



Triple Taulk

COMMUNICATION for the ROYAL ARCH in SOMERSET

Issue 1, May 2014



IN THIS ISSUE:

COVER:

New Team, New Season
Our Oldest Exalte

INSIDE:

Hot Stuff in Bath
Alfred the Great

By George They've Got It

2015 Dates to note

No. 41 a Potted History

BACK:

A Securely Moored Deputy
Patently Obvious

Thomas Dunckerley

Is this our oldest Exalte?

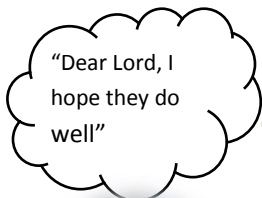
At a recent meeting of Chapter of Fidelity & Sincerity No. 1966 W Bro Arthur Morris PPJGW age 83. was Exalted into the Order. Arthur was their oldest Exalte on record, **Has there been an older one in the Province ?**

3 visitors attended from the Province of Hereford & Worcestershire as Arthurs guests. At the festive board Arthur commented "I thought it was about time I joined .

Thursday 15th May, a day to remember for many Somerset Companions for their First Appointment to Provincial Rank or a well earned promotion..

Approx 140 attended the Annual Convocation, the traditional formalities were executed efficiently and a warm welcome offered to all present, the Webbington Hotel being transformed into an atmospheric Temple with the display of crimson and blue dominating the scene. The ceremony worked like a well oiled machine in a temperature more suited to the Caribbean, Congratulations to the hard working Stewards for keeping their cool.

"Dear Lord, I hope they do well"



3 3 Active Offices, 11 First Appointments, 28 Promotions and the Principals must have had limp fingers from so many handshakes but the smiles of approval remained genuine.

The only new Principal being E Comp Ray Beckingham as Joshua.

7 official Team visits are planned during the season plus each Chapter will be represented by one of the leaders at each Chapter Installation meeting and usually a second meeting as well, so, all in all a busy year ahead awaits them.

Congratulations on a splendid Masonic experience for all who attended. The Royal Arch in Somerset remains in safe hands.

Annual Convocation 2014 !



Wake me up when its over !



D John Bennett MEGS wishes success for the this new publication and writes,

"Good communication is a key to understanding and success, the more you know, the more you will enjoy time spent in the Royal Arch in Somerset, Chapter Communication Officers need to get involved and I wish all concerned well"

Didn't we have a lovely day !



Any which Ray !



In for a Penny, in for a pound, well several actually

*Royal York
Chapter was
consecrated in
Bath in 1765*



On 21st March a 'Curry Night' was organized by E Comp Roger Penny, a man very familiar with culinary delights.

In for a Penny, in for a Pound, well several actually, Roger's night proved hot stuff and an unusual gathering for 40 RA Companions in a social and fund raising atmosphere.

Support was from all over the Province with the Boojon Tandoori restaurant full to capacity, from Bhaji to Tikka, Korma to Jalfrezi everyone scoffed and perspired with delight.

There is no feedback on the atmosphere at home the next day but the £270 extra raised for the Somerset Flood Relief Appeal was gratefully received.

Rice one Roger !

Hot Stuff in Bath !

The Flood Appeal in Somerset has now reached the staggering figure of nearly £200,000.

An example of Freemasonry working for its community.



2015

We are celebrating 250 years of continuous working of the Royal Arch in Somerset throughout 2015.

The Royal York Chapter was consecrated at the Bear Inn, Cheap Street, Bath in 1765, which is the first official record in Somerset, this Chapter ceased working in 1824 but Royal Cumberland was consecrated in 1782 to give us 250 years continuous working.

Alfred the Great at 25

King Alfred Chapter No. 3169 at Weston-super-Mare celebrated its 25th anniversary in March with the Provincial Team performing a demonstration of the 'Ceremony of the Veils'.

This is rarely seen in Somerset and the Team did everyone proud giving a skilful performance that not only gave them a challenge but King Alfred a celebration to remember.

Note these Dates -

ANNUAL PROVINCIAL WEEKEND

Durrant House Hotel, Bideford, 6th, 7th, 8th February

Friday 6th 7pm Buffet, Saturday 7th Dinner 7 for 7.30pm, Sunday at your leisure

ESPECIAL CONVOCATION in BATH (for Companions & Invites)

Bath Masonic Hall (under Banners of Royal Cumberland, Royal Sussex, St Lukes)

Wednesday 18th March Meeting 6pm, Dinner 8 for 8.30pm.

ANNUAL CONVOCATION (for Companions & Invites)

Webbington Hotel & Spa, Loxton

Thursday 21st May, 3pm Meeting, 6pm Dinner

ESPECIAL CONVOCATION (for Companions, Invites, Family & Friends)

Webbington Hotel & Spa, Loxton

Friday 9th October 3pm Meeting, 6pm Dinner

CAROLS & READINGS for CHRISTMAS (for Comps, Invites, Family & Friends)

906 plus 26

Communication Officers are all honorary members of Calderley C of U, which is open for ALL Somerset Companions to attend.

By GEORGE they've got it

Chapter of St George No. 3158 at Taunton has presented a cheque to the Royal College of Surgeons Appeal to aid surgical research for £600, a healthy contribution towards the Somerset total of £15,000.

Supreme Grand Chapter set a national target of £1m.

A wise old Mason once said, "Remember as long as you live, you make your living by what you get, but your life by what you give"



No. 41 a potted history

PAGE 3

In February 2008 the first banner ever produced for Royal Cumberland was dedicated.

It was a painstaking achievement of elaborate design involving countless hours by a dedicated seamstress, scroll work of gold leather, each square being individually embroidered.

The result was a magnificent banner sponsored by E Comp Ray Honey which signifies the Chapter's status within the Province.



A symbol can be seen today on top of the South West tower of Bath Abbey to recognize donations to the restoration of Jacobs Ladder in 1873.

As Bath started the ball rolling in Somerset and our current oldest Chapter is based in Bath we have put Royal Cumberland under the spotlight.

It appears the earliest records show their first meeting as Friday 25th January 1782, no elections were held and no Officers appointed. The three Principals, two Scribes, three Sojourners were seated and two Brethren prepared for Exaltation, one of whom a Bro Green was to be re-Exalted. The second Exalte was immediately made Janitor, at that time considered a really important Office in that his duties included postman delivering summons and chasing Companions who failed to attend.

Prior to 1817 when the Antient and Moderns together formed Supreme Grand Chapter, the name of the Chapter was not stated, the Minute books from 25th January 1782 until 29th October 1819 opened by saying 'This evening a Chapter of harmony was held'. The first time the name of Royal Cumberland was recorded was 15th April 1818. On 10th November 1818 it reads 'The Royal Arch Cumberland Chapter No. 28, this evening a Chapter of harmony was held', so perhaps this was the usual address for a Chapter at this time.

Later in 1842 to 1843 it gives the Chapter as No. 48, despite this apparent confusion over the name and number an E Comp Percy wrote, 'the Chapter called Royal Cumberland No. 28 was from its first establishment joined or attached to Royal Cumberland Lodge No. 36 yet this is not of first importance as the Chapter Warrant is dated from 11th January 1782 and has met ever since'.

On 11th August 1784 Thomas Dunkerley who had been appointed as First Grand Superintendent occupied the chair of 'H' at an emergency meeting with the intention of speeding up recruitment and disposing of some formalities. Four months later he again attended and was 'Z' for the meeting when 15 new members were admitted at a cost of 5/- each. So their earlier deliberations had proved a success.

Like today the attendance of such a high ranking official enhanced the Chapters reputation which attracted membership from a wide area. Non Bath residents were levied an Exaltation fee of £1.11.6.

Then as today membership and attendance fluctuated, some meeting dates state, 'meeting not held as an insufficient number present to open the Chapter'. At least that is not our experience today. Membership in the early days was often drawn from Royal York Lodge and Lodge of Virtue, both now extinct.

As many as 30 different locations are recorded as meeting places, the Corridor Rooms being regular for 32 years. In 1817 when the Chapter met at the Castle and Ball, three Craft Lodges built the Masonic Hall in York Street the first meeting being recorded as 10th November 1818. This building still exists and is used by the Quakers. The subsequent move to Old Orchard Street was in 1866.

In 1873 the carving of Jacobs Ladder on the west front of Bath Abbey was in need of urgent repair, the Chapter made a donation to the fund, a symbol to recognize this can be seen today on the top of the SW tower above the ascending angels.

In 1882 the first Centenary Warrant issued by Supreme Grand Chapter was presented. The original honours board which cost £26 is still in use today. In 1896 the Chapter purchased the painting 'The Pool of Bethesda' from the Octagon Chapel and is hung today over the SW chair in the west in Old Orchard Street.

One notable name in history was E Comp G Norman who was Exalted in 1803, Scribe E in 1805, Third Principal in 1806, Second Principal in 1808 but was not First Principal until 1818, he then remained in the chair for 14 of the next 17 years, obviously not a happy home life.

Attendance during the 1914-18 war was limited and a supper not often held, During WW2 on 25th & 26th April 1942 the building was damaged by enemy action and many Chapter records destroyed. The upper area dysfunctional but the hall remained in use for meetings until 1949 when temporary accommodation was used at Keynsham during restoration.

Masonic finances have often been a subject of concern and scrutiny, in 1960 the Chapter was not paying its way, the charge levied by the hall association was 2/6 per member annually, the subscription had remained at £1.00 since 1944 and had to be increased by 75% to remedy. In 1966 the Treasurer had to make a personal loan to keep the accounts solvent.

Today Royal Cumberland is not only solvent but extremely proud of its ritual and traditions, and rightly so having existed since 1782. It remains the third oldest Chapter under Supreme Grand Chapter of England.

Thanks to E Comp Ken Ellis, Scribe E at Cumberland for his knowledge

'15 new members were admitted at a cost of 5/- each'

Patently Obvious

Another unusual event took place at Royal Cyrus Chapter No. 285 at Bruton in April when a special ceremony to dedicate patents originally issued to E Comp Idris James Evans PGSoj on his appointment as the first Deputy Grand Superintendent in Somerset, anno lucis 5991 and anno lucis 5994.

Idris was originally from Seven sisters near Neath. He worked as a young man in Port Talbot steel works, did military service in the Royal Signals in the early part of WW2 stationed in Prestatyn, North Wales.

He was a keen rugby player gaining a Welsh trial at scrum half, this proved to be to his advantage as he carried out his 'foreign service' only in England representing the army in rugby matches, postings went as far afield as Scarborough and Harrogate.

In 1959 he moved south to Somerset living in Croscombe until his retirement in 1986. He was then initiated in Love and Honour Lodge and Royal Cyrus Chapter No's 285 in 1965,

which then met at Draycott road, Shepton Mallet.

His RA Masonic rise to stardom came as Prov DC in 1977 to 1989 and Deputy Grand Superintendent from 1991 to 1995.

The Patents had recently brought to the Chapters care where they will be permanently mounted and displayed in the Lodge Room.

No one did so much as **Thomas Dunckerley** for Freemasonry during the latter part of the 18th century. Born in 1724, the illegitimate son of King George II. He spent 26 years in the Navy but as his true esteem was not recognised became no more than a Gunner. It was not until 1767 that King George III recognised his birth giving him a handsome pension together with a suite of apartments in Hampton Court Palace, he was permitted to bear the Royal Arms with the appropriate motto '*Fato-non-Merito*', in his correspondence he used the name '*FitzGeorge*' (son of George)

There is no record of his Initiation into Masonry but it must have been just before 1757 as he addressed a Lodge in Plymouth at that time. In 1767 he became Provincial Grand Master of Hampshire. He was soon appointed to the superintendency of five other counties. He became a reformer or at least a remodeller of the system. He then reconstructed the Royal Arch. His name is now given to the new Club in Bath to allow senior Brethren to socialise.

A Securely Moored Deputy



Like another of his name kind—**A Man for All Seasons**.

Bob was born in Bristol, originally Kingswood then later to Oldland Common, a smart area which must have influenced his stature today. All his brothers & sisters did well, GP, Vicar, Banking. Bob gained a scholarship to Bristol Grammar School, trained as a teacher, achieved a Bachelor of Education degree and a Bachelor of Science degree from Open University. His ability to absorb and retain remains with him today.

He has been married twice, his second attempt to Val is still going strong after 33 years so I think he found the right one eventually. He has a son from his first marriage who lived in Switzerland and now a chef in Norfolk, and a step-daughter who lives in Lyon working in a language school, varied family talents you might say.

He has had 4 Headships in Schools spanning some 31 years between 1967 and 1998 when at which time he retired to develop an IT consultancy support business across West Somerset.

Can anyone have hobbies when so immersed in Masonry? Well Bob loves amateur theatre, as an actor, producer and playwright. He once built a Morris 1100 car body shell from visits to scrap yards. He's a registered instructor/examiner for the motorcycle training scheme. Helped to establish Great Yarmouth Road Runners and took place in half marathons in the 1980's. Involved in handicrafts, from carpentry to cross-stitch. Currently a cyclist, attends a gym twice a week plus reading, photography and walking. Now wait for his Masonic career !

CRAFT LODGES—initiated 1984, has been Master, Charity Steward, Treasurer, Secretary. CRAFT PROVINCIAL—PPrSGD, PPrGReg, currently Prov Orator in 2014, that early acting worked! ROYAL ARCH CHAPTERS—Exalted 1985, has been 1st Prin, Asst Scribe E, Scribe E, founder of Calderley CofU.

RA PROVINCIAL—now progressed to his 6th Office as Deputy GSup. SUPREME GRAND CHAPTER—PGStdB to PGSwdB. He is also extensively involved in Rose Croix, Red Cross of Constantine, Knights Templar, KT Priests, Royal Order of Scotland.

No one can question Bob's ability with such a history of activity, and apart from that he is a decent man to all who know him. It seems like the MOORE the Merrier and he keeps that calm positive exterior that emanates confidence to those working with him.

There is no second-string with this Deputy, Truly a **Man for All Seasons**.