



The Back Page.

The Back Page will look at topics, points of view and other items and of interest but from not quite *The Right Angle*.

Darts. Rumour has it that around seventy entries have been received for the Masters Darts Championship which will start in September (if the young inexperienced Office-bearers who are organising it return from the Far East). An insider who has been keeping an eye on the practice on a Friday revealed that a seventy - three dart finish was a possibility by some of the experts. Right. Is a picture of The Masters Trophy which resembles a football Trophy that a famous Glasgow team won in the early seventies. The winner will also receive a rather good 70 cl bottle of the best. **Large Screen.** The back page has been aware that some people have questioned whether the large screen is square, level and

perpendicular on the Lounge wall. Well the person who put it there joined the Lodge in the early seventies and is an expert in hanging things. Our expert in everything was asked for his opinion, adjusting his glasses he said "It's like the planets - perfectly aligned" **Quiz** - ? X 1596 - 639 + 2 = 111083, what number is ? If you are stuck with the answer, then the clue is - a famous plumber will be this age at the end of September.

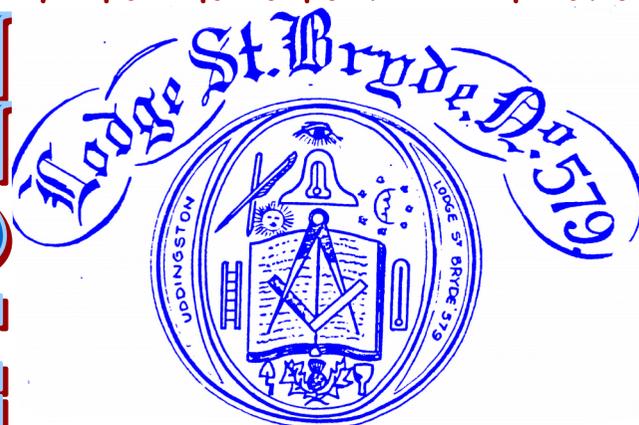
What ? The Plumber !



70

THE MAGAZINE OF LODGE ST. BRYDE No. 579

THE RIGHT ANGLE



September

2008

Issue

No. 119

Bro. Gerry Sharman, R.W.M.

Inside this issue

- Diary
- Lodge News
- Provincial News
- In whom do you place your trust

Homepage- <http://www.stbryde.co.uk>


September Masonic Diary

Mon. 1st. Lodge St. Bryde No. 579. Deputation to Lodge Buchanan No. 1499. E.A. Degree by Bro. Alasdair Dunlop, W.J.W.

Wed. 3rd. Lodge St. Bryde No. 579. Management Committee at 7.30 p.m.

Tues. 9th. Lodge St. Bryde No. 579. Deputation to Lodge Bothwell Brig No. 1229. F.C. Degree by Bro. David Shaw, W.S.W.

Wed. 10th. Lodge St. Bryde No. 579. Regular Meeting at 7.30 p.m. M.M. Degree by Lodge Livingstone, Stonefield No. 599.

Thurs. 11th. Bro. James L. Jack, P.M. will present "The George Washington National Masonic Monument" Lecture at Lodge Tollcross No. 1194.

Mon. 22nd. Bro. James L. Jack, P.M. will present "The George Washington National Masonic Monument" Lecture at Lodge St. Kentigern No. 429, Penicuik.

Wed. 24th. Lodge St. Bryde No. 579 Regular Meeting at 7.30p.m. E.A. Degree by Bro. Alasdair Dunlop, W.J.W.

Fri. 3rd. Oct. Provincial Grand Lodge Regular Communication at 7.30p.m. At Bellshill (305).

Installations

Fri. 12th. Sept.	Lodge St. Mary Coltness No. 31.
Wed. 1st. Oct.	Lodge Hamilton No. 233.
Sat. 4th. Oct.	Lodge St. Andrew Military No. 668
Tues. 21st. Oct.	Lodge Meridian No. 1779
Fri. 24th. Oct.	Lodge Blantyre Kilwinning No. 557
Sat. 25th. Oct.	Lodge St. Clair No. 427.

Lodge St. Bryde Annual Dance



**Saturday 4th. October
2008
at 7.30 p.m.**

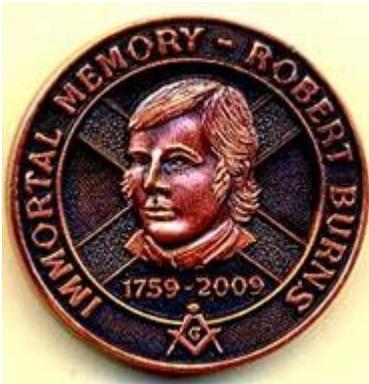
Contact Bro. Pat Clarke for Tickets.
£15 each



P.G.L. Golf..

The Provincial Annual Golf Outing was held on 10th. August at Drumpellier Golf Club. The weather was not too kind but the event was another great success. Lodge Coltswood No. 1067 were the victors in the Team event , with Bro. Colin Campbell

winning the Individual and Challenge Cups. Tom Ferguson of 1067 won the Seniors Cup.



Advance Notice. Provincial Grand Lodge will hold a Special Burns Supper on Friday 20th. March 2009 to mark the 250th.

Anniversary of the birth of Bro. Robert Burns. The event will be held in Cambuslang and further details regarding tickets will be available soon.

New Caravan. Donations to the New Provincial Caravan from

Lodges and Individuals has been tremendous and the first year of fund raising has been very encouraging. An Atlas model caravan has been chosen as the proposed option and details will be circulated to all Lodges in the Province soon for the information of the Brethren. We must however, continue with our fund raising efforts to be in a position purchase the new caravan and have it ready for the start of the 2010 season. **Homepage.** The Provincial Homepage continues to be more than popular - over 16, 000 visitors have had the opportunity to view what we in the Middle Ward are doing for our Community. If you have still to visit, the address is,

www.pgllanarkshire.org.uk



Provincial Grand Lodge Seminar.

At The Provincial Grand Lodge Seminar held on Saturday 31st. May 2008, Bro. Rev. Peter Price, Provincial Senior Grand Chaplain gave a very thought provoking lecture entitled, "In whom do you place *your* trust". Since the Seminar, many Brethren have asked if the Paper could be

reproduced. The Lecture has been printed in full on the following pages for the information and education of our Brethren.

In the 18th. Century, Britain was overwhelmingly Christian: now it is multicultural, and it is evident that the influence of religion in society has declined. What sense does it make to ask a candidate for our Order if he believes in a Supreme Being?

In all likelihood this is very probably the first time in his life that he has been asked this question. Do candidates today *actually* believe in God – or do they say that they do in order to become eligible to join the Craft?

They asked the candidate from Fife,
In times of difficulty and strife,
Tell us, you must,
In whom do you trust?
The initiate replied, "In the wife !"

Nevertheless, when a candidate is to be initiated and before the degree proceeds the first question put to the candidate is , "In whom do you put your trust? The question is confirmation of that question put to him at his Enquiry Meeting, " Do you believe in a Supreme Being?" However, whatever the present state of society, it can be shown that a belief in the Supreme Being is one of the oldest and most fundamental of the ancient Landmarks of the Order. This belief in God as a requirement for membership is no new tenet of the Craft. Ancient records demonstrate that this is a LANDMARK of the Order.

The term LANDMARK is biblical in origin.

The term is found, for example, in Deuteronomy 27 : 17 :”cursed be he that removeth his neighbour’s landmark.” Or in Proverbs 22 : 28 where it is said, “Remove not the ancient landmarks which the fathers have set”. In early times, prior to the development of modern surveying techniques, and the recording of the position, shape and size of land areas, it was very difficult to establish the permanent boundaries of a farm, estate, or other piece of land. Almost the only known way was to fix upon some prominent feature, such as a hill, a stream, a rock, or even a tree, and from it draw a line to some other static feature, and thus establish the limits beyond which a man’s property could not, or should not go. Later, more or less permanent marker stones with identifying marks cut into them were set up, and their self explanatory name was LANDMARKS.

In Freemasonry, there are certain principles, practices, traditions, usages and laws which are considered to be significant to the ESSENTIAL IDENTITY and NATURE of FREEMASONRY. These things, which are spoken of as ancient LANDMARKS of the Order are irrevocable and unchangeable. (how many LANDMARKS there might be is a matter of some debate which is not our concern now) However in all the lists of LANDMARKS there are elements which are common to each of them. These are: that a Mason professes a belief in God, the Supreme Being, the G.A.O.T.U.

Secondly, that the VSL is an essential and indispensable part of the Lodge, and must be open in full view when the Brethren are at labour.

The third element is an afterlife which is spoken of in Rituals though is not specified as to what type of future awaits the believing mason.

John S. Simons, in “The Principles of Masonic Jurisprudence” defines LANDMARKS in this way: “We assume those principles of action to be LANDMARKS which have existed from time immemorial, whether in written or unwritten law: which are identified with the form and essence of the society: which the great majority agree cannot be changed, and which every mason is bound to maintain intact under the most solemn and inviolable sanction.”



Provincial News. Seminar....

The Provincial Seminar which was held in May was a tremendous success. Over 180 attended and the speakers, Rev. Peter Price, Prof. David Stevenson, Bob Cooper presented papers of the highest standard. The Kilwinning Ludge demonstrated an E.A. Degree circa 1695 which was based on their minute books of the time.



Obituary

Bro. Marshall Stark passed away during the summer recess.

Marshall was Initiated into the Lodge on the 28th December 1966, his Proposer was PM Bro. Peter Smith and his Secunder was PM Bro. Joe Polson. He stayed in the village at Garvald Place and he was an Electrician to trade. Although he didn't serve his apprenticeship there, his family had a small electrical business in Uddingston and he did work with them for several years. He was well known in the village at that time having been brought up and worked there.

Marshall went through his Degrees at three consecutive meetings, all conferred by Lodge Office bearers, as was his Mark Degree in October of 1967. He was Installed into his first Office as 2nd Junior Steward, as it was at that time, in November 1968 and he served for the next four years in Office reaching the position of Senior Deacon.

It was then that Marshall moved away to work in the North Sea and we lost touch with him thereafter. He was an excellent member and Office bearer and he and his wife were supportive of the social evenings in the Lodge.

The Lodge was represented at his funeral and condolences were passed on to his wife Janette and her family.

It is clear that this DEFINITION is comprised of three necessary elements which define a LANDMARK as such:

1. It exists from time immemorial.
2. It expresses the very form and essence of the Craft.
3. Therefore it follows that it can never be changed.

According to William Preston, LANDMARKS, are boundaries set up in order to check all innovations, as now expressed in the 10th. Regulation to which the Master-elect is required to assent, namely: "You admit that it is not in the power of any man, or any body of men, to make alteration or innovation in Freemasonry".

Well then, has belief in God always been a requisite for membership of the Masonic Order? When operative lodges started to accept non-operative masons, and the building of a spiritual temple became the main goal, there arose the need to set agreed boundaries. In other words, only LANDMARKS which served the aims of speculative masons were chosen from among the customs and usages already existing in the operative lodges. The connection between speculative Masonry and operative Masonry having been largely verified it is important to note that the documents of the mediaeval masons show that belief in God was a requirement of the Craft Guilds. Throughout these MSS there are clear indications that it was the duty of every mason to worship God in accordance with the doctrine of the then established church. And it is hard to imagine any deviation from this when we remember that these were the Craftsmen who built our ancient cathedrals and churches. The next documents in chronological order are those Masonic title deeds known today as the "OLD CHARGES". There are over 130 texts in existence, all very similar in content, from which it may be deduced that they all derive from a common source, invoking the blessing of the Trinity. After setting out the legendary history of Craft Masonry, the Old Charges recited demands which were binding on the Master and the Fellows concerning belief in God. Again, throughout the Middle Ages there were in most towns in England and Scotland, Guilds of Masons, and many of their ordinances have been preserved.

From these it is clear that a mason was required to profess the religion of the established church, and to acknowledge belief in the Trinity. However, we ought to be aware that the subject of belief in God was one of great controversy in the 17th. century. Britain was rife with religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants, and between the various non-conformist denominations and the established church. In that same volatile period the beginnings of what we now think of as modern science began to challenge certain aspects of religious worldview, and the “Enlightenment” or Age of Reason was born. Modern masonry emerged out of this social and intellectual ferment. In the centuries prior to the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717 Masonic Lodges were governed in accordance with the “Old Charges”. Then, a candidate for admission into Freemasonry was required to be of the Christian Religion, and to declare a specific belief in the Trinity. This practice continued until 1723 when the new BOOK OF CONSTITUTIONS was introduced.

This version contained several significant changes which caused great concern and dissention among the brethren of the time. At what date the Christian faith ceased to be a requisite we cannot say with certainty, but it was the work of Dr. James Anderson, a Presbyterian Minister, in completing the 1st. edition of the Book of Constitutions, that the first real change can be seen. – “Though in ancient times masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation .. Yet `tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them *to that religion in which all men agree*”. ie. Belief in God was still required, but the religion of the established church was no longer mandatory. From now on a candidate was not asked about his own particular religion: the only question of a religious nature asked at the beginning of the candidate’s initiation was : “In whom do you put your trust?” with the reply being, “In God”. Thus as a mason he was free to interpret Masonic symbols, allegory, and actions according to his own conception of their spiritual meaning, whether he be a Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or other religious persuasion. So it may confidently be claimed that “Belief in God” can be said to be a LANDMARK of the Craft, having existed



Lodge St. Bryde News.

Annual Dance. The Lodge has decided that due the tremendous success of last years Annual Dance to hold another Dance this year.

The Dance will take place in

the Hall on Saturday 4th. October at 7.30pm Dress code is smart but casual and tickets can be purchased, cost £10 from Bro. Pat Clarke. **Your support is required to make this another success!**

2009 Trip. Arrangements are being made for the Lodge Deputation next year. It looks likely that Lodge St. Bryde will visit The Lodge of Melrose St. John No. 1 bis. Bro. Ronnie McCarney is looking after the arrangements and details will be available early in the New Year.



Wayne Price. Congratulations to Bro. Wayne Price a well respected Member of our Lodge who has been Elected to the Office of Worthy Master of The Civil War Lodge of Research No. 1865 in Virginia. His Installation will be in Richmond in December. **Work Party.** The Lodge Work Party carried out a tremendous work schedule during the summer recess. The Lounge was completely

decorated after the January storm damaged the ceiling. Other work included a clear up of the garden and surrounding property and a new radiator fitted in the Gents. Electrical work was carried out to provide lighting for the dart board and a new flat screen T.V. was fitted in the Lounge. The R.W.M. would like to thank all those who helped in any way during the work carried out during the recess.

However, everything in Masonry has a reference to God, implies God, speaks of God and points to God. Every degree, symbol, obligation, lecture, charge, finds its meaning and derives its majesty from God, the GAOTU. "In all cases of doubt, difficulty and danger, in whom do you put your trust?" The answer, "IN GOD" demonstrates that with a faith so well founded a candidate for Freemasonry may advance on his journey with a firm but humble confidence.

To sum up: I believe it can be conclusively shown that "Belief in God" is a Landmark of Freemasonry, and which expresses the form and essence of the Craft, and has existed "from time immemorial".

However that may be, the question is: Do all candidates today *actually* believe in God, or do they say they do, in order to be able to join the Craft. When speculative Freemasonry took hold religion was very much part of society: now it is multi-cultural, and there is no doubt that Christianity has declined in influence, as well as numerically.

What then does it mean:

a) to ask the question today, and b) to answer it, in the required way?

A well-known lecturer on Freemasonry was asked by a mason, in view of his interest in the Craft, whether he was not minded to join. He replied that he was an atheist: to which the mason, allegedly, replied, "Don't worry about that, I've been an atheist for thirty years!" Does the question about belief in a Supreme Being still have the same force that it once had? Ought the question to be put more firmly in the Enquiry Meeting? And does that not suppose that the questioner is as firm in his belief as he claims to be?

Belief in God is a Landmark of the Craft, and underlies everything in Freemasonry, and so the vital question is still the same: *In whom do **you** put your trust?"*

Bro. Rev. Peter Price, C.B.E., Past Grand Chaplain,
Senior Provincial Grand Chaplain,
Provincial Grand Lodge of Lanarkshire (Middle Ward).

from time immemorial. Although there was undoubtedly some ambiguity in the wording of the Charge concerning God and Religion, yet the mass of contemporary evidence available indicates an adherence, at all times, to a belief in God as one of the inflexible, unquestionable and unalterable tenets of Freemasonry. The redrafting of this Charge in the Constitutions of 1815 removed such ambiguity as may have existed, and a faithful belief in God was once more clearly shown to be a LANDMARK of Craft Masonry.

The question which must now be addressed is: what is the relationship between Masonry and religion? Freemasonry is a system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols. It is a philosophy of ethical conduct which imparts moral and social virtues and which fosters brotherly love. Freemasonry stands for the values that are supreme in the life of the Church, and expects each member to follow his own faith, and to place his duty to God above all other duties. Though religious in character Freemasonry is not a religion, nor a substitute for one, The Mason who says "Masonry is my religion" does not know what he is talking about. As Masons we are proud that our Order practices universal tolerance regarding religion, so that any man may sit in a Masonic Lodge whatever his religion. All discussion on the topic of religion is banned in the Lodge, along with politics, or indeed any subject which is liable to create animosity and personal difference. When prayers are offered in the Lodge Masons understand that regardless of the person speaking, the words and manner of prayer, are being offered to THEIR Supreme Being. There is nothing in Freemasonry that is opposed to the religion a man brings with him into the Masonic Lodge. Neither does Freemasonry assert, nor teach that one religion is as good as another. It simply does not make this judgment. Freemasons believe in religious freedom, and that the relationship between the individual and his God is personal, private and sacred. We do not apply a theological test to a candidate. Our only religious test is to ensure that he believes in a Supreme Being. Belief IN God is faith: Belief ABOUT God is theology. As Freemasons we are interested only in a man's faith, not his theology.

It is important to emphasize again that Freemasonry is not a religion nor a substitute for religion. Certainly I have met Masons who have made the Craft their God – but then again you can make a god out of anything! A man does not subscribe to a new religion, much less to an anti-Christian religion, when he becomes a Freemason, any more than when he joins a political party or a Rotary Club. We insist that Freemasonry is not a religion because it lacks the characteristics that make up religion. Nowhere in the Ritual is “LIGHT” implied to mean anything more than knowledge, - and certainly NOT salvation. Our critics suggest that because we have prayers in our Rituals this supports their contention that Freemasonry IS a religion. But the House of Commons begins its day with prayers, but no one suggests they are practicing a religion. Freemasonry has its Rituals which are allegorical plays which teach lessons; but rituals do not equate to liturgy. We have no dogma or theology; no creed or profession of faith. The Order offers no sacraments, does not claim to lead to salvation by works, by secret knowledge, or by any other means. The secrets of Freemasonry are concerned only with the modes of recognition, and not with the means of salvation. The only item in the Lodge which could be deemed to be associated with religion is the altar. The dictionary defines “altar” as a flat topped block on which are offered sacrifices to the deity, - or in Christian usage, a Communion Table. However there is absolutely nothing in our Rituals or ceremonies to connect them with either of those definitions. The altar in a Masonic Lodge is simply a resting place for the VSL on which a candidate takes his Obligation.

The only religious item in the Lodge is the VSL which is the holy book pertaining to the country’s own religion. In places like India, it is common for various books to be on view in the Lodge of men of various religions. In Britain the majority of masons would claim to be Christians, and therefore the VSL will be the Bible, - probably the King James Authorised Version. A Mason may be presented with a “Masonic” Bible by family or friends, but this Bible will be exactly the same kind of Bible as that used in the Lodge as the VSL. It is only a “Masonic” Bible because it also contains a brief history of Freemasonry,

and a glossary of Biblical references relating to Masonic Ceremonies. Masons who are not Christians will bring their own holy book for their initiation. Freemasons are religious men, but Freemasonry is not a religion. However Freemasonry is far from indifferent to religion. Without interfering in religious practice it expects each member to follow his own faith seriously and sincerely, and to place above all other duties his duty to God – by whatever name he is known. The Lessons Freemasonry teaches in its ceremonies are to do with moral values, and not religious doctrine. The principles of the fraternity are based on the same moral absolutes that form the foundations of all true faith. Because it is universal in scope, and inclusive in membership the Craft provides a philosophy and a fraternity, where good men can “meet on the level and part on the square” The names used for the Supreme Being enable men of different faiths to join in prayer to God as each sees him, without the terms of the prayer causing dissention among them. There is no Masonic God. A Freemason’s God remains the God of the religion each member professes. The Order makes no attempt to produce a conglomerate god – a lowest common denominator god, created from various aspects of the gods of the world religions. Masonry leaves it to the individual mason to choose his own pathway to God. A mason is expected, quite properly, to get that spiritual guidance from his own church/denomination/cult, which, in turn, he is encouraged to support with both his energy and his personal finances. Nevertheless, it has been charged not only that Masonry is a religion, but that Freemasonry’s god is called JAHBULON. This accusation appears in the book, “*The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge*”, written by John Ankerberg and John Weldon. The name of this “god”, allegedly means “Jehovah-Baal-Osir”. The two men base their charge on Stephen Knight’s anti-Masonic books “The Brotherhood” and “Darkness Visible”. This secret name is said to describe God in the Royal Arch Degree. It is true that a similar word is found in some associated degrees, but it is not a secret God, or a secret name for God. The suggestion is that this may be a poor attempt to present the name of God in three languages. Such as “*Dios-Dieu-Gott*” .