important not a parrot like recital.

A Freemasons time is the most valuable thing one can give his lodge not recital.

PROs – We have some of the best floor work within the province we are very professional in our approach but still manage to have a laugh at practices that people really want to come to.

We have uncovered some real gems. Delivering their ceremony with meaning and astounding accuracy. Everybody within the lodge knows how Lodge Averon delivers ceremony in a consistent manner. In our unique way.

We have had guys proactively learning something and asking to go on the floor.

CONS – It was hard work producing, validating and approving the Lodge Averon book of ceremony
Changing the perception that flawless floor work is not what masonry is all about.

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Retaining.

We still face this challenge, we still see some guys come through the door then never to be seen again, however overall, I would say our turnover has decreased we don't see as many new masons not coming back. We are still working on this ourselves. More importantly as a lodge we are more willing to change than we have been in the past. One thing I feel all lodges need to recognise. **Freemasonry is not for everyone.**

One of the Initiatives I am trying to promote within my own lodge, is a decent period between the 1st degree and moving on the 2nd. I would like to see attendance over more than a few meetings. To give a new mason a chance to find his feet. To allow us to fully guide a new brother in what his lodge might expect of him and for his Lodge to fully appreciate his expectations. Should we be looking at quality not quantity? As a proposer and seconder there is a responsibility to be had here. I think a set of written guidelines and responsibilities not just for proposers, but the enquiry teams would be helpful.

We have embraced new media channels. We have a website and we have a Facebook page. This is a secret page and only lodge Averon members can see. We use this to get feedback, chat, give updates to upcoming events. It also allows us to keep our lads that work away a lot up to date in turn allowing them to plan a little better when they are home.

Overall brethren, if I was to give advice. Look inward toward your own lodge. You will find the answers there.

Bro D Mathieson
Lodge Averon 866

A teacher was testing the children in her Sunday school class to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven. She asked them, "If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into Heaven?"

"NO!" the children answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into Heaven?"

Again, the answer was, "NO!"

Now she was smiling. Hey, they're getting it, she thought! "Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into Heaven?" she asked.

Again, they all answered, "NO!"

She was just bursting with pride for them. "Well," she continued, "then how can I get into Heaven?"

A five-year-old boy shouted out, "YOU GOTTA BE DEAD."

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The Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland

The Installation of MEC Joseph Morrow will take place on Friday 16th March 2018

PROVINCIAL GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of R&C

For the information of the companions I'm noting below the visitation dates for the next season of meetings.

Chapter	Visit
Tain & Ross 63	13 February 2018
St Clement 244	27 April 2018
Cromarty Firth 310	07 March 2018
Hebrides 364	16 May 2018
Hebrides Lodge & Council	17 May 2018

AGM in Hebrides Chapter Stornoway on Friday 18th May 2018 at 2pm.

Donnie Macleod

Donald Macleod GS R&C

Tain & Ross RAC 63

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Tuesday 13th February.

St Clement RAC 244

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Friday 23rd February.

Cromarty Firth RAC 310

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Wednesday 7th February

The Hebrides RAC 364.

The next meeting of the Chapter will be on Tuesday 13th February

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PRECEPTORY OF THE WESTERN ISLES



A picture of DGP Andrew Morrison and his district officers visiting on Saturday 28th October to carry out the re-installation of VP Donald Macdonald and his officers.

Donnie Macleod IPDGP

GUILD LODGES

Highland Guild Lodge

The next meeting of the Highland Guild Lodge will be the Installation Meeting on Friday 9th February in the Masonic Hall, Alness

Alasdair Taylor

Kirkwarden/Scrivener
Highland Guild Lodge

And finally:

Praise to God who giveth meat
Convenient unto all to eat:
Praise for tea and buttered toast
Father, Son and Holy Ghost