Twelve Talk

Issue No. 189
04.01.26

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)

A Guid New Year!

As we look ahead to this New Year of 2026, what lies in store for us all? None of us has the power to see the future, but what might be our responses to the things that lie ahead? Of course, time is of the essence for us, but why do we waste so much of it.

FESTIVE MESSAGES editorial@greenocktelegraph.co.uk www.greenocktelegraph.co.uk

Provost Drew McKenzie

'Time to stop living digitally and get out into the real world'

WHERE does the time go? It's been another busy and quick year. Blink and you miss it stuff as usual.

It is because we're all so busy engaged with work, home life, and lives.

We are busier now than we have been or were folk back in the day? I don't know.

But it's because the world has been more connected than ever with everything at the palm of our hands, a mobile phone, tablet or fancy smart watch that might have dropped into your Christmas stocking.

It is a fast-paced world we live in.

Having everything at your fingertips is great – connect with family from anywhere in the world, avoid the Christmas queues at the shops by ordering online, enlighten the mind with all sorts of information.

Technology and online also has its downfalls – and there are many.

Misinformation, mistruths, madness, struggling towns and high streets, distraction, and poor mental health.

That's why my hope – and advice, for what it's worth – for 2026 is that we all get off our phones, tablets, watches or whatever your technological taste is and get out into the world again.

Go and spend some time with family and friends in person, take a trip to the shops and support local businesses that support hundreds and thousands of local jobs instead of ordering off the big rainforest website, go for a walk, grab a cuppa in a café, chill out.

I heard a saying recently that was words to the effect of: 'When you get old would you prefer to think about all the hours spent watching daft videos on social media that you can't even remember or would you prefer to think back about all the experiences and happy times you've had out and about with family, friends, work colleagues or whoever?'

As much as I love tech myself, that is an absolute no brainer. I couldn't tell you about the last funny reel I watched but I can recall, with fondness my last holiday or trip to Cappielow (selective memory with that perhaps).

Life's for living. Get out there and live it.

My friend, our local Provost Drew McKenzie (Past Master of Lodge Crawfurdsburn Greenock No. 1121), addressed this very thing in his message to the citizens of Inverclyde in his seasonal message to us (above) in our local newspaper – the *Greenock Telegraph*. He urged us to spend less time on phones, tablets, and other devices and more time interacting with real human beings. "Go and spend some time with family and friends in person…," he said.

I think my New Year resolution will be to waste less time: less footering; less time staring at 'rubbish' on my phone; deciding a course of action and getting on with it; I'm with Drew. I want to spend more time with friends, people, and Masonic Brethren. What a difference it would make if, even once a month, we all went to that meeting down the road in a Sister Lodge that we hadn't planned to attend. I'm going to give that a try and see how it works out. Will I be made welcome when I turn up unheralded – no doubt! Will I enjoy myself – almost certainly. Will I make a wee difference to that Lodge – probably. Will it be a better use of my time than aimless online browsing – certainly.

Finally, as my Dad used to sing every New Year

A guid New Year tae ane and a'
And mony may ye see
And during a' the years tae come
Oh, happy may ye be!

Bro. Alexander More PM PPSGW

No. XII's Senior Past Master - 4th March 1926 to 26th November 2025

I am grateful to Bro. Hector Macphail PM for the following eulogy. Bro. Hector took a keen interest in Bro. Alex communicated regularly with both him and Alex's son, Stewart.

Eulogy for Past Master Alexander More, Died 26th November 2025

Those of us who remember him were all saddened to learn of the passing to The Grand Lodge Above, on Wednesday, 26th November 2025, of our Senior Past Master Bro. Alexander More, or 'Big Alex' as he was always affectionately known.

Alex was a truly extraordinary gentleman and had a wisdom and humour that endeared him to the lodge, which he served well and led as Master from 1973 to 1975.

He was also a Past Provincial Grand Senior Warden. He is shown as an Installing Master on the left in 1977.

Alex was a very successful man, which is worthy of note, considering the challenges that he faced in his early life:

He was born on 4th March 1926 on a croft in the tiny township of Sarclet, situated on the east coast of Caithness. He was the eldest of five, and he grew up in this small basic cottage with no electricity or domestic water. The roof was thatched, water was drawn daily from a local well, heat came from a peat-fired range, light from oil lamps, and the external toilet was an old oil drum filled up with water and Jeyes Fluid, with a spar of wood across it to sit on.

(Government Grants were later awarded in 1967 to modernise the facilities, long after Alex had left home, but he did return briefly and used the Grant to re-roof the cottage and completed the modernisation himself, with some help from his two brothers.)

Alex left school at 14 with no qualifications and embarked on a 5-year carpentry apprenticeship, which he completed in 1945. Due to his lack of a wider academic education, although a skilled carpenter, he might have been considered semi-literate at that time but was greatly supported and encouraged by his wife Mary, and later his son Stewart. With their support and his own perseverance, he honed his literacy skills and became proficient in reading and a very capable writer.

After completing his apprenticeship, he served two years of National Service. This being at the end of WW2 (1945), requirements for the military were not high, and so he was encouraged to go into one of the civic services, and he chose the Police Service in Glasgow, where he was able to lodge with his aunt and uncle.

After completing his National Service in 1947, Alex spent the next six years working around Glasgow, still with the Police for a while, but then started working in a local hotel, using his modest income and spare time, to pursue his further education by attending night classes. This enabled him to enrol in technical college, where he gained good qualifications.

These qualifications, in conjunction with his time served as a carpentry apprentice, put him in an ideal position to consider becoming a technical teacher, and so he embarked on a one-year teacher training course, which he completed in 1954.

Alex then secured the position of technical teacher at Port Glasgow High School, where he stayed for around ten years.

Alex and his wife, Mary, then bought a semi-derelict top-floor and attic flat at 18 Bentinck Street, for a very reasonable price due to Alex's tenacious negotiating skills. He then completely renovated the property by himself, over several years.

In the mid-sixties, Alex was offered, and accepted, a more senior teaching role at Paisley Grammar School. During the early 1970's, Alex's career advanced again, with him securing the position of lecturer in Building and Construction at Jordanhill Teacher Training College in Glasgow.

Around the same time, Alex and Mary bought a site on Lyle Road, on which he designed and had built an impressive, detached house, which they moved into in 1974.

Later, Alex took the opportunity of buying a plot of land on Octavia Terrace near the Rugby Club, as well as a large garage on Madeira Lane, as investments. (Until selling it, Alex put the garage to practical use as a timber store for his various projects and to keep his big caravan secure). Alex's land on Octavia Terrace attracted a lot of keen interest from builders, and it proved to be another lucrative investment when, years later, he sold it to allow flats to be built on the site.

Alex then sold the Bentinck Street flat, generating sufficient profit to allow him to purchase a large plot of land at Killin on which to build a holiday bungalow. Whereas Alex designed but only part-built the Lyle Road house, the house in Killin was built totally by himself, with only some labouring assistance from an elderly neighbour when required.

(Left: Alex with PMs KK Morrison and Alistair Glenny in Luncarty in 2015)

Career-wise: around this time, in the mid 1980's, Alex got promoted to Senior Lecturer at Jordanhill College before becoming a Consultant Lecturer at Strathclyde University, and a School Inspector.

Alex and Mary then purchased a semi-detached villa on Fort Matilda Place at a very keen price, and they moved in, selling the house at 1a Lyle Road. (The proceeds of this sale were then added to their portfolio to fund a comfortable retirement).

A few years later, Alex and Mary, who had pursued her own successful teaching career, both decided to accept an early retirement package from the education authority, sold their Fort Matilda Place house, and moved permanently to their holiday home in Killin.

In 1990, Mary had an accident affecting her mobility, and as the Killin bungalow was on a hill, they decided to look for a more practical home. They then purchased a detached house in the village of Luncarty, Alex, as usual, managing to negotiate a below-market price for this property! They moved to Luncarty in 2001.

Sadly, Alex's wife, Mary, died in 2015, and now being on his own, he was encouraged by his sister to move up to the area of his youth to be near her and her family. Alex then bought a fine bungalow in Helmsdale and moved North. On the left, Hector is seen with Alex in 2023 in that very bungalow.

In 2024, being 98 years old and finding it increasingly difficult to live on his own, Alex decided to move to a Care Home. With the help of his son, Stewart, he then sold his Helmsdale house, and Stewart managed to obtain comfortable accommodation for him at Seaforth House, a care home in Golspie.

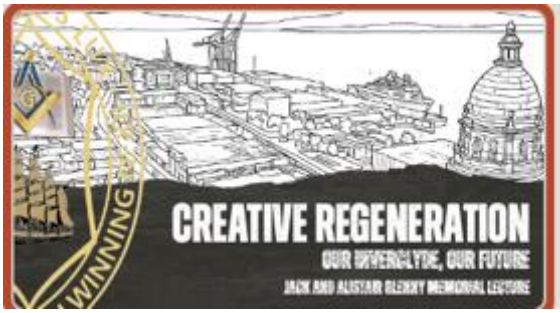
As might be expected, when Alex arrived, he was immediately allocated 'Room No. 1'! In Seaforth House, Alex, or Sandy as he was known locally, was popular amongst the residents, as well as with the very attentive care staff who looked after him. He lived respected and died regretted by all who knew him.

Hector Macphail PM

Our Previous Meeting
Tuesday 2nd December 2025
The 6th Jack and Alistair Glenny Memorial Lecture
Creative Regeneration: Our Inverclyde Our Future

The annual No XII Glenny Memorial Lecture is in memory of the Glenny brothers, Jack and Alistair, both Past Masters and stalwarts of the lodge (left), who passed to the Grand Lodge Above within weeks of one another between December 2019 and February 2020. They were both excellent communicators, and this seemed the appropriate way to remember them.

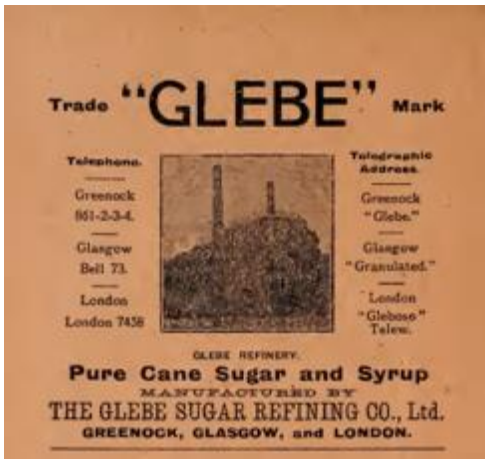
This was actually the 2026 Glenny lecture but was brought forward from its usual January slot for syllabus expediency.



The lecture was an open meeting and illustrated talk by Brother Finlay Campbell, a Master Mason of No. XII. Bro Finlay is an experienced local teacher with a passion for outdoor education and experiential learning. The lecture/talk was entitled *'Creative Regeneration: Our Inverclyde, Our Future'*. Bro Finlay is a board member of Creative Regeneration Inverclyde, and the talk looked at various regeneration

projects which he and fellow board members are promoting.

Creative Regeneration's purpose is the advancement of the Arts, Culture, Heritage & Science and the organisation's belief in the transformative effect of community-led learning, leading to renewal and regeneration. Over the past decade, there has been growing recognition of the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in empowering young people



Bro Finlay delivered the talk, illustrating two projects in particular – the old Glebe building (left), which is currently derelict and in disrepair. Creative Regeneration believes that this project will not only play a key part in preserving the rich heritage of an area that is the subject of wider regeneration, but will also provide a unique cultural hub, fostering creativity and learning in an area that is identified as Scotland's most deprived, by creating training opportunities and opportunities for people to reconnect and come together. This building is the last remaining of the Glebe Sugar Refinery (above), which was owned by Bro. James Reid Kerr, who was Master of No. XII from 1945 to 1947.

The other project is the regeneration of the Old Library in King Street, Gourock (right), where Creative Regeneration is transforming it into a place for community use and learning after agreeing a lease of the building from Inverclyde Council.

Following his talk, Brother Finlay took several questions from the brethren. The Master thanked Brother Finlay Campbell for the time and effort in preparing his talk and presentation, and for providing a most interesting, informative and enjoyable evening. The audience showed their great appreciation.

Bro. Finlay Campbell and Bro. Robert Marshall RWM

Our Next Meeting
Tuesday 6th January 2026
50th Diploma Presentation to Bro. Hector Macphail PM
and Annual Divine Service

The first meeting of the New Year will be an evening of celebration as Bro Hector Macphail PM (left)is to receive his 50-year Jubilee Diploma. Bro. Hector has been a dedicated servant to and supporter of No. XII and the Craft in general, over all these years. He was in the Chair of No. XII from 1991 to 1993 and carried out his duties with great distinction.

After the formal business, the Annual Divine Service will also be held on Tuesday, conducted again by Bro. James P. Livingstone, our Immediate Past Master. Owing to the extensive agenda, this year the Divine Service is limited to members of the Craft. Of course, visiting brethren are most welcome..

Installation of Bro. Donald Morrison Cunningham
Lodge Doric Kilwinning No. 68
Friday 12th December 2025

It was a wonderful evening in 'the Port' when Bro. Donald Morrison Cunningham (or 'Big Donnie' as we all know him) was installed into the Chair of King Solomon. Everything about the event was exceptional – the attendance, the work of the Installing Masters, Bro. Donnie's work when he took over the Lodge, the meal and the speeches and toasts after the dinner. No XII was well represented between the visitors' deputation and the Provincial Grand Lodge. As is always the case at 68, No. XII's Master – this time Bro. Robert Marshall – led the deputation of visiting Masters and replied to the Toast to the Visiting Brethren. It is a wonderful old tradition that exists between the two Lodges. A very fine job, Bro. Robert made of the reply, too.

Some photos of the ongoings are shown below. I had the honour of piping along with my pal Bro. Donald McRae of Lodge Crawfurdsburn Greenock No. 1121. We were both in the 1st Port Glasgow Boys' Brigade Pipe Band with Installing Master Bro. Billy Mooney PM, for whom we were standing in as Duty Pipers. That was just over 50 years ago!

Bros. Donald McRae (1121), John Black (68), RWPGM and Iain White (XII) PM

The New Master and Installing Masters

Bros., Ian McPherson WIM, George Freeburn WIM, Donald M Cunningham RWM and Billy Mooney WIM

XII at Harmony

Bros. Cameron White SD, Paul Branchfield WSW and Iain White PM (rear view)

It was a great pleasure to see No. XII Honorary Member, Bro. Iain D. MacLeod nominated and installed as Depute Master.

Grand Lodge of Scotland – Strategic Vision and Priorities

Early in the change process, the Grand Lodge issued the Strategic Vision and Priorities for the Scottish Craft through the Governance and Strategy Board. As a wee 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?

Installation of Bro. William Hamilton Marshall
Lodge Mosspark Glasgow No. 1329
Saturday 13th December 2025

It was an excellent Installation at Lodge Mosspark. Bro Iain Gordon PM and I were there on Lodge The Prince's duty and saw Bro. William H. Marshall installed into the Chair. He had previously been in the Chair of his Mother Lodge – Lodge Gleniffer No. 1219 in Paisley almost 20 years ago, when he was just 22! Not surprisingly, he is that Lodge's youngest ever Master. All the work was done in the Lodge by Installing Masters Bro. Rev. Gordon B. Armstrong, PM and Bro. Alistair W. Hughes PM. They did a great job – short, dignified, efficient and precise.

(On left) Bros. Iain T Gordon PM (607), William H. Marshall RWM (1329) and Iain White WJW (607)

Prostate Awareness Pro-Am
Erskine Golf Club
Cheque Presentation 4th December 2025

On the right, Prostate Champions Bro. John Malcolm PM (The Lodge of Erskine No. 1566) and Bro. Brian McFadyen PM (The Lodge of Erskine No. 1566 and Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No. XII) may be seen presenting a cheque for £2900 to Alison Wright, CEO of Prostate Scotland. The Pro-Am was held at Erskine GC on 4th September and Bros. John and Brian were part of the event planning team. More money will follow. The generous support of the Blair Group/Saveheat and the Scottish Police Credit Foundation was recognised.

The next Pro-Am is planned for 4th September 2026.

No. XII Regular Meeting
Tuesday 20th January 2026
Entering by Lodge St. Munn Ardnadam No. 496

Under the continued stewardship of Brother Kevin Barton, Lodge St. Munn Ardnadam has had a very productive couple of years. Bro. Kevin, of course, has his Mother Lodge as No. XII and indeed sat in the Warden's Chairs before work and travel commitments led him to demit Office. We were delighted when he affiliated to Lodge St. Munn to continue his Masonic journey and even more pleased when he took the Chair in 2024 and again in 2025. I had the great pleasure of being at both his Installations.

Bro. Kevin is bringing a Deputation from across the water on Tuesday, 20th January, to confer the First Degree on No. XII's next candidate. It promises to be quite a night!

Of course, Bro Kevin's grandfather, the late Bro. Arthur Young was a distinguished member of No. XII, taking the Chair between 2005 and 2007 and again between 2009 and 2011. A man of great generosity, Bro. Arthur gifted the keyboard that is used in No. XII.

Reports on Visits

- Lodge Sir Michael No 989 on 21st November 2025 (Annual Installation) – attended by Bro Bob Bain PM
- Lodge Firth of Clyde Gourock No 626 on 24th November 2025 (Fellowcraft Degree) – attended by WSW Bro Paul Branchfield
- Lodge Pollok, Pollokshields No 772 (Annual Installation) – attended by RWM Robert Marshall, Bro Iain White PM Bro. Alan D Beck, PM WSW, Bro Paul Branchfield, and Bro Craig McFadyen
- Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning No 217 on 28th November 2025 (Annual Installation) – attended by RWM Bro Robert Marshall, WSW Bro Paul Branchfield, IPM Bro James Livingstone, Bro Hector Macphail PM, Bro Kenneth Morrison PM, Bro Alan Beck PM, Bro Brian McFadyen PM and Bro Ken MacDougall PM
- Lodge Doric Kilwinning No 68 on 1st December 2025 (Fellowcraft Degree Exemplification) – attended by RWM Bro Robert Marshall

No. XII Christmas Outing
Saturday 6th December 2025

9 brethren of No. XII and 2 friends are shown in the photo above, taken at the Christmas Day Out. As has become the norm, this was held at the hospitality pre-match lunch at Greenock Wanderers RFC. I am told that a most enjoyable time was had by all, but reports as to how many actually watched the rugby are a bit inconclusive.

Christmas Hampers 2025

No. XII again gave Christmas Hampers to our older brethren and widows this year. We are again really grateful to Mrs Morag MacDougall, who did such a wonderful job of putting them together in such an attractive way as may be seen in the photo on the left.

The hampers were most gratefully received by the recipients from the brethren who delivered them. It is a lovely way for the Lodge to let the older brethren see that their long service is much appreciated and a demonstration to the widows that their husbands are held in dear memory by us all.

. 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 Gourock No. **626 in John Street**. Please **put that in your diaries now**.

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. In addition to being a highly esteemed 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).

As we always do, we invited Inverclyde's Provost to nominate a Charity of his choice for No. XII to support in 2026. Provost McKenzie has nominated Ardgowan Hospice in Greenock. We shall also support Children in Poverty Inverclyde and a veterans' charity.

The usual raffles and auctions will take place at the Charity Burns Supper, and items are sought for these.

Bro. Finlay Campbell
Education Correspondent for the *Greenock Telegraph*
Column of 27th December 2025

IN THE CLASSROOM...
WITH FINLAY CAMPBELL

'We must value learning'

It was mentioned above that Bro. Finlay Campbell, who delivered the Glenny Memorial lecture, was a multifaceted figure in our community. One of these is his role as a teacher and, as such, he writes regular columns for the *Greenock Telegraph*, illustrating his views on education. As a former secondary Heidie, myself, I am in complete agreement with Bro. Finlay's views on what the focus and nature of education should be.

His column for December 2025 is shown on the left. If you use your online magnifier, you can read clearly what he says and get the gist of what I mean. Amongst other things, Bro. Finlay says, *"…learning is at its most powerful when it is ambitious, driven by strong relationships, grounded in genuine connection and firmly rooted within the community."*

That is education, at its best, in a nutshell. Such common sense can be rare in the world of Scottish education. I wish that the officials in the Scottish Government actively shared and implemented the views described by Bro. Finlay.

Please read his column. You'll be impressed. Keep up the good work, Finlay, by getting your message out there.

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 overdue. 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. 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 -

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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 2024. Good luck to all participants,,,,,

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 (left) 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!

Views expressed by individuals within *Twelve Talk* do not necessarily represent the views of Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII. Unless otherwise stated, Bro Iain White PM is the author of all material.

IW 05.07.25