

The Mallet

The monthly journal of Lodge Union and Crown No.307



February 2026

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No. 491

Editorial



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I never fail to be totally amazed at society in general, and the media in particular's fascination with "The Sinister Masonic Brotherhood" who are obviously plotting to overthrow numerous governments across the globe, almost on a daily basis !

Following the most recent example of the Police and Judiciary in England, and here in Scotland the attempt several years ago to force all Members of the Scottish Parliament to declare any involvement in Freemasonry. At that time several MSPs bravely decided to stand up and be counted, immediately declaring that they were in fact proud to be a member of our fraternity, fully realising that we were a group dedicated to performing good deeds for all, including non-masons.

Contrary to popular belief, we are not a secret society, simply a society who actively promote charitable, benevolent and educational works, who happen to possess traditional methods of recognition and symbolic instruction. Many non-masons firmly believe that Lodges are watering holes where any number of shady deals are concocted. Nothing could be further from the truth, and it is time that Freemasonry firmly met this unwarranted and unnecessary criticism with facts and figures which accurately reflect our true contribution to society over many years.

It was heartening to see Grand Secretary, attempting to redress the balance in the press and hopefully this will continue to be a feature of The Craft's efforts to widen its profile. Unfortunately, the recent media coverage has far exceeded that, which followed our sizeable donations to very deserving causes.

I would be the first to admit that I have asked favours from fellow Masons and indeed obliged a few of my Brethren over the years. This is performed openly and without any sinister undertones in a similar manner to that employed by members of Golf Clubs or Social Clubs who approach someone with whom they are familiar with – it is honest companionship. Do we see the liberal woke establishment conducting a witch hunt on underhand dealings in Golf Clubs? – Not at all.

Let us continue to perform the charitable deeds for which we receive faint praise, and do all that we can to ensure that a far greater audience are kept fully aware of the full significance of what we have done for our fellow man for many many years

Perhaps the next appointment from within Grand Lodge should be a "Communications Director" whose role would be to promote our Global image or Brand. Or perhaps we should utilise a resource already there – the 35,000 Freemasons in Scotland who are undoubtedly incensed at the manner in which The Craft has been portrayed yet again. Let's stand up and be counted Brethren, but for the right reasons !



Lodge Union & Crown

No. 307

Dear Sir & Brother,

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

Tuesday 3rd March 2026

Business : Minutes & Correspondence etc

Provincial Grand Lodge Visitation

by the PGL of Renfrewshire East

Harmony



Tuesday 17th March 2026

Business : Minutes & Correspondence etc.

Fellowcraft Degree

Conferred by the Worthy Deacons

Harmony

Yours faithfully & fraternally

R Evans Reid P.M., Lodge Secretary

Regular Meetings

At the Regular Meeting on Friday 6th February, the Lodge received deputations from both the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East, and the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Salutations and fealty were shown to both the Provincial Grand Master - Bro Ronald E Fraser, and in turn to the M.W. Grand Master Mason – Brother Alexander Charles Graham Moncrieff who was making his first visit to Union & Crown since his installation in November.

The Brethren of the Lodge Instruction Class then gave a performance of the ‘Burns vs Kipling’ dramatization, which was enjoyed by all in attendance.

Thereafter, at the close of the meeting the Brethren retired to the Function Suite where a sumptuous 3-course meal was served to mark the Bicentenary of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East. Also in attendance were representatives of the Bourock Church and 7th Barrhead Girl Guides who received £500 cheques from Union & Crown as part of our annual benevolence towards the community.

Also in attendance was Mrs Mary Montague, Provost of East Renfrewshire who spoke warmly about Lodge Union & Crown and its long-standing involvement in the local community, and its continuing generosity towards many deserving causes.

Both the Grand Lodge of Scotland and the PGL of RE were toasted and the MWGMM and the PGMRE made suitable replies. Thereafter, limited edition bottles of whisky, in specially engraved wooden caskets, were presented to Bro Alexander Moncrieff, Bro Ronald Fraser and Provost Mary Montague to mark the occasion.

Opened : 6.30pm

Lodge Closed : 8.06pm

Attendance : 93



At the Regular Meeting on Tuesday 17th February, the Lodge gave another performance of their extremely popular Dramatised ‘Prisoner of War’ degree before a full house with a high number of visitors. The Brethren of the Instruction Class gave a fine rendition of what is quite a humorous dramatization, which was well-received by all.

The Brethren and their visitors then adjourned to the Lodge Function Suite where the Harmony was well received.

Opened : 7.30pm

Lodge Closed : 9.14pm

Attendance : 97

The Symbols of Freemasonry

The world of Freemasonry is composed of esoteric signs and symbols that are baffling to most non-Masons. Perhaps the most common are the square and compasses, which are the universally recognizable symbols of the organization. They typically emblazon the lintels above lodge entrances and can be found on the aprons worn by Masons during rituals.

Although there is not a single, universally agreed upon meaning, most Masons would probably contend that these two objects in conjunction are meant to represent how a Mason should conduct himself, according to a dictionary of Masonic symbols. The square signifies that a man should act "square" with his fellow man — that is, he should be honest and forthright in all his dealings. The compasses are a reminder to engage in moderation, and not to get carried away by life's vices.

In general, some Masonic symbols — such as the beehive, the acacia tree and the all-seeing eye, to name a few — are meant to invoke ideals, remind members of correct modes of conduct and behaviour, and impart important lessons.

"The symbols of freemasonry largely have to do with ethics — how one should live their life," said a prominent Brother.

Dates for your Diary



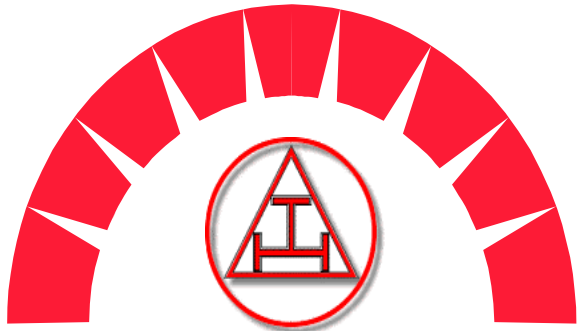
- Tuesday 3rd March** Regular Meeting of the Lodge, where the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East will be paying their statutory annual visitation to Union & Crown.
- Monday 16th March** Management Committee Meeting at 7.30pm
- Tuesday 17th March** Regular Meeting of the Lodge, where a Fellowcraft Degree will be conferred by the Worthy Deacons.

(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)

100 CLUB

The fortunate winners of our cash prizes over the last month or so were :

- 16th January** £20 : **Bro Tom Mulholland PM** £10 : **Bro Bro Callum MacIsaac**
- 6th February** £20 : **Bro Lawrence Webb** £10 : **Bro Alan Izatt RWM**
- 17th February** £20 : **Bro Eddie Mullin** £10 : **Bro Michael Hughes PM**



Rockmount R.A.C. No.367

At the Regular Meeting of the Chapter held on Tuesday, 10th February, the Companions of the Chapter were honoured to welcome a deputation from the Provincial Grand Chapter of Renfrewshire. Most Excellent Companion Dr Kevin Pollock, Provincial Grand Superintendent, commended the efforts of Rockmount over the past twelve months, with particular recognition given to our Executive Office-bearers for their exemplary performance.

Following the conclusion of the meeting, the Office-bearers and Companions of both Rockmount Royal Arch and Cryptic Council, along with their guests, retired downstairs where they enjoyed a quiet yet pleasant gathering.

MEC James Renfrew MEZ cordially invites all to the next Regular meeting of the Chapter to be held on Tuesday 10th March at 7.30pm, where the Companions of Rockmount will be conferring the Royal Arch Degree.

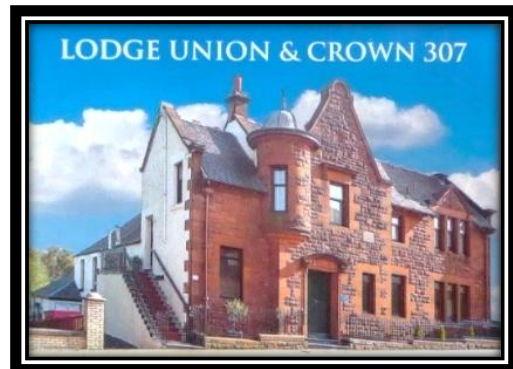
Any Brethren who perhaps may be interested in joining the Royal Arch should have a word with any of the Chapter Office-bearers.



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 by the late 18th century, at the height of the Enlightenment, Freemasonry carried considerable social cachet. "Being a Mason signalled that you were at the forefront of knowledge".

BITS & PIECES

- It is tremendous to see that the new Pool Table, which some of our younger Brethren have been fund-raising for, is now in place and looking good in 307 Blue. The first Friday night after it was installed was very busy with Brethren and their friends eager to try it out.
- We have seen the early drafts of the new-revamped Lodge Website by Bro Stephen Scott IPM. It is looking great and hopefully once the domain is sorted out will be open to all very soon.
- 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 !!
- The Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire East is holding its Bicentenary Rededication by The Grand Lodge of Scotland on Saturday 6th June at 1pm in the Paisley Town Hall. Union & Crown as one of the original founding Lodges of the Province in 1826 have always been good attenders at PGL celebrations over the years and hopefully as many Brethren as possible will be in attendance on that day. If you're interested in attending, give your name to Bro Jim Renfrew P.M. (☎ 07957 556689)
- Many congratulations to youthful looking Bro David Watson P.M. who recently hit the milestone of 60.
- Bro Graham Manson PM, our faithful Instruction Master would be delighted to see some new recruits at the Instruction Class on a Monday evening. He'll be only too glad to help you out and let you go forward when you're ready to take the floor.
- Good to see Bro Kenny Beatts at our recent Anniversary Dinner, in company with his Father-in-Law Bro Davie Noble P.M. Bro Kenney has had a bit of ill health of late, but is making a good recovery in recent months.
- Great to see Bro Donald Cook P.M. at our last meeting. He's had some health problems of late, but his medications have been balance and he has improved,
- Bro Michael McBride has been in and out of hospital a few times recently and we wish him well and a speedy recovery.
- Bro Alex Morrison who's 93 has been experiencing some mobility issues of late and it has tended to stop him getting out and about. We would like to wish well and let him know he is in our thoughts
- It was great to see Bro Jim Phillips at our recent meeting.

Famous Freemasons

(Continuing our series about Famous Brethren, this month we turn to one of Scotland's most loved musicians)

Bro Sir Jimmy Shand MBE (1908 - 2000)

Sir Jimmy Shand MBE was a legendary Scottish accordionist and dance band leader who popularized traditional Scottish country music worldwide. Known for hits like "The Bluebell Polka" and appearances on the BBC's White Heather Club.

Born on January 28, 1908, in East Wemyss, Fife, he was the sixth of nine children of a ploughman turned miner who played the melodeon. He left school at 14 to work in the mines but left after the 1926 General Strike to take up employment with the Fife Power Company

He began playing the mouth organ and fiddle before mastering the accordion, gaining fame playing at local social events. After a stint as a travelling music salesman for a Dundee shop, he developed his unique style on the British chromatic button accordion, recording his first session in 1933.

He formed his famous band in the 1930s, gaining national fame in the 1950s and 1960s with numerous BBC TV and radio appearances.

Ill health prevented him from serving in the armed forces during World War II, and he joined the Fire Service.

"The Bluebell Polka" was his signature tune, with the band becoming the only Scottish country dance band to ever hit the British charts, reaching number 20 in 1955. He toured extensively to Canada, Australia and the USA, including performances at Carnegie Hall in New York, and he became a household name. He regularly performed at Balmoral and Windsor Castle and was a great favourite of the Queen and the Queen Mother.

Awarded an MBE in 1962, he was knighted by the Prince of Wales at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in 1999.

He passed away on December 23, 2000, in Perth. A life-size bronze sculpture was later erected in his honour in Auchtermuchty in 2003, where he was a long-term resident. He was a friend of Bro The Lord Elgin past MWGMM, who unveiled the statue which has 'The Tyler's Toast inscribed on the base.

He is recognized for preserving and elevating Scottish musical heritage and influencing a generation of musicians.

Beyond his musical legacy, Sir Jimmy was also a Freemason, a member of Lodge Robert De Bruce No. 304 in Ladybank, Fife, Scotland — reflecting the long tradition of musicians, artists, and craftsmen who have also walked in the light of Freemasonry.

His life is a reminder that the Craft has always been home to men who shaped culture, preserved tradition, and brought joy to their communities.



Almoner's Report

During the past month I have visited the following Brethren, and in each case I was made most welcome in a warm and kindly manner.

- Bro Jimmy Laing was rushed into hospital with a blood clot and is now recovering. I saw him in the RAH and a few times at home
- Bro Alex White is still having problems with his eye. I passed on good wishes to both Alex and Grace.
- I called in to see Mrs May Dinning and she was delighted to see me. I presented her with her late husband – Bro Roy's PM's photograph from the Temple.
- Bro Ian Ross who is presently in Parkhouse Manor Home and is always delighted to see me when I visit him.
- Bro Douglas Junner PM and his wife Mattie were glad to see me and we had a great chat.

By Telephone I managed to keep in contact with the following Brethren :

- Brother Michael McBride is doing well after a recent operation.
- Bro Donald Cook PM and his wife Pauline are both recovering from illness and I wished both of them all the best.
- Bro John McCuish's wife Roberta was in hospital and I had a chat with Bro John and offered my support, wishing Roberta all the best.
- Bro Alan Gebbie has had a mini stroke and I spoke with him recently and wished him a speedy recovery.

As your new almoner, please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any assistance, or a visit.

Brother Lawrence Webb ☎ 07514 772 560

MASONIC FACT ??

St. Andrew's Lodge in Boston bought the Green Dragon Tavern to use as a meeting place. While the Freemasons conducted their business on the pub's first floor, another group—the Sons of Liberty—is thought to have met in the basement. The Sons of Liberty are best known for dramatic political protests !!

The St. Andrew's Lodge meeting in Boston on the night of December 16, 1773, was called off due to poor attendance. Presumably, they were too busy chucking tea into Boston Harbour to bother with whatever Masonic business was on the agenda for the evening, in what became known as 'The Boston Tea Party'.

REMEMBER YOU'RE A MASON

When the pressures of recession
Make us concentrate on greed,
Take heed, a worthy Mason
Cares about another's needs

Don't let pressures of the moment
Make your obligation sway,
Stop and help a fallen brother
Or another by the way

What you give is like a bubble
Whenever you assist,
What it costs in time and trouble
Is, soon after, never missed

Brother, bear that obligation
You accepted on your knee,
It's in direct relation
To your own security

Never hesitate, my brother
Square your actions now and say,
I'll remember I'm a Mason,
And behave like that today

With regard to human kindness
And the 'Golden Rule', I pray,
I'll remember I'm a Mason...
And behave like that today.

FLASHBACK

Some Snippets from "The Mallet" of 44 Years Ago

No. 52

February 1982

REGULAR MEETINGS : At the Regular Meeting on Tuesday 2nd February the following five candidates, Daniel Carlton, Robert Young, James Paton, James Laird and Iain Wilson received the Fellow Craft Degree. The degree was carried out by a deputation from Lodge Anima, No. 1223, Glasgow who were our visitors for the evening. The ceremonial work, which deviated somewhat from the usual pattern, was none the less most impressive and extremely well carried out.

Lodge Opened : 7.30pm

Lodge Closed : 10.00pm

Attendance : 164

At the next Regular Meeting on 16th February the same five candidates received the Master Mason Degree, this time, at the hands of our friends and neighbours from Lodge Nitshill, No. 1478. Once again the degree work was just what we have come to expect from our Nitshill brethren, in a word, excellent.

Lodge Opened : 7.30pm

Lodge Closed : 10.10pm

Attendance : 158

LODGE GOSSIP :

We hear that Big Campbell Thomson, one of the happiest people you could meet, has finally decided to apply for affiliation to 307. We are right glad to hear it - he has been a regular attender at our meetings for many years.

Congratulations to Bro Ian Wilson whose wife recently presented him with a baby boy and also to Bro Tom Mulholland whose the proud father of a baby girl.

We hear that Bro Jim Cameron is in the process of learning Spanish.

We are glad that Bro Albert Gray has, at last, been given the the keys of his new house in Gladstone Avenue.

Our best wishes to Bro Peter Cameron, who recently retired and we hear that Bro Willie Bell will be taking early retirement in March.

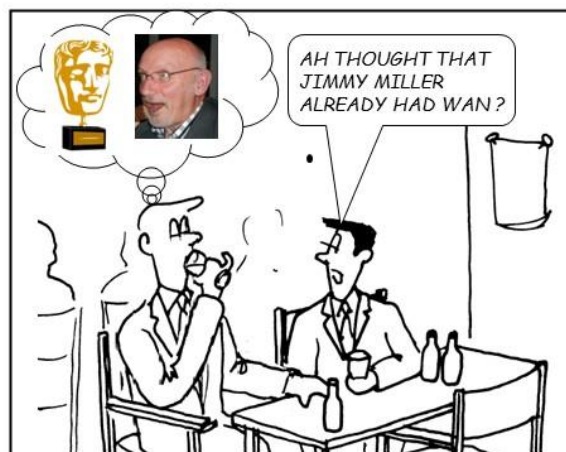
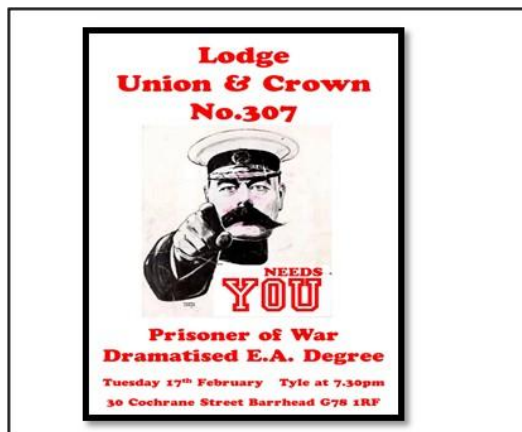
We have been told that Bro Willie Wade PM has visited no less than ten Lodges in a fortnight.

Congratulations to our R.W.M. whose wife Penny presented him with a baby girl.

FROM PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE :

- We are told that Bro Andrew Tannahill PGM is an Hon. Member of at least 18 Lodges.
- In our opinion, the most aptly named Provincial Office-bearer is Bro Jackie Goodfellow PPGSW.
- Bro John Spence, Prov. Grand Jeweller, is on the Chair of Lodge Randolph Clarkston for the 2nd time.
- Bro McAllister Smith, Provincial Grand Senior Warden has presented the John Fulton Golf Trophy in 307 on no fewer than 22 occasions !
- Since being installed as PGMRE, Bro Andrew Tannahill has visited every Lodge in the Province at least once, outwith Installations, Statutory Visits etc.

MARK N' ARCHIE



J RENFREW FEB 2026

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

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