

Dear Bro. *John,*

10th October 2020.

Outside, it is raining stair rods and the central heating is warmly appreciated. So ends the worst summer since we retired to the Welfare State in 1988. What happened to the sun? Some people however seem to flourish in such adverse weather conditions. Last week, Marie entered 14 exhibits in the Dartmouth Horticultural Society Annual Show. She won 8 firsts, 3 seconds and 2 "highly commended" certificates. It must be some secret Chinese ingredient in her method of gardening which has transformed her into a local celebrity. Am I proud of her? you betcha life I am.

Roy Spencer sent a query from Spain, a pal Bob Buxton who was proposed into Masonry by Peter Carton wished to re-establish contact. The necessary info was passed on. Roy enjoys his Masonry out there. Working under the Grand Lodge of Andalusia, he partakes in a fair amount of floor work. A new Chapter will be Consecrated in May and Peter Lomas will be going out there for this occasion. In November a crowd, together with wives will descend on Gibraltar for an Installation meeting. Roy lives in a place called Mojacar in Almeria Province and invites any of our members to contact him on 950 478561 for information regarding the Craft in the area.

The 'Freemasonry Today' magazine continues to provide quite a bit of interest. In the current edition is an account of the Consecration of a new Lodge, (EC) in Borneo by Lord Northampton. Joe Eu, as the District Grand Master was there of course, as was Peter Wong, our own D.G.M. (EC). It must have been hot as photographs of the event show brethren wearing

regalia over their shirts, i.e. no jackets. Just as our own Grand Lodge is interested in fundamental change in our procedures, so are the columns of the magazine filled with similar suggestions in respect of English Lodges. Much of the criticism is so familiar to us. Too many meetings, long winded reading of minutes, etc. It strongly recommends the circulation of minutes before the meeting as a growing number of Lodges now do. Some of the suggestions do not appeal. I certainly would not be in favour of getting rid of the festive board as one correspondent proposed. Reform yes, abolition, no. I have long held the view that meals after meetings should be light hearted and entertaining which, as we know, are how our Scottish Lodges are run in HK. Absolute formality during the traditional toasts, followed by amusing anecdotes, music and often singing. Then once again, absolute formality for the Tylers Toast. Unfortunately, many festive boards in the UK are simply a continuation of the ceremony in the Temple. The correspondence page in the magazine which allows people to blow off steam publishes some cracking letters. One writer expresses his irritation at "pests sitting on the back benches, mouthing, whispering or, still worse, speaking the words of the ceremonies aloud." Now, that sounds rather familiar.

*Long years ago you took my hand
and led me to the magic land
of secret arts and mystic rites
illuminated by Masonic Lights
to guide my faith, my words and deeds
and help me in my daily needs
that is what the Craft is all about
helping to bring that goodness out.*

Trevor Berry, with family, recently toured the length and breadth of Oz and wrote at length (12 foolscap pages) of their experience. As we all know, Trev has a rather unique way of expressing himself as shown in the following excerpts from the letter. "One of the good things about the golf field was the drinks trolley that went up and down the fairways peddling loopy juice. You just said, put it on the bill. We were miles from anywhere with plenty of trees for letting the used juice out." "One thing we noted about Queensland was the apparent poverty of many white people who couldn't afford shoes." "Back at Brizzie (pronounced Brisbane) at daybreak (pronounced sparrowfart) and thence to Ayers Rock." Trevor's opinion of down under chefs was not over-graceful, insisting that they all started life in a British Army Field Kitchen, a good "healthy" dish being Roo and mushroom pie and spuds. Favourite t.v. programme was News at Six.

This normally featured two comic hillbillies called Howard and Beazley. They had their audience in stitches calling each other liars, dreaming about the future, rewriting history, avoiding the actual question, making impossible promises and being general rent-a-gabs on any issue of the day. Howard is the one with big eyes that looks like a kangaroo caught in the headlights of a bus and is called the Prime Minister. Beazley, the one with the beer belly being known as the Leader of the Opposition. Compared with this pair, Blair and Hague are mere amateurs in the art of public speaking. Trevor, when you were in Noosa Heads why didn't you bludge on Dick Hudson for a beer?

Roddie Cade had a few comments to make on the last newsletter. He lamented the death of his dear friend "Fergie" and was delighted that he got such a good send-off. When I wrote about the I.S.M. (Imperial Service Medal) I was not aware that Roddie was also the holder of this award having been so honoured in 1975. On a recent visit to Kirkwall with the British Legion he took the

*I'm going to be a Mason, said Sir, one day at tea.
It will only mean one evening out, once a month said he.
One evening quickly led to two, followed by three or four.
And pretty soon I asked his name when he walked in the door.*

*We bought a jar of peppermints and put them in a tin.
I have to hand them round he said, or they won't let me in.
So now when friends come calling, and ask where is he then?
I say, "You won't see him tonight, he's with the peppermint men.*

*He dines out fairly often, superb meals, mostly roasts.
While I just watch the goggle-box and scoff my beans on toast.
A clean white shirt is needed, his gloves as white as snow.
His suit well brushed, his case in hand, I wish that he would go.*

*He's started talking to himself, I heard him in the a.m.
I think he's going crackers, I blame the peppermint men.
I'm going in the 'chair' he said, a position of renown.
That's nice I thought, with his poor legs, he's never sitting down.*

*I'll be the Master of my Lodge, you ought to be impressed.
I am dear: take the hat bish out as soon as you are dressed.
You'll have to make a speech you know, when it's your Ladies Night
I look at him in horror. As fear replaced delight.*

*I scribbled through a pad or two, as I tried hard to think.
I threw away six ball point pens when they ran out of ink.
But now the evening has arrived, no words can really tell.
That it's the best night of my life, I hope it's yours as well.*

opportunity to visit the local Lodge, who are the owners of that very valuable scroll. Roddie was given a copy of the scroll together with an explanation of it. The main theme being the wandering of the Hebrews until they settled in Egypt. The original, which measures 18 ft. 6ins. x 5ft. 6ins. and is painted on a strong linen is now housed in "safe place."

After spending the summer ??? in Chester. John Gray has now returned to his house in the Algarve. He and Ginette keep in touch with many old friends including Francis Batson and Bob Samuel. In April they will be going to Malta where they hope to meet up with Don And Betty Davis.

*If there is 365 days in the year, how
come when I multiply the number
of days in a week (7) by the number
of weeks in the year (52) I get only 364 ?*

Roger Draper is now happily convinced that there is life after RTHK. Having now been demobbed for 18 months he has settled down. just

as we all do. Meredith is making pots of money in the City. Winnie, greatly benefiting from the time spent at Beacon Hill School is happy in her studies whilst Roger has become super proficient as a vacuum cleaner, washing machine and ironing board operative. As we know he is a most gifted artist. With his letter he attached a photograph a magnificent painting he had created of the crest of Queens Colour Squadron of the Royal Air Force, which now hangs in the RAF Museum. Currently he is working on a project for the Brooklands Motor Museum. The Eastern Scotia Centenary Jewel which will see the light of day in 2002 will also be one of his creations. Masonically he has returned to his Mother English Lodge in Hampshire and also visits other Lodges in the area.

Another Scotia member who commented on the passing of Alan Ferguson. was Dougie Neish. Like many of us who belong to the RHKP Association, we all met up with Alan and Freda for many years after retirement from HK. It reminded Dougie that we are all getting older. He is nearly 75 now but from his letter sounds like a two year old. In spite of a few aches and pains he recently went on a bowls tour to Jersey. In November he will be attending a remembrance service of his old commando unit at their former training ground in Scotland and in January will be off to the Gold Coast in sunny Queensland. Best of luck on your travels Doug

It doesn't look as though HK Govt. pensioners will get any increase at the annual review next April. So far this year the cost of living in Honkers has gone down by 4 1/2 % and this trend is expected to continue. The reduction in property prices was quite noticeable when we were there in May. HK has regained its place as the world's busiest container terminal. Last year it moved 16.2 million units, 10% up on the previous year. A Madame Tussaud's Museum has opened in the Peak Tower. Solicitors charged as much as \$9,000 per transaction on the sale of homes during the boom times. Now at around \$200, it's a sign of the times. The HK lotharios who keep a second home and de-facto wives over the border are having their wings clipped much to the delight of their lawful wives residing in HK. With apartments as cheap as \$195 p.m. and lots of wannabe concubines available, such domestic arrangements are regarded as status symbols for those who indulge. Interestingly, the

ADIEU, A HEART-WARM, FOND ADIEU

Robert Burns.

*Adieu, a heart warm, fond adieu,
Dear brothers of the mystic tie!
Ye favoured, ye enlightened few,
Companions of my social joy!
Tho' I to foreign lands must hie,
Pursuing fortune's sliddery ba', -
With melting heart and brimful eye,
I'll mind you still, though far awa'.*

*Oft have I met your loyal band,
An' spent the cheery, festive night;
Oft, honoured with supreme command,
Presided o'er the sons of light;
And by that Hieroglyphic bright,
Which none but Craftsmen ever saw,
Strong memory on my heart will write
Those happy scenes, when far awa'.*

*May freedom, harmony and love
Unite you in the grand design,
Beneath the omniscient Eye above,
The glorious Architect divine; - -
That ye may keep the unerring line,
Still guided by the plummet's law,
Till order bright completely shine,
Shall be my prayer when far awa'.
And you farewell, whose merits claim.*

*Justly the highest badge to wear, - -
Heaven bless your honoured, noble name,
To Masonry and Scotia dear!
A last request, permit me here;
When yearly ye assemble a',
One round, - I ask it with a tear
To him, the Bard, that's far awa'.*

practice of concubinage was not made illegal in HK until 1971. Now, the communist authorities have cracked down by sending some miscreant to jail for 10 months. Two years in a labour camp is the norm for such offences. All this reminds me of the schoolboy who studiously wrote, "Solomon had 300 wives and 900 porcupines." The Commissioner of Police Eddie Hui will step down in December and will be succeeded by Deputy Commissioner Tsang Yam-pui, brother of the Financial Secretary Sir Donald Tsang. Pillar Point Vietnamese Refugee Camp has finally been closed concluding the 25 year exercise of caring for the many thousands who fled their country in the

2022/42-163

seventies. The sailing vessel "Ji Fung" owned by the Outward Bound Training School and a familiar sight in the harbour has made its last voyage and will now be scrapped. HK is now the largest exporter of watches in terms of both value and quantity and the largest exporter of clocks by value and the second by quantity. Included in Arthur Gomes's last newsletter was an interesting comparison of monthly salaries paid to national leaders. In order of value, (HK Dollars) they are :-

Singapore President S.R. Nathan	\$380,000
HK Chief Executive Tung Chee-wah	\$270,800
Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian	\$205,000
Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori	\$185,000
USA President Bill Clinton	\$133,000
UK Prime Minister Tony Blair	\$130,845
China President Jiang Zemin	\$1,300.

Zetland Hall now has a new website (<http://www.zetlandhall.com>) I have been looking for a photograph of the old Zetland Hall, destroyed by the Japanese in 1941, for some time and have been assured that a copy is displayed on the website. Perhaps I have been conducting the search wrongly but I can find no mention of a pictures section on the site. Can anyone help?

Ron Childs would appreciate answers to the following questions:-

How do we know that elephants never forget?

What do clippers go like?

Where does the sea end and the ocean start?

If man evolved from apes, how come there are still apes?

Have the cows come home yet?

When something goes wrong, why does Gordon Bennet always get the blame?

If Bob's your uncle, who's your aunty?

How do we know that hell is bent?

Which is the other foot that the boot is on?

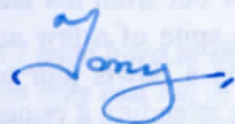
How is it that mobile phone shops stay in the same place?

How do hens know what size eggs to lay to fit egg cups?

Some time ago I mentioned the plight of young Mark Petchey, gravely injured in a motor car accident. It has been over a year now and his journey back to normality will be long and hard. Even though confined to a wheelchair, he has returned to school and is gamely trying complete his education. Although unable to speak, his thoughts are capable of being interpreted and thus he is capable of expressing his innermost feelings. Graham and Hideko, we wish you, the family and particularly Mark, continued progress as you strive to lead as normal life as possible, under the circumstances.

Sorry that this newsletter runs to less than 4 pages. I try to produce 6 pages every 4 weeks, but this is entirely dependent on suitable material being available and unfortunately, the cupboard is bare this month. Perhaps an enhanced edition produced quarterly may be a better proposition? Let's see how things go.

Sincerely and fraternally,



(J.A. Higgins)

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