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**The Pelican & Eagle NEWSLETTER**

**Northumberland District**

**Rose Croix**

**Issue 1 Spring 2019**

**What’s Been Happening**

Princes, first of all apologies for the length of this newsletter, it is a bit longwinded but a lot has happened over the last few months which needs to be communicated.

What an exciting and busy time it has been in our District since Autumn 2018, with V. Ill. Bro. Stephen (Steve) Read being promoted by Supreme Council to the office of Inspector General in Charge way back in September last year (backdated).

Steve travelled to Duke Street at the end of October to receive his 33° immediately followed by a visit to Nottingham the next day to see V.Ill.Bro. Richard Howarth being installed as the new Inspector General for the District of Nottingham. Since then I am sure you are aware that our New Inspector General has been very busy within this District. He has visited all of the Chapters in Northumberland and many other Districts for Official Functions.

So what has been happening since Steve’s appointment, excluding his Installation as Inspector General on 5th February, and the District Meeting on 27th April?

In the Autumn of 2018, Ill. Bro. Robert Cumberland of St Oswald Chapter No.300, Ill. Bro. Selby Snaith of Halystane Chapter No. 366, Ill. Bro. Colin Phelps of St. Gabriel Chapter No. 388, Ill Bro. Stuart Hay of Priors Haven Chapter No 925, Ill. Bro. John Ternent of Wudcestre Chapter No. 1025, all of whom made the expedition South to the Tardis in Duke Street, the home of the Supreme Council where they had the 30° conferred on them by Supreme Council. Congratulations to all of the newly promoted Illustrious Brethren, I am sure they would be no less than impressed by the Ceremony performed by members of Supreme Council, proving their role is very much a working one as of course are ours..This would be followed by an excellent meal at the Royal Over-Seas League Club in St James’ and I am sure it would be accompanied by copious amounts of good wine. This obviously would have set the theme for the train journey back.

In the period since Steve’s appointment, we have seen several members Enthroned as MWS, some for the first time, although not as many ‘First Timers’ as we all would like to see. They are :- Ill. Bro. Michael Storey of Priors Haven Chapter No 925, Ill. Bro. David Price of Northumbria Chapter No 1070, Ill. Bro. John Spark Wallace of De Sussex Chapter No.1035, Ill. Bro. Ian Clouston of St Wilfrid Chapter No.646, and of course our Inspector General, V.Ill.Bro. Stephen Read, on this occasion of St Albans at Earsdon Chapter No.861, all of whom have been recycled. We thank all of them for their dedication to this Order, and a BIG, BIG, thanks for volunteering to put themselves under enormous pressure.

We also have some ‘First Timers’, They are:-E.&P.P Alan White of Wudcestre Chapter No.1025, E.&P.P Andrew Christie of Prudhoe Castle Chapter No.913, E.&P.P Kevin Gray of Cramlington Chapter No.978, E.&P.P Charles William Schardt of Royal Kent Chapter No.8, E.&P.P Keith Armstrong of St. Oswald Chapter No.300, E.&P.P. Ian Hudson of Halystane Chapter No.366, and the most recent member of this elevated squad, E.&P.P. John Leslie of Severus Chapter No.940

We bid you all a very warm welcome to the office you now hold, and we look forward to visiting your Chapter during you term of office. Princes all, you will receive a very warm welcome at these and indeed all of all of the Chapters in the District to which you are encouraged to attend as often as possible, but please bear in mind that Royal Kent No.8 is by invitation only. Each Chapter feels much more vibrant when well attended, and for new Perfectees, the Ceremony will be greatly enhanced.

 A special mention must go to Ill.Bro. Stuart Cairns who received promotion to the 32° and had his new rank conferred on him at Duke Street in November 2018. Well done Stuart, and we are sure all of the members of the District will join with us in offering our sincere congratulations on your promotion.

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**More Recently**

Well, we now have our New Inspector General, V.Ill.Bro. Stephen Read 33° in office, and he was installed into that office on 5th February, 2019 by Supreme Council who travelled from London for the occasion.

What a class act they are with ritual performed in the most relaxed manner we have seen in this District for a long time. We thank the Team from London for everything they did for us on the day, and we hope they enjoyed it as much as we did.

Our Inspector General was well supported with approximately 160 Brethren in the Chapter Room, and almost 140 who stayed for the Banquet afterwards to support him in his new role. He obviously is a popular choice for Inspector General. This was further shown by the number of Inspectors General and their District Recorders who travelled from as far afield as Herefordshire, & Leicestershire to witness the occasion.

**Special Thanks**

V. Ill. Bro. Michael Daws announced his retirement from office at the District Meeting last year which prompted the search for his replacement. V.Ill.Bro. Michael has served this District in a superb manner for the last 10 years. For this dedication to the District we are sure you will join us in thanking V.Ill.Bro. Michael for the Sterling work he has done for the good of us all. As a token of appreciation for all he has done, each Chapter in the District contributed towards a retirement gift, several in fact, and these were presented to V.Ill.Bro. Michael at the District Meeting on April 27th at Corbridge Road.

 We must also mention Ill. Bro. Stuart Cairns who has worked very closely with V.Ill.Bro. Michael, for the past few years, succeeding Ill.Bro. Mel Sayers upon his retirement. Stuart decided to step down from his role as District Recorder, and took up his new office as Provincial Grand Secretary in the autumn of last year. Stuart has worked diligently during his term of office in close conjunction with V.Ill.Bro. Michael, and has administered the Districts affairs in a splendid and extremely professional manner. Stuart, we thank you for all you have done for this District, and we wish you every success in your role as Provincial Grand Secretary

**Plans for the Future**

**Increasing Membership**

There are 3 key areas that are being concentrated on in the immediate future, which are:-

1. Recruitment, Retrieval, and Retention of members

2. Dedicated District Website

3. Encouraging Visits to other Chapters

**1. Recruitment, Retrieval, and Retention of members**

Princes all, we are the future of this Order in this District, and we need New Members to ensure that the Order prospers in Northumberland. How we achieve this is not easy, and needs to be worked on constantly. The aim is to tackle the problem from several fronts, and hopefully we will see some progress. To this end a leaflet has been produced to assist in the recruitment process by being more open about the order. It provides simple details about the Order and the qualification for membership. You will be surprised at how many Craft masons believe you have to be a member of a Royal Arch Chapter to be eligible for membership of this order, which as we all know is not the case. These leaflets, by now, should have been distributed to every Masonic Centre in the Province of Northumberland which hopefully will bring enquiries. Further supplies if required are available from the District Office. Try asking a close friend or someone you may consider being suitable to be a member of this wonderful degree, if they would like to find out more about the Order and possibly apply for membership should their interest be stimulated.

We have experienced a number of enquiries about re-joining from Princes who have in the past, resigned from the order. This is very encouraging indeed. Please invite and encourage any past member of the order you know, to consider re-joining, it may just re-kindle their interest.

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When it comes to retention of members, one of the biggest concerns that newer members have is the complexity of the ritual, and the volume of learning that needs to be done for the office of MWS. Please take the time to explain how this work can be spread over 3 years; it may just make the task seem much more achievable than first thought. Encourage them to visit, take them with you to visit other Chapters, the more they see the ritual being performed the easier it is to learn and understand what the Order is about. This could help us to retain our newer Princes rather than scare them away.

**2. Website**

The dedicated Rose Croix Website for the District of Northumberland (northumberlandrosecroix.org) which will also be linked to the Provincial website, is up and running in a limited fashion, and is still undergoing development. It is hoped that it will be fully operational in the near future. It has however generated 2 enquiries so far and progress with these enquiries is ongoing.

**3. Encouraging Visits to other Chapters**

We are experiencing an increase in the number of members visiting other Chapters which is wonderful to see, particularly when there is a Ceremony of Perfection with a New Candidate. To those of you who are increasing your visiting, please keep it up, and to those members who have yet to start can we urge you to do so, even if it is only to one other Chapter on a regular basis. Full Chapter Rooms and Festive Boards all have a lovely atmosphere when well attended, and can only be good for the wellbeing of the Order.

**NEWS and EVENTS**

This section is for you to make use of this Newsletter to promote special events, report on things happening, achievements both Masonic and Personal. Indeed anything as long as it is not of a dubious nature or of a commercial matter.

If you have anything you wish to mention, please pass it to your Chapter Recorder who will forward it to the District Office through the usual channels.

 **Recent News**

The District Meeting this year took place at Corbridge Road Masonic Centre on 27th April, attended by 130 members of the Order including 3 current and 2 past Inspectors General from other Districts, and of course our very own Past Inspector General V.Ill.Bro. Michael Daws.

The host Chapter, St Albans at Earsdon No. 861 did a splendid job of organising the event, primarily by Ill. Bro. John Dunford, who unfortunately could not attend due to illness. I understand John is on the mend now, and our sincere thanks go to John for such a superb event which reportedly was enjoyed by all.

Sadly the illness theme almost took over the event with many of the St Albans officers being unable to attend at the last minute, a DC’s nightmare, but more than capably handled by Ill. Bro. Donald Auld the Chapter DC and Ill. Bro. Brian Welsh, our ADC. Fortunately, the Troops rallied around and all of the offices were filled at very short notice, with thanks to:-

E.&P.P. Steve Sinclair of Aberwicke Chapter - 1st General, Ill. Bro. John Baldwin of Cramlington Chapter - 2nd General, Ill Bro. Ray Dryden of St. Oswald Chapter - Marshall, Ill. Bro. Derek Stafford of Cramlington Chapter - Almoner, Ill Bro. Selby Snaith of Halystane Chapter - Herald, Ill. Bro. Bill Surtees of Northumbria Chapter - Captain of Guard, E.&P.P Jim Brown of St Oswald Chapter - Guard, all of whom did a splendid job as did the regular officers of the Chapter in their usual roles. We of course must not forget Ill. Bro. Michael Scott of Halystane Chapter who took on the role of Recorder not only for the day, but once it was known that Ill. Bro. John Dunford was incapacitated. Michael arranged the table plan for the Luncheon and did a great deal of administrative work and printing prior to the event. Well done Michael, and thank you for all of your help.

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With the MWS of St Albans at Earsdon Chapter also being our Inspector General, he obviously had to adopt his more senior role on the day, and the scramble was on by several members all volunteering for the honour. Gladly, Ill.Bro. Ian Wellington won the race as it were and we thank him for a beautiful ceremony more than ably assisted by the three Most Wise Sovereigns from the participating Chapters, E.&P.P Andrew Christie of Prudhoe Castle Chapter No. 913 who conferred the Intermediate Degrees, Ill. Bro. Michael Storey of Priors Haven Chapter No. 925 for the First Point, and E.&P.P John Leslie of Severus Chapter, who only became MWS on 16th April, performed the Second Point up to the Accolade. Our Inspector General also played his part by conducting the Third Point after which he retired with his distinguished guests. The ceremony was enhanced throughout with music played by Ill. Bro. Michael Louis, thank you Michael for once again being our organist on the day.

Our New Perfectee, E.&P.P. Richard Alexander Develyn informs us that he was very impressed with the proceedings, and I am sure you will join us in extending to him, a very warm welcome to our Order. We are sure you will soon see Richard visiting in the District. It is such a shame that Ill. Bro. John Dunford, his proposer, could not be there to see Richard perfected.

**Overall, a superb day to be enjoyed it all, but if you missed it, then a date for your diary, Saturday 25th April 2020, at Corbridge Road, Our Next Merry District Meeting.**

**Upcoming Events**

It has been a long while since the King Edward VII Chapter of Improvement made the long journey North to demonstrate any of the Intermediate Degrees, and this year on 13th July they are coming to Carlisle and will be enacting the 13th Degree, Royal Arch of Enoch. In days gone by this District used to team up with Durham and share a coach on an annual basis to the various venues in the Northern Half of England to enjoy a day out in good company, and to see a ceremony which only comes around once in every 12 to 15 years or so performed to perfection. Sadly on the last occasion a number of years ago, the drop off arrangements on the way home, were less than satisfactory and the practise of coach sharing ceased. Since then the numbers (including myself) going to see these degrees dwindled, such a shame as I remember them with great fondness. If you would like to see the 13th Degree and enjoy the Luncheon afterwards please contact your Chapter Recorder who has details and application forms

So far we have 22 members of this District who have applied to go, and they are spread so far apart that it is not economical to arrange a bus, so volunteer drivers for car sharing are encouraged. If you wish to volunteer, please let me know. Several members have expressed an interest in staying overnight in Carlisle and making it a ‘Boys Night Out’ in the City. If anyone is interested in this please contact me (barry.w@sky.com or Tel: 07939 551115) and I will explore suitable accommodation. **Those who have already expressed interest please contact me again to confirm numbers.**

We sincerely hope you will embrace this event and help swell the numbers from Northumberland. Currently we are in Pole Position of supporting Districts, and I hope we can maintain that position and support one of our neighbouring Districts (we only have 2).

We hope you have found this, our first Newsletter interesting and informative, and we look forward with enthusiasm to your contributions in future.

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