

WITTA'S ISLAND TODAY

Issue 6 - November 2016

A BUSY SUMMER...AND A BUSY WINTER TO FOLLOW!

Witta's Island has had another cracking year, with the Lodge growing with two new initiates and plenty of visitors to swell the numbers!

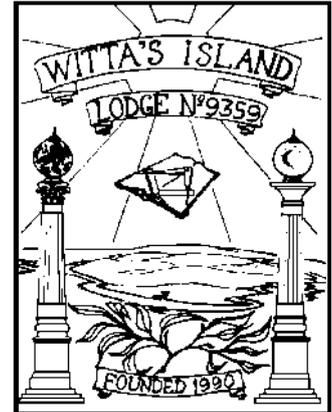
A surprise visit by the PGM and DPGM in July was a great honour for the Lodge with the Worshipful Master taking it all in his stride.

In May, Bro. Brian Gardner was initiated and August, 62 brethren attended to see the Lodge initiate Bro. Dale Cox. The Lodge welcomes both with open arms!

A special mention for W.Bro. Mike Brown, a founder member who has been made an honorary member for his services to the Lodge!

Our Worshipful Master W.Bro. David Hutton PPrGSwdB and W.Bro. Geoff Goodman PPrSGW both received promotions at the October Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge. Congratulations are in order for their well deserved recognition of service to Witta's Island and the craft in general!

The 'Winter Season' is now upon us with the Witta's Island Wanderers back on the road (see p.8) and the Lodge of Instruction back up and running (see p.12). A host of social events have been planned which are open to all masons and their families and friends (see p.10-11).



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A YEAR IN REVIEW

21ST APRIL 2016 - INSTALLATION MEETING

The Lodge was honored by a visit from the Provincial Junior Grand Warden W.Bro. Andrew Pickwick, escorted by W.Bro. Michael Murphy, Provincial Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies, accompanied by W.Bro. Michael Treffler, Provincial Junior Grand Deacon, our very own W.Bro. Andrew Trueman, Provincial Grand Steward.

W.Bro. David Hutton was installed into the Chair of King Solomon by the outgoing Master W.Bro. Martin McBride.

Our new Worshipful Master was one of the founders of the Lodge



Photo above: Worshipful Master, Wardens and Provincial Visitors

and was Lodge Secretary for some 8 years! Having moved away, he resigned from the Lodge, but we were extremely fortunate to get him back and having been Tyler for

a few years, was only too happy to help and jump into a gap as Senior Warden and this year as Master for the second time in Wittá's Island!



Pic Above: Members of the Wittá's Island Lodge

19TH MAY 2016 - INITIATION

In May, the Lodge initiated and welcomed Mr. Brian Gardner into the Lodge!

17TH JUNE 2016 - PASSING

In June the Lodge passed Bro. Brian Gardner to the Second Degree. We also formally appointed W.Bro. Ron Lovegrove as our Tyler!

15TH JULY 2016 - RAISING

In July the Lodge Raised Bro. Paul Connor to the Third Degree. The Lodge was honored to received a surprise and totally unannounced visit of the PGM, RW.Bro. James Hilditch and DPGM VW.Bro. Neal Spencer! This made for a fantastic evening for all and certainly kept the officers on their toes for the evening!

19TH AUGUST 2016 - INITIATION

In August, Past Masters of the Lodge



took over and initiated Mr. Dale Cox into the Lodge! We had a bumper attendance with 62 present, including our regular visitor the APGM W.Bro. Alan Knowles.

The Lodge also voted to make W.Bro. Mike Brown, a founder member, an honorary member in recognition of his services to the Lodge.

W.Bro. Robert (Barney) Barnfield was elected Master Elect and looks forward to a good year in the chair in 2017!



Pics:

Above: WM, Bro. Paul Connor, PGM & DPGM

Left: Bro. Dale Cox after his initiation with the WM, his Grandfather and Uncle!



ALMONERS REPORT

I took on the role as Almoner for the year, following in the footsteps of W.Bro Clive Powell. As this is a new role for me, I benefited from Clive's advice to me and a rather thick volume from the Provincial Almoner.

Wittas Island Lodge is a relatively healthy Lodge so my work load has been light so far.

The Lodge Almoner is very dependent on

members telling him of any problems that they are aware of, as was the recent situation with George Sidebottom. Initially I was contacted by Barny Barnfield to say that George Sidebottom (a Founder Member now living in Cyprus) had recently had a fall and was in hospital. I spoke to the Provincial Almoner and also W.Bro Tony Taylor who knows George

personally. As a result, a number of Witney Lodges have made a donation via the Provincial Almoner who will deal with the appropriate Almoner in Cyprus.

I am in regular contact with Betty Nelmes, widow of Peter, and she continues in good health and is looking forward to the Widows luncheon.

W.Bro. Martin McBride



CHARITY DONATIONS 2015

Several local charities were supported by Witta's Island, chosen by our W.M. Martin McBride from money raised in the Lodge during 2015.

Carterton Food Bank received £200 to help the vulnerable families referred to it by GPs or Social Workers. The Mayor of Carterton, Cllr. Lynn Little is seen receiving the cheque from Martin.



Brize Norton Scout Group meets in Carterton and received £400 towards the purchase of new camping equipment.

St Joseph's Church roof appeal was also supported as was **Carterton Day Centre** with donations of £300 and £200 respectively.



A WORD FROM THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER



In 1983 I was Initiated into Gateway Lodge 8501 and my proposer was W.Bro John Gray, who was also my neighbour and family friend. He had a collection of aphorisms which he enjoyed trundling out to anyone who would listen to him and one of his favourite sayings was 'many men are chosen but very few are called'. He was convinced that I was personally 'called' to become a freemason for the express purpose of chauffeuring him to every masonic meeting for the ensuing 23 years. As he got older I became his minder and he my masonic mentor, however, he did invariably buy the drinks.

Sadly W.Bro William John Hubert Gray, PPrJGW and founding treasurer of our Lodge, passed to the G.L. above in 2007 aged 77, having 'lived respected and died regretted'.

Moving forward 32 years in January 2015 whilst visiting Weyland Lodge as a Wittas Island Wanderer I was neither 'chosen' nor 'called' but I was definitely 'cornered' by 3 notables of our Lodge who suggested I ceased acting as Tyler and became Senior Warden with a view to being WM in 2016, if so elected. Whilst this came as a complete surprise I nevertheless agreed and I found myself duly installed

in April 2016 in fine style by W.Bro. Martin McBride.



My actual ceremonial workings commenced at the May meeting and has amounted thus far to 2 Initiations a Passing and a Raising which, despite taking their toll on my time and taxing my limited intellect, have been both a pleasure and a privilege for me and hopefully enjoyable for all the Lodge brethren and our numerous visitors.

I hope and trust our two Initiates, Bro. Brian and Bro. Dale will have been sufficiently enthused to commit themselves to progressing in the future and that Bro. Paul enjoyed the surprise visit by the RW. Provincial Grand Master and his team to witness the ceremony of him being Raised. Actually I'm still not fully reconciled to this quite unusual yet memorable occasion myself, especially as it preceded my first

Provincial promotion at the Annual Provincial Grand Lodge in October.

With the help and support of the Lodge committee we've had a delightful and well attended BBQ, Beer 'n' Skittles evening on the 24th September, we've a special 'curry' evening shaping up nicely for 20th November and of course our traditional Xmas carols evening held jointly with the Gateway Lodge on 11th December should see 2016 out in fine style.

For 2017 we have the prospect of our Ladies Festival on 18 March and the installation in April of our Master Elect, W.Bro. Barney Barnfield along with some prospective candidates for Initiation and progression.

I'm personally looking forward to the remainder of my year with joyful anticipation and I take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to my Lodge officers and the brethren for all the support and considerations extended to me as Worshipful Master.

W.Bro. David Hutton



THE LIFE & TIMES OF OUR MASTER ELECT, W.BRO. ROBERT 'BARNEY' BARNFIELD

I was born in Cheltenham on 26 Sept 1930 and was brought up in Charlton Kings. After leaving school I was employed as a gardener/nurseryman for about eight years. I then did National service for two years and went back to gardening but I could not settle down in civvy street even though I had got married. After a couple of years I re-enlisted into the REME as a Training NCO and then after another few years I was offered the chance of transferring to the Small Arms School Corp as a weapons instructor, teaching NCOs and Officers how to teach small arms and how to run ranges safely.

While carrying out the duties of Training Officer at the Royal Artillery Barracks, Woolwich some friends of mine in the Mess used to disappear on certain evenings and when asked why I was left out, I was told they were all Freemasons. I therefore took an interest and was told how to go about joining them. This led me to be Initiated into the Wyvern Lodge in Warminster in 1977.

Five years later I left Warminster and moved to Carterton where I found my next door neighbour was Tom Worsfold, a member of Gateway Lodge so it was not long before I joined Gateway. In 1991 I was installed as Worshipful Master of Wyvern Lodge and eight months later I was installed as WM of

Gateway Lodge. One working was Emulation and the other Oxford, which I found difficult to grasp and wasn't helped by two very uptight DCs who didn't like the wrong workings which continually crept into my ritual.

After serving 24yrs in the Army I retired and got a post as a British Defence Courier with the MOD. This took me all around the world carrying Diplomatic material to Embassies and Consulates and often to Ships at different ports. During one of my trips to Washington DC, I was invited to the Embassy for a cocktail party and got into conversation with a Lady about what was then the new system of Air Miles. A little later I was talking to a couple that were on a trip using Air Miles, so I called across the room to the lady I had been speaking to earlier and said she ought to come over and speak to the couple who also belonged to 'The Mile High Club' that she was also a member of. It was only when everyone present broke into laughter that I realised exactly what I had said!

I was a Defence Courier for eighteen years and retired at 65. But I clearly wasn't ready for retirement yet and took on part-time work at Ascot racecourse and after four years I was given the post of Paddock Manager. I also took on responsibilities at Newbury and Cheltenham racecourses. My best

day at any races was at Cheltenham one day when something told me to pick up a ticket from the floor. This turned out to be a betting slip with £20 EW on the winner of the previous race and I drew it the next day after no one had claimed it and I got £386 from the bookmaker - you do not get many winners in that manner! I finally gave up all racing when I reached 80 and now it is the garden that keeps me busy.

While serving as Senior Warden in Gateway I became a Founder of Witta's Island Lodge in 1990 and also joined Chapter and Mark. In 1995 I also joined Allied Degrees in which I received Grand Rank in 2008.

In March 1984 I joined Wychwood Conclave of the Secret Monitor degree and this Order really became my favourite. I have been a Founder of at least four different Conclaves and a member of seven. I went up to the rank of Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Wiltshire and also Provincial Grand Chancellor of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire and also held Provincial ranks in both London and Hampshire & Isle of White. In 2000 I was promoted to Grand Rank. Secret Monitor has really kept me extremely busy for a goodly number of years, but I have enjoyed every minute of it. One of the Conclaves I was Founder of was Enigma Conclave and on 2nd September this year I was Installed as the Supreme Ruler, my fifth chair in that degree!

Next April I shall finally be Installed as

the Worshipful Master of Witta's Island Lodge, which as a founder I really am looking forward to.

On the personal side of life I have been a very lucky man. I met my Wife Doreen when she was only 15 and courted her for five years before we married in March 1964 and we have been very happily together since then, LONG MAY IT CONTINUE. We have no children but a lot of Brothers and Sisters and nephews and Nieces.

Our passion for the last few years has been going on Cruises. This year we went on one in June, have another booked for October and a further one over Christmas and the New Year. We really do look forward to our cruises.

Doreen has always backed me up with all my Masonry and for nine years we ran the Widows Lunches in Witney and she really was a tremendous help. In Witta's Island and in the Order of the Secret Monitor we also we ran Ladies Festivals and again the right touches in the right places from her always led to the best end product. She has always backed me up to the hilt and many thanks are due to her.

All in all I have had some thirty nine years of Masonry and I must say that every minute has been very enjoyable and I hope to get a few more years in if The Great Man will grant me the time.

W. Bro. Robert 'Barney' Barnfield

WITTA'S ISLAND WANDERERS - WINTER PROGRAMME

*“Visiting is often
said to be the
lifeblood of
Freemasonry”*

It's the autumn/winter season again and hope the “Witta's Island Wanderer's” will be out in force again in 2016/17. Visiting is often said to be the “lifeblood of Freemasonry” and think our efforts last year can support such a claim! In 2016, our own Lodge was supported by a number of Lodges which we will look to reciprocate. So please see the visiting schedule and please do make every effort to represent Witta's Island and enjoy our own and others company in the Winter period.

26th September - Gateway Lodge No. 8501 - Meeting in **Witney**, our Mother Lodge deserves a visit, an initiation is the ceremony.

20th October 2016 - Carfax Lodge No. 5723 - Meeting in **Woodstock**, see the Installation of Bro. Josh Spencer (son of the DPGM) who visited Witta's Island in the Summer!

23rd November 2016 - Oxford Lodge No.6691 - Meeting in **Witney** by special dispensation! A reciprocal visit having received good support in the Summer!

11th January 2017 - Windrush Lodge No. 1703 - Our very own W.Bro. Martin McBride will be going into the Chair at Windrush Lodge in **Witney**. Let's go and show him some Witta's Island support!

16th March 2017 - Weyland Lodge No.6507 - Our long time visitor Bro. Harry Hebborn is to be Installed into the Chair as Worshipful Master! Come and support the Weyland Mafia and Bro. Secretary's father-in-law! Meeting in **Bicester**.





WITTAS ISLAND 2016 LADIES FESTIVAL



Wittas Island 2016 Ladies Festival was hosted by Worship Master Martin and his wife Jenny and was held at the Masonic Hall here in Witney. The following day was Valentines Day so that was the theme chosen for the evening.

The hall looked splendid decorated with hearts and flowers. Although we had been told the hall would have been redecorated sometime before the event, this didn't happen. However, with all the fancy wall and table decorations, the evening was bright and "loving".



Another excellent meal was provided by Gary and his team, all beautifully cooked and well served up. After a short visit to the Temple for those who wished to see it, we were entertained by "The Sisters of Swing" who treated

us to many nostalgic tunes to sing and dance along with. The evening was then rounder off by a disco by Chris Brown Roadshow for those who had the energy to carry on until Midnight.

From all the positive comments and goodwill wishes we received, we can only conclude it was a successful evening that was enjoyed by one and all!



Pictures:

Above: WM's table

Left: DC Bob Swanton leading the can-can!

SOCIAL EVENTS 2016/17

Witta's Island End of Season Drinks/Skittles/BBQ Evening

Saturday 24th September 2016 @ the Witney Masonic Hall



Witta's Island Curry Night

Sunday 20th November 2016 @ The Shaan Indian restaurant in Witney.



Witta's Island & Gateway Lodge Christmas Carols Evening

Sunday 11th December 2016 @ the Witney Masonic Hall



David & Jenny Hutton
invite you to attend the
**Witta's Island Lodge
Ladies Festival**

Saturday 18th March 2016

Witney Masonic Hall

6:30 for 7:00pm

4 Course Meal with Wine

Live Entertainment

Dress: Evening Dress

Carriages at Midnight

Tickets £TBC

**Further information and flyer will be sent to all members and
will be posted on the Lodge Website:**

www.WittasIslandLodge.org.uk



WITTA'S ISLAND TODAY

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LODGE OF INSTRUCTION (LOI)

We meet on an informal basis and practise the various rituals so that at our 'actual' meetings we feel confident and well rehearsed. There are always experienced brethren there to guide and instruct the newer brethren as necessary. The Lodge of Instruction is key to the guarantee of a good meeting of which the members can be proud and which hopefully gives pleasure to our visitors.

The purpose of the Lodge of Instruction is to provide an opportunity for the newer Brethren to become versed in the ritual and symbolism of Freemasonry. Also to be able to practise the ritual in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The meetings are usually overseen by the Preceptor (another word for teacher) who is an experienced member of the Lodge.

The rehearsal of a ceremony normally takes place with the officers of the regular Lodge occupying the positions they either hold or expect to fill next year. Lay brethren are also given the opportunity to practise any of the offices. This gives them a chance to practise a ceremony in an office which until then is unfamiliar to them. There are also opportunities for any brothers to practise any additional ritual or signs should they so desire (time permitting).

Although, of course, the ceremonies are always practised in earnest to make sure we give of our best at the actual meetings, LoI could not be classified as a totally serious event and there is always a lot of fun and banter, usually followed up with a pint in a local public house!

All Master Masons should attend to enable them to receive the benefit of informal instruction in preparation for their eventual progression in the Craft.

Dates for upcoming LOI's:

2016: 8th Sep, 13th Oct, 10th Nov, 6th Dec **2017:** 12th Jan, 9th Feb, 9th Mar

All held at the Witney Masonic Centre!