

WITTA'S ISLAND TODAY

Issue 2 - April 2014

A BUSY WINTER...

With 2013 over and Spring in sight, it can only mean one thing - the start of a new season for Wittá's Island Lodge!

This year looks to be another promising one, with a new Master being installed in April, following two excellent years under W.Bro. Geoff Goodman's direction.

Last year of course saw a number of changes in the Lodge, and this year will no doubt see more.

Since the last Wittá's

Island meeting in August 2013, we had another extremely successful joint Carols evening with our mother lodge, Gateway.

We've also had Committee meetings which have come up with a number of initiatives that should come to fruition this year (see later in newsletter).

We also conducted the first of two large scale visits to other Lodges. On 16th January 2014, we had 13 brethren from Wittá's Island

visiting Weyland Lodge to see an initiation. It was a great occasion and good to catch up with friends from Weyland, as well as seeing each other in the Winter season.

Weyland Lodge very much appreciated the visit and stated that they would return in force as usual to Wittá's Island in the Summer!

The next visit was to Gateway Lodge on Monday 24th March where 11 Brethren attended from Wittá's Island.

...AND AN EVEN BUSIER SUMMER AHEAD!

As April beckons, we have a busy year ahead.

First we have the Installation meeting, where we will be installing Bro. Bob Swanton into the Chair of King Solomon. At this meeting we will be honoured by a visit of the Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Stephen James Dunning and the Assistant Provincial Grand Master,

W.Bro. David Laidlaw.

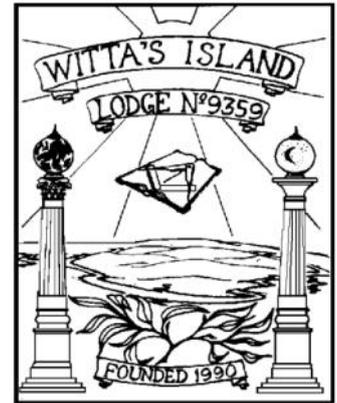
We also have a new candidate for this year, whom we will be initiating in May and possibly a further candidate to be interviewed with a view to being initiated in June! Not only this, but we might well have up to 2 joining members too!

We have a full schedule

for the rest of the year, with a double *passing in July* and a *raising* in August.

To enhance the work of the Lodge, we hope to restart Lodges of Instruction to further our Brethren's Masonic knowledge.

All this points to a strong year ahead for Wittá's the Lodge!



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*THE GREATEST
"HIGH" FOR ME
IS THE
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A WORD FROM THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

My period as the Worshipful Master is drawing to a close and Installation of a new Master approaches and the Lodge will commence a new year, culminating in 2015 with our Silver Jubilee.

It has been an exciting two years, with many "highs," but also a few "lows" and I will firstly address the "lows."

The loss of W.Bro. Peter Nelmes, and to watch his health deteriorating, I found numbing. However his many attributes were amply recorded in the previous Newsletter. To learn that the Master Elect felt unable to take over the Chair of the Lodge, whilst I was on holiday did put me off my Sangria for a short while, however the way everyone rallied round was heart warming.

It must also be said that the "highs" greatly outnumber the "lows." Indeed it is difficult to know where to start. Firstly I must heap praise on to the shoulders of our Secretary, W.Bro. Andrew Trueman for his hard work in keeping the Lodge progressing in an orderly

way. W.Bro. David Carpenter, selflessly took over as D.C. as W.Bro. Paul Tweney's work made it impossible for him to continue.

Having several Candidates, meant that we have had a ceremony to work at every meeting, which was very rewarding. The high level of attendance by both members and visitors greatly added to the sense of occasion. We greatly appreciate the attendance from all our visitors, but mention must be made of the Weyland mafia, who attended in great numbers. Their Worshipful Master, W.Bro. Peter Duff, with but a few weeks to live, came to all our meetings, simply awesome.

Thirteen members of the Lodge journeyed to Bicester to attend the Weyland Lodge, and a great evening was enjoyed by all. No small thanks are due to Andrew for organising this. In January the Weyland Lodge held a Burns Evening in memory of W.Bro. Peter Duff, which was a memorable evening.

The greatest "high" for me

is the attitude and commitment of the Officers of the Lodge, many new to masonry, but their commitment is commendable.

For me, personally seeing my father invested as a Past Senior Grand Warden, by the Provincial Grand Master at Provincial Grand Lodge will live in my memory.

Finally brethren, W.Bro. Bob Swanton, the Master Elect, deserves all our support. he is an intelligent, committed freemason, well deserving of the Office of Worshipful Master. I look forward to supporting him, as he has always supported me!

W.Bro. Geoff Goodman,

Worshipful Master

A WORD FROM OUR MASTER ELECT

Well it's finally arrived, in a few short weeks I shall be stepping into the slightly daunting but equally exiting role as Worshipful Master of Witta's Island Lodge.

It always seemed a long way off, as I moved steadily around the various offices within the lodge, and I kept thinking I really should be getting my head in to the ritual book soon! But just like retirement or the kids leaving home the time flew by and the big day is nearly here.

I am very lucky to have a strong team of officers around me and plenty of experienced masons to go to for a bit of advice, although going away on a cruise with our Pro-

vincial Secretary W.Bro. Tony Taylor may seem a bit excessive.

I believe the lodge has gone from strength to strength over the last two years with W.Bro. Geoff Goodman in the chair and I consider myself very lucky to have him as my Installing Master and IPM for the coming year.

Once again we have a full programme ending with a Past Masters Raising in August which will be a Past Masters ceremony, as I will be away in August on holiday (see previous comment on cruise with Tony Taylor, we shall be thinking of you all!).

We are having a Vintage Tea Party and BBQ at Witney Masonic Centre on Sunday 6th July to re-activate the social element of our lodge and hope the event will cater and appeal to all ages and tastes and will of course be open to everyone, including family and friends.

I look forward to seeing you all over the coming months and hope you all have a wonderful year.

Bro. Bob Swanton,

Master Elect

MASONIC HUMOUR

The newly made Worshipful Master

A Mason who had just been installed as Master of his Lodge and was duly attending all the functions he could was having a hard time with his wife.

She said " All those Masters have to do is click their fingers and you would be there wouldn't you?.....I wish I was a master!"

After due thought, he said...

"So do I dear..... we swap them for a new one every year!!"

The Hot Air Balloon

Two experienced Master Masons were enjoying a flight in a hot air balloon when suddenly a thick cloud formed between them and the ground. Being without instruments, after half an hour they realised that they were well and truly lost.

A short time later there came across a large hole in the cloud and espied a gentleman below walking his dog across a field. They had time to exchange pleasantries and found that he too was a member of the Craft. The chaps in the balloon enquired of him as to their location and received the reply, "About 200 feet up in a balloon."

Just then the cloud closed the hole and they were alone again. One turned to the other and said, " I bet he's the Secretary of his Lodge!" "Why do you say that?", the other asked. "Well what he has told us is absolutely true - but in our present predicament is totally useless!"

NEWS FROM THE LODGE COMMITTEE

In the 'off season', the Lodge Committee will have met three times in to discuss Lodge affairs. The most important part of that was to interview 2 new candidates.

As previously trailed in the last newsletter, the Committee held a 'Blue sky's thinking' session, to look at what more the Lodge could be doing socially or what it could do differently in the Lodge temple itself.

As a result, the Committee agreed a number of initiatives.

The first, is the reinstatement of the Summer Party. As already mentioned, our Master Elect is organising a Vintage Tea Party &

BBQ (see flyer below). We should also have games such as Aunt Sally (there is expertise in the Lodge!) and skittles.

We will also be having a traditional Ladies Festival early in 2015 to celebrate Bob's year in office and to thank his and all of our good ladies for their support.

Continuing the social trend, the Committee agreed that we would

try to do a number of large scale visits to those lodges that have supported us well - with Weyland Lodge and Gateway Lodge receiving over 10 of us over the winter season!

On the Lodge meetings side, members decided to resurrect the Lodge of Instruction, particularly as we have so many newer Brethren that would benefit from it.

Finally, we will be receiving greetings in meetings where time allows, an old tradition that is rarely seen anymore!

If you have any further bright ideas, please let your Secretary know, who will add them to the next Committee agenda!



"THAT'S THE LAST BOX TICKED - HAS ANYONE ANYTHING FURTHER TO RAISE?"

Charges to pay _____ s. _____ d. RECEIVED	POST OFFICE TELEGRAM	No. _____ OFFICE STAMP 
At.....m	Prefix, Time handed in, Office of Origin and Service Instructions, Words.	At.....m
From.....	WITTAS ISLAND LODGE No. 9359	To.....
By.....	INVITES BRETHREN, FAMILY & FRIENDS TO ATTEND:	By.....
	<u>1940'S VINTAGE TEA PARTY AND SUMMER BARBECUE</u>	
	ON SUNDAY 6TH JULY, 2014 AT 12 NOON ONWARDS	
	TO BE HELD IN THE MASONIC HALL, WITNEY	
	DRESS CODE: CASUAL OR 1940'S OPTIONAL	
	TICKETS: ADULTS £7 (UNDER 16 FREE) INCLUDES BBQ, CAKE & TEA / COFFEE	
	For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS INQUIRY" or call with this form <u>B or C</u> at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form and, if possible, the envelope	

BAR AVAILABLE

A WORD FROM THE ALMONER

I hope that you have all had a good break from the Witta's Island Lodge and you have managed in some part to do some well worth visiting around the Province.

Thankfully, I can assume that you and all your dependences and relatives are well, as I have had no notifications otherwise. This has led us to examine exactly what the role of the Lodge Almoner is.

The Almoner is appointed by the Worshipful Master to look after the welfare of Lodge members and their families, not only in times of poor health, but in many other respects of difficulties and hardship. He can offer confidential and informal guidance on financial, as well as personal and healthcare issues. Although many of us might feel that it would be embarrassing to ask for such assistance, poverty and distress are not easy things to admit to, with health worries

often kept hidden.

However, every year Masons are given help and support from their Almoner, under the guidance of the Provincial Grand Almoner and other Masonic Charities.

POSSIBLE NEEDS

Financial

This covers all sorts of money worries, inability to cover household expenses, difficulty in paying for home repairs and maintenance, emergency costs, i.e. involved in children's education, dealing with debt and its attendant problems following a period of illness.

Health related

Healthcare problems also involve cost that you may find hard to meet, problems that may affect well being and quality of life, whether mental or physical.

before you must be given the utmost respect, if the traditions of the Fraternity are to be observed and proper Masonic etiquette is to be maintained.

Masonic etiquette comprises lodge courtesies and proprieties. Good manners imply observance of the formal requirements governing man's behaviour in polite society and a sense of what is appropriate for a person of good breeding with high morals and good taste.

The spirit of brotherly love and affection, by which we are bound together, will be exemplified in

Family

Other needs may relate to family and friends including the effects of bereavement.

I hope that this small article helps you understand the role of the Almoner, and remember that he is here to help! However he can only do that if asked – here's hoping there is no need to receive any calls!

Finally, I look forward to another great year with our new Worshipful Master in the Witta's Island Lodge!

Yours Sincerely and Fraternally,

W. Bro Clive Power,



our conduct, our carriage and our behaviour at all times.

It is my hope that you will use your trowel to cement the stones of brotherly love for the "More Noble and Glorious Purpose" of exhibiting these rules of Masonic Etiquette toward one and all within the brethren."

Read more at: <http://www.masonic-lodge-of-education.com/masonic-etiquette.html>

MASONIC ETIQUETTE

"Masonic etiquette is simply the rules of good manners which make lodge meetings pleasant for everyone.

The position of Worshipful Master in the East occupies the most exalted position within the lodge.

A lodge which does not honour its Master, no matter how they personally feel about the man, himself, lacks Masonic courtesy.

The honour conveyed by the brethren in electing him, ...in other words, the historical traditions and the men who have gone

In the Spotlight – Our newest initiate Bro. Connor Thornhill

Tell us about yourself?

I am 37 years old and happily married to Natalie Thornhill, since June 2003 - no kids (as yet).

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Abingdon initially and then Wootton village, Nr Abingdon as an only child (not a spoilt one).

Where do you work?

I work for Cordwallis Commercials in Eynsham, selling Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles and I have been there 11 years this April.

Favourite sport/teams/personalities?

I am not exactly a big follower of any particular sport nor do I follow a team, however as a child I used to live near Peter Rhodes Brown of Oxford United and occasionally he would let me get one in the back of the net in the park.

What hobbies do you/have you had?

I don't have much time for hobbies or interests at this stage in my life but I used to enjoy cycling, not competitive racing and not exactly off-road but again somewhere in between.

Favourite TV shows / Movies?

I have very eclectic taste in TV viewing and movies, ranging from the simplicity of The Simpsons to documentaries about history (specifically Egyptian history) and everything in-between.



Movie wise it has to be anything Star Wars. My pet hate is reality nonsense, such as Big Brother and that Jungle nonsense.

What is the most interesting thing that has happened to you?

My claim to fame or ' little interesting fact ' is that I met David and Samantha Cameron and they purchased a New wheelchair accessible Volkswagen Caravelle from me when their son Ivan was alive.

Tell us something about you that no-one knows?

I don't really have any exciting or dark secrets, but only a few people know that I went through life saving bowel surgery in 2006 and now function and live with no large bowel at all - a fact that I would not have spoken openly about a few years ago until I realised just how many people live with Inflammatory Bowel Diseases such as Colitis and Crohn's disease or like me been affected by cancer.

What was the best day of your life?

Best day of my life 20 June 2003 when Natalie became my wife, she is my rock and soul mate.

How do you feel about Freemasonry one year in...?

I am almost 'one year in', in terms of my time with Witta's Island and still feel as if I have an immense journey ahead of me and great deal to learn. But I feel proud to belong to such a fraternal organisation and I hope to grow in to a better man with the help of my brothers at Witta's Island and all brothers across the land.



ALFRED LODGE No.340

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF OXFORDSHIRE FREEMASONRY 1814 - 2014

The Alfred Lodge No.340 will be the first Lodge in Oxfordshire to reach its bi-centenary. This is a big occasion for the Lodge and the province too.

The Alfred Lodge is to celebrate its bi-centenary at its April meeting and will be honoured with the

presence of the Pro Grand Master, M.W. Peter Geoffrey Lowndes, along with Active Provincial Officers for Oxfordshire.

Seating will be limited; it will be on first come first served basis with payment only.

Dress Code: Dinner Jacket, Morning Suit & Masonic Regalia.

The Dining fee is £30:00

To be held at the Kassam Stadium, Grenoble Road, Oxford, OX4 4XP.

The booking form can be found on the Oxfordshire Province Website under [Lodge events](#).



OXFORDSHIRE 14 – 18 CENTENARY APPEAL

By the PGM's command I have been appointed to preside over a provincial mini festival starting in 2014 and ending on the 11th November 2018 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Great War.

The object of this festival is not to be a major fund raising occasion, which might dilute our efforts at the official forthcoming festival in a few years time, but rather to raise awareness of the contribution and sacrifice of our armed forces especially those with links to Oxfordshire.

Of course with every festi-

val we are attempting to raise funds which will be used to support local military personnel especially The Rifles (Formally The Ox and Bucks) which is our local regiment who has spent more unit days in Afghanistan than any other regiment.

What we would like to see is a series of events throughout the period organised by the lodges, chapters etc with a military theme, such as visits to museums and a lunch, evening socials or dinners with a theme, entertaining lectures from Military charity representatives etc.

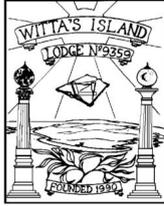
I would welcome all ideas and proposals and especially volunteers to organise and assist with such events.

Of course the most efficient way of raising funds is by a standing gift aid donation for the duration of the appeal.

Can you please make your members aware of this appeal and I look forward to hearing your ideas and of course in time receiving your donations.

**E.Comp. Alan Knowles
Pr.G.Ch.Stwd (Chapter)**





WITTA'S ISLAND TODAY

Secretary & Editor

W.Bro. Andrew Trueman

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DATES FOR THE DIARY - 2014

Lodge of Instruction (All Brethren invited to attend):

3rd April, 2nd May, 5th June, 3rd July, 1st August

Lodge of Rehearsal (All Lodge officers expected to attend):

10th April, 8th May, 12th June, 10th July, 7th August

Lodge Meetings:

Thursday 17th April - Installation

Thursday 15th May - Initiation

Friday 20th June - Initiation

Friday 18th July - Passing (Double)

Friday 15th August - Raising

Witta's Island Social:

Summer BBQ & Vintage Tea - Sunday 6th July @ Witney Masonic Centre

Christmas Carols - Sunday 14th December @ Witney Masonic Centre

THE LEVEL AND THE SQUARE, *DR. ROBERT MORRIS*

We meet upon the Level and we part upon the Square. What priceless words of meaning these words Masonic are.

Come, let us contemplate them, they are worthy of a thought; in the very walls of Masonry the sentiment is wrought.

We meet upon the Level and from every station come, the rich man from his palace and the poor man from his home, for the rich must leave their wealth and state outside the Mason's door, and the poor man finds his best respects upon the chequered floor.

We meet upon the Plumb, 'tis the order of our Guide, we walk upright in every way and lean to neither side; The All-Seeing Eye that reads our hearts and doth bear us witness true, That we still try to honour God and give each man his due.

We part upon the Square, for the world must have its due, we mingle with the multitude, a faithful band and true, but the influence of our gatherings in Masonry is green, and we long upon the Level to renew the happy scene.

There is a World where all are equal, we are hurrying to it fast, we shall meet upon the

Level when the Gates of Death are past; we shall stand before the Orient and our Master shall be there, To try the blocks we offer with His own unerring Square.

We shall meet upon the Level there, but never thence depart, there's a Mansion, 'tis all ready for each trusting, faithful heart, there is a Mansion and a welcome and a multitude is there; who have met upon the Level and been tried upon the Square.

Let us meet upon the Level then while labouring patient here; let us meet and let us labour though the labour be severe, already in the western sky the signs bid us prepare, to gather up our working tools and part upon the Square.

Hands round Ye faithful Brotherhood, the bright fraternal chain, we part upon the Square below and meet in Heaven Again;

and the words of precious meaning, those words Masonic are,

" WE MEET UPON THE LEVEL

AND WE PART UPON THE SQUARE"

