



# Triple Taulk

COMMUNICATION for the ROYAL ARCH in SOMERSET

Issue 2,

February 2015



IN THIS

ISSUE:

**COVER:**

Provincial Ball 2015

**INSIDE:**

More Bideford 2015

Chapter Marine—the first  
25 years

**BACK:**

Sid the Great

Veils Uncovered

Barry K Woodside

## Provincial Ball 2015

**Bideford**

On the 6th and 7th February the revelries of the Chapter members could be heard across the Torridge estuary in north Devon when the Provincial Ball was enjoyed by over 200 guests at the Durrant House hotel.

On this occasion the 250th year of the Royal Arch in Somerset gave the celebration a special feel with support from all Masonic Orders in the Province. The ladies were resplendent in their gowns and the gentlemen equally matched in their black attire with splashes of Royal Arch colours, grandeur prevailed.

A pre dinner sparkling wine reception was hosted by MEGS John Bennett and his wife Jenny where everyone warmed to the atmosphere of the occasion. The formal dinner was followed by excellent speech making by E Comp Clive Hennessey who welcomed the ladies and a most entertaining response, partly in verse by Mrs Vanessa Johnstone-Smith.

Dancing to a fine four piece band continued with adequate imbibing well into the evening.

This annual event is now in its 20th year, it was first held at the Rainbow Hotel in Torquay when 80 attended, after two years it moved to the Durley Dean Hotel at Bournemouth, after a further three years its popularity outgrew its surroundings and it moved to the Durrant House Hotel at Bideford where it has remained ever since. For many years it has been organised by E Comp Keith Fisher and his wife Margaret and has always proved its worth as a Masonic gathering where friends meet at a formal occasion in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

Many guests made a weekend break when there was a less formal gathering on the Friday evening with a buffet supper. Some spend their free time visiting the local places of interest which include Westward Ho and Appledore and across the river Taw to the largest town in the area, Barnstaple. Exmoor is close by for those preferring more rural surroundings, making Bideford an ideal choice for the Chapter weekend.



Keith & Margaret Fisher—the  
champions of Bideford, past and  
present



Vanessa Johnstone-  
Smith



Durrant House was bought by Admiral Sir Richard Gordon Keats in 1810, as his west country home, he was the son of Rev Richard Keats, rector of Bideford and a capable and well respected naval officer, some of his battle actions became legendary. He became Commodore Governor of Newfoundland 1813-1816 and died in 1834 when Governor of Greenwich Hospital.

Don't we look dash-  
ing? Better hurry from  
the bar before the  
ladies miss us!

The elegant place  
settings



**B**ideford is a small town with a little over 17,000 population, its long bridge connecting east and west of the town was said to have been originally built of timber in 1286, the present stone structure was built in 1474, all of its 24 arches are of a different size.

In the 16th century it boasted the third largest port in Britain, Sir Walter Raleigh landed his first shipment of tobacco here.

In 1682 three women were accused of witchcraft and hanged here, one of the last trials of its kind in England.

The Provincial Chapter weekend had no structure that collapsed, no hangings, just an aura of jollity and pleasure.

### 2015 Celebrations—What Next?

**It's the especial Convocation in Bath on *Wednesday 18th March*, if you haven't booked dining please hurry.**

**Then it's the Annual Convocation at the Webbington on *Thursday 28th May*,**

**and the Especial Convocation, again at the Webbington on *Friday 9th October*, this to include family and friends.**

Glad to be here says John Griffin, at least its dry outside—more than I can say for inside.



Does it look obvious we emptied the  
bottles?



# Chapter MARINE EC No. 232—the first 25 years



Chapter Marine is one of the youngest Chapters in Somerset, but has one of the oldest histories, so we first need to understand the history of its Lodge, the first known recording of it being 1776.

It was consecrated in Calcutta in what is now the District of Bengal in India, the reason for putting either Lodge or Chapter before the name being an Indian custom. Being formed there it attracted mariners looking after the Empire in that part of the world. At the time there were other Lodges operating in different constitutions, Marine puts EC after its name to proudly show they were and remain English Constitution.

It must be noticed that this was some 40 years before UGLE in 1813. Marine was an Antient or Atholl Lodge meaning that the ceremony of Exaltation was worked within the Lodge at that time, sadly most early records are missing.

There was much change during this period with Lodges and Chapters, some surrendering, others forming under the new constitution and different numbers being allocated. In 1949 Chapter Sinai attached to Lodge Marine but the independence of India meant falling numbers, so both Lodge and Chapter trans-

ferred to London in 1972 but the Chapter surrendered its Charter.

The Lodge transferred to Portishead in 1975 being close to the sea and easy access for mariners returning from India, Chapter Sinai did not move with it. It was a further 10 years before another move to form a Chapter attached to the Lodge. The arrival of the God Father of the Chapter—Trevor Johnson, a London Mason looking to make a home in Somerset whose huge depth of experience and contacts meant he could almost single handedly act as the driving force and mid-wife to the new Chapter.



The name was chosen and to be the same workings as Sinai which was Nigerian, but this was found to be incorporated into Aldersgate which became adopted. However, the installation ceremony was not liked, in which the Principals are installed JHZ, it was felt that Z should install all his own team so Domatic was used making it a two ritual Chapter. About 10 years ago following major revision it was changed to Domatic only.

So at 2pm on 20th January 1990 at Portishead Chapter Marine was consecrated by its 14 founders under the direction of E Comp Tom Hughes MEGS.

In the 25 years there have been some 35 candidates. Original meetings were in the afternoon to allow many to travel long distances but 10 years ago it was moved to the evening which has benefited recruitment. There was early pioneering work done by sharing the Sojourners and Principals duties and now one step further by sharing the questions at the Festive Board, this takes 6 Companions.

There is a special and unique toast, everyone present toasts their Mother Chapter whether it still exists or not. So, Chapter Marine's foundation, quirkiness and uniqueness thrives well after 25 years. To quote words from its consecration:-

*"Let us convince the world of the benefit of this invaluable institution, never let it be said we have laboured in vain, nor wasted our strength to no avail"*

## SID the Great

Masonry is made up of many greats but few come better than the stalwart of Chapter of Sincerity No. 261 than E Comp Sid Honibal.

Sid received his 50th Certificate in January from the MEGS D John Bennett.

He was Exalted in 1965 and broke all the rules by being Scribe E for 36 years either in 261 or Taunton Deane No. 5221 where he was founding Scribe E, obviously a successor to better him could not be found.

He was presented with an engraved glass and bottle of his favourite tippie by the three Principals on behalf of all the members.

Congratulation to Sid for his devotion to duty, whether he remembered the evening after the bottle was emptied we do not know.



## VEILS UNCOVERED

The Provincial Team performed a 'Passing of the Veils' ceremony at Chapter Marine No. 232 in January. 60 Companions packed into the cauldron that is Clevedon Masonic Hall to witness the event to mark its 25th anniversary. MEGS presided, the narrator was E Comp Robert Moore with his authoritative, scholastic voice gave a positive introduction and explanation of each advancement for the candidate.

Today in England it is worked in Bristol only but is still performed in Ireland, Scotland and the USA.

Festive fun continued with a Burns night supper complete with wee dram and not so wee Haggis led to the slaughter by kilt and bagpipes.

A Masonic treat for both the Chapter and Provincial Team.

### E Comp Sid receiving his gifts from E Comp John Trowbridge Z at 261

From **WOODSIDE** to Goldside E Comp Barry has led an illustrious life venturing from his Cornish roots to a number of formative years in east Africa with his family in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, formally referred to as Tanganyika. Before returning in 1961 for a public school education Barry founded his love for Masonry by progressing through the cubs and scout movement and was also an active sportsman, sailing, horse riding, football, rugby and cricket. At his mature age he now admits golf is his limitation.

Having spent his early years as far away from the sea as possible he then attended a naval school, T S Mercury at Hamble nr Southampton. Here the sleeping arrangements was a hammock aboard HMS Gannet, a Victorian Royal Navy *Doterel*-Class Screw Sloop, at anchor in the channel on the river Hamble, perhaps this is how he developed his balanced outlook on life!

This led to boys service in the Royal Navy at Gosport now aged 15, but his seafaring career was short lived as he joined the construction industry, starting at the bottom as a scaffolder, progressing into management and eventually retiring as a director in one of the largest national scaffold companies, you could say a pipe dream come true!



Barry lost his first wife in 2004 after 33 years together, subsequently meeting his current wife Peggy in 2005 and whilst on holiday in the USA proposed on 24th June and married on 28th June 2010, that's positive action, this took place under the canopy of a covered pontoon on the May river at Palmetto Bluff in South Carolina.

What of his Masonry? He was initiated in 1977 in the Breanick Lodge No. 8610 at St Agnes, Cornwall, progressing through the chair in 1986 and promoted to PPrGStdB in 1993. Exalted in RA 1978 in Trevaunance Chapter No. 4668 also at St Agnes and succeeded his father as 1st Principal in 1990 where he remained for 2 years, then promoted to PPrScN in 1993.

His eldest son took notice of his fathers activities joining the Star of Saxony Lodge No. 853 meeting in Germany. Barry was fortunate in attending his Initiation and Raising ceremonies being invited to participate in both. He has a younger son living in Loughborough and a daughter in Taunton along with his four grandsons. All his children have professional careers.

Barry transferred with his job to Taunton in 1980 and so started his Masonic advancement in Somerset, joining Vivary Lodge No. 8654 in 1992 and Taunton Deane Chapter No. 5221 in 1993. Active rolls rapidly followed in both, rising to Provincial Third Grand Principal in 2008 and now Second Grand Principal.

Other Offices include Deputy PGM, Royal Order of Scotland, Cotswolds District. Past Deputy PGM, ROS South Wales District. Also Officer in charge of Sentinels at Supreme Council in the Ancient and Accepted Rite at Duke St, St James's, London.

From West Cornwall to East Africa, Royal Navy to Royal Arch, his scaffold experience has built him a platform where WOOD really has turned to GOLD.

### Barry K Woodside

Second Prov Grand Principal

