



Supporting Local Freemasons

The Craftsmen

Week Commencing 19th October 2020

Issue Number Twenty Nine

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

A great big thank you to all of our contributors to this issue. I am sure we all appreciate your efforts each week. This week we have a packed issue including:

- Patrick and Harry continue the story of their varied careers
- The continuation of our regular features;
 1. 'When I were a lad' - do you know who is in the picture?
 2. How I became a Mason, where Nigel tells his story
- A focus on Social Media
- An article on the history on our doorstep from John Mole
- A fun wordsearch 'close up challenge' and Paul's Perplexing Puzzles with answers published next week

All thoughts and suggestions for future articles welcomed. Please keep your input coming with, once again, 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.

A focus on social media in and around the Province

Here are links to the Twitter and Facebook pages for Craft, Chapter and Mark.

The Province of Herefordshire has a number of 'Official' Twitter Accounts with the following #



PGL Herefordshire @PGLHerefords

PGM and MEGS Michael Holland @DGLBMason

Dep PGM Graham King @GrahamCKing1

Caeruleum Club @hfdslightblues

Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Royal Arch @GlosandHereRA

Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Mark Province @PGMMarkGandH

If you use Twitter why not give them a follow and like their tweets?

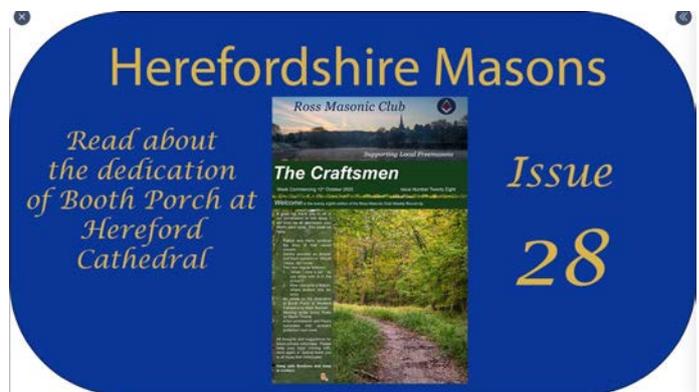
They regularly promote our newsletter which is also available on the Provincial website [here](#)

The Province of Herefordshire has a number of 'Official' Facebook Accounts with the following #



The Province also has a facebook page [here](#)

Also the Chapter [here](#)



The Zoom sessions also are still going strong every Friday

Why not join us next week any time from 19:30 to around 21:30. You can come and go as you please, it's very informal.



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

By W.Bro. Dennis W. Roberts, PAGDC Group Leader Information and Guidance Group

Don't forget the question from last week. The Tracing Boards: what are they for?

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

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



You think 'English' is easy?

Have a look at the following:

Some light hearted treats to keep you amused

'Close Up Challenge'



Can you guess what this object is in the close up picture?

Paul's Perplexing Puzzle

With thanks to Paul Sabel

Last Weeks Answer



This eerie object was found under the floors of a house built at the beginning of the 19th century.

But don't think that this is some kind of a strange medical instrument or even a torture device — it is in fact much simpler.

It was made to help peel shells off of hard-boiled eggs.

This Weeks Question

Do you know what this strange object is for?



1. The bandage was wound around his wound.
2. The farm was cultivated to produce produce.
3. The dump was so full that the workers had to refuse more refuse.
4. We must polish the Polish furniture shown at the store.
5. He could lead if he could get the lead out.
6. The soldier decided to desert his tasty dessert in the desert.
7. Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present to his girlfriend.
8. A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
9. When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
10. I did not object to the object which he showed me.
11. The insurance was invalid for the invalid in his hospital bed.
12. There was a row among the oarsmen about who would row.
13. They were too close to the door to close it.
14. The buck does many things when the does (females) are present.
15. A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
16. To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
17. The wind was too strong to wind the sail around the mast.
18. Upon seeing the tear in her painting, she shed a tear.
19. I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
20. How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

Heteronyms

Homonyms or homographs are words of like spelling, but with more than meaning and sound. When pronounced differently, they are known as heteronyms.

Source Marlene Davis

Sent in by Stephanie Jones via Emyr. Thank you!

'When I Were A Lad'

Can you guess who these Ross Masonic Club Members are?

Please send in your pictures of you as a child and a short clue. We will publish the photo one week so people can guess who you are and publish the results the following week. Either a scanned image or take a picture of the photo with your phone and send it in with a few words of description. Just for a laugh - nothing too serious!



Did you Guess? This is Billy Russell, flexing his muscles even at an early age.



Here is Billy giving the 9 o'clock Toast towards the beginning of lockdown.



Any idea who this young chap is immediately past 'Marking time'.

Lodge Officers

Answers to last week's Word Search

With thanks to Paul Sabel.

This week's is on the last page.

In case you want to print it out

(Stephanie - thanks for the feedback!)

S K G P R S B T S N C H T X W T N Q C V H S P T
 S C Q X Q W O R S H I P F U L M A S T E R S K P
 K V H F C J H T G U Q V P Z N R I P W Q T D Q C
 G L U A O H U J Y A Z V Y R A T E R C E S B N
 Z L T K P X A O I N R D R N V V T M P X K W Y H
 D H D G V L T R X S I U O S A V E R R Z I A E C
 S T S V V U A O I G F C S C L Z D K F D T R E S
 U C A K L H M I E T A G O N M Q H Z D J R L A M
 Y O R K J O V Q N E Y N Q W O C N U X Z E I W O
 E K I C X V E M D R O S X C N M N B J O A H A O
 F U N D G O J R J C T K T R E L Y T L D S D Z L
 M A A H C B O Q A Y C O A E R F R P P N U X C K
 Q C M Z U I W E W Z V N K B W H J Q E V R S C A
 Y X U D N D D R A W E T S L A J N B J E R H R
 S T E U E R H A X V I O M D V W R R P H R P E D
 C E J R O C W J D H J G C A W U Y D N T H M O C
 H K N I I N N E R G U A R D D P R W W O W B X X
 B G N T N E D R A W R O I N E S P K I P Z Z M L
 P E D Z Q I M M E D I A T E P A S T M A S T E R
 S G J E V N U D U P T F X S A A Z B C B G I H N
 M F Q Z R O T N E M V Z T T C Y S M E O M A U Q
 F J V E K C F N Q H J K A E S V V F W R J C U V
 M F D I R E C T O R O F C E R E M O N I E S A I
 G Z S N E D R A W R O I N U J M S A D N O N I A

- Almoner
- Chaplain
- Charity Steward
- Director of Ceremonies
- Immediate Past Master
- Inner Guard
- Junior Deacon
- Junior Warden
- Mentor
- Secretary
- Senior Deacon
- Senior Warden
- Steward
- Treasurer
- Tyler
- Worshipful Master

Harry's in Hot Water! (Part X) Contd....

The further adventures of Harry Holwell

Justice is Served

The work started on the garden in Wiltshire intending to leave the garage till last in the hope of avoiding having to demolish it. This was wishful thinking. A team was working for a couple of weeks in the garden and then started demolishing the garage, including the concrete floor. The searching appeared in vain and on the last day the D.C.I. went to the site to inform the team they were being pulled off that day. They had just finished demolishing the garage. That same afternoon they dug under the last part of the floor of the concrete garage when they found a sealed forty gallon drum about 8 ft underground. They opened the drum and cleared the surrounding area with the smell. They had found the missing woman. She was found to have been murdered and the husband was later convicted of killing her and received a life sentence.

I continued with my work on the drug squad in Bristol. A lot of the work involved importations of heroin, cocaine, cannabis resin and amphetamines. We mainly dealt with the top of the food chain criminals but in the drugs world you have to start with the users at the bottom whether they use for recreation or because they are addicted. Catching them with drugs would often lead to the gathering of information and thereby start leading to their suppliers and then maybe up the supply chain. The ones at the top of the chain would not generally get their hands dirty by direct contact with the drugs so you would have to use other means such as surveillance, telephones taps, telephone billing to connect them with others and sometimes undercover officers. Often at the end you would be looking to involve them with conspiracy charges if you could not link them directly to the handling of the drugs. It was interesting work.

One of these involved two middle aged men of previous good character who came to our notice from an informant. Over a period of months we were able

to show they were going to Holland on a regular basis. We liaised with Dutch police and were able to establish they were meeting known drugs suppliers. We were also able to show that they had purchased second hand a large seagoing rubber boat with large twin engines. We established where they stored this craft on a large trailer. We were then able, from other sources, to find that they were both going to Holland. We followed them both to Dover towing the boat and trailer. They both departed across the Channel on the ferry. Two days later we watched as one of them returned back through Dover with the trailer and no boat. The arrests of both of these men took place some three days later. We followed this male, who had returned from Holland in his estate car, to the south coast. He parked up in a small coastal town and the following morning in the early hours his partner showed up in the boat with 400 kilograms of cannabis resin. They abandoned the boat on the slip having recovered the drugs and we arrested them both on route back to Gloucester. The sea journey by the boat from Holland to the landing point was 80 miles.

Being on the drugs wing also meant that we'd had visits from overseas officers. One set of these was from Missouri, America. One of them was a federal officer from Postal Investigations. They were interested in an offender from Bristol who was sending steroids from the UK to America. In the UK these offences are contrary to The Medicines Act and are dealt with by the Medicine Control Board who have their own investigators. In America importing steroids is a Federal Offence.

We obtained search warrants for addresses in Bristol and we took the American Special Agents with us. A number of addresses needed to be visited at the same time. Besides the Americans we also had a Police Major from Nicaragua with us observing. He was with our unit for a couple of days to see how we did things. The

main target was at our address when we knocked the door down to get in. We detained him under the Medicines Control Act and searched the premises. We found quantities of injectable steroids. The suspect who was sat watching us was becoming more and more agitated whilst we were there searching and he was a very big lad. A body builder. He then spoke to me as the senior officer present and advised me that the reason he was becoming so aggressive and agitated was that he was past the time for a steroid injection. I let him inject himself from the drugs we had seized. The effect was immediate. He calmed immediately and we finished the searches and went to the local police station. The American found it difficult to understand how we dealt with the situation. I explained if we had not let him take the steroid someone would have been injured. Steroids deprivation can make the person very aggressive and besides in the UK the offence was not in the taking of the steroids but in importing and dealing with them without the appropriate licences. Letting him take the steroid calmed the situation. The Nicaraguan officer explained that in his country they would have executed the warrant with at least one armoured car and machine gun present and all officers would have machine guns.

The arrested person was later dealt with by the Medicines board in this country for offences and received a heavy fine. The offences for America were not extraditable so they took files and evidence back to America. About a year later this same suspect went to America on holiday, stupid man. He was arrested at the airport and got five years. I was hoping he was going to plead not guilty and would require my presence in court to give evidence. No such luck, he pleaded guilty. I did become friends with the American Postal Inspector and his family has been to stay with us and we reciprocated. We are still friends.

The events I have described above do happen occasionally all over the country. Sometimes local forces deal with them. On this occasion Customs and Excise became aware of what we were going to do and asked us to take the Nicaraguan with us. He was with them on a training cooperation swap.

History On My Doorstep?

John Mole Unearths Some Local History.

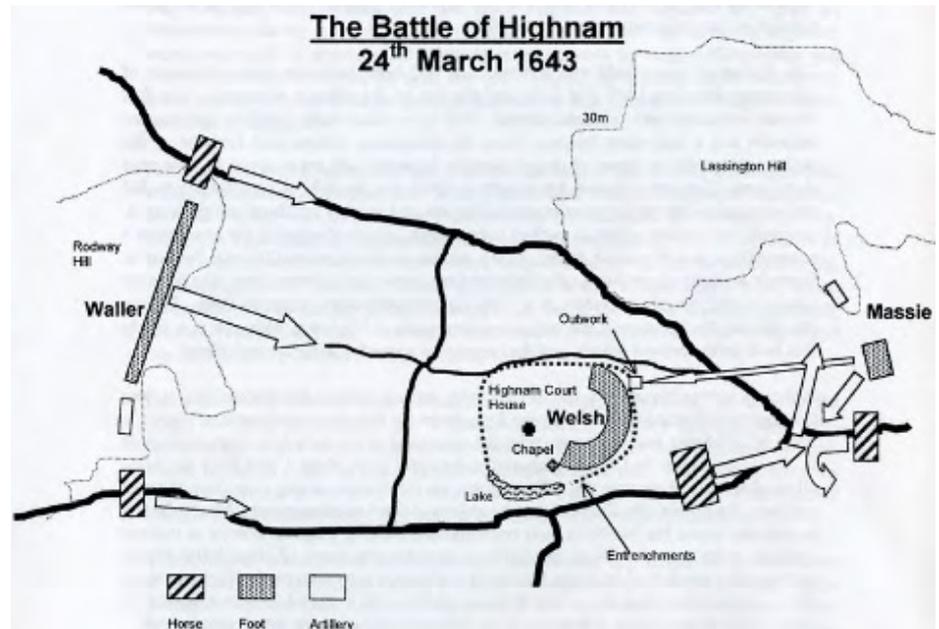
When I started working in the garden of The Hollies at Clifford's Mesne, many times I found old broken white clay pipes (the smoking kind). I was interested. Although the property was old, it was not that old with the site initially developed in the 1880's. The clay pipes were certainly earlier and why so many. A copy of an old 19th century Gloucester newspaper reported Clifford's Mesne wild and barren, with gorse and bracken much like parts of Mayhill today.

I looked further back, the earliest record I could find of the village was a muster for the hundred years war. Then I hit the jackpot.

From a contemporary account of his life as a trooper in the English Civil War by WS Symonds, he writes; '23rd March 1643, the Owl rested his troops by the Gospel Oak in Clifford's Mesne. The men were reluctant to carry on.'

This 'Gospel Oak' still exists, is very old and is less than 30 yards from my property. It must have been very prominent in the 17th century to have been noted in the troopers' diary. *400 years a growing, 400 years a living and 400 years a' dying.* The road from Aston Ingram to Clifford's Mesne is called Oak Lane and the nearby Georgian house is 'The Oaks'. It must be the same tree. I was determined to find out more and was surprised how important this 'rest' was to the outcome of the civil war.

In 1642, Bristol and Gloucester had declared for Parliament while the majority of the southwest and Wales for the crown. This put both cities in a difficult position and Bristol was subjugated in late that year by the King with an army of over 30,000. Parliament sent two regiments, about 1,000 men to Gloucester under the command of a 23-year-old soldier, Colonel Massie. The local population of about 5,000 was able to raise a third regiment, giving a defensive force of about 1,500. The defences around the city, including part of the old medieval war started to be improved.



The king with a token force soon arrived and demanded the city surrender. He was told to go away but not wishing see the slaughter as at Bristol, he departed. The city knew he would return and a major siege would take place.

In late February 1643, the opening move by the King was a force of 2,000 Welshmen from Monmouth attacking and taking Coleford then moving towards Gloucester. They invested Highnam Court just 2 miles from the bridge over the River Sever to the city. Quickly, defensive works were erected and all roads to Newent, Ross and Chepstow closed.

Massie reacted at the same time. Using a third of his force he occupied the abandoned moated Bishop's House at Over erecting a strong defensive position. There was some skirmishing but basically a stalemate had been reached. He sent urgent messages for assistance.

Early on the 22nd March, 'The Owl', General William Waller, was at Tetbury, with a force of 2 regiments of horse and one of infantry, about 1,500 men. They had just engaged a Royalist force and taken their Colours. He immediately sent 200 troupers to Colonel Massie with instructions to send barges down the River Sever to the old ferry crossing at about 5 miles

south of Gloucester. He then moved quickly to the ferry crossing. During the 22nd, the force crossed the river and marched westwards up through Blaisdon village and by nightfall had camped at Huntley.

A route I regularly drive when visiting Newham Masonic Hall.

The commander at Highnam would have seen the barges depart Gloucester and scouts would have reported the Roundheads crossing the Severn and heading west. If this force was to assist Massie they could have come straight to Gloucester and crossed the bridge or after crossing the Severn using the barges turned north up the Chepstow Road.

On the 23rd March, I believe The Owl, left his infantry at Huntley and slowly led his cavalry up towards Mayhill Village, down through Newent woods with the leading elements arriving at The Oak Tree in Clifford's Mesne. From this position, the tower of Gloucester Cathedral could clearly be seen and likewise the oak tree from the cathedral. The roll of hills blocks any view from Highnam, as would not be the case from the top of May Hill. Messages could have been exchanged with Colonel Massie at Over. Perhaps a bonfire or a wave of flags.

History On My Doorstep ... Continued

John Mole Unearths Some Local History.

'I am ready' would be enough.

I can also imagine a Royalist scout, seeing the long line of troops heading further west, would ride swiftly down the Newent Road reporting that General Waller and his troops were no threat to their position at Highnam. *You can read the rest from history books.*

The next day, 24th March, Massie and his 500 men abandoned their fortification, formed up and attacked the Royalists.

With such a small number they were easily repelled and quickly fell back. It was too much of a temptation, the majority of the Royalists climbed their defences and charged Massie's men. With Massie destroyed, Gloucester could be taken easily from the west.

Suddenly, there are cries from the rear of the Royalist lines, General Waller's force had marched unknowingly east from Huntley, had crossed the

undefended barricades from the west and taken Highnam Court. They were in no position to defend themselves. With Waller's regiments of horse on both sides and two infantry regiments in the centre, Massie's men turned and held their ground. The Royalists were in complete disarray. 1,500 threw down their arms and surrendered. There was a short bloody battle near Rudford. Waller's two infantry regiments were in fact only one. He had split it and used the Royalist Colours taken a few days earlier.

After the battle, the supplies of food, arms and gunpowder taken would prove vital to Massie in the defence of Gloucester. Some of the prisoners taken joined the Parliament force but the majority were released and returned to Wales. He could ill afford to take them into Gloucester.

The Owl soon left with his small army having more victories and defeats in the Southwest.

The King returned to Gloucester with his army on the 10th August and the further tale of Colonel Massie and the city's stout defence is well worth reading.

Some historians suggest the defence of Gloucester was critical in the outcome of the English Civil War. If that is correct, so was the defeat of the King's forces at Highnam and the supplies taken into Gloucester.

I could easily speculate that those troopers smoking their pipes in what would become my garden, 450 years later, may have decided the outcome of the war?



How it All Began

Nigel Donovan describes his route Into Masonry.

Hello Brethren, I greet you all safe and well.

You will recall (or maybe not, it is some while since) back in May during the still early days of lockdown, that I wrote an article alluding to the way life had quietly dragged us to where we are now? When writing for issue 7, it had not occurred to me that we might still be communicating with each other in this way, but "The Craftsmen" has been a wonderful conduit to share little bits of each other's lives. Our need to maintain communication has never been greater and the initiative of Andrew and Billy has been a beacon for us all, a true reflection of what Masonry is about. But how did we all arrive here and what is Masonry to each of us? My reference to issue 7 of "The Craftsmen" was prompted by Emyr, when I told him I was writing this piece. He said, "You have already done that", but in referring back, I see all I did was give him an honourable mention!

I know that for many Masons, interest in the organisation has been prompted by a family member having graced the temple and walked the tiled floor, or a close friend, relative or just a perverted interest in the secret and "dark" side of life!

For me it is a strange memory from my childhood, as our family home was bordered on one side by the local primary school and Masonic Hall, whilst my grandfather lived on the other side. The garden was an irregular shape, but in a rectangular space to the rear of the school playground and the neighbours to the rear, father, who owned and operated a sizeable building company, decided to build a swimming pool. So it was in those days, that on occasions when the digger driver was available, he would be seconded to our house to "dig a hole". Likewise the bricklayer in a moment of redundancy, would appear and lay rows and rows of blocks, closely followed by another tradesman to apply the render to the face of the blockwork, and so it was that a swimming pool appeared. The

plumber duly appeared when on a break and installed the pumping and filtration equipment. As a family, we were then put to work applying a rubberised paint to the render to make it waterproof (and blue!) and "voila", complete the greatest gift a father could give to his family. You may wonder why the long reference to the swimming pool. It is very simple, the other side of the fence was the Masonic Hall, and it soon became obvious that we really needed a wall built, as the hall was open to a small side road on the other side, giving all the passing public a lovely view of all of us in our "cossies", really not that edifying. This somehow brought about a focus on the Masonic Hall. As a child, I would spend most evenings alongside the pool, climbing and sitting on the wall and marvelling at the world with my ever increasing stream of friends – amazing what a swimming pool can do in the popularity stakes! As the months and years rolled by and as a child you become more aware of things going on around you, I had noticed that two or three times a month (it could have been many more) a large number of men in black suits, carrying briefcases would descend upon the hall and vanish into this mysterious building. As inquisitive as children are, when querying my parents on the subject, I truly to this day cannot remember the answer, other than it was the Masonic Hall, and, as a child, accepting that as the answer.

It was interesting to learn of Andrew Moore's journey into Masonry which followed his wonderful time in the scouts. This must be a following trend, as I too had spent a thoroughly enjoyable time in both the local Wolf Cub pack, graduating to the Scout Troop (3rd Woodstock as it happens) at the appropriate age, become a "sixer" and patrol leader etc., leading the troop to great success in local and national scouting competitions – sorry, I digress. Our involvement in the town activity was quite consuming, with father being a local councillor, mayor and the chairman of the Oxfordshire Association of Boys Clubs. He was

responsible for the building of our local youth club and all in all was highly revered in the local community, known by all, and a personal friend of the Duke of Marlborough, which had it's own benefits (another time!). It is strange that a man who did so much for other people, loving youth and helping young people all around us was never really able to forge a close relationship with me. In fact he was a hard disciplinarian and rarely discussed anything with us at all. He sadly passed at a very young age (62), just when I was probably starting to be adult enough to form a relationship with him, heart disease afflicting the whole family, all four brothers of my father's generation succumbing, but oddly not his one sister who lived well into her nineties. The reason I dwell on my father is that given his involvement in everything in the local community, his charitable work, his input to youth activities and general "Bon viveur" approach to life, to this day I still do not know if he was a Mason. I have asked my sister who was much closer to him and she does not know either, but "thinks" he wasn't. I am sure there are records somewhere which would reveal the secret, but I have to admit to it not really being something I need to know.

It is fair to say that my father's inclination to give his time to others in all walks of life and differing pursuits has definitely influenced my participation in "life", having been involved in clubs and organisations of one kind or another at every opportunity, the football club, the rugby club, the motor club, the cricket club etc. etc, in addition to which I have always been involved in charitable causes, RBL being high on list, as father was also chair of the local branch and me having dated a one time "Miss RBL"! The theme of charitable fund raising has continued through my life wherever I have been, most frequently through events organised "at the local", events so radically different from each other, but all with the same aim in mind – raising money for charity and good causes. Over the years I have been involved in raising tens of thousands of pounds

How it All Began

Nigel Donovan describes his route Into Masonry.

one way or another, particularly when we moved to the New Inn in 1989.

Over the years at the New Inn, the fund raising activities ranged from promise auctions in the garden to school dinner nights, African nights, Cowboy nights and far too many more to mention. Each year for several years we were involved in an annual live music night held in a local barn that we completely converted to a night club for a week. The last year we held the event (just on the outskirts of Llangarron), we had around 1,000 people to watch an ABBA tribute band and our own local heroes the Double Barrel Band! Needless to say, thousands were raised for the Cobalt Unit in Cheltenham on that occasion, just one more of many. Probably one that stands out in my mind was "Unchristmas Day", held on the last weekend in June, which was a day of jollity, food, music and fund raising, always graced with the tree from the Christmas before (some called it a twig, can't think why).

Having obviously toed a fairly close line to Masonry, it was not until I met Emyr Jones that the subject of Masonry ever arose, but unbeknown to me I was surrounded by several Masons who never showed their hands. One in particular who would always shake my hand and circulate his thumb in a very unusual manner and stare me in the eye at the same time which I always thought was just his way of being really friendly. I probably met, served and befriended many more Masons in my time there, but none ever made it apparent. During our time at the New Inn I doubt that I would ever have had the time to become involved in Freemasonry as the ownership of a very busy pub and restaurant was all consuming in every sense!

A few years later, having left the New Inn and become a neighbour to Emyr, we maintained our friendship and frequently met up for beer, meals, more beer, shared dog care, holiday homes and all sorts of activities in between, did I mention beer? During



these years, Emyr would pass me exhausted copies of FMT and all sorts of other information about the good work that Masons did worldwide, which I have to say pricked my interest, but I was still busy learning my new business in the surveying world, so still had little spare time. That pattern continued for a while, until eventually my curiosity got the better of me and I felt the need to investigate another way of fulfilling my charitable intentions. I then learned that Arthur (Stonadge) was a Mason and I was very involved with him and his family at the cricket club. Eventually, I decided the time was right to "go for it" and in no time at all, having been proposed by Emyr and seconded by Martin Thorne (who I had also done business with but didn't know was a Mason), found myself sat in front of an interview panel which included Arthur and others. Initiation arrived very suddenly and as I am sure happens to so many of us, when that hoodwink is removed, when material light is restored, there are all those people you know, all over the room, dressed in their finery! Suddenly, the mystery of the stroking thumb was revealed and there in the Senior Warden's chair was Steve Williams, smiling from ear to ear, and of course, his brothers, besides our DC and several others who had obviously been aware of my impending arrival, but in my complete ignorance of their involvement.

So, here we are several years later, Worshipful Master of Vitruvian Lodge, a position that as a child, seeing all those chaps enter the building next door from the swimming pool wall, I would never have dreamt of. I am proud, happy and humbled by everything around me and have so much to learn. I really do wish I had done it many years earlier, when possibly I would have had more energy and certainly a greater capacity for learning (script especially), but am so glad that all of these friends and acquaintances led me there in the end. All that is missing now is to get back in the Lodge and enjoy the company of my fellow Masons, all working towards the same goal. For now though, I sit in my little part of Herefordshire and watch my brothers continue the business on my behalf, for which I am eternally grateful. Stay safe brethren and look forward to when we can all meet again.

Amazing what a swimming pool does for your popularity in the neighbourhood!

There's more than one way to earn a living Part 12

Patrick Eyre continues to recount his career moves.

The flatbed truck arrived from Exeter, I can't rightly remember the make but it appeared to have a 5 ton carrying capacity, and was a short wheel base, ideal for the job. It was sitting in our workshop, and along with my assistant I spent a long time looking at it, and making sketches. One of the main things was stability when the conveyor was fully extended and loaded with concrete. A truck/mixer with conveyor attached would weigh approx. 8.5 tons unladen, so the weight of the flatbed had to be increased. We decided to cover the bed of the truck with one layer of ships plate, which as well as giving it more weight would also give the project more rigidity and balance with the conveyor extended

Having completed the tour of England and Scotland with the demonstrator I had agreed with my MD that we would keep it on standby for a month, and should a potential customer wish to see it working I would hope to convince them to, buy it and offer it intact at written down book value.

Tony had been given a temporary job in the company stores and during his job driving the demonstrator he had been studying for his CPC, "certificate of professional competence". This is the minimum requirement for any person or business wishing to apply for an 'O' licence from the local traffic area to operate a goods vehicle. To obtain such, one has to have a suitable operating centre or approved place to park the vehicle overnight and before that can be approved, it is advertised in the local press, and open to scrutiny by the public and police who can raise objections on grounds of noise, pollution and character of the individual. Most of these requirements can be met by the applicant joining an owner

driver scheme as operated by the ready mixed concrete industry. Tony passed his CPC and I found him a position as an owner driver with one of my contacts in the business, and he has never looked back since. I should mention that I had obtained my 'certificate of professional competence', and indeed my HGV driving licence through "Grandfather Rights"

The hybrid conveyor truck was completed with all the necessary equipment such as a high pressure water hose fed from a substantial water tank. Having witnessed the difficulty and time consuming problem of keeping the conveyor clean following use, I knew the importance of the facility. The feedback from the owner after putting it into use back in Devon reiterated my fears, but apart from that he was very satisfied with the way it performed. I saw it a credit to the ingenuity of all those concerned in the project, but I knew that the two main factors why the industry in general wouldn't take up the conveyor concept would be the maintenance involved, the costs associated with that and the impact it would have on the way the ready mixed business extended it's delivery method universally.

In other words if one buys it, the competition will have to do the same. The customer will only deal with the company who can provide the service. When the conveyor becomes more readily available, the customer will only deal with the firm who offers the service for free, and so it goes on. BUT IT HAD TO BE TESTED.

To a degree this is exactly what happened. I received orders for no more than 20 over a 2 year period.

They were mainly to companies who were happy to buy my truck/mixers, and were prepared to see how the conveyor fitted into their business model, but on receiving an order for one I would always emphasise how important it was to allocate it to a driver who kept a clean truck as it was so essential he treated the conveyor in the same way. One complaint I dealt with in South Wales where the rear of the vehicle had suffered a twisted chassis. On inspection, the conveyor looked like a concrete lamp post, the weight of which had done the damage, I often despaired of local management who would allow this to happen as it did on several other occasions in different parts of the country. In comparison a customer in the Wrexham area purchased two conveyors to be fitted to truck/mixers not of my company's make, and was so happy with them he bought the demonstrator. The company concerned is still offering this service today.

My customer in Dublin went on to manufacture his own conveyor. This being the gentleman who was part owner of the firm who assembles the Japanese Hino truck, and probably had premises suitable for carrying this out. I made it my business to see one of his creations on a business trip out there, satisfying myself he would never sell one in the UK. Made completely of steel the only truck strong enough to accommodate it would be the Hino, and knowing the ready mixed business as well as I did in the UK, there would be no appetite for those either.

In part 13 I will talk about why I left the company, and "what I did to earn a living".

A Word Search of Herefordshire Lodge Names

With thanks to Paul Sabel

J J L H X X V K S Q E P S Y D V R Y T P P D V H
F L O Y A L H A Y Q A D D L F K J L Q N U C H V
Y R S Z R H Z F P E E G E N H C E L T X Y P O X
S S R R L W U O D T B I E S N N T V S B E A A F
D X E T W V I Y Z R F G S V P A S F F R D L W V
I B T D A U H V P R E U W M O O P U U K N L V S
V L S R K D D I E O L K G U F O M S J N Z A A C
A D A Q O X T T Q H P C S F U P X I Y P L D G W
D T M A L Y A W J S R E T E P T N I A S J I A V
T P H X M W A O S G J A N W G Z F Z R Y F A A I
S E G W N H J L J I Q Y I C B S I D E E J N A K
R F I A I W O J E E H A R I P V O I Q I P R X L
E X E W A A X P J D R P A W X T I W R F I G F R
T D L N N C K O A R W D L X U P K R L C A Q C M
S W N A F K B Z O U B A F E Y P K U O J S I E O
E D A I J A T W W E J Q R B D F A N X U U T T Z
H A E V I Y F P H B C A S D B Z I R Q Z P M N L
C Y D U N X O G D E L G V N P U D O X A A V B V
N F J R R Z H V O V N H C K M L X N L N P C D T
A K J T Q G X Z B I E P U L I T N A C C B X F X
M F C I S V W T N C W O E I C H Q C B N H P W U
G B R V C Z V O L G X W A U D E A F W Z T N D Y
P U N Y P N C C A S K M H F B M L E E W Q K L H
Z H R I A C A E M O Y U L Z Q K J Z A G M O Z E

Ariconium DeanWaterfield Delphis SaintPeters Coningsby
Cantilupe DeanLeighMasters Vaga LoyalHay Arrow
ManchesterStDavids RoyalEdward Vitruvian Palladian