

Every New Beginning Comes From Some Other Beginning's End.



Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 BC - 65 AD)

November - What a wonderful month with so many things happening and beginning to happen!

Monthly Mailing to Lodges/My Monthly Blog

Following overwhelming requests, my Monthly Blog will be once again be included in the Monthly Mailing to Lodges as well as appearing on the Provincial Website.

I have been moved by the many positive comments concerning my Blog that have certainly alleviated my worries about "too many attachments" being included for Brethren with the Monthly Mailing to Lodges. A Lodge Secretary summed things up with the comment that "If Brethren do not wish to read all the attachments then they do not have to!"

Another told me: "We are now receiving quality communications from the Province and that did not happen years ago.

The Members really appreciate being kept up to date".

That's progress!"

My thanks to all Lodge Secretaries who pass on the Monthly Mailing to their members so promptly. This is but one way of ensuring that Brethren who are unable to attend meetings are kept informed and feel part of our Masonic Family. I am pleased to report each month I receive my personal copy from my own Lodges within minutes of the email being sent out by the Provincial Office.

Our Brethren really do appreciate being kept informed. How do I know? They tell me!

A summary of the feedback provided to me confirms that you cannot please everyone all of the time. As with everything in Freemasonry, there are so many appropriate words contained within our ceremonial. I am reminded of those wonderful words from the Ancient Charge concerning cheerful acquiesce.

Increasing Membership - Working Plan for Success

The Membership Pathway - Further Proof of Success

The feedback received from the launch events has been very positive. The enthusiastic reception by Lodge Representatives in attendance has been inspirational. I am indeed grateful to our Membership Team and the Provincial Stewards' Company for planning and delivering the events.

Some Lodges opted not to attend the events? Following the success of the launch, I repeat the invitation - Any Lodge that did not attend might now be having second thoughts about embracing the positive solutions contained in the Membership Pathway. W Bro. Andy Brown, PAsstGStdB, our Provincial Membership Officer and his Team stand ready to assist.

Membership Pathway news from other Provinces – The three Pilot Provinces report continued increased membership and also continued increased retrieval of Members.

Other Provinces that are a little ahead of us in the implementation are seeing immediate positive results. This tells me that the Membership Pathway works.

Planning ahead with an eye on the experiences of the past – It is interesting to see how the location of the populations changes over the years. Sometimes the shifting population demographic leaves Masonic Halls and Lodges on the “wrong side of the tracks” or in the wrong part of town with reduced access to potential Candidates. I have asked our Membership Team in conjunction with our Communications Team to look at our Province to identify where new estates and houses are being built. We will be making contact with the new residents to raise awareness about Freemasonry and to look for suitable Candidates.

I predict that this will mean the need for Lodges in new parts of the Province – Let’s see?

So there can be no doubt – Yes, I am looking to increase our Membership but only with men of the right character and calibre.

Raising our Civic Profile - Always Looking to “Be There.”

Provincial Grand Master’s Fund (PGMs Fund) & West Riding Masonic Charities Ltd. (WRMCL)

Yorkshire Air Ambulance (YAA) - Donation

Our Annual trip to the YAA Base at Nostell Priory was another pleasant occasion where we were again really welcomed by the YAA staff.

This was a “Yorkshire United” visit by the Provinces of Yorkshire, West Riding and Yorkshire North & East Ridings. Donations from the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) together with a generous donation from WRMCL were presented. The reality is that our donations keep one helicopter in the air for only one day of operation. It is expensive but what a magnificent service funded entirely by donations. The Chief Pilot is the Master of a York Lodge and that in greeting him well as Brothers, we all hoped that we would not have to meet him professionally!

Our Square and Compasses emblem looked resplendent on the helicopter fuselage.

Castleford Marine Cadets - Donation

The donation of £2,000 from the PGMs Fund will mean that this new Unit for young people will now have the right equipment to become fully functional. I attended a Parade at the temporary Headquarters and was delighted to see such well-presented and keen young citizens. It was a first for me when I was invited to inspect the Guard!

Remembrance Day - An Opportunity to Honour the Fallen

The reports and photographs in the "White Rose Magazine" show Freemasonry engaged fully in our Communities. I did not mind getting soaked to the skin as we stood in silent tribute to fallen heroes at the Leeds Parade. As the rain dripped from my head I reflected – This is nothing compared with standing in a mud-filled trench and in constant fear of death experienced by the gallant soldiers in the First World War.

I pay tribute to our Webmaster for such a wonderful temporary Home Page on our Provincial Website concerning Remembrance Day illustrating the debt that we owe to previous generations.

Defibrillators - A Serious Note for Monitoring Please

As I perambulate the Province, it is very reassuring to see defibrillators in Masonic premises. This life-saving equipment is fast becoming a fixture in many public places, and the PGMs Fund has provided many defibrillators in Communities throughout the Province.

The concern is that this equipment is not being maintained with new batteries and disposables at due times. This could mean that at the very moment that the defibrillator is needed that it will not function correctly with predictable consequences.

Could I ask every Brother to check the defibrillators to which they have access? A record should be shown on the equipment to confirm battery replacement date and the expiry dates of the disposables, e.g. the pads and paddles. If necessary, a word with the owners/custodians of those responsible for the equipment should prompt corrective action.

Community Sponsorship - Something to Consider?

It is great that some Lodges have sponsored prizes for Schools and Universities.

We have now been approached by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme to consider sponsorship for individual excellence of personal achievement. This is currently under active consideration as is the possibility of creating Annual "Freemasonry Community Awards" for such things as literature and citizenship. It is early days, so I am looking for ideas Brethren.

Enhancing Member Experiences

Provincial Office Hours

I arranged for a review of working practices in our Provincial Office, and the results have led me to approve a change in the hours for access by the Public (and that includes us Brethren).

The Monthly Mailing confirms the revised hours and the reason behind this change reflects the increasing Legal and Regulatory demands impacting on every Organisation – commercial or social. The Office Team need dedicated time to attend to such matters including the uninterrupted input of essential data.

White Rose Magazine - Autumn 2018 Edition

Another magnificent edition of a publication that is enjoyed and highly respected all over the Masonic World. Well done to W Bro. Peter Doherty, PPJGW, and Team - A real credit to the Province!

Can you help? I know that W Bro. Peter would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to become involved.

Assistant Provincial Grand Masters-designate - Installations

W Bro. Dr Andrew Wright, PAGDC and W Bro. Ian Lewis, PAGDC are scheduled to be installed respectively on the 16th and 24th of January 2019 at Otley and Leeds.

Bawtry Lodge N: 5174 - New Banner Dedication

It is a rare opportunity to dedicate a Banner, and my visit to Bawtry was a delight. It was so good to see the newer members of the Lodge forming the Banner Escort with the full support of the more senior members. Such inclusivity is to be congratulated and encouraged.

As no-one in the Lodge had seen a Banner dedication before, I can safely say that the ritual was perfect!

SOLOMON - The Masonic Learning System is Now Live!

"A Daily Advancement in Masonic Knowledge" – I heard that somewhere! Do look to see what is on this excellent electronic system. There is something for everyone.

Prestonian Lecture 2019 - To Be Delivered in our Province

The Leeds Lodge of Installed Masters No: 7981 meeting at Castle Grove, Leeds has been honoured to have been selected as a Lodge where the 2019 Prestonian Lecture will be delivered. A date for your diary: Thursday, 19th September 2019.

Young Masons' Clubs

There are now a number of such Clubs meeting across the Province. This social dimension of Freemasonry is important. An invitation to attend extended to prospective members is yet another method of raising awareness. If anyone would like to know more – Do have a word with your Lodge Liaison Officer.

Brighouse Garden & Patio

What a pleasure it was to have been invited to attend the opening of the new garden and patio at Brighouse Assembly Rooms. The "Before" and "After" pictures show the enormous physical efforts undertaken by the Ladies of the Lodges to create a lovely area. I can just see golden evenings and moonlight moments where there will be music and merriment.

The Church and Freemasonry - Lecture – 13th December 2018 - Leeds

I am most grateful to the Brethren who alerted me to this Lecture.

If anyone is interested in attending – visit this link -

<https://learning.leeds.anglican.org/event/freemasonry-and-the-church-of-england/>

I have discussed the matter with the Grand Secretary and also with the Chair of the Grand Lodge Theological Group who tell me that the Lecturer is known to us and that subject matter is likely to be contentious. I have had no response to my invitation to the Lecturer to contact me for any information about Freemasonry. I know that many Brethren intend to join me in the audience. We will be there to listen politely and to correct any factual errors in a gentlemanly manner.

And Finally: Reflections on my November Diary

Provincial Grand Chapter - Bradford

I can confirm that the Token confirming the “indissoluble link” between the Craft and Royal Arch Masonry was duly passed into my safekeeping by our MEGSupt, EComp, Stewart Carley. This Token will, of course, be passed back at the meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge at Harrogate next May. The Provincial Grand Chapter meeting was tremendous with a record number of Companions in attendance - I was lucky to get a seat!

Well done indeed to the Royal Arch Team of Rulers and all of the Companions!

2018/19 Acting Provincial Officers - Team Visit to Harrogate

Well, we went to Harrogate and what another splendid visit in excellent company.

The smiling faces and laughter indicated that everyone had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

The processions looked really smart and certainly impressed the Brethren who rarely see the Team “On Duty”. How do I know? They told me!

The situation at Knaresborough Masonic Hall with the new Fire Regulations would have restricted the numbers attending so severely that the switch to Harrogate was necessary.

My grateful thanks to the Master, Wardens and Brethren members of Doric Lodge for accommodating us so willingly and at short notice.

I have not forgotten Forest of Knaresborough Lodge, and I will be visiting the Lodge in January 2019 with a small contingent of Acting Officers

Installation Meeting, Cockburn Lodge No: 5362

Excellent in every respect! Such a vibrant and happy Lodge where high standards are expected and delivered. Thank-you Cockburn Lodge.

Friends of Connaught Court - AGM

A good attendance to hear about the support being provided to Residents and the 2019 Fete. It is always interesting to have confirmed that the Residents continue to enjoy their sherry! Good on them!

Our Masonic Family - Consecration of a new Knights Templar Preceptory

I attended the splendid Consecration Ceremony at Castle Grove, Leeds to celebrate the arrival of a new Member of our West Riding Masonic Family. Every success at your home in Pontefract Brother Knights!

Masonry Universal: Britannic Lodge of Madeira No: 134, Funchal

Thank you to all the Brethren who enquired about the Ladies Night on Saturday; the 30th of March 2019. Please keep in touch regarding your travel and accommodation plans.

I will be happy to provide advice.

My Fraternal Greetings and Regards to you and yours!

"2018 - Best Year Ever!"

RW Bro. David S. Pratt - Provincial Grand Master