



OCTOBER 2003

GRAND MASTER VISITS ITALY

In early April the Grand Master, accompanied by his wife and the Grand Secretary, attended the Tenth Anniversary Communication of the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy, which was held in the San Domenico Palace Hotel, formerly a monastery, in Taormina, Sicily. Our photo shows the Grand Master, M.W. Brother Eric N. Waller, presenting a Tyrone Crystal Decanter from the Donegall Collection to the Grand Master of the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy, M.W. Brother Fabio Venzi, at the banquet



GM of Ireland presenting Crystal Decanter.

following the Tenth Anniversary Communication. Also in the picture is R.W. Brother Carlo Zappalà, Past Assistant Grand Master and Past Grand Secretary, of the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy, who is also Representative of the Grand Lodge of Ireland at that Grand Lodge.

Our other photograph shows the Grand Master of the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy presenting Tenth Anniversary Medallions to the Grand Master and Grand Secretary during the Grand Lodge Communication.



GM of Italy (in Regalia) making presentation.

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Retiring Collection for Meningitis



At the conclusion of a recent Communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Down, held in the King's Hall Conference Centre, Belfast on the occasion of the Investiture and Installation of R.W.Bro. Robert J Armstrong as P.G.M., a retiring collection was taken for the Meningitis Research Foundation. The Brethren responded with their usual inimitable generosity and the photograph shows the Provincial Grand Master (R.W.Bro. Robert J Armstrong) accompanied by the Provincial Grand Secretary (R.W.Bro. Rodney L McCurley) presenting a cheque to Mrs Diane McConnell (Meningitis Research Foundation) for £1,500.

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New PGM for Down

Following the sudden and tragic demise of the late R.W.Bro. John F Kerr in December 2002, the new Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Robert J Armstrong was Invested and Installed on Saturday 29th March 2003 by the Grand Master, at a special meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Down held in the Conference Centre, Balmoral, Belfast. The Grand Master was accompanied by the Deputy Grand Master, R.W.Bro. George Dunlop and the Assistant Grand Master, R.W.Bro. William Mawhinney. In addition, the meeting was also attended by a considerable number of distinguished Brethren representing all disciplines within The Order.

The Installation Ceremony was well supported with in excess of 600 Brethren attending.

At the same meeting, R.W.Bro. Robert Armstrong installed his Deputy, R.W.Bro. Cecil D Burns, who is the current Grand Lodge Director of Ceremonies.

Subsequently, at a quarterly Stated Communication held on Saturday 10th May in Downpatrick, the Provincial Grand Master invested and installed R.W.Bro. Robert W J H McMurray as Provincial Assistant Grand Master, thereby replacing R.W.Bro. Ian G Ritchie, who had with regret, to retire from his post through pressure of business commitments.



L. to R. R.W.Bro. William Mawhinney (Asst. Gd. Master); M.W. The Grand Master; R.W.Bro. Robert J Armstrong (PGM Down) and R.W.Bro. George Dunlop (Deputy Gd. Master).

Articles Wanted

The success or otherwise of this type of publication depends upon the quality and variety of articles it contains. "Grand Lodge News" is not solely for the promotion of Grand Lodge matters, rather it is there to serve Provincial Grand Lodges and Subordinate Lodges alike. 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@5shoots15.freeserve.co.uk

At 93 and still going strong!



W.Bro. George Wolsey celebrated 62 years membership in Freemasonry in March 2003. He was Initiated on the 26th November 1941 and Raised on the 23rd March 1942 in Ormiston Lodge No. 581, Belfast.

W.Bro. George has been Worshipful Master 5 times in

1951, 1979, 1989, 1999 and 2002. He also occupied the Office of Secretary for 26 years namely, 1960 –1978 and 1980-1986.

In addition to this amazing record of service to Ormiston Lodge, he has donated a Christmas cake each year since he was first W.M. The Cakes have been raffled for 100's of pounds and the proceeds donated to Lodge charities.

W.Bro. Wolsey is seen pictured with R.W.Bro. Richard Gray (PAGM Down) receiving a "60 year bar" to his 50 Year Jewel. In recognition of his outstanding service to the Order, the Province of Down and Ormiston Lodge in particular, the Provincial Grand Master (R.W.Bro. Robert J Armstrong) invested him as an Hon. Past Provincial Grand Steward of Charities, at a Stated Communication of Provincial Grand Lodge held on Saturday 10th May 2003, in Downpatrick.

The best wishes of the Province are extended to W.Bro. Wolsey and trust he will be spared many more years to enjoy this personal and well-deserved honour.

P.R. Consultants Appointed by Grand Lodge

In the past, our Order has shown great beneficence to many public charities, such as, Alzheimer's, Meningitis, RNLI, etc., yet has only enjoyed moderate success in promoting it's image in society generally. This was not due to any failure on the part of the Order but rather by a lack of the knowledge and skill needed to be more professional in our PR promotion.

Since then, our attempts at PR have been greatly enhanced by the help of two members of our Order, professionally qualified in this area, who have successfully identified opportunities and managed quality projects. As a result, media appearances and press interviews have been undertaken by the Grand Master and we can all bear witness to the admirable manner in which he interfaced on those occasions.

These Brethren, one resident in the north and one in the south, have been formally retained by Grand Lodge, as from January 2004, to continue to identify PR opportunities and manage projects on behalf of our Order.

All requests for assistance from these PR Consultants must be made through the Grand Secretary who will deal with them and / or transmit them to the Grand Master or his Deputy.

HAVE GAVEL WILL TRAVEL

~ CULMORE LODGE NO 320 ~



A Travelling Gavel was crafted by a Mason from New South Wales, Australia and having moved across many parts of the Masonic world, arrived in Culmore Lodge No. 320 in October 2002 from Victory Lodge 522 Killybegs, Donegal. It was then suggested that it be taken to Cork. Although some were a little sceptical about the long journey, a coach party including 22 Brethren and 19 of their ladies set off from Londonderry to make the 300 mile journey on Thursday 9th January 2003.

The journey turned out to be quite pleasant with a number of stops along the way including Donegal Town and Oranmore in Co. Galway. We arrived in Cork around 6 p.m. and during the evening a number of Brethren from Shamrock Lodge No. 27 including the PGM of Munster, R.W. Bro. Alan Campbell, accompanied by his wife and daughter, came along to welcome us. The PGM did us a great honour and spoke with everyone on an individual basis and made us very welcome indeed.

Bro. John Walsh and Bro. David Walls, accompanied us on our coach the following day and took us on a conducted tour of Cork City,

including Cobh and Blarney Castle. We greatly appreciated their kindness. John, a taxi driver in the City, was a natural guide and kept everyone amused with his wit and humour throughout the day.

In the evening, dressed in our 'best bib and tucker' we visited the very impressive Masonic Temple in Tuckey Street and witnessed a delightful First Degree done the "Munster" way. Not only that, but to witness the Church of Ireland Bishop of Cork, The Venerable Right Rev. Bro. Paul Coulton being initiated, was a positive bonus. An enjoyable meeting was followed by an equally enjoyable festive-board when a lot of new friends were made and gifts exchanged.

A sterling silver plate mounted on Cork slate engraved with the Coat of

Arms of Londonderry and Cork and suitably engraved was presented to us and will take pride of place in Victoria Hall, Culmore for many a year. During the course of the evening W.Bro. Guthrie entertained us on the Bagpipes; some Cork Brethren claiming that it was their first time ever to hear the pipes played.

We relaxed on Saturday. On Sunday we sadly said goodbye to Cork. We faced the long journey home, vowing that some day we would return. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and we wondered why we had to wait until an Australian Mason and his Travelling Maul, gave us the motive to travel.

*David Parkhill,
Secretary Culmore M/L No. 320*



Group photograph of members from L/Derry and Donegal who visited Shamrock Lodge No. 27 Cork on 10/01/2003, when they received the Travelling Gavel from Culmore Lodge No. 320.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER IN 432

For Thompson Wade P.M. of Ardmore Masonic Lodge No. 835 and Myra Castle 516 in the Province of Down, it was a night to remember. The night he conferred the degree of Master Mason on his son Richard in Press Lodge No. 432.

W.Bro. Wade, no stranger to Lodge 432 where he has conferred many degrees over the years, had on this occasion his other son Malcolm, Senior Warden in Carareagh Lodge 374 in the Province of Antrim, to make up the family trio.



W.Bro. Trevor Hanna with W.Bro. Thompson Wade and sons Richard & Malcolm.

In the intervening months he also conferred the Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft degrees on Richard and in earlier months did likewise for son Malcolm.

Later, when Richard was presented with his M.M. Certificate by the W.M., W.Bro. Trevor Hanna, his father in an exemplary manner explained the ancient meaning of the "Pillar Certificate", which was an education to all present.

*W.Bro. M J Drake,
Secretary*

Famous Old Boy Reaches Masonic Milestone

At the Festive Board of the W. E. Scott Memorial Lodge No. 554, Campsie, Londonderry, W.Bro. Scott Huey (a famous Irish International Cricketer) was presented with his 50 year jewel.

A native of Ture near Muff, Co. Donegal, he was one of Ireland's most accomplished left arm slow bowlers. He was taught his cricket at The Masonic Boys' School Dublin where he played in several Leinster Schools Cup-finals. He subsequently returned to the North West and achieved great success with Eglinton which he joined in 1948 winning both league and cup medals.



W.Bro. Brian Nutt (WM 554), W.Bro. Scott Huey and R.W.Bro. Billy Manning, PAGM Londonderry & Donegal.

Due to many work commitments he only won 36 Irish caps (captain 5 times) but among his many achievements was a match winning 8 for 46 v MCC in 1954 (this was the first occasion an Irish bowler had taken 14 wickets in a first class match and meant Scott topped the English bowling averages for 1953). Other notable achievements were 10 for 28 v Donemana in 1961. He also was Captain of the North West on 24 occasions winning the inter-provincial title on several occasions.

W.Bro. Huey was W.M. in 1979 and served as Steward of Charities for many years. His jewel and certificate were presented by R.W.Bro. Billy Manning (PAGM) who reminded him of times playing hockey together and paid tribute to his exceptional all-round sportsmanship describing him as a true gentleman and example to all Freemasons.

W.Bro. Dr. R Hetherington,
Secretary

A Special Occasion at Polytechnic Lodge 756

This March a very special event took place at the installation of our new Master and Officers for 2003.

It consisted of the presentation of Certificates and a 70-year jewel to W.Bro. John Parkinson and a 50-year jewel to W.Bro. Bill Wilson by the then Provincial Deputy Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Bob Armstrong.

The P.D.G.M. R.W.Bro. Armstrong reminded the Brethren of the good work and service both Brothers had given to Masonry and to Lodge 756 and also stressed that both still play a leading role in the Lodge. He then informed the Brethren that W.Bro. Parkinson joined the Order in 1933, became a founder member of 756 in 1952 and has served as W. Master and Secretary and finally being made an Honorary member. Also, at the age of 96 he still attends on a regular basis and contributes to the working of the Lodge in many ways.

R.W.Bro. Armstrong also disclosed that W.Bro. Wilson had joined the Order in 1953 and had been a



(L to R front row) W.Bro. John Parkinson; R.W.Bro. Robert Armstrong & W.Bro. Bill Wilson. (L to R back row) W.Bro. Murray (S.W.); W.Bro. Small (I.P.M.) & W.Bro. Coulter (W.M.)

member of 756 since 1979 serving as W. Master and is currently Secretary to 756.

Thanking the Brethren for the honour of presenting the jewels, he wished them both many more years of enjoyment and active participation for the years to come. He also offered best wishes to the new Officers and Brethren of 756 for their term of office in 2003.

Bill Wilson, Secretary

Questions over Masonic One-Day Classes in North America

The June Issue of Grand Lodge News carried an article regarding "an aggressive membership drive" in North America.

At the recent Annual Conference of Grand Secretaries of North America, held in Minneapolis on 15-19 February 2003, one of the major topics discussed, concerned the "one-day classes" which some Grand Lodges in the United States have held to initiate, pass and raise, in one-day, several thousand Freemasons in a mass ceremony. Such ceremonies have recently been held in Ohio and Indiana; the Grand Lodge of New York has planned one for the end of March.

The conference was told that these events were not as successful as the organisers had hoped; figures suggested that the dropout rate after the ceremonies was reaching 82%. In consequence, Grand Lodges are questioning whether the huge administrative effort involved in organising such one-day classes is therefore worth it.

Others questioned whether this was the right way forward for Freemasonry: how can such events claim to create Freemasons? Are they creating Freemasons or just creating numbers?

There does seem to be a background of resistance to these events. Significantly, there is no evidence that those jurisdictions, which have held these mass ceremonies, are rushing to repeat them.

Courtesy of : Freemasonry Today Issue No. 24
www.freemasonrytoday.com

Golden Celebrations in Ancient Lodge No. 588 Donegal

The Brethren of Ancient Masonic Lodge No. 588 honoured one of their Members recently in presenting W.Bro. James Crummer with his 50 year jewel and Certificate.

Due to ill health, W.Bro. Crummer has not been able to attend the Lodge Communications on a regular basis for a number of years. It was for this reason that some Lodge members were delegated to visit W.Bro. Crummer to make the presentation on behalf of the Lodge.

V.W.Bro. Harry Trimble, W.Bro. Crummer's former Rector, brought him greetings, congratulations and good wishes from the Lodge and apologised for the absence of the Worshipful Master, W.Bro. Gregory Browne, who had other commitments. V.W.Bro. Jack Irwin presented W.Bro. Crummer with his jewel and the certificate was handed over by W.Bro. William Wilson.



W.Bro. Crummer, seated, who was W.M. of 588 in 1960, with W.Bro. Billy Browne, V.W.Bro. Rev. Canon Harry Trimble, W.Bro. William Wilson, W.Bro. Victor Browne and V.W.Bro. Jack Irwin.

A delicious supper was served by W.Bro. Crummer's wife and daughter. Sadly, Mrs Crummer has since died after a short time in hospital.

V.W.Bro. Rev. Canon Harry Trimble

CHARITY CORNER

"Have wheels will travel"

In May 1996 a Down widow became an Annuitant of the Victoria Jubilee Masonic Benevolent Fund and continued to receive assistance until September 2001 when the Board of the Fund removed her name from the Register of Annuitants due to her higher than normal income level. Late in 2002 her local District Charity Committee were made aware of the very dramatic change in her circumstances. Due to ill health she had had both of her legs amputated.

Her Health Board had been unable to find her suitable accommodation in a Nursing Home and she returned to live in her own home and they assigned her four carers who looked after her daily needs.

Unfortunately this did result in her being confined to the downstairs of the house but with building adaptations she is now fully accommodated although wheelchair access can only be made through the back of the house using a ramp. Obviously security and other factors have had to be taken into account.

She is an intelligent and alert lady and is fortunate to have good friends and is

very involved in her local Church. She gets out occasionally with the assistance of friends or using transport provided by her Church. The location of her home being at the bottom of a hill adjacent to a major trunk road and with no shopping facilities at hand was also a relevant consideration in this case.

It was felt that she would have a lot more freedom if she had the use of an electric wheelchair, as she would be more independent. It was at this stage that an approach was made to both the Victoria Jubilee Masonic Benevolent Fund and the Masonic Welfare Fund both of whom were in a position to be of financial assistance. The local Charity Committee raised sufficient funds from various sources and has purchased an electric wheelchair, which she is currently using.

Due to these very sad circumstances the Board of the V.J. have reinstated her Annuity.

The Masonic Welfare Fund was launched by Grand Lodge in October 1996. It has steadily established itself as a Fund with a broad remit and would appeal to Lodges and Brethren

GIANT STEP for Freemasonry

When a Southport Freemason visited the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland he came across a piece of 125 year old Masonic graffiti.

Christopher J Brooks of West Lancashire Lodge No. 1403, was working in Ulster and during a day off paid a visit to the famous landmark. Seating himself on one of the perfectly formed hexagonal rocks to have a bite of lunch he saw, carved in the rock next to him, some graffiti dated 1878.



Masonic graffiti on the Giant's Causeway.

He said: "Perhaps John Orr was a local Freemason wanting to make his mark, but whoever he was, he was obviously proud to be a member of our fantastic organisation and even in 1878 was not embarrassed to fly the flag. I'm not suggesting for one minute that we go around defacing natural phenomena, but let us have more of telling the world about ourselves and how proud we are to be Freemasons".

Courtesy of Freemasonry Today Issue No. 24

www.freemasonrytoday.com

to be ever watchful for exceptional cases of need, such as this.

Applications should be made to the Assistant Secretary for Charity at Molesworth Street.

W.Bro. Brian A. Eve, Prov. Gd. Almoner.
R.W.Bro. Ken Abernethy, Dep. Ch., MWF.