



Chingford Area Masonic Social Group Newsletter No.13

Editor: W Bro Allan de Luca PPGStwd
www.casmgnewsletter.org

Diary of Events - 2006

22nd April - St. Georges/Cockney night to be held at the Chingford Masonic Centre, information from CAMSG

1st July - St Peters and St. Pauls Concert - with the Avelely and Newham Brass Band - not to be missed. Cost of tickets £8 including refreshments during interval....info from Tony Curtis 01708 510406 - book early to avoid disappointment

9th July - Stisted Annual garden party to be held at PEDKC Stisted....watch out for further information on Provincial and CAMSG Websites.

23rd July a cricket match between Chingford and Loughton Centres, to be played at Roding Valley Cricket Club. A day out for all the family

29th September - Fundraising Night ...theme to be announced

15th December - Widows Broken Column Christmas Luncheon at Chingford Masonic Hall...Contact Bernie Willis 01582 621496

Christmas Carol Service - to be held at St Peter & St. Paul's Church - Chingford - dates to be announced.



CHINGFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Members from the Chingford Masonic Centre together with the members of the Methodist Church held a Service of Carols on the 9 December 2005 at the Methodist Church, Station Road, Chingford. The Freemasons were grateful to The Revd.



Eleanor Jackson for granting permission to allow this, the third biannual Carol Service to be held at the Church.

The Revd Eleanor Jackson delivered the welcome and bidding prayer. The Methodist

readers by Mrs Betty Finch, W.Bro. Stan Shepard and Mr. Fred Wall and the Freemason readers were W.Bro. Bill Gunary, Ex. Comp Ken Elmes, W.Bro. Ray Raynor, and W.Bro. Dave Clarke. There were five Masonic Stewards on

duty W.Bro Chris Hicks. Roy Borchard, Peter Jessup, Bill Avery and Graham

Cannon, and grateful thanks are due to them, for carrying out their duties in

such a discreet manner. The offering was taken out during the final carol, and The Revd. Eleanor Jackson gave the closing blessing.

At the conclusion the congregation retired to the Hall for refreshments comprising of tea, coffee, biscuits and hot mince pies. W Bro Derek Hanson - Media Committee

Goodwill Lodge No: 7904 - Two reasons for celebrations recently

The Members of Goodwill Lodge 7904 have had two very good reasons to Celebrate recently.

The first was that on the 1st September 2005 one of their Past Masters, Right Worshipful Brother John Michael Webb was installed as the Provincial Grand Master and Grand Superintendent of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Essex.

The second reason for celebrating was that RW Bro John completed his 40 years in Freemasonry at the Regular meeting of the Lodge on the 4th November 2005.

Here we see R.W. John Receiving a cut glass decanter from the members of the Lodge by W. Bro. Roy Monery PDepGSwdB the remaining founder member of the Lodge. W Bro Roy stated "It



was a special occasion for me having seen John Initiated and after Installing him into the Chair of Goodwill Lodge". The meeting, attended by over 60 Brethren entitled the "Big Picture" a whistle stop tour of our history from the operative stone mason in mediaeval times through to the speculative masonry today.

W Bro Derek Hanson - Media Committee

Chingford Area Masonic Social Group Broken Column Luncheon - 16th December 2005

For the third year in succession, the Widows Christmas Broken Column Luncheon was held at Chingford Masonic Hall on Friday 16th December with 31 widows of departed members of Lodges who meet at Chingford.

The Provincial Grand Master RW Bro John Webb and his wife Diana, APMG W.Bro Bill Gunary and his wife Shirley, Father Darren Collins of the Church of St. Peter & St. Paul Chingford also attended along with committee members of the Chingford Area Masonic Social Group, and representatives of the Chingford Masonic Hall. A total of 50 ladies and brethren enjoyed a thoroughly festive luncheon.

The Widows were welcomed by W Bro Bill Gunary, and before the Christmas Lunch W Bro Bob Urch our most eloquent Master of Ceremonies soon got everyone into the festive mood by getting one and all to join hand and in communal singing "Whatever will be will be" to much enthusiasm.

Father Darren Collins gave the opening prayer and everyone tucked into a full festive menu of soup, roast turkey, Christmas pudding and mince pies.

Between each course a Christmas carol was sung, with each table participating in full harmony.



On the completion of the lunch, the PGM and his wife Diane then took wine with the Widows.

Picture left: PGM RW John Webb

and his good Lady Diana enjoying the Christmas Luncheon

There were Widows who had attended for the first time, and they each were presented with a Broken Column Broach.

W Bro Bill Gunary APGM, requested that we sing "Grace" followed by the National Anthem after which the Loyal Toast was given.

The festivities continued with everyone joining in the traditional Christmas song "The twelve days of Christmas" to much laughter and applause, as each designated individual attempted to stand up to sing their line at the right time, the PGM and APGM were given the line as the "2 Turtle Doves".

The "guest of honour" Father Darren Collins delivered a short oration, and related a story of being locked out without a set of keys, something that probably everyone has done at some time in their life. It was so important to obtain the keys, as on this occasion it was crucial to attend a funeral service with the right appurtenances. Farther Darren giving emphasis on the perseverance to get the keys, despite several amusing mishaps, and linked this story with the dedication of the members of Freemasons Lodges who commit themselves to such time for comfort and support to those widows and members who have lost loved ones.

Father Darren also mentioned the amount of good work that goes on in Freemasons Lodges, and in conclusion thanked everyone for inviting him. Father Christmas (a.k.a. W Bro Ted Page) then arrived, circulated the tables and presented all the widows with a Christmas present and at the same time taking the opportunity of stealing a kiss from each Widow.

There was a superb display of many Raffle prizes and each Widow won something from a large cuddly Teddy Bear, Xmas Hamper, Chocolates, and many other gifts. On this occasion there were two Widowers in attendance and were each given a special gift. The members of the CAMSG then sang to all those attending "We wish you a merry Christmas".

RW Bro John Webb, PGM stood to say that it was a wonderful afternoon, and he was delighted to see so many Widows in attendance. The PGM also related to the departed Brethren who should and will be long remembered and went

on to thank the Committee for their sturdy work for the Widows Christmas Luncheon. On behalf of himself and his wife Diane, he wished everyone a Happy Christmas and Happy New Year.

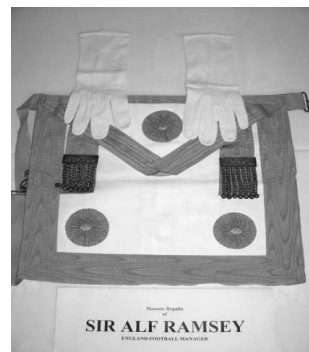
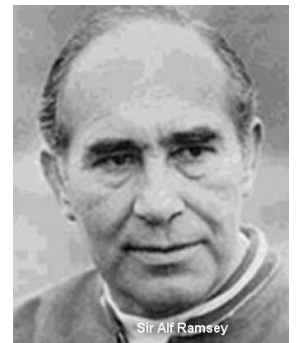
The tables were tastefully decorated with a floral Christmas centre piece, balloons and lighted bottle candles, and everyone had a most enjoyable luncheon.....W Bro Allan de Luca

Sir Alf Ramsey - Freemason from 1953 to 1981

The most famous line in sports commentating, "Some people are on the pitch. They think it's all over. It is now" as Geoff Hurst (now Sir Geoff Hurst) scored England's fourth goal, were made by BBC sports commentator Kenneth Wolstenholme, when England won the World Cup in 1966 under Sir Alf Ramsey, the England football team manager.

Sir Alf Ramsey was born in Dagenham, Essex 22 January 1920 and made his football league debut as a player on 26 October 1946, playing for Southampton against Plymouth Argyle. After a spell at Southampton, he transferred to Tottenham Hotspur where he achieved success by being the victorious side that won both the Second and First Division championships in the 1950/51 seasons.

In 1955 he became Manager of Ipswich Town when the club had been relegated to the Third Division. He got Ipswich back in the Second Division in 1957. The Ipswich squad won the Second Division championship in 1961 and the First Division the following year. The way he developed his players at Ipswich made him an obvious successor the England job, which he took in 1963, and by 1966 he had assembled an England team comprising of some of the best players this country has ever seen. Sir Alf Ramsey was knighted for his services to football in 1967, and remains the only England Manager to win for England the prestigious football World Cup. Unfortunately, after England lost to Poland, a defeat which cost them qualification for the 1974 World Cup, he was sacked, and effectively it was the end of his working life, although he acted as a consultant for a time and briefly managed Birmingham City, where he had been



made a director in 1977, and just after a short period of time subsequently resigned.

Sir Alf Ramsey was a member of the Waltham Abbey Lodge 2750, and he was initiated on Monday the 25th October 1953, Passed on Monday 16th November 1953 and Raised on Monday 4th October 1954. Sir Alf was never installed as Master of the Waltham Abbey

Lodge. Sir Alf resigned from the Lodge in 1981, and sadly died on 28th April 1999 in Ipswich, Suffolk.

Sir Alf Ramsey's widow Victoria Ramsey (Vickie) donated his Master Masons apron and Grand Lodge Certificate, and

two Summonses showing details of the date of his Initiation and Passing, to the members of the Waltham Abbey Lodge 2750, and soon will be displayed in a special cabinet for all the Brethren to view when they visit the Chingford Masonic Hall. From the Lodge History, Waltham Abbey Lodge No.2750 was consecrated on Wednesday 21st June 1899 in the Lady Chapel of Waltham Abbey by kind consent of the Vicar of Waltham, the Reverend F.B. Johnston, who was not a Freemason. There is legend to the effect that while the ceremony was in progress the Vicar, anxious for the comfort of his guests, tried to gain admission, and found he was unable to enter his own church, much to his dismay and probably annoyance. It is fairly certain that the Brethren had no legal right to close the Abbey - but they did. (*reproduced from the centenary souvenir book "The History of the First One Hundred Years of the Waltham Abbey Lodge No.2750 - 1899-1999" - held at the library at Freemasons Hall*)
The Lodge has met at Chingford Masonic Hall since 1931, where it still remains the Lodge's home.....W Bro Allan de Luca

An Interview with

RW Bro Col Sir Neil Thorne OBE TD DL

**Reproduced from the Loughton Masonic Centre Newsletter,
and by very kind permission of W Bro Jim Fretwell**

It is always frustrating if I do not receive material for inclusion in Newsletters therefore after the completion of the January edition I decided to approach our RW Provincial Grand Master to see whether he would allow me an interview so that I may include a profile before his impending retirement. My request was granted and I met Sir Neil in one of his office in Westminster on a sunny afternoon in April.

Neil Gordon Thorne only son of Henry Frederick & Ivy Gladys Thorne was born in Seven Kings on the 8th August 1932. He attended South Park school and recalls marching around the playground waving the Union Jack to celebrate Empire Day. At the outset of the Second World War the school broke up and, because of the concern about air raids, children were not concentrated in one area but were taught in small class groups mornings or afternoons in peoples private houses.

Young Neil passed a common entrance exam to attend the City of London School which, shortly afterwards, was evacuated to Marlborough as the Head was President of the Public School's Headmaster's Association and his friend was the Master of Marlborough College, this meant for a few years he was taught in Marlborough.

The school however relocated to the Embankment just at the time of the dreaded V1 rockets which necessitated a rather long holiday (16 weeks) in 1944. After the V1 came the V2 which was somewhat more terrifying. In 1945 with the cessation of hostilities normal school was resumed with much catching up to be done. Sports in which he participated were athletics, rugby & hockey. Having passed his School Certificate ('A' level in today's parlance) Neil went in to 6th Form and then to London University where he took his chosen subject Estate Management. This led to a BSc and later to qualification as a Chartered Surveyor. Whilst at school he was enrolled in the compulsory combined cadet force and with National Service to follow volunteered for the University

Training Corps. Holiday employment was not easy to come by so on one fairly long holiday he decided to take basic training and on a long subsequent long vacation he took the officer cadet training course at Mons. In effect he was commissioned before he was called up. The Queen Mother was Chancellor of the University and presided at Neil's Graduation.

In leaving University he spent a short time with Bernard Thorpe & Ptrs - Surveyors; in 1957 joined the Royal Artillery M. Quo fas et gloria ducunt (*where fate and glory lead*) and was posted to the British Army on the Rhine where he became a gun position officer and later an Assistant Adjutant; a role that was to open opportunities of a most diverse nature.

In 1958 the British Army were still allowed to practice anywhere in Western Germany and that did causing damage to farmland for which the local farmers were compensated at a level negotiated with the farmers' by a Joint Services Liaison Officer who was a British civilian. The farmers' bill was presented to the German government for payment. Some 13 years after the war the German government expressed their discontent with the situation and the British Ambassador was instructed by the British Government to re-negotiate the are for training and agree fresh rates of compensation. What followed could provide material worthy of a Dickie Attenborough 'Ealing Studios' farce.

The British Ambassador instructed the Major General Royal Artillery on the Rhine to sort out the problem; he in turn, for some unknown reason, sent for his Nuclear advisor, the CO of 2nd Lt Neil Thorn's Regiment and assigned the task to him. The Regimental CO was somewhat involved in equestrian matters (3 day Eventing to be precise) as was his Adjutant who participated in the Events, so he delegated the task to his second in command, a Major who held the war rank of Lt. Col. Hence a unique situation was created whereby, for a period, the Regiment was being run by a Major assisted by a National service Assistant Adjutant. Due to a quirk of fate the Major became very ill at a critical time and was unable to take part in the final negotiations which were then placed in the hands of a 26 year old 2nd Lt. Who had to be presented as a "Staff Captain" in order not to offend several hundred German farmers and their negotiators.

Fortunately the negotiations were satisfactorily concluded and remained in being for around 20 years.

On completion of his National Service Neil joined the "Terriers" and took up full time employment with Bernard Thorpe & Ptrs and later Hull & Co - Chartered Surveyors where he became Senior Partner having also qualified as a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (FRICS). He spent 30 years with the TA and achieved the rank of Lt Col and the Colonel.

From a very early age NGT had shown an interest in politics, not really surprising as his grandfather and mother had both been active in the political field, however his mentor was really Geoffrey Hutchinson (MP for Ilford and later Lord Ilford) who showed 9 year old Neil around the Houses of Parliament.

From Councillor on the London Borough of Redbridge (1965-68) and the Greater London Council (1967-73) to MP in 1979 his varied Political activities have been innumerable and are

well documented in Who's Who. Many tasks undertaken resulted in lasting policies being adopted; in particular, whilst the GLC, his study on pedestrianised streets and also the St. Katherine's Dock development.

Neil Thorne was Initiated in a London Lodge at the age of 23, awarded a Military OBE when he was 48 and received a



Knighthood at the age of 60. In recognition of his services to the people of Nepal (particularly in respect of guidance in writing the Constitution for the new democracy) he was also honoured with a Nepalese Knighthood; the Gorkha Dakshina Bahu. For his services in

facilitating the return of Pakistan to the Commonwealth he received a Pakistan Knighthood Hilal-i-Quaid-i-Azam.

One of the questions I put to Sir Neil was "What do you consider has been your greatest challenge? His reply was that in each phase of his life he had been faced with challenges of different kinds, each requiring to be addressed in distinctive ways, but near to the top of challenges must be the office of Grand Master for the Province of Essex.

When I enquired whether the challenge was in reaching the office he replied that it was an honour that he had not expected or solicited. The performance of the duties of the office over the period of 10 years presented the challenge; all of which he had enjoyed and from which he had gained much experience. Sir Neil has no intention of retiring from his Parliamentary activities au contraire he has already agreed to undertake further duties in his capacity as Director and Chairman of the Armed Forces and Police Service Parliamentary Schemes. His duties will again take him on his overseas travels to the West Indies, Afghanistan, Iraq, Holland, Canada and Australia.

Although Sir Neil does not have a son to emulate his Masonic career he does have God-sons who are active in the Craft and no doubt they take full advantage of their mentor.

My final question to Sir Neil was "What advice would you give to young people of today, not only young Freemasons but generally? His answer was "Whatever you do the more you put in the more you get out, everyone should try and become involved in a variety of activities and pass knowledge gained from one to the other".

The interview was carried out in a very relaxed and informative manner and I am grateful to Sir Neil for his time and the courtesy he extended to me.

It is clear that the Province has been under the command of a Brother who has been, and remains, well respected in may walks of life and in many countries. On behalf of the Board of the Directors for the Loughton Centre, Essex Masons in general and the members of Group 3 in particular I extend thanks to Sir Neil for his stewardship as Provincial Grand Master of Essex and wish him well in all that he does in the future. When he hangs up his Essex spurs later this year his successor will certainly have a hard act to follow.

W Bro Jim Fretwell..... Refero relata (cum grano salis).

for those whose latin is not so good the translations are:-
"Refero relata" - I tell the tale as I heard it and "cum grano salis" - with a grain of salt.....Editor W Bro Allan de Luca

**Combined Chapter hosted by Shurmur Chapter No. 2374
at Chingford Masonic Hall on Tuesday 29th November
2005**

In the Chapter business for the meeting, E. Comp Gerry Scott of Old Parkonians No: 4709 accompanied by E. Comp Ian Gorman PGOrg presented a very humorous and entertaining talk entitled "Musicians in Freemasonry". This was an excellent presentation of musical reviews from Mozart to Duke Ellington. While Gerry played the Organ, Ian told the history.

Their versatility was further proved by exchanging roles with the playing and lecturing. They had certainly put their information together in a professional manner, and gained all this for the talk from the internet and books.

The talk was given in a light and very entertaining manner to much amusement of the Companions attending the meeting. After the meeting everyone adjourned to the Festive Board to enjoy a menu of Seafood Cocktail, Chicken in cream and mushroom sauce followed by the Cherries Jubilee and coffee and mints.

The next Combined Chapter will be hosted by Waltham Abbey Chapter No. on the 31st October 2006. Now is the time to make a note in your diaries. - Article by Comp. Dennis Jane - Chingford Chapter No. 2859

And Finally.....Daphne Retires !!

On Monday 19th December, Daphne, one of the waitresses of Hall's Catering celebrated her retirement with a party after many years of serving meals to the Brethren at Chingford Masonic Hall. Friends and colleagues gathered to wish her a happy retirement. There was an excellent buffet, to include Chilli and home made Cottage Pie, plus all the usual snacks to enjoy. Daphne always had a happy and cheerful personality to everyone. Mick Wheeler, one of the proprietors of Halls Catering gave a short speech, and let slip one of Daphne's secrets, which was that she is an devoted West Ham Supporter, and presented to her a beautiful bouquet of flowers.



There were also gifts presented by some of the Lodges that meet at the Centre. Daphne thanked everyone for attending, and that it has been a pleasure working with the Company

and with such lovely people, and quipped it was a shame about the wages, to which everyone expressed amusement and applauded. For those continuing, she hoped they would continue enjoying serving meals at the Festive Boards as much as she has.....We will miss you Daphne.....Allan de Luca