



The Provincial Grand Lodge of Somerset

News Digest – May 2009

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1. Bridgwater Masons join forces for their Somerset 275th year Appeal

Amongst the many celebrations and fund-raising efforts put on during 2008 in support of 275 years of Freemasonry in Somerset, the three Bridgwater Lodges combined to promote a series of fund-raising functions for the benefit of deserving local charities. Perpetual Friendship No.135, Admiral Blake No.4692 and Tynte No.7994 formed a joint committee which enabled a diverse program including a Barn Dance, a Charity Golf Day and a Choral Evening.

So successful was this collaboration that a fully equipped Topper sailing craft costing £2262 was purchased for the benefit of the Somerset Youth & Community Sailing Association (SYCSA) in support of their work providing training and sailing experience for youngsters from all sectors of the community. The SYCSA organisation is a registered charity staffed entirely by volunteers.

A second local initiative supported by the committee was the purchase of a defibrillator for the centre of Bridgwater, to be under the supervision of Bridgwater Police. In addition to meeting an obvious need for resuscitation, the defibrillator, costing £1000, will be used to augment the training provided by the Police Support & Community Officers to various organisations and groups within Bridgwater.

John L Knight of Tynte Lodge chaired the committee and expressed his sincere thanks to all the Brethren and helpers of the combined Lodges whose efforts proved to be so very successful. Indeed, he hoped that such a collaboration might be repeated for future events.



2. Presentation by The Royal College of Surgeons

The Royal College of Surgeons of England was delighted to attend and present at the annual meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Somerset on 2nd April 2009. This was held at the Winter Gardens Pavilion in Weston-Super-Mare.

The contribution of English Freemasonry to the advancement of surgical knowledge and practice both through the generosity of individual lodges and via the Grand Lodge 250th Anniversary Fund has been truly outstanding. In the years since the inception of the Anniversary Fund in 1967, this has totalled well in excess of £3.5million.

Representatives from the College included Louise Jary from the fundraising and events team and two Royal College Research Fellows. Mr Stuart Gillett MRCS was a local lad, carrying out his research at the Royal United Hospital in Bath in the speciality of Otolaryngology (Ears, Nose and Throat) with specific reference to the larynx. His talk entitled: *West Country doctors, Spanish patients and some long runs* took the audience through the challenges and breakthroughs leading to the recent landmark laryngeal transplant on Spanish patient Ms Claudia Castillo. A joint European team of doctors and surgeons pioneered this technique using stem cell technology, led in England by a team working at the Laryngeal Research Group, University of Bristol.

Mr Ravi Barod MRCS enlightened the audience on a completely different area of surgery during his talk entitled *On natural selection in kidney cancer*. A very timely topic for this years' bicentenary of the birth of Charles Darwin whose revolutionary ideas are still providing food for thought for surgical researchers of today, Mr Barod's talk on the factors controlling the growth of kidney cancer, based at the world renowned Imperial College London was very interesting.



The popularity of the research fellowship scheme amongst aspiring surgeons is such that the College receives many more applications for funding than they are able to support. Currently, we are unable to support 80% of the projects who apply annually and are constantly looking for new means of support. Sincere thanks go to all those lodges that have, and continue to support this important scheme to bring benefits to the surgical care of patients.

The College is delighted to arrange presentations to lodges up and down the country. Any interested Lodge members should contact Louise Jary on 020 7869 6083 for further details.

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