

Twelve Talk

Issue No. 188
29.11.25

Meetings 2025-26

2025

*02.09.25

Entering

16.09.25

Passing

07.10.25

Mark Ceremonial

21.10.25

Annual Meeting and Election of Office
Bearers – Members Only

04.11.25

Raising

18.11.25

Annual Installation (630 pm)

02.12.25

The Jack and Alistair Glenny Memorial
Lecture

Bro. Finlay Campbell: "Working in the
community for its benefit"

16.12.25

No Meeting as per Bye Laws

2026

06.01.26

Annual Divine Service

20.01.26

Entering by Lodge St. Munn Ardnadam
No. 496

03.02.26

No meeting owing to Music Festival.

17.02.26

TBC

Saturday 28.02.26

Annual Charity Burns Supper (630 for
7 pm) in Lodge FoC Gourock No. 626

Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII
The Saloon of the Town Hall, Greenock
Regular Meetings – 7.30pm 1st and 3rd Tuesdays – September to April
Summer Meeting – 1st Thursday in June
Burns Supper – Last Saturday in February

RWM Bro Robert Marshall 3 Victoria Road Gourock PA7 5BY (078958158628)
Secretary Bro Ken McDougall PM 6 Stirling Drive Gourock PA19 1AH (07810270787)
Treasurer Bro David Stevenson 5 Broomberry Drive Gourock PA19 1JY (07887904910)

Happy St. Andrew's Day!

Some time ago, I wrote about the challenges we faced as an organisation, especially as society changes around us. Change is relentless; change is unremitting; change is accelerating in rate. The one thing that we can be confident in these days is that things will change. One of the things that I highlighted is the amount of time that our meetings and ceremonies take and the simple fact that young men nowadays do not have limitless amounts of time at their disposal to spend at Lodge meetings. Why do our ceremonies take so long? Do they need to be that long? How could we make them shorter?


Over the past couple of weeks, I have been at 4 installations, 2 in my own province and 2 beyond it. In 3 of the 4 cases, it was a re-installation, that is, someone going into the Chair who had been Master on a previous occasion.

I waited for the whole evening, including dinner and harmony at 3 of the 4. Of these 3: at one, the ceremony and festivities were over by 1115; at the other 2, it was nearer 12 midnight. These had all started between 630 and 7 pm. So, I had spent 5 hours 45 minutes at the first and 6 hours 30 minutes at the others. That's a long time ...

To make matters worse, at all 3 re-installations an Installing Board was constituted and in each case the work inside was completed long before the Installing Board returned. This lengthened the evening unnecessarily. What is the point of having an Installing Board to teach the Master signs and secrets that he already knows? At each Installing Board time was wasted as brethren footered over drams, juices, shortbread and dumpling. There was blethering too!

Maybe it isn't just the Installing Board. At a reinstatement, do we need to go through the whole ceremony in the part held in the Lodge? After a year in the Chair, if the Master doesn't know what the working tools are and what they represent, there is something amiss.

Then there's the photos. When these are taken between the ceremony and the dinner, that's more time wasted. Can the photos not be taken before the Installation starts?

At one of the Installations I attended, all the business was done by 845pm. Yet it was 950pm before the Top Table marched in. Where did that hour go? Footering and photos! Continued over 



Flag of Scotland

also known as St Andrew's Cross or The Saltire

Then to the dinner itself. Must we have two courses at 1030pm? Do we need all these (sometimes) lengthy toasts and speeches?

We wonder why fewer young men join nowadays and, if they do, why so many fail to engage. Maybe Masonic footering and unnecessary ceremonial work leading to a very long evening do not help. We live in different times with different family demands than there were 30 or 40 years ago. Time is the most precious of commodities. We shouldn't waste it. IW

Bro. Neil McLachlan Johnston HM
Mother Lodge Firth of Clyde Gourock No. 626



It was sad to learn of the passing of one of our Honorary Members, Brother Neil Johnston, in his 80th year on the 8th November 2025.

Neil was a life member of his Mother Lodge, Firth of Clyde, Gourock No. 626 and indeed had just been presented with his 60-year jubilee certificate. Sadly, due to his failing health, the presentation had to be done at his home in Bishopton, by two of his Past Masters, Brother Brian Hopkins and Brother Iain McFadyen. They would have noted that above his bed was a framed certificate celebrating his honorary membership of Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII, an honour of which he was very proud and which recognised his

regular attendance at the Lodge over many years.

Neil was a true Greenock lad, having attended Lady Alice Primary, the Mount School and finally Greenock High School before taking up an engineering apprenticeship with J G Kincaid. However, he always hankered after a career at sea and completing his apprenticeship in 1966, he joined Mobil Oil Company and spent the next 16 years traversing the globe on his many travels. Although he left Mobil Oil in 1982, he remained employed in various capacities all connected with the sea and spent the final years of his working life working for Denholm Ship Management in Glasgow.

He was a keen member of the 12th Greenock Boys' Brigade and gained his Queen's Badge during his time with the company. He was married to Margaret for 57 years and was very proud of his two sons, Neil and Stuart, both members of 626 and of his grandsons, Reece and Logan.

Neil was one of those brethren who never sought office, although he served as Depute Master of Lodge Firth of Clyde, Gourock No. 626 between 1989 and 1991, but would usually be found in the back row of a Lodge. However, he knew the ritual back to front and would be quick to tell you if you got it wrong.

He was strong-willed but was also a very generous person, and above all, was good company and very welcoming to new members in a Lodge.



He will be sadly missed, and the condolences of all at No. XII, go to his wife Margaret and his extended family.

James P Livingstone, IPM

Neil pictured on receiving his Honorary Membership of No. XII on 1st November 2016

From left: RWM Bro. Capt. Allan I MacFeate, Neil, Jim Livingstone (Neil's brother-in-law)

Bro. Alexander More PM
Senior Past Master No. XII



We were deeply saddened to hear of the passing to the Grand Lodge Above of Bro. Alex More, our Senior Past Master, on Wednesday, 26th November 2025. He occupied the Chair of No. XII from 1973 – 1975. Big Alex, as he was known, was a stalwart, a character, the essence of No. XII and one of the last 'giants' of the Lodge. He was in his 100th year.

There will be an appreciation of Big Alex's life in the next edition of *Twelve Talk*.

Big Alex is seen on the left as one of Bro. Wilson J. McCulloch's Installing Masters in 1977 and below between Past Masters Kenny Morrison and Alistair Glenny on a visit to see him in November 2015 in Luncarty, Perthshire



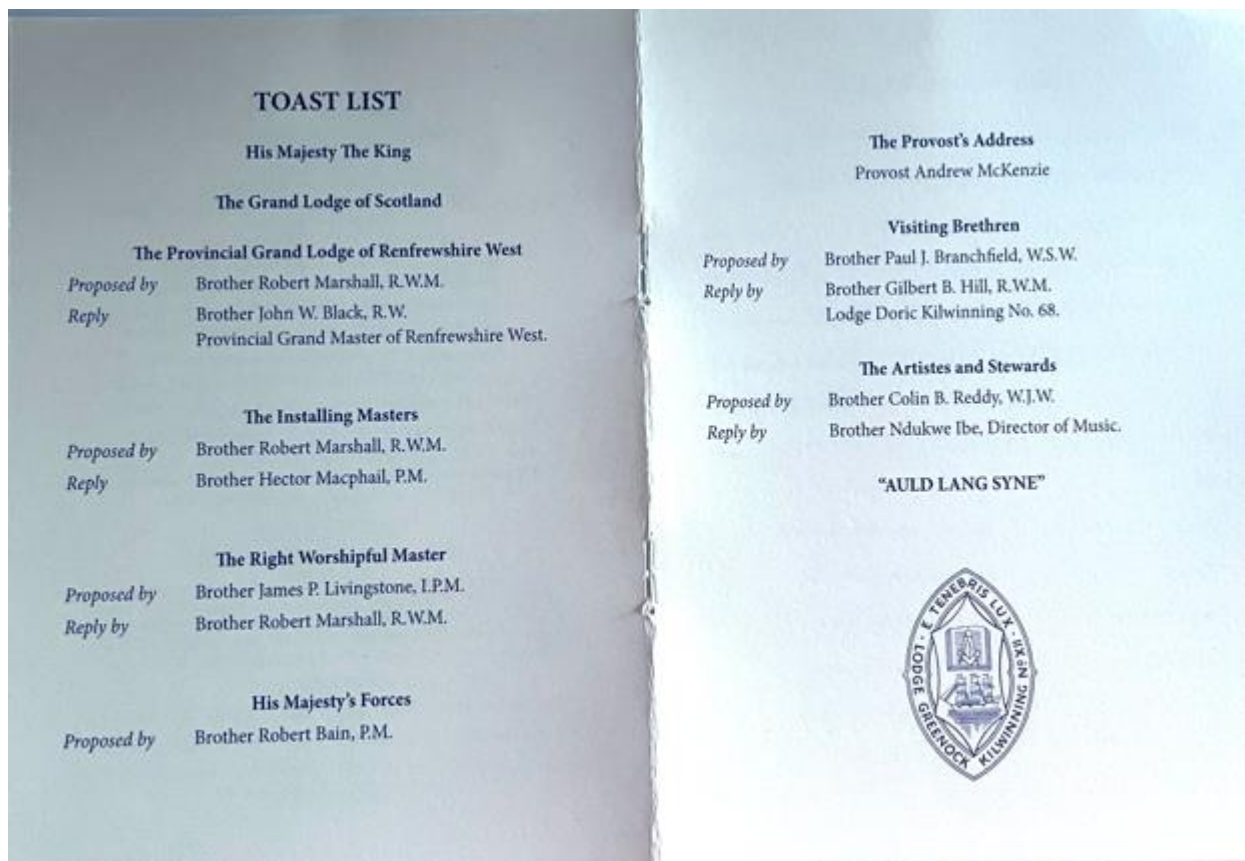
Our Previous Meeting Annual Installation of Office Bearers Tuesday 18th November 2025 at 630 pm



Bro. Robert Marshall was reinstated to the Chair by a team in very good form, providing an Installation that was very much in line with the traditions and practices of No. XII. The Team was made up of Bros. Hector Macphail, Allan T. Glen and Brian McFadyen, all Past Masters of No. XII. Bro. Brian is, of course, a Past Master of The Lodge of Erskine No. 1566 too. No. XII is Bro. Brian's Mother Lodge.

It was a full ceremonial, including an Installing Board. This was followed by a dinner that included the usual Loyal and Masonic toasts. As is the custom. The Provost of Inverclyde was invited, and Provost Bro. Drew McKenzie (himself a Past Master of Lodge Crawfordsburn Greenock No. 1121) attended. He addressed the Brethren on a personal basis, and on behalf of Inverclyde Council, stressing the mutual respect that exists between the Council and the Lodge and that successive administrations in Greenock and Inverclyde have had a close relationship with No. XII for over two centuries.

Robert works in Further Education. He is currently employed as a Lecturer at West College Scotland and is integral to the support and rebuilding of the apprenticeship program in Inverclyde. He is also involved in various industrial training initiatives and travels UK-wide and in Europe when discharging his role. Outside of work, Robert is a passionate golfer and has been a member of Gourock Golf Club for over 35 years.





Principal Installing Master Bro. Hector Macphail PM and Bro. Robert Marshall RWM in the Grand Corridor



Bros Paul Branchfield WSW, Robert Marshall RWM and Colin B. Reddy WJW in the Grand Corridor Installation 2025



**In Provost's Room
Installing Masters, Master and Provost
Bros Brian McFadyen PM, Provost Drew McKenzie PM (1121) Robert Marshall RWM Hector Macphail PM Allan T Glen PM**



Bro. Hector Macphail PM speaking
Top Table (from left): Bro James P. Livingstone IPM, Brian McFadyen PM, John W. Black RWPGM, Robert Marshall RWM, Hector Macphail PM, Provost Drew McKenzie PM, Allan T. Glen PM and Gilbert B. Hill RWM (68)
In front (from left): Bros. Howard Crooks PM (Master Elect Lodge Pollok Pollokshields No. 772), CreightonHalliday PM (772) and Kenneth C. MacDougall PM



Provost Drew McKenzie PM (Crawfurdsburn Greenock No. 1121) addresses the Brethren at the Dinner

Our Next Meeting
The Jack and Alistair Glennay Memorial Lecture
Tuesday 2nd December 2025
Bro. Finlay Campbell
Creative Regeneration: Our Inverclyde, Our Future

Bros. Jack and Alistair were each, in their own way, great communicators, and that is why we decided to honour them by naming our regular annual lecture after them. They are unique in the history of No. XII because, as birth brothers, they both aspired to the Chair of the Lodge and, further, did it in successive terms of office.



This year, No. XII member Bro. Finlay Campbell will speak on his involvement in Inverclyde's regeneration through his work with charitable organisations.

These lectures have traditionally been historical, looking back. Our Master, Bro. Robert Marshall said, " *This year, we've decided to make it about looking forward. Historical lectures are fine, but in this case, we have Creative Regeneration co-founder Finlay to talk us through projects through its projects. We all need to help turn Inverclyde's trajectory. Finlay's organisation is doing just that.* "

To find out more about what Finlay and his team are about, follow this link

[**Creative Regeneration**](#)

Grand Lodge of Scotland – Strategic Vision and Priorities

As a we reminder, these are:

We will expand the global presence of Scottish Freemasonry by inspiring our members to enjoy their involvement and attracting new members to strengthen our capabilities and reach. This will be achieved by cultivating a positive culture of inclusivity and meaningful impact in our communities.

- **Placing membership at the heart of Scottish Freemasonry**
- **Growing Scottish Freemasonry**
- **Creating inspiring communication and engagement**

These are the parameters within which all Lodges should be working. Are we?

Annual Charity Burns Supper Saturday 28th February 2026

The attendance at the 2025 Burns Supper was disappointing, so let us see if we can do better next year! For the avoidance of all confusion, the date is **Saturday, 28th February** and the venue, following consultation with the brethren, is Lodge Firth of Clyde Gourrock No. **626 in John Street**. Please **put that in your diaries now**. The usual raffles and auctions will take place, and items are sought for these.

We have 2 excellent speakers. Bro. Archie Chalmers will propose The Immortal Memory. He is a Past Master of Lodge Thistle 127 in Stewarton and Lodge The Kings Park No. 1386, which meets in Busby. Bro. Archie is also a Past Provincial Grand Master of Ayrshire and is presently Senior Grand Warden in the Grand Lodge of Scotland. As well as being a very eminent Freemason, he is a renowned Burnsian and Past President of the Irvine Burns Club. (photo left below).

Bro. Duncan McGregor, a self-employed painter and decorator and Past Master of Lodge Nitshill No. 1478, will Toast the Lassies (right below). Duncan has been speaking at dinners for over 40 years. He tells me that he was born in Coatbridge over 60 years ago, but was deported to Glasgow at the age of 3. Duncan still lives in Glasgow with his wife and children. Glasgow has given him his dry sense of humour, but he believes that his family has shaped his views on life. He is a very amusing speaker. His motto is, as WC Fields once said, *“When you wake up in the morning, smile – and get it over with.”*



Archie (left)
and
Duncan (right)



It is going to be a great night. To book a place, contact either Bro. Iain White (07533 112242) or Alan Beck (07739 514242)

Reports on Visits

- Lodge Crawfurdsburn Greenock No 1121 on 7th November 2025 (Annual Installation) – attended by RWM Bro Robert Marshall, WSW Bro Paul Branchfield, IPM Bro James Livingstone (Installing Master), Bro. Iain White PM (Piper), Bro Alan Beck PM, Bro Brian McFadyen PM, Bro Kenneth Morrison PM, Bro Hector Macphail PM, Bro Ken MacDougall PM and Bro David Stevenson Greenock

- Well Park Cenotaph on 9th November 2025 (Remembrance Sunday) – attended by RWM Bro Robert Marshall, Bro Iain White PM, Bro Hector Macphail PM, Bro Bob Bain PM, Bro Cameron White, Bro Alex Gray, Bro James McGregor and Bro James Lever HM
- Lodge Firth of Clyde Gourock No 626 on 10th November 2025 (Entering) – attended by WSW Bro Paul Branchfield
- Lodge Crawfordsburn Greenock No 1121 on 11th November 2025 (Entering-Exemplification) – Bro Iain White PM
- Lodge Montgomerie Kilwinning Skelmorlie No 624 on 12th November 2025 (Entering) – attended by Bro Bob Bain PM and Bro Andrew Paton.

Presentation of Charity Cheques

The following information about our charitable work has been passed to the local paper, *The Greenock Telegraph*, and will hopefully feature soon. The Cheque recipients were really delighted.

Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII is Inverclyde’s oldest organisation, having been instituted in 1728. As freemasons, the brethren of No. XII have the concept of helping those in need at the heart of all that they do. This is reflected in the importance placed on the annual charity drives. Various fundraising activities support these charity drives, with the most significant being the annual Charity Burns Supper.

The Lodge recently presented cheques for £500 to Compassionate Inverclyde, £500 to *Children in Poverty Inverclyde*, and £250 to the *Argylls’ Veterans’ Caravans*. Lodge Treasurer David Stevenson said, ‘In No. XII, we are anxious to make a difference for those who are perhaps not as fortunate as ourselves. We are very happy to pass this cheque over to help *Compassionate Inverclyde*, for it was the group that Provost McKenzie nominated for us to help. The close links between No XII and the Corporation of Greenock and now Inverclyde Council stretch back to 1766. Each year, the Provost is asked by the Lodge to nominate a charity in recognition of this special relationship.

No. XII supports a Veterans’ Charity every year, and this year it was the *Veterans’ Caravans*, a charity that provides holiday opportunities for forces’ veterans.

Also, a cheque for £500 was presented to Pat Burke, the Chair of Children in Poverty Inverclyde. Treasurer Bro. Stevenson said, “*We are very happy with our link with Children in Poverty Inverclyde, which began 10 years ago. It has been a great pleasure to be part of the work that it has done and to have helped with its development.*”

Charity chairman Pat Burke said, “*It is a privilege to accept this magnificent donation. Since our foundation in 2014, we have been beneficiaries of thousands of pounds from the charitable generosity of this Lodge, along with Lodges Firth of Clyde No. 626, Doric Kilwinning No.68 and The Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West. This financial input is pivotal to our work in the community and of incalculable benefit to the many families that struggle daily. Much of No. XII’s exemplary charitable connections in our community are unheralded.*”

It was a joy to be at the cheque presentation and to see our work through fundraising making such a potential impact in the local area. In the photo below, the more perceptive amongst you will see our Provincial Grand Master, Bro. John W. Black. His presence was owing to his being an ex-Argyll and Sutherland Highlander. For a wee change, he wasn’t on Provincial duties.



From left: David Stevenson (No. XII), Marie Claire Davidson (Compassionate Inverclyde), John Black, Capt. Arthur Cairns Ronald Joe Brooks (all ex Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders – Veterans’ Caravan) Jim Livingstone (No. XII) Pat Burke (Children in Poverty Inverclyde)

Information from the Treasurer

Lodge Ties are back in stock and are available from the Bro. Treasurer priced £16 each

40th and 50th Anniversary Badges. These are £7 and are also available from the Bro. Treasurer. There are badges for various years’ anniversaries, from 25 years to 70 years, plus the always popular Grumpy Past Master. £2 from each badge sale goes to Grand Lodge Benevolence

Test Fees are now due for 2025-26. Owing to increases levied by the Grand Lodge of Scotland, the No. XII Test Fees are now £65. If you have not paid your Test Fees, you cannot take or hold office, visit other Lodges or vote in the Lodge.

Capitation Fees The Lodge has to pay Grand Lodge £45 for each Life Member. Life Members are encouraged to support the Lodge by covering this sum. They have no Test Fees to pay, but the Grand Lodge still requires payment for them.

Monthly Draw

The Monthly Draw provides your Lodge with an important source of income, and this year I have been able to transfer £420 to the Tercentenary Fund. It is time to renew your subscription. If you pay by Standing Order then you have nothing to do and thank you for your continued support.

To renew or join the Monthly Draw please send £1 per number per month - i.e., £12/£24/£36 etc as you wish -

RBS

Sort code 83 22 20

account 10000509

Name - Greenock Kilwinning No X11 Social

Ref - your name /draw

Alternatively, set up a Standing Order for the required monthly amount - same bank info

Where I can, I shall use the same numbers you had for 2025. Good luck to all participants,,,,,

Recent winners: September JP Livingstone, October Alex Johnson, November KK Morrison, December RJ Bain

I would like to thank various Brethren who, upon being told of their monthly win, very kindly donate the money back to the Lodge. Typically, these Brethren do not want their name publicised but their contribution is very much appreciated. *DS Treasurer No. XII*

Tercentenary Jewels and No. XII Rituals

The Tercentenary Jewel commemorating the Lodge's 300th birthday on 27th December 2028 is available to ALL brethren from the Bro. Treasurer, and the price is £12 per jewel.

The new rituals are available to all qualified brethren of No. XII at the price of £15 from Treasurer Bro. David Stevenson. Over half the Rituals have been sold already!



MR DUNCAN DRUMMOND voices appreciation to employees for their generosity in providing dinner to senior citizens, and below: some of the guests letting themselves go during the dance session.

Drummond's employees' treat

HIGHLIGHT of the social season for retired members of Drummond's is the entertainment provided through the generosity of the employees.

At this year's get-together — equal to anything they had held before — were close on 50 senior citizens, all of whom entered into the spirit of the evening.

The evening started with an excellent dinner followed by a programme of songs and dances, music for which was supplied by the Sunnybank Concert Party.

Mr Duncan Drummond, welcoming the company, spoke of the work done by employees and committee to give their guests a night to be remembered. He said that a balance had been carried through from last year, added to which had been the proceeds from a coffee morning



At the coffee morning more than £100 had been realised and £52 had come from collections. The target, added Mr Drummond, had been to raise £200, and this had been passed.

In his thanks to everyone who had in any way helped to make

the evening such a success, Mr Drummond made special mention of the backroom staff, Mr James Lever, Mrs Margaret Crompton, Mrs Demarco and her canteen staff. Also those employees who made their cars available to bring the guests to and from the dinner.

Bro. Jim Lever
Past Master
Lodge Montgomerie
Kilwinning Skelmorlie No.
624
Honorary Member No. XII

In the last *Twelve Talk*, Bro Jim Lever was featured, in his 93rd year, at the Remembrance Service at the Greenock Cenotaph in Well Park. Coincidentally, in looking at flashback features in the *Greenock Telegraph*, the Drummonds' Employees' Christmas treat was featured. Jim worked at Drummonds, the tin box manufacturers, for many years. Those who look closely at the attached photo will be able to pick out Jim who gets credited as a behind-the-scenes organiser.

Bro. Finlay Campbell (No. XII) Teacher, Writer and Columnist



Bro. Finlay Campbell, mentioned above as delivering the Glenny lecture on Tuesday, is a school teacher by profession in addition to his numerous other talents and interests. He provides a feature for the *Greenock Telegraph* every so often. It just so happens that he had one published on Friday. It is shown on the left.

Lodge Pollok Pollokshields No. 772 Annual Installation Tuesday 25th November 2025



Our Master took a deputation of brethren to the magnificent surroundings of the Pollokshields Burgh Hall (left) for the Installation of Lodge Pollok Pollokshields on Tuesday. This was a return visit after brethren



from 772 had been at the No. XII Installation. He was accompanied by Bros. Iain White PM, Alan D. Beck PM, Tony Stewart PM HM, Paul Branchfield and Craig McFadyen. The RWPGM, Bro. John W Black was with us in 'disguise' as a Past Master of Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68 – another occasion when not on Provincial duties.

Bro. Howard Crooks, PM (above) was placed in the Chair during an excellent ceremony, and we enjoyed a very pleasant meal after the ceremonial work was over. In the photo, Bro. Colin Botfield, RWM of The Prince's Lodge No. 607, is looking very contemplative, perhaps because of his upcoming reply to the Toast to the Visitors. If so, he need not have worried as he did a smashing job.

We were delighted to be welcomed so warmly by the brethren of Lodge Pollok on what was an extremely cold, frosty night. I am looking forward to returning on Tuesday, 6th January 2026, to give a talk entitled '*Just a boy fae Greenock*' at Lodge Pollok's New Year Meeting. **IW 30.11.25**