



Tercentenary initiates' Evenings

Delivered as promised! It was a delight to present special Tercentenary Certificates to Brethren who were initiated in 2017. The events held at Baildon, Leeds, Otley and Huddersfield have been really well attended, not only by our newer Members but also by their families together with supporters from their own Lodges. A sea of smiling faces indicated that the events have been an outstanding success.

At each event, the "Antient Charge" was delivered to the gathering by a younger Brother from the Area. Those in attendance listened with rapt attention and in awe as the Charge was delivered with passion and understanding following the introductory comment: "This is what Freemasonry is all about"!

The wives, families and friends were then treated to buffets to round off splendid occasions. We must never under-estimate the beneficial effects of involving our families and friends as they can be our greatest advocates! The remaining events to be held at Sheffield and Doncaster in early March will be I am sure, equally memorable.

Tercentenary Appointments – A First for Our Province

The Most Worshipful Grand Master authorised me to appoint certain Brethren to Provincial Grand Rank as part of the Tercentenary celebrations. I choose to utilise the rank of Past Provincial Grand Steward for this special honour. The recipients were invested at Castle Grove, Leeds as an additional event during the Tercentenary Initiates' Evening. How pleased I was to have been able to invite the families and friends of the recipients to witness the investiture.

In other Provinces it has become the practice to invite families and friends to witness the appointment and promotion of Brethren to Provincial Rank. Clearly this is not conducted when a Provincial Grand Lodge is Open but when Provincial Grand Lodge has been "Called-Off". There is insufficient room at the Royal Hall, Harrogate to even consider this as an option for inclusion into the business of the day at our own Annual Provincial meeting.

Increase in New Members in 2017 – Good News!

The increase in 2017 of nearly 28% new members on the previous year is most encouraging. No doubt the interest created by the Tercentenary activities contributed to this increase. This is just the start! 2018 offers great opportunities for us all to be pro-active in seeking out new members. Yes indeed – Pro-active! Now let me make this clear – We only want quality candidates and not just numbers. I am asking all members to consider their own colleagues, families and friendship groups and make the direct approach e.g. *"I know you well enough to say that I think that you would really enjoy joining my Lodge – Why not come to an Open Night?"*

Enough is Enough!

Grand Lodge - Paid articles in the Press! Our new Chief Executive (Grand Secretary-designate) appearing on Television and Radio! You will have seen that Grand Lodge is being really pro-active because "Enough is Enough" when the media publish scandalous untruths about our wonderful Order. We are not going into pitched battle with the media but it is now clear to all concerned that Freemasonry will assert itself forcibly when necessary. No longer will we, as Freemasons, just turn the other cheek when our good name is being traduced. I am always delighted to report that our relationship with local media is excellent.

Even More News of Local Interest from the Provincial Grand Master's Desk!

Freemasonry in the Community: West Riding Masonic Charities Ltd. (WRMCL), made a generous donation to Ripon Cathedral Choir to sponsor music for one week for the next five years. Music! One of the liberal Arts and Sciences! The 2018 week of Music was conducted early this month, much to the pleasure and enjoyment of the congregation and the choristers at Ripon Cathedral

Acting Provincial Officers Visit to Harrogate: Virtually the full Team visited Harrogate & Claro Lodge No: 1001 where we were delighted to have witnessed an excellent initiation ceremony. Some Brethren may well be old enough to understand when I say that the carpet was very clean in the Lodge Room! I have asked my Assistant Provincial Grand Masters to suggest Lodges to me for the 2018/2019 Team of Officers to visit.

Liaison Officer Workshops: Member education is rated highly in this Province. I am most grateful to WBro. Ken Wootton, for rewriting and delivering a most stimulating series of Liaison Officer Workshops. Delegate feedback has been tremendous! Liaison Officers are critical to the well-running of our Province being an essential conduit of information between Lodges and the Province. Well Done Team!

Area 4 Gala Dinner: The dinner at the Magna Centre at Rotherham was memorable. I shocked the Mayor of Rotherham with a donation of £2,500 from WRMCL in support of her designated charities of the year. The Brethren and their Ladies were all in sparkling and radiant form. I understand that this might become an annual event? Excellent!

Civic Engagement: All will now know that one of my 2018 Objectives is to increase our involvement in appropriate Civic activities. I have mentioned the donation to the Mayor of Rotherham at the Magna Centre above. I also visited the Lord Mayor of Bradford with other Provincial Rulers accompanied by WBro. Howard Richardson, the Treasurer of WRML. A cheque for £2,500 from WRMCL was donated to the Lord Mayor's Charity appeal. The donation was accepted graciously and we all enjoyed an excellent cup of tea in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.

We will be supporting "Yorkshire Day" at Ripon in August – That is now a standing engagement. Now Brethren, I would welcome your ideas as to how we increase the profile of Freemasonry still further in Civic circles.

Visit to "Foreign" Parts: RWBro. Sir David Trippier is the Provincial Grand Master of the adjacent Province of East Lancashire. With a special travel permit, I travelled bravely under the protection of our Provincial Grand Secretary to Rochdale. It was the 50th Anniversary celebration of Sir David's initiation. The certificate presenter was our own, our very own, RWBro. Sir David Wootton, Assistant Grand Master. Sir David W. was in great form taking every opportunity to remind our Lancastrian Brethren of the merits of "God's Own County!"

REMEMBER THESE WORDS: 2018 - BEST YEAR EVER!

My love and very best wishes to you and yours as always.

**RWBro. David S. Pratt
Provincial Grand Master**