



Triple Taulk

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Especial 250th Anniversary

Webbigton Hotel, Friday 9th October 2015

Companions with wives, partners and non Masonic guests gathered for this auspicious occasion, one of the highlights of the 250th year activities.

Over 200 attended for a splendid afternoon and evening, the guests learning a little of what the Royal Arch is all about and how our activities and influence go far beyond our regular meetings.

There were many visiting dignitaries as with all such occasions it is important we maintain the glamour of our ceremonial



performances and the Provincial Team excelled to impress all present.

Andy Gray our Provincial Archivist gave an informed history of the Province from its humble beginnings in 1765 to the present day, as was said the difficulty was knowing what to leave out rather than include.

Our chosen Charity this year being the Visually Impaired Cricket Club not only presented the story of their organisation but demonstrated the game to the assembly, interesting how those with normal sight struggled to perform with accuracy whilst those with impaired vision

had other senses sharpened to excel. E Comp John Bennett presented a cheque for £1,000 to the club with a further donation planned by our Annual Convocation in May 2016.

It was nice to see our Grand Superintendent not only celebrating 50 years in Masonry but being acknowledged with his wife Jenny for 50 years of marriage.

A grand occasion enjoyed by all who attended.



The power of authority, you are being watched, one error and you will be thrown to the lions.



GLOVES – Should they be worn at our Convocations? a teasing question with mixed views. Hand it to the MEGS but he has stirred a hornets nest of opinions. Chapter Communication Officers need to send in your own Chapter response before the end of December. Around 30 years ago Supreme Grand Chapter decided that gloves do not form part of a Royal Arch Regalia and ceased wearing them, but, each Grand Superintendent was left to make his own decision, most accepted but some chose to continue and Somerset fell into the latter group. The result is we do not know when visiting if they should be worn or not.

Our MEGS would like to fall in line with the SGC policy but feels it is wrong to enforce a change if its against the wishes of a majority, that is why you are being asked to give your views.

When the results are finalised the Provincial executive will give its ruling, this is expected to be in January 2016.

Battle of the Orders

In August members from Craft, Mark, Royal Arch and Knights Templar gathered at Long Sutton Golf Club under the organisation of E Comp Barry Woodside Second Provincial Grand Principal to do Royal battle on the Golf course.

This year it was won by Knights Templar and team Captain Jon Mansell but was it fair play at all holes? Craft were seen pinned against a tree with swords and Mark using a heavy maul whilst Chapter members were locked in a vault. As you will observe they ended smiling.

The team shown is L to R, Bob Town, Barry Woodside, Peter Ashby, John Hartry, Ian Pamplin, Iain Robertson



Eric strikes the right note



E Comp Eric Johns in 2015 successfully completed 50 years in Royal Arch Masonry, a Veteran in Chapter and a Veteran at the keyboard. Eric is a Cornishman from the St Austell china clay area, his father worked as a clayman and his mother was a dressmaker, life was tough in those days particularly in a deprived mining area but the family Methodism brought him into music from an early age in both Chapel and Brass Band.

At the declaration of war in 1939 many schools became overcrowded from evacuees but he successfully gained a scholarship from Treverbyn school to the local Grammar school and when it was discovered he could play the piano became enlisted to help play for the school assembly.

He left school in 1946 and obtained work as an engineering trainee with Post Office Telephones and remained with the company throughout its many changes, this was interrupted with National Service in the Royal Signals. He became Technical Officer in charge of the new St Austell Telephone exchange in 1959 and retired from BT in 1990.

Masonry was very secretive in those days so to be approached by a colleague was an indication of the respect in which he was held, Eric was initiated in the Fowey Lodge No. 977 on 12th December 1962 and exalted into Fowey RA Chapter on 23rd June 1965. He later moved to Bristol to take a management role and settled in Portishead. On retirement he took an Open University course and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1995.

A chance meeting with an old Cornish colleague introduced him to Lodge Marine meeting at that time in Portishead, at one time he was Lodge organist at all 5 Craft Lodges meeting at Avonmouth and now holds honorary membership in all Craft and Chapters meeting there.

Masonry has much to thank Eric for, his dedication and support has been well recognized and can be regarded as a stalwart in the Province and beyond.

Music has been his key to Masonic success where he has remained in tune throughout North Somerset.

ALAN Geoffrey Robert HOLTON

Engineer, Farmer, Provincial Scribe E and very much a family man, Alan is well known and respected by all who have dealings with him, tolerant, considerate and flexible, great attributes that has allowed him to excel throughout his family, business and Masonic life.

He has been married to Sally for 48 years, four children, two of which are adopted and Mum and Dad to the many fostered over the years and grandparents to eleven, that in itself deserves a medal.

He started farming as a hobby looking after a couple of goats which soon escalated to sheep, calves and donkeys, this meant moving home to a farm near Tiverton where they now keep cattle and Wensleydale sheep renowned for exceptional high quality lustrous wool, said to be the finest and most valuable lustre wool in the world.

Alan joined Masonry whilst working as a production engineering manager for Westland Helicopters being initiated into Corinthian Pillar Lodge No. 7552 in 1982, little did he know he would remain a high flier, and WM in 1995. Further whirlwind activity and 6 years later he was promoted to Senior Deacon and in 2008 as Grand Sword Bearer, both active ranks. Not surprisingly he became Master of Somerset Farmers Lodge No. 9180 in 2009 and is now DC.



He also progressed through the chairs of Mark and Ancient and Accepted Rite.

The Royal Arch welcomed Alan in Chapter of Brotherly Love No. 329 in 1989, he became First Principal in 1999, a noteworthy meeting, with E Comp Denis Calderley and the Provincial Team along with the MEGS of Dorset and his Team also in attendance. Promotion was rapid, Prov 2nd Asst Sojourner in 2002, Registrar in 2010 and Prov Scribe E in 2011. Also in 2011 he received the Supreme Grand Chapter rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer.

He is to become Provincial Grand Senior Warden in the Craft at the Annual meeting in March 2016, a richly earned honour.

Eldest son Duncan is currently WM of Somerset Farmers, the picture shows Alan on the occasion of installing Duncan in the chair in March this year. Alans silvered hair is his trademark and he brings a golden touch of grass roots to the higher echelon of Freemasonry.

Avalon Chapter No 446 performed their last meeting in the West Cloister of Wells Cathedral in November, in many ways a sad occasion to leave such historical surroundings.

Wells is probably the most beautiful of the great English churches, the early Cloisters were in place before the Chapter House was complete and the three Cloisters were substantially remodelled in the 15th century. Bishop Bekynton (1443-65) began the alterations in the West Cloister with the intention of building a grammar school above it, although not completed until 1480 the fine vaulting contained both Bekyntons initials and coat of arms.



Pictures show the meeting room and dining in the Cloisters

Avalon will continue its meetings in future in the Masonic Hall, Wedmore

