

R I B B E S F O R D L O D G E N O . 7 6 9 6

100th Meeting - 3rd February, 1977

PAPER PRESENTED BY:-

Wor. Bro. H.W. Windsor I.P. P.G. ST.B.

"AIMS AND AMBITIONS OF THE FOUNDERS"

I have been asked by our Worshipful Master to give you my recollections on the formation and aims and ambitions of the founders of this Lodge.

Wor. Bro. George Bowker and I talked for many months about forming a Lodge in Bewdley, and eventually called in Wor. Bro. Cyril Perrett and Wor. Bro. Philip Mayne (Prov. Gd. Sec.) to advise us how to proceed. From that time Wor. Bro. George Bowker kept notes and acted as secretary at our informal meetings, and worked in that capacity even after our consecration. Unfortunately his early notes are not available, and I must rely on memory.

Our next problem was finding suitable premises. Nothing could be found in Bewdley, and if we had premises there would be the problem of furnishing them. We then sought more founders and four enthusiastic Masons joined us, Wor. Bros. Gregory, Wilkie, Hill and Broadbent. We had a meeting and decided to open the new Lodge at Stourport. Wor. Bro. Gregory suggested that as Ribbesford is halfway between Bewdley and Stourport why not call it Ribbesford Lodge? Wor. Bro. Perrett suggested that the tympanum over the porch of the church would make a suitable emblem for the Lodge, and I was delegated to approach the Rector and Church Authority for permission, which was readily given. Wor. Bro. Gregory offered to lend a very old etching of the Norman doorway from which the emblem, and subsequently the Banner were designed. I then persuaded my Mother Lodge, Severn, to sponsor the new Lodge, and we were away.

This small committee had certain aims and ambitions, we felt standards had steadily fallen since the war, and that this Lodge was going to be different. You may think we were idealists, perhaps

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a little conceited, but that was to be our target. By this time the number of our founders had risen sufficiently for us to call a founders meeting, which was held at Redthorn Hotel. At this meeting I was asked to take the Chair, and to my recollection these were our decisions:-

6 meetings only a year

April - Installation, October - 1st November - 2nd December -

3rd February - 1st March.

Any combination

I would like to place on record the great service this Lodge owed to Wor. Bro. Cyril Perrett and Wor. Bro. Philip Mayne during the formation of the Lodge. They were made Honorary Members for their services.

The younger members will notice that we are Patrons of the Royal Masonic Hospital; Vice Patrons of the Royal Masonic Institution for boys; Vice Patrons of the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution. As far as these are concerned Wor. Bro. Don Broadbent must have commendation, and his work is being enthusiastically carried on by Wor. Bro. Leslie Darby. Wor. Bro. Don Gregory must be mentioned for his untiring work as Preceptor of the Lodge of Instruction, and as Treasurer for the first ten years.

It was felt that too much emphasis had been given to making Masons, and not enough on instruction; the March meeting would, therefore, be used for the three tracing boards and lectures. This meant that only $1\frac{1}{2}$ candidates could be admitted in one year, and this would make the Lodge fairly exclusive.

1. The candles were to be lit while the Bible was being opened.
2. Dinner jackets were to be worn.
3. A Board of Officers should be appointed as a selection committee.

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4. The Nigerian Ritual would be used with certain reservations, this Ritual was very close to Ritual already in use locally, and had the advantage of giving more implicit instructions to the Officers as to their duties and positions during the ceremony.

5. That the alarm knock would be used on appropriate occasion.

6. The Ballot Box should be shown to the Senior and Junior Wardens, and then to the Worshipful Master.

We now come to the first recorded bi-monthly meeting after Consecration, and from the Minute Book of these meetings, the following notes were taken.

25th May, 1960

It was agreed that a Lodge of Practice, followed by a meal and business meeting be held on the fourth Thursday at 7.00 p.m. in the months of September, October, November, January, February and March. It was further agreed that every endeavour should be made to have the meal at 8.00 p.m.

Lodge Committee

It was resolved that the Lodge Committee be automatically comprised as follows:

Past Masters of and in the Lodge

The Worshipful Master

The Senior and Junior Wardens

The Secretary

The Assistant Secretary

The Senior Deacon

Lodge Selection Committee

It was resolved that the Lodge Selection Committee be comprised as follows:

The Worshipful Master

Four Past Masters to be permanent members

One Brother to be elected annually

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The Secretary of the Lodge (ex officio)

The four permanent members were to be:-

W. Bro. H.W. Windsor

W. Bro. D.S. Gregory

W. Bro. G. Clancey

W. Bro. W.D. Broadbent

Evening Dress

After a lengthy discussion it was eventually decided to leave the choice optional whether or not Dinner Jackets should be worn at Lodge Meetings. The Worshipful Master expressed the hope that dark suits would be worn at Lodge Meetings, but it would be nice if the officers on the floor would confer to dinner jackets.

30th June, 1960

At a meeting of the Founders of the Lodge on 30th June, 1960 it was approved that the following amendments to the Nigerian Ritual be made:

1. That in the opening of the three degrees all officers would be required to answer their own questions, and each officer would be required to state his own duty.
2. That in the 1st Degree the I.G. would open the little window without giving the E.A. ks. otherwise full ks. would be given in all degrees.
3. That the lighting of the candles in the 1st Degree would form a ceremony in itself.
4. That the I.P.M. should carry the Apron on a blue velvet cushion lined with gold cord and suitable engraved with the name and number of the Lodge, from the W.M.'s pedestal to the S.W.
5. The Senior Steward should be responsible for arranging the seating of the Stewards in the Lodge in such a manner that their departure from the Lodge could be arranged in an orderly manner.

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6. That the D.C. should escort the Deacons and the Candidate on the perambulations, and would remain with the Candidate until after the obligation, when he and the Senior Deacon would resume their seats.
7. That a Bible should be placed on the J.W.'s pedestal, and that the Bible should be shown to the candidate at the appropriate moment, that is during the Charge to the Initiate.
8. That the J.W. should stand to give the charge, and that the J.D. should stand with, but a little to the rear of the candidate.
9. When the Initiation ceremony is completed the candidate should be seated as near as possible to the R.H. of the W.M.
10. That the J.D. should make himself known to the candidate and as far as possible brief him as to what may be expected of him.

Lodge Supper

It was agreed that a note should be printed in red on all Lodge Summons to the effect that no supper would be provided for Brethren who had not previously informed the Secretary of their intention to be present.

Bi-Monthly meeting 25th February, 1961

Election of the Tyler

It was resolved that the S.W. should propose, and the J.W. should second, the election of the Tyler at the meeting prior to the Installation meeting.

Bi-Monthly meeting 25th January, 1962

Joining Members

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed:

1. That the usual notice, giving details of members of other Lodges wishing to join the Lodge, and possible initiates of the Lodge, be circulated to members of the Lodge by the Secretary.

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2. That objections, if any, to joining members or possible initiates, be lodged with the Secretary within 14 days of the date on which the details were circulated by the Secretary.
3. That if no objections be received within the stipulated time the applicant be interviewed by the Selection Committee in the normal way.

Bi-Monthly meeting 26th March, 1964

Position of Officers (Asst. Secretary)

It was reported that at a meeting of Past Masters it was resolved that such an officer should, on completion of the appropriate number of years of service in office, be allowed to take other office, up to the level of J.W.

Bi-Monthly meeting 22nd February, 1968

It was agreed that when matters of a private and personal nature concerning a Brother had to come before the Lodge, such matters should be dealt with by a small committee comprised of the W.M., Secretary, Treasurer and Almoner.

Bi-Monthly meeting 25th January, 1972

It was agreed that a Lodge Benevolent Fund be created, and that the Alms collected from each Installation meeting, and 10% of the Alms collected at the other meetings each year be devoted to this new Lodge Benevolent Fund.

You will notice that several alterations were made at these meetings; we were obviously maturing a little at this stage.

You must remember that all societies suffer changes as the years proceed, and I have no objections to change, so long as the changes are beneficial and enhance the ceremony, this I think is most important.

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Over the years the Lodge has enjoyed a very high standard of work, and our candidates have been well chosen. May it continue for many years in this healthy state.

Finally, I would like to place on record my sincere thanks for the many kindnesses shown to me by all the Brethren of the Lodge.

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List of Founders

J. ADLER

Wor. Bro. G.L. Bowker P.P.G.D.	
Wor. Bro. J. Wilkie P.D.G.STD.B. (Madras)	
Wor. Bro. W.D. Broadbent P.P.G.W.	
Wor. Bro. D.S. Gregory P.P.G.D.	
Wor. Bro. E. Fletcher P.P. Asst. G. Purc.	1963
Wor. Bro. H.W. Windsor J.P. P.G.ST.B.	1960
Wor. Bro. F.G. Hingley P.P.G.W.	
Wor. Bro. G. Clancey P.P.G.W. P.P.G.ST.B. (Staffs)	1961
Bro. V. Fisher P.P.G.STWD	
Wor. Bro. J. Geddie P.F.G.D.	1966
Wor. Bro. F.C. Adams P.P.G. REG	
Bro. A.R. Pardo	
Wor. Bro. A.A. Hartley P.P.G.D.	1967
Bro. F. Jones	
Wor. Bro. G.L. Hill P.P.G.D.	1965
Wor. Bro. C.W. Beale P.P.A.C.D.C. (Shrops)	1964
Wor. Bro. P.C. Ruggles P.P.G.W.	1952
Wor. Bro. W.S. Phillips P.P.DEP.G.D.C.	1969
Wor. Bro. W.J. Howells P.P.G. SWD.B.	
Wor. Bro. J.E. Austin P.P.G. REG	1968
Bro. T.T. Howells	
Bro. M.R. Fellows	