



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



DECEMBER 2008

GRAND MASTER'S FESTIVAL



NORTHERN PROVINCES COMMITTEE

Brethren as I write this update I am pleased to report that the total collected so far in the Northern Provinces is in excess of £130,000. As with our Brethren in the Southern Provinces it never fails to amaze me how ingenious the members of the Masonic Order are. Money has poured in from such diverse events as "Quizzes" to "Clay Pigeon Shoots" to "Barbeques" to "Nights at the Races". Then there were the two Brethren from Clotworthy climbing 2 Peaks in the Himalayan's and of course that runner (Jonny Steede) from Connor Lodge, who decided he would like a few days away from work, so he decided to run



As they "run" out of the door – Dorothy (Samaritans); Jonny Steede (the runner); Alderman Nigel Hamilton (Mayor of Newtownabbey); Judith Wilson (Miss Northern Ireland) and R.W.Bro. Leslie V Johnston (Asst. Grand Master).

from Belfast to Dublin, but not being satisfied with that, he would then run in the Dublin marathon.

As you know we will be supporting three very worthy causes and most of you will realise that in the present economic climate our support is more necessary than ever. I would just appeal to the Brethren to make that extra effort and also ask the Lodge Treasurers to deposit any money they have raised into the Festival Bank Account.

Once again many thanks for your efforts so far and good collecting in the final few months.

R.W.Bro. Rodney McCurley
Chairman, Northern Provinces
Committee

SOUTHERN PROVINCES COMMITTEE

The Festival year 2008 has been a significant year for Freemasonry within the Southern Provinces. To date, as I write this piece in October, I am delighted to say that the total banked so far in the Southern Provinces is now over €120,000 and this added to that raised by the Northern Provinces (plus what is currently planned to happen between now and year end) will do much to help the three chosen charities.

Thanks and congratulations must be shown to all the efforts and ingenuity that individual members, Lodges and Provinces have put into raising this money for these charities. The events have ranged from the personal efforts of sponsored walks and marathon runs to barbeques and dinner dances, not forgetting deep sea fishing, golf outings whiskey tasting and many more.

Also thanks to Jane McKenna who has attended many meetings around the country to help people understand the Laura Lynn Foundation dream and purpose. Indeed as we go to press Jane has been happy to tell me that plans for the building of the Laura Lynn House within the Sunshine House grounds, which will cater for 8 children & 4 family apartments, are well



R.W.Bro. Basil Fenton (P.G.M. South Connaught) along with W.Bro. Bob Chapple, W. Master of Premier Connaught Lodge No. 14 and Nuala Dalton, Representative of Galway Samaritans.

advanced and they hope to start building next year.

On September 29th the "almost" nationwide quiz took place in conjunction with the Samaritans and in the Southern provinces we had 6 venues raising almost €14,000 between them. This event was in general well publicised through the media with thanks in the main to the Samaritans expertise and participation in each locality - Sligo, Waterford, Kilkenny, Limerick, Athlone and Galway. The positive media publicity for our Order within local communities was significant. With over 200 tables of 4 participating on the night, this means that the event was supported in person by some 800 people prepared



Pictured above are Brethren, wives, friends and family on a garden walk in Mount Congreve, Waterford in June 2008. This event raised €650.00.

to turn out on a Monday night and support a public event co-hosted by the Freemasons of Ireland and publicised and ticketed as such.

To understand the scale of the Samaritans efforts in the year of 2007 throughout the Island of Ireland the Samaritans had 315,368 Dialog contacts, while January to June during the first six months of this Festival they had 155,958. This is real community support.

As we move to the closing months all we can say is thanks for the efforts so far and please can we have more of the same so we can finish this Grand Master Festival 2008 on a high note.

R.W.Bro. Basil Fenton
Chairman, Southern Provinces
Committee

Grand Master's Address

Grand Lodge, Coleraine, October 2008

The summer recess was fairly quiet, although I spent some time in Florida with my family celebrating my mother's 100th birthday. A good time was had by all.

I would comment briefly on the following issues:

The Membership Project Team of W. Bros. Michael Egner and James Johnston of Lodge No. 578, under the guidance of R.W.Bro. Richard Gray, P.G.M of Down, is making good progress with the Membership Analysis of the Belfast Metropolitan Area and I await the outcome of their endeavours. Finding a solution to this problem will, all being well, help to return overall membership to a more acceptable level; I wish them well!

Membership Research Projects have been undertaken by other Grand Lodges which have indicated that the causes of loss are not necessarily the same for each Constitution or Provincial Area, thus justifying the Belfast project. A number of questionnaires are currently being sent to Lodge Secretaries in Antrim and Down and I would appeal to them to complete and return their replies with accuracy and promptness.

The Deputy Grand Master has set up a Committee, under the Chairmanship of R.W.Bro. Hugh Milne, Provincial Grand Master of North Munster, to consider the function of Provinces. There is a feeling that in these modern times, a general review should be undertaken to assist in determining any general changes which may prove to be logical and appropriate.

I thank R.W.Bro. Milne for his work as Chairman and look forward to the recommendations of his Committee. I refer to his recent illness and trust that he returns to full health in the very near future as we all wish him well.

A proposal was put to the Grand Master's Council that the St. John's Day Communication should alternate between Dublin and Belfast so giving equal opportunity to both Northern and Southern Brethren to attend in greater numbers. It is my intention to hold it in Belfast in December 2009 and to monitor the cost and effect from that point; trusting that this will lead to a best option being formally adopted.

I am pleased to report that, to date, €182,740 has been realised for the Festival, which augurs well for the rest of the Masonic year. My sincerest thanks go to all brethren, with special reference to the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen, R.W.Bros. Ensor, McCurley and Fenton and to their committee members, who have given much valuable time and effort, with no shortage of enthusiasm. I congratulate the many lodges and individual members, who have responded willingly and have raised some unbelievable amounts. Thank you brethren!

I would report that our Public Relations Officer W.Bro. Trevor Hanna has gone through serious surgery and is now recovering at home – we wish him a speedy recovery. His absence leaves Grand Lodge devoid of this important function at this important time, which we are currently attempting to cover on a temporary basis.

I had much pleasure in accepting an invitation from the Chairman of the Management Committee of the Masonic Hall, Bishop Street in Londonderry to attend their 'Open Day' on Saturday 7th September with R.W.Bro. Robert Quigley, PGM. V.W.Bro. Robert Bashford and his team from the Lodge of Research also attended and displayed a range of jewels which created much interest.

This annual event has been running for a few years now and is proving very successful thanks to a subsidy from the 'Walled City Program'. My thanks go to R.W.Bro. Arthur Fielding, W. Bro. Trevor Taylor, Chairman, and representatives of the Hall Management Committee for their input to this project.

R.W.Bro. Douglas Grey, my Deputy, being suitably attired in the livery of his office, attended a British Legion Commemoration Ceremony in Dublin on Saturday 12th July when he laid a remembrance wreath on behalf of The Freemasons' of Ireland.

I accepted an invitation from the Taoiseach and his wife to attend the National Day of Commemoration on Sunday 13th July at Kilmainham Hospital, 'In Honour of all those Irishmen and Irishwomen who died



in past wars or on service with the United Nations'.

I was privileged to be there as it was the first occasion that the Grand Master of Ireland has been invited to such a function by the Taoiseach; the President also attended and we were blessed with fine weather.

Representatives of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths led an act of Commemoration, each according to their own tradition and we were royally entertained by the music of a Military Band and the singing of Dr. Bernadette McGreevy, who sadly, died last week. I was accompanied by V.W. Bro. Sean Murphy and R.W.Bro. Noel Simpson. A day to remember!

I visited Killyleagh Lodge No. 30 on Saturday 7th June to celebrate their 200th Anniversary.

I visited The Grand East of the Netherlands with the Grand Secretary on 20th & 21st June in Amsterdam. We were well received and very impressed with the inspirational presentation given by the Grand Master.

I attended Carnlough Lodge No. 216 on Saturday 28th June to celebrate their 200th Anniversary and was invited to and pleased to attend a Thanksgiving Service on Sunday 29th September. A most acceptable and pleasing sermon was ably delivered by Bro. Rev. Dr. Paul Reid and the singing of the Masonic Male Voice Choir was well received.

I attended a Summer Lodge organised by the Metropolitan Board on 16th July. There was a large turnout; it was an excellent day and the charity collection was most impressive. My thanks go to R.W.Bro. Richard Ensor, Chairman of the Board for his foresight in putting together such a fine event.

An Informal Festive Board, held in the Patio and a quality presentation by Jane McKenna of Laura-Lynn Children's Hospice proved to be a most fitting conclusion to a very enjoyable day.

Craigavon Cardiac Care benefits from Masonic Golf Competition

The 9th Annual Grand Master's Millennium Golf Competition held under the auspices of The Northern Provinces Committee took place at Killymoon Golf Club Cookstown, on Friday 22nd August 2008. The large entry of 250 golfers, which included Masons, Non Masons and Ladies from Ireland, North and South, Scotland and England, competed for the '2008 Grand Master's Millennium Cup'

Although the entry was limited to the first 200, on a first come, first served basis, again due to the demand this year, the Competition's Committee decided to extend the numbers to 250, unfortunately, even with the increase there were quite a few people disappointed.

The Assistant Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Leslie Johnston represented Grand Lodge in the absence of The Grand Master, M.W.Bro. George Dunlop, who was in Florida with his Mother celebrating her 100th birthday and could not be with us this year.

Prior to the prize giving there was a meal for the Guests, which included The R.W. Assistant Grand Master Leslie Johnston, and his wife Florence, The Provincial Grand Masters accompanied by their partners, and Representatives from the Provinces of Antrim, Armagh, Down, Tyrone & Fermanagh, Londonderry & Donegal and North Connaught.

The entertainment was provided by Mr Jim McGookin from Ballymena and Panache, which was appreciated by all.

The Competition raised £6000 to be distributed equally between Craigavon Cardiac Care and Masonic Charities. R.W.Bro. George Miskimmins, Chairman of the Northern Provinces Committee, presented a cheque for £3000 which was accepted by Mrs Geraldine Hagan on behalf of the 'Craigavon Cardiac Care'.



Presentation of cheque for £3,000 to Philomena Hagan of Cardiac Care Craigavon Association, from R.W.Bro. George Miskimmins P.G.M. of Armagh.



Overall Winner (43 points) – (L-R) R.W.Bro. Leslie Johnston A.G.M., W.Bro. Tommy Armstrong, (Victoria Masonic Lodge No. 473) and R.W.Bro. Harry Weir P.G.M. of Tyrone & Fermanagh.

The Assistant Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Leslie Johnston, thanked Mr Brian Dunlop President of Killymoon for his welcome, also the Captain, Mr Rene Boomer, the Secretary/Manager Mr Norman Weir, The Council and Members of Killymoon Golf Club for the use of their excellent course on this special day, an annual arrangement which, over the years, has proven to be successful for both parties. He also thanked the Green Keepers for the condition of the course and for assisting with markers etc., to Darren and Stacey and the



Team Prize Winners (75 points) – (L-R) Mervyn McIlwaine & Cecil Howe (Crichton Masonic Lodge No. 204) Tyrone & Fermanagh.



Lady Prize Winners – (L-R) Ann Grieves, Diana McClelland, R.W.Bro. Leslie Johnston A.G.M., Grace McGowan and Kathleen Porter.

Catering Staff of Fairways Restaurant for looking after our sustenance by providing most acceptable fare.

Following the entertainment in the clubhouse, the Assistant Grand Master R.W. Bro Leslie Johnston presented the winner with the Grand Master's Millennium Cup.

R.W.Bro. Noel Simpson
Competition Secretary

ARTICLES FOR GRAND LODGE NEWS

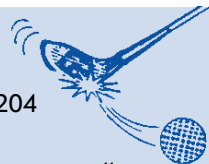
The editorial team will be glad to receive interesting articles regarding functions / special anniversaries / letters etc. We would ask that the "kiss" principle is recognised – "keep it simple and short" – and forward your articles (supported by a photograph or image) to:

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

Overall Winner: Tommy Armstrong, Lodge No. 473
Province - Tyrone & Fermanagh – 43 Stableford Points.

Team Prize: Cecil Howe & Mervyn McIlwaine, Lodge No. 204
Province - Tyrone & Fermanagh – 75 Stableford Points.

Best Gross: David Turner 1 handicap, Non - Mason - with an excellent gross score of 69.



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
W.Bro. William G McCartney	69	Abercorn Masonic Lodge No. 299	Armagh
W.Bro. Baillie Gage	65	The Grand Master's Lodge	Metropolitan
W.Bro. James Barton*	60	Concord Masonic Lodge No. 462	Down
W.Bro. Richard McConkey	60	Newbliss Masonic Lodge No. 794	Armagh
W.Bro. Cecil Davidson*	60	St. Patrick's Masonic Lodge No. 122	Tyrone & Fermanagh
V.W.Bro. R H B Mills	60	St. Patrick's Masonic Lodge No. 122	Tyrone & Fermanagh
V.W.Bro. Arthur W Fielding	60	St. Columb's Masonic Lodge No. 640	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. Henry Nichol	60	Ashlar Masonic Loge No. 528	Down
W.Bro. Walter K Carson	60	Oldstone Masonic Lodge No. 56	Antrim
Bro. David Kirk	60	J Pim Thompson Masonic Lodge No. 349	Antrim
W.Bro. Robert E Cummins	60	Star of Kilwarlin Masonic Lodge No. 66	Down
W.Bro. Samuel J Compston	60	Abercorn Masonic Lodge No. 299	Armagh
W.Bro. Robert McAllister	60	St. George's Masonic Lodge No. 166	Antrim
W.Bro. Desmond Nash	52	The Grand Master's Lodge	Metropolitan
W.Bro. Andrew Craig	50	Concord Masonic Lodge No. 462	Down
W.Bro. James Stevenson	50	Concord Masonic Lodge No. 462	Down
W.Bro. Wallace McDowell	50	Concord Masonic Lodge No. 462	Down
W.Bro. Thomas Robinson	50	Donemana Masonic Lodge No. 256	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. Maurice Lockhart	50	Solomon's Band Masonic Lodge No. 565	Antrim
W.Bro. Bryan Q Baxter	50	St. Andrew's Masonic Lodge No. 1012	Antrim
W.Bro. William F Gillespie	50	Union Masonic Loge No. 105	Down
V.W.Bro. James Lagares	50	Calpe Masonic Lodge No. 325	Gibraltar
W.Bro. James A Crowe	50	St. Patrick's Senior Masonic Loge No. 623	Armagh
W.Bro. Lowry Wylie	50	Union Band Masonic Lodge No. 336	Down
W.Bro. Robert Gray	50	Killyleagh Masonic Lodge No. 113	Down
W.Bro. Norman McKeag	50	Killyleagh Masonic Lodge No. 113	Down
W.Bro. Harold Boyd	50	Windsor Masonic Lodge No. 538	Antrim
W.Bro. Andrew T Craig	50	Concord Masonic Lodge No. 462	Down
W.Bro. Stuart W McDowell	50	Concord Masonic Lodge No. 462	Down
W.Bro. James Stevenson	50	Concord Masonic Lodge No. 462	Down
W.Bro. Robert Taylor	50	St. Donard's Masonic Lodge No. 676	Down
W.Bro. John McDowell	50	Sion Masonic Lodge No. 144	Down
Bro. Robert Hamilton	50	Island of Inch Masonic Lodge No. 589	Londonderry & Donegal
W.Bro. Lancelot F Thompson	50	P. G. Master's Masonic Lodge No. 52	Londonderry & Donegal
Bro. Robert McClelland	50	T Hay Masonic Lodge No. 685	Down
W.Bro. James Kissock	50	Union Masonic Lodge No. 317	Antrim
V.W.Bro. William J Barr	50	Woodland Masonic Lodge No. 803	Antrim
W.Bro. Alfred Spicer	50	Clontarf Masonic Lodge No. 249	Metropolitan
W.Bro. William McCoy	50	St. Patrick's Masonic Loge No. 602	Antrim
R.W.Bro. Canon T H Trimble	50	Castleberg Masonic Lodge No. 799	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. Andrew D G Young	50	Castleberg Masonic Lodge No. 799	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. John J Darragh	50	Castleberg Masonic Lodge No. 799	Tyrone & Fermanagh
W.Bro. Rory R Anderson	50	Abbey Concord Masonic Lodge No. 242	North Connaught
V.W.Bro. Mervyn Torrans	50	J W Ritchie Masonic Lodge No. 677	Antrim
W.Bro. James Kilpatrick	50	Holmlea Masonic Lodge No. 740	Antrim

*Now Deceased

£600 FROM SPUDS & SCALLIONS

Thanks to the generosity of people across the Province – little Natasha Falls from Ballygowan flew out to Chicago to be assessed at the Children's Memorial Hospital.

Natasha Falls has been diagnosed with '18q' - but is only 1 of 4 children worldwide to have the Mosaic form of this Rare Chromosome Disorder. Natalie explained that the Royal Victoria Hospital had done all they could for their little daughter and their hopes now lay in Dr Nordli at the Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

She explained: "We need to raise £150,000 to cover the costs of taking Natasha to Chicago for Special Treatment. Dr Nordli has advanced diagnostic equipment required such as 3DI and MEGS scans. The chances of a cause being found is hugely increased and through the appropriate intervention Natasha will be treated by either diet, surgery and medication but will also need to attend an intensive therapy programme around 10 times per week to help encourage development and speech. Dr Nordli is a top epidemiologist and offers good hope of a breakthrough. Once Natasha's epilepsy is controlled we have every faith that some day she will walk, talk and even have some independence of her own."



W.Bro. Alistair Douglas (W.M.) along with W.Bro. Brian Gardiner (Steward of Charities) presenting a cheque for £600 to Denise Hampton from the Natasha Falls Journey of Hope. The money was the proceeds from their annual Spuds & Scallions BBQ, held at Crawfordsburn Masonic Hall.

Anyone wishing to donate to Natasha's Journey of Hope Fund can do so by making cheques payable to Natasha Falls Fund and post to - Natasha's Journey of Hope, PO Box 240, Newtownards BT23 9BL or via Barclays Bank Account Name: Natasha Falls Fund, Sort Code: 20-62-23 Account No: 23623394. Donors can also log onto www.natashafalls.com and make a donation by the PayPal link.

The Grand Master celebrates with the Moffitt family – Father & 3 Sons

W.Bro. Stephen Moffitt, W.M. of Light of the West Lodge No. XX, during its 175th Anniversary year, had the added bonus of presenting his father, V.W.Bro. Leslie Moffitt (P.P.G.S.W.) with his 50 year jewel and certificate. In his fifty years he has only missed 3 Stated Communications. What a personal achievement!

Since this memorable occasion, it is with great sadness I have to inform you that V.W.Bro. Leslie Moffitt has passed on to the Grand Lodge above. On behalf of all our readers, may I extend our sincere sympathy and condolences to his sons and their wider family circle. Ed.



Back Row – W.Bro. Howard Moffitt; V.W.Bro. Leslie Moffitt; W.Bro. Stephen Moffitt (W.M.); W.Bro. Keith Moffitt. Seated: M.W.Bro. George Dunlop, Grand Master; R.W.Bro. George Ginnelly' P.G.M. North Connaught.

A Combined Celebration for 575

Terence Masonic Lodge No. 575, in the Province of Down, had a special cause for celebration at their closing night in May. Brethren and visitors in attendance paid tribute to the Lodge's senior member, V.W.Bro. Jack Hill, on the occasion of his recent 80th birthday.

Extracts were read from the Lodge Minutes of September 1952 and January 1967 detailing Jack's entrance into Freemasonry and his Installation as Worshipful Master.

The Lodge was also honoured by the presence of R.W.Bro. John Clarke (P.A.G.M.) who accepted a cheque for £575.00 in support of the Grand Master's Festival of Charity.



Pictured above is R.W.Bro. John Clarke with the W. Master W.Bro. Colin Magil and the birthday boy himself, V.W.Bro. Jack Hill.

Book & Art Fair

Rosemary Masonic Lodge No. 578 organized a Book and Art Fair at Rosetta Masonic Hall, Park Road, Belfast, on Saturday 31st May, and raised £900 for the Grand Master's Appeal.

A huge number of books were donated by Brethren and friends across the Northern Provinces, to whom we offer our grateful thanks. Following on from this success, and without the need for any further donations of books, we will be running another Fair, at the same venue, on Saturday 29th November, 10am to 2pm, and look forward to



In the picture Maureen and Eileen, the wives of W.Bros. George Swann and Walter Christie stand by to take in the cash at the opening of the Fair.

the support of Brethren and friends, particularly from the Belfast area.

W.Bro. George Swann, Steward of Charities, Lodge No. 578.

EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAY 2008

~ FREEMASONS' HALL, BISHOPS STREET ~

It has been five years since R.W.Bro. Arthur Fielding sought permission from The Board of Management to open the Freemasons Hall in Bishop Street, Londonderry for European Heritage Day.

Since then R.W.Bro. Fielding has formed a group of Brethren to act as guides to conduct tours around the hall on that day. Classes of instruction take place during the month of August, so that the Brethren can refresh their memory on the history of the hall and the changes that have taken place within the hall.

No matter what member of the public comes into the hall on this day they are made very welcome, it is amazing to hear some of the comments made by them on what they have been told or heard about Freemasonry. We feel when they leave they have a different view on our Order. Many people come into the hall just to see the inside of the building. Overall visitors seem to be delighted and thankful that they have been given the opportunity to see round a Masonic Hall.

This year our M.W. Grand Master George Dunlop, R.W. Provincial



J Mitchell, N Hamilton & David St. J Baird.

Grand Master Robert Quigley and The Lodge of Research were in attendance, this made the day even more special.

Our thanks must go to R.W.Bro. Arthur Fielding and the Brethren who attended on this day for promoting Freemasonry within the City of Londonderry.

It does not matter what colour or creed the visitors are, they are all treated as equals.

Wor. Bro. T J Taylor, Chairman of the Board of Management

Photographs courtesy of Wor. Bro. Richard Adair



Back Row L to R: T J Taylor, Board Chairman; R S Burnside Vice-Chairman. Front Row L to R: A W Fielding Board Secretary; George Dunlop Grand Master; R G Quigley Provincial Grand Master.



S Burnside, G Wright, D Withington, C Davis.

MASONIC AMENITY FUND DONATES TO MASONIC WELFARE FUND

The Masonic Amenity Fund was established by the board of directors of the Masonic Housing Association (NI) Ltd on the 30th November 1984. One of the purposes of the Fund was to provide comfort to the residents of the properties provided by the Association. The initial Trustees were:

James L Rankin O.B.E
J B C Sherman M.B.E
R T Harris
R E Gray F.C.A
Robert Campbell
N Agnew Phd F.R.I.C.S
S Burnside
G L Reside O.B.E
J L Moneypenny B.Com.Sc
D H Stevenson O.B.E.J.P
Charles McCollum



Many well known and respected masons of their time.

Over the years the Masonic Housing Association was compelled by circumstances outside its control to change its name to Corinthian and latterly to merge with Choice Housing Association (formerly Church of Ireland Housing Association) forming Trinity Housing Association.

The current Trustees at a special meeting held this year decided that the fund was no longer able to fulfil the purpose for which it was set up. It was decided to wind up the fund and transfer the assets of the fund to the Masonic Welfare Fund which would be much more in keeping with the ideas of the original Trustees of the Masonic Amenity Association.

Pictured left is R.W.Bro. Harry Weir (Masonic Housing Association) presenting a cheque for £25,000 to V.W.Bro. Edward Brownell (Chairman, Masonic Welfare Fund).

TRIP TO LATVIA

In early April nine Brethren from the Provincial Grand Lodges of Tyrone & Fermanagh and Londonderry & Donegal, accompanied by six wives, made a three-day trip to Riga the capital of Latvia. The party included R.W.Bro. D H Weir, R.W.Bro. N Humes, R.W.Bro. Rev. Canon H Trimble, W.Bro.'s G Robinson, J McBain, J McCormick, L Shiels, J Shiels and D Wallace.

On arrival at their hotel the party were welcomed by the Grand Master of Latvia R.W.Bro. Valdis Pirags, the Grand Secretary, V.W.Bro. Maris Slokenbergs and the W.M. of Apollo Lodge, W.Bro. Valters Kronbergs.

The main object of their journey was to visit The Apollo Lodge, one of four in the city. It was founded in 2006 as the first English speaking Lodge in the country, with currently twelve members. We had hoped to see a Candidate initiated, however that was not possible, but Member No. 14 was successfully balloted for during the communication.

Although obviously part of the Grand Lodge of Latvia, which derives its ritual from European traditions, Apollo Lodge uses what their W.M. describes as "FACM ritual in emulation of the English Constitution".

After a warm welcome the nine visitors were conducted to their places in the Lodge, and discovered how the ritual was not far removed from what we use in Ireland. As there was no business to bring before the Lodge the W.M. read extracts from a history of Freemasonry in Latvia prepared by their Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Valdis Pirags. Following the closing of the Lodge the visitors gave a demonstration of Irish working, which was greatly appreciated by the Apollo Brethren.

The Provincial Grand Master of Tyrone and Fermanagh, R.W.Bro. D H Weir presented the W.M. of Apollo Lodge with a provincial Grand Lodge plaque and R.W.Bro. Rev.



Above: R.W.Bro. D H Weir with the W. Master and Officers of Apollo Lodge along with R.W.Bro. Norman Humes (P.A.G.M.); R.W.Bro. Rev. Canon Harry Trimble and other distinguished visiting Brethren.



Left: An example of the Masonic symbols on buildings in the City of Riga.

Canon H Trimble (Rep. of the Grand Lodge of Latvia at the Grand Lodge of Ireland) presented a framed photograph of Ancient Donegal Masonic Lodge, of which he is a member, taken on the occasion of the Lodge's 225th Anniversary.

During the guided tour of the City it was interesting to note how the elaborate plaster work of some of the 'Art Nouveau' period buildings incorporated what were obviously Masonic symbols using a compass, equilateral triangle and plumb line.

The trip was so successful and enjoyed that all have indicated their desire to return at a later date.

KIWI VISIT TO ST. PATRICK'S MASONIC LODGE NO. 602 DERRIAGHY

St. Patrick's Masonic Lodge No. 602 held an Emergency Communication on 16th April 2008 to accommodate a visit home from New Zealand of Bro. Graham Law of Lower Hutt Masonic Lodge No. 299, Wellington, New



Zealand. The father of Bro. Graham Law, Bro. Mervyn Law, had been in Wellington, New Zealand to witness his son's First Degree and had requested that the Lodge hold a communication to allow his son to witness Irish Freemasonry in action. R.W.Bro. Allen Megarry was able to inform us that there were three Lodges sitting in Lower Hutt, TE Puni No. 315 and TE. Rema No. 394 as well as Lodge No. 299 and the W.M. asked Bro. Graham Law to convey our fraternal greetings to his mother Lodge and should he visit No. 315 and No. 394 to also convey our best wishes. It is not often that St. Patrick's Lodge No. 602 is favoured by a visit from a Brother from such a distance. The Lodge closed and the Brethren retired to enjoy a Festive Board and heard of the workings in New Zealand.

The photograph of those present shows Bro. Graham Law, his father, Bro. Mervyn Law, his uncle W. Bro. Fred Law, with the Worshipful Master W.Bro. T M Yarr.

Redcliffe Masonic Housing Association Limited – End of an Era



Front row: W.Bro. K F Eakin, R.W.Bro. D R Millen, W.Bro. J C Stevenson.
Back row: W.Bro. P J Sherriff, W.Bro. D J Lawson, W.Bro. J A McBride,
Bro. P H Mullholland & W.Bro. R K Lindsay.

In 1969, Brethren of Redcliffe Masonic Lodge No. 564, Bangor decided to set up sheltered accommodation. A house at 40 Bryansburn Road, Bangor was purchased and including necessary improvements, the total outlay was approximately £10,000. This was funded by a loan from the Victoria Jubilee Masonic Benevolent Fund which was subsequently repaid and some financial assistance from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Down. A housekeeper was employed to help the residents and provide meals etc. The official opening of Redcliffe House by the Grand Master, M.W.Bro. Lord Donoughmore, assisted by Mrs Lena Stewart, wife of R.W.Bro. H Stewart, P.G.M. (Down) took place on 15th May 1970.

In 2002 extensive renovations were carried out but despite this work, the demand for sheltered accommodation reduced and the Company was running at a loss. In September 2004 it was decided to close Redcliffe House. W.Bro. J C Stevenson (Chairman), W.Bro. K F Eakin (Secretary), W.Bro. P J Sherriff (Treasurer), W.Bro. R K Lindsay (Chairman of the House Committee) along with other Committee Members approved the sale of the house and in 2006 the sum of £220,000 was realised.

It was then proposed that the sale proceeds along with other cash resources be donated to the Masonic Welfare Fund. A cheque for the total sum of £309,000 was presented to R.W.Bro. D R Millen, who was then Deputy Chairman of the Masonic Welfare Fund, at the December 2007 Stated Communication of the Lodge.

This generous donation has now given the Masonic Welfare Fund a very sound financial footing.

BANGOR IN POLAND

On Thursday 22nd May members of Bangor Union Masonic Lodge No. 746 and their wives travelled to Warsaw in Poland to visit Lodge La France No. 4.

We all arrived safely, settled in to our hotel and then in the early evening were taken to a traditional restaurant for a meal, hosted by the W.M. of Lodge La France No. 4.

On the Friday we were taken on a coach tour of the city. The tour guide was actually the Polish Grand Master's daughter (recruited by her father because of her command of the English language); she had also taken time out from her university studies, at a critical exam time, to show us around this great city.

During the tour we visited Willanow Castle, which is in Lazieki Park in the centre of the city. We toured the castle grounds and gardens and ended up in the Castle amphitheatre, where, waiting for us was M.W.Bro. Tadeusz Cegielski, the Past Grand Master. Tadeusz is a Professor of history at Warsaw University and also the Grand Lodge Masonic historian.



The photograph shows the Lodge Brethren and their wives listening to a talk by Tadeusz (the chap with the beard), on the history of Freemasonry in Poland before the Second World War, during the Nazi occupation, followed by the Russian occupation and Communist Party control, and then coming out of that period into freedom and the now re-emergence of Freemasonry in the country.

At the time of our visit there were only eight Lodges in the whole of Poland (there is now a ninth), most of which were represented at our meeting on the Saturday. Some of these representatives had travelled for more than three hours just to be with us at that historic meeting.

After the conclusion of a very successful meeting we were hosted to a magnificent lunch, once again laid on by the host lodge. Whilst we were at the afternoon meeting, a group of Lodge La France wives met-up with our ladies and then took them on sight seeing tour around the city, which I am assured they all thoroughly enjoyed.

Later that evening we travelled to the 'Old Town' of Warsaw where we attended a banquet, hosted by Lodge la France and the M.W. Grand Master of The Grand Lodge of Poland, who had also attended the meeting that afternoon.

All of the Bangor Brethren and their wives, felt that it was an outstanding weekend and were so well treated that it was with great pleasure that we were able to welcome three of the Polish Brethren (and one wife) to our International weekend in Bangor, where we attempted to return some of the wonderful hospitality we had received in Warsaw – I hope we were successful.

W.Bro. T Hornby, DoC