



XII Talk

Special Edition No 5

22nd December 2012

Annual Installation 2012

The Ongoings

Instituted in 1728, Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII is the oldest and longest surviving organisation in Inverclyde. Recently, No XII held its 285th Installation Ceremony. Bro Alan D Beck was installed into the Chair as Right Worshipful Master in front of a large number of brethren from within and outwith the province of Renfrewshire West in a packed Town Hall Saloon. It was the biggest Installation attendance for many years. The deputation of visiting brethren was led, as always, by the RWM of Lodge Doric Kilwinning No 68. In this case the man at the head was Bro Ian McPherson.



Bro Alan is very well known in the area and beyond. As a music teacher, Bro Beck has taught at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the Royal Northern College of Music. He is currently a member of the teaching staff of Scottish Opera and Clydeview Academy. He is a founder member of the three tenors group Caledon with whom he has performed all over the world including for HM The Queen at the opening of the Scottish Parliament, HE Kofi Annan at the UN Headquarters in New York and at venues such as The Sydney Opera House, T-in-the-Park and Hampden Park for the Scottish international football team.



The new RWM and his Installing Masters

**Iain White PM
Alan D Beck RWM
Hector Macphail PM
Kenneth C MacDougall PM**

At the Harmony in the main Town Hall a large number of brethren enjoyed supper and the usual Loyal and Masonic Toasts were observed. Bro Alan D Beck RWM toasted Her Majesty the Queen. His Toast to The Grand Lodge of Scotland and The Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West was replied to by Bro James P Livingstone Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master Depute. A heartfelt toast to Her Majesty's



Armed Forces was delivered by Immediate Past Master Bro Robert J Bain, himself a former regular soldier. The Right Worshipful Master, Bro Beck, toasted the Installing Masters and the Immediate Past Master. The replies to these came from Bro. Iain White PM and Bro Robert J Bain IPM, respectively.

Bro Bob Bain IPM Toasts Her Majesty's Armed Forces



Toast to the Visitors....

Bro Martin Anderson WSW toasted the Visiting Brethren and, as is traditional in No XII, the reply was given by Bro Ian McPherson RWM of Lodge Doric Kilwinning No 68. The Artistes and Stewards were toasted by Bro Paul G Galbraith WJW.



and the reply



As is the custom in No XII, Inverclyde Council was represented at the Installation Supper and Harmony by Provost Robert Moran. Provost Moran addressed the assembled brethren and spoke of the long and close connection between No XII and the town of Greenock and the Lodge's historic right to meet in the Saloon of the Town Hall. He also expressed his pleasure at being in attendance again at a No XII function and extended his good wishes to the Lodge for the forthcoming session.

Provost Moran's Address

Bro Alan D Beck spoke of his pleasure at taking the chair and of the plans that he had for the Lodge in the year ahead. A major charity drive is under way and its focus will be on the Erskine Home and Youth Theatre at the Beacon Arts Centre. Provost Moran also agreed to nominate a charity to be supported by No XII on his behalf.

Musical contributions from Elliott McKelvie, Craig Dunsmore and Ian McCrorie were much enjoyed by the company as was the piping of Alasdair Beaton WSW of Lodge The Gael No 609.



The extremely happy evening finished with the singing of Auld Lang Syne and three hearty cheers!



The Brethren sing Auld Lang Syne



Father and Son

As I know from personal experience, there is no happier feeling on the evening that a new RWM assumes the Chair than to have your dad present. Thus it was for RWM Bro Alan who was joined at the Installation by his dad, Bro Duncan Beck, of Lodge Old Monkland St James No 177. I remember ages ago talking to Bro Duncan about Alan joining No XII and amidst his delight he made the observation that Alan would be running the show soon. Well, this has proved to be a very perceptive insight indeed and we are all delighted that it has.

The Brothers Beck

Back to the Future Evening – Historical Preamble

The Installation of 2012 was dubbed a ‘Back to the Future’ evening. The idea was that in looking ahead, No XII should look to its history, traditions and procedures to bring back some of the little bits of history, or idiosyncrasy, that make No XII what it is, and different from other Lodges. The following is a historical preamble that I gave as Principal Installing Master, after accepting the Gavel, and before commencing with the Installation ceremony.

“Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII has been in existence since 1728 and is the oldest organisation in Inverclyde. When this local institution met for the first time on 27th December 1728, King George II was on the throne and No XII has seen another 9 monarchs reign, including Queen Elizabeth II.

For those of you who have an interest on Bro Robert Burns, Caledonia's Bard, after the his Lodge became an entity in its own right, on Tuesday 27 July 1784 Robert Burns was elected "Depute Master" of the Lodge (now St James (Kilwinning) Tarbolton No 135) at the ripe young age of 25.

Isn't it wonderful to think that when Burns was attending his meetings in Tarbolton, on the alternate Tuesdays, the brethren of No XII were meeting in Greenock under RWMs Humphry, Stewart and Wilson. And the brethren were meeting in the Town House that preceded this one because they had purchased the right to do so, 'in all time coming thereafter to have the liberty and privilege of keeping their meetings in the hall to be in the said house', under construction in 1765, by contributing forty pounds. The arrangement was confirmed for this building in 1878. You might look at this room and ask yourself why it was built in the way that it was I think I know

Such is our antiquity, and No XII has been a thread woven through the fabric of our town for 284 years now and the strands of the thread are the members. While it is true in freemasonry that all are important or none are important, if you pause to think about some of the people who have been members and office bearers of No XII, and through No XII to Provincial, and hence to Grand Lodge, it makes a very impressive list.

The Shaw Stewarts, ending up with Sir Guy were members and Provincial Grand Masters and Sir Michael Robert Shaw Stewart was Grand Master Mason in the 1860s, Lord Inverclyde was Depute Master of No XII in the 1950s, John Scott and RL of Scotts' Shipbuilding and Engineering Company were Masters, Arthur FR Caird the shipbuilder was Master, J Reid Kerr Sugar Refiner who played for Scotland and the British Lions at Rugby and for Scotland at Cricket and who gave his name to the College in Paisley was Master, Erskine Orr owner of the Greenock Telegraph was Master, John McEwing owner of Rapid Road Transport was Master, George Tough the Rope manufacturer was an office bearer.... ..Provosts of Greenock and Gourock including Drummond and Leith were masters, numerous MBEs and war heroes with MCs ... and so it goes on....and of Course Alexander Drummond the first Provincial Grand Master in Scotland was RWM in 1738.

Tonight we are having a 'Back to the Future' evening as we look to the future whilst bringing back things that make No XII unique, a wee bit different from other Lodges and we shall highlight aspects of our history as the evening goes along. The evening tails that you see the RWM-elect and the Installing Masters wearing were de rigueur at No XII installations until the shortages of materials in World War II caused their abandonment in 1940.

As we launch No XII into its 285th Year, we hope you enjoy the slightly different evening that we have in store for you."



Bro RL Scott



XII Office Bearers 1936-37 with Bro Arthur FR Caird RWM and evening tails and white gloves!

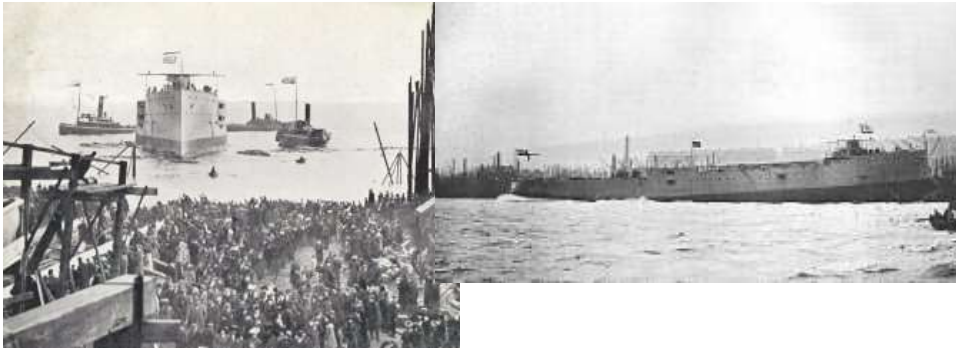
Back to the Future Evening – what was emphasised

Office Bearers' Attire

The General Committee decided that the RWM and his installing masters would wear evening tails and white gloves, as we see in the photo above from 1936-37; all other Past Masters and Office Bearers would wear short morning dress. This was a return to uniformity.

Charter Case

The history of the Charter Case was briefly described during the ceremony. It is made from the casemate armour of HMS Argyll, a cruiser built in Scotts' Cartburn Dockyard and commissioned in 1905. The case was presented by Bros CC and RL Scott (photo above), Directors of the Company. HMS Argyll is shown below at her launch in 1904 and later in service.



The Gavel



The fact that the Gavel used by the RWM is made from wood from the old Stockwell Bridge in Glasgow was pointed out. This Stockwell Bridge was built in 1345.

The Illuminated Square and Compasses



The large illuminated square and compasses was brought out for the first time in many years. Previously it had been an ever-present at Installations in the main Town Hall and before that in the Saloon, as the following extract from the Minutes points out.

Meeting on Tuesday 13th December 1938 RWM Bro William W Buchanan in the Chair (The Annual Meeting and Installation)

‘The decoration of the Saloon was enhanced by the illuminated Square and Compass (sic) gifted to the Lodge by Bro Thos P McIntyre SW. Although there was no formal presentation, the brethren nevertheless appreciate that this Square and Compass (sic) is our own property’.

The Ryrrie J Erskine Orr Goblet

Bro Ryrrie J Erskine Orr OBE was RWM of No XII in 1953-55 and he presented a silver goblet to the Lodge. This was traditionally used by the RWM on the evening of the Annual installation. Bro Alan was pleased to follow this tradition even if he did complain of a distinct taste of silver polish from its contents.

The Port Decanter



In 1938, there was great consternation in the Lodge when ‘the decanter situation’ became apparent. In the Minute of the General Committee on Tuesday 1st November, Bro William W Buchanan RW Master presiding, it states: Bro John Conn Chief Steward spoke of the necessity of providing two decanters to replace breakages and this was met by an offer of one each from Bros Owen Dewar PM and AFR Caird IPM. Bro Caird stipulated that his should be exclusively used for port.

There is a touch of class associated with Bro Caird’s stipulation. Bro Iain White PM offered to replace the (presumably long lost) port decanter. His offer was accepted by the General Committee provided he undertook to supply the port as well! He said that he would do this on an annual basis for the Installation. So the port decanter returned to the top table at the 2012 Installation Supper!

Rule Britannia!

A few of the older members of the Lodge could remember in years gone by that there was a certain ritual that surrounded the Toast to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West. This was twofold in nature. Prior to the Toast being proposed by the RWM, the assembled brethren would sing the chorus of *Rule Britannia!* After the Toast, ‘We’ll all sit down together to wait for their reply’ was sung by the brethren. These were re-introduced but with a bonus. One of our entertainers, Elliott McKelvie, sang the verses of *Rule Britannia* and the brethren accompanied him enthusiastically in the chorus. Elliott was accompanied on piano by Polly Beck, RWM Bro Alan’s wife.



After the Toast, ‘We’ll all sit down together to wait for their reply’ was sung by the brethren. These were re-introduced but with a bonus. One of our entertainers, Elliott McKelvie, sang the verses of *Rule Britannia* and the brethren accompanied him enthusiastically in the chorus. Elliott was accompanied on piano by Polly Beck, RWM Bro Alan’s wife.

And in conclusion

The Installation evening can certainly be said to be a great success in terms of the numbers who attended, the quality of the ceremonial, speeches and entertainment, the happy, positive atmosphere and the collection taken for the Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund. The Lodge was proud to have the Provost of Inverclyde, Robert Moran, as its guest yet again.

No XII faces the future with great confidence with attendances rising, candidates in place until 2014 and a great deal of enthusiasm evident amongst the members. Let brotherly love prevail



XII and 175





Shalom No 1600



Lucky George Bryden gets his prize



St John's Whiteinch 683



PM Bro Iain White and his guests



**Bro Martin Anderson WSW Bro Alan D Beck RWM
Bro Paul G Galbraith WJW**

The Office Bearers 2012 – 13



Back: Bros Murray Thomson PM Kenneth K Morrison PM (Director of Ceremonies)

Middle: Bros Ross Gourdie (President of Stewards) James S Adams PM (Junior Deacon) James McGregor (Jeweller) Martin Anderson (WSW) Paul Galbraith (WJW) Brian McFadyen (Architect) Gordon Thompson (Inner Guard) John McFadyen (Almoner) Allan Glen (Senior Deacon)

Front: Bros Alex Galbraith (Substitute Master) Kenneth C MacDougal PM (Secretary) Iain White PM (Treasurer) Alan D Beck (RWM) Hector Macphail PM Robert J Bain (IPM) Allan Macfeate (Depute Master) Derek Macfeate (Chaplain)