



Supporting Local Freemasons

The Craftsmen

Week Commencing 3rd August 2020

Issue Number Eighteen

Welcome to the eighteenth edition of the Ross Masonic Club Weekly Round-Up.

Welcome to the eighteenth edition of ***The Craftsmen***.

This week we have an article from Peter Nash on his outdoor building project and Patrick Eyre continues his memories of a varied career.

We also have a few roundup articles from the Province and some items to amuse and confuse you. Aeron's curiosities and Dennis Roberts poses another 'Would I know, Did I know' question.

All thoughts and suggestions for future articles welcomed. Please keep your input coming.

A special thank you to all those that contributed.

Keep safe Brethren and keep in contact.



Keeping in Contact and Staying Sharp

Facebook



We have set up a Facebook Group for Ross Masonic Club. We currently have 28 members across the Lodges and Chapter. Any members of Lodges or Chapter that meet at Ross Masonic Hall are welcome to join in.

More opportunities to Zoom together



If you have not previously joined in, we now have a meeting that starts earlier on a Friday at 7:30pm as well as the 8:45pm meeting for the 9 o'clock toast.

You can come and go during these times as you please.

It's simple to setup and Billy can help with support if you need it.

Would I know the answer? Did I know the answer?

Last time I asked "Why do we wear gloves?"

Apart from the practical use of protecting the hands from cold or injury, gloves have symbolic connotations.

Old illustrations show no gloves being worn, so the use must have been symbolic. In the Ancient mysteries, and in some places even today, the washing of the hands was always an introduction to the mysteries, showing the need for purity for the entry to sacred rites.

Some writers consider that the wearing of gloves was for military use, since they protected the hands while carrying weapons, and also improved the grip.

The glove's protection can also be considered spiritual as well as protection. For this reason the hand must not be covered when touching the Holy Book or when forming the 'fraternal chain', to allow the fraternal energy to circulate freely.

The custom of presenting a pair of white gloves, either to the Initiate, (or, as in my Lodge on the Traditional History), has a long history. Gloves were presented to a Bishop on his investiture, and in the past, a new Mason had to provide gloves for the entire company as part of their entrance fees.

The acts of a Mason should be pure and spotless as the gloves he proudly wears.

A more modernistic belief is that gloves would also cover both imperfections and adornments of the hands, thus hiding the injuries of labour, as well as gold and silver rings, thus making men of all classes equal within the Temple.

For next time, let me pose the question.

Why do we lay the Foundation Stone in the NE part of the building?

You can always check your thoughts by visiting 'Solomon' of course! <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

By Dennis Roberts - Group Leader Information and Guidance Group e-mail: roberts.greeba@btinternet.com

Coffee Break and T@3

This week Aeron Lewis provides us with a curiosity to name and the answer to last week's question which was an Apprentice Piece.

Last weeks object was.....

A saw set, dating from around the 1930s. It is used in the tuning and sharpening of saw blades. The saw set is used to adjust the set, or distance the saw tooth is bent away from the saw blade.

Regular pliers with small jaws could be used to set a tooth. Designers added to this to make pliers with a built in stop. The stop is usually adjustable and rests against the saw blade as the jaws bend the tooth. The goal of the stop is to make a consistent set and prevent tooth breakage. Depending on the style, the tooth is either gripped first in the jaws and then bent or the saw set is aligned to the tooth and the jaws closed.

When the teeth of a saw are formed from the body, they are in line and the same thickness as the blade immediately behind them. A saw with this configuration is described as having 'no' or '0' set.

To prevent the body of the blade binding and for other enhancements to the cutting action, the teeth can be set (angled out) from the blade. Teeth can be set in several patterns: single-sided set, alternating set or a patterned set.

Most Western and Asian handsaws use an alternating set, whereby a tooth is set the opposite direction from the preceding one. Specialized tools like veneer saws or flush-cut saws may be set only to one side. Some hacksaws and machine saw blades have patterned sets that may require specially designed saw sets to create.

A saw set makes the process of setting the teeth easier, more consistent or both.

So now when you see a saw you can see how the saw is set!

The Craftsmen Newsletter



Aeron's Curiosities - This Week's Question

This week we publish a further picture of a 'curiously wrought' item that Aeron sent in.

Can anyone hazard a guess at what it is and what it is used for?

The answer, as always, in next week's issue.



Patrick Eyre continues to recount his early career moves.

With my father's consent I rented some premises in Slough to begin the process of manufacturing his electric fires in another location. Self financed by the money I had received from the sale of my haulage business, it was certainly a gamble I was prepared to take and I was anxious to get on with it, even though I would have to purchase some of the parts from my father's business, as I didn't have the special machine tools required for some of the pressings. The coal effect too, a process of his own design was ingeniously made of chicken wire - fish glue - Mica-dust, and paint. A red bulb beneath, generating enough heat to drive a flicker fan made of aluminium, sitting on a gramophone needle giving the flame effect a certain realism.

The machinery I had to purchase cost a great deal; a 4ft guillotine capable of slicing 24 gauge steal sheet, a bending machine and fly press along with a spot welder and everything else required to do the job. Most of the stuff I needed was available from the Slough industrial estate along with a firm who would do the chromium plating and another company the stove enamelling.

My original aim was to build a stock of twenty finished appliances ready for sale, but doing it on my own without help was proving very difficult.

I urgently required some sales to generate cash in the bank so the target was reduced to ten. Not all the shops I had made sales to, when working for my father were still in the market but those that were left on the books were happy to take a couple in stock and they were duly delivered. However trying to make the deliveries myself took me out of the workshop and as a consequence production suffered.

The only solution to this was to use the services of a wholesale distributor who would reduce my margins, which I couldn't afford, but it had to be. By now my wife and one other person were helping me in the workshop on the production line but the main problem was cash flow and the

viability of the business became extremely doubtful. If that wasn't enough, the introduction of natural gas was having a dramatic affect on the sale of electrical heating products in the retail sector. The future looked very bleak indeed, and after 12 months of trading I closed the business down after finding a buyer for the machinery.

Having had a lot of time to think of what I should do next, it all came down to thinking about what I knew I was good at. That being the road haulage business. I had a little money in the bank from the sale of the machinery but I knew that I had to find work before investing in a truck.

Fortunately I had friends in the business who put me in touch with a local quarry company who were producing large amounts of sand and gravel to supply the ready mixed concrete plants they owned, one of which was in Maidenhead where I lived. The company assisted me in obtaining the necessary license so the choice of vehicle was obviously a tipper truck.



Financially a new one was out of the question but a secondhand one was readily available. I took it for a test drive knowing the purchase terms were 'As Seen and Approved'. The dealer had no history of how it had been used and the type of work it had been engaged in, and until I had put eight tons of weight on it I wouldn't know how mechanically sound it was. The very first load proved my worst fears - the clutch was grabbing due to oil on the disk and the Bedford's Diesel engine's rear main oil seal was leaking with oil dripping from the bell housing.

Could I keep it going for a while was the question and be able to afford to get it fixed?

It simply had to keep going until I could find a cheap way of sorting it out. With the engine's oil pressure dropping, it soon became clear the engine was on its way out.

I managed to locate a secondhand engine and drivetrain from a breaker of commercial vehicles. The vital parts were recovered from a written off vehicle and came with a guarantee, and with the help of a JCB driver and his machine, along with a heavy chain we removed the engine and gearbox and installed the replacements.

Work for the tipper was seasonal as the demand for sand and gravel for the production of ready mix concrete in the winter was obviously less. So I was laid off. However, strikes by rail workers meant that coal for power stations could only be delivered by road so every available vehicle capable was hired to keep the lights on. That winter I was delivering coal from the Nottinghamshire coal mines to Harlesden power station in London. This meant I had to raise the sides of the truck's body with what was known in the trade as 'greedy boards' the coal needing more room than the gravel.

At this point, in order to keep my story flowing, I will have to digress and take up the continuation of the above narrative later.

I had a friend who owned a plant hire business and had the digging rights of a sandpit in the area. The pit was owned by a brick and tile firm. Kiln fired, they used a little of the sand but were more interested in the clay that lay underneath. My friend had buyers for the sand which he mined for free on the basis that an overburden of soil had to be scraped away to expose it. The procedure then was to remove the sand in order for the brick works to get to the clay. He explained all this to me when he said he had put the business up for sale and would I be interested.

Patrick Eyre continues to recount his early career moves.

The deal did include a regular supply of sand to an asphalt manufacturer in Middlesex, as well as a couple of builders who used the sand for mortar production, but these customers combined didn't make it a viable business proposition. When I told my friend I would need to think about it, I had another potential customer in mind.

It required a visit to the Thermalite block making plant which was located about 5 miles from the sand pit. I was aware that they took daily deliveries of pit sand for the manufacture of the blocks and as I knew the production manager and the people that worked in their laboratory, it just meant a phone call to arrange an appointment for me to take in a sample of the sand to establish if it was an acceptable material for their use. The following day I was delighted to learn that it was indeed suitable for the purpose but that it would be essential for the production manager to check out the source to establish that the continuity of supply could be maintained at all times before he would consider changing their current supplier to me.

As an extra to the price of the digging rights, and located at the sandpit was the means to dig out the sand, in the shape of a Smiths 21 RB dragline excavator with a 30 foot jib, that would also be required to load the lorries, and a vibrator screen used to remove the clay.



A typical Ruston Bucyrus with clamshell bucket.

The meeting with the Thermalite manager went ahead as planned and I'm sure he was impressed with what he saw and the quotation I gave him for the delivered price of the sand to Reading he knew was competitive.

He said that I should expect a letter from him stating his decision in the near future but the Board of Directors would also have a say in the outcome. I didn't have the cash to purchase the machinery at the sandpit so I had to find the means of raising it. Previously I had spoken to a friend who owned a very successful skip hire business and was prepared to buy into a partnership by providing the necessary funds to buy the machinery. My contribution was the purchase of the digging rights which would give me a 51% holding in the newly formed company.

Things were moving fast, my friend in Plant Hire who I was buying the digging rights from suggested a meeting and when this took place I outlined my plans to him. He said he had been approached by another potential buyer and if I didn't come up with the cash and sign up with the brick and tile company in quick time I would lose the opportunity to purchase. I had no doubts of his honesty and he went on to say that if my deal with Thermalite didn't materialise he would pass on the details of the other interested party to me.

I had my meeting with the directors of the tile company, signed the necessary documents and paid out the money. Several days later the letter arrived from Thermalite stating that we could do business together providing a concrete road some 300 yards in length was laid from the entrance to the digging site in order to ensure that vehicles would have access in and out in all weathers.

A very costly exercise indeed and a major problem for me and my partner. A meeting with my bank manager to finance the road was fruitless.

Banks do not lend money for roads, they are not perceived as a recoverable asset. How many times have I heard that since!!

My ownership of a sand quarry was short lived, my plant hire friend put me in touch with the other interested party who took over the digging rights and paid me in full for my failed attempt to make some real money

The sandpit was just off the a A4 halfway between Reading and Maidenhead and access to the tile works was via a service road. Several months after the handover I was travelling to Reading when I noticed a couple of low loader trailers with heavy earthmoving machinery parked on the service road, and a few days later large numbers of tipper trucks loaded with sand. They were on their way to the site of the new Maidenhead bypass, which was a motorway spur off the M4, and the dug sand with clay content was being used to form the banking and sub-base formation of the road itself. Costain-Higgs and Hill - the construction companies involved - were the paying customers.

Following the opening of this section of motorway some three years later there appeared a very large hole at the rear of the brickworks which in turn was made available for London's land fill. The use of this facility went on for a year or so, and the gentleman I sold the digging rights to was still ensconced in his little wooden hut alongside the weighbridge issuing paperwork which would eventually turn into cash.

The story goes that he was a former employee of Costain construction and was obviously aware of their material requirements when they were awarded the contract, or maybe before, with inside information.

He did become a millionaire owning several Asphalt plants and quarries.

I can honestly say that I have never looked back in anger but wistfully refer to it as my lost million !!



Interview with the PGM

The Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro Michael Holland, has been interviewed by the Provincial Communication Officer, W Bro Paul Sabel, and you can watch the interview by clicking on the image above.

Or you can view it on the members' website [here](#).

In the interview RW Bro Holland talks about his career in Freemasonry, in the UK and in other parts of the world.

He also describes the way Freemasonry is changing as it modernises, and the response of Freemasons and the Province to the Covid-19 pandemic.

He concludes by discussing his strategy for the Province moving into the future.



Other Links You May Find Useful

Province of Herefordshire Public Website [here](#)

Caeruleum Club – the club for newer Masons in Herefordshire [here](#)

United Grand Lodge of England [here](#)

Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of England [here](#)

Royal Arch Province of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire [here](#)

Mark Province of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire [here](#)

Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales [here](#)

Solomon – Information about Freemasonry for Members and non-Members [here](#)

Masonic Charitable Foundation [here](#)

b.UGLE – information for members from UGLE [here](#)

Craft Provincial Gardening Competition

Don't Forget To Enter!

If you are in the Craft in Herefordshire you will have received details of the Provincial Gardening Competition.

Send your entries by email to

pco@herefordshiremasons.org.uk

You can send up to two photos, no larger than 2MB each.

Give each of them a title, and give a short description of what you have done in the garden during lockdown to get the results shown in the photos.

Don't forget to add your name, and which Lodge you're in.

Closing date 12th August

Good luck!

Further details can be found on the Provincial website [here](#)

Just for a laugh

If you **Initiate** and smile as you **Pass** someone, then you **Raise** their spirits.



Pam Ayres ✓
@PamAyres

Profound thoughts assail me

While feeding the dog,

And performing my everyday tasks,

I could be richer than Branson or Musk,

If I had invested in masks



I must go down to the sea again,
to the lonely sea and the sky;
I left my shoes and socks there -
I wonder if they're dry?

Spike Milligan

Can you think of a suitable caption for this picture?
Drop me an email with any suggestions.



Expectation v Reality Hey kids we're going on a trip to Iceland!



Expectation.....



Reality!

On this day in history - 3rd August

1492 Christopher Columbus sets sail on his first voyage with three ships, Santa María, Pinta and Niña, from Palos de la Frontera, Spain, for the "Indies"

1798 **Battle of the Nile:** British Admiral Horatio Nelson forces the remnants of the French fleet to surrender, concluding a decisive victory for the British who capture or destroy 11 French ships of the line and 2 frigates.

1829 Opera "Guillaume Tell" (William Tell) Gioachino Rossini's last and greatest opera premieres in Paris.

1833 HMS Beagle reaches river mouth of Rio Negro

1914 **Germany** invades Belgium and declares war on France, beginning World War I

1914 British Foreign Secretary Edward Grey famously remarks "The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our time."

1954 1st VTOL (Vertical Take-off & Land) flown

2017 **Brazilian soccer** forward Neymar transfers from FC Barcelona to Paris Saint-Germain for a world-record transfer fee of £198m on a 5-year deal

Peter Ponders His Pond Dilemma



Day 1

He arrived on Tuesday with two other men to assist him. I had already agreed that I would help him set out the angles for the sleepers adjacent to the steps, I helped with this and then left them to it.

Unfortunately, by lunchtime he told me he was pulling off the job.

“But where does this leave me?”, I asked.

After some discussion we agreed that I could use the two men for two days.

So the three of us set about continuing with the building project.

Those of you that are regular Zoom attendees, you may remember a couple of Fridays ago Aeron asked “How is the garden project?” I said don’t ask it is a disaster, too much to explain.

Well here is my attempt at explaining my garden project in words and pictures.

Barbara wanted a pond in the garden like we had at our previous property, Lavender Cottage. We decided that as we had a sloping garden it was better to form a raised area incorporating a pond at one end with a rockery at the other end and a water feature in the middle with the whole area shingled so that Barbara could put plant pots around and about.

I drew up a plan for the job and as this would have been too much heavy work for me to take on my own, we needed to find someone to do the project for us, and then I remembered a landscape gardener who I knew had been in existence for at least 25 years as I actually did some carpentry work for him at his house.

I contacted him and he agreed he could do the work to form a terrace from oak sleepers.



I built steps formed from paving slabs the week before in preparation to start the work. He duly gave us a price for doing the job and we arranged a date for starting on Tuesday 21st July.



The materials were delivered a week before which he moved to the back of the house.



They had previously set the posts into the ground but not very deep and so I collected spurs to extend the posts left ready for completing the next day.



Continued on next page



To This,.....

Day 2

Wednesday half way through the day after concreting the spurs in, the boys and I constructed the sleeper walls.



End of the day Wednesday all the heavy work done, just the tricky bits left to do.



Day 3

Thursday, a reasonably easy day installing the sleepers and posts adjacent to the steps, tricky bits to do Friday.

Day 4

Friday all tricky bits finished off with my grandson doing all the heavy lifting. Construction of sleeper walls finished.



Day 5

Saturday my grandson on his digger.



Digging a hole for the pond.

Pond in excavation, Lewis my grandson on my right, and Robert my son on my left. Both came over to set the pond up.



End of the day all tidied up ready for the next phase.

The next phase will be to set up the pond and back fill the whole area ready to be gravelled.

To be continued.....