Petersham Lodge – Website News Archive December 2016 – December 2024

This is of course, by no means an extensive list of news and activity but we hope you enjoy these few titbits that give a general feel of our Lodge.

For anymore extensive historical research please contact the Lodge Historian, via the Secretary.

Christmas Meal 2024

On Saturday 30th November over 30 brethren, partners and friends attended "The De Havilland Arms" in Fleet to a fantastic 3 course meal. A worthy recommendation from our WM Jamie and I'm sure we'll be back.. £140 was collected by the raffle and a great time was had by all







November 2024

In a surprise turn of events we rehearsed the 2nd degree with the WM performing the ceremony, W Bro Henley describing in detail the 2nd Degree Tracing Board and Bro Corbey explaining the 2nd degree working tools. We also had a visit from Bro Julien Tidmarsh from Weybridge lodge introducing the new 2030 Festival and the great causes where the money is used. Many brethren signed up but those that missed the day will get a 2nd chance in January when Julien will be back as he enjoyed himself so much !

Finally to celebrate 100 years of Petersham Lodge, W Bro Henley has tirelessly been working in the background sourcing a new banner, and now here it is..... Many thanks Peter for all your efforts in
organising



October 2024

Today our Worshipful Master Jamie raised Bro Emyln to the 3rd degree in his usual proficient manner. The ceremony was capably assisted by W Bros Goswell and Henley with their enjoyable extended workings. We also met our new Visiting officer W.Bro Alan Giddings for the first time albeit on an unofficial occasion

April 2024

Our WM Jamie started his year with the initiation of Harrow Fallows with the great flare of a true thespian. This was followed with "The Presentation of the White Gloves", a Petersham first, capably delivered by our Treasurer Peter Henley who immediately afterwards gave "The Charge After Initiation". We were also delighted to hear that three members of the lodge will be receiving promotions on Wednesday 26th June at Freemasons Hall. Many congratulations to Peter Henley, David Rickwood and John Luke

March 2024

Today we said our sad farewell to our WM, Sam and a warm welcome to our new WM, Jamie as another year has passed. The ceremony was a truly global affair being performed principally by Peter with a great helping hand from Roger, John A and the two David's

A couple of weeks ago on the 18th February we were blessed with great weather to celebrate the year of our WM, Sam and his good wife Katie at the Ladies Luncheon. This year it was held in Farnham at the Castle Pub and attended by 25 members from the Lodge with family and friends





January 2024

We started 2024 with the raising of Bro David Banks to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. Our WM, Sam proficiently opened and closed the lodge in the 3 degrees while the main ceremony was conducted by W Bro Ian. W Bro Peter followed delivering a near flawless Traditional History which was followed by Jon Corbey's explanation of the working tools. W Bro Roger then presented a heart-felt Walking Charge. A great team effort enjoyed by all !

November 2023

What a spectacular meeting in November where Emlyn Hawkins was passed to the degree of a Fellow Craft. Our WM Sam, not only performed the ceremony but also treated us again to an excellent rendition of the 2nd degree tracing board which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The Working Tools were proficiently explained by Bro Paul Elsey and W Bo Paul Kerswell provided a moving Act of Remembrance..

October 2023

After the long summer break it was good to get back into the temple where we passed Bro David Banks to the degree of a Fellowcraft. The open and closings were completed in fine style by the WM who generously let W Bro John Arney perform the ceremony in fine style. The WM then delivered a flawless 2nd degree tracing board. At the festive board we were treated to Topside of Beef followed by Sticky Toffee pudding.

Petersham Hotel - 21st May 2023






THE
PETERSHAM



Many thanks go to W Bro Peter Henley for organizing such a wonderful afternoon

April 2023

Today we celebrated the 100 year history of the lodge with the first full meeting with our new WM. 70 brethren enjoyed the splendid meeting and delicious festive board that

followed. On a sad note we said farewell to our secretary Ken Beattie who passed to the Grand Lodge above.

March 2023

Another enjoyable meeting in March where our Centenary Master, W Bro Sam Storey was Installed into the Chair of King Solomon. The ceremony was very well conducted by the outgoing WM, Ian Wilson and he was ably supported by W. Bros Tony Hill; Roger Goswell; David Rickwood; John Arney; Peter Henley and Bros Jon Corbey and Paul Elsey. Our thanks also goes to the members of Syenes, Malines and Lodge of Service who gave their time to support the Lodge.

January 2023

A successful and enjoyable meeting in January. The ceremony was the Initiation of Emlyn Hawkins which was performed, once again in a relaxed manner, by our WM in his final ceremony before passing on the mantle to his successor. The explanation of the Working Tools was confidently given By Bro Paul Elsey, making his debut in ceremonial work and you won't hear a finer rendition of the Charge after Initiation than that given by W Bro Roger Goswell.....just excellent

September 2022

An enjoyable October meeting was had by all as we welcomed David Banks into the Lodge with an Initiation Ceremony carried out by the WM. This was followed by David Rickwood explaining the Working Tools and Peter Henley giving a fine rendition of the Charge after Initiation. The meeting was closed with the National Anthem and it had a strange sound to it, with King replacing Queen for the first time since 1952.

April 2022

Those of you with long memories will remember that our April meeting was the Raising of Jon Corbey. The ceremony was conducted in fine style by the WM and Tony Hill delivered the Traditional History extremely well. The Working Tools were expertly explained by Paul Noke which was followed by Paul Kerswell giving a fine rendition of the Walking Charge.

At the Festive Board, the speech to the Visitors will be given by John Luke and that to the Initiate by Paul Kerswell.
As previously mentioned, Centenary celebrations are being organised. The one so far confirmed is a Members Only Lunch at the Petersham Hotel, Richmond on Sunday 21st May.

Other events currently being looked at by your Centenary Committee include a boat trip and or a train journey followed by a dinner amongst other things. All events apart from the Members Lunch will welcome partners.

January 2022

The January meeting, which was attended by our Visiting Officer, W Bro Mike Seddon, went off really well. Bro Elsey was Passed to the Degree of a Fellowcraft by the WM in fine style which was followed by W Bro Henley giving a faultless rendition of the Tracing Board (at three days notice), which he then followed with some ritual on the Symbolism of the Second Degree

Petersham Lodge are proud to have been awarded a "Guardian of the British Normandy Memorial"


NORMANDY MEMORIAL TRUST

This certifies that

Petersham Masonic Lodge

is a Guardian of the British Normandy Memorial

A Guardian of the memory of one of the most momentous events in our recent history; A Guardian of the remembrance of the 22,442 who sacrificed their lives for our freedom; and a Guardian of the lessons from which future generations will benefit.

Thank you

George Batts, MBE, Leg d' Hon.
Veteran Patron,
Normandy Memorial Trust

Harry Billinge MBE, Leg d'Hon.
Veteran Ambassador,
Normandy Memorial Trust

November 2021

I think everyone who attended the November meeting would agree that it was exceptional. Tony being presented with his 60 years in Freemasonry Certificate by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master followed by an excellent Third Degree ceremony for Bro Noke, carried out by his dad along with Bro Gatland doing the Traditional History and Tony himself explaining the Working Tools. This was all followed by the Act of Remembrance and the singing of TAPS by the WM. A letter has been received from the DPGM thanking the members for their welcome and congratulating all who took part in the work

October 2021

The return of Petersham in October was a great success, albeit with a few unusual twists to what would normally be expected. Quite a few members were absent which was a shame but after some frantic conversations with several obliging members, all of the offices were filled and all the necessary work was completed. W Bro Gordon was declared as Worshipful Master for a second term and he
Appointed and Invested all his officers that were present.

January 2020

Where to begin really…….On the back of another excellent meeting in January we had the devastating news of the passing of Peter Jones and Abbas Sheikh, within three days of each other. We all have our own thoughts and memories of both Brethren, one a senior and highly respected member of the Lodge and the other fairly new to Masonry but enjoying himself whilst making new friends. They both encompassed what Freemasonry is all about and will be sorely missed.

Moving back to our January meeting, it was another successful occasion with the Passing of Br Noke Jnr and the Initiation of Mr O'Kelly. In addition, we had a Joining Member in the person of Bro Oakley.

The WM conducted the ceremony of Passing in confident fashion and was well supported by Bro Arney who explained the working tools and Bro Sec gave a rendition of the Second Degree Tracing Board in the absence of Peter Jones.

The Initiation was performed in good style by Peter Henley, the Working Tools explained by Bro Green and a superb rendering of the Charge by Bro Storey which drew deserved applause.

We were also honoured by a visit from the APGM, Bill Caughie, who as you know, is an Honorary Member of the Lodge. On this occasion, the visit was in his official capacity and I think you could tell from his reaction that he enjoyed the meeting.

November 2019

Well, what a meeting we had in November. From the comments I have had, it would seem that everyone had a great time and some described it as the best meeting they had ever been involved in……..some compliment!! The meeting consisted of the Raising of Bro Green followed by the Initiation of Mr Elsey. It was also the first visit to Petersham by our new Visiting Officer, W Bro Mike Seddon who was equally impressed with the proceedings. I felt everyone was on fire that night and there was a great atmosphere throughout. The WM conducted the ceremony of Raising in great style and was supported superbly by W Bro Gatland Jnr with the Traditional History and J Luke with the Tools. After the break, Bro Beattie performed the Initiation ceremony for the WM, after which Bro Green gave an excellent rendition of the Tools followed by a brilliant Charge by Halvard.

In between the two ceremonies, we had the Act of Remembrance which was completed once again by Bro Gordon singing 'Taps', a fitting end to an act of respect to the fallen. It was also nice to see that so many Brethren stood and read the name of their soldier at the Festive Board, now a firm fixture of our November meetings.

October 2019

Our October meeting was the Raising of Bro Sheikh and the Initiation of Mr Corbey. The ceremony of Raising was eloquently carried out by W Bro Henley at short notice as WBro Jones was feeling unwell. The Traditional History given in fine style by W Bro Hill and the Working Tools confidently explained by W Bro Luke. The Initiation ceremony was performed by the WM in a splendid manner, the Working tools very well explained by Bro Noke Jnr in only his second meeting and an excellent Charge after Initiation was given by Bro Storey resulting in spontaneous applause from the Brethren.

It has been a sad summer period for Petersham. W Bros John Cane and Eric Eastwell, both highly respected members have been called to the Grand Lodge Above as has W Bro Tony Hill's wife Joan. There was a good representation from Petersham at all three funerals and W Bro Tony would like to express his thanks to all those Brethren who attended or sent cards and messages of condolence.

Don't forget our Worshipful Master's Ladies Weekend at the Bailbrook House Hotel, Bath on 21st – 23rd February 2020. Bookings are now being taken and the WM would be delighted to hear from anyone wishing to attend.

Petersham had its usual Bottle Stall at the John Terry Court and Shannon Court Summer Fetes and as usual, made a lot of money for charity. Thanks to the regular suspects, W Bros Peter Henley; Roger Goswell; Ian Gatland and Trevor Nell and to any Brethren who turned up at the venues to offer their support.

We will be supporting the John Terry Court Xmas function again on Saturday 7th December. All Brethren are welcome to attend.

Finally, the Lodge Xmas lunch will be back at Guildford on Sunday 8th December 12.30 for 1. The cost will be £22 per head

April 2019

Our April meeting was the Initiation of Jack Noke, our Worshipful Master's son. The ceremony was carried out with feeling by the WM, the Working Tools explained by W Bro David Gatland and an excellent rendition of the Charge was given by Bro Sam Gordon.

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March 2019

Our March meeting was the Installation of our new Worshipful Master,W Bro Noke. A memorable afternoon with the 'surprise' appearance of the Provincial Grand Master to lend a hand with proceedings. (should have had a camera pointing towards Paul's face when the PGM came in!).

Thanks to W Bros Spillett, Edser and Kemp for taking on the duties of SW, JW and Inner Guard respectively. The Installation ceremony was expertly carried out by W Bro Kerswell, the explanations of the Working Tools proficiently given by Bros Green, and Sheikh while the Hallstone Jewel was presented by W Bro Henley in his usual confident manner. The PGM sadly had to leave early to attend another charity function but not before he delivered the Address to the WM and presented Petersham with their well-earned ---Silver Award for the 2019 Festival. -- The Address to the Wardens was given by W Bro Arney and that to the Brethren by W Bro Jones, both in fine style.

Our Worshipful Master's Ladies Weekend has already been set up and is at the Bailbrook House Hotel, Bath on 21st – 23rd February 2020. Flyers were handed out at the Festive Board but will shortly be circulated to all members and friends of the Lodge.

The occasion of W Bro Nell's Ladies Weekend together with his lady, proved to be a big success. The appearance of Basil Fawlty and his crew on the Friday night caused a certain amount of mayhem but was well received by most of the guests. The Saturday night function was preceded by a talk from the mother and father of Max, a young lad suffering from Brittle Bone Disease which was the charity of choice for WM throughout his year. It was quite moving to hear what they have had and will continue to have to go through during his life as there is no cure.

A couple of conversations took place over that weekend which may lead to one or two of the guests applying for membership of Petersham. It shows the value of inviting non-Masons to these events. You never know what might happen!!



January 2019

Our January meeting was the Passing of Bro Green, a rare single ceremony meeting!! The ceremony of Passing was given with great aplomb by our WM. The Working Tools were explained by Bro Sheikh in a capable manner, then a splendid rendition of the 2nd Degree Tracing Board was given by W Bro Jones who also added some extra Scottish ritual at the end.

Our Worshipful Master's Ladies Weekend is very nearly upon us. **The Oxford Spires Hotel**, Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS is the venue from Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th February.

We hope Trevor and his good lady, Laura enjoy their weekend. Gifts for the raffle would still be gratefully received.

The Committee interviewed a potential candidate on Monday night at Guildford and were very impressed with his responses to the questions. He will be recommended for membership of Petersham by the Committee. Full details will be given at the March meeting.

November 2018

Petersham Lodge has achieved a Silver 2019 Festival Award so we are entitled to display this motif throughout the period of the 2019 Festival. Congratulations are in order to all Lodge members who have made this achievement possible. I am sure our VO will make reference to it during his visit.

Our November meeting was the Raising of Bro Green. The ceremony of Raising was carried out confidently by W Bro Wilson and the Traditional History given by W Bro Goswell in equally fine fashion. The Working Tools were expertly explained by W Bro Jones., followed by an excellent rendition of the Walking Charge by W Bro Henley.

During our Act of Remembrance, Bro Gordon sang ‘Taps’ and W Bro Luke brought to the Lodge a ‘Silent Tommy’ (picture below) which he had made. It was decided to display the Silent Tommy inside the Lodge during each of our November meetings.



The Lodge Xmas Lunch was attended by about 40 people who thoroughly enjoyed themselves (except for the ones stuck in the Kingston one-way system). The raffle raised £220 which the WM announced would be donated to the Brittle Bones Society.

Our Worshipful Master's Ladies Weekend is at – The Oxford Spires Hotel, Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS from Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th February 2019.

Please try and support Trevor and his good lady, Laura, during their weekend. As always, gifts for the raffle would be well received.

October 2018

Our October meeting was the Raising of Bro Smith and the Passing of Bro Sheikh. The ceremony of Raising was carried out in fine style by W Bro Rickwood and the Traditional History given by W Bro Gatland in an equally confident manner. The Working Tools were elegantly explained by Bro Noke. This was followed by another excellent rendition of the Scottish Charge by our Honorary Member, W Bro Caughie.

The ceremony of Passing was carried out by W Bro Beattie. The explanation of the 2nd Degree Tracing Board was then jointly given by Bros Smith and Green with such panache that it was rightly rewarded with spontaneous applause from the Brethren.

In addition to the ceremonies, Grand Lodge certificates were presented to Bros Gordon and Gibbons. The Master Masons apron was explained by W Bro Jones and the certificates presented and explained by W Bro Caughie.

Our Worshipful Master has selected a venue for his Ladies Weekend – The Oxford Spires Hotel, Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS from Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th February.

A Flyer and a Booking Form have already been circulated. Please try and support Trevor and his good lady, Laura, during their weekend. The menu for the Saturday Gala has also been confirmed and is as follows:

- Tomato, Carrot and Coriander Soup
- Beef Brisket with a Garlic and Thyme jus, Roast Potatoes and vegetables.
- Warm Apple and Mixed Berry Crumble with Cinnamon Cream
- Cheese and Biscuits

The Vegetarian option for the main course is: Spinach, Mushroom, Brie and Walnut pie with braised vegetables.

The Lodge Xmas Lunch has been confirmed at The Kingston Lodge Hotel, 94 Kingston Hill, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7NP at 12.30 for a 1pm sit down.

Finally, please remember to bring details of the soldier named on the card in the poppy box that was presented to you. At the Festive Board, each member will stand and read out their details in memory of their sacrifice. Guests that were presented with a poppy are also welcome to join in this tribute.

April 2018

Our April meeting, was the Raising of Bro Gibbins and the Initiation of Halvard's dad, Nick. The ceremony of Raising was carried out most proficiently by W Bro Wilson and the Traditional History and Working Tools by W Bro Henley in his usual fine style. The Initiation ceremony was carried out jointly by W Bro Beattie and W Bro Kerswell in magnificent fashion and the Working Tools explained by Bro Smith in an excellent manner. A memorable Charge after Initiation was then given by Bro Green and earned deserved applause.

Since we last met, there have been a couple of happy events with Bro Smith's wife giving birth to baby Theo (at 8lb 14ozs !!) and Bro Gordon became a married man in July.

Sadly, Bro Gray's wife, Karen, passed away during the summer. Our thoughts continue to be with him at this time.

Our Worshipful Master continues to seek a venue for his Ladies Festival. Details will be issued as soon as they are known but please make sure you leave the weekend of 22nd – 24th February free and support W Bro Trevor and his lady, at their weekend.

As you can see from the front page, the Xmas Lunch will be held at the Kingston Lodge Hotel. The same venue was used for the Spring Lunch and everyone who attended enjoyed the venue so please make the effort to come along.

Once again, during the summer, Petersham supported the functions at James Terry Court and Shannon Court by turning up with our Bottle Stall and making money for the two homes. Some of the regular organisers of the events are shown in the photo on the next page. Anyone who thinks I have changed the spacing on this page to cover my inability to get the photo on it.....are spot on!!

March 2018

Our March meeting was the Installation of W Bro Nell. The Installation was carried out by W Bro Kerswell in a very professional manner. The working tools were explained respectively by Bro Storey, Bro Berry and Bro Green. The Hallstone Jewel was presented by W Bro Beattie and the addresses were given by W Bro Luke, W Bro Wilson and W Bro Jones respectively in fine style.

It was good to see W Bro Eric back in the fold, recovering nicely from his problems. W Bro Arney, having had a hip operation was not there but is also recovering well and expects to be with us in April. Our thoughts continue to be with W Bro Gray and his wife while they struggle with health issues.

The Festive Board was attended by 30 Brethren, who thoroughly enjoyed the Carvery put on by Vince. The Brethren who asked for Cheese and Biscuits as their sweet course also seemed happy with the selection.

Our new Worshipful Master has announced that his Ladies Festival will take place between 22nd and 24th February 2019. The venue is still under consideration but please make sure you leave those dates free and support our master and his lady, Laura, at their weekend.

Excellent late news.....W Bro Cane has received a promotion. A great achievement and we all wish him well at the Middlesex Provincial AGM in May.

January 2018

Our special January 2018 meeting consisted of the presentation of a 50 Years in Freemasonry certificate to W Bro Luke and the Raising of Bro Gordon. The presentation of the certificate was made by W Bro Caughie and Bro Luke appeared to enjoy himself judging from the continuous smile on his face throughout the whole day. Several amusing tales were revealed which really could only have happened to him!

Unfortunately, our WM was unable to be present at the meeting due to his dad, Eric, being taken to hospital the day before. W Bro Henley once again stepped into the breach and delivered an excellent ceremony for the Raising. This was added to by W Bro Kerswell and W Bro Goswell giving additions from Scottish Ritual. In addition his brother gave a fine rendition of the Working Tools. W Bro then finished off the ceremony with a Charge which went down extremely well.

The Festive Board was attended by 40 Brethren, a good number and the speech to the Visitors was given by W Bro Gatland which was well received


PROVINCE OF SURREY
PETERSHAM
LODGE
PETERSH







14th October 2017

Our October meeting was the Passing of Bro Jamie Smith. This was conducted in fine style by our WM. The 2nd Degree Working Tools were described by Bro Storey in fine style and the Tracing Board explained by W Bro Peter Henley in his usual fluent manner. W Bro Peter Jones then added some Scottish ritual which rounded off proceedings nicely.

March 2017

This meeting was a very enjoyable affair.

It was great to see our new Worshipful Master, W Bro Andrew Eastwell, installed in the chair of King Solomon. The ceremony was impeccably carried out by the Installing Master, W Bro Peter Henley, in fine Petersham tradition.

The addresses to the Master, Wardens and Brethren were also given with great panache by W Bros Eric Eastwell, Paul Kerswell and Peter Jones but could you feel the emotion when Eric was speaking to his son Andrew. The Working Tools were also very will explained by Bro Storey, Bro Roberts and Bro Gordon respectively. The Festive Board was enjoyed by all and with 43 dining, made for a terrific atmosphere. As was mentioned in the meeting, W Bro Paul Kerswell has received a promotion to PPDepGReg for which he was congratulated. What we did not know at the time but found out subsequently was that W Bro Peter Henley has also been given a promotion, to PPGSwdB. On top of that, our Tyler, W Bro Chris Chandler, has also been promoted to PPSGD. Many congratulations to all three and lets hope for good support when they receive the promotions at the Provincial Meeting at Grand Lodge in June.

Saturday 8th April 2017

It was a momentous meeting in April 2017 when we had an official visitor presenting not one but two 50 year certificates to W Bro Peter and W Bro John.







Five years previously in 2012 WBro Tony celebrated his 50 years



Sunday 29th January 2017

The date for our next inter lodge ten pin bowling tournament will be on Sunday 29th January 2017 at Tolworth commencing at 5pm

The fully address of the venue is:-

Charrington Bowl, Kingston Road, Tolworth. KT5 9PB

Entry will be £10 per player

Everyone is welcome.Teams will be put together on the day depending on numbers. There will be teams from other Lodges and we hope to repeat our victory from last year inaugural competition.

There will also be the usual raffle for charity

If you wish to play or just turn up to watch please supply your names and those of any guests to Trevor Nell at big300t@hotmail.com

Our January meeting was again a very busy affair. Starting with Brother Gordon undertaking his Second Degree, which was most competently carried out by our WM. It was followed by a tremendous rendition of the Tracing Board by Brother Storey.

It certainly bodes well for the future when younger Brethren volunteer for and deliver such good ritual. After a quick break, we were back in for the Initiation into Freemasonry of Bro Green. Again, the ceremony was delivered in a superb manner by our WM and the Working Tools were explained by Bro Gordon who had only just completed his Second Degree. Once again, a young Brother getting stuck into the ritual at an early stage..... Well done !. This was then followed by Roger Goswell giving a splendid presentation of the Charge after Initiation.

A big welcome to Halvard at the start of your Masonic career and delighted that you have joined Petersham Lodge.

The Festive Board was enjoyed by all and the Toast to the Initiate was given in fine style by Paul Kerswell.

Further news of our now Honorary Member, Graham – He has been accepted into Shannon Court (see photo below) and is settling down nicely. He has been visited by several Brethren who found him quite relaxed. Further thanks to our Almoner, Richard for all the hard work involved in getting Graham a place in the home.



Our November (2016) meeting was spectacular to say the least, certainly the best since I joined Petersham. The presence of our Assistant Provincial Grand Master, Bill Caughie, added to the atmosphere and what a time to pull that sort of performance out of the hat!! His comments both in the Temple and afterwards at the Festive Board were all extremely complimentary and well deserved by the Brethren who participated in the ceremonies. Special mention was made of Bro Gordon's rendition of the Charge and for the WAPGM to say it was the best he had ever heard was impressive.

The Festive Board had a relaxing Xmas feel to it and the entertainment delivered by 'In Accord' was enjoyed by all.

Bro Storey completed his 3rd Degree while we all welcomed Jamie Smith into the Lodge.

News of our recently retired legendary Charity Steward, Graham – He has been back in hospital and whilst there, failed a 'Stairs' test meaning he needs better care and no stairs. He has now accepted that a care home is a sensible option. Our Almoner, Richard, is in negotiation with Shannon Court and the RMBI to try and resolve the situation.

Christmas Message 2016

Dear Brethren and Companions

It is that time of year when we reflect on the past year and then look forward to the adventures of a new year ahead.

The last twelve months have been interesting and busy to say the least! We started the year saying goodbye and congratulating RW Bro. Eric Stuart-Bamford PProvGM on completing his very successful tenure at the head of our Province. This was quickly followed by my investiture in May and our two Annual Meetings. Indeed a very busy time for all involved. To add to this I had the pleasure of conferring celebratory appointments and promotions requiring three additional meetings of Provincial Grand Lodge / Chapter to be arranged. My sincere thanks to everyone who worked so hard to ensure these were all successful and enjoyable occasions.

Our Festival appeal is going well, as I write we have £1.57M in the bank, while the total including promises to pay is an impressive £1.87M. This puts us on track to achieve and perhaps exceed our goal of £3.25M. Over the summer, we had a wonderful BIG WEEK, which saw numerous sponsored events across the Province. Members, their families and friends took part and most importantly had a great time doing it! For me the skydive was an amazing adrenalin rush which also helped raise an impressive sum. Overall the BIG WEEK raised over £55K, which is a tremendous result and is testament to all the hard work put in by the organisers.

Membership - recruitment and retention remains our top priority. The stark fact is that we are still losing more members than we recruit. There are three strands of work, which are crucial to turning this trend around – Recruitment and Retention, Communications and Education. The Provincial Strategy is nearing completion; however, we now need execute our plans. This requires a real team effort and to that end we need volunteers to roll up their sleeves and get involved in securing the future of our Province. If you have skills in the areas of IT (web design, social media etc.), Public Relations, Journalism, Photography, Local Radio, Writing, Graphic Design, Proof Reading, Planning, Project Management, Hosting, Presentations and giving talks please contact the Provincial Office. Whatever you can offer, please come forward.

It has also been a busy year in the Royal Arch Province. In particular I am very pleased to see the role of Royal Arch Representative in Craft Lodges being promoted. This is key to developing our membership in what is the completion of our Masonic structure. The Pro Grand Master put it very well when he said, “joining the Craft is like buying a ticket to a four act play, why would you stop at the third act?”

2017 will be even busier as we celebrate our tercentenary. The first celebratory event will be a service at Canterbury Cathedral on Saturday 18th February 2017. Tickets are still available to attend this unique occasion, but you must be quick as bookings close at the end of the month. Please make every effort to attend to ensure our Province is very well represented and help make this a very special occasion. The rest of our tercentenary events are on the back page of the latest edition of Surrey Mason. Please take a look and pick the events you will be attending and get them in your new 2017 diary!

Relief Chest News ….from our Charity Steward

It has long been the tradition in Petersham Lodge to encourage Members to make a regular small contribution to the Grand Lodge Relief Chest Scheme. It is entirely a matter for personal choice, what you are able to afford and of course what you are prepared to regularly donate in the cause of Charity, One hears many suggestions, ranging from an hours salary per month to the cost of a night out once a month or even the price of a round of drinks.

The advantage of using the scheme is that for all income tax payers, the scheme will collect gift aid against your income tax; thereby increasing the value of your donations by 20%. The Scheme also pays a small amount of interest …. This has always been above that available through commercial banks.

Traditionally Petersham Lodge receives an annual statement from Grand Lodge detailing how much has been donated by each participant, (This is not public

information the only people who know the details of your donations are you and the Charity Steward)

Each year the WM chooses which Charities he wishes to support, usually one Masonic and one non-Masonic, this is referred to as his Master's List. Compiled by the Charity steward, using the information from Grand Lodge, each member will receive a statement detailing the amount held against their name and requesting them to choose how much of that amount they will donate to each of the Charities on that Master's List.

Direct Debit forms will be available from the Charity Steward and should be returned to him once complete.

Alternatively you can complete the online form at
https://www.grandcharity.org/dd_setup.php

Using the Lodge Number 4514 and Name: Petersham for both Lodge details and Relief Chest Name and Number