

The Ailsa Craig

Fixtures and Fittings

(Lodge Activities)

- Congratulations to Bros. James Lynn, Mel & Paramjit Sing Gill, on the Mark Degree working. The following Brethren performed the duties:

Master Bro. Kurup

Senior Overseer Bro. Salvi

Junior Overseer Bro. Ito

Lecture Bro. Ruiter

S. Deacon Bro. Colin Macdonald

J. Deacon Bro. Bruce Barnes

Inner Guard Bro. Anthony Lee

D of C Bro. Chang Pinang

- The next meeting will be on the 6th March and will be the Installation of Bro Malcolm Davis to the Chair of King Solomon.

Your attendance is required.

Home and Away Games

(Visiting Brethren, Visits and Invitations)

- Visiting is an important part of worldwide freemasonry. It allows us to understand the differences between the Constitutions and locations and thus appreciate our own ways and deepening our understanding of the context of our rituals. All Master Masons are encouraged to visit other Lodges as much as possible.
- There were no Visitors to the Lodge for the Mark working.
- Planned Visits and Invitations received for the month of March 1999

include:

Royal Pahang Inst 13th Mar

St Patrick's Inst 20th Mar

Tinkers Corner

(The latest gossip)

- "In theory, there's no difference between theory and practice, but in practice, there is" - There were only four Brethren at the most recent practice - - -
- There is the possibility being investigated at present to set up a system by the more experienced Lodge members to instruct and assist the "younger" members in the Lodge etiquette, the meaning behind some of the Masonic Symbols and Procedure and generally to assist them to understand Masonry in-depth. It is hoped that this will lead to more confidence, interest and ability to understand more than only the first four degrees of Masonry (what about the other 29 degrees ??)

The Classifieds

(Awaits your Ad)

- Relevant contributions to the Craig may be made by any member by emailing me at - colinmac@pacific.net.sg.
- Get your order in early for the latest in Lodge sartorial elegance - Kennedy Tartan Cummerbund and Bow tie (prices still to be determined). This will

The Ailsa Craig

certainly give the non-kilted members of Ailsa immediate recognition when visiting other Lodges.

- Previously some books relating to Masonic topics were distributed to the Bros. with the hope that an Ailsa Masonic Library be set up to enlighten as many of the members as possible. Lets help to keep those books in circulation by keeping a list of books and returning the books to the Lodge when finished reading them.

Animal, Vegetable or Mineral

(Complaints, Congratulations and Commiserations)

- Please help the Lodge meet it's commitments by paying your dues promptly. Brethren in financial difficulty may approach the RWM or Treasurer personally.

Post Script

(The Last Word in Masonry)

- Bro. Swithun Lowe recently returned from a trip to Scotland that coincided with some interesting events and his excellent article below, describes the essence of Masonic visiting and worldwide Brotherhood:

At the Heart of Scottish Freemasonry

It was a good opportunity to mix business with pleasure, and we took it. We planned our trip to coincide with the Installation of the Grand Master Mason on 26 November 98. It was much more than just worthwhile. It was a most enriching experience.

We walked into the Office the day before, and introduced ourselves.

"I'm the Grand Secretary" said the man with a smile and hands outstretched, "Here are your tickets to the Festival."

We were each handed an envelope with our names hand-written on them. We said that we heard a lot about the Temple; and without a moment's hesitation the man got the key and showed us in himself. It was a splendid sight. It lived up to its reputation and we were not disappointed.

"I have asked Harry Reeve to take care of both of you tomorrow and we have put you on the same table. He is looking forward to meeting you."

Every little detail was covered and no effort spared to make us welcome. That was how we met the Right Worshipful Grand Secretary Bro. C Martin McGibbon A.S.C.A. And we felt very much at home.

The Ailsa Craig

On the day itself we went in early. And it was especially nice to see Harry again, looking so well. We were ushered into the Library to get ready, and we met Bob Cooper the Curator.

Bob is, quite simply, a Repository of Masonic information and knowledge. He bubbles over with enthusiasm, and it's infectious. Mention was made of Lodge Tullibardine in the East and he immediately pulled out a Paper on the history of the Lodge. Not only that, but he was also able to point out an error in the record. He had checked on the research done!

Over the two days that we were there Bob was to become a very good and helpful friend. It was the little things that he found time to do for us that touched us most. Any request made was personally attended to. The greatest joy was to talk to him about our Craft. We learned a lot.

The Installation of the Honourable the Lord Burton as the Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason was a delight to behold. More than four hundred Brethren from East and West and North and South were present, dressed in their Masonic splendour.

We were elated when we were recognised by name and Lodge in the presence of so many distinguished Brethren. The Grand Master Mason requested that we convey the greetings of Grand Lodge to the Brethren of our own Lodges. The Right Worshipful Installing Grand Master, Brother Brigadier Sir Gregor MacGregor of MacGregor, gave it a very personal touch, with a special word for every officer he installed. He also showed the

very human side of our Craft, when he got the knocks wrong and brought laughter into the proceedings.

We were particularly interested in the way the Aprons were worn. We are pleased to report that there were some who wore them on the inside and some who wore them on the outside. The explanation we received from Bob later was that the hallmark of Scottish Freemasonry is the uniqueness of each Lodge. We all practise the same Craft and convey the same message, but we each do so in our own special way. That is what makes visiting other Lodges so enjoyable and instructive.

The Festival of St Andrew at the Sheraton Hotel was another event to remember. At our table were Brethren from the United States, Nigeria and of course Scotland. We also had the pleasure of the company of the Very Worshipful Senior Grand Deacon Brother (Rev.) Joseph J. Morrow. Joe was talking about an available posting to the East and we hope he decides to give it a try.

The drinks flowed freely and the jokes came easily. We even had a flask of whisky passed round our table. Two of the Brethren provided the musical entertainment which culminated in a rousing sing-a-long. We were indeed happy to meet and sorry to part. After dinner we gathered around the Bar with Grant (the Worshipful Grand Tyler) and Michael (St John's Operative Lodge No 97) and Fred from Nigeria and others. We returned to

The Ailsa Craig

our hotel in the wee hours of the morning, quite overwhelmed by the ceremonies, the festivities; and the harmony and esprit-de-corps so alive within our Brotherhood.

We had met as strangers and we parted as brothers.

The following evening, we accepted the kind invitation of Brother Michael to visit his Lodge. The St John's Operative Lodge No 97 holds its meeting in the first purpose-build Masonic Temple in Scotland (and possibly in the world). Our visit coincided with the visit to the Lodge by the Provincial Grand Master of the District of Edinburgh R.W. Brother Robert S. Tait and his Officers. Brother Tait is concurrently the Right Worshipful Grand Director of Ceremonies of Grand Lodge.

The Temple was beautiful. There were life-size paintings of famous Freemasons and of familiar Masonic scenes. Being in that Temple brought home to us the "wealth", the richness of the history and traditions of the Craft.

The Lodge was working a First Degree and it was near perfect. To our surprise, we were told after the working that both the Senior and Junior Wardens were standing in for their Fathers; and they did so at very short notice. Certain practices and procedures were different from ours. For example, They did not send out summons for the Meeting, Visitors and Brethren saluted each of the three Lodge Office Bearers in turn and the

Ritual did not include a lecture on the Tracing Board. But the essential message remained clear and unsullied.

The harmony that followed was also different. The Brethren of the Lodge served the meal themselves. They had a Director of Music whose duty was to line up a number of items to entertain the Brethren during the Harmony. The meal was paid for by one of the Brethren who was celebrating his Diamond Jubilee in the Craft. Brother Andrew the Right Worshipful Master of the Lodge made us feel most welcome. The Right Worshipful Master of Tullibardine in the East Brother N. Shanmuggam was given the honour of replying on behalf of the Visitors and he did us proud. When I mentioned that I liked the special Lodge Tie they wore, brother Keith, without another thought, took off his tie and gave it to me! The Master-Elect Brother John bought us drinks at the Holiday Inn after dinner and we had a great time with him and other Brethren. They just took us in and made us part of the family, as it were.

At the Heart of Scottish Freemasonry is the strong abiding bond of Brotherhood that encircles the globe and surrounds the pole and unites every portion of the human family.

Nowhere will you feel and realise the truth of that statement more than in the Home of Scottish Freemasonry.

Bro. Swithun Low