



# A. F. & A. Masons of Ireland Grand Lodge News



MARCH 2008

## CHARITY FESTIVAL 2008 – OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED



Left: Pictured with the Grand Master and his Deputy & Assistant on the steps of Freemasons' Hall, Molesworth Street, are The Festival Chairmen R.W.Bros. Richard Ensor; Rodney McCurley & Basil Fenton and representatives of the three benefiting charities – (L-R) Suzanne Costello (Samaritans); Jane McKenna (Laura Lynn Children's Hospice Foundation) and Siofra Healy (N.I. Children's Hospice). Right: The Grand Master with Jane McKenna (Laura Lynne Foundation); Siofra Healy (N.I. Children's Hospice) and Suzanne Costello (Samaritans), at the Belfast Launch in the Provincial Masonic Hall, Rosemary Street, Belfast.

**A major campaign to raise substantial funds for charities involved with young people throughout Ireland has been launched by Grand Lodge. The campaign will be the focus of a "Festival for Charity" during 2008 announced by the Grand Master, M.W.Bro. George Dunlop.**

As already announced, the chosen charities are **Samaritans, Northern Ireland Children's Hospice and Laura Lynn Children's Hospice Foundation.**

As part of the Festival activities, a 2009 calendar will be produced, featuring photographs of Irish scenes for each month, with the Grand Lodge's subordinate Provinces and Lodges raising funds through sponsorships and sales. Individual Lodges will also engage in fund-raising activities. The Festival Committee has hit the ground running with more than €40,000 already banked.

Speaking at launch ceremonies, in Belfast and Dublin, attended by the media, the Grand Master said: "The huge success of our fund-raising efforts all over Ireland is an achievement of which we feel especially proud. Hardly a week goes by that a Lodge somewhere in Ireland does not raise funds for a local or national charity. It reflects our open and active participation in the life of the community and demonstrates

that we are a caring organisation and part of society. The emphasis of the 2008 Festival will focus the proceeds directly towards younger members of society and their families."

Representatives of the Charities that will benefit attended the launches in November and expressed their appreciation of the Freemasons' support.

## Support the Grand Master's Festival And show it!



In response to many requests a Button Badge, 16mm diameter, is being produced in a limited number and will be sold on a first come, first served basis. The cost is at least £3.00 or €4.50.

It is enamelled with a dark blue logo on a light blue background with silvered relief. After initial manufacturing costs, all profits will go the Grand Master's Festival 2008 fund. Badges can be obtained by writing to:-

**David Penpraze, 44a Middle Road, Islandmagee, Co. Antrim BT40 3SL.**

State the number of badges required, your lodge number, name, address and telephone number.

Cheques, drafts, orders etc. (include £1.00 or €1.50 per order for P&P) payable to 'Grand Master's Festival' should accompany your order.



# Grand Master's Address

## – St. John's Day December, 2007

**Brethren, today I celebrate my first anniversary as Grand Master of Ireland making this my second occasion to preside over the St John's Day Installation Communication.**

I am delighted to have arrived, apparently unscathed at this juncture. I am also pleased that the Cabinet's decision to reinstate this Communication on St. John's Day has resulted in another excellent turnout, for which I sincerely thank you.

As you are all aware, Craft Masonry is the bedrock of Freemasonry and its tenets and principles are sound; so much so, that when practised sincerely, honestly and with commitment, instils in us a sense of prestige and sets us apart as men of honour and integrity; an apparent anathema in modern times.

Changing society's perception of our Order will always be difficult, as the tide of public opinion will constantly ebb and flow and our closed-minded protractors will forever prevail. No sole generation of our members will solve this problem for all time, yet we all have a singular responsibility to exhibit high moral standards in the public place, in parallel with non-denial of our membership and an obligation to safeguard our standards of scrutiny, so ensuring that the quality of our membership continues to be of the highest order.

My Grand Officers and I will continue to promote our Order in the public place with a view to achieving a more balanced view within the Media generally and through the medium of presentations to interested groups.

It is quite unacceptable that we suffer not only from the enemy without but also the enemy within – a circumstance which should never exist if every Freemason remained true to his obligations, practised brotherly love and fully embraced the Laws & Constitutions of Grand Lodge.

We have all voluntarily agreed, under oath, to obey these laws and in the event of unlawful violation, promised to accept the punishment decreed by Grand Lodge in the absence of any consideration of involving Civil Law.

The incidence of violation must surely relate to the quality of membership!

On that subject, it is alarming that in North America, maverick practices on the part of a number of Grand Lodges had to be met with stern and resolute action to prevent catastrophe; I am, of course, referring to the conferring of the 3 degrees in large theatres on multiple candidates. Fortunately there were those with the moral fibre to react before irremediable damage was done.

On 5th and 6th November an important meeting was held in London at which at least forty European Grand Masters were present. It was a significant occasion when the Pro Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, the Grand Master Mason of Scotland and I were privileged to make presentations to the assembled body. The purpose of the meeting was to raise issues relative to the practices of Grand Lodges within the European block.

Papers were also presented by other Grand Masters with the purpose of creating an understanding between the many units in Europe, which was partly achieved. It is planned to hold further meetings of these bodies so that mutual harmony and understanding may result.

It is believed that some European Grand Lodges are in favour of forming a Grand Lodge of Europe. A European Recognition Commission is currently under consideration; The Home Constitutions would be opposed to these moves.

We were privileged to dine with the M.W. Grand Master of England, HRH Duke of Kent, at an exceedingly luxurious banquet held at Lincoln's Inn. Much credit for the success of the total event must go to the Pro Grand Master, The Most Hon. The Marquess of Northampton, the Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. Peter Lowndes, and R.W. Bro John Hamill, Grand Archivist.

In late November, the Grand Secretary and I attended the National Grand Lodge of France in Paris, at which the new Grand Master was installed and proclaimed in the presence of around 3,000 Freemasons, including the



Grand Masters from forty seven Constitutions and their Deputations. The Ceremony was complex and enduring, taking some two hours alone to introduce each Grand Master's Delegation, of which Ireland was the penultimate group. It was, however a marvellous experience during which we were treated majestically by our hosts – an occasion to remember.

Considering my recent experiences, I was significantly inspired by my visit to Gibson Lodge No. 87 at Park Avenue when I attended their Centenary celebrations and witnessed tremendous enthusiasm and commitment to which they applied themselves to the established standards of traditional Freemasonry. I thank them for their generosity and kindness.

I was further inspired by my engagement with Francis Crossle Lodge No. 83 Newry on the occasion of their centenary when I had a enjoyable time with the Worshipful Master and his brethren and compliment them on carrying an esteemed name from the past to the present with all the honour due to it.

A visit to Antient Union Lodge No. 13 Limerick was indeed a memorable event, celebrating it's 275th year and meeting in a magnificent building, which is, without doubt, a credit to the brethren of North Munster. The past Provincial Grand Master R.W. Bro. Geoffrey Ashton and his successor R.W. Bro Hugh Milne must be congratulated on the excellent outcome of their endeavours. The Provincial Grand Master treated me exceptionally well and I tender my deepest appreciation to him.

On 19th November I was made most welcome at Lodge No. 5 Waterford on the occasion of their 250th

Anniversary. I enjoyed a tour of the city, conducted by V.W. Bro. Sean Murphy, which brought back some happy memories. The Provincial Grand Master, R.W. Bro. Tom McBain and his predecessor R.W. Bro. Arthur Keppel attended with me at a very pleasant meeting and Refreshment Board.

I was delighted to invest R.W. Bro. Sam Dukelow in the office of Junior Grand Warden, an honour long overdue. Our numbers were greatly enhanced by the large deputation of members from Tyrone & Fermanagh who came to support him and who faithfully attend Grand Lodge Communication on this St. John's Day.

I regret the absence of R.W. Bro. Adam McKinley our Senior Grand Warden Elect whose poor health caused him so much discomfort that he could not make the journey. May he recover well and soon be amongst us again. Our thoughts also go to R.W. Bro. Robert Thomson and we also wish him well.


I especially thank our outgoing Provincial Grand Master of Down, R.W. Bro. Robert Armstrong for the stewardship of his area and wish him health and happiness for many years to come. I endorse my welcome to R.W. Bro. Richard Gray and look forward, with much expectation, to liaising with him in his new and important position in the Province of Down.

The Province of Antrim is currently in a state of flux with the forthcoming closure of Rosemary St hall and the attendant return of seven Lodge Warrants. The problem of membership in the Belfast area has yet to be overcome and I feel that 2008 will allow the two Provinces to address this issue when current difficulties are resolved and the new Provincial Grand Master of Down has settled in.

Finally, I would, once again, thank all the Provincial Grand Masters for the effective oversight of their areas and look forward, with my Cabinet, to working closely with them in reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of their respective Provinces. I would especially thank my Deputy, my Assistant, the Grand Secretary, the Grand Treasurer and their Assistants for all the day to day work they do and all other administrators for the excellent support which I receive.

Thank you brethren and may God bless you all.

*M.W.Bro. George Dunlop*



**FREEMASONS' OF IRELAND GOLFING SOCIETY**  
**Millennium Charity Cup 2008**  
 at  
**Killymoon Golf Club – Cookstown**  
 on  
**Friday 22nd August 2008**  
*This Year's Beneficiaries:*

**'CARDIAC CARE' & 'MASONIC CHARITIES'**

**£1,000 IN PRIZES**  
**THREE PRIZE CATEGORIES:-**  
 1. MASONIC BRETHREN  
 2. NON-MASONS  
 3. LADIES

**PRIZES WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE "EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT"**  
**THE FIRST 200 ENTRIES WILL BE TAKEN ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS.**  
**NO GREEN FEES REQUIRED ON THE DAY**  
**ENTRY FEE £20 INCLUDING ENTRY TO THE 'GRAND DRAW'**  
**REGISTRATION FORMS AND COMPETITION RULES AVAILABLE FROM:**  
**NOEL SIMPSON**  
**13 CARNEYBALIN DRIVE**  
**PORTRUSH BT56 8JA**  
**TELEPHONE No. (028) 70823332**  
**MOBILE No. 079 67789641**  
**EMAIL: PAR70MM589@AOL.COM**

## Golf Dates for your 2008 Calendar

Competition	Venue	Date	Contact
1. PGL Londonderry & Donegal	Castlerock	24th April	Geoff Millar 02870 344964
2. Captain Fyffe Salver - T&F	Killymoon 2.00pm	6th May	Leslie Graham 02886 762773
3. Provincial Priors' Golf Society	Killymoon 9.30am -1.30pm	20th May	George M.J. Stewart 02879 418348 (H) 07793223464 (Mob)
4. Mourne Cup - T&F	Newtownstewart	11th June	Harry Friar MBE 02881 658237 Garth McKibben 02891 878859
5. Armagh Cup - Armagh	Portadown	13th June	David Blakely 02838 871879
6. Ferris Cup - Down	Kilkeel	27th June (tbc)	William Andrews 02840 623780
7. Grand Master's Millennium Cup	Killymoon	22nd August	Noel Simpson 02870 823332

# CHARITY CORNER

Eight hundred pounds only £800-00

## MASONIC BENEVOLENT FUND AT WORK

**It's always warming to see what can be achieved through the kindness and support offered from one to another.**

Three brothers have benefited greatly from the Masonic Boys Benevolent Fund, from the early days of their education, right up to achieving both their undergraduate and postgraduate academic studies and career goals.

The Wright brothers, of Bangor, County Down, have all done exceptionally well, both in the educational and work fields as a result of continued support from the Benevolent Fund. Craig, 30, Graham, 27 and Kyle, 23, would like to convey their complete appreciation in providing them with the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations and reach goals that would otherwise have made their paths a much more difficult journey.



*The Wright Brothers – (L-R) Craig, Graham & Kyle.*

Today Craig is living in Chester, England, and working as an Equity Partner, specialising in property, at a well renowned UK law firm. In getting to where he is today, financial support was provided during his undergraduate law studies at Glamorgan University, Wales, and for his Legal Practice course at the College of Law in Chester.

Graham is living in London, and employed by Vodafone as a Brand

and Communications Manager. Similar support was offered to Graham during his undergraduate studies at Stirling University, Scotland, and helped him attain a First Class BA Hons. in Business Studies and Marketing. The generosity from the Benevolent Fund then helped Graham in gaining entry to Nottingham University Business School, where he studied for his MA Marketing degree.

Kyle has received support that mirrors that of his brothers and has recently graduated from The University of Ulster with a 2.1 Hons. Degree in Quantity Surveying. He has now made the decision to further his academic studies at Aberdeen University to gain Chartered Arbitration qualifications.

The thanks and appreciation is echoed by all three of the Wright brothers for helping them reach their goals and get them to where they are today.

## CAROL SERVICES

Two Carol Services were held in the Province of Down under the auspices of local Charity Committees.

The first of the Services was held on Sunday 2nd December in Westbourne Presbyterian Church, which was extremely well attended by Brethren and their families, along with local residents both young and old. At the conclusion of the Service, Father Christmas made an appearance and the children all received a present from him. For the adults, a very welcome cup of tea awaited.

Pictured top are R.W.Bro. Robert Armstrong P.G.M. Down, The Lord Mayor Councillor Jim Rodgers (who is a past master of William Shannon Lodge 353); District Grand King, M.E.Comp. Kenneth Abernethy with John Butcher (to the back) and their respective ladies.

The second Carol Service was held the following Sunday, 9th December in Seapatrick Parish Church, Banbridge. The Service was conducted by the Rector Rev. Archdeacon W. John Scott, assisted by R.W.Bro. Canon George Little and R.W.Bro. Rev. Charles McCurdy. The Church was filled almost to capacity by Brethren and their families, local residents and dignitaries from the District Council etc. At the conclusion of the Service, all were invited to the parochial hall for a very welcome cup of tea.

Pictured bottom is the Provincial Grand Master R.W.Bro. R J Armstrong, along with other senior Masonic Brethren and local dignitaries from the District Council.

Conclusion - two wonderful Services not to be missed. The 'organisers' are to be congratulated and we look forward to December 2008.



# CHARITY CORNER

## BELLEEK HARVEST SERVICE HONOURS ORIGINAL POTTERY FOUNDERS

On Friday evening September, 21st 2007, a large congregation gathered at the Church of Ireland Parish, Belleek for the Harvest Thanksgiving which also marked a Special Milestone with the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Belleek Pottery.

One of the original pottery workers, Mr Robert Williams Armstrong, was one of the Pottery Founders and also founder of Lodge No. 129 Belleek, which held their meeting in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal.

The Rector of Belleek Parish Union, V.W.Bro. The Rev. Noel H. L. Regan, Provincial Grand Chaplin of North Connaught, said the Harvest Festival Service was a Thanksgiving for the Harvest and for the employment given in the area over the last 150 years. The Rector pointed out that the Pottery has been responsible for putting the village of Belleek on the world map. He also made reference to the burial place in the church yard of W.Bro. Robert Armstrong, Civil Engineer, Architect, Inventor and Ceramic Historian and William Henshall who brought the art of basket weaving and flower making to the pottery.

The Bible Readings were read by Mr John Maguire, Managing Director of Belleek Pottery and The Earl of Erne, Lord Lieutenant for County Fermanagh. Other guests included descendants of W.Bro. Robert Armstrong, The Chairman of Fermanagh District Council, Cllr. Alex Baird, Local M.L.A. Tommy Gallagher, Fermanagh High Sheriff, Mrs Rosemary Forde, Mr Paul Tubbs, Mentor of the Belleek U.K. Collectors and Mrs Helen Rankin, Honouree 2007.

The Grand Master was represented by R.W.Bro. David H. Weir, Provincial Grand Master, Tyrone and Fermanagh. Also present were R.W.Bro. George F. Ginnelly, Provincial Grand Master, North Connaught. and R.W.Bro. Robert Quigley, Provincial Grand Master Londonderry and Donegal.

In the Procession of Harvest goods, the Square and Compass and the King James Bible were carried on Blue cushions by Mr Keith Johnston and Mr Gordon Gregg.



Left: Front Row (L-R) Alex Baird, Chairman Fermanagh Dist. Council. John Maguire, Man. Director Belleek Pottery, Bishop of Clogher Rt. Rev. Dr. Michael Jackson, V.W.Bro. The Rev. Noel H. L. Regan, R.W.Bro. George Ginnelly, P.G.M. North Connaught. Back Row: (Middle) R.W.Bro. D. H. Weir, P.G.M. Tyrone & Fermanagh, Mrs Rosemary Forde, High Sheriff of Fermanagh, Helen Rankin, Honouree 2007, for Belleek Pottery Collectors, Paul Tubbs, Chairman U K Collectors, R.W.Bro. Robert Quigley, P.G.M. Londonderry & Donegal.

Right: (L-R) R.W.Bro. Robert Quigley, P.G.M. Londonderry & Donegal, R.W.Bro. George Ginnelly, P.G.M. North Connaught, R.W.Bro. D. H. Weir, P.G.M. Tyrone & Fermanagh, V.W.Bro. Rev. Noel H. L. Regan (Rector) Prov. Grand Chaplin North Connaught.

## Copestone's Christmas Cabaret



Following the success of last year, Copestone Masonic Lodge No. 474 again hosted a Christmas dinner for the Lodge Widows and Senior Citizen members of the Lodge, in the Masonic Hall, Crawfordsburn, Co. Down on Saturday afternoon 10th December.

The Brethren of the Lodge treated their guests to a full Christmas dinner whilst entertainment was provided by W.Bro Billy Sloan on the organ and W. Bro. Terence McKeague kept things moving along in his own inimitable style.

The dining room and tables were decorated in the festive spirit. In all 56 attended, of which approximately 20 were Lodge Widows and Pensioners

along with 4 senior Brethren with restricted mobility.

The family atmosphere was enhanced with the presence of wives and several children.

This very practical contact with the widows of the Lodge does much to make them feel a part of the fraternity and all were agreed that it was a very enjoyable afternoon.

The thanks of the Lodge must go to the organisers W.Bros. Robert Lynn, Paul Tweedie, the W. Master (Elect.) W.Bro. T. R. Pyper and their wives for all their hard work.

W.Bro. Ronnie Bradford (Secretary)

# 100 Years of Freemasonry in Maghera

2007 saw the 100th anniversary of the constitution of Masonic Lodge No. 42 in Maghera, in the Province of Londonderry and Donegal. The Warrant of the Lodge was issued on 12th March 1907 and the Constitution was held on 12th April 1907. The number 42 had been held by other lodges prior to 1907, but none of these now exist and we have held the warrant continuously since 1907.

To celebrate the Centenary, the Lodge had planned a series of events for the year. The first of these was the Installation Communication in March at which W. Bro. David Crooks was installed as Worshipful Master. At this communication, and for the first time in its history, the Lodge was honoured to host The Most Worshipful, The Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, M.W.Bro. George Dunlop. The Grand Master was accompanied by the Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Robert Quigley and the Provincial Assistant Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Jackie Graham. There was also a lively turnout of Provincial Grand Officers as well as visitors from Scotland and England.

Maghera Lodge shares its centenary with Phoenix Masonic Lodge No. 48 Newtownabbey. Members of Maghera attended the Constitution of Phoenix Lodge in 1907 and of course members of Phoenix reciprocated. No mean journey in 1907! Maghera were then delighted to welcome a delegation from Phoenix 100 years later to help celebrate the centenary.

The evening culminated with a Festive Board attended by some 85 brethren. The highlight was the cutting of a cake by the Grand Master and Worshipful Master, bearing the legend "Maghera Masonic Lodge No. 42 - 100 Years of Peace, Love and Harmony", which was sampled by all. The Charity collection for the night was a Lodge record of £870.00

To mark the Centenary, the Director of Ceremonies, W.Bro. William Sufferin, produced a short history which he entitled "100 Years of Peace, Love and Harmony". The research for this book came from past minutes and other documentation as well as anecdotal information from the more



Above: The Cake.

Left: M.W. Grand Master and W.M. cutting the celebratory cake.

senior members. The book was priced at £2.00 per copy and was launched at the Installation communication. To date, W. Bro. Sufferin has raised £400.00 from the profits which he has donated to "The Friends of Belfast City Hospital Cancer Unit" which all members agreed, was a very worthy cause.

In May, we were visited by the Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Robert Quigley, accompanied by R.W. Bro. Jackie Graham, R.W.Bro. Noel Drain and his Provincial Grand Secretary, V.W.Bro. Raymond Robinson. The PGM congratulated the Lodge on its longevity and noted that all the progressive posts were filled by Master Masons, no past Master being 'recycled'. A festive board was held at the end of the meeting.

The meeting was marked by a rather unusual interlude by the Secretary of Phoenix Lodge, Stephen Porter. W. Bro. Stephen is well known in Maghera, having visited before. However, he was accompanied by another brother whom we did not know. This visitor asked if a William Sufferin was present. William, being the Director of Ceremonies, was introduced to the visitor and they both promptly disappeared.

It all later transpired that the visitor was W.Bro. Jim Ferguson of Bryantmore Masonic Lodge, Crawfordsburn, and was a friend of Stephen Porter. He had heard of William Sufferin's book on the history of Maghera Lodge and had

recognised the name of the late William Patterson. This name was familiar because in 1941, Jim was evacuated from Belfast due to the Blitz and was sent to the farm of one William Patterson of Beagh, Maghera. It turned out that this was one and the same William Patterson who had been a long serving and enthusiastic member of Maghera Lodge and one time Member of Provincial Grand Lodge of Londonderry and Donegal.

William Sufferin, being a relative of William Patterson and having been brought up on the same farm, immediately took Jim to meet his father and the rest of his family and renew old acquaintances, some of whom Jim had not seen for 60 years.

The lodge is continuing from strength to strength and is looking forward to another 100 years of Peace, Love and Harmony.

## ARTICLES FOR GRAND LODGE NEWS

The editorial team will be glad to receive interesting articles regarding functions / special anniversaries / letters etc. We would ask that the "kiss" principle is recognised – "keep it simple and short" – and forward your articles (supported by a photograph or image) to:

The Editorial Team, Grand Lodge News, c/o 115 The Mount, BELFAST BT5 4ND or by e-mail to: [w.clarke@5hoots15.freemasonry.co.uk](mailto:w.clarke@5hoots15.freemasonry.co.uk)

## LONG & DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

The Grand Master and Officers of the Grand Lodge of Ireland recognise the valued contribution of the Brethren listed below for their devoted and distinguished service to The Order and the honour they have bestowed upon their Lodges and Brethren.

Distinguished Brethren	Years	Lodge Name & No.	Province
V.W.Bro. John E Wright	75	Ulidia Masonic Lodge No. 292	S. Africa
W.Bro. George Chambers	75	Phoenix Masonic Lodge No. 836	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. James A McDonald	65	Harmony Masonic Lodge No. 111	Antrim
R.W.Bro. John F McDermott	65	Curragh Emerald Masonic Lodge No. 397	Metropolitan District
W.Bro. G C Todd	65	Olive Branch Masonic Lodge No. 599	Antrim
W.Bro. Howard W Benson	60	Excelsior Masonic Lodge No. 268	N. Munster
W.Bro. David R Gordon	60	St. George's Masonic Lodge No. 267	Antrim
W.Bro. David C Boyd	60	Waterford Masonic Lodge No. 5	South Eastern
W.Bro. William M Houston	60	Harmony Masonic Lodge No. 286	Down
W.Bro. Cyril W Galbraith	60	Triune Masonic Lodge No. 333	N. Munster
W.Bro. John C Leahy	60	St. John's Masonic Lodge No. 162	Antrim
W.Bro. William E Priestly	60	Services Masonic Lodge No. 174	Down
W.Bro. William R Cooke	60	Services Masonic Lodge No. 174	Down
W.Bro. Samuel Black	60	Services Masonic Lodge No. 174	Down
W.Bro. Thomas S Moore	60	W E Scott Memorial Masonic Lodge No. 554	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. Gilbert J S Craig	60	Donemana Masonic Lodge No. 256	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. William G Campbell	60	Donemana Masonic Lodge No. 256	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. Cecil J Corken	60	Lisburn Masonic Lodge No. 121	Antrim
W.Bro. Francis Potter	60	Antiquity & Integrity Masonic Lodge No. 80	Down
W.Bro. Francis Potter	60	Royal Jubilee Masonic Lodge No. 870	Down
W.Bro. Les Tucker	60	Unity Masonic Lodge No. 116	South Eastern
W.Bro. J McKee	55	Olive Branch Masonic Lodge No. 599	Antrim
W.Bro. T L Wilson	52	Olive Branch Masonic Lodge No. 599	Antrim
W.Bro. Jack Mitchell	50	Rising Sun Masonic Lodge No. 170	Down
W.Bro. Robin Bolton	50	Mohill Masonic Lodge No. 495	N. Connaught
R.W.Bro. Cecil Humphries	50	Mohill Masonic Lodge No. 495	N. Connaught
R.W.Bro. Douglas Wakefield	50	Harmony Masonic Lodge No. 67	Munster
W.Bro. John H Johnston	50	Gordon Masonic Lodge No. 780	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. Leslie J Irwin	50	Gordon Masonic Lodge No. 780	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. Derek C G Irwin	50	Gordon Masonic Lodge No. 780	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. John S Gavin	50	Gordon Masonic Lodge No. 780	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. George Snodgrass	50	Harmony Masonic Lodge No. 102 (Lifford)	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. Samuel Linton	50	Harmony Masonic Lodge No. 102 (Lifford)	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. William A McCauley	50	Mourne Masonic Lodge No. 823 (Strabane)	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. Brian P Hartstonge	50	St. Patrick's Masonic Lodge No. 468 (NZ)	New Zealand
W.Bro. William Johnston	50	St. Patrick's Masonic Lodge No. 468 (NZ)	New Zealand
W.Bro. Derek G Allen	50	Lord Arthur Hill Masonic Lodge No. 147	Down
V.W.Bro. G Wendell McGrath	50	Parkgate Masonic Lodge No. 776	Antrim
W.Bro. John Dunlop	50	Moat Masonic Lodge No. 546	Down
W.Bro. James H McClung	50	Drumcree Masonic Lodge No. 979	Armagh
W.Bro. Harry Lewis	50	Lisburn Masonic Lodge No. 121	Antrim
W.Bro. Derek G Allen	50	Lisburn Masonic Lodge No. 121	Antrim
W.Bro. William J Armstrong	50	St. Jude's Masonic Lodge No. 26	Down
W.Bro. John E Higgins	50	Kingstown Masonic Lodge No. 510	Metropolitan
R.W.Bro. Walter B Argent	50	Farmers' Friendship Masonic Lodge No. 978	Down
W.Bro. David Porter	50	Crossle Masonic Lodge No. 132	Down
V.W.Bro. Anthony N Devlin	50	Royal Shamrock Masonic Lodge No. 32	South Eastern
W.Bro. Thomas W Clarke	50	Victory Masonic Lodge No. 478	Metropolitan
W.Bro. Norman F Rooney	50	Victory Masonic Lodge No. 478	Metropolitan
W.Bro. James R McKee	50	Union Star Masonic Lodge No. 198	Down
W.Bro. William J Norris	50	St. John's Masonic Lodge No. 162	Antrim
W.Bro. William T Morrow	50	Triune Masonic Lodge No. 333	N. Munster
W.Bro. David S Coulter	50	Waterford Masonic Lodge No. 5	South Eastern
W.Bro. Thomas J McFarland	50	St. John's Masonic Lodge No. 334	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. William B Wilson	50	Royal Blue Masonic Lodge No. 140	Antrim
W.Bro. Hugh D Crawford	50	Crusaders Masonic Lodge No. 440	Antrim
W.Bro. Eric Hunter	50	Civitas Masonic Lodge No. 483	Down
W.Bro. John Ewart	50	Sion Masonic Lodge No. 144	Down
W.Bro. Jack Mitchell	50	Rising Sun Masonic Lodge No. 170	Down
W.Bro. Richard Aughey	50	Solomon's Band Masonic Lodge No. 565	Antrim

# The Restoration of Skibbereen Masonic Hall

The 4th of October 2007 saw the culmination of 18 months of work by the Secretary and members of the Fire Committee of Lodge 15, when the M.W. Grand Master George Dunlop travelled all the way to the most south-westerly corner of Ireland to dedicate the Lodge room to virtue, truth and universal benevolence. The ceremony was attended by 44 Brethren, Grand Lodge Officers, Provincial Grand Lodge Officers and Worshipful Masters of most of the Munster Lodges.

There can never be a good time to receive a telephone call from anyone telling you that your premises has been destroyed by fire, but that is what I heard at 8 p.m. on Sunday 9th April 2006. The Masonic Hall in Skibbereen was substantially damaged by the fire which spread from the adjacent Church Restaurant on that evening, and it was especially worrying as I had been in the hall a few hours before, so naturally my first thought was that I had done something to start it. Even so, it was little comfort to learn that it was actually an intruder who had gained access to the rear of the Church Restaurant, and cut the gas main. He had then made good his escape before the resulting fire totally destroyed the restaurant, damaged some nearby buildings and burned the roof off the Masonic Hall. This historic Hall had been purchased by the Trustees of Lodge No. 15 on 7th October 1869. Obviously renovation and alterations had to be undertaken and the members of the Lodge finally



met in March 1870 in the present building.

The damage caused by the recent fire extended to the entire roof structure, but below that level the damage was limited to that caused by smoke, water and fallen debris. The members of the Skibbereen and Schull Fire Brigades, assisted by one of the Brethren who was passing, and at not insignificant risk to themselves, managed to move all of the Lodge property and furnishings to a side room where they were preserved for subsequent restoration. Fortunately all of the records and minute books were stored in a steel safe and were saved.

The interior of the Hall had been hand decorated in a style which is unique in Irish Masonic Halls. The walls and ceiling had unique hand painted decoration and stencil work, and comprised thirty two Masonic icons relating to the Craft and Royal Arch Chapter. Enough remained of all but one of these so that a photographic record could be made before all the plaster had to be removed prior to reconstruction. The centre piece of the ceiling was a magnificent stained glass panel displaying Masonic symbols, and this was totally destroyed as the burning roof fell down through it.

The restoration of the building entailed the dismantling and replacement of the entire roof structure and extensive repairs and plastering of the interior, including

restoring the offices of the Social Welfare Department on the ground floor. We were very pleased that all of the work of restoration was able to be carried out by craftspeople living locally and we received much sympathy and encouragement from the people of Skibbereen.

The work of restoring the unique hand painted murals in the hall itself was carried out by Nigel Connell from Drimoleague, assisted by his wife Louise who also beautifully restored the gilding of the frames of two portraits of Past Masters of the Lodge. One of these is of Dr. David Hadden, who would have been well known as a local medical doctor in the town in the 1860s. A unique feature had been the 12 foot by 6 foot stained glass panel in the ceiling, supported on timber frames. Nothing at all remained of this, and the only record had been a video made by one of our members some years ago, and this only showed superficial details. The leaded stained glass panel was created by Methuselah Stained Glass, Drimoleague. This involved resolving special technical difficulties as leaded stained glass panels are specifically designed to be placed vertically in church windows, and not horizontally in a ceiling.

The dedication ceremony was followed by a buffet supper in the adjacent "Yassou" Restaurant which proved to be a most enjoyable way in which to round off the evening. The Grand Master was presented with two books by local authors and a copy of the history of the Lodge as token of appreciation.

The restored Masonic Hall was opened to the general public for viewing on Sunday 23rd September, and we were surprised and delighted with the response. About 400 people came to see it during the day. All of the commentary and questions were positive and showed that the visitors were interested in our work and charmed with the restoration. A voluntary collection was made at the door in aid of local charities and including some later contributions €1,270 was collected. The event was deemed to be an excellent public relations exercise.

*Dermod O'Brien, Secretary*

## "Shopping & Sightseeing in an Ancient City"

ARMAGH MASONIC CLUB extends a hearty welcome to all visiting Brethren and their Ladies to the Orchard City.



The Masonic Hall facility includes: Lodge Room (available for your Lodge meeting), Meals & refreshments.

These are available from 12 noon. Evening meals are available if desired.

For details contact in writing: V. W. Bro. Ronnie Watt, Chairman, 13 Folly Lane, ARMAGH BT60 1AS.