



The West Column



Brethren,

Jings, crivvens, help ma' Boab, the normally round shiny head of the Provincial Grand Master, has been replaced this month with a nice shiny bucket, which was presented to me by Right Worshipful Master Brother Hugh M Docherty at the end of the annual visit to Lodge Crawfordsburn No. 1121. (Personally thought it was a bit beyond the pale)! When Hughie said he had a presentation to make to me, I could feel a cold sweat on my brow!

Now in a month, when we have witnessed the conferring of honorary Grand Ranks, honorary Provincial Grand Ranks (see inside the Column) and honorary memberships being conferred, you may think that I will feel a little hard done by receiving a galvanised bucket! But since one should always look on the bright side of life, I can probably claim to be the first and only Provincial Grand Master ever to have been presented with his own bucket (even if you could have maybe gone to the small expense of having it properly inscribed and not just written on with a felt tipped pen! However, it is the thought that counts and this particular thought was very much appreciated.

Not only do I take it as a great compliment that the brethren of the Province deemed it appropriate to honour me with this fantastic award, more importantly, it provided a little moment of humour which brought a smile to everyone's face.

I said at my installation that I wanted to make the Province a *happy* Province because if the mood is light, the Lodges will move forward. Of that I have no doubt. Too often we get ourselves into a spiral of depression and despair but we should be talking up our achievements. For two weeks in a row, at the annual meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West and at the 225th anniversary meeting and rededication of Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175, the start of the meeting was slightly delayed as we had to bring more chairs into the Temple. In his report to the Lodge at the annual meeting, Provincial Grand Secretary confirmed that on average, attendance figures are on the increase as are the overall number of candidates being initiated within the Lodges.

Most Lodges currently have applications to work through and the standard of ritual work remains consistently high throughout the Lodges.

Lodge Sir Michael No. 989 are currently engaged in a very ambitious project to rebuild their Temple and the work is progressing well with much credit due to the brethren involved.

All Lodges were well represented at the annual meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West which has not always been the case in the past. The new Provincial Grand Master's Charity Fund is building nicely and of course, once again, we are looking forward to a *Summer Ball*, with all the Lodges participating in this very happy event. (In fact, it is looking as if the demand for tickets might exceed supply so make sure you don't miss out).

It's good sometimes, to pause and count your blessings. In the Province of Renfrewshire West, we have many more reasons to be positive than negative. Talk up your Lodges and your achievements. Talk up the Province. We may not be the largest Province under the Grand Lodge of Scotland but that in itself has its own advantages.

I have visited all the Lodges on as regular a basis, as time and circumstances allow, during the session so far and can honestly say that I have never left a single meeting without a happy feeling (and nothing to do with alcohol consumption)!

Happiness will breed success, so keep a smile on your face, consider any problems you face as a challenge to be overcome and I have no doubts whatsoever that the Province has a bright future ahead.

PS - thanks again for the bucket :-}

Regards,
Jim

Contributions to the West Column

I would as always thank those who have provided contributions to this month's edition and a reminder that photographs of events are also welcome but I have to reserve the right to limit their use as it can affect the email transmission speed. However, please continue to send photographs as I can always include them in later editions. Most importantly, it is assumed that any photographs sent to me have the permission of the subjects for publication. If sending articles with accompanying photographs, could I ask that these are not embedded into a word document but send separately as JPEG files. All contributions should be sent to Jim626Col@aol.com

I am aware that many Lodges have had new initiates or even existing members who may have email addresses but do not receive the West Column. I would be grateful if the Lodge Secretaries could mention the West Column in your respective Lodges and perhaps encourage those who do not yet receive it to drop me a note of their email address and I will add them to the distribution list. The Column goes all over the world but let's make sure that it reaches all possible addresses in the Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area as well! My thanks go to those who have forwarded on new contact details within the last month.

Views expressed by individuals within the West Column do not necessarily represent the views of Provincial Grand Lodge.

**** - PROVINCIAL NEWS - ****

Provincial Website. For up to date information on what's happening in the Province, go to www.pglrw.org
Brethren, if you have anything that you wish added to the Provincial website, contact Brother Jim Donnelly at jimdonnelly@ntlworld.com

Meetings.

Lodge meetings in the Province of Renfrewshire West take place as follows;

Day	Day of month.				
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Monday	68	68	68	68	68
Monday		626		626	
Tuesday	XII	1121	XII	1121	
Wednesday	Preceptory	989	Royal Arch		
Thursday	217	1425	217		
Friday	1814 *	175	175	175	175

- The Anchor Lodge of Research No. 1814 meets on the 1st Friday of the months of September, October, April and May.

Dates and duties for your diaries:

Annual Installations and Visitations:

Lodge	Inst. Date	Off/bear	Annual Visit	Commenting
12	18th November	George J Carson	3 rd March	DPGM
68	12th December	Robert J Bain	16 th February	JPGW
175	24th October	William A McLarty	27 th March	SPGW
217	28th November	Alexander Johnstone	16 th April	SPGW
626	18th October	Edward M Ross	9 th March	JPGW
989	21st November	Richard M Harrison	8 th April	SPGW
1121	7th November	James Donnelly	27 th January	DPGM
1425	5th December	Gordon Price	12 th February	SPGM
1814	1st May (2015)			

Please note that the date of the Provincial visitation to Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175 has been changed to Friday 27th March 2015.

Annual Meeting.

See full report later in this edition.

Renfrewshire 200 Club (RW200Club).

We have now had a total of 6 draws of the RW200Club with the prize-winners as listed below. The draws for July draw was made at a meeting of the Commissioned Office-bearers and the August draw at a meeting of Provincial Grand Committee. Draws during the session will be held at appropriate Lodge meetings.

March	William Lawson (68)
April	Ian Freer (1121)
May	Paul Stewart (1425)
June	Paul Stewart (1425)
July	Anthony Stewart (1425)

August	Robin McIntyre (626)
September	Alan Beck (XII)
October	George Carson (1121)
November	Jim Livingstone (626)
December	Ross Nugent (217)
January	Paul Stewart (1425)

Application forms are also still available within each Lodge. If you have not already "signed up" I hope that you will give your earnest consideration to this excellent method of charity fund-raising which should at the same time, assist in boosting attendance figures throughout the Lodges. The monthly entry fee is £5.00. However, those wishing to participate are not limited to any number of "entries" and if anyone wishes to purchase two or more tickets they may do so. It is hoped that Lodges will also participate by purchasing tickets and perhaps this could be favourably considered by your General or Finance Committees. Members may either pay cash (cheques should be made out to the Provincial Grand Lodge) or may take out a standing order arrangement. You can also take part on a monthly basis but to take part in the draw your contribution, whether by cash, cheque or standing order must be with the Provincial Grand Treasurer prior to the draw taking place.

Please remember that a minimum of 50% of the income will be going directly to charity. I have not as yet decided on a good cause for this project as I felt that we had to be assured that it would get "off the ground". It is probably that when the time comes to divide up the proceeds, it will be split between a national charity and a local charity or charities. I have a fairly open mind about a national charity and would welcome suggestions from Lodges or individuals. There are, of course, many worthy charities and many of them will resonate with many of you for personal reasons. Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland, Breast Cancer, Cancer Research, Childline, Help for Heroes, the list is endless. If you have a suggestion, please email me at Jim626Col@aol.com

Provincial Grand Master's Diary.

Brethren, for the shortest month of the year, it managed to be one of the busier months of the year and as always I am indebted to the members of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West who have supported the Province during the month.

Thursday 5th - I attended a meeting of Grand Committee and thereafter the Regular Communication of Grand Lodge in Edinburgh and it was good to see the familiar faces of Brother William Lawson Right Worshipful Master of Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68 accompanied by Senior Warden Brother Rab Allan and also Brother Malcolm Sinclair the Junior Warden of Lodge Crawfordsburn No. 1121 representing their respective Lodges.

Friday 6th - there is included in this month's West Column, a full report on the Annual Meeting and Installation of Elective Office-bearers of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West.

Thursday 12th - the annual visit to Lodge Inverkip Ardgowan No. 1425.

Saturday 14th - the 225th anniversary celebration and rededication of Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175.

Monday 16th - annual visit to Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68 where I had the pleasure of presenting Brother Archie Wright with his honorary grand rank certificate and jewel and also Brother Joe Bell with his honorary provincial grand rank certificate and jewel.

Tuesday 17th - Along with Depute PGM Brother John R S Keith, I attended the regular communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Kilwinning. The Deputation of sister Lodges was headed by Brother James c Peddie and included representatives from the Provincial Grand Lodges of Perthshire East, Perthshire West, Dunbartonshire, Stirlingshire, Lanark Middle and Upper Wards, Glasgow, Galloway, Ayrshire, Renfrewshire East and Renfrewshire West.



Saturday 28th - I attended the Charity Burns Supper hosted by Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII.

In addition, I was privileged to be present at 7 other meetings of Lodges throughout the Province during the month..

I must express my grateful thanks to SPGM Brother Robert Shields and PG Secretary Brother Robin McIntyre, for representing the Province at the regular communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Stirling which unfortunately clashed with another engagement.

Summer Ball.



I am pleased to advise that following the success of this year's Drummond Ball, provisional arrangements are being made to hold another Ball in 2015. This time it will simply be called the "Summer Ball". The date, will be Friday 29th May 2015 and an invitation has been extended to the MWGMM, Grand Secretary and their wives. Tickets are now on sale shortly and as we expect them to be sold out quickly, early booking is recommended.

Forthcoming Provincial Visits in March.

See below for visits to Sister Provincial Grand Lodges.

Sister Provinces.

Friday 6th March - Annual Meeting and Installation of elective Office-bearers of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Lanarkshire Middle Ward (Cambuslang).

Grand Lodge News.

Grand Lodge Meetings:

Meeting of Provincial Grand Masters.

The bi-annual meeting of Provincial Grand Masters with the Most Worshipful Grand Master and Grand Secretary will take place in Perth on Saturday 14th March 2015. If any Brother wishes me to raise any specific matter at that meeting, please discuss with me before that date.

Test Fees:

Please be reminded that it is important that Test Fees are kept up to date. Most Lodges now offer the facility of paying by direct debit which is an excellent way of ensuring that you are always clear in your Lodge. In particular, it is also important to make sure that if you are an affiliate member of another Lodge, you must be clear in ALL Lodges in which you are a member to ensure that you may continue to visit other Lodges. Brethren who are not up to date in all Lodges have visiting rights withdrawn as well as the privileges which would normally be afforded to them in their Mother Lodges.

Capitation Fees:

Brethren should be aware that the Capitation Fee has now been increased to £30 per active member as per the recent membership return. This is the first increase in three years and it is hoped that, if approved, this rate will be fixed for a three-year period. It may be appropriate for some Lodges to now consider whether their TEST FEES continue to be at an appropriate level.

LODGE NEWS REPORTS, NOTES and MEETINGS DURING NOVEMBER.

Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII

Tuesday 3rd - Passing, Ballot and Annual visit of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West (7.15pm start).

Tuesday 17th - Raising

Monthly Draw (from Brother David Stevenson, Treasurer).

As we enter another year the monthly draw is available again to all of you - and family.

£1 per number per month with no limits !!

All participants will be entered into the draw and it is my intention to draw the winning number on the 1st Tuesday of each month.

PRIZES - I am hoping for £12 per month with the exception of June and December when the prize will be £50 each month. Please support the Lodge with this draw. Cash, cheques or through internet banking are all acceptable.

Charity Burns Supper.

The Lodge will once again, be hosting its Charity burns Supper in the Town Hall on Saturday 28th February 2015 at 7.00pm. Tickets are available through IPM Brother Alan Beck at a cost of £20.00 or tables of 10 for £200.00. This is always a well supported event and early booking is strongly recommended.

Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68

Monday 2nd - Business Meeting

Monday 9th - Passing

Monday 16th - No meeting

Monday 23rd - Raising

Monday 30th - TBC

Presentations:

At the annual visit to Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68 on Monday 16th February, **Brother Archibald McNaughton Wright of Lilybank** was presented with his certificate and jewel as Honorary Grand Senor Standard-bearer in recognition of his service to his Lodge and to the Province in which he served as throughout the elective offices of Provincial Grand Lodge to the office of Senior Provincial Grand Warden.

A further presentation was made to **Brother Joseph Moir Bell** for his services to the Lodge when he was made an Honorary Member of Provincial Grand Lodge, being presented with his certificate and Jewel as Honorary Provincial Grand Jeweller.

Brother Bell was speechless - Brother Wright wasn't!



Unfortunately, the visit on Friday 20th March, by Lodge Fortrose No. 108 (Stornoway) has been cancelled owing to difficulties with travel.

Away Game

The Lodge will also be visiting Lodge Dumbarton Kilwinning No. 18 on Friday 6th March to confer a Fellowcraft Degree. If there is sufficient demand, it would be intended to organise a bus leaving from the Lodge.

Social Scene

A warm welcome is extended to all brethren and friends to join the Lodge in their regular Saturday evening dances from 8.30 pm until midnight.

Lodge Greenock St John's No. 175.

Friday 13th - Business Meeting and Ballot (Members Only)

Friday 27th - Passing and Annual visit of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West (7.15 pm start).

“225th ANNIVERSARY REDEDICATION OF LODGE CEREMONY.

At the 225th Anniversary Re-dedication Ceremony of Lodge Greenock St John's No. 175 held on Saturday 14th February 2015 in the Masonic Temple, West Stewart Street, the Brethren of the Lodge were joined by Brethren from Masonic Lodges from within and outwith the Province of Renfrewshire West to commemorate another fantastic milestone of this Grand Old Lodge.

The Right Worshipful Master Brother Marshall North, after opening the Lodge, welcomed a large Deputation of Brethren from visiting Lodges, headed on this occasion by Brother Andrew Piggot, Right Worshipful Master of Lodge Firth of Clyde Gourock No. 626. The Deputation included representatives from all Lodges within the Province and many from outwith, including Brethren from our Sponsor Lodges from Lodge St. Andrew No. 126 and Lodge Beith St. John's No. 157.

They were followed by a deputation of Brethren from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West headed by the Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master Brother James

Pearston Livingstone. Present in the Lodge we had Past Substitute Grand Masters Brother Alexander Galbraith and Brother Angus N. MacInnes.

After the formal presentation of the Gavel, the Provincial Grand Master Brother James P. Livingstone and Provincial Grand Chaplain Brother Rev. David Mitchell, assisted by Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, Brother James Cowan, carried out an excellent Ceremony of Re-dedication and Thanksgiving.

After the Re-dedication Ceremony at the Celebration Dinner the following Toasts were given: "The Queen" proposed by Brother Marshall North RWM followed by "The Grand Lodge of Scotland" and "The Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West" proposed by Brother Callum Wohlgenuth DM, reply by Brother James P. Livingstone RWPGM; "Lodge Greenock St John's No. 175" proposed by Brother Angus N. MacInnes PSGM, reply by Brother Marshall North RWM; "Visiting Brethren" proposed by Brother Alex Johnstone IPM, reply by Brother Robert Culvert RWM of Lodge Troon Navigation No. 86 and finally "The Vote of Thanks" proposed by Brother Thomas Porteous WJW.

On behalf of the RWM Brother Marshall North, Past Masters, Wardens, Office-bearers and Brethren of Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175 I would like to thank the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West and all the Brethren who attended the Re-dedication Ceremony to help make our 225th Anniversary Celebrations an excellent occasion. I would also like to thank our Chef, Brother Jim Williams, and his Staff, for providing us with a fantastic meal and to our Bar Staff, Angela and Carolanne, for keeping the refreshments topped up. Thanks to you all for a great day.



Brother Reverend David Mitchell with Right Worshipful Master Brother Marshall R C North.



Right Worshipful Master Brother Marshall R C North with office-bearers of Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175 at the 225th anniversary meeting of the Lodge.



Brother James Cowan, Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, Brother John R S Keith, Depute Provincial Grand Master, Brother James P Livingstone, Provincial Grand Master, Brother Marshall R C North, Right Worshipful Master, Brother James W Miller, Immediate Past Provincial Grand Master, Brother Reverend David Mitchell, Provincial Grand Chaplain.

Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No. 217

Thursday 5th - Raising
Thursday 19th - Entering

Social events.

The next Family Friendly Saturday will be on Saturday 7th March 2015 from 12 noon until 4.00 pm with food served until 2.00 pm - ALL WELCOME.

Lodge Montgomerie Kilwinning, Skelmorlie No. 624

Wednesday 11th - Fellowcraft Degree (Exemplification)

Lodge Firth of Clyde No. 626

Monday 9th - Entering and Annual Visit of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West (7.15 pm start).
Monday 23rd - Raising

Lodge Sir Michael No. 989

Wednesday 11th - Entering conferred by Lodge Gleniffer No. 1219.

On Tuesday 10th the Lodge will be visiting Lodge Gleniffer No. 1219 to confer an entered Apprentice Degree.

Visit as Lodge to EC Bedfordshire (from Right Worshipful Master Brother Robert Marshall).

Brethren, As many of you know, we have been exchanging visits with a number of Lodges from the English Constitution, more often than not, Lodge Arklow Regis 4481 (EC), where we have conferred an exemplification of our degrees. This has been a great success and this year is no different with us having been invited down to Dunstable to confer a Mark Degree.

Dates are Friday 20th March fly down, Saturday 21st, confer the degree and Sunday 22nd fly back to Glasgow Airport. This has been a great success in the past and we already have a number of brethren committed to coming down to support. A travel club is already in operation with some brethren having contributed quite handsomely already! This is open to all qualified brethren, including outwith Lodge Sir Michael brethren and we would be delighted to welcome along any brother who wishes to come along. Please speak directly to myself or IPM if you are interested or indeed would like to find out more. We would be delighted to let you know what happens. brethren.

Lodge Crawfordsburn No. 1121

Tuesday 9th - Raising and Ballot
Tuesday 23rd - Entering

Social Scene.

The Lodge will be holding a Charity Dance on Saturday 28th March 2015 within the Masonic Hall, John Street, Gourrock (626) from 7.30 until 11.30 pm. Dancing will be to "Risky Biz" and tickets inclusive of a Buffet Supper, cost £6.00 each and are available from Brother Malcolm Sinclair (0771 825 2528) or any office-bearer.

Lodge Inverkip Ardgowan No. 1425.

Thursday 12th - Passing

The Anchor Lodge of Research No. 1814

The Anchor Lodge of Research No. 1814 is now in recess until April 2015.

Other Orders

Greenock Royal Arch Chapter No. XVII

Greenock Royal Arch Chapter No. XVII meets in the Masonic Temple, John Street, Gourock on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 18th March and will be a Royal Arch Degree.

Most Excellent First Principal, Tommy Trotter and office-bearers of the Chapter extend a warm invitation to all, especially any Companions who may not have been to the Chapter for some time. Remember, the hardest thing can be walking through that door again. For anyone contemplating returning to the Chapter, you can be assured of a warm welcome.

Ranfurley Royal Arch Chapter No. 289

Monday 9th - Royal Arch Degree conferred by Baron of Renfrew RAC.

Preceptory of Ardgowan

The Preceptory of Ardgowan extends a warm welcome to any Frater who has been unable to attend over the past few years through other personal commitments and looks forward to seeing them at any of our Statutory Musters in the future.

A pocket sized Syllabus has been compiled to assist those not currently on e-mail and a general aide memoire for all. Current Statutory Musters and Executive Committees forecast for 2015 are as follows;

Please ensure that the Secretary has your current contact details including e-mail and mobile number. All musters are held within the Masonic Temple, West Stewart Street, Greenock.

2015 syllabus of meetings

4 th March 2015	-	Knight Grade & District Visit,
1 st April 015	-	Knight Grade
6 th October 2015	-	AGM & Malta Grade
4 th November 2015	-	Annual Installation
2 nd December 2015	-	Knight Grade

St. George's Conclave No. 79 - 2013/14 Syllabus

2015

Tuesday 17th March – KHS

Tuesday 21st April – Installation

The Wee Corner

The spot for all the stories that don't fit anywhere else!

CHARITY NEWS

STAMP APPEAL.

Please remember that Brother Bill Crumlsh of Lodge Firth of Clyde, Gourrock No. 626 is collecting used stamps in aid of Ardgowan Hospice so please don't throw them away. Put them in an envelope and hand them on to Bill or to any member of 626 who will be pleased to pass them on. This costs nothing, simply a moment of your time and can mean so much to a very worthwhile cause. I'm sure than we all know of someone who has benefited from the care received at Ardgowan Hospice over the years so please help!

Brother Crumlsh has asked me to advise that if donating stamps it is very helpful if approximately 0.25" border is left around the stamp.

ANNIVERSARY LAPEL BADGES.

Lapel Badges for 25, 40, and 50 years service are available at a cost of £5.50 each. A special "gem" set badge for 60 years is also available at £10. **All prices are excluding postage.** For every badge sold, £2 will be donated to the Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund. All cheques should be made out to "David Stevenson"



Badges, may be purchased individually by qualified Brethren, or in bulk by Lodges who may wish to make presentations to deserving Brethren, for meritorious service. All enquiries and orders to treasurerno12@aol.com
Please make cheques payable to "David Stevenson".

Anniversary Badges.

Brethren, Brother David Stevenson, who kindly took on the task of co-ordinating the supply of anniversary badges from Brother Henry Tibbles has asked me to include a brief request to the effect that he would appreciate if Lodges could ascertain what the demand is likely to be for supplies of such badges during the coming year. It would be helpful if Lodge secretaries could co-ordinate any likely requests for such badges and advise Brother David of demand. His email address appears at the advert for the badges.



In the October edition of the West Column, I published a 'Grumpy Old Masters ' Badge, provided by Brother Brian Hopkins PM626. Brother David Stevenson, has advised me that following enquiries from a number of brethren, he has been able to source these at a cost of £5.50 each excluding postage. Brother David's details are provided above.

Address by Provincial Grand Master.

At the rededication ceremony of Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175 on Saturday 14th February, I gave a short address to the brethren which is customary at such ceremonies. For some inexplicable reason, I was asked by a few of the brethren if I would publish the content of the address in the West Column which I have included below.

Change.

I mentioned earlier that it did not seem like 25 years since the bi-centenary of the Lodge but if truth be told, so much has changed in the intervening years.

For a starter, I had hair (yes I did) and the end of my tie still reached the top of my trousers. Now I find that I have reached that age when I prefix words with the word "wee". I'll just have a wee lie down, a wee seat, or a wee drink. People now phone me a 09.00 am and ask did I wake you. Even worse when they phone after lunch and ask the same question. It now takes me two shots to get up from the chair and I'm more likely to be told to slow down by the doctor than the traffic cops. Yes, so much has changed in the last 25 years never mind the last 225 years.

So it is maybe worth taking a moment to reflect just how long it has actually been since this Lodge was consecrated in 1790. Consider some of the events around the time of the last decade of the 18th century.

1790 was the year that Flora MacDonald and Adam Smith died. It had only been 4 years since Highland Mary died in the town and was a year before Burns was to write his epic tale of Tam O'Shanter. The French revolution and the Mutiny on the Bounty took place. The Forth and Clyde Canal opened and there was the first petition for the abolition of slavery. The shoe lace was invented, George Washington gave the first "state of the nation" address, Mozart premiered his work *Così fan tutte* and just another decade would go by before 96 men from the town were lost at the Battle of Trafalgar, including reputedly, brethren of this Lodge.

My purpose in quoting these facts is not to provide you with a history lesson but to emphasise just how much the world has changed in the last two centuries and also to put in perspective the challenges that the founding members of the Lodge would have faced.

Change is something that we often approach with fear and mistrust. The very word strikes fear into the heart of the traditionalist. There is often a great reluctance to change sometimes at the expense of our traditions and customs and this is perhaps nowhere more evident than within the ranks of freemasonry which has often been slow to change, to move with the times, to adapt to circumstances.

How many times have we heard the phrase, it's tradition! But we should not confuse tradition or custom with ideals and values.

Harry S Truman said that "men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better".

On a lighter note, it could be said that the tortoise only makes progress when he sticks his head out of his shell.

Even Grand Lodge, whose ability to change and progress could perhaps unkindly be likened to the speed of a tortoise, are in the middle of reviewing the Grand Committee structure. And the best of luck with that - the only thing that can be guaranteed from the outcome is that it won't please everybody. But it needs doing and it will take men of courage to make decisions.

Freemasonry today faces many challenges, different to those faced in 1790. In years gone by local heavy industry provided a ready recruitment ground for membership. Young men of today have different interests, more cash in their pockets and a huge range of attractions to relieve them of their cash.

To survive as an organisation, we must do more to establish what appeals to young men. How to get our message across, how to make membership worthwhile and fulfilling.

So we must be bold and ready to take decisive action;

Does midweek televised football mean that you have to review your meeting night? Can we still afford to operate from premises that are a continual drain on our finances? Should we consider summer meetings with a winter break? We are part of an ageing population with an ageing membership. How many of our brethren experience access problems to upper floors in our Lodges? How many of our aged brethren are put off going to meetings in the dark winter months and would an afternoon meeting on a Saturday make a difference?

Are we offering enough social activities in our Lodges? Should I as PGM be doing more to draw the Lodges together? Do we offer enough training for new members and office-bearers? How many of our brethren taking up a new office are given any guidance regarding what the office entails?

We must constantly question what we are doing, why we are doing it and is there a better way. Just because it is traditional or customary does not mean that it is effective!

Thomas Carlyle said "Today is not yesterday; we ourselves change; how can our works and thoughts if they are always to be the fittest, continue always the same? Change indeed is painful; yet ever needful".

I will not dwell on the Lodge history as I suspect that will be covered later in the day at the dinner.

However, I do think that we have to take a lesson from the many distinguished brethren of this Lodge who, through two centuries, have often been required to take bold decisions to move the Lodge forward. Like the title of Brother McKillop's excellent history of the Lodge "They passed this way". Aye and left their mark!

Now brethren before the traditionalists amongst you get overly excited that your PGM is advocating wholesale changes and the introduction of disco lights in the 3rd degree ceremony, I would reiterate what I said earlier, do not confuse tradition and custom with ideals and values.

The concepts of charity and benevolence, of peace, harmony and brotherly love are what makes freemasonry unique and separates us from lesser organisations.

These ideals were evident in the early years of Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175 and are still evident today.

I congratulate the brethren of the Lodge on reaching this milestone in their history and will conclude with the words of the Dalai Lama, "Open your arms to change - but don't let go of your ideals".

Annual Meeting and Installation of Elective Office-bearers of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West.

It was a wonderful atmosphere in the grand old Temple of Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175 on Friday 6th February when the Lodges gathered for the annual meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West. It is not often that we are struggling to seat everyone and a great complaint to have to send out for additional chairs but that is what happened on the evening with around 110 brethren present.

This was complimented by the large deputation of visitors from the sister Provinces of Ayrshire, Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, Kilwinning, Lanarkshire Middle Ward, Renfrewshire East and Stirlingshire, headed by the Provincial Grand Master of Renfrewshire East, Brother John S Miller.

Prior to the deputations being admitted, verbal and written reports were considered and approved and the PGM congratulated the Lodges not only for the buoyant state of the Provinces where attendance figures and number of initiates are up on last year but also on the significant donations to charitable causes, both masonic and non-masonic over the year. In total around £20,000 has been donated which is a wonderful achievement.

Following the admittance of the deputations, the highlight of the meeting was the installation of the elective office-bearers by Depute Provincial Grand Master Brother John Robert Spence Keith, who carried out the ceremony in his usual dignified, humorous and friendly manner.

Office-bearers elected to serve for the next twelve months were;

Provincial Grand Lodge Office	Office-bearer	Lodge
Treasurer	Thomas Trotter	Lodge Firth of Clyde, Gourrock No. 626
Almoner	James Pearson	Lodge Sir Michael No. 989
Senior Warden	John Black	Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68
Junior Warden	Gordon Porter	Lodge Sir Michael No. 989
Director of Ceremonies	James Cowan	Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No. 217
Senior Deacon	John McAlister	Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No. 217
Junior Deacon	Gordon Price	Lodge Sir Michael No. 989
Architect	James Donnelly	Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No. 217
Jeweller	Richard Harrison	Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68
Bible-bearer	Alan Beck	Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII
Bard	William McLarty	Lodge Inverkip Ardgowan No. 1425
Sword-bearer	Alexander Johnstone	Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175
Director of Music	Robert Bain	Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII
Organist	George Carson	Lodge Crawfordsburn No. 1121
Marshal	Alistair Glenney	Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII
Standard-bearer	Kenneth Morrison	Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII
Inner Guard	Paul Docherty	Lodge Sir Michael No. 989
President of Stewards	Gerard Robertson	Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No. 217
Tyler	James McCorkell	Lodge Crawfordsburn No. 1121
Commissioned office-bearers remain unchanged.		

One of the highlights of the evening was the conferring of honorary memberships of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West on a total of eight brethren on the evening. The presentation which have somehow remained a secret was made by the Provincial Grand Master to the stunned recipients as follows;

Brother	Lodge	Honorary Rank
Crawford Kirkpatrick	Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII	Senior Deacon
Eddie McGill	Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII	Senior Deacon
David McShane	Lodge Greenock St. John's No. 175	Architect
Daniel Blaney	Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No. 217	Secretary
Kenneth McCrae	Lodge Firth of Clyde, Gourock No. 626	Senior Warden
Robert Winning	Lodge Sir Michael No. 989	Secretary
James Strachan	Lodge Crawfordsburn No. 1121	Bard
James McLellan	Lodge Inverkip Ardgowan No. 1425	Director of Ceremonies



The Provincial Grand Master with the new honorary members of Provincial Grand Lodge.L-R: Brother Jim Strachan (1121), Brother Kenneth McCrae (626), Brother Eddie McGill (XII), Brother Crawford Kirkpatrick (XII), PGM, Brother Danny Blaney (217), Brother Jim McLellan (1425) Brother Bob Winning (989), Brother David McShane (175).



Deputations from the sister Provinces of Ayrshire, Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, Kilwinning, Lanarkshire Middle Ward, Renfrewshire East and Stirlingshire.

Citizen of the Year Award:

Following the formal part of the evening, the brethren retired to a splendid buffet supper and while it has been customary to make this part of the evening as informal as possible, it does include the presentation of the annual Citizen of the Year award, presented annually to the person or group, considered to have provided exemplary and often unsung service to the community.

Recipients in the past have included individuals such as Douglas Rae, the Chairman of Morton Football Club, the Inverclyde Tourist Group and the Football First Touch Group. this year the popular choice of the brethren was Mrs Christine McLachlan, who has served the Guiding Movement in Inverclyde faithfully for over 50 years culminating in her appointment as County Commissioner. It was a privilege to present Christine with her award along with a donation for Guide funds and she accepted her award with grace and delight.



Christine with her award along with the Provincial Grand Master and Mr McLachlan.

Following a very kind vote of thanks by Brother John S Miller, Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Renfrewshire East, the meeting was completed in traditional fashion with the singing of Auld Lang Syne.



Four old sojers!

Former members of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders join to congratulate Brother James H Ritchie on his presentation of his certificate of service as Provincial Grand Senior Warden.

Masonic Education.

I am continuing to publish a list of suggested reading which many of you appear to have found useful. It would be my intention to continue to keep this list as a standard feature and if anyone finds a website or article which could supplement the list, please let me know and I will be more than happy to add the details.

Reading Material

- The Ashlar
- The Grand Lodge of Scotland Year Book (order through your Lodge Secretary).
- Robert Burns - The Freemason edited by John Weir from Grand Lodge of Scotland
- The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century, 1590-1710 by David Stevenson
- The First Freemasons by David Stevenson
- The Craft by John Hamill
- The Genesis of Freemasonry by Knoop and Jones
- The Scottish Mason and the Mason Word by Knoop and Jones
- The Temple and the Lodge by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh
- A Pilgrim's Path by John J. Robinson
- The History of Freemasonry by Robert Freke Gould
- The History of Freemasonry by Albert G. Mackey
- The Secrets of Freemasonry by Robert Lomas
- Workman Unashamed by Christopher Haffner
- Famous Scottish Freemasons published by Grand Lodge of Scotland
- The Freemason at Work by Harry Carr
- A Masonic Miscellany by George Power

New Material.

Right Worshipful Master Brother George Carson advises for those with a Kindle Fire HD you can download for free: The Symbolism of Freemasonry by Albert G MacKey in the 1800's. and comments that it is a very interesting insight into the use of symbols and allegories and how they may have developed from ancient cultures into what we have in "modern" Freemasonry. A little bit heavy in parts but as a free download for the information and ideas it is excellent.

Websites

- <http://www.hawthornefortitude200.com/twtmag.html>
 - <http://www.lodge76.wanadoo.co.uk/>
 - <http://freemason.pastperfect-online.com/37812cgi/mweb.exe?request=random>
 - <http://www.americanmason.org/TheNorthernLight.aspx>
 - <http://scottishrite.org/srjournal/>
 - <http://www.esmason.com/news.html>
 - <http://www.freemason.org/newsEvents/index.htm>
 - <http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/>
 - "Pietre Stones".
 - Cinosam
 - www.rurallodge.com
- Sadly, the last site is now no longer updated but there are a few back copies still on the site which are worth reading and I think that the lectures and material available at <http://www.lodge76.wanadoo.co.uk/> are particularly good.

The Ashlar:

Of particular interest to all freemasons in the Ashlar edited and produced locally, it is one of the most informative publications that you could read and is available either through your Lodge or through Brother Alex Galbraith, Immediate Past Provincial Grand Master, for the relatively modest sum of £4.00. Often with articles written by brethren known to us locally, it comes highly recommended.

I am also pleased to advertise the following publications which can be ordered through the Masonic Publishing Company, 30, Loanbank Quadrant, Glasgow G51 3HZ. Email at info@theashlar.com

Profits from the sale of any books goes towards Masonic benevolence.

Books - Price List.

Title	Price £	Postage and Packing			
		UK	Europe	World 1	World 2
Robert Burns, Cronies etc (Hardback 1.5 Kg.)	24.50	6.00	13.00	21.00	22.50
The Star of Robert Burns (Hardback 1.0 Kg.)	19.95	6.00	9.50	15.50	16.50
A Winter with Robert Burns (Hardback (0.3 Kg).	12.50	3.50	5.50	7.50	8.00
Robert Burns Print	29.95	Free	5.50	7.50	8.00
Illustrated Guide to Rosslyn Chapel (Hardback (0.3 Kg).	12.50	3.50	5.50	7.50	8.00
Nicolo and Antonio Zena. (Hardback (0.6 Kg).	22.50	3.50	6.50	10.00	11.00
MacBride Ritual. (Hardback (0.25 Kg).	18.00	3.50	5.50	7.50	8.00
A.S. MacBride Speculative Freemasonry. (Hardback (1.0 Kg).	20.00	6.00	9.50	15.50	16.50
The Church of the Knights Templar in London. (Hardback (0.25 Kg).	12.50	3.50	5.50	7.50	8.00
Also available in soft cover (0.25Kg).	8.00				
The Bruce - Robert King of Scots. (Hardback (0.6 Kg).	12.00	3.50	6.50	10.00	11.00
The Great War, 1914 - 1918 Victoria Cross Freemasons. (Hardback (1.6 Kg).	35.00	6.00	13.00	21.00	22.50

Circle Publications.

I would take the opportunity to recommend to you that you take a few moments to click on the following link to see what is available through this excellent website. www.circlepublications.com

There is a vast range of interesting material available and in particular a booklet called "The Lodge Master", which explains his duties, powers and responsibilities and is an excellent read for every member of the Lodge.

Also available, are copies of the "Burns Print", signed by his wife in 1813 (the only one so signed), which makes an excellent gift for a friend, a speaker or a raffle prize.

Lodge Websites.

Brethren, sadly my plea to Lodges to ensure that their websites are up to date appears to have fallen on deaf ears as many of the website contain information which is out of date. There is nothing more off-putting and I am of the opinion that if a Brother accesses such an out of date site, he is unlikely to return to it.

I would appeal to you to ensure that your material is up to date and if possible place a "Last Updated" post on it.

If you are not able to update your meetings in particular, I would suggest that it is better to delete this section and just have your website as a static basic information only site, with contact details.

Some useful site addresses.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland - <http://www.grandlodgescotland.com/>

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West - <http://www.pglrw.org/>

Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII – www.lgk12.com

Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68 - <http://www.lodgedorickilwinning68.org.uk/>

Lodge Greenock St John's No 175 - <http://www.greenock-st-johns-175.masonic-lodge.org.uk/>

Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No. 217 - <http://www.lck217.org.uk/links.html>

Lodge Firth of Clyde No. 626 - <http://www.firhofclyde.org>

Lodge Sir Michael No. 989 – www.lodgesirmichael989.co.uk

Lodge Crawfordsburn No. 1121 – www.lodgecrawfurdsburn.org.uk

Lodge Inverkip Ardgowan No. 1425 - link deleted.

Stirling Royal Arch Websites

<http://www.lodge76.wanadoo.co.uk/> - Lectures site

<http://www.lodge76.co.uk/> - Main site

<http://www.greyfriars51.fsnet.co.uk/> - Preceptory site

Grand Lodge Guidelines for the creation of Lodge Websites

if anyone is considering the development of a lodge website please bear in mind that the Grand Lodge of Scotland have issued guidelines for the creation of such sites and I would be happy to provide a copy.

DO YOU ORDER GOODS AND SERVICE THROUGH THE INTERNET – READ ON -----

GRAND LODGE – BENEVOLENT FUNDS - Easyfundraising

Brethren, I draw to your attention the attached fundraising scheme for the Benevolent funds of Grand Lodge and I commend it to you. It is the easiest, most painless way to raise money for the Benevolent funds.

I have used it on a number of occasions and it is incredible the amount that can be sourced by simply buying online at your usual supplier - all the big names are there. e.g. simply renew your car insurance with your Insurance Company and the normal fee sent by the Company to your nominated charity or good cause is £35 other suppliers send a percentage anything from 1.1/2 -2.3/4%. It is so simple it is brilliant. Please read the attached and consider using if you buy online.

Many thanks

Alex Galbraith

Extract from Grand Lodge of Scotland Yearbook 9th September 2010.

**The EASY FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE – AN EXCELLENT AND SIMPLE WAY OF
RAISING MONEY FOR THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS OF GRAND LODGE.**

The chairman and members of the Benevolence and Care Committee invite you to join them in supporting the above initiative which enables much needed monies to be raised for the Benevolent Funds at **NO** cost either to you or to Grand Lodge.

Please take the time to visit the website to find out more at: www.easyfundraising.org.uk

How it works:

The scheme operates by the registration of organisations and individuals with the service and when they shop online with a participating retailer, a donation is made to their nominated recipient. So many of us now shop online that it is an excellent way of raising funds just by doing something which we would anyway. Since the committee first approved participation in this initiative, Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund has been registered and now has a unique identification number which means that we can receive money from the scheme. Therefore, the more people who register and nominate Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund as their benefactor, the more funds we can raise simply by making online purchases in the normal way but using the links from the above site first.

To go directly to the unique web address for Grand Lodge type: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/glsbf and follow the links to register. The website is easy to use and gives a step by step guide. Different retailers give different percentage donations – for example, Grand Lodge has already received the sum of £35.00 which was donated by Direct Line when a member of staff renewed their car insurance. It is very difficult to raise funds in these challenging economic times so this initiative is worthy of consideration. Many thanks in anticipation of your support.

Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West Calendar of Events and Meetings – March 2015

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2 nd 68 - Business Meeting	3 rd XII - Passing (Annual Visit of PGL of Renfrewshire West 7.15 pm).	4 th Preceptory of Ardgowan - Knight Grade	5 th 217 - Raising	6 th	7 th 217 - Family Friendly Saturday	1 st 8 th
9 th 68 - Passing 626 - Entering (Annual Visit of PGL of Renfrewshire West 7.15 pm) RAC289 - RA Degree conferred by Baron of Renfrew RAC	10 th 1121 - Raising and Ballot	11 th 624 - Passing (E) 989 - Entering (conferred by Lodge Gleniffer No. 1219)	12 th 1425 - Passing	13 th 175 - Business Meeting and Ballot (Members Only).	14 th	15 th
16 th 68 - To be confirmed	17 th XII - Raising SGC No. 79 - KHS	18 th RAC XVII - Royal Arch Degree	19 th 217 - Entering	20 th	21 st	22 nd
23 rd 68 - Raising 626 - Passing	24 th 1121 - Entering	25 th	26 th	27 th 175 - Passing (Annual Visit of PGL Renfrewshire West 7.15 pm)	28 th	29 th
30 th 68 - To be confirmed	31 st					

(E) denotes an Exemplification

Information is correct at time of issue but may be subject to change. For up to date details of meetings and news and information please log on to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West website at www.pglrw.org