



The Provincial Grand Lodge of Somerset

News Digest – July 2009

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1. Very Worshipful Brother Thomas (Tom) Albert Hughes – in memoriam

It is with regret that we report the death, at the age of 90, on Saturday 27th June of Tom Hughes following a long period of ill health. Tom Hughes was initiated into Taunton Deane Lodge No. 5221 in April 1957, aged 37, becoming Master of that Lodge in 1969. He was exalted into the Chapter of St George No. 3158 in 1960 becoming First Principal of the Chapter in 1976. He was a Founder Member of the Somerset First Principals Chapter and also of the Chapter of Rectitude in Wiltshire.



Tom Hughes was appointed to Provincial Rank in both the Craft and Royal Arch in 1975 and 1977 respectively; and in recognition of his service and high office was first appointed to Grand Rank in 1984 and 1985. Further promotion in Somerset followed including a continuous period of service from 1983 as Director of Ceremonies, Assistant and then Deputy Provincial Grand Master to 1996.

Tom Hughes will be remembered by many with great affection as a friend and distinguished leader of Freemasonry in Somerset.

2. Initiates' Evening at Yatton

At the personal invitation of David Jenkins, a very happy and informal evening was held at Yatton Masonic Hall for all new Initiates and their wives or partners. On arrival all were welcomed with a drink and the dining room soon filled with happy chatting groups. The PGM accompanied by his wife Poo and other senior members of the Province circulated amongst the guests greeting and answering questions. David Jenkins gave a few words of welcome and invited Frank Clarke, Provincial Grand Orator to present a view of Freemasonry in general and especially that in Somerset. This was given in his usual gentle and interesting way to an attentive audience. The evening continued with a superb buffet with music supplied on the organ by Ken Sherring, Provincial Director of Music.



3. Cadogan Court – 13th June 2009



On arrival at Barley Lane about an hour before opening, parking was already at a premium! The stalls were all up and running with people spending their money. Peter Layzell had everything and everyone under control, David Medlock was even seen to congratulate him (or was it for his choice of uniform?). David Jenkins made a very warm opening speech including introducing the new Home manager Helen Mitchell and staff. He also welcomed PGM for Cornwall Peter George and suggested a contest to discover the best pasties: Cornish v Somerset! It's unclear who the winners were but Somerset's were all sold out (say no more). Cheer leader dancers from Uffculme gave an energetic

performance, especially a little 5 year old who stole the show. The caterers were of the usual high standard providing excellent fayre in beautiful sunshine. Initial indications are that the Somerset stalls and donations raised over £6000. A big thank you to everyone who helped or contributed.



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4. Rural Philanthropic host “Tea at 3”

On a beautiful and hot summer's day, the Brethren and their ladies of the Rural Philanthropic Lodge No. 291 held the third annual “Tea at 3” at the Burnham-on-Sea Masonic Hall. It's all part of a national fund raising campaign held over June and July in aid of hospices around the country. David Jenkins, who is himself a Trustee of St Margaret's Hospice, was pleased to welcome the many distinguished guests which included the Mayor and Mayoress of Burnham, Chris and Derek Cooper.

The tea and cakes were made and / or provided by the ladies and raffle prizes were generously donated by the Brethren and local businesses this raising a handsome £602 for St Margaret's.



Pictured are:

Julia Draper (Hospice Fundraiser), Annette Wolstenholme, Chris & Anne Becket, Jan & John Kidd.

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5. Somerset Masons provide support for Wells Cathedral

Wells Cathedral, like all the great Cathedrals in this country, is ever in need of funds to renovate and upgrade the fabric of the building. To mark the 275th Anniversary of Freemasonry in Somerset, the Provincial Grand Master proposed a substantial donation towards the Cathedral Development Project.

The chosen project was the renovation of the Pilgrims' Porch and West Cloister. The medieval Pilgrims' Porch had been closed for over two hundred years and was to be re-opened as the principal visitor entrance to the Cathedral. With the generous support of Lodges a total of £60,000 was raised within the Province.



Following a suggestion that this gift might be acknowledged in a more practical manner Alwyn Leek, a Past Master of Royal Sussex Lodge and an operative stonemason, offered to donate and craft a Threshold Stone of Somerset Blue Lias to grace the floor of the Porch. The Cathedral authorities further agreed to the incorporation of Mason's Marks in the Stone. The two Provincial Banner devices were approved and are engraved at each end of the Stone.

The new Cathedral Visitor Centre and entrance is now open and all entering the Cathedral pass over the Threshold Stone – a lasting tribute to Freemasonry's contribution and a link with our operative heritage.



Stone Pictures: **Pat Morrisey.**

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