



Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim **NEWSLETTER**

No 12 November 2013

EMERGENCY AT 15 ROSEMARY STREET



In the early hours of Friday 18 October a serious fire broke out in commercial premises adjacent to the Masonic Hall. Emergency services attended around 6.30am and shortly afterwards our keyholders were contacted. The Provincial Grand Secretary together with his assistant responded promptly to allow the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service access to the Hall in order to assess any risks to our building.

With the help of infra-red cameras, fire officers monitored our boundary wall in order to locate hot-spots; these were dampened down to prevent flash-over into our premises. Due to their prompt and

efficient actions, the Fire Service brought the conflagration under control and prevented serious damage to the Masonic Hall.

Such was the intensity of the fire that some forty fire officers, eight appliances and three turntable units were at the scene for most of the morning.

VW Bro Ivan Gillespie (PGS), together with his assistant W Bro Joe McCullough, spent the entire day in the Hall liaising with the Fire authorities, the insurance company and loss adjusters. The Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works, VW Bro Tommy Yarr, also spent time checking the premises and, coincidentally, was instrumental in discovering the theft of a substantial quantity of lead from a section of the roof.

There was smoke damage in some rooms, but the main rooms, including the Provincial Grand Lodge Room, were not affected. However, the acrid smell of the smoke did linger in the corridors for a number of days afterwards.

Business in the Hall has returned to normal and the Province expresses its gratitude to our Provincial Grand Secretary and his Assistant, along with others who have been involved, for their time and dedication in response to this emergency.

And now for some Good News

At the September Communication of Provincial Grand Lodge VW Bro Robert Wilson, who had organised the Provincial Golf Day in May, presented cheques for £736, to each of the Charities which had been sponsored.

- ❖ RW Bro Bill Dyer accepted a cheque on behalf of the **Red Cross**
- ❖ W Bro Peter Pollock accepted a cheque on behalf of the **Samaritans**
- ❖ RW Bro Richard Gray accepted a cheque on behalf of **T L C**

TEDDIES *for* LOVING CARE

Teddies for Loving Care (TLC) was launched in Northern Ireland in September, first at the A&E Department of Craigavon Hospital and then at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. The purpose of **TLC** is to provide a cuddly bear for children in participating hospitals who are distressed and in need of comfort. At the discretion of nursing staff, a distressed child may be given a teddy to befriend and to keep during his/her stay in hospital – and to take home as a keepsake.



The Guest of Honour at the launch was **BIG TED** who arrived at Craigavon on his three wheeled trike, accompanied by the President, Vice President and Chapter members of the Widows Sons Masonic Bikers Association.

Here he was welcomed by RW Bro Richard Gray and his team from the Northern Committee of **TLC Ireland**.

Big Ted was then introduced to a few of the A&E nursing staff, and having spotted a near-by Morgan roadster, took them over and into the car for a photo opportunity.



The media were on hand to report the event and Barra Best interviewed RW Bro Gray. Then **BIG TED** took Barra for a spin on his bike!!



Below, some of the supporters at the launch pose for a photograph and **BIG TED** takes a couple of children for a spin!



TLC is supported by Irish Freemasons through the donation of Teddies to all the participating hospitals across the island of Ireland. Each Teddy has a small label which indicates that fact. This is just one of the many ways in which masons in Antrim and in all the other provinces throughout the Irish Constitution are active in their local communities.

Photographs and original text provided by RW Bro R Bashford

NEWS FROM CLOTWORTHY MASONIC LODGE No 593



Some members from Lodge of Dunfermline No 26 in the Scottish Constitution visited **Clotworthy Lodge 593** for their October meeting. Centre back row is Clotworthy's current WM, W.Bro Jason Woods, and to his right in the green collar and apron is the Assistant Grand Secretary of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Fife and Kinross, W Bro David Britton. In the front row with the blue apron is Bro Chris Stewart, a member of 593. The remainder are Scottish Brethren from Lodge 26, who visit N Ireland in alternate years and spend four days in the province, giving them the opportunity to visit a couple of other lodges in addition to Clotworthy.

Below are some of the Widows Sons Masonic Bikers who also visited **Clotworthy Lodge 593** in October. In picture from left to right is VW Bro Joe Murdoch, W Bro Victor Keenan (President of Widows Sons), W. Bro Jason Woods, Bro Wilson Cunningham, W Bro Alan Earle (Secretary of Widows Sons) and RW Bro David Shelby (Chairman of Widows Sons)

