



MALMESBURY

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MASONICS

AN IRREGULAR NEWSLETTER
AROUND

ST ALDHELM LODGE NO 2888

MEETING AT MALMESBURY : PROVINCE OF WILTSHIRE



WBro Ian Dunbar PPSGW has been appointed Visiting Grand Officer to St Aldhelm Lodge No 2888, in succession to WBro Ian Jacobs PGSwB. Here he is greeted by WBro Mike Neal WM 2888 at the November 2016 meeting - under the benevolent gaze of WBro B deBertodano, founder of the Malmesbury Lodge.
See back page for more.

Giving "greetings" is great - but beware of too much "banter", and "Keep it short, and sweet!"

IT has long been encouraged that every member of St Aldhelm Lodge exercises, the privilege of conveying "Greetings" from our Lodge to any lodge where they happen to be a visitor. The same goes for brethren who visit us, although this is sometimes confined to one 'token' greeting on behalf of all if time is running short.

The exact shape such greetings take may have never been formally laid down. It has changed over the years, bearing in mind that at one time it would have been customary for only a WM to give full and formal greetings, when he visited as a ruling Master.

RULING MASTER'S PRIVILEGE

The form is that if a ruling Master is present he alone gives greetings on behalf of himself and his lodge, and all other members stand to order as he does so. When he is not present, any member in good standing can do it on behalf of the lodge, if he wishes. There is no obligation on any individual to give greetings.

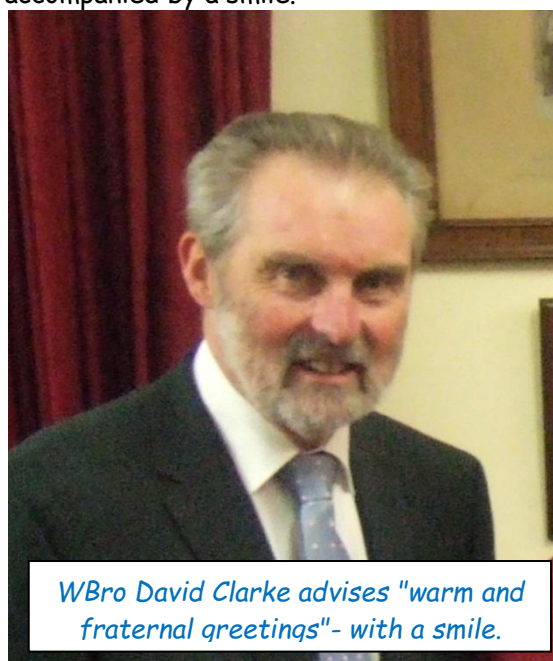
When the WM is not present the privilege goes to the senior member in the Lodge order of precedence who wishes to do so.

There are differences in the ways greetings are given on behalf of St Aldhelm or any other Lodge. Advice from WBro David Clarke, a former St Aldhelm DC, is to keep it short and sweet. It is sufficient to speak on behalf of the lodge, with name and number, without referring specifically to either the WM, officers or brethren, but this is optional.

It is not necessary to pass judgement on either the ceremony or the performance of those taking part. The only necessity is to give warm and fraternal greetings on behalf of the WM and the Lodge, says WBro David.

The response to the Visitors' toast at the festive board is the best place for congratulations or comments. It would be inappropriate for a visitor to seriously make derogatory criticism at any stage, anywhere.

Having said that, brotherly banter is not unknown or unwelcome, preferably when accompanied by a smile.



WBro David Clarke advises "warm and fraternal greetings" - with a smile.

WBro David organises a yearly St Aldhelm 'group' visit to Gordano Lodge No 6244, meeting at Clevedon in the Province of Somerset. This always coincides with a traditional Burns' Night supper, complete with haggis, mashed neaps, bagpipes and whisky, which is enjoyed by all but not necessarily in that order. The visit this year was on January 24th and was attended by 12 St Aldhelm Lodge members, including the WM, WBro Mike Neal, and two other additional guests.

The verdict was "excellent", with the WM giving greetings and replying to the 'Visitors' toast in what is described as an "exemplary" manner, highlighting the benefits to masonry and masons of going to other lodges.

Looking back at a Ladies' Festival over 60 years ago

THE St Aldhelm Lodge Ladies' Festival scheduled to take place at the Hilton Hotel, Swindon on Friday May 12th 2017 looks like being very good value.

But, even so, wine list prices are unlikely to be as low as they were for the event when it took place over 60 years ago, as an eagerly awaited prelude to the Christmas season.

WBro Percy Clark, a veritable mine of memorabilia and minutiae, has unearthed a St Aldhelm Ladies' Festival card, menu and wine list for an event which took place on Friday, December 9th, 1955.

The WM was WBro Jack Mott, proprietor of the old Athelstan Cinema. He left a permanent impression on the Lodge, not to say the brethren, as the red plush seats in the Temple came out of the old cinema on its demise.

As a memento, the card itself brings back many memories. It is undoubtedly a product of the former *Taylor's of Minety* printers, a very high-class company which was latterly owned by the late WBro Robin Walker, a member of the founding family.

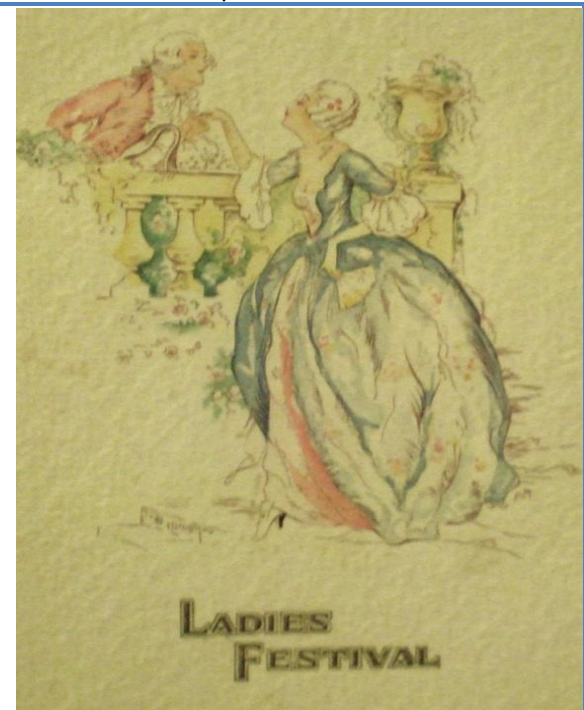
That it came from Taylor's is not surprising. WBro George Taylor was a former St Aldhelm WM who was not only present at the festival but is listed as an entertainer ("tenor") along with Bro Victor Peacock ("magician").

There is no indication of the venue, but in those days the old Malmesbury Town Hall, of fond memory, was the accepted home of such events. No less than 111 members, ladies, and guests attended, sitting at a top table with six arms.

They could have enjoyed a glass of sherry (medium or sweet), or port for "2/3" or about 15p today not allowing for inflation.

Liqueurs cost three old pennies more, at 2/9, and the most expensive red wine (Nuits St George) was just £1 a bottle. You could have had a bottle of dry white Graves for 11/-, although sweet white Sauternes, which was probably more popular in those days, was a whopping 13/- or 65p.

The menu one can only describe as "highly traditional", but there is no record of the caterers: Ox-tail soup; Scotch salmon mayonnaise; roast stuffed turkey and sausages, creamed and roast potatoes, garden peas; fruit salad and cream; biscuits, cheese and celery; and coffee.



St Aldhelm Lodge Ladies' Festival 1955

The grace was sung ("For these, and all thy mercies...") and there were three toasts, to the Queen, the Ladies by WBro J H B Fielder, and the WM, by WBro C R W Moore.

Dancing, to Arthur Alexander's Ballroom Orchestra (anyone remember him?) was a world away from the styles of today. Things like the veleta, barn dance ("progressive encore"), gay Gordons, St Bernard's waltz, and Paul Jones, were on the card - and there were 'spot' prizes.

There was a buffet at 11pm but no indication of its fare. In 1955 they might not have kept it up much after midnight.

Very busy masonic career of our new Visiting Grand Officer

ST ALDHELM Lodge No 2888 members are sad to lose WBro Ian Jacobs **PGSwB** as their Visiting Grand Officer. The VGO is a close link between each lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge and WBro Ian has always been a welcome and helpful guest and visitor.

However, the sadness is eased by the happy arrival of another "Ian", WBro Ian Dunbar PPSGW, who looks forward cheerfully to joining in at Malmesbury. "I will be happy to help in any way I can, and if I do not know the answer to anyone's questions I am sure I will know a man who does" he says.

WBro Ian (68) was brought up and educated in Fife, Scotland and came south of the border in his early 30s. He moved with his wife of 30 years, Maureen, to Chippenham, where his masonic career began. Maureen's father, a Freemason in Shrewsbury was instrumental in his being initiated into Vale of Avon Lodge No 8432 in 1995.

In 2002 Ian became Worshipful Master of Vale of Avon Lodge, and in 2008 accepted the Provincial rank of Steward, followed in 2009 by that of Past Provincial Senior Grand Deacon.

In his year as Steward he is proud of the fact that he managed to visit almost every lodge in the Province of Wiltshire.

He became WM of Vale of Avon Lodge again, this time for two years in 2013 and 2014. During this time he also served as DC for about 18 months.

At Provincial Grand Lodge, in 2015 Ian became Provincial Junior Grand Warden and was further honoured this year with the rank of Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden.

He has also been Provincial Grand Sword Bearer for the Mark degree.

300 years of English Freemasonry - and 115 years of Masonry in Malmesbury!

THE Province of Wiltshire has been given welcome and much appreciated access to Salisbury Cathedral for a special Evensong service, on Sunday, September 3rd 2017, to mark the 300th anniversary of Grand Lodge. It is also the 115th year of St Aldhelm Lodge which was consecrated in 1902.

We must help fill the Cathedral!

Special arrangements are being made. Details as soon as possible. In the meantime, reserve the date, invite family and friends, and encourage the brethren. See you all at Salisbury.

King Athelstan the Glorious

KING Athelstan the Glorious, one of the greatest Anglo Saxon kings was closely associated with Malmesbury.

He was also closely associated with Freemasonry, which is not so generally known.



Tomb of King Athelstan in Malmesbury Abbey.

This fascinating aspect of our history, together with intriguing glimpses into early ritual and masonic lore will be discussed in a presentation at the St Aldhelm meeting on March 21st. The Chaplain will be assisted by two senior brothers in dramatic roles. Shows promise!

GREAT CAROLS - GREAT RESULT!
THE 2888 carol service - St Aldhelm Lodge at St Aldhelm's Church - raised £500 for Prostate Cancer UK. Many thanks to Fr Martin Griffin and parish.