

The Mallet

The monthly journal of Lodge Union and Crown No.307



January 2026

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No. 490

Editorial



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How often have we discovered to our horror that a relative or friend have fallen upon difficult times, and decided that we must do something to help? We realise that it is a perplexing situation, often made even more difficult and complex when the person in question is understandably too proud to either admit they are in difficulties, never mind even consider accepting the aid and assistance that is offered.

No matter what our own circumstances are, we will strive to find an opportunity to extend the necessary assistance, which hopefully will make the difference to our friend in their time of need.

Surely it is no different within Freemasonry in what are continuing to be dark and difficult times for The Craft. Many Lodges are struggling to make ends meet financially, with greatly reduced incomes brought about by much smaller attendances, and a general lack of Candidates.

It is believed that within the West of Scotland alone, there are as many as 30 Lodges who are only a hair's breath from receding into darkness for a wide variety of reasons, mostly financial. The Grand Lodge of Scotland, and the various Provincial Grand Lodges are able to offer fairly limited support. In this day and age there are few Sister Lodges, if any, who will be able to offer the necessary assistance, which will have a direct affect upon these struggling Lodges.

This is the serious times for The Craft, when Freemasonry itself is at its strongest, and most enduring. Past examples have shown, that if we put our mind to it, we can achieve almost anything. One of the earliest lessons that we teach our Candidates is "Equality" and surely these are times when those Lodges who are stronger should ensure that they come to the assistance of those less fortunate. It may not be direct financial assistance, but surely if we put our mind to it we could attend the occasional Lodge meeting in sufficient numbers to show that we care and to hopefully boost the morale of the less fortunate Lodges.

In recent years, some Lodges have chosen to enter into a 'Union' with a Sister Lodge and hope that the benefits of scale etc. will keep them on an even keel, perhaps even allow them to advance to a better status for all involved.

Many years ago, back in the 1970s legendary groups like "The Quality Street Gang", did much for Lodges in difficult times, and by regularly visiting in fairly large groups. Their enthusiasm and good spirits seemed to lift Lodges. This well-intentioned band of Brethren (including our own Bro Tom Young) were mostly RWM's of Lodges throughout Renfrewshire East during the year 1972-73, who decided to see what they could do for the "lesser attended Lodges in the Province". They had spectacular success and on more than a few occasions took in excess of 100 Brethren with them on their travels.

Perhaps it is something that we could consider again, some fifty years later, but it took a special breed of Freemasons then, and only time would tell if they still exist today ?



Lodge Union & Crown

No. 307

Dear Sir & Brother,

The Right Worshipful Master, Bro Alan D Fzatt cordially requests your attendance at the forthcoming Meetings of the Lodge to be held within the Masonic Temple, Cochrane Street, Barrhead on :

Friday 6th February 2026

Short Business Meeting, followed by

*The 200th Anniversary Dinner
for The Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East*

Harmony



Tuesday 17th February 2026

Business : Minutes & Correspondence etc.

Prisoner of War Dramatisation

Carried out by the Brethren of the Instruction Class

Harmony

Yours faithfully & fraternally

R Evans Reid P.M., Lodge Secretary

Regular Meetings

After a brief Business Meeting at the Lodge on Friday 16th January, the Brethren gathered for a 'Celebration of Robert Burns'. The evening took an inventive turn from tradition, featuring what could only be described as a "*live dramatic performance*" introduced by Bro. Johnny Gauld PM and skillfully overseen by Substitute Master Bro Ross Aitken. He led a talented group including RWM Bro Alan Izatt, Bro. Jim Goldie RWM of Lodge Montgomerie Kilwinning Skelmorlie no.624, who delighted everyone with his accordion playing, Bro David McPheators of Lodge Dunlop Caledonia 1408, Bro Graham Manson PM, Bro Bryce McCaig WSW, and Inner Guard Bro Mark Lawn.

Guests enjoyed an excellent dinner, preceded by Bro McPheators' lively Address To The Haggis, where mischief was already in the air. After the meal, the audience settled in for entertainment, beginning with a memorable Immortal Memory from Bro Johnny Gauld PM. Assisted by two "Fitters," who amusingly rearranged the furniture—played with great humour by Young brothers Gregor Mullin and Marc Jones—the company was treated to tales of Burns' travels round Scotland and his many adventures. When the furniture was back in place, the festivities continued with singing, readings, and plenty of laughter, as everyone enthusiastically joined in.

A mini Pipe band made up of members of The Caledonian Cowboy Collective entered, delivering spirited tunes under the leadership of chief joker Bro Johnny! The night ended on a high note, with a passionate rendition of The Star Of Rabbe Burns followed by Auld Lang Syne, both sung with gusto by all present. A successful raffle rounded off the evening, and the RWM delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks, officially bringing proceedings to a close. All agreed it had been an outstanding night, with every attendee leaving cheerful. The unique approach proved highly successful, and the contributions from visiting brethren and the pipe band's ladies and gentlemen greatly enhanced this exceptional event. Truly epic!

Opened : 7pm

Lodge Closed : 9.46pm

Attendance : 71

Paper Appeal

As ever, we are always on the lookout for that most essential of commodities – PAPER, for our journal.

As many of our readers will know we make regular appeals for A4 size, 80g/m² paper, preferably white but any colour will do. Without sufficient stocks, we simply cannot print enough copies of our journal to satisfy our wide-ranging readership. So if you have the odd ream lying about just let us know and we'll even arrange to have it picked-up if necessary.

In addition, we also need 160g/m² card for various tasks within the Lodge

Dates for your Diary



Friday 6th February

Short Business Meeting of the Lodge, to be followed by 'A Dinner to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East.

(The Brethren should note that the meeting tyles at 6.30pm, and admission to the Dinner is by Invitation Only)

Monday 16th February

Management Committee Meeting at 7.30pm

Tuesday 17th February

A Regular Meeting of the Lodge, where the Brethren of the Lodge Instruction Class will confer the popular 'Prisoner of War Degree'

Friday 27th February

Visitation to Lodge Paisley St James, No.1116, where we have been invited to confer the FC Degree.

(In addition to the above, the R.W.M. and his Wardens are constantly involved in unofficial visits to sister Lodges. Details of which can be easily obtained by contacting our RWM or any senior Office-bearer, and they will be only too pleased to take you along with them as they represent the Lodge throughout the Province)

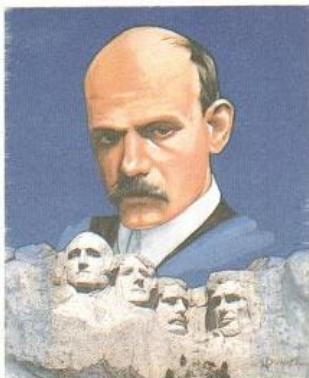
Randolph Lunch

Our Sister Lodge – Lodge Randolph, No.1434 is holding its Annual Lunch, here in 307 on Saturday 27th June at 1pm for 1.30pm. Tickets costing £20 are available for any 1434 Office-bearer (of which there are many within Union & Crown).



Bro Gutzon Borglum

Bro Gutzon Borglum (1867–1941), was the sculptor famous for carving Mount Rushmore. He was an active and prominent Freemason. Raised in Howard Lodge No.35, in New York, on June 10, 1904. He served as Worshipful Master in 1910 and was appointed Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Denmark.

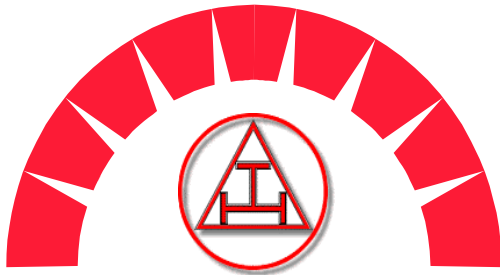


He received Scottish Rite Degrees in the New York City Consistory in October 1907.

He carved a bust of Edward M. L. Ehlers, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of New York, and created "Silence," a memorial for the Masonic Home in Utica, New York.

The cornerstone of his studio in Stamford, Connecticut, was laid with full Masonic ceremonies.

Borglum was a dedicated member who often incorporated his artistic skills into his Masonic service, using a special gavel for his lodge fashioned as a lion's paw holding a stone.



Rockmount R.A.C. No.367

At the Regular Meeting of the Chapter held on Tuesday 13th January, the Companions of the Chapter carried out a Mark Affiliate and Excellent Master's Degree upon a substitute Candidate.

Those taking part are to be congratulated upon their efforts in what was the very first time for many.

At the close of the meeting, the Office-bearers and Companions, along with their visitors retired downstairs where a quiet, yet enjoyable, harmony was enjoyed by all.

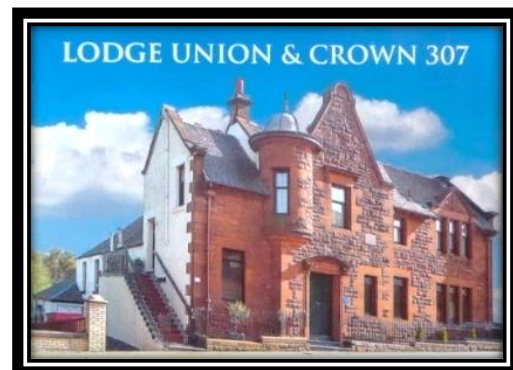
MEC James Renfrew MEZ cordially invites all to the next Regular meeting of the Chapter to be held on Tuesday 10th February at 8.15pm, where the Provincial Grand Chapter of Renfrewshire will be carrying out their annual visit to Rockmount. The later start is to accommodate the PGC visit to Rockmount CC at 7.30pm.



Lodge Postcards

Unique colour postcards of our Temple are still available for sale at the bargain price of £1-00 each from Bro Jim Miller PM (☎ 0141 881 4006) jimmiller307@hotmail.co.uk

All proceeds will go to The Lodge Charity Fund, with an annual donation being made to a local charity each year at our Anniversary Dinner in February. As it stand, a magnificent total of almost £750 has been raised so far.



Did You Know ??

That Catherine the Great of Russia, a German born Princess, distrusted the Masonic movement, and in 1762 prohibited all Masonic Meetings in Russia. She was later persuaded that she was wrong and revoked her prohibition. She ended up supporting the constitution of new lodges, going so far as to call herself "Protector of the Lodge of Clio in Moscow. Upon her death in 1776 Masonic Lodges were again prohibited and masons persecuted by her successor Paul I, Emperor of Russia..

BITS & PIECES

- Our grateful thanks goes to Mrs June Murdoch, the wife of the Late Bro Donald Murdoch, for the kind donation of a Pool Table.
- The Lodge should be most grateful to Brother Campbell Ritchie for all his hard work on behalf of the Lodge behind the scenes. Most Monday and Friday morning will see Bro Campbell working quietly away in the Lodge.
- Bro Graham Manson PM, the Lodge's Instruction Master would be delighted to see some new recruits at the Instruction Class on a Monday evening. He'll be delighted to help you out, and let you go forward when you're confident enough.
- Hasn't Brothers Ian Blair and Lawrence Webb settled well in to their new roles within the Lodge. Treasurer and Almoner are very important offices, and we're sure that they will receive great support from the Brethren.
- Bro Colin McLardy PM was back in the UK for a very brief spell recently. Here to finalise his US Visa in London, he managed a couple of days back in Barrhead, but unfortunately didn't manage to take in a Lodge Meeting.
- We see that Bro Jim Miller PM returned at the end of the month from his annual winter sojourn to Portugal looking well.
- We are led to believe that the Pool Table (which some of our younger Brethren have been fund-raising for) has now been ordered.
- We are told that Bro Campbell Ritchie WSW has been elected as the President of the Senior Section of Charleston Bowling Club in Paisley.
- We gather that changes are afoot with the Lodge website, with hopefully a new Webmaster and revamped Website up and running within the next month or so.
- Cufflinks with the Lodge's new 'Coat of Arms' are still available for sale. All interested should contact Bro Ross Aitken SM (☎ 07590 207 365) In addition, a lovely new Lodge Tie is also for sale at a bargain £15 !!
- Bro Colin Buist and his wife Suzanne, who are both lovers of the sun, have just returned from an exotic holiday in Marrakesh.
- Thanks to Bro Paul Higgins, who is lending the Lodge an advanced sound system for use at the forthcoming PGL 200th Dinner.
- On the subject of the Provincial Dinner, thanks to Bro Stephen Scott IPM and Bro Nicol Hynd for all their work in fixing up a new CCTV system to allow the Brethren who are to be seated in the Downstairs Lounge to see everything happening in the Function Suite next door.

Famous Freemasons

(Continuing our series about Famous Brethren, this month we turn to a public figure who was a newscaster, author, playwright and stage actor.)

Bro Gordon Honeycombe (1936 - 2015)

Ronald Gordon Honeycombe was a British newscaster, author, playwright and stage actor. He was born in Karachi during British India, studied at Edinburgh Academy and Oxford, then served with the Royal Artillery in Hong Kong, where he also announced for Radio Hong Kong. After returning to the UK, he pursued acting and became a well-known ITN newscaster. He later moved to Perth, Western Australia, continuing his career in radio, television, theatre, voice-overs, and documentary narration.

Honeycombe worked as an actor with the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1962 to 1964, then gained national fame as an ITN newscaster from 1965 to 1977. Twice voted Britain's most popular newscaster, he later focused on writing and presenting TV shows until 1984. He returned as TV-am's chief newsreader (1984–1989), earning recognition as the top male TV newscaster in 1986 and winning industry awards.

During his appearances on British television, he contributed voice-overs and narration for numerous television and documentary projects, and participated in a range of training films, industrial presentations, conferences, internal corporate videos, and charitable fundraising events. In March 1990, he produced and directed *The Redemption*, his own play, for the Festival of Perth in Western Australia, subsequently settling in that region.



Beginning in 1965, in addition to authoring his own books, Honeycombe wrote for television, radio, stage, and film. Among his notable works is the horror novel *Neither the Sea Nor the Sand*. Early in his career, Honeycombe authored two horror novels which, according to horror historian Stefan R Dziemianowicz, are "atmospheric modern gothics whose rugged natural northern English settings resonate with their unsparing supernatural horrors."

Honeycombe's first novel, *Neither the Sea Nor the Sand*, features a woman whose deceased lover comes back to life. His next book, *Dragon Under the Hill*, centers on a Northumberland professor caught in a Viking-era tragedy. According to Dziemianowicz, Honeycombe's work was largely overlooked as it predated the 1970s horror boom.

Initiated as a freemason in Oxford's Apollo University Lodge No 357 in 1959, Honeycombe was also passionate about family history and organized family events. He never married or had children, and passed away after a long illness on 9 October 2015 at age 79.

Visitation to Thistle & Crown



On Thursday, 15th January, we made our first trip of the year to visit our friends at Lodge Thistle And Crown 1167 in Neilston. A group of 24 brethren attended and received a warm welcome from RWM Bro. Andrew Irvine.

Our own RWM, Bro Alan Izatt, presented Bro Andrew with a bottle of whisky as part of the longstanding tradition where we are 1167's "First Foot" of the new year. The mallet was then handed to our RWM, and our degree team—made up of both younger and more experienced members—performed an excellent E.A. Degree. The candidate paid close attention throughout the ceremony, as did all the brethren present.

After returning the mallet, our group was thanked by RWM Bro Andrew Irvine for their impressive work, a sentiment echoed by Bro Martin Stobo, RWM of Lodge Nitshill 1478, who spoke on behalf of the visitors.

Following the meeting, many brethren gathered downstairs in the function suite to enjoy the usual harmony and warm atmosphere. It was truly a fantastic start to the year!

Succoth and Zeredatha

Succoth and Zeredatha (or Zarethán) were twin locations in the Jordan Valley, situated on the plain east of the Jordan River some 35 miles Northeast of Jerusalem in the territory of the tribe of Gad.

According to 2 Chronicles, chapter 4, verse 17 - This was where King Solomon cast the bronze furnishings for the Holy Temple. The area was chosen for its thick clay, ideal for moulding, and was located between the two cities.

This place is, and selected because the clay there was very tenacious, perfect for making bronze castings. Even in the 19th century this clay was being used by jewellers to reproduce small pieces of brass and jewellery, in a technique that has not been changed in 4000 years.

MASONIC FACTS

The highest Masonic Lodge in the United States is Corinthian Lodge No.35 located in Leadville, Colorado. Its elevation is 10,152 feet

The Lowest Lodge in the United States is Winnedumah Lodge No. 287 of Bishop, California. It occasionally hold meetings in Death Valley at 270 feet below sea level.

Aitchison's-Haven Lodge

Also spelled ATCHESON, ACHISON. This was one of the oldest Operative Lodges consenting to the formation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736. The age of this Lodge, like many or most of the oldest Lodges of Scotland, is not known. Some of its members signed the Saint Clair Charters in 1600 and 1601. The place of its meeting, Aitchison-Haven, is no longer on the map, but was in the County of Midlothian. The origin of the town was from a charter of James V, dated 1526, and probably the Lodge dated near that period. Aitchison's-Haven was probably the first meeting-place, but they seem to have met at Musselburgh at a later period.

Lyon, in his History of the Lodge of Edinburgh, speaks of trouble in the Grand Quarterly Communication respecting representatives from this Lodge when in May, 1737, it was "agreed that Acheson's Haven be deleted out of the books of the Grand Lodge, and no more called on the rolls of the Clerk's highest peril."

The Lodge was restored to the roll in 1814, but becoming dormant, it was finally cut off in 1866. The Lodge of Edinburgh has long enjoyed the distinction of having the oldest preserved Lodge Minute, which is dated July, 1599.

Just recently Brother R. E. Wallace-James has brought to light a Minute Book bearing this title:

The Buik of the Actis and Ordinans of the Nobile Maisteris and fellows of Craft of the Ludg of Aitchison's heavine,

and contains a catalogue of the names of the fellows of Craft that are presently in the Zeir of God 1598. The first page of this rare book bears in a bold hand the date 1598.

The Minute to which we have already referred is as follows :

"The IX day of Januerie the Zeir of God upon ye quhilk day Robert Widderspone was maid fellow of Craft in ye presens of Wilzam Aytone Elder, Johne Fender being Warden, Johne Pedden Thomas Pettencrief John Craford George Aytone Wilzame Aytone younger Hendric Petticrief all fellowis of Craft upon ye quhilk day he chois George Aytone Johne Pedded to be his intenders and instructouris and also ye said Robert hes payit his xx sh. and his gluffis to everie Maister as efferis" (see 'volume xxiv, Ars Quatuor Coronatorum).

Movie Studio Executives & Film Directors

Cecil B. DeMille(Prince of Orange Lodge No. 16, New York)
D. W. Griffith(St. Cecile Lodge No. 568, NY)
Hal B. Wallis(Prudence Lodge No. 958, Chicago, IL)
Jack Warner(Mount Olive Lodge No. 506, Los Angeles, CA)
Darryl F. Zanuck(Mt. Olive Lodge No. 506, California)
Adolph Zukor(Centennial Lodge No. 763, New York, NY)

Masonic Jewels

By John George Gmson (1917)

Does the square that you wear mean the test by your God
Of the work that you do, and the word that you speak,
Of the will of your mind, the thought of your heart,
Of the Past that is gone, of the Future you seek?

The Compasses you wear, does it mean that you move
Within the true bound appointed and sure,
Restricted desire, pleasure defined,
A yielding of self to the bonds that endure?

The Triangle too -great emblem of Him
Who is Maker, and Master, Beginning and End,
Do you wear it to show that He is to you
The Source and the Aim that all others transcend?

What means the gold trowel that hangs at your chain
Does it tell of the mortar of Love that you spread?
Of the joint well cement with fine brotherly love?
Of the stones that now lie in the well-mortared bed?

If 'tis not so, then take the poor jewels away
The meaningless bauble will only deceive
Yourself and the others you meet on your way
As meaningless lies which none ever believe

FLASHBACK

Some Snippets from "The Mallet" of 20 Years Ago

No. 290

December 2006

Regular Meetings

With no meeting of the Lodge held on the normal first Tuesday of the month, due to the New Year holidays, the first Regular Meeting of the Lodge took place on Tuesday 17th January, when the following two Candidates :

ALAN BARNARD JAMES URIE

were raised to the high & sublime degree of a MM by the Installing Masters, Bro William Gauld PM and Bro James Miller PM, ably assisted by the members of the Lodge Instruction Class, in what was a fine 3rd Degree conferred with the customary 307 "enthusiasm".

Also in attendance on that evening was Provincial Grand Master, Bro Dixon Drye, who took the opportunity of conferring upon our own Bro Tom Young PM, his recently awarded Honorary Grand Rank. Bro Tom took the who occasion in his stride, expressing surprise at the reason he had been singled out for such distinction, and thanked all who has helped and assisted him over the last 40 years ! Needless to say, Bro Tom sat down to a thunderous applause for the assembled Brethren.

Opened : 7.30pm

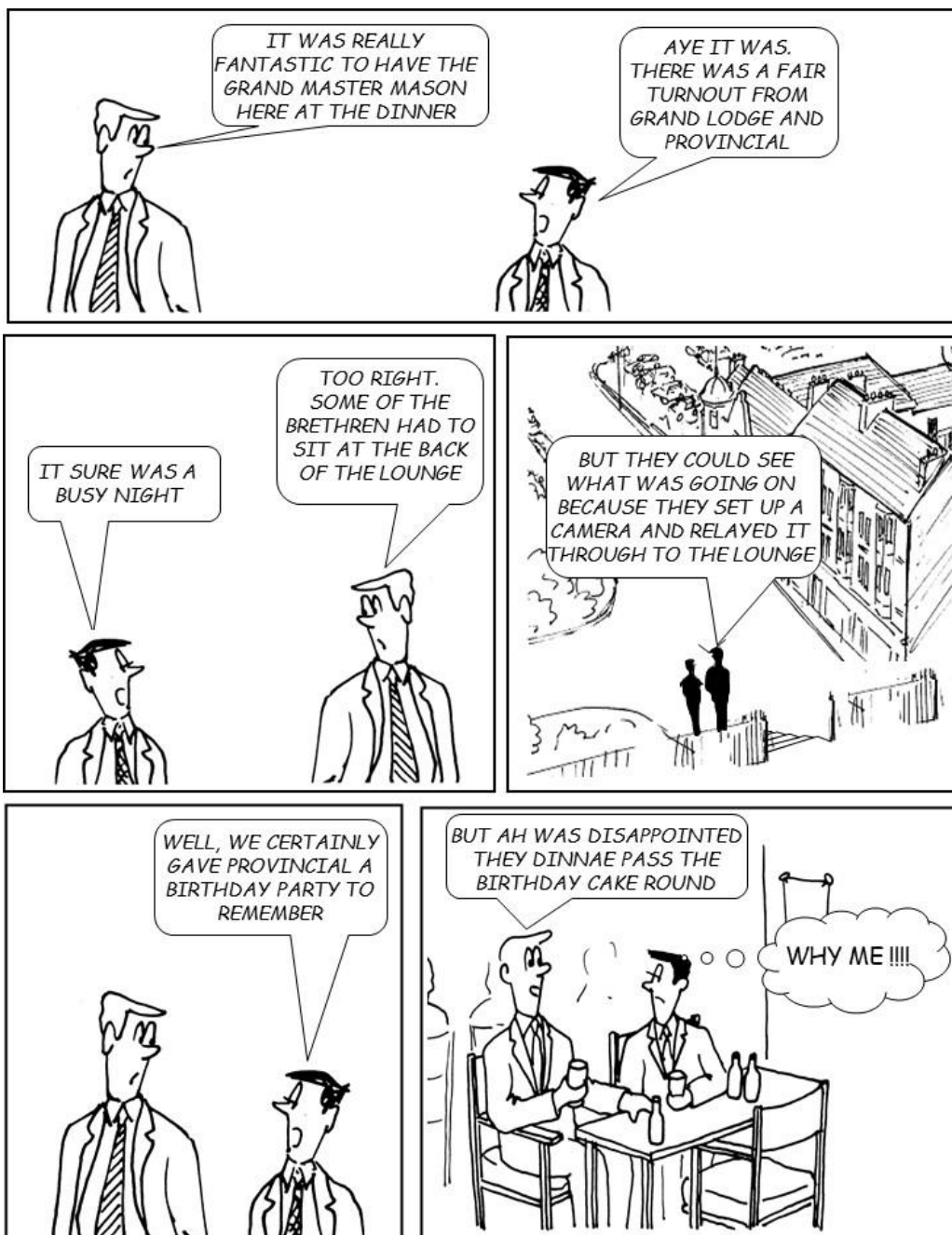
Lodge Closed : 10.13pm

Attendance : 92

BITS & PIECES

- Well done to Bro Robert Miller PM, who with a whole series of events & schemes, manage to raise all the necessary funds for the recent Senior Members' Dinner.
- The Lodge was delighted to receive a most generous and thoughtful donation of £500 from Rockmount RAC, No.367. This is to go towards the high cost of installing the new hi-tech alarm system in the Lodge, and the heartfelt gratitude go to the Office-bearers and Companions of the Chapter for their generosity.
- Congratulations to Bro Brian Morton PM on his installation as Provincial Grand Senior Warden. The first since the late Bro Willie Wade PM in the mid 1990s, it is fitting reward for over 20 years hard work & faithful service to Renfrewshire East.
- Many thanks to Bro Jimmy Laing, our Tyler, for all his retail efforts before and after our regular meetings. His sale of Masonic Paraphernalia each month is a welcome addition, and the funds realised are quite considerable.
- It was heartening to see Bro Douglas Fulton PM 1359, and an avid reader of The Mallet, in attendance at our last meeting. He'd heard that Bro Tom Young PM was receiving his Honorary GL Office, and didn't want to miss the occasion. Bro Tom is of course an Honorary Member of Lodge St Conval.
- Well done to Lodge Houstoun St Johnstone, No.242 who recently sponsored the local Paisley & District Boys' Brigade Battalion Swimming Gala. A gesture that is sure to raise the profile of Freemasonry in the community.

MARK N' ARCHIE



JANUARY 2026

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" With grateful thanks to all those who gladly gave their assistance "

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