

The Ailsa Craig

Fixtures and Fittings

(Lodge Activities)

(Jellied Knees, Haggis and Pipes)

Another day dawned. For the Right Worshipful Master Elect of Lodge Ailsa (1172 SC) this was bound to be one of the most memorable days of his life. Yet Bro. Malcolm John Davis sat in front of me (all six-foot-something and as broad and tough as they come) whimpering "My knees have turned to jelly"

In a few hours he would be installed in the Chair of King Solomon in front of 100 or so Brethren from all over the District of the Middle East who knew Malcolm well from his extensive travels.

We were awaiting the arrival of the Visitors at the Masonic Club in Coleman Street and between the occasional "Grouse" and trying to fix the rapidly expiring air conditioning in the Temple there were mumbling and corrections of the required parts of the Ritual being rehearsed. The temperature was rising!

Suddenly the Club started to fill with familiar faces from far flung fraternities, and the air turned thick with Tuxedo's, bow ties, kilts, sporrans, sgian dubh in the rush to be sartorially prepared for the ceremony.

Commencing on time, the Hall filled in stages according to the hierarchy and was raised to the Third Degree for the Installation. Due to the potential AC problems a refreshment table was prepared but in the event it was not required due to the efficiency

of the installing team and the prior tinkering by the now RWM.

After a speedy relief to specific necessities at the downstairs Bar, dinner was served. Ghurka pipers from the police band were obtained at the last minute and did the honours of piping in the Haggis. RWM Malcolm soon had his "trencher gushing" with a steely flash of his sgian dubh and greetings thanks and speeches followed in quick procession with the collection and raffle amounting to \$2,000.

The Masters' Song was rendered in sweet harmonies by Bros. Swithun Lowe and Victor Fernandez and the Ladies were included for the later part of the evening.

After the Tyler's Toast the party then adjourned to the "adjacent" where serious contemplation on the virtues of John Barlycorn were heard long into the night....

Home and Away Games

(Visiting Brethren, Visits and Invitations)

- Visiting has at last taken off with vengeance for Lodge Ailsa. For the new masonic year there have been a strong attendance by the Brethren of Lodge Ailsa to Royal Pahang and St Patrick's Installations. Further planned visits for April and May include:

St. George - 23rd April '99.

Scotia - 15th May '99 (Penang)

Tinkers Corner

(The latest gossip)

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• There is talk of some Brethren of the Lodge wishing to attend the Grand Master's Installation in Edinburgh in November this year and to include a trip to Glasgow to Lodges Progress (873) and Levin St. John (170) to see the MacBride Ritual carried out by the experts.

Please let the Junior Warden know (9-732 5488) if you are interested and wish to make the trip, it would help to get an idea of the numbers for planning and possible block-booking reductions etc.

The Classifieds

(Awaits your Ad)

• RECRUITMENT DRIVE SLOWS DOWN

The Club's recruitment drive is falling short of the 500 target set by the authorities, and like Damocles sword, is hanging over the future prospects of the Club. What is worse is that the frail thread holding up the fable sword is fraying with each passing day.

Our recruitment campaign started off well enough but has recently reduced to a trickle, and we are still tantalizingly short of the number required for retaining our fruit machine permit.

At our recent committee meeting the membership stood at 493 a baker's half-dozen short of the target. We extend our thanks to all those who have helped to attain the numbers thus far. The effort must continue until we have overcome the problem. The deadline is now thankfully extended to April 1999 but the consequences

in case we fail to achieve the desired mark in time means that we would lose revenue from our fruit machines.

Coleman Street News-January/February '99

Charity

We all acknowledge that Charity is one of the most fundamental principles on which Freemasonry is based, and therefore ask you to give as generously as you possibly can, when, and if you are able.

Please indicate your choice of charity from the list below. If you have your own personal preference which is not listed, please specify under "Other" and forward to the Lodge Treasurer.

Thank you for your generous support

Dear Sir and Brother,

I wish to make a charitable donation to the following:

Lodge Ailsa's Benevolent Fund -

£\$ _____(Cash/Cheque/Pledge/Please Bill me)

Worshipful Master's Benevolent Fund-

£\$ _____(Cash/Cheque/Pledge/Please Bill me)

Other (please specify) -

£\$ _____(Cash/Cheque/Pledge/Please Bill me)

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

Name:.....

Date:.....

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Post Script

(The Last Word in Masonry)

Q. How and why did the derrick come to be associated with the Senior Warden and be placed on his pedestal?

A. In one older lodge room the pedestals have only the columns and pillars (on the Master's the V.S.L.). In the centre of the room was a 16-foot table, on which were the derrick supporting a smooth ashlar, two globes and various other items. The members sat round this table during the Lodge meeting; and, when the Lodge was closed, the old phrase "Put away our W.Ts. and Jewels" became an actuality, for all on the table was locked away in the Lodge cupboard "a safe and sacred repository" after which the table was used for dining and the festive board. What more certain than that, when pressure of numbers became too great for comfort, the table was removed and the furniture disposed round the Lodge room. The derrick, with its suspended smooth ashlar, would go to the S.W.'s pedestal, as being the most appropriate place.

It is well, however, not to be too dogmatic on this point, as many of the old Lancashire Lodges have elaborate derricks of varying design placed on the east side of the pavement, suspended. Sometimes the rough and sometimes the smooth ashlar, as the occasion may warrant.

It is likely that the tripod or derrick was introduced to illustrate the practical use of the lewis, than that it came in merely as ornament.

Where Lodges meet on their own premises and the ashlar is a sizable model of ten or twelve inches side, the tripod is usually

some five or six feet in height, and is placed in the south-west, sufficient far towards the centre of the room to leave space for the Deacons and candidate to pass outside it in their perambulations. In those Lodges the rough ashlar lies on the floor in front of the Junior Warden's pedestal.

But where, as in so many London Lodges, the appurtenances have to be packed away in a box after each meeting, the necessary tiny ashlar was placed on the Warden's pedestals, the rough ashlar being given to the Junior Warden and the perfect ashlar to the Senior Warden. When the tripod was introduced in such Lodges it had of necessity to be very much in miniature, and it like the ashlar previously, was placed on the pedestal.

It should be noted that the tripod although it had come into use - in London Lodges at any rate - before the Union, is by no means ubiquitous. Thus, in Manchester neither it nor the lewis is in evidence, the ashlar (fairly large ones) lying in the north east and south-east corners of the small area of tessellated pavement in the middle of the floor. Nor is there a tripod in Bristol, where the stones are placed on the easterly corner of the low table that supports the Tracing Boards.

This article is reproduced from the QCC Summons - Their reciprocating Lodge (Research in Singapore is Lodge St. Michael). The next working of Lodge St Michael will be on the 29th April 1999 - All MM's are welcome

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Lodge Membership

Activities and

Interests

Although the Lodge does have an official membership list, it may help to include any other Masonic interests or Memberships in a future Members Booklet that we intend to publish as soon as possible.

This will allow Members to expand their interests and strengthen the cohesion of the Lodge in doing so.

Please fill in the form below and return it to the Junior Warden by the next Working: