
R.A.O.B.



Grand Council *News* *round*

News from R.A.O.B. Grand Council Provinces

Issue No 3. March 2004. So, you are reading this then

about us. This should be sometime in January.

What would you think was the first comment with regard to the last issue, 'good read Ray' – 'well done for the effort', no? "There are two I's in Bull....". Still, what the 'L', it does show the Brother reads it carefully, doesn't it. Apologies to the Brethren on Sark, I got that a little bit mixed up too, but at least you got a mention. Sorry?

Here is an excerpt from a letter received from Bro John Grey R.O.H. the Grand Secretary of New Zealand!

Dear Brother Ray

Thank you for your correspondence and the address of the Grand President. Our Conference finished last weekend and I am at last, able to sit down and reply to your letters. Please forgive the tardiness, but as you are also a General Secretary, I am sure you will know what it is like when your Conference is only a few weeks away.

This was my fifth year as Secretary, and I am still learning as we go along. At the moment we are in the process of forming closer ties with G.L.E. here in N.Z. as both Banners are sliding towards extinction. Most of our Lodges are very small in numbers, only just enough to form a quorum in some cases, and we need all the help we can get to survive.

To give you some idea of how things are here, in 1980 Grand Council had 44 Minor Lodges and 13 Grand Lodges with 14000 registrations for the year. Last year we had 22 Minor Lodges and 9 Grand Lodges and 4000 registrations. This is a very depressing picture and does not bode well for the Order. However we struggle on with a small band of dedicated Brothers, many of who are in there 80's and 90's. It is pretty near impossible to initiate and retain Members. But enough doom and gloom.

The Council does not have a web site, but our Grand Editor is on the net. When the next issue of our Gazette comes out I will send you a copy and you can read all

The report from Brother Alan Lewis made interesting reading as it always does. At Conference, our Members were quite surprised that the attendance at both yours and ours are about the same, around the 40 mark.

Yours faithfully & fraternally
John Grey ROH LM
General Secretary N.Z.S.C.

Editor's Note: I did receive a very nice Christmas Card from Brother John and am in the process of writing to him again. As a point of information and because I just know someone is going to ask, we have 67 Minor Lodges and 24 Grand Lodges. I bet I know what the next question is. We, as all fraternal organisations are suffering the pangs of 'too many years when no one knew who we were' because of our attitudes to secrecy and the nature of the quiet way in which we carried out our charitable deeds. Nowadays, we should try to advertise even the smallest donation or gift and if possible, a photograph in the local news. Not for self-gratification I may add, but so that other's will recognise that we exist as a movement. This is just one of the ways to try and improve our lot and I am confident that we will drag ourselves from beyond the Ark and into the future. Even if there are 'just a few' who wish to live in the past.

The answer to the anagram from 'Buff Oonery' in last Months Mag was 'Editorial', did you get that one.

Here's No 2. Racy Steer. Clue, could be a Buffalo? One word, 9 letters. Answer in the next issue.

Speaking of the future, if you do have access to the net, then have a look at the 'New Grand Council Site' on <http://www.geocities.com/raobgcuk/> It is far from complete and you can not open the other pages yet, but from small beginnings. My absolute gratitude to Allison Handley for her work so far on our behalf.

A little late I know, but I feel sure that Brother Fred Stevens Family would wish me to publish the following letter from his daughter.

Dear Brother Ray

I wish to thank you for the lovely letter you wrote to me dated the 18th July 2003 about the sad loss of my father Fred Stevens. The RAOB meant an awful lot to him for 40 years and the really great friends he made over the years, not only here in Snodland, but in other areas of the Country. He loved his trips to Sark as well. They were a great help to him when my mother died in 1991. He would have been really delighted to see all his friends at his funeral. My family and I were so pleased for the gesture you made on his behalf. Everybody I spoke to after the service commented how lovely it was.

Yours sincerely

Ann Crouch.

A good Buff is walking by the riverside on his way home from the Lodge, when he sees a fellow on the opposite bank. "Hey, scuse me" says the good Buff, "How can I get to the other side". The fellow looks disdainfully at the good Buff and answers, "You are on the other side".



▲ Warm work on a hot day: this group of walkers are ready for the off. H25609

Karl wondered why everyone was applauding him ...

A round of applause greeted 12 year-old Karl James when he completed Sunday's Rotary seven-mile walk. For the past three years, Karl's life has depended on the pacemaker, which controls his heart. Nobody applauds Karl's achievements more enthusiastically than his father, Paul, of Buxton Drive. The sponsored walk, from St Richard's Catholic College to Crowhurst and back is not a race- but not least of plucky Karl's achievement was in crossing the finishing line first.

Karl attends the Grove Secondary School at St Leonards. Because of a heart condition he had to have his pacemaker fitted at Guy's Hospital in London three years ago. Karl took part in the walk to raise money for Barby Keels Animal Sanctuary in Freezeland Lane. He raised £337.50

Asked how he felt about the whole event, Paul James said: I'm very proud. "He was the only person in the walk who wasn't an adult" At the end of the walk Karl couldn't understand why everyone was applauding him.

Young Karl is of course, the Son of proud Father Paul James R.O.H. from the Sussex East Province and at last Years Conference, Karl asked permission to seek sponsorship. He would like to take this opportunity to give thanks to those Buffs who supported him.

Speaking of Sussex East Province, the Grand Lodge Secretary, Brother Brian Turner R.O.H. informs me that all is ticking over quietly in his Province and they are looking forward to hosting the Conference in June. He is in the process of retiring his old computer, which he purchased over ten years ago for the princely sum of £250.00. A sound investment at the time Brian, good luck with your new one, the speed has increased so much in those years, you may well have to tie it down to the desk and wear a flying helmet.

The adventures of Brother Albie continue, he's had plenty of time to read the "Newsround" but apparently his sense of humour remains undamaged, he informs me that enjoyed reading of his escapades.

I have now heard on the grapevine that Brother Albie is at last being honoured for his dedication and services to his Province by being exalted to R.O.H. on the 14th August

2004 and he has asked Bro J.Jeffs R.O.H. to perform the Ceremony.

Someone should inform Brother Albie that all train drivers either go on holiday to Skegness in August, or go on strike while the Sun is out?

A letter from Australia

Brian T.Middleton C.P.
114 Foxlow Street,
Captains Flat,
Australia.
NSW 2623

Dear Sir and Brother

As past records will show, I was an active member of the Venture Lodge, No 1593 from the time of my initiation on 1st July 1960 until the end of 1965 when my family and I migrated to Australia.

The pleasant Buffo memories I have of that time have stayed with me over the years and to me, seem as fresh now as when they were formed all those years ago. In addition to 'The Venture' I was affiliated to and regularly attended various other Lodges, the Brandon Lodge on Brandon Hill and the Unity Lodge in (I think) Pennywell Road; these Lodges being located in the City of Bristol under the Banner of the Grand Council, As I remember, the Unity Lodge venue was at a pub called The Cornish Mount. But memory is a fickle friend and over the years I would not be surprised if it had let me down.

According to my extent, but rather tattered records, (now much worse for the many years they have lasted, as is their owner).

I was initiated into the Order at the Venture Lodge No 1593 on the 1st July 1960, the address of which was then, the Venture Inn, Melvin Square, Knowle West, Bristol.

I became affiliated to the Brandon lodge on the 14th of August 1960 and later also became affiliated to the Unity Lodge. (The date in no longer legible).

Subsequently, I was raised to the second degree of Primo Buffo on the 4th May 1962.

During part of those years I held the position of Lodge Secretary at the Venture Lodge, eventually being presented with a fine S/R Jewel to commemorate the fact. Unfortunately, I am prevented by time, distance and the fact that the 'Venture Inn', (I now discover) was

demolished many years ago, from knowing where to write for information about my old stamping ground, thus, the letter to you. Basically I seek information; specifically a Grand Council address I can contact for information. Continued next month, is there any one out there!

The following is an extract of letter from Grahame Atkinson, Father to two of our Orphans, recently dropped from the list after leaving school.

Dear Bro Ray & Brethren

Just a short note to let you all know that Sara passed her exams, A."B" in maths, the rest straight "C"s" with only one "D" in Travel & Tourism. She now has all she needs for her "Advanced" course in Art, Design & Textiles.

As for me, I haven't started Buffing yet as I cant do Sunday evening and I have just finished a course, which was on a Wednesday evening, so I will try soon.

Yours fraternally

Bro Grahame Atkinson

I had a very nice letter from Brother Alan Mallatrat R.O.H. As many of you will remember, he was the Editor of the previous newsletter. As well as congratulating me on the "Newsround" and saying that he had a most enjoyable read, he informs me that 'all of the Lodges that met previously at the old club, will be meeting at the new club'. Thanks Alan, we look forward to a few articles from Nottingham Province.

Brother Arthur Stevens R.O.H. the Grand Lodge Secretary of the Snodland Province informs me that they are holding a Charity raffle in aid of Demelza House, a local Hospice for children. The prize is a scooter, shown below, and it is



being donated by Bro John and Mary "the Witch" Eccleston of the Neville Lodge and is being run in co-operation with Paydens, a local Chemist.

Brother Arthur Stevens R.O.H. informs us that; all moneys raised will be going directly to the Hospice. The draw is to take place on the 28th February 2004, more of this later.

In Memorium

I have the sad duty to inform you that Brother P.Hatton R.O.H. a Past Grand Knight Commander and a Delegate to Grand Council for the Croydon Province for many years passed away on Monday the 2nd February. Those of us, who were well acquainted with Brother Phil, would be aware that he had been ill for some time.

He had no family close to him and as a consequence the Order became a religion to him and the Rule Book his bible.

The Ceremony of Cremation was held on the 19th of February at the North East Surrey Crematorium, New Maldon, and was most ably performed by Brother R.R.Routledge R.O.H. assisted by Brother Ron Wilson R.O.H. and Bro Lou Jennings C.P. 27 Members of the Order travelled to say their farewells. He will be sadly missed, but not forgotten.

I must also inform you that Bro Charles W Thoroughgood R.O.H. late of the Dealers Lodge, Croydon Province, passed away on the 19th of February 2004. Both of these Brethren should be in our thoughts, when next you meet.

Saturday the 13th March heralds the Grand Knights Chapter Conference at the Savoy Hotel, North Parade, Skegness. Lincolnshire. This is due to begin at 12pm prompt. The Ludensian Knights Chapter will be hosting a Buffet/Dance in the evening and all are welcome. Tickets are available from Brother J.W.English R.O.H. His phone No is 01754 766770, Cost of tickets only £7.00 each. Be there or be square.

Saturday the 27th of March 2004. Bro J.Stracey K.O.M. Will have the Roll of Honour conferred upon him

by the Sir Walter Raleigh Lodge, No 1909. Again no cards out yet, unable give Brother Ernie Taylor's telephone number out, it's Ex directory.

Also on the 27th of March 2004, the Sir Walter Miles Lodge, No 2129 are having their 25th Anniversary celebrations, 19.30 until late, at the R.A.F.F.A Club, Huntingdon Street, St Neots. Cambridgeshire.

On Saturday the 22nd May 2004. Brother Alan Nixon K.O.M. has the Roll of Honour conferred upon him by the Pride of Bramley Lodge, No 2152.

The Ceremony to start at 8pm will be performed by Brother J.W.English R.O.H. Grand President for 1998. Venue, the Sunnyside Community Centre, Flanderwell Road, Rotherham. South Yorkshire.

I will of course remind you of any dates not yet reached in future issues. If you have any events planned, then please inform me and we will try to spread the word.

Until next time, being sociable and happy means good times and good Buffing
G.R.Cooke R.O.H.
The Editor