

Ross Masonic Club



Supporting Local Freemasons

The Craftsmen

Week Commencing 8th June 2020

Issue Number Ten

Welcome to the tenth edition of the Ross Masonic Club Weekly Round-up. A chance to share what we have been up to, with some light hearted articles during the break in face to face meetings.

I hope you have all been keeping safe and well.

This week we have a feature on the hidden talents of Pip Thomas with his amazing Model Making Skills, something that took me back to my childhood with model aircraft suspended from the ceiling on fishing line.

A glimpse inside Emyr Jones' 'Man Cave' and the reminiscing of John Thornton on his lifelong enthusiasm for hockey.

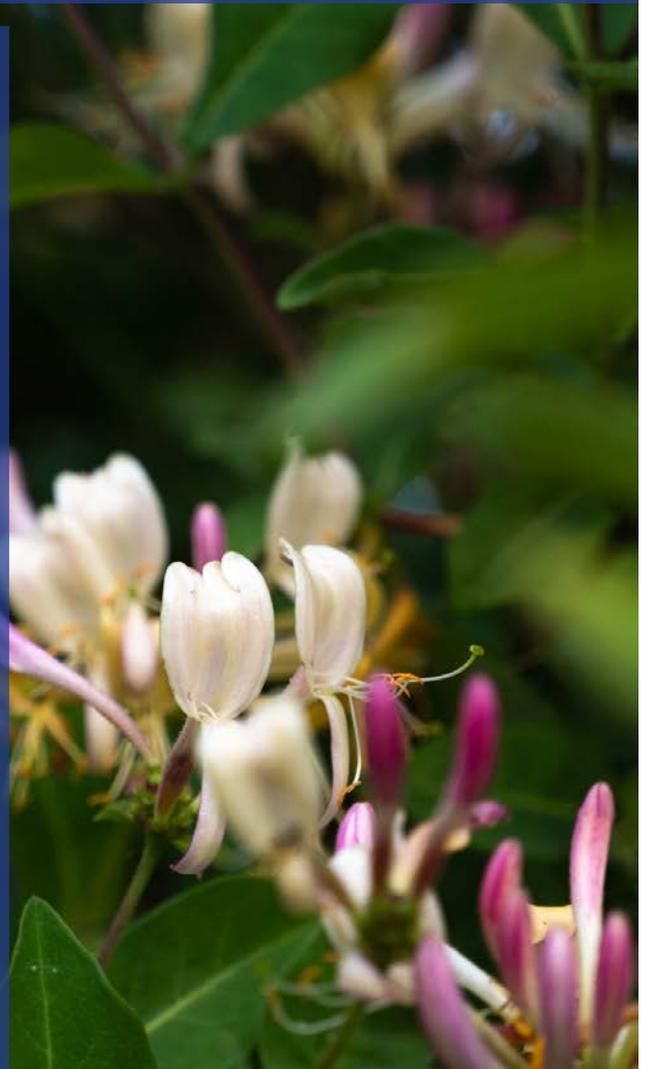
One of the perks of editing this newsletter is finding out about some of the Brethren I have known for years, but had no idea they were such talented chaps outside of ritual and masonry!

Next week we have yet more talent from David Hudson and Graham King.

This week we have started a series which we hope will become a regular feature every fortnight or so on some of the fundamentals of Masonry which we probably take for granted. The feature is entitled 'Would You Know The Answer?' and poses questions on items we probably took for granted and didn't give a second thought to. This week we look at the columns which are placed at the Master and his Wardens' chairs.

If you have a hidden talent we could feature, or have a question about masonry you would like answered then drop me a line and we will try to include it in a future issue.

Keep safe Brethren and keep in contact.



Any contributions or feedback please email the Editor

Social and Online Media Roundup



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 8:45 meeting for the 9 o'clock toast

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



Face to Face

In a virtual way!

Billy Russell has also continued his hard work in organising a regular face to face (virtually) get together using the 'Zoom' App for video conferencing.

18 of us met again last Friday to Toast Absent Brethren, our biggest ever turnout despite missing a few of our 'regulars'.

Billy also opened a Zoom meeting at the earlier time of 7:30 where we also had a number of participants that had not previously joined. If you would like to join at the earlier time please see the details in the email circulating the newsletter.

Any contributions or feedback please email the Editor

This Week In My Garden

This week we look at two contrasting gardens. The English Country Garden of Alan Miller and Michael Littlefield's Vines

Mike Littlefield's Vines

The first picture with roses is really no more than a labour saving device for the front of the property, which is lawned with a beech hedge.

The rear, which is terraced, apart from beds of heathers, flowers etc has 3 grape vines. Two, freestanding are Syrah or Merlot given to me by French viticulture neighbours. The third is an old vine which grows (now, with my encouragement) on the pergola. Our predecessors had hacked it down to only 18 inches! Whilst I'm no expert, I've accepted advice on growing from the French and we achieved 20+ bottles of drinkable red wine (the French tasted and approved) in 2018 but last season's constant rain in the autumn put paid to everything! At the moment all are in flower and grapes developing so we'll see.



Alan Miller's English Country Garden

Having enjoyed maintaining the 2.5 acres of lawns, flowerbeds, shrubbery and paddock of a Victorian Rectory during recent years, it really is a pleasure, and, if we're honest, rather a relief, to have now moved to a modern property with a correspondingly smaller garden

Not so much neglected upon our arrival as colourless and uninteresting, this is now slowly taking shape, the objective being to create something that, whilst pleasing to the eye will, once completed, require minimal maintenance. The choice of plants will be influenced by our desire that the garden should be a "safe haven" for wildlife, encouraging bees, butterflies, small birds and hedgehogs to visit and populate.



More from Alan on his Blog here <https://www.applecrossantiques.com/blog/>



Any contributions or feedback please email the Editor

Coffee Break and T@3

A quiz on the 2nd Degree Tracing Board submitted by John Thornton and a few items to keep you smiling.



Quiz on the 2nd Degree Tracing Board

1. What was the width of the outer rim or shell of the two great pillars at the entrance to the 1st Temple in Jerusalem?
2. What was stored within them?
3. What fruit was shown on the chapters?
4. What was the name of Jephtha's father?
5. What was drawn on the two spherical balls on top of the pillars?
6. How is 'Plenty' depicted on the Tracing Board?
7. In which Country did Jephtha raise a small army prior to the Ammonitish War?
8. How many Liberal Arts and Sciences are there?
9. In what were the Fellow Craft masons paid their wages?
10. Who is stood outside the door to 'The Middle Chamber' to prevent unauthorised access?

I see people around my age mountain climbing, I feel good getting my leg through my underwear with out losing my balance



Thank you to Arthur Stonadge for these cartoons. Original Source Unknown.

Courtesy of the Humour Train Facebook Group

A man just drove past me on a tractor shouting 'the end is nigh'
I think it was 'Farmer Geddon'

What's made of leather and sounds like a sneeze?
A shoe!

I once dated a twin, my friend asked me how I told them apart?
I said Stacy had a beauty mark on her right cheek
And John had a beard!

If you think swimming with dolphins is expensive, try swimming with sharks.
That cost me an arm and a leg!

What did they yell at Edgar Allen Poe when he nearly walked into a tree?
PO-E-TRY!

Any contributions or feedback please email the Editor

Would You Know The Answer?

Dennis Roberts helps us with our daily advancement while we are away from Lodge Meetings.

During a recent telephone conversation with a mason in another Province he mentioned that some members had been sorting out the lodge and refurbishing during the lock-down. On checking round after the cleaning he noticed that the columns for the Master and Wardens were not correctly placed. This, of course, led me to think if I would know what should go where. I do know that they represent Wisdom, Strength and Beauty. But who is who? And which column is the correct one for the position?

We can all find the answers easily of course by consulting Solomon. Remember that?

<https://solomon.ugle.org.uk> There are also other ways of seeking information, and many masons in Herefordshire have now joined Twitter, and Ross has its own Facebook. It really is easy to join and you do not need to be showered with 'rubbish' if you choose carefully who to follow.

Below are the three columns, but do you recognise them, whose is whose, and what and who do they represent? I would be interested to know if you know without looking it up, and anyone with ideas please email me.



I would also be interested to know if there are any other questions which puzzle you concerning our lodge ceremonies and ritual meanings. Please let me know on the email address below.

This could become a regular feature.

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

roberts.greeba@btinternet.com



Remembering Happier Times

Any contributions or feedback please email the Editor

Hidden Mysteries? - No, Hidden Talents!

Planes, Trains and Automobiles

This week we focus on the hidden talents of Pip Thomas and his amazing model ships and planes



I would like to take you all back to when we were all young tearaways and at each Christmas we would all receive an Airfix model plane. On completing it we would pester Mum for a length of cotton to hang it from the ceiling!

Then, after a number of years, it had to come down due to the 1 inch of dust that had collected.

The only way to clean it was to run it under a tap and it never got put back up again. Then you were left with a

pepper pot ceiling from all the holes.

Cutting a long story short, I decided to get my own back, and started building bigger and better models. Whilst in the forces I made numerous model ships and planes but sadly they were all lost in transit. The box which had our wedding and family photos plus my models went missing never to be found again.



It has not deterred me in any way. Here are some of the models I have worked on and those still in progress.

HMS VICTORY this took me 7 years to build. A fine looking ship, it is 1m in length and 900mm in height.

The Victory is built from plans with balsa wood.

The Bismarck and Spitfire from plans die cast metal.

The Bismarck is 2m long and 600mm height. This is a 3 year build.



And finally I started building the Spitfire on lock-down but there is some way to go yet as it will be a 2 year build.

The Spitfire is 600mm wingspan and 700mm in length.



Fifty Sheds of Grey

This week we focus on a newly built 'Man Cave' by Emyr Jones

I have been building things all of my life – my father was a carpenter and joiner, and I used to 'assist' him from a very young age in his private ventures. One such item of 'help' was to gather up all loose screws and nails in his workshop, and put them all into a container – little realising that he'd spent several hours sorting them all out for individual storage. You live and learn – well he did!

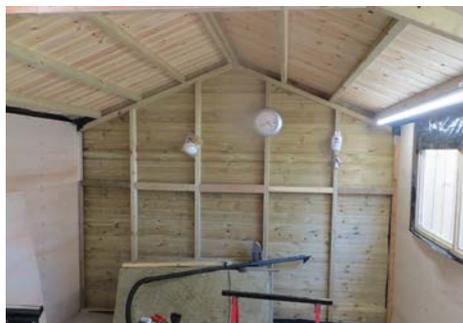
I 'loosely' followed in my father's area of work, by becoming a Civil Engineer, and eventually brought many of my acquired skills to bear, by constructing (with the assistance of my late brother) a rather large bungalow, doing a great deal of the work myself. I had previously renovated, with my father's assistance, our first home, by completely gutting it, and getting on with the job of refurbishment etc.

All of the above was usually done in cramped conditions, and sometimes out in the open, during all weathers. What I never possessed, was "A SHED" to work in! After almost 50 years of marriage, I am now well on the way to creating a (I'll say it quietly) 'MAN CAVE'. This (ad)venture is fully supported by my Line Manager Stephanie, although she did not realise the full time and financial implications prior to commencement of procurement and construction of "The Greatest Shed on Earth".



Progress has been somewhat hampered, due initially to bad weather, and then Covid-19. I've had to modify my strategy. I was originally going to build it from scratch, but the restrictions imposed on obtaining timber etc, has resulted in an 'off-the-shelf' solution being procured.

The shed was delivered (and erected) 3 weeks ago, and It measures 14' X 10' externally. I'm currently installing insulation to the walls, and then lining it internally with plywood. Should be finished by the time you read this, and then it's on with benching, shelving, and electrics.



This is an adventure that I've been sharing with Nigel, our WM, having previously assisted him in erecting his storage shed last Autumn. Self-isolation has brought many difficulties to us all, with visits to Screwfix and Toolstation, being 'taboo', until just recently.

I confess that I'm a bit disappointed with Screwfix – in the past, any purchases from them generated a donation to the Herefordshire 2020 Festival via "easyfundraising". This has now stopped. Thank you, Tim Berners Lee for the Internet, and on-line shopping!

In the fullness of time, all of my tools will have somewhere to live happily together. Who knows, I might now actually get to use them more frequently!

I plan on 'doing things' in my shed, not sure what, but time will tell.

In my own mind, I'm still planning (even plotting) what to include as permanent fixtures. (A toilet is quite difficult but not impossible!), but features might (will) include a TV and Computer. Stephanie and I already communicate during this 'fitting-out' phase by Walkie-Talkies. These are an essential adjunct for requesting refreshments, getting moral support and praise for my progress. On occasions, we get 'stray conversations' on our comms channel from who knows where, which can cause great confusion, and it's very tempting to join in anonymously in a conversation with several unknown participants – a bit like the old Telephone Party Line system that prevailed decades ago with many telephones. Someone said they'd be there in 20 mins. I'm still waiting for them to arrive! Whilst I 'know' what I really want in MY SHED, any constructive and realistic suggestions would be more than welcome!

For example, it needs a (not rude) name. After Covid-19, you will be welcome to inspect my shed – entry is gained when you bring sufficient beer! If you even try to introduce Lager, it carries a life ban from MY SHED.

Any contributions or feedback please email the Editor

Hockey - a Lifetime's Enthusiasm

John Thornton's Lifetime Enthusiasm for Hockey.

I was first introduced to hockey in September 1966 and have not missed a season since then. Why hockey you may ask. My country grammar school played hockey and football, no rugby. I was useless at football as confirmed by one of my school reports where it states under football "a bit clumsy".

Hockey was a different game then as we played on grass rather than today where we play on astro-turf. As a player I never scaled any dizzy heights either at school where I just scraped into the first XI nor ever since or throughout my career. However I learnt how to stop and hit a ball and tackle well. I have never been one to go training.

I could have achieved greater heights (at least in my dreams), but to me it is a splendid game rather what others refer to as a sport. Considering it to be a game sort of reduces its seriousness to the level of say tiddlywinks! Having said that I certainly play to win.

When I started playing club hockey in 1971 I found myself in a team made up of players in their forties and teenagers like me. We were taught about sportsmanship, not showing dissent to umpires and how to drink beer. I learnt all these lessons well, possibly the latter too well.

Throughout my life I have found that hockey is a great release; in that what other problems you have you forget them for 70 minutes whilst playing the game. Also if in a bad mood thrashing a hockey ball about is therapeutic.

When I got married I had a verbal agreement that I could play hockey every Saturday and go on two tours per year. I doubt that she expected this agreement to last for 40 years!

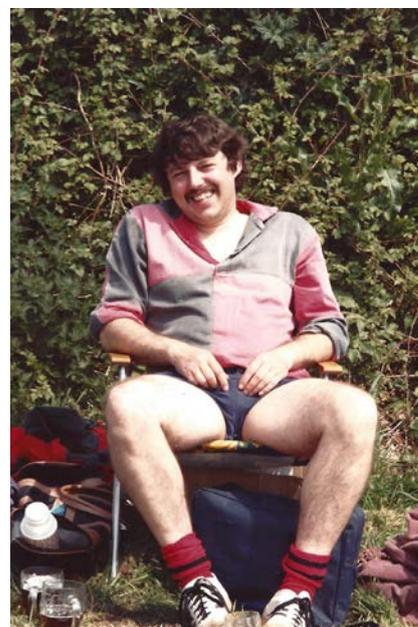
I suppose the teams in which largely played were made up of what could be called coarse hockey players. The sort of people who always had a beer before a game and knew where all the best pubs were for lunch on the way to matches and where to stop on the way back. This is not to say that we were not very keen to play good hockey, indeed one of my teams won the league one year, much to our horror. We were the despair of the serious players. People like myself with no aspirations to higher things form the back bone of clubs, rather like Freemasonry where many of the brethren have no wish to do more than to support their own Lodge which they do year in year out

I found many masons amongst hockey players, particularly on tour. Indeed a number of us were invited to an Installation when the goal keeper was going in the chair. There were enough of us there to raise a side! Talking of goal keepers Graham King the Deputy Provincial Grand Master was a keeper for a Bristol side. Sadly our paths never crossed before he retired.

I only play in Social matches about twice a month now rather than on Saturdays. I had to give up when I found I was trying to mark players nearly 50 years younger than me. The knees are not what they were and the doctors ask what do I expect after 50 odd years of hockey and yet they say sport is good for you! My wife tells me that I have played for all these years because I have no imagination and can't think of anything else to do on a Saturday.

I now umpire on Saturdays in the attempt to give something back to a game that I have loved for all these years.

The photo shows me in a classic pose on a tour when in my 30s. Note the pint of beer at my feet!



Community Hub

Local Services

A list of local suppliers and services who offer delivery services

Local Delivery Services and Community Hubs

Forest of Dean

Anyone living in the Royal Forest of Dean? This is a list of local producers who will provide delivery services
<https://www.foresthub.co.uk/covid-19-home-delivery-services>

Llangrove-Llangarron-Llancloudy and Three Ashes Community Hub

Local Community Hub able to help with shopping, prescription collections etc

They are on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/Llangrove-Llangarron-Llancloudy-and-Three-Ashes-Community-104075311144231/>

Email address is communityhub22@gmail.com

Telephone number is 01989 770916.

They hope to answer all calls between 9am and 5pm but if they are engaged or you call outside of these hours you can leave a message.

Ross on Wye

Hanks Butchers

45 Broad Street

Ross

01989 562216

www.meatandgame.co.uk

info@meatandgame.co.uk

Meat, game, eggs

Pengethley Farm Shop

Pengethley Garden Centre

Peterstow

01989 730430

www.pengethleyfarmshop.com

sale.pfs@btconnect.com

Vegetables, dairy, bakery, meat, deli, general groceries

Ross Good Neighbours

www.rosscdt.org.uk

help@rosscdt.org.uk

01763 802046

Provide a number of helpful services to the Ross Community

Thank you to David Hudson, Geraint Bevan and Nigel Donovan for the useful information above.