

## CHORLEY AND DISTRICT MASONIC GROUP

### Activity Reports for the Group Meeting held at Westhoughton Masonic Hall on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

**Note: The following reports are presented exactly as received from the representative of that function, committee or society:**

#### **8a) Local Care Officer (*WBro A Farrington, PPrJGW*)**

'I have been approached by brethren who have asked me about the Samaritans. They had been prompted by their wives to inquire after she had read the Freemasonry and the Samaritans In Need Magazine.

These magazines explain a lot about the National Charities, and what is available especially the Samaritans In Need magazine, should you not be getting the treatment you need from the NHS. Glance through them brethren as you and your dependents may be missing out on assistance we could provide.

Also brethren we have not been able to complete application forms to the charities because either the applicant or his dependant refused to provide financial details.

The Charities are means tested. The application forms require the visiting brother to ask for and see documentary proof of the applicant and his wife or partners financial status.

This helps to make sure that the money you put into the collection plate goes to the needy and not the greedy

I give you my word brethren any information given to an Almoner or myself is sent to the Grant Executives. It is not, by anyone in the care team or anyone in the offices of the charities divulged to anyone else certainly not to the Social Services, Inland Revenue or the VAT.

Never at any of the Almoners meetings are specific cases discussed, and to my knowledge no Almoner discusses a specific case with another Almoner at any time.

Confidentiality is of prime importance to us and I hate to see a case where we could have helped but unable to do so because of the applicants fear that the information they give would be misused.

As always the care team can only help if we know of the problem and your Lodge Almoner is always ready to listen and help.'

#### **8b) Group Charity Steward (*WBro M Warren, PPrGSuptWks*)**

'Brethren, since our last Group meeting a number of things have happened within the Province. Firstly the West Lancashire Freemasons' Charity has moved from Hope Street into a newly purchased building in Huyton, Liverpool, purchased as an investment for the Charity from legacies left by freemasons. All Lodge Charity Stewards in the group have been informed of the new address and contact details.

Unfortunately the Provincial Charity has had to write off some £22,260 from unpaid standing order pledges from the "M.S.F. 2010 Festival Appeal". Chorley Group has had £2,175 of that debt written off. (TWENTY TWO Chorley freemasons cancelled their standing orders, before completion of their pledges).

I am pleased to announce that WLFC is getting extra support from individual brethren who have agreed to take out standing orders to raise funds for our own Masonic Charity. Over 370 brethren have already pledged £14,614; Chorley Group members having pledged £850 among 20 brethren, other "one off" donations to the charity are in excess of £250 up to the March.

A letter has been sent out to all Lodge and Chapter Charity Stewards informing them that our WLFC is to give to Masonic and non Masonic Charities this year in excess of £522,000. At the time of writing we have received £292,357 of which £62,735 are legacies, a shortfall of £229,643, Chorley Group has given £9,839 as at 22/3/2011.

Our contribution as a group is 4.3% of the grand total. The charity has substantial funds in hand, but if the amount raised each year by lodges and chapters continues to fall, then our own charity will suffer terribly. It is particularly important that we remember our own charity when your lodge or chapter is considering where to give donations. We are well aware that fund raising for our Masonic halls is so important, but we still have to remember others within freemasonry and beyond, who are less fortunate than ourselves.

The Grand Charity this month donated £50,000 to the Red Cross for the "Tsunami Appeal" in Japan. Bearing in mind that in January 2011 the charity donated £35,000 to help those caught up in the Brazilian floods. Brethren, we do look after people outside freemasonry. Anyone wishing to make an individual donation to the "Tsunami Appeal" can make a Gift Aid donation, if they contact me after this meeting for further information.

Most of you should be aware that a number of brethren are to walk the length of Hadrian's Wall in an effort to raise funds for WLFC. They are looking for sponsorship from lodge and chapter members. The walk takes place on 30<sup>th</sup> May to 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2011. Sponsorship forms have been circulated and we hope that lodges and chapters will offer support.

I have requested that Lodges and Chapters notify me if they intend to support a "Chorley Group Giving Day" to be held in the summer of 2012. So far only 13 of 29 lodges and chapters in the Group have indicated that they will take part. Please take back the message that a Giving Day is the ideal vehicle for obtaining much needed publicity for our non masonic giving and to encourage other worthy causes to present themselves to us for consideration. The date of the "Giving Day" will be announced at the forthcoming Charity Stewards' meeting in September, when more information will be made available.

"Yellow Envelopes" have been adopted by a number of lodges and chapters, but there are many who have yet to consider taking up the scheme, which allows visitors, along with members, to give to WLFC and also to claim 25% back in "Gift Aid". The scheme is far easier to administer than the existing "Blue Envelope Scheme". Hopefully more lodges and chapters will decide to adopt the scheme, which is highly beneficial to our Provincial charity.

All Lodges and Chapters have received a request to let me know how many "West Lancashire Freemasons' Charity" pin badges they require? At this time I have had just NINE replies to the request. The pin badges cost £1.00 each and if we collect £2 for each of them it will all go to the WLFC charity. There are also a few "Trolley Dolly" key fobs to be had, at just £1 each, which can be used for immunity badges at Old England Nights or to be sold to brethren for the good of freemasonry, sell at £2 each were possible.

Finally, all Lodges and Chapters have received from Province a guidance document entitled: "Collections and Raffles and Accounting for Charitable Monies" This points out how lodges and chapters should administer their charitable collections, together with raffles and fund raisings at the festive board and on other occasions. It explains at length about "Lodge Accounts", "Charity Accounts", "Disbursement Accounts" and other forms of saving accounts including "The Relief Chest". This is an excellent document, which clearly sets out the correct procedures and should be read and understood by us all.'

### **8c) Group Publicity Officer (WBro JR Breakwell, PPrGStdB)**

'The structure of the team remains unchanged and is a Group Publicity Officer and three Correspondents one for each Masonic Hall.

- John Breakwell,  
Tel 01257 481628 email: john.breakwell@talktalk.net
- Ken Ingham for Chorley  
Tel 01257 264452 email: kixkeys@btinternet.com
- Alan Hurst for Horwich  
Tel 01204 491246 email: hurstalan8@aol.com
- Mike Greenhalgh for Westhoughton  
Tel 01204 668552 email: jmr04@btinternet.com

The team attended a very useful training course. The requirements for web publishing are now more standardised.

The new Group Webmaster, Iain Simpson, is now keeping the Group Website up to date.

Seventy articles / adverts have been published on the Chorley Group Website.

Forty three articles have been published on the Provincial Website.

Plans

Month	Planned Articles	Additional Stories / Articles required
April	6	6
May	8	4

As we visit each Lodge or Chapter we will try to encourage someone within the Lodge or Chapter to provide their own articles. Or at the very least identify potential stories.

Group Representative can help by providing one story each. If anyone has anything of interest (e.g. charitable donations, unusual ritual, events with a Masonic twist? or adverts for forthcoming events) please contact one of the team or take 2 or 3 photos and sent in the story. When taking photos it is essential to get verbal permission to publish a picture from the subject(s).

Province has announced plans to share the editing role by creating four regions.'

#### **8d) Group Webmaster (*Bro I Simpson*)**

'The web site is up to date as far as news is concerned and a thank you must go to John Breakwell for his help with this. Work is now being carried out on other parts of the web site.

Transfer of the Domain names to myself would be of benefit as any errors in the email forwarding for Lodges and Chapter secretaries cannot be corrected until this happens, also any change of Group Officers can not be updated with reference to their email addresses.

I am now in a position to email out to all when the site has been updated. If you are not on the distribution then please email me [cmgwebpage@hjc.org.uk](mailto:cmgwebpage@hjc.org.uk) and not [webmaster@c-m-g.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@c-m-g.org.uk) and I will add you to the address book.

I would like the group to look into the possibility of setting up a small team to support the building of a new site.

There is a need to look at web hosting in the future and how this can be acquired to support the group web site.'

#### **8e) Group Mentor and Membership Officer (*WBro GA Wiltshire, PPrGStwd*)**

##### **Group Mentor:**

'Since the last meeting 7 Lodges have had an Initiation ceremony. The Group Mentor presented the 'Welcome Pack' on 2 occasions, Peter Horgan on 3, and Peter Allan and Malcolm Warren on 1 occasion each. Another Initiation ceremony was scheduled, but was postponed due to the candidate failing to appear on the evening. At Present there are 2 further Initiation ceremonies scheduled before the end of the season.

Despite the Group Mentor's plea at the last meeting, there are still a number of Lodges failing to send a summons each month. To ensure that he is aware of potential candidates, Lodge Secretaries are requested to include the Group Mentor on their mailing lists.

The Group Mentor's meeting in January was well attended, but it was noted that some Mentors failed to attend without giving apologies. During the meeting, Andy Wiltshire gave an informative talk on how Westhoughton Lodge approaches Mentoring. Several people requested copies of the material used by Westhoughton Lodge, and these have been duly supplied. Any other Lodge Mentor wishing to use the materials can obtain copies by contacting Andy Wiltshire.

The Group Chairman, Group Mentor, Assistant Group Mentor and Lodge Mentor of Asshaw Lodge represented the Chorley Group at The Provincial Mentoring Conference in January. Delegates from the Preston, Bootle, North Fylde and Leyland groups addressed the Conference whilst the Key Note speech was given by James Bartlett, Mentoring Coordinator for the UGLE.

The Provincial Grand Master, in his closing remarks, indicated that Province would probably be appointing a Provincial Mentoring Coordinator in the not too distant future.'

### **Group Membership:**

'Since the last meeting there have been no new enquiries for membership to Lodges within our group.

The Provincial Membership Officer has asked Group Membership Officers if they could consult with Group Chairmen in finding and appointing a Deputy Group Membership Officer. The Group Chairman and the GMO are still discussing this.

The PMO also asked the GMO's to recruit members who were willing to act as unofficial assistants to the GMO. Their role would be to phone prospective members who have made contact through the Provincial website requesting further information. Since, at present, the Chorley Group has had very few enquiries, I have not pursued this at great length.

Province has invested in a Membership trailer which can be used as an exhibition stand. In response to the PMO's request for suitable shows where the trailer can be utilised, the GMO has suggested the Adlington Carnival. Should this be approved, Volunteers to assist with staffing the display will be required.'

### **8f) Group Royal Arch Liaison Officer (WBro D Harrison, PPrJGW)**

**'New Exaltees' Evening** The Group Royal Arch Liaison Officer reported that on 8<sup>th</sup> March Standish Chapter had hosted an evening for New Exaltees from the four Groups for which E.Comp. Chris Hamilton, Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals, was responsible (Chorley, Leyland, Ormskirk and Southport). The Principal Guests were E.Comp. Steven Reid, Deputy Grand Superintendent, and E.Comp. the Rev'd. Harry Ross, Third Provincial Grand Principal. Sixty-plus RA companions from the four Groups attended, and all present witnessed a very good Ceremony of Exaltation and shared an enjoyable festive board.

A little disappointing was the take-up from the new exaltees across the Groups. Sixty-nine invitations had been sent out, yet only a dozen or so were able to attend. However, it was generally accepted that the evening was a success and had been well worth doing.

**Mentoring** Group Chairmen have been asked to make arrangements to introduce mentoring into the Royal Arch. Mentoring in the Craft has been very effective in the Chorley Group and it should be possible to build on that success to the advantage of the Chapters in the Group. A potential difficulty will be that of finding companions who are sufficiently knowledgeable, dedicated and enthusiastic to make the scheme effective.

**Exaltations** During 2010, there were eight exaltations in the Group, somewhat less than the previous year, and all new exaltees were given the welcome pack. If Royal Arch membership is to grow, everything possible must be done to encourage new members to join, and much of that is undoubtedly down to the RA Contacts in Lodges. Recently, the names of 'potential' RA Masons were given to E.Comp. Danny Jones, Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals, who is collating the information for the Province, and the potential members have received or will be receiving letters from Steven Reid in the hope of encouraging them to join the Royal Arch.

**Passing the Veils** The Ceremony of Passing the Veils was once a precursor to the Exaltation Ceremony but was discontinued in England (with the exception of the Province of Bristol) in 1835. The Deputy Grand Superintendent, E.Comp. Steven Reid, has put considerable effort into persuading Supreme Grand Chapter to allow the ceremony to be conducted as a demonstration, and has eventually succeeded. There are three demonstrations planned for next season: 15<sup>th</sup> September at St. Annes Chapter, St. Annes-on-Sea; 20<sup>th</sup> October at Barrow Chapter, in Barrow; and 21<sup>st</sup> November at Elias Ashmole Chapter in Warrington. If any companion is interested in attending one of these demonstrations, the Group Royal Arch Liaison Officer will be happy to provide contact details.'

**8g) Group Year Book Secretary (WBro NK Dunlop)**

'Preparations for the forthcoming Year Book are well under way. Forms requesting details of officers have gone out to every Lodge and Other Masonic Order, and I thank those who have already responded. I would again request prompt return of details.

Please could all Secretaries, Scribes etc request of their members their valuable assistance in obtaining both individual page sponsors and commercial advertisers. By keeping at least the same number of advertisers will ensure that we can once again provide the Year Book free of charge to our members.'

**8h) Group Social Committee (WBro DR Clough, PPrGSuptWks)**

**'Christmas Draw 2010**

1. Group Reps should be far more active in supporting sales.
2. Lodges had three meetings at which to sell the Tickets, the smaller Lodges selling proportionally far more tickets!.
3. The Raffle made £ 950.00 which was less than 2009.

**Autumn Ball - 5<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

The Ball was a success last year and we have already booked the entertainment for this year; so book early.

Not many Group Reps or Masters!

Lodges should sponsor a Table - now is the time to recommend to your Lodges.

**General:**

The committee sees the funds resulting from the Ball and Raffle going to the Halls plus a proportion to Local non Masonic Charities.'

**8i) Provincial Golf (WBro GH Pierce, PPrSGD)**

'As I reported at the Group Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November last year, no one from the Chorley Group featured in the prizes. A full breakdown of who won and what they won is in the minutes which I have put out for each Secretary and Scribe E. Would Group representatives please ensure that they take their Lodges or Chapter envelope. They are in numerical order. On the golf outlook we hope for more success next year.

Our efforts in raising money on the day, and from the donations in becoming Patrons of the Provincial Golf by the lodges and chapters;

Enabled sums of £4000 Masonic Charity Fund

£400 Air Ambulance

£100 Junior Golf Foundation

I ask you to continue your Patronage for the coming year.

Next years Provincial Golf Final will be held at Charnock Richard Golf Club for both Golf and Dinner

Cost for Golf	£26
Dinner	£15
Total	£41 for the day'

**8j) Group Golf (WBro G Southworth)**

'Events for the forthcoming season are now organised and are as follows:

1. **Chorley Group Golf Day** to be held at Hindley Hall Golf Club on Tuesday the 24th May.
2. **Autumn Golf Day**, comprising both the John Parkinson Rose Bowl (an individual competition) and the Ray Jackson Salver (a competition between the three halls), is to be held at Hart Common Golf Club on Monday the 15th August.

Masons who are not yet members of the Golf Society and non-Masonic guests are most welcome to join us at either of the afore-mentioned events

3. **Arthur Gregory Memorial Shield.** The draw has taken place for the knockout event which will continue through the golfing season
4. **Mike Wareing Challenge Trophy.** This competition between Chorley and Wigan Masonic Groups will take place on Monday 12th September at Hart Common Golf Club.
5. **Disbursement of Funds.** It has been agreed that a donation of £400 will be made to St Catherine's Hospice from money raised during 2010. A donation will be made to MacMillan Cancer Support from money raised during the 2011 events.'

#### **8k) Group Bowling (WBro RG Wilkinson, PPrJGW)**

'The annual Group Bowling Final, Masters and First Principals' Trophy and Ladies Trophy will be held at the Rivington Bowling Club, Sheepphouse Lane, Horwich BL6 7SD on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

Three competitions take place and will run concurrently in a round robin format:

The Oliver Hart Challenge Trophy which is open to all masons belonging to lodges and chapters within the Chorley Group.

The Leonard Holt Ladies Trophy, open to members' wives and partners.

The Masters and First Principals' Trophy donated by our Group Chairman W Bro John Robson will be open to masters and first principals that are in office at the date of the competition.

Members can enter only one of the competitions.

Bowling Fee £ 1.00 Buffet £ 6.00 (to be booked in advance)

Start 10.00 am Scratch 10.30 am

A limited number of bowls can be provided on the day

The Provincial Bowls final will be held at Windle Bowling Club, Dentons Green, St Helens WA10 6JT on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2011.

For more information see your Masonic Hall notice board or contact any of the committee members.

We hope that there will be a better attendance at this year's final particularly from Masters and First Principals and we would like the group reps to encourage members of their lodges to attend.'

#### **8l) Masonic Fellowship (WBro JK Cairns, PPrJGW)**

No report received.

#### **8m) Masonic Research (WBro GP Snape, PPrJGW)**

'Since the last Group Meeting, there has been only one meeting of the Research Society. On 28<sup>th</sup> January at Brookfield, W.Bro. Ian Scott gave a talk entitled 'Memory Techniques to Learning Ritual, with Audience Participation'. The talk proved to be very interesting, and the audience participation not too onerous. The next meeting of the Society is the AGM, and will be held at Brookfield on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May. Following the AGM, W.Bro. Fred Lomax will give his talk on 'The US One Dollar Bill'. Fred is a good speaker, a renowned Masonic researcher, and always good to listen to. The meeting will be followed by a hot-pot supper with the usual free draw for a bottle of whisky. Any Master Masons are welcome to attend the meetings and the subscription is just £4.00 per year.'

#### **8n) Ecclesholme (WBro MS Gregory, PPrJGW)**

'The 2010 Ecclesholme Christmas Fair was a success, raising over £2000. Sale of tickets within the group was well supported. It was good to see members of the Chorley Group attending the event. Yet again we had in excess of 10. Once again my thanks to Ruth and Bill Crook for their continued support.

Since our last meeting the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Friends of Ecclesholme has taken place, W. Bro Earnest Daniels is now chairman.

The Friends with your support continue to assist the residents of the home. We are currently co funding, along with the RMBl, the landscaping of the grounds. Why not come along to the Garden Party and have a look?

The Summer Fair is to take place at Elm Bank (Eccles Masonic Hall) on Sunday 5 June 2011. Tickets have already been distributed to lodges and chapters. Many thanks to those lodges and chapters that have already forwarded monies raised from the sale of the tickets. Any further monies in respect of ticket sales will also be gratefully received. I understand that once again some lodges are using the Fair tickets as immunity badges at Old England Nights thus increasing the support. I look forward to seeing as many members of Chorley Group as possible on the day.

After the success of the Audenshaw District in East Lancashire hosting a Gala Dinner in aid of Ecclesholme, this event is to be hosted later this year by the Wigan Group at Bryn Masonic Hall on 28th October 2011. Notification will be sent to all lodges and chapters in the hope of your support.

In closing may I pass on the thanks of the committee, staff and residents of Ecclesholme for your past and continued support.'