

**Minutes of the Southport Group Meeting held at the Masonic Hall on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2010.** The meeting was opened at 7.30pm by the Group Chairman, W.Bro. Bryan Henshaw.

1) **Respect to departed merit:** The meeting stood in silent respect to the several brethren who had passed to the Grand Lodge above since the last meeting.

2) **Apologies:** W.Bros:- J.V. Moore; M.M. Evans; E. Morris; T. Rimmer; B.S. Skinner; A. Trees; B. Molyneux; W.M. Cox; L.J. Adams; J. Harris; R. Bell and Bro, P. Martin:

3) **Minutes:** The minutes of the Group Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010, having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed.

4) **Matters Arising:** None.

5) **To Receive Reports:**

■ **Royal Arch Lead:**

**W.Bro. I.R. Beecham**

I have been informed by one of the R A Contacts that he has found it necessary to resign from that post. As yet a replacement has not been found.

**Booklet**

To start the new season I have arranged for a small booklet to be printed, entitled "From Craft to Royal Arch". The material for this publication was taken from papers given to me by E Comp David Bradbury. It has been updated and as stated presented in booklet form. The material is aimed at the young Master Mason who may be considering joining Royal Arch and it is of course available to anyone interested in the Royal Arch.

Copies of this booklet have been circulated to all R A Contacts in the Group and there is also a copy on the Royal Arch Notice Board.

**Pamphlets**

A further supply of the pamphlet entitled "This is the Royal Arch – Completing Your Journey" has been printed and is available in the main Reception Area. These can also be printed by your R A Contact. Can I ask that if you know of anyone who may be interested in the Royal Arch please ensure he has a copy of this publication. We all have a duty to promote the Royal Arch.

■ **Golf Tournament:**

**W.Bro. T.F. Vearncombe**

For the eighth successive year the Golf Tournament was played at Southport Old Links Golf Club which is not only proving a popular venue but one of extremely good value. It was played in cloudy damp conditions but as always in a fine Masonic spirit. Competing were Twenty Seven Brethren, Companions and visitors, of whom three were non-masons. Thirty Two brethren and guests stayed for the meal and presentation. The occasion was marked with the presence of our new president W.Bro. Colin. H. Ryan, P.A.G.D.C. who has taken over from W. Bro. T. Norman Hunt, P.S.G.D. due to his ill health and may we all from the golfing society wish him the very best and thank him for his long

and loyal service. W.Bro. Ryan presented the winners with their respective trophies at the presentation meal.

The Col. Wallwork Cup was won by W.Bro. Trevor Vearncombe (North Meols Lodge). Other trophies were won by Bro. Martin Stoker of Southport Temple Lodge (Harry Doughty Scratch Trophy), W.Bro. Alan Ravey of Ainsdale Chapter (David Foulds Cup) and W.Bro Peter Foster of Silver Jubilee Lodge (Turner Trophy). The team prize (Walter Beaver Trophy) was won by Southport Temple Lodge for the second year running.

The event throughout the year raised approx. £750.00 for distribution to Charities, of which £50.00 has gone to the Children's Xmas Party, £50.00 to the Captain of Southport Old Links Charity, £50.00 to the West Lanc's. Provincial Golf £460.00 has been distributed to the Lodges of the Competition winners and the remaining £140.00 will be distributed as determined by the Golf Committee at their next meeting. On behalf of the Golf Committee I would like to thank the Lodges and Chapters for their continued support as patrons and the Brethren and Companions for the purchase of draw tickets.

On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2010 six of our finest golfers represented the Southport Group in Provincial Golf Tournament at Shaw Hill Golf Club Nr Chorley. The result of this was that Bro Martin Stoker of Southport Temple Lodge won 1<sup>st</sup> prize; also The Southport Group won the Team Trophy the team being made up of Bros Stoker and Henshaw (Southport Temple Lodge) and W.Bro John Deal (Emulation Lodge). Congratulation and well done to all. At this juncture the Trophy was presented to the Chairman for safe keeping.

■ **Treasurer's Report:**

**W.Bro. M.M. Evans, read by W. Bro. P.G. Stock**

I have pleasure in presenting the Accounts, which are self-explanatory but would comment as follows:

The Accounts show a net loss for the year of £329.52 as against a profit of £1,220.54 for 2009.

The Xmas Fayre surplus was again somewhat less than the previous year reflecting the difficult economic conditions also evidenced by the decline to almost zero of our bank interest. However, we were enabled once again to make substantial donations from the Group to various charities - all presented at the Masters Festival and thanks are due to Mark Price and his team.

The Sandgrunder account unfortunately shows a loss this year of £459.50 and the balance held has reduced to £807.15. It had been hoped that the new improved production would reflect in increased sales and additional advertising thereby covering the substantial increase in production costs. Thus far sales revenue has only increased marginally and regrettably some of our anticipated advertising revenue has so far been uncollectable and may have to be written off. The Sandgrunder team are taking steps to ensure that these problems will be minimised in future.

The Group Calendar activity has benefitted from advertising and strong bar sales and a

profit for the year of £57.00 has been achieved. This year the unit production cost exceeded the copy sale price and this is unsustainable therefore I must ask for a 50p increase in unit price. The £2 price has held for at least 10 years and production costs have increased substantially over that time.

I am delighted to have been able to collect all current dues and I thank all Treasurers for their assistance.

Group subscriptions have been £30 for Lodges and £18 for Chapters since 2005 and will now need to be increased to £35 and £20 respectively. I regret the need for this increase (which will only yield an extra £156) but it is essential that Group finances remain strong. Invoices for the current year have been issued and I would be very grateful if all Treasurers could arrange to settle these as soon as possible please.

I would like to thank the auditors Stuart Sime and Eric Bulcock for their work.

■ **Group Mentor:**

**W. Bro. D.W. Bradbury**

I am pleased to say that the Lodge Mentoring Booklets, together with return slips for candidates after each progression to the rank of Master mason, are complete and have been issued to each Lodge Mentor. From the feedback so far, they have been accepted very well, proving an excellent introduction for candidates.

The Lodge Mentors meeting in April, although quite poorly attended, showed a keen interest from Mentors and a good exchange of information and ideas took place.

During the recess I attended a meeting with the Group Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and E.Comp. Ian Beecham, the Royal Arch Lead, to discuss extending the Group Mentoring Scheme to the Royal Arch. I was asked if I would add the Royal Arch duties to my Craft Mentoring responsibilities, to which I agreed. Our Group Vice Chairman has now written to all Scribe E's in the Group asking for Chapters to appoint a Mentor. Following their response, I intend to arrange a meeting with nominated Companions in order to get Royal Arch Mentoring up and running. Bro Peter Martin and I are continuing our efforts to attend as many Initiation Ceremonies as possible and many Lodge Secretaries do send me a summons, but it would help if I could have a copy of all Lodge Summonses.

■ **Group Care Officer:**

**W.Bro. E. Binks**

The Southport group is the second largest in the Province, having about 950 members. We have 13 Almoners of Royal Arch Chapters and 26 Almoners of Craft Lodges.

Last year the Almoners of West Lancashire Province disbursed £1,073,000 on behalf of National Charities i.e. Grand Charity; The Samaritan Fund; RMBI and the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls & Boys. In addition to this, the Almoners of the Southport Group disbursed £38,000 on behalf of the WLFC.

The Almoners of 'The Southport Group' are disbursing the lion's share of Masonic charitable grants awarded to this Province and

in addition to looking after the brethren and families of the Southport Group, many are acting as visiting almoners for other lodges in this and other Provinces. Several are acting as case almoners for the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys. This can be especially difficult and time consuming.

■ **Regional Care Officer:**

**W.Bro. A.W. Rushton**

Brethren following on from your Local Care Officer – W.Bro. Eric Binks.

I would like to thank Eric for the work he does in the Province on your behalf and I have but one complaint to put forward to this meeting.

Each year since 2002, it has been the responsibility of each Lodge ALMONER to complete a CENSUS of the brethren of each Lodge, with the exception of the Silver Jubilee Lodge of Installed Masters No 8818.

Numbers of Brethren, widows, recipients of Grants, local and from Grand Charity also the numbers of Brethren and widows of the Lodge who are in residential care homes.

**In each case only the numbers are required not names.**

The results of the Census are coordinated by Eric Binks who is then required to send them onto me. The results for each Group in the whole Province are then presented to the Provincial Grand Master at the Provincial Cabinet Meeting.

The Census return for Southport Group in 2010 shows only 681 Brethren?

I understand that there are over 900 Brethren in the Group.

Please bring this to the urgent attention of your Lodge Almoners and Lodge Secretaries.

Three Lodges within the Group DID NOT send in the Census was YOUR Lodge one of them?

■ **Group Charity Steward:**

**W.Bro. N.W. Jones**

The total amount collected by the Southport Group of Lodges, Chapters and individual donations for the 2010 Festival amounted to £231,206.48 or £288.29 per capita.

I put on record my thanks to all the brethren of Southport Group for their great effort and of course W.Bro. Robert Wright who set up the foundations of the 2010 system. I ask all Charity stewards to note that individual standing orders to the Festival should be allowed to run their course as the total sum reported above depends on the full S.O. being paid and some brethren have stopped their S.O's before they have completed their commitment

Dates for your diaries:

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept - 2<sup>nd</sup> A.G.M. of the WLMC.

Fri 15<sup>th</sup> Oct - Charity stewards meeting.

Both the above are at the Wellington Hotel, Leyland starting at 10:00hrs.

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011 - Almoners & Charity Stewards dinner; guest speaker - Provincial Charity Steward W.Bro. Barry Jameson.

A new scheme for maximising our charitable gifts to non Masonic charities etc., will consist of a "Giving Day". Monies donated to non Masonic charities will be done in the usual way at installations or special events but instead of the money going to the charity soon

after the event it will be held by the Group Charity Steward who will arrange a special; day when all the pooled monies will be presented to the various charities. It is hoped all Lodges and Chapters will embrace the idea for the following reasons:

1 Harmonised giving appears much more organised and professional.

2 Matched funding by the W.L.M.C. thereby doubling the amount your charity receives.

3 Maximising the benefits to Freemasonry as far as the public and recipients are concerned.

4 A great opportunity to advertise to the press and media our charitable giving.

A further briefing will take place at the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October at Leyland.

The W.L.M.C. has been hit quite hard over the past 5 years due to the 2010 Festival; so please brethren, do not forget WLFC!

Not all Lodges and Chapters are making use of the Gift Aid envelopes; it adds an extra 25% to whatever you give courtesy of the tax man.

Will all charity stewards/secretaries please make every effort to introduce this method of giving at your meetings.

\*NB. The Chairman and W.Bro Chris Hamilton expanded on the fact that the WLMC could top up any donation made to third parties with a project in mind. This should be planned early. Full information will follow shortly.

■ **Group Ball:**

**W.Bro. B. Gilder**

The evening was a success with 131 attending and the accounts are now available.

I would like this figure to increase for next year and an advert has been placed in the Masonic year book.

The 'Group Ball 2011' will be held at The Royal Clifton Hotel on the 16th April. A deposit of £200 has been paid; a pianist and two bands (Vince Newton Trio and The Black Knights) have been booked.

■ **Bowling Tournament:**

**W.Bro. B. Molyneux, read by W.Bro. C.W. Paton**

The Annual Tournament was held at Formby Conservative Club on Sunday June 2010.

The event attracted 30 bowlers which was very pleasing to the Bowling Committee and no doubt indicated the high esteem in which W. Bro. Ray Jeffs is held within Southport Masonry as this was the first occasion on which the Ray Jeffs Trophy had been played for. We were pleased to be joined by the Group Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary and delighted that our Assistant Provincial Grand Master W.Bro. John V. Moore agreed to present the Ray Jeffs Trophy.

The weather was very mixed but bowling was not interrupted and after some excellent social and yet competitive bowling the final produced a ladies pairing of Pat Dunne and Margaret Tickle and a team pair from Nile Lodge, Bro. Chris Harding and Bro. Mike Milne.

The ladies had produced some excellent bowling during the day, but despite being the best looking were unable to combat the skill of the Nile team who cruised to a 15-3 win.

W. Bro. John Moore presented the trophy to Bros. Harding and Milne who were most

worthy winners. It is hoped that W. Bro. Ray Jeffs may be able to visit Nile Lodge and present the trophy at the October meeting.

■ **Masonic Research Group:**

**W.Bro. J.V.C. Fisher**

At our September meeting last year, W.Bro. Fred Lomax gave us an interesting talk on "Masonic Imposters", this was supplemented by a short talk by W.Bro R.J. Hollins "What I have learned from Freemasonry" Presented by W.Bro.G. Wilcock.

At the May meeting we received a talk by W.Bro. Roger Stanforth entitled "Joshua and the missing day" the intriguing aspect of this subject was a report from N A S A, that when they worked back in time with their computers there was a missing day that could not be accounted for in history.

W.Bro. G. Wilcock gave a short talk on the Masonic Symbols shown on the Masonic Clocks presented by the Three Degrees Club and we had two very interesting talks by W.Bro. Peter Walker this September, One was on the history of "The Russian Grand Lodge and its renewal", the second of his talks was on "Freemasonry in the American Civil war", and how Freemasons from both sides helped each other even although they were enemies.

We do not sit looking at old papers as some might think, we are interested about learning more of Freemasonry through speakers on many Masonic Subjects, we have speakers from all over The West Lancashire Province, and sometimes from beyond.

Our Museum still generates interest; I have many more items to place in cabinets as soon as I can find room and I have been presented with some more books for our Library, I would like more members to realise where the Library is and to take advantage of our free lending system.

■ **Year Book Editor 19<sup>th</sup> Report:**

**W.Bro. K.S. Milne**

When I took on the role ten years ago, the production of the book had been achieved without access to a computer. Having worked with both Word as a word processor and Access as a database, I felt sure I could develop a collection of files which would produce a more accurate document. However this accuracy could not be achieved by me alone. It required contributions from Lodge Secretaries, Chapter Scribe E's and all the other secretarial officers of the various side degrees. So, any success I may have had in producing an accurate document is as much due to their efforts as my own and *I would be happy if the minutes of this meeting recognized their contribution.* I also thank Crawford's printers for their tremendous assistance over the years.

Things move on and we now have a new editor who will be responsible for producing the 2011-2012 edition. For those of you don't already know, he is W.Bro. Rob Teesdale of Lodge of Unity. If he is given as much help with this work as I have been given over the years, then I am sure he will enjoy the task.

Whilst producing this book each year I have been privileged to be provided with summonses from every lodge etc throughout

the group. I have already, many times, laboured the point that I feel all summonses should include accurate lists of active members. So, much to your relief, I won't continue with this theme.

However there is one final point I would like to make regarding summonses. We are now in the 21st century. Most lodges send out summonses as email attachments, having in many cases produced a pdf file of this document. We continue to provide, in many cases, 19th century documents in a 21st century setting. Maybe the time is coming when the style and content of our summonses should actually reflect the developments that have taken place in technology. I leave that with you as a thought.

\*NB The Chairman thanked Ken for all the great work he has done over the last 10 years. Long and loud applause followed in response.

■ **Year Book Report:**  
**W. Bro. R.I. Teesdale**

This is of course my first report as editor of the Masonic Year book and can I first thank you for this opportunity to do something for the Group.

It is appropriate that although I'm presenting this report I should make it clear, this year's edition of the Year Book is all W. Bro. Ken Milne's own work. I say that not to distance myself from it but the opposite to ensure all the credit remains where it's due.

Although I volunteered for this job I still suffered a little trepidation when actually asked to take it on. However that fear was completely allayed when I saw the work Ken had done. What he has passed on to me is an efficient publishing system which I can only aspire to copy.

Like Ken I will be entirely in the hands of Lodge and Chapter Secretaries for the accuracy of the information & they should note that it is still true to say "rubbish in - rubbish out" as far as any information system/book or directory is concerned.

In respect of this year's book it is now available for collection/purchase from the bar at the hall. The increase in the price I think was inevitable and the steepness of the rise was largely due to the group Treasurer maintaining the £2 tag for perhaps too long. Many members will be aware that during the coming year I will endeavour to make contact with all secretaries with a view to establishing a similar working relationship to that which existed hitherto. Thus ensuring that future editions of the yearbook are at least as accurate as they are at present.

■ **Sandgrounder Report:**  
**W. Bro. J.H. Harris, read by W. Bro P.G. Stock**

Mr Chairman Brethren I speak on behalf of my team W.Bro J Porter, Bro P. Hardman and W. Bro P. Wall to whom I owe my most sincere gratitude. We have, I believe, reached a point which we set out to achieve, i.e., to produce a professional publication. It has increased in size from 40 to 48 pages including 8 pages of colour. W.Bro. P. Wall works diligently to maintain sufficient advertisers which in the main sustain the higher print costs and to whom we are all indeed, grateful.

Sandgrounder is a Group Magazine of which I hope we can all be proud. It is of a standard far above that of any other Group and I believe above that of several Provinces. I do not say this boastfully because this standard has been achieved by the team, most certainly not by me. **A higher sales figure of each issue must be achieved.** From the monies collected it does appear that the £1 donation is not always being placed in the 'Honesty Box'. Each issue is being reduced to pdf standard to archive. However, a general study is under way at the present time discussing 'safe archiving'. I, like others, was led to believe that 'the hard drive' was a safe form. With the constant changing of the systems and the ever changing technology there is now an element of doubt. It had been a general consensus that the DVD was the answer, however it is now obvious that DVD's also have a limited life. It might be that the shelf in the basement is the only safe form - Please do not destroy the 'card index system'. The autumn issue of Sandgrounder will be available when the Lodges start their new season. This is to give a longer sales period for the autumn issue. Mr Chairman the Sandgrounder is good heart.

■ **Publicity Officer:**  
**Bro. P.R. Hardman**

Last season I reported that my aim for the following year was to progress our profile in the local community via the local press. I believe the year has been very successful with regard this objective.

The work continues right through the year and not just for the Masonic season. This last year has seen over twenty stories covered and I am very pleased to say that ten of those stories made it to the local press. The rapport between me and local journalists is steadily progressing. One in particular at the **Champion** is indeed championing our cause. I therefore am, unashamedly, inviting him to the forthcoming Magic Sportsman's Night with two intentions in mind. 1) I want to feature this event in **GR8 LIFE** and 2) I want to dispel any preconceptions of what is still considered to be 'The Secret Society'.

I am still making sure that all stories are being presented to the Provincial and Group web sites as well as the Sandgrounder and, where appropriate, the Provincial Newsletter and local press. A new objective for this year arises out of several new projects. Up and coming are a charity bike ride, the three peaks challenge and the Great North Swim. All of these will be reported in the local press and I hope for the first time we can get some of the stories into **Freemasonry Today**.

Finally, on the promotional side our aim for this coming season is to promote the Hall as a Functions Venue. This has already been launched in the local press. I also intend, with brethren to promote the Golf and Bowling Tournaments and bring especially the Bowling tournament back to the success it was in past years. Also, I intend to help raise the profile of the Christmas Fayre, that it may become the success that it deserves as an ambassador of Freemasonry to the local community.

Before finishing, may I remind all Lodges and Chapters that if you want something promoting

then you know where to find me! My details are on the board and my pigeon hole is on the extreme bottom right hand corner.

■ **Asst. to the Pr. Grand Principals:**  
**E.Comp. C.D.H. Hamilton**

The most important development in the Royal Arch this year will be the introduction of mentoring. The aim is to help new members to understand the Order, and to enjoy it. Full details will be announced to Chairmen in October. As always the Southport Group is ahead of the field and I personally thank W.Bro. Dave Bradbury for his readiness to take on the appointment of Group Royal Arch Mentor. Each Chapter will also be asked to appoint a Chapter mentor.

There will be a new section on the Royal Arch 'Shutterfly' internet forum with guidance for Chapter mentors and information for new members. All of this can be downloaded and printed. Any mentor who is not yet subscribed to the Shutterfly site should send an email to Peter Mason at petermason5@talktalk.net, who will register him on the site and send him a personal invitation to join.

Mentoring in the Royal Arch is my particular responsibility and I shall welcome any feedback or suggestions to help make it work successfully.

May I also mention that if any Lodge would like me to do so, I should be happy to attend and give a short talk about the Royal Arch.

■ **Chairman's Remarks:**  
**W. Bro. B.S. Henshaw**

The Chairman extended sincere thanks to the Asst. to the Pr. Grand Principals, E.Comp. C.D.H. Hamilton and to all those Brethren who attended and gave reports.

■ **Any Other Business:**

\*W.Bro Roy Crawford suggested that the Departed Merit email system should/could be extended to include the wives of masons. The Chairman said that this idea had been discussed before but as yet it was thought to be too difficult to establish.

\*It was suggested from the floor that Lodge Lockers were too small. It was agreed by the Chairman but little could be done due to the lack of space.

\* W.Bro Charles Paton gave a vote of thanks to W.Bro Bryan Henshaw for chairing the meeting.

Date of next meeting Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

The meeting having no further business closed at 8-50pm.