



# FORUM

## THE NEWSLETTER FOR SUFFOLK FREEMASONS

October, 2002

### WHAT A WEEK THAT WAS

**"May I congratulate all those directly involved in the many activities surrounding our Week of Awareness. The campaign was an unqualified success not only in making the general public better informed on Freemasonry but, equally important, providing, for many of our members, the opportunity of gaining far greater confidence as spokespersons for our movement"**

*Robert J. R. Tile, Provincial Grand Master*

### SUFFOLK ROADSHOW

FUELLED by the generosity of Alex Scales (Lodge of Virtue and Silence No.332) supplying free of charge to the Province his double decker exhibition bus and the enthusiasm of Peter Peck, Bill Hagger, David Harries, David Boswell and myself, we commenced planning in October 2001, six days of masonic campaigning across Suffolk in support of the Week of Awareness, commencing 26th June 2002.

Our first priority was to persuade local Authorities and the Police to let us park our bus in the middle of their towns and villages. This was no mean challenge but just the type, Bill Hagger, our ex Police Chief Superintendent relished. Accompanied by his worthwhile masonic colleague, Peter Peck, they moved in on the authorities and after making the "right noises" found planning permissions reasonably forthcoming. There were a few exceptions but not, I would like to think, as a result of any anti-masonic attitudes. By March 2002, the consents had all been secured and the route of our bus carefully mapped out.

The next stage was to gain the support of Suffolk masons to man the bus, with an agreed preference to recruit younger Brethren (age wise that is!) to dispel the generally held public myth that all masons are sixty years of age or over. A natural target was the Suffolk Provincial Grand Stewards' Lodge, aided and abetted by younger Brethren in those lodges meeting in the towns and villages to be visited. This was achieved by some expert coaxing by David Hatties and it was most encouraging at the numbers prepared to take up the challenge. Their support on the day was crucial to the venture's success.

The final stage in preparation was to transform the bus as an eye-catching mobile exhibition with accompanying posters, leaflets etc., etc. David Boswell took on this task with considerable relish, as exemplified by the production of a large banner running the full length of the bus titled "Freemasonry in the Community" (clearly visible not only to passing pedestrians but also low flying aircraft!) Inside the bus, displays were mounted including displays of Working Tools, Tracing Boards, Regalia and carefully scripted posters - some indicating our financial generosity to local charities. An awning was also erected which provided the opportunity of hanging from the side of the bus, under cover, a series of lodge banners (including Provincial Grand Lodge) which couldn't help but attract our passing targets.

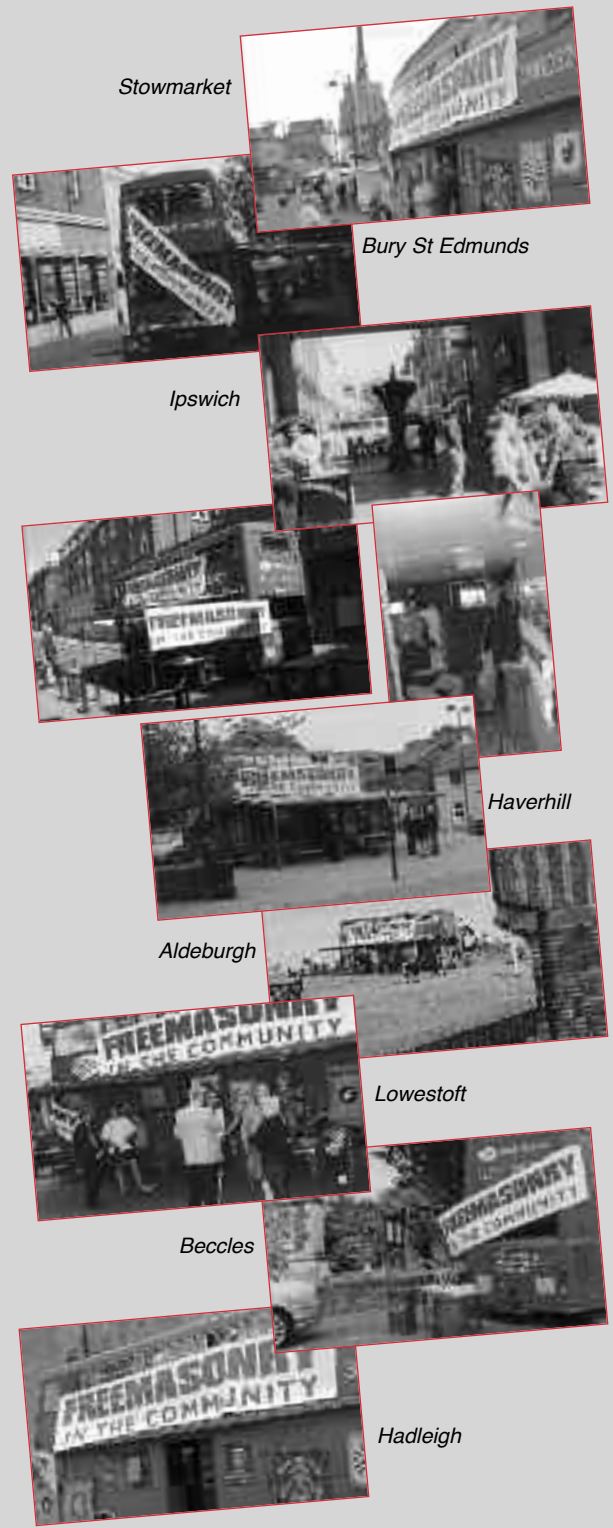
So our Campaign began on 26th Wednesday 2002, in the main thoroughfare of Ipswich (or almost!) and all the team that day took turns to flood the passing public with information leaflets, stickers and Open Days invitations. Visits followed to Stowmarket, Hadleigh, Bury St. Edmunds, Lowestoft, Beccles, Aldeburgh and Haverhill.

Whilst by the end of each day we all felt somewhat exhausted, there was not doubt we attracted considerable interest and awakened the attention of the public to all the good things surrounding Freemasonry. Hundreds of leaflets were dispatched and to a large extent most people were happy to receive them. There were a few exceptions, like one who commented all Freemasons, including myself, were destined to to to hell!

At one time we even had the Provincial Grand Master moving in on the unsuspecting shoppers and directing their attention to visit our exhibition - who better as an advocate.

Overall I am firmly of the view we achieved a positive contribution to our Week of Awareness and whilst it took a fair amount of arranging, the end result was well worth the effort, thanks to all those who so willing took part either before or during the week.

*Barry Ross - Provincial Grand Secretary*



# WEEK OF AWARENES

## VIEW FROM THE NORTH



Mr. Alex Porter and W.Bro. Richard Whiley - High class entertainment following a superb meal



The 'Opening Night' - The Charity concert - the Suffolk Secretariat well in attendance!!

WHEN the "Week of Awareness" was launched in the early autumn of 2001, it had a mixed reception, as would any new concept associated with such a historical ancient institution. On a purely domestic basis it brought together brethren from a number of lodges to set the parameters for a programme that would not only respect the feelings of the majority of Lodge members but would also demonstrate to the public, in a practical manner, our fundamental abstract principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

All local events took place at the Lowestoft Masonic Hall with the exception of the siting of the Exhibition Bus.

On Wednesday 26th June the week was launched in a very formal manner with a "Grand Charity Concert," described as 'an evening of good and music, to delight the palate and soothe the soul!' Some 90 masons and non-masonic friends enjoyed the champagne and canapés reception followed by a gourmet meal. Mr. Alex Porter, concert pianist and W.Bro. Richard Whiley, classical guitarist, gave the musical concert. Included in the programme of solo and duet items was the theme tune from the film "Captain Corelli's Mandolin," for which piece Bro. Richard had purchased a mandolin and taught himself to play!

The following evening, Thursday, saw a very informal gathering for a "Pie and a Pint." The younger brethren in the Lodges had been encouraged to take along relatives, friends, neighbours and working colleagues. The Lodge



A cheque for £400 from a mason wishing to remain anonymous and presented by the PSGW to a representative of a voluntary local Respite Care Agency.



'Pie and a Pint' Evening - four interested non-masonic attenders!

Room was open and they had a preview of the display boards that were being arranged for the Open Day. Some 30 non-masons were in attendance and there was lively discussion and some very searching questions! One Brother was accompanied by his father who was scheduled to join a local Lodge in the early autumn.

The Exhibition Bus together with the three Musketeers, (W.Bros. Bill Hagger, Peter Peck and Alex Scales) hove into sight over Lowestoft Bridge on the morning of Saturday 29th June. The Waveney District Council had kindly permitted the sitting of the bus in a prestigious area in the central shopping precinct. There was a steady flow of visitors, both enquiring and merely curious, and many 'flyers' were handed out advertising the "Open Day." Two early visitors to the bus were Lady Masons from a Lodge in Norwich.

Brethren from 11 of the 12 N.E. Suffolk Lodges acted as 'Stewards' for the Open Day on Sunday 30th June when the Masonic Hall was open to the public from 10.30am to 4.00pm. The Lodge room was fully set out for the opening of a lodge and eight banners adorned the walls behind the chairs of the three senior officers, creating a vivid splash of colour. Great interest was shown in the five Volumes of the Sacred Law representing universal faiths, kindly loaned from Caduceus Lodge. The dining hall was hung with display boards depicting the History of Freemasonry, Grand Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge and Private Lodges. In compiling our N.E. Suffolk charity display boards it was striking to note that over the past five years some £56,000 had been raised from 16 Lodges and 71 different charities had benefited from donations. On the first floor was a display of craft regalia, badges and jewels and included three Provincial Grand Master's aprons which aroused much comment and admiration from the ladies for the intricate working of the gilded wires. In the Upper Lodge Room the three Masonic Videos were continuously playing as was a computer-generated slide show cleverly depicting the history, organisation and activities of Freemasonry with an ever-changing and mobile screen picture. 103 members of the public visited the Hall, many of them staying for a considerable period of time and partaking of the light lunches provided at a moderate cost.



A full house of over 100 ladies and gentlemen enjoying company, tea and entertainment during the 'Caring' Afternoon.



We were quietly proud of this display board, the first time N.E. Lodges Charity efforts had been brought together



To celebrate a recent engagement - a bottle of Champagne presented to the two octogenarians

On the Monday afternoon, 1st July 110 "Carers and Those Cared For" spent a delightful time together enjoying the sing-along-entertainment and a delicious afternoon tea. The charity Age Concern had very kindly assisted with advice and information which enabled the organisers to communicate with appropriate agencies for those persons "Cared for." During the afternoon, finding that two octogenarians had recently become engaged, a bottle of champagne was presented to them. We were very pleased to have W.Bro. Robert Mayhew, the PSGW, with us for the occasion and he kindly presented a cheque for £400 to a representative of a voluntary Respite Care Agency, given by a lodge member, who wished to remain anonymous, for the care and attention given to his housebound wife during the past number of years. Bro. Robert spent the remainder of this time helping to wash up - he is very good- caterers take note as he visits around the Province!



Open Day - a lot of interest shown by lady visitors, especially regarding the charities.

## CATHEDRAL SERVICE 1000+ ATTEND

THE climax to the week was the St Edmundsbury Cathedral Evensong. The Cathedral was full, and it must have been an occasion of wonder to the resident clergy. The service was beautifully arranged, the readings carefully selected and read, and the address so fitting for the occasion (extracts below). There is no doubt that this was the perfect end to our week, the words of the address by the Archdeacon of Ipswich, the Venerable Terry Gibson will long remain with us and give substance to the hope that there will be strands of the week that will continue through the fabric of our Masonic lives for many years to come.

A Warm and Fraternal thanks to all the brethren who contributed to this unique week in our Masonic Experience.

### EXTRACTS FROM THE SERMON FOR FREEMASONS OF OF SUFFOLK, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR FRIENDS, DURING THEIR WEEK OF AWARENESS TUESDAY 2ND JULY 2002

I thank you for your kindness in inviting me to share in your Week of Awareness during which you have been working to dispel some of the myths and prejudices you have received in recent years. Though I have never been a Freemason I am pleased to recognise here this evening some of my closest friends for whom I have the greatest respect.

Historians tell us that the origins of freemasonry go back probably to the 12th century, when some of our greatest cathedrals and parish churches were being built, and when the English Masons established a religious fraternity under the protection of St. John the Baptist, to guard the secrets of their craft. So it is good that we are gathered in this cathedral church at a time when 21st century masons, bricklayers and carpenters are working to complete the building and to crown it with a 150ft tower. Those who have seen the work achieved so far are impressed by the excellence of the workmanship. Like the Masons of centuries ago the craftsmen at work here are building for the glory of God and for the centuries to come.

'Freemasonry - one of the world's oldest secular fraternities - is a society of men concerned with moral and spiritual values. Founded on the three great principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, it aims to bring together men of goodwill, regardless of background or differences, to find out what they have in common and how they can build on that commonality for the good of society in general.

Organised Freemasonry began in 1717 when four London Lodges came together to form a Grand Lodge, the first in the world. Freemasonry has been an important part of the fabric of society for nearly three hundred years, encouraging the development of personal integrity and respect for one's fellow man, and quietly providing care and support for the disadvantaged and the distressed.'

'Freemasonry offers its members an approach to life which seeks to reinforce



thoughtfulness for others, kindness in the community, honesty in business, courtesy in society and fairness in all things.'

Open any newspaper on any day. One paper last weekend reported on the challenge from African leaders to the G8 Group of the world's eight richest nations to help save much of the African continent from catastrophe. Christian Aid, in a briefing, said that there were 12m Aids orphans in Africa, 8m dead from its current wars, and that debt repayments were still running at \$12 billion a year. The same newspaper reported on how the government's plans for dealing with asylum seekers continue to draw fire from all sides. At the same time, groups of all kinds around the country are working to relieve the suffering of refugees.

Then there was the continuing saga of disaster engulfing corporate America. Enron, Worldcom, Xerox, etc. Accusations of fraud, false accounting and dubious auditing continue to dominate the headlines.

In our frightening post 11th September world there can surely be few here tonight who would question what Freemasons believe to be important - the need for "thoughtfulness for others, honesty in business, courtesy in society and fairness in all things."

The care and support provided by Freemasons to the disadvantaged and distressed is undoubtedly one of the most appreciated aspects of your work. It is good to know that in addition to supporting your own charitable causes, during the last 12 months Suffolk Freemasons have donated more than £42,000 to local non Masonic charities and that nationally this figure rises to over £2.7m, supporting a wide range of good causes.

It was when I discovered that a belief in God is an essential requirement for anyone wishing to become a Freemason, and that freemasonry encourages its members to be active in their own religions as well as in society at large that I felt able to accept the invitation to join you this evening.

I am sure that many here this evening give thanks for the relationships they have been able to make with a wide range of people from different faiths and different backgrounds. Relationships really are important and mean so much to us. This is



the point I want to stress this evening. Relationships are of the greatest importance to us all.

I first started working in Merseyside in 1963. Those were heady days. Liverpool Football Club had recently entered the First Division. Gerry and the Pacemakers and the Beatles were both appearing for the summer season at the Floral Hall in Southport. The Beatles of course quickly rose to great prominence. It was a matter of some significance that a cousin of Paul McCartney was a member of our Church Youth Centre, and I will remember the day when a teenage girl arrived reverently holding a polythene bag of soil which had come from next door but four to Ringo's auntie's garden! In the years that followed, the Beatles gave us authentic folk music which touched on the deepest human feelings and emotions in the context of a genuine idiom. It is interesting to note the prominent part that Beatle music played in the national celebrations last month of Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee.

The theme running through many Beatle songs was loneliness and its overcoming in human relationships - a theme which we are all familiar.

So many people are lonely today because of their inability to communicate. Sometimes this is because they are immature. Sometimes they feel inadequate or inferior. Some of us may find this loneliness in ourselves more than sometimes we like to admit.

For the true reality in life, from the highest to the lowest in the human race, is to be found in our relationships - our relationships with one another - those with whom we live and work, those whom we seek to serve, and those with whom we enjoy our leisure - and our relationship with God who gives us life in all its preciousness and beauty and who enables us to relate to one another.

It is never easy to make and sustain good relationships. To succeed we need compassion and sympathy. We need to learn to treat other people as we would like them to treat us. We need to lose our selfishness as we give ourselves to others and their needs. St. Paul spells this out in the hymn of self giving love in the great thirteenth chapter of his First Letter to the Corinthians which we heard as our 2nd hymn this evening. We are called to be long suffering, kindly disposed, not given to envy or to self display, to conceit or misbehaviour, to self seeking, rage or bitterness.

It was easy to hear these words. To achieve what they challenge us to do and needs constant effort and daily practice as we respond to the love of God for us. My prayer for you who are Freemasons here in Suffolk is that God will continue to enrich your lives through the relationships you make with him, with one another, and with those whose lives you touch.

*God bless you all.*

## SUDBURY OPEN DAY ANALYSIS

Masonic Centre, Sudbury Saturday 29th June  
 Provincial Grand Lodge of Suffolk  
 Open Day - Survey Analysis

My view of Freemasonry before today was	Positive	36
	Negative	8
My view of Freemasonry is now	Not committed	31
	Positive	36
	Negative	nil
	Not committed	10
I was interested in	Exhibition	42
	Lodge Room	58
	Regalia display	44
	Video	10
	Discussion	43
	I heard about this Open Day from	Newspaper Article
	Newspaper Advertisement	8
	Poster	4
	Friend	6
	Written personal invitation	12
	Other	15

### General comments of visitors

Your Open Days was very informative and will, I am sure, have a positive effect on your public image.  
*Very interesting to learn more about Freemasonry and being given so much time by various members who had given up their time today.*  
 An eye opener.  
*A thoroughly interesting morning. Norman Gray was so helpful - a friendly society that welcomed us with open arms.*  
 Very impressed with the temple and long history of the masons. Surprised at the amount of charity work done.  
*I have never shown much interest in masonry. This tour has changed my views on this. I may show more interest in future.*  
 I walk away a lot more open minded about the lodge and how it works, also my interest in Freemasonry will continue. Many thanks.

## THE MASONIC "ROADSHOW" BUS

The Masonic 'Bus' arrived in Bury St. Edmunds on Friday 28th June, and parked just outside Woolworths, a prime site indeed, it is within the centre of the town itself, sited across the main shopping and pedestrian routes. Peter Peck and Bill Hagger were present to 'hand over' the vehicle to the Bury brethren, with severe warnings about the need for the safe keeping of the contents, and after an interval departed, leaving the operation in the capable hands of Barry Ross.

Business was slow throughout the day, a great many mums and small children, who had enough on their hands without engaging in conversation, and shoppers with agendas to fill in a given time, but there was a steady, if momentary, interest shown by passers by, most of whom engaged in brief conversation, but most were not persuaded to enter the bus and view the display. Our Provincial Secretary surprised us all by his natural ability to stop passers by, attract their attention, engage their interest, and put stickers on the (more attractive) mums and children alike.

For me the interest lay in the number of men, middle aged it has to be said, that once stopped and engaged in conversation, revealed themselves to be Freemasons. In most cases they had moved from other parts of the country and had allowed their membership of their previous Lodges to lapse, and had never pursued the opportunity of joining a local Lodge. It seems that there are a lot more Freemasons 'out there' than one realises. It made me wonder how many brethren do eventually leave, never to return. One local freemason, now resigned, passed by the 'bus, ostensibly showing no interest whatsoever, but other members of Lodges, passing by, stopped and gave us moral support.

Those members of the public who stayed long enough for us to engage in conversation expressed an interest in what we do, and there were no overtly hostile reactions. It seemed to me that the public in general is unconcerned about our activities, and were somewhat surprised by our being present in the

street. Friends passed and greeted us, one lady acquaintance of mine, unaware of my membership, could not get over my being a Freemason, and went off saying "oh, no you're not one of them are you?" and disappeared round the corner still laughing.

We refreshed ourselves at the nearest coffee shop, and the day passed easily. For me it was useful introduction to the Open Day in Sudbury, which was to come. Indeed, it taught me one useful lesson, that if you want people to respond to you, you literally have to button hole them. It is no good relying upon a static display in itself to make people stop, look and listen.

In the end one presumes that any publicity is better than no publicity. Whilst I support the intention to put across the message of being proud of what we are and what we do, I remain to be convinced that a 'bus can achieve what a full display mounted in a Masonic Hall can. Most of the passers-by had no idea what we represent, those that did expressed surprise that we, understood by them to be secret society, were so presenting ourselves in the public arena. In most cases the public was, or claimed to be, short of time, and most of them did not feel that they had the time to spare us. An Open Day, as we later discovered, means that one can engage in a longer and more useful dialogue, simply because those who come to an Open Day are, by definition, interested enough to spend some time in conversation.

The paradox is that Open Day's should not be mounted too often, but that road-shows, if they are to have any impact at all, require frequent presentation to a generally disinterested public. Those who came to our Open Days will remember what they said and discussed for a long time to come; those who passed our 'bus had, in most cases, forgotten all about it one hundred yards down the street.

Was it worth it then? Well, it was certainly tiring, but we enjoyed sharing the camaraderie of being in the front line.

In the end all the concern about openness might be summed up in the words of Olin Miller, "You probably wouldn't worry about what people think of you if you could know how seldom they do."

## OPEN DAY - IPSWICH 29th June

Our second Open Day was held during the Week of Awareness and over 200 people visited us during the day. The event was supported by the PGM who met various civic dignitaries during the morning including the Mayor of Ipswich, who spent over an hour with us and was particularly interested in our organisation.

Virtually all those who attended were not only impressed by the building, displays and information available but were also appreciative, and perhaps a little surprised, by our openness. This was largely due to the significant contribution made by our Masonic 'hosts' on the day and as a result we have created considerable interest in the local community. In fact, following an interview with Barry Ross on Radio Suffolk during the day, a lady took the trouble to phone in and say what a super event it was and how much she enjoyed her visit, which was made all the more special by the local masons who were available to answer her questions. From the feedback we received on the day, her comments were fairly typical of the majority of those people who visited us.



In some more remote parts of these islands people are so adept at being close and minding their own business, that not a word of momentous events or juicy scandal leaks to the outside world - as one eminent commentator once put it, "In that area a pig with two heads would not occasion comment: So perhaps in this Suffolk Province the Installation of an 86 year old - me - as Worshipful Master will not be particularly remarked.

For me it is a twofold wonder. First there is the immense pride and pleasure as the recipient of the Brethrens' confidence and support, and then the honour of being entrusted with the Chair of a long established and prestigious Lodge in succession to a line of young and much talented occupants.

There has been comment in and out of the Lodge, fair as ever among Masons, and kindly meant; references to armchair activities, vicarious thrills from TV dramas, and other sober and low-demand pursuits. No, with great humility I take my inspiration from that famous poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson - Ulysses - wherein the great Navigator, Explorer, Statesman, and ruler sees himself in comfortable retirement, but restless and unhappy, unable to use his vast talents, and with his ambitions unsatisfied:

How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
 To rust unburnished, not to shine in use  
 ..... for my purpose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.

He surveys and considers his brave and well-tryed crew, equally restless and losing the edge of efficiency. He exhorts them in words that have long inspired and motivated me:

Though much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
 We are not now of that strength which in old days  
 Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

The defence rests.  
 Cdr. Tom Horton RN - WM Doric Lodge No.81.

# SUFFOLK RAISES £20,000 FOR LOCAL CANCER CHARITIES



The highly successful Gala evening at the Spa Pavilion Theatre on June 28th, during Masonic Awareness Week, starring Prunella Scales in "An evening with Queen Victoria" raised the staggering sum of £20,000 for our local cancer charities. "This splendid response is the result of a great deal of very hard work by the team and tremendous support by the members and lodges" said organiser and planner W.Bro. John Yeldham, A.P.G.M. " and I would particularly thank my wife Elizabeth, who was responsible for all seating and ticketing arrangements and W.Bros. John Keeley, Les Howard, Trevor White, David Boswell and David Harries and many others who assisted on the evening.

A special champagne reception was held after the performance when the Provincial Grand Master and Mrs Tile together with Miss Scales mixed and chatted with the 200 members and guests who had taken advantage of the offer of the post performance event.

*200 people attended the reception afterwards, pictured with Prunella Scales is the PGM, APGM and*



## Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee

## Provincial Grand Secretary **DOUBLES UP**

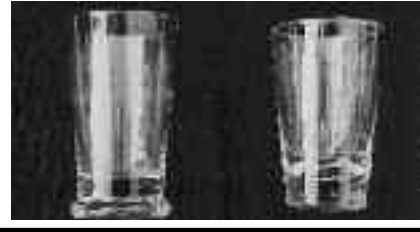


W.Bro. Barry Ross our erstwhile secretary is pictured here in the robes of First Principal of Marine Chapter No.232 Portishead Somerset installed on 1st March 2002, at the same time as being First Principle of Royal Alexandra Chapter No.959 Ipswich. An impressive way to keep your ritual up to Scratch. Ed.

## Gone but not forgotten, or The 'All Seeing Eye'

Has any Brother or Lodge purchased, been offered or seen for sale, any firing glasses, as featured in the photograph, which are approximately 200 years old, as 58 of the flanged base type have gone missing from the premises of an old established Lodge in East Suffolk, if you do have any information please contact the Editor of Forum, The Newsletter for Suffolk Masons. **Reward Offered.**

W.Bro. Peter Green, 9 Heath Close, Hessett, Bury St Edmunds. IP30 9BL



Three members of Composite Lodge 9480 recently visited the West of Ireland. Pictured at Freemason's Hall, Sligo, before the meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of North Connaught are RWBro. Edward Smith (DPGM), WBro Hugh Stewart (WM Composite Lodge), WBro. Cyril Munnings, RWBro George Ginnelly (PGM) and W.Bro. David Spencer. RWBro's Ginnelly and Smith will be returning the visit accompanied by senior officers of the province when they attend the installation meeting of Composite Lodge 9480 on November 2nd.



## STAMP' s Visit to Malta

**Sunday** 3rd February 2002, the trip to Malta started from Felixstowe at 07.00 hours with the usual collection points *en route*. 25 members from the area started their annual pilgrimage to visit fellow masons abroad. First destination Gatwick, arrived at 09.45 hours, and an uneventful flight leaving for Malta at 11.30 hours. A coach awaited our arrival to take us to the Preluna Hotel and Towers, Sliema on the north coast at about 17.00 hours local time (one hour difference). A double room for each, *en suite*, many overlooking the sea. All very civilised, dinner at the Hotel arriving at the dining room through the kitchens! Very helpful and pleasant staff. And so to bed.

**Monday** dawned bright and cheerful and the coach arrived to take us on a trip round the island. First impressions were of bleak landscapes, lava from a past volcanic eruption spoiling the countryside. The villages were small with some cultivation and each with its own firework factory. Big business. One was destroyed by fire with memorials nearby for those who perished.

The Bish., Roy Chalkley, true to custom, found two college lasses to chat-up, the vent being duly photographed by Nigel Gibson, group paparazzi, for prosperity. We lunched at the Harbour Lights in the fishing village at Marsaxlokk on the east coast, reced by David Woodard on a previous visit. Very well recommended, a healthy snack dining in shirt sleeve order.

The evening visit was to the Lodge of St John and St Paul, No.349 where an initiation was adequately performed by the Master, a past master of a Hertfordshire Lodge. As far as one could see, David Harries did not prompt once! their Grand Officer obliged. Three ballots for initiates and a joining member were taken individually which meant that we dined soon after 21.00 hours. The Secretary, who played an active part in the ceremony did not appear too amused at some of the arrangements. Some discrepancies in timing and financial matters (not due



Arthur Spraggens receiving the Bona Cup.

to our organisers) were experienced. It appeared that very few knew of our presence (25 STAMP members and eight from Norfolk), the largest number attending in all since the 30s, he member of St John's mentioning this fact must have been very young at the time. The DC was quietly asked, if appropriate, that STAMP could take wine with the master. He obliged and we sung! Norman Long, Master of 3833 gave a witty reply to the visitors' toast and Graham Colthorpe, Master of 3093 presented the gavel to St John's Master in his usual speedy manner. Back to the Hotel, a dram and bed.

**Tuesday** was a free day mainly spent exploring the town, some went to Valletta, the capital, and a trip round the harbour was arranged for the following day. Bill Hagger's threatened swim in the indoor heated pool did not materialise and his bathing trunks remained dry throughout the visit. Mention should be made that all food, drinks and wine were included in the very advantageous room hire. Not that advantage was taken of this! Peter Peck, who religiously kept to the diet laid down by his wife, and Bill Hagger were awarded with a bar to their medals, the sixth name to be added to the visits by STAMP. A party by some residents in the early hours kept some awake, duty free being consumed no doubt.

**Wednesday** morning arrive and a 1 1/2 hour trip round the harbour was enjoyed by the members. some likened the breeze to a force 9 gale but coffee and brandy on board kept us warm. In the afternoon some walked, some slept until our final dinner. Again we ate in the dining room, not the large, self-catering room overlooking the sea where we took breakfast, some more than others. After dinner, two member were expelled for not wearing their gongs, new bar attached. Thanks were expressed to the organisers, David Deal, John Jarman and Peter Seaman. The arrangements could not have been bettered, enjoyed by all the members. The Bona Cup, normally presented to the one who had disgraced himself during the trip, was awarded to Arthur Spraggens. Not because he had mis-behaved, but for his laughter and good humour which all had enjoyed during our stay. He suitably responded and for the third time we honoured his birthday followed by "Home, home on the range." Des. Band advanced his promotion by acting as Senior Warden and he and Jack Wright, close companions, were officially names Hinge and Bracket.

**Thursday**, the day of departure, was spent breakfasting, packing and travelling to Harbour Lights again for lunch, under cover because of the rain. Off to the airport, a flight home at 17.00 hours, this time to Stansted. A slight hic-cup in that the coach hire firm had our return booked for the following day in their diary. A local firm was contacted and a deluxe coach arrive to take us home. One can only assume that most of us were in bed soon after midnight. Those who took part and survived were: Des Band, David Boswell, Roy Chalkley, Graham Colthorpe, David Deal, Chris Dearing, Nigel Gibson, Bill hagger, David Harries, Rod Hellawell, John Jarman, Mike Leighton, Norman Long, John Martin, Chris Ottoway, Peter Peck, Greg Phillips, Ted Race, Ralph Robertson, Peter Seaman, Arthur Spraggons, Ian Treleaven, Adrian Watts, David Woodard and Jack Wright.

## IMPORTANT DIARY NOTE

### Provincial Annual Meeting 2003

You will no doubt recall at this year's meeting it was mentioned that next year our Annual Meeting will be on 30th May 2003. We have now been informed by the Royal Hospital School that, due to unforeseen school commitments, this date is no longer possible.

As a result, it has been agreed our **Provincial Annual Meeting will take place on Friday 25th April 2003**, at the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook. Can you please make a note in your diaries.



## Editor's notes

Brethren this has been an uplifting experience putting this issue together, I don't think we've ever had such a positive and enthusiastic set of contributions, and there's more; due to lack of space I am holding over a few articles until next time my apologies to those people, I would particularly like to thank the North east Lodges for their copious contribution. Keep up the good work and don't forget Forum during the coming months.

WBro Peter Green , 01359 270598