

password

Summer 2009

Introducing The Provincial Demonstration Group

From a standing start 18 months ago, the Provincial Demonstration Group has grown dramatically in membership and is now expanding its repertoire of historic Masonic re-enactments. The Group presented its first play – 'Lodge Night 1759' – four times in early 2009 to great acclaim and has forward bookings over the whole 2009/10 Masonic season. There are another seven plays planned over the next three years, including a new Royal Arch play to be enacted in early 2010.

Why was the Demonstration Group Set Up?



It was in April 2008 that VW Bro Derek Young, the then DPGM, formed a small team to present the history, origins and meaning of Freemasonry in a dramatic form. "We knew there was more we could be doing to educate our members in the Province. Demonstrations really give an appetite to learn more about their Freemasonry and its origins and were the last piece to fall into place in the Province's education and training plans".

The APMG W Bro Dr Vivian Thomas, who succeeded VW Bro Derek Young as Chairman of the Education & Training Steering Group, observed "These plays help people understand the journey they have completed in Freemasonry by experiencing the historical background first hand. Younger Freemasons in particular have a thirst for this sort of knowledge". He obviously shares his predecessor's enthusiasm for using drama to educate and inspire.

An introduction to the set up of historic demonstration in this Province would not be complete without acknowledging the part played by Pomfret 360, our senior Lodge. "It was here I experienced first hand the educational value of historic re-enactments and the great sense of team spirit created for the members", says W.Bro Trevor Sherman, who joined the Pomfret '1765' team some 12 years ago and is now Chairman of the Provincial Demonstration Group. "All credit to W.Bro Mike Green of Pomfret for running that team for so many years".

“MEETING A CHALLENGING YEAR AHEAD”

After very enjoyable and successful meetings of Provincial Grand Lodge and Three Counties Lodge in May – both of which took place on fine early Summer days – all of us I'm sure looked forward to a Summer break with every prospect, as the forecasters predicted, of hours of beautiful sunshine and high temperatures. Ah – what dreams – we have them every year don't we?!!

Nevertheless I hope, like Joy and I, you have enjoyed the summer whether on holiday or at home, and particularly during this Ashes Test series which is proving to be as exciting this year as in 2005. Many Brethren, I'm sure, will have read the summer edition of Freemasonry Today and discovered that many of our cricketing heroes of yesteryear were proud members of the Craft including Len Hutton, Herbert Sutcliffe, Bill Bowes, Bertie Oldfield, the great Don Bradman and many others.

Perhaps the “Bodyline Tour” didn't exactly eschew the virtues of brotherly love on the field of play unlike our annual Provincial cricket match against the Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London which took place this year in the stunningly beautiful grounds of the Royal Masonic School for Girls at Rickmansworth. A most enjoyable and relaxing afternoon was had by players and supporters alike. Another win for our hosts by the not inconsiderable margin of sixty runs did nothing to dampen spirits but only made for an even firmer commitment to reverse the result at next season's game on home territory – home supporters please note!



Good cricket, like any sport or personal hobby, requires a significant commitment of time and effort to ensure modest success and maximum enjoyment by all its devotees. Likewise enjoyable and meaningful Freemasonry requires a similar commitment of time and effort. We all know the effort required to master the little “blue book” to ensure successful and enjoyable ceremonies, whilst the commitment to the more longer term officer stations, Secretary, DC, Almoner and the like, has to be of the highest order for the Lodge to be a happy and thriving unit. As we look forward to a new and challenging Masonic season may I commend two particular areas of commitment which are so essential to the well being and success of our Lodges, the Province and the Craft as a whole?

Firstly our commitment to the 2013 Festival Appeal on behalf of the RMBI – a very special Masonic charity looking after the welfare and dignity of elderly Brethren and their dependants either in our Residential Homes or enabling them to continue living in comfort in their local communities whenever possible. We have made fantastic progress in a little over two years since the Appeal was launched. Brethren have contributed no less than £1.1 million in that short time. Regular Payment Promises have been the mainstay of the Appeal but considerable sums have also been raised through many enjoyable events promoted by the cross-Province Festival Committee chaired by Deputy PGMVV Bro. Max Bayes. Our recent sponsored Easter “Walk the Province” event which took place in lovely spring sunshine is still causing a few lasting muscular twinges but what a fantastic success with a further £40,000 being raised towards our target through the efforts of

“MEETING A CHALLENGING YEAR AHEAD”(Contd)

over a hundred very committed walkers.

Brethren, the Festival Committee are very aware, as we all are, of the difficult financial climate in which we find ourselves. Spare cash is increasingly scarce and I ask only for the wholehearted commitment of Lodges and brethren to do their very best to achieve their Lodge target and the Provincial target of £1.6 million without detriment to themselves or their families. The key, as I frequently emphasise, is for everyone possible in the Lodge to take on a commitment to contribute modestly but regularly through the Gift Aided Regular Payment Promise scheme. As for future fund raising events, you may be sure that the Deputy's Committee will organise these sparingly but for maximum enjoyment. Their record speaks for itself.

So much for our commitment to the Festival Appeal. A second area requiring significant commitment relates to last year's success in implementing good recruitment practices to again achieve a modest increase in Provincial membership. With that success our consequent commitment – and it is such a vital commitment – is to ensure that we retain those new members in their enjoyment and personal fulfilment in the Craft. To do so ensures a very significant contribution to the long term health of our Lodges and our thriving Province. A committed approach to Mentoring our new members is crucial to retention success and everyone can, to varying degrees, play an important part in that process. We all know that our early years in the Craft are questioning years, so many queries concerning our ceremonies, our organisational structure and above all that deeper understanding of our journey through the three degrees and onward through the Royal Arch. To have a committed Mentor or group of Mentors able and available to answer our questions is a source of great support and encouragement to new members all striving to understand our aims and objectives and to play an active role in the life of the Lodge.

Please, please make a personal commitment to encourage, support, and whenever possible, to assist Lodge Mentors in their so important task. Our new members, the Lodge, and the Craft in general, will be the richer and the happier with that commitment. In particular our Provincial Grand Mentor, W. Bro. Reg Hirst will, in the coming year, be seeking Lodge views as to how we might further improve our Mentoring Scheme in all its facets. Do please ensure that your views are given or represented together with a clearly expressed commitment to help whenever called upon.

But back to cricket. As this article goes to the Editor, I look forward, albeit rather nervously, to tomorrow's last day of play in the Lords Test with England needing five wickets for victory and Australia needing two hundred and nine runs to retain their seventy five year dominance at the home of cricket. Whatever the result I shall still be an enthusiastic supporter of England's quest for the Ashes – just as I am for the Festival and Mentoring Scheme successes. It really is all about total commitment to causes one believes in - isn't it??

Please do enjoy the rest of the summer break. I look forward to the new Masonic year, to my visits to Lodges and joining with you in taking on and enjoying the challenges ahead.

R. W. Bro. W. Barrie Hall
Provincial Grand Master

/Cont'd from Page 1

In the eighteenth century it was common for Lodges to meet in Inns and Taverns, and very often the Lodge was named after the name of the Inn or Tavern. The 'Lodge Night 1759' demonstration is of a meeting of the George and Dragon Lodge – the first Northamptonshire Lodge, consecrated in 1730 as Lodge No.62. The cast of twelve perform in the costume of the period. The ceremony is a composite picture of the ritual practiced around the middle of the century. This presentation concentrates upon the Ancients' working, much of which has found its way into the ritual practiced today.

The team was asked what it meant to them being part of this historic re-enactment group and a snapshot of their feelings is given in the responses below:

W.Bro Peter Ayton, Lodge of Fidelity – Author & Narrator

"I was delighted to be asked to be part of the demonstration team, and even more surprised to be invited to research and write the first play – Lodge Night 1759. The research side gave me the impetus to learn more about Freemasonry and its origins. Now I'm part of extending this understanding and education to other Masons across the Province"

W.Bro Trevor Cook, Gates of Billing Lodge – Worshipful Master

"It was a great honour to be cast as Worshipful. I love ritual anyway. This role puts me very much at the centre of connecting our audience to the early history and ritual, and helping them put into context what we do now. I would encourage others to join us. We are here for the long term and need new people with new ideas for the future".

Bro John Medley, Pomfret Lodge – Senior Warden & Props/Costumes

"I personally find it very enriching to my Freemasonry to be part of the team. It's very fulfilling to be demonstrating something that happened 250 years ago and has such a bearing on what we do now. We're going back to our origins. For newer Masons it helps them understand our history. For others, it can re-invigorate their interest".

The next play will be about the formation of the Holy Royal Arch. It traces the differences between the Antients and the Moderns over the relevance of the Royal Arch, what was agreed at that time and how it applies to us now. Grand Superintendent, E.Comp Wayne Williams is delighted. "It's both educational and entertaining. Many members do not realise the traumatic origins of the Royal Arch. For Master Masons the play helps them understand the deeper spiritual meaning of the Craft and what I call 'the glorious conclusion'. The Royal Arch is the means for them to complete their Craft knowledge and experience". This play will be available for booking by Chapters and Lodges. The joint authors of the play are E.Comps Barry Weigleb and Bill Purcell of Wellingborough Chapter.

Subjects for future plays include the story of the Antients & Moderns leading to the Union in 1813, the formation of the RMBI to celebrate the Province's 2013 Festival and the Earliest Making of a Mason to represent the initiation of Elias Ashmole and Colonel Mainwaring in 1646. The longer term and more ambitious project is to create a series of plays to present the nearly 250 year history of the Northants & Hunts Province.

For booking enquiries please contact The Northants and Hunts Demonstration Group at the Provincial Office or by email to demogroup@northants-huntsmasons.org.uk

W Bro Trevor Sherman LGR
Chairman

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Provincial Grand Lodge 2009

Some 358 Brethren attended the Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge on Thursday 21st May 2009 (the largest attendance for many years). We welcomed guests from 16 other Provinces together with 7 Heads of Other Orders in this Province. The Provincial Grand Master appointed and promoted 30 Brethren to Acting Provincial Rank, re-Appointed 11 Brethren in Acting Office and conferred First Appointments in Past Rank on 39 Brethren.

A Provincial Grand Master's Certificate of Merit was awarded to a very surprised W Bro Ray Thorpe (see Page 21) for his many years of service to the Province in general and Huntingdon Masonry in particular (see pen portrait on page 21). After the meeting 302 Brethren joined the Provincial Grand Master at Festive Board at which the Grand Draw in support of our 2013 Festival was made. Over £10,000 was raised from the draw and W Bro Martin Lilley (inset) was the winner of the first prize car.



On Wednesday 27th May 2009 at Three Counties Lodge the Provincial Grand Master was pleased to promote 74 Brethren in Provincial Grand Rank and award a Certificate of Merit to W Bro Wilf Rodwell for his many years of service to Masonry particularly in Peterborough. Over 70 Brethren attended in support of those promoted.

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Bavarian “Oompah” Night

Saturday May 16th had the function room at York Road, Kettering resounding with the joyous sounds of a Bavarian “Oompah” band at a St. Crispin Lodge No. 5627 Social Evening. With the hall appropriately decked out and the authentic looking “Der Schuster Musik” on stage, the audience was set to be whisked away to a beer hall somewhere in deepest Bavaria.

In fact, “Der Schuster Musik” consisted almost entirely of St. Crispin Lodge members and their wives, all accomplished brass band musicians. Assembled just for the occasion, they all gave freely of their time, not only for the evening but for the rehearsal sessions which resulted in a truly first rate performance.



Star of the evening was Bro. Richard Orme who led the proceedings with such enthusiasm that the audience was soon joining in with songs, toasts and games to create a truly party atmosphere. The entertainment was only interrupted for the serving of supper which, of course, included real German sausage!

The evening with an audience of around 100, made up of Masons, their wives and friends, was enjoyed by all proving the the raising of funds for charity (£730 in all) can be a most pleasant experience when approached in innovative ways.

Northampton LAMs

Continuing their efforts on behalf of good causes the Northampton LAMs recently presented the magnificent sum of £3150 to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. The total was made up from monies raised during Mrs Margaret Williams’ year of Chairmanship supplemented by a contribution of £1500 from the Provincial Benevolent Fund.

This was a particularly poignant moment for Margaret’s family as her daughter Julie Morris had been saved from drowning by the RNLI some time before; sadly her husband Ian had failed to survive.

Pictured in the front row from the left are Joy Roblin – LAMS President - Margaret Williams, Kim Matcham and Jane Collins of the RNLI with Margaret’s daughter Julie and two other representatives from the RNLI in the rear.



Mentoring and the North East Corner

It is unlikely that many Masons can have remembered every word of our varying rituals; (indeed, that may be one of the reasons that we have varying rituals), but there can be few who ever forget the period during their Initiation, when they stood at the North-east corner of the Lodge. I refer specifically to that peculiar moment, immediately before the embarrassment of being asked if you have anything to give in the cause of charity, when you were told that you now stand to all external appearance a just and upright Mason. That statement gives an Initiate a sense of pride. One of my favourite writers on Masonic matters, the late Bro. the Revd. Joseph Fort Newton, referred to it as "one of the thrills along the great journey of Initiation - a point at which the idea and purpose of Masonry begin to take shape in the mind."

But just what is the purpose and significance of the mini-ritual enacted at the North-east Corner? Symbolically we refer to it as the laying of the first or foundation stone. I suggest that to the candidate, as well as to the whole future of Freemasonry, that portion of the ceremony is of tremendous significance and great importance, because it goes to the very heart of one of our most important principles and tenets.

The Initiate stands in that strange posture, midway between the darkness in the North and the light from the East, but with his attention directed to the light. It is at once emblematic of the dawning of a new day; the beginning of a new venture; the unfolding of things previously kept from view.

Earlier in the ceremony, the Initiate has been told that he is expected to stand perfectly erect. It is not surprising, therefore, that, on standing at the North-east Corner and being told that he now stands a just and upright Mason, the new-made Brother fills out his chest and raises his shoulders with pride. Almost immediately we see the shoulders drop and the look of pride replaced with one of bewilderment, when, being only too well aware of his present condition, he is asked to make a contribution to charity. Not surprisingly, he feels uncertain and embarrassed, until the reasons for this portion of the ritual are explained to him. I can think of no more effective way of teaching a new Mason, at such an early stage, the importance of charity in its broadest sense, or that humility and docility are sure indications of merit, but this is just one of the many principles and tenets in which the Initiate is still to be instructed. So just whose responsibility is this and how can it be implemented?

The re-assertion of the creative teachings of our institution is essential to our future. We owe it to ourselves, our forebears and our successors to preserve our long-established standards, but we cannot do so unless we increase our own awareness of our history and heritage. It is not enough to be content with learning the words contained in our ritual books. We must strive to understand their true meaning and how they came about, for it is only by developing such an awareness that we can give proper instruction and guidance to those who are to follow; like the Brother at the North-east Corner! The new Mason needs as much encouragement as possible and will continue to need wise counsel, guidance and instruction for a very long time. The responsibility for this, whilst resting first and foremost with a Candidate's sponsors, does not end with them, but devolves on us all. It is our joint responsibility to ensure that he is not found wanting for lack of proper instruction.

New Mentoring Scheme Welcomed

That is why the Rt. W. Provincial Grand Master's initiative towards the Mentoring Scheme is so much to be welcomed. But, may I please sound a warning? The appointment of Mentoring Officers does not in any way absolve the rest of us from doing what we can to welcome, enlighten

and generally to assist those new to our Order. Please don't leave it to others! I firmly believe that we all have a responsibility to ensure that each new Initiate is given proper care and attention and taught the true meaning of the principles and tenets of our great Craft. There is no other way of ensuring that these principles and tenets will be transmitted pure and unpolluted through our Lodges from generation to generation.

W Bro Geoffrey Smith PPrGReg (Risden Lodge 6532)

Masonic Bowls Tour 2009

The Northants & Hunts Provincial Masonic Bowling Association had another most enjoyable tour this Summer with five days sight seeing and four games of bowls during their tour to Portsmouth in July. Once again, as with last year's tour, the weather was not the best but this far from dampened the spirits of these dedicated bowling enthusiasts.



On the way home the 'team' stopped for a game at Chipping Norton and their success at this venue is amply reflected in the smiling faces in the photograph above.



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Just What The Doctor Ordered

W Bro Bill O'Rourke, in his role of Worshipful Master of the Lodge of Fidelity No. 445, Towcester presented a cheque for £937 to Dr Sally Thompson at Long Buckby Doctors' Surgery. Bro Bill had a problem a few years ago which required extensive examination for a period. He said, "I had such professional care when I had to go to the surgery every day for treatment during 2006, and I was really pleased to be able to donate this money for the benefit of Long Buckby Doctors' Surgery."



The money will be used to purchase an Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring (ABPM) which provides a non-invasive method of obtaining blood pressure readings over twenty four hours, whilst the patient is in their own environment, representing a true reflection of their blood pressure. Many studies have now confirmed that blood pressure measured over a 24-hour period is superior to clinic blood pressure in predicting future cardiovascular events.

Mark Banner Presentation

At a special meeting at The Priory Huntingdon of Socrates Mark Lodge No 794 on Monday 18th May the Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro George Bonham, accompanied by his Deputy VW Bro Richard Turpin and a team of Provincial Officers, dedicated a new Lodge Banner. This was a first for the Mark Province of Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire and the PGM said in his address that there was no doubt that a banner formed a rallying point for any Lodge and he hoped more Lodges might, in the fullness of time, follow Socrates example.

The Worshipful Master, W Bro Geoff Pitcher, thanked the PGM and his team for an excellent ceremony and all then retired for a most enjoyable Festive Board.



Annual Cricket Match 2009

Brethren and Supporters converged on the Royal Masonic School for Girls in Rickmansworth on Sunday 19th July 2009 for the second Annual Cricket Bonanza with Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London. Having successfully negotiated the challenge of locating the pitch and pavilion Jamie Plowman, our captain, won the toss and elected to field first. The team was



strengthened at the last minute with the inclusion of our Assistant PGM, Viv Thomas and Peter Ayton (who doubled up as umpires as well). On a slow pitch where runs were hard to come by our opponents made steady progress against some mixed bowling. The 100 run

mark was finally passed after 26 overs with the loss of 2 wickets. Further bowling success followed with the hosts finally totalling 143 for 7 wickets in their allotted 35 overs.

Tea was taken (3 course meal with wine) and after a torrential rain storm the sun re-appeared to encourage Northants & Hunts batsmen to rise to the occasion. The ploy by Met Grand Lodge of London to feed and water the teams between innings proved to be successful as wickets fell and the run rate required rose. Sterling performances by Jeremy Thomas (17), Peter Ayton (13) and Viv Thomas (10) gave "The Barmy Army" a lot to sing about but on 83 the final wicket fell and we had to be content with second place for the second year running.

Worse was to come when our hosts won all the raffle prizes but another memorable day of fun was sufficient compensation for the Provincial Grand Master and his team and supporters and we look forward to taking Metro Grand Lodge of London on again next year.

Lodge of St Paul Songbook

In support of the 2013 Provincial Charity Festival, the Lodge of St Paul has re-published its booklet of Masonic songs for use in lodge meetings and at the festive board. Produced in a handy A5 pocket size and printed on heavy weight paper, the songs included are: Opening Ode; Closing Ode; Grace; Absent Brethren; Entered Apprentice Song; Worshipful Masters Song (2 versions); Visitors Song and Tylers Song. Individual copies cost £3.50 each. Multiple copies for lodges purchasing in bulk, to give to members or to sell for their own funds cost £20 for 10 copies and £38 for 20 copies, inclusive of postage. For multiple orders, the Lodge logo or badge and name are printed on the front page free of charge. All proceeds go to the 2013 appeal. Enquiries to Lodge Secretary at woodsattrinity@btinternet.com

The Provincial Charity Walk

It was Friday 10th April, Good Friday, the start of the Easter Holidays for some, but for 44 others it was the start of the Provincial Charity Walk. It would have been 43 if someone had not mentioned to Bro Mo Moussi that he would get a free tee shirt if he completed the walk! At around 8.15am people were arriving outside the public house in Badby to get ready for the off. Some were applying ointment before the strains took place and some taped up their feet



to try and avoid the blisters, they were not all successful. Age proved no barrier as can be seen left by W Bro Stan Wilford, 'Grampy' (photo: courtesy of his Granddaughter), accompanying The Provincial Grand Master and The Deputy Provincial Grand Master over part of the course.

The Provincial Grand Master wished everyone well, as well as a safe journey. He himself completed at least one section each day with his wife Joy, without suffering any ill effects. It was arranged for the press to meet us at one of the prearranged stops, but such was the pace set by the front runners they had to be rescheduled, eventually meeting up on the side of the main road in a layby!

There were a few volunteers to help marshal the walkers and attend any injuries, they moved from one site to the next to ensure there were no accidents or injuries. One of those volunteers was the Provincial Senior Grand Warden, who also had another responsibility, he was in charge of W Bro Mike Gorrod's lunch box, it held enough food to feed all of us! The Marshall's also carried the first aid kit, although the person in charge of first aid was walking, mentioning no names W Bro Ian McLachlin, whose services thankfully were not required. Once again W Bro Trevor Boswell supplied excellent directions for us all to follow, it still did not prevent a few losing their way. In fact one group who had gone wrong were retracing their steps only to pass another group heading in the direction they had just turned back from!!! I am pleased to report that all returned safely.

Quite a few Brethren regularly travel the roads back and forth between Northampton and Peterborough, but one wonders how many of us realise that there is in fact some beautiful countryside to be seen along the Nene Way. If you ever have the time, the river is not far away from the main roads, just take a while to take a side road and have a look for yourself. If you ever find the field full of young cows remember not look at them too fondly, or the Assistant Provincial Grand Master's prophecy will come true. As they circled the walkers he was heard to say "be careful or they will be your friends for heifer and heifer and heifer"!

The last day turned out to be the warmest, but this did not detract from the pace and most arrived at the finish at 2.00pm on the Monday afternoon, where the 'other' Assistant Provincial Grand Master, fortified by half a pint of Guinness joined for the last 100 yards! Some of the Peterborough masons who joined the walk for the last section came in late and moaned that there was no champagne left, at which the Deputy Provincial Grand Master was heard to say if they had not stopped at the Black Horse in Nassington they would not have missed out!

Over the course of the 4 days, over a hundred Brethren and their partners took part with twelve, two of whom were ladies, completing the whole walk. Although the walk was not

intended to raise large amounts of money over £35000 was raised towards the 2013 festival appeal; another successful event. The Deputy Grand Master was heard to say “this is definitely the last walk I am going to do, but if I do suggest another one in the future will somebody please shoot me”; dare we suggest there may be one or two sore footed Brethren in the queue. Once again this event brought together Brethren from all over the Province, new friendships formed and old ones renewed. An altogether happy outcome to another resounding successful event in support of the 2013 Festival.



W Bro Alan Kersley PPrAGDC

Continuing the practice of introducing Brethren who are active in ‘hidden’ roles in the Province we are pleased to introduce W Bro Alan Kersley, who is the mainstay behind the Daily Advancement website. Living in Peterborough, Alan runs his own Internet Software Development business, specialising in the Travel industry, with technology solutions for Tour Operators and Travel Agencies. He has (almost) the most tolerant and understanding wife out there. With 3 children – 2 boys who have grown up and left home (although they are more trouble now than they were at home!), and one 11 year-old daughter (trouble still to come perhaps) he ‘enjoys’ a busy home life.

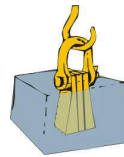


However, his hobby tends to be Masonry(!), as any spare time seems to be taken up with something linked with it. And despite working in the Travel industry, he notes that there are few freebie trips abroad these days and no time to take them anyway! In addition to his important role as Provincial ‘Daily Advancement’ guru, Alan is a PM and Secretary of Peterborough & Counties Lodge No 2996, a Founding Member and PM of the Richard Sandbach Lodge of Research No. 9600, PM and Secretary of Norman Rolfe Mark Lodge No 1643 and Past MEZ and DC of St Peter’s Chapter No 442; a busy Mason!

We hope to produce a major article on ‘daily advancement in the next issue and Alan will be invited to make a regular contribution thereafter. **Ed**

Perspective of a 'Young' Mason or Reflections of a Lewis

What is Freemasonry – over the years we have all read and discussed the many aspects of Freemasonry, and to each of us it might well have a different meaning. My reason for joining was twofold, first the burning desire to continue a family tradition, a destiny, one I have relished and enjoyed immensely, and secondly out of duty – both grandfathers, and indeed my father, were Masons attending the Creaton Lodge No 1791 in London. My grandfather was Worshipful Master in 1964 and it was sadly only 7 years later that my father, at the age of 36, succumbed to ravages of cancer. We have all been affected by this terrible disease at some point in our lifetime, but the year was 1972 when the help and support is not what it is today (well outside of Freemasonry anyway). Indeed grief was not allowed to be a private matter as in 1972, they even printed my fathers will in the local paper making out that my father was considerably more wealthy than was the case, which had the detrimental affect of turning help away from a young widow with three sons aged 7, 6 and 3.



But there was one body of men that stood firm, men that felt a sense of duty to protect all that was dear to a fallen brother – I refer of course to the Freemasons. Creaton Lodge indeed took on the role of guardian ensuring that financial help was forthcoming from the RMBI and indeed periodically from the Almoner of the Lodge. We children were educated at Masonic approved schools and these schools were responsible for the men we have become, understanding and practicing a sense of duty, care, compassion and loyalty to those we hold close and indeed to those we don't even know, qualities that make men Masons. Access to members of my father's Lodge, who readily offered advice and help during some of my mother's darkest days and additional financial help, ensured Christmas was indeed a time of joy. Things such as a new washing machine, as 3 grubby little monsters tested most appliances to destruction, were of invaluable help which was both needed and extremely gratefully received. Where we would have been today without this support we will never know, but the help we received for those many years will live with us as a family for the remainder of our lives.

When a loved one is lost to one so young memories are somewhat blurred, but I have the joy of a least being able to experience and take part in ceremonies that my father and grandfather would have taken part in. Learnt ritual from the same book, experienced the same frustrations and apprehensions and experienced the same feeling of loyalty and belonging that Freemasonry gives. I was looking forward to visiting my fathers lodge, but sadly they have not met since February 2008 and upon contact with the Secretary of Creaton Lodge I was informed that the Warrant would be returned at the end of March. The end of another Masonic chapter which I find incredibly sad. I have been promised copies of poignant meetings and I will be included at the annual reunion, so I will still be able to say thank you in person in the future.

The reason I felt compelled to submit this article is to let all Brothers know that your Almoner and Charity Steward work endlessly and often secretly to ensure the families of departed Brothers are not found wanting or forgotten, and that worthwhile charities such as the RMBI are maintained so that help is available when we need it most.

On behalf of all those who have given and continue to give in the name of Masonic charity I bring you a genuine message of thanks from my mother, 2 erstwhile grubby brothers, both of whom are now successful property developers in Australia, and me. As you may well understand, as a Lewis, I feel a strong sense of duty to my mother, to my own family and to the Craft; one that I hold dear and will do so until my acceptance into the Grand Lodge Above.

Bro Scott Frater
Lactodorum Lodge 8526

Jubilee Certificate Presentations

There must be something in the air that keeps Freemasons going in our happy Province as since our last publication no less than eight Jubilee Certificates have presented. Those for 50 Years went to W Bro Donald Arthur Marlow of Lodge of St Paul presented on 13/01/2009 by W Bro John Partridge, PrGAlm, to W Bro Michael John Goulding of Peterboro & Counties Lodge presented on 17/02/2009 by W Bro Wayne Williams, APGM, to W Bro Eric George William Godwin of Towcestrian Lodge presented on 25/02/2009 by W Bro Jim Parker, to W Bro John South of Chicheley Lodge presented on 09/03/2009, by RW Barrie Hall, the PGM, to W Bro George Smith of Vale of Nene Lodge presented on 11/03/2009, by VW Bro Max Bayes, the DGPM, to W Bro Henry Frederick Hooper of Sothius Lodge presented on 12/03/2009 by W Bro John Harvey, the PrSGW, and to W Bro Edwin Charles Lyles of Lodge of Perseverance presented on 20/04/2009 by W Bro Wayne Williams, APGM.



Also, because he was unable to attend Lodge, a 60 Year Certificate for presentation to W Bro Victor Albert Charles Burton was handed to W Bro Gary Boddington the WM of the Old Northamptonian Lodge on 07/04/2009 by W Bro Richard Bedells PrGTreas. The presentation was done subsequently by Bro. Gary on 4 Aug (see photo). Regrettably we only had sufficient space to publish the one picture but hearty congratulations are of course offered to all the recipients concerned. **Ed**

Lunches for Masonic Widows

Every year the Peterborough Lodges hold a luncheon for their widows. In the picture below you can see some of the ladies enjoying a spot of social discourse and a drink before being served a three course lunch at the Masonic Centre at Ellindon in Peterborough on Tuesday 21st April 2009. All the Lodges were represented and the Almoners from each of the Lodges acted as chauffeurs and wine waiters.

There were 36 ladies from various areas in attendance and one in particular had come all the way from Hunstanton. This is a popular event and is well supported every year, and goes to show just what can be done when the Lodges act together rather than go it alone.



This idea is not unique to Peterborough and on the 5th July St Crispin Lodge held their first such lunch for many years when 20 widows, friends and helpers gathered at the Masonic Hall in Kettering. A hearty meal in a most friendly atmosphere was enjoyed by all present and the pleasant ambience was enhanced by the fact that there was musical entertainment to add to the enjoyment.

St Crispin are hoping to engage the other local Lodges next year to ensure that this pleasure can be shared among more Masonic widows from the local community. This worthwhile annual event occurs at a number of Centres and is obviously an excellent way to keep in touch with the widows of departed Brethren.

Second 50 Year Jubilee Certificate for Frank Brierley PDistGScN (Zimbabwe)

In 1957, Frank Brierley, a young banker in the then Southern Rhodesia, was initiated into Freemasonry. Thus it was that, in December 2007, the Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro Barrie Hall, presented W Bro Frank Brierley PGStdB of Pemberton Lodge No 3039 with his 50 year certificate.

Frank, of course, did not limit his Masonic experience to Craft masonry, and was exalted into the Royal Arch in September 1958 in the Msasa Chapter No 6802 in Salisbury, now Harare. He was Installed as its MEZ in 1975, and served as District Grand Treasurer of Zimbabwe from 1981 to 2000, when he retired and moved back



to the UK to settle in Rushden.

By happy coincidence, Frank was MEZ of Pemberton Chapter No 3039 during his 50th year in the Royal Arch, and on a visit to Pemberton the ME Grand Supt, E Comp Wayne Williams, presented E Comp Frank with a Chapter Jubilee Certificate.

The photograph shows the Grand Supt with E Comp Frank and the certificate, taken immediately after the ceremony.

Mark Benevolent Fund 2010 Festival Enters Final Phase



Details of the 2010 Festival activities for July next year will shortly be available on the Mark Provincial website at www.northants-huntsmark.org.uk.

The Festival Dinner will be at the East of England Showground on **Saturday 17th July 2010** with an informal gathering planned for our visitors on the Friday night at the Marriott Hotel. Every member of the degree in the Province will be advised of details and it is hoped many of those who are qualified (your Charity Steward can advise) will obtain and proudly wear the Festival Jewel featured above.

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The Interesting Life of a Departed Brother

Bro John Gardner MBE DL



Bro John Gardner was the personification of kindness, generosity, tact, decency and courage. Always cheerful, especially in the face of adversity, he spread joy and happiness, not always an easy thing to do when you have civic social responsibilities as he had but he succeeded magnificently. He was born in Northampton in 1930, educated at Bective School during the Second World War. His first job on leaving school, at the age of 14, was with 'Dilleys' the toolmakers in Kingsthorpe, moving on later to British Timken and Manfield, the shoe manufacturers. Early in his life John recognised the importance of everyone pulling together to overcome the many trials and tribulations that often face us in life. His early experiences made him aware of the importance of reliability and regularity, two principles he put into practice throughout his life. His working life was broken by a spell of National Service in the Navy following which he remained for some years in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

This background accounted much for his main aim in life to serve the community cheerfully, with his whole heart and soul. In this, he was aided by the rock of his life his adoring wife Jean, whom he met during a visit to the most run-down cinema in Northampton or, as he insisted in putting it, 'at the flicks'. Jean was by his side throughout his long public service of 30 or more years, on the Borough Council (supporting him as Mayoress), in his role as Queen's Deputy Lieutenant, and as Chairman of the County Council. John was adamant that the support of a decent, loyal wife is particularly important for those who work in the public eye.

In addition to his Civic role John led a very diverse full and busy life where he brought joy to the hearts of children as Father Christmas, at British Home Stores, he was president of Northampton Angling Club, an ardent supporter of the Caring and Sharing Trust at Cogenhoe. He was much involved with the St John Ambulance Brigade and spent many hours helping at Grendon Hall, the outdoor activity centre in Northampton, with its highly commendable projects, where he served as Chairman for a good number of years. He was a constant supporter for community efforts in Abington Park where he was particularly helpful in encouraging and organising regular musical events. John was a musician himself, regularly playing the cornet for Abington Wind Band. He was a governor for many years of two Northampton schools and served as a JP where he was not only just but merciful. His support for the Cobblers, Northampton Town Football Club, was legendary and almost everything stopped for that.

John was proud to be awarded the MBE and to be made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, never letting it go to his head, and he was much honoured to be a Freemason having joined Doctor Field Lodge in 2005. John not only practised charity, but accompanied it with sincerity and kindness as well. His nature was such that if you were sick or in low spirits or dealing with troubles in your life he would be among the first there to help you.

The above was very largely based on the Eulogy delivered at John's funeral; may he rest in peace and rise again in Glory. **Ed**

Provincial Grand Master's Diary to January 2010

Date	Lodge Number	Lodge Name
Tues 8 September 2009	8844 (Ins)	Anglo Scottish
Mon 14 September 2009	9775	Grand Junction
Fri 18 September 2009	9344 (Ins)	Heritage
Thu 1 October 2009	2533 (Ins)	Fitzwilliam
Sat 3 October 2009	516 (Ins)	Chetene
Fri 9 October 2009	1764 (Ins)	Eleanor Cross
Wed 21 October 2009	6532 (Ins)	Risdene
Thu 19 November 2009	2555 (Ins)	England's Centre
Tues 1 December 2009	5694 (Ins)	Old Northamptonian
Tues 8 December 2009	9309	Gates of Billing
Fri 11 December 2009	8767	Petriburg
Tues 15 December 2009	5195	John Pyel
Thu 7 January 2010	360 (Ins)	Pomfret
Thu 14 January 2010	9491	Rock'ham Forest
Tues 19 January 2010	373 (Ins)	Socrates

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Presentation of Wheelchairs to Northampton General Hospital

As an important aspect of their charitable activities, the six Corby Masonic Lodges annually select a suitable deserving local cause for a joint charity contribution. Earlier this year Robert Taylor, the Master of the Lodge of Heritage, proposed the purchase of specialist chairs for the Holcott Stroke Unit at Northampton General Hospital to assist stroke patients which was readily agreed to by the other Lodges.

As a result, the contributions of the Lodges, coupled with a contribution from the Provincial Grand Charity, provided sufficient funding to enable the purchase of two specialised chairs for the Holcott Unit at the hospital, enabling patients, who would otherwise be confined to bed, to benefit from the advantages of being of being able to sit up and enjoy an element of mobility.

Pictured with staff from the Stroke Unit are W Bro Wayne Williams (Assistant Provincial Grand Master), W Bro Bill Rutherford (Senior Group Officer Corby Lodges), W Bro Robert Taylor (seated in the other chair) and the Masters of the other Lodges involved.

This contribution from the Province follows the recently reported donations to the Endoscopy Unit at the Hospital and presentations of an ECG machine and Syringe Drivers to the Willowbrook Health Centre at Corby all of which give testament to the benefits of Lodges working together in conjunction with the Provincial Grand Charity.



Bringing 'Sunshine' to Portugal - Our Country's Oldest Ally

At the installation of the Lodge of the Oldest Ally 9524 in May, it was agreed that 50% of the proceeds from the Festive Board raffle should be donated to the Fundacao Irene Rolo in Tavira, Portugal. This charity was formed in 1982 to assist handicapped people, especially children and teenagers, by providing training and help for them to integrate into society. They receive a small amount of aid from the government but, to a great extent, rely on the help and support from the general public.



Picture left the Worshipful Master W Bro Roger Cooper presenting a cheque to the President of the foundation Dr Jose Silva Marques accompanied by colleagues and other members of the Lodge party. Although not a large sum, when looked at in the context of their requirements, it was gratefully received and thankfully applied.

Worshipful Brother Frank Palmer PPrSGW

Worshipful Brother Frank Palmer has retired from the Communications Committee after many years service as the Publications Advisor for Password magazine and, more recently, the Information Officer for the Huntingdon Group, covering Lodges in the Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey, Kimbolton and Oundle areas. He contributed much sound advice during his time on the Committee drawing on his experience as a Graphic Artist in London, a profession he followed for many years. Frank will certainly be known to many for his excellent maps for all the Masonic Halls in the Province which, after being published over a number of issues in Password, were provided in booklet form to Centres and much appreciated by many visitors over the years.



The Committee have appreciated his commitment and friendship and wish him well in the inevitable many Masonic roles he will undoubtedly fulfil in the future. **Ed**

Knight's Templar Biennial Church Service

The biennial spectacle of the Knight's Templar Church service, held at the Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Northampton took place on Sunday 14th June. As always, this was a colourful event with over 60 Knights, from near and far, parading into the Church, dressed in the full regalia of the order. The Right Eminent Provincial Prior - Phillip Major Collins was

pleased to welcome the Knights of his Province along with their families and friends and following the service a relaxed Church tea was enjoyed, prepared by Em Kt Roger Rice and his family. At short notice, due to the unavoidable absence of Very Eminent Knight Rex Mead, the Provincial Prelate, the service was conducted by the Provincial Sub-Prior, Very Eminent Knight Dr Viv Thomas with an address given by Knight The Reverend Tony Avery.



Knights Templar continues to be a hugely popular degree with many preceptories having to schedule additional meetings to cope with the influx. This popularity, especially amongst the currently non Masonic populace, to become a Knight Templar is partially due to the intense interest held in the history of both the modern order and that of its medieval namesake. The Modern Order was first worked in England in 1777, having probably originated in France. This province of Northampton, Huntingdon and Bedford has 13 Preceptories stretching from Stamford to Daventry and Dunstable to Biggleswade and has over 300 swords.

The reason that so many Masonic Brethren are keen to join the Order is the level of friendliness among the members. Information on this Degree can be found on the Craft Provincial Web site and anyone interested in joining should contact the Provincial Vice Chancellor – Eminent Knight Roger Wortley.

Kt Mike Sheppard – Commander Provincial Priors Bodyguard

Provincial Grand Master's Certificate of Merit Awards

W Bro Ray Thorpe PPrSGW (CoM)

W Bro Ray Thorpe was born at Tydd, Nr Wisbech in the Lincolnshire fens in 1925 and educated at Buxton College in Derbyshire



where he met his wife Eileen some 65 years ago; they have been happily married for 59 years and have two sons and four grandchildren. He started work in the family Motor

Trade and Transport business then joined the RAF where he spent several happy years which included an opportunity to accompany No 35 Pathfinder Squadron on their first goodwill tour of America. After leaving the Services he returned to the family firm for a short time before moving to Huntingdon selling Ford cars, at £100-00 each and petrol at two shillings (just 10 pence in new money) per gallon (4.5 Litres).

Ray was a founder member of the Huntingdon Round Table which had a number of Brethren as members. In Sept 1955 he was initiated into Socrates Lodge No 373, when his Father, a Provincial officer in the Province of Lincolnshire, took part in the ceremony, and became the WM in 1969. He joined The Lodge of Installed Masters No 3422 in 1972 and was a Founder of Samuel Pepys Lodge in 1970, becoming ADC in 1973 and WM in 1975 and Charity Steward in 1980; a post which he still holds. He was the founder 'Chief' Steward of Meridian Lodge No 9542 a post which again he still holds. W Bro Thorpe was appointed PrGSwdB in 1976 and promoted to PPrGReg in 1989.

Further promotion to PPrSGW and presentation of his 50 year Jubilee Certificate made 2005 a special year but the undoubted highlight of his Masonry to date was the total

surprise at this year's Provincial meeting when he was presented with the Provincial Grand Master's Certificate.

W Bro Wilf Rodwell PPrSGW (CoM)

W Bro Wilf Rodwell was born in Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, educated at Fakenham Grammar School in well and attended College in Birmingham, interrupted by National Service of which part was spent in Libya. He is married to Ruth, a very supportive wife, and they have a son, daughter and two grandchildren. In 1952 he was appointed to a teaching post in

Peterborough, moving on to The Village College Sawston and later returning to Peterborough in 1963 appointed as the head of Mathematics and Technical Studies and finally to Deacons School as the Head of Craft Design and Technology.



Wilf was initiated into Dr Oliver Lodge in 1970 and became Worshipful Master in 1985; currently he is the Lodge Preceptor. He was a founder of Thomas Deacon Lodge and installed as Worshipful Master 1987 and 2007. Exalted into Gildenburg Chapter and First Principal in 1992 and is a member of Fitzwilliam Lodge of Mark Master Masons. Installed into Saint Crispin's Preceptory of Knights Templar becoming Eminent Preceptor in 1995; now Deputy Marshall. Exalted in Dr Oliver Chapter of Rose Croix; Sovereign in 1994 and a Joining Member of Castle Ashby Chapter Rose Croix.

On Wednesday 27th May Wilf attended the Three Counties Lodge in Northampton where without any prior knowledge he was surprised and honoured to receive the Provincial Grand Master's Certificate of Merit.

Grand Charity Donates £50,000 to help MND Vital Research

On Tuesday 21 July 2009 the Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro Barrie Hall, on behalf of The Freemason's Grand Charity, handed over £25,000 to the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association at Freemasons' Hall, St George's Avenue Northampton. The money, which is the first instalment of a total of £50,000 being donated, will be used to fund a research project to determine how to improve the quality of life and length of survival for people living with the fatal and devastating motor neurone disease (MND).

The Freemasons' Grand Charity was delighted to support the MND Association as part of



its programme to regularly support national charities that are not connected with Freemasonry. MND leaves people trapped inside their body, unable to walk, talk or feed themselves. As the muscles around the chest deteriorate they find it difficult to breathe and lose the ability to even cough, a vital tool to keep our airways clear and keep chest infections at bay. Without this ability people with MND are at serious risk of developing

repeated infections, leading to respiratory failure and hospitalisation.

A device called a cough assist that can help people cough may hold the key to improving quality of life for people with MND and reduce stays in hospital admissions. The generous donation will fund a team at the University of Sheffield who will be establishing whether the machine can offer life-saving health benefits and reduce the trauma of illness, hospital stays and physiotherapy.

Wellingborough Masons Help Lifesavers

The Wellingborough Lifesaving Club has a growing membership, with about eighty youngsters to whom they are teaching water safety, lifesaving skills and resuscitation techniques. This growth has led to a shortage of Mannequins for practicing Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation. Thanks to raffles held by The Scout Lodge No 9814, Wellingborough Chapter No. 737, and Croyland Mark Masons No 594, and a sizeable donation from the Provincial Charity, they have been able to buy four new Mannequins to help with their training. In all, a total of about £750 was raised for the club.

W Bro. Barry Weigleb and his wife Sue, who is a teacher at the club, presented the Mannequins to some of the teaching members of the club, with some of the youngsters looking on.



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Keep your Information Officer advised of any interesting Lodge activities because it is only by doing so that he can know what is going on in your area and thereby get something published in 'your' Provincial Magazine - Password.

Grand Rank Promotions and Appointments

On Wednesday 29th April 2009 at Freemasons' Hall Great Queen Street, London seven Brethren of the Province were honoured with promotions and first appointments at the Annual Investiture meeting of Grand lodge. The recipients were promotions for W Bro Maxwell W Bayes PSGD DepPGM (Lodge of St James No 6838) to Past Grand Sword Bearer, W Bro Dr Vivian Thomas PJGD AsstPGM (Vale of Welland Lodge No 8845) to Senior Grand Deacon), W Bro Brian Huckle PAGDC (Hatton Lodge No 3041) to Past Junior Grand Deacon and W Bro Peter Hamel-Cooke PAGPurs (Pro Musica Lodge No 9547) to Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies through Grand Lodges. First appointments to Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies was conferred on W Bro John Matthews PPrJGW (Petriburg Lodge No 8767), W Bro Richard Turpin PPrSGW (Meridian Lodge No 9542) and W Bro Richard Paul S Sandbach PGStwd PPrJGW (Vale of Welland Lodge No 8845) - through Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London.



Prior to the meeting most of the recipients and their guests enjoyed a very pleasant lunch, hosted by RW Bro Barrie Hall, the Provincial Grand Master, at Beotys Restaurant in St Martin's Lane where the picture was 'taken' with 'absent Brethren' added post event..