

The St Nicholas Lodge Bugle

November 2024



Dear Brethren,

Welcome to the November 2024 edition of the St. Nicholas Bugle. How quickly a month goes, and indeed even a year! November is the penultimate meeting in our Masonic year and one we usually describe as our business meeting to elect a Worshipful Master for the ensuing year.

As is traditional in the St Nicholas lodge the Senior Warden moves on to Worshipful Master, and with no other nominations, we were very delighted to elect Bro. Scott Davison as Master Elect and Worshipful Brother Peter Hemmingham as Treasurer.

Bro. Scott having been elected on the same day as President Trump, pledged in his inaugural speech, 'To Make St. Nicholas Great again!' During the greetings to our Worshipful Master, praise was given for a great Masonic year, indeed here are some stats from W. Bro Roger Kaye's year.

- We have initiated 5 new members!
- Two second degree ceremonies
- One third degree ceremony
- One joining member

The remaining business of the Lodge been concluded, the brethren retired to enjoy some social engagement and meal.

The Festive board was very enjoyable and the raffle raised a great £111.00 which was won by W. Bro Chris Blackman. The proceeds will go to the Westway Open Arms which is the charity of the year.



'I violate no secret when I say that one of the greatest values in Masonry is that it affords an opportunity for men of all walks of life to meet on common ground where all me are equal and have one common interest'.

Theodore Roosevelt



The Chair of King Solomon, soon to be occupied by our Master Elect, Bro. Scott Davison



I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE, AND FEELING GRATEFUL FOR THE PAST



The next lodge of instruction will take place on **Monday 18th November** at 6:30pm in the upper temple. We will be going through part of the first degree ceremony with the officers of 2025. All brethren are welcome.

If anyone would like to learn anything for the ensuing year, please let me know. This will also be the last opportunity to practice before installation. As always this is also an opportunity to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge and ask question in an informal setting.

Please note if you are unable to attend, please let W. Bro Jamie Wallis know.

December Meeting

Our installation ceremony starts at **5:30pm** and is one not to be missed. This see's a new team installed for 2025, led by Bro. Scott Davison who will become our new Worshipful Master. The festival if St John the Evangelist will be a three course meal costing £17.00.



The Worshipful Master's Apron.

Social Events

Gourmet Evening - 1909

A very enjoyable evening was had at Restaurant 1909 on Thursday 17th October and grateful thanks to our Worshipful Master, Roger Kaye for organising a wonderful evening. The staff and students at the restaurant were attentive and the food excellent.





**COMING
SOON**

Ladies Night at North Cliff Golf Club – Saturday 23rd November. Please contact our Worshipful Master for more details and tickets!



Past Master's Dinner

It is traditional for the Master elect to arrange a dinner for the Past Master's of the St Nicholas Lodge, and this year Bro. Scott was very generous to put on a dinner at the Crescent Hotel on Thursday 7th November for 10 Past Masters of the Lodge. His plans and Officer's for 2025 were presented along with the Installation ceremony plans presented by the DC. Other matters relating to the year ahead and Installation ceremony were discussed followed by a meal and wine provided by the Master Elect.



Charity



Throughout 2024, the Worshipful Master, Roger Kaye has made Westway Open Arms at Eastfield the nominated charity of his year. This social action centre in Eastfield provides practical support and advise to those in need in the local area, including a Food Bank, Client Support and Debt Management.

Through raffles and other fund raising efforts, the lodge has donated **£2,219** to the charity! This also includes the funds raised for W. Bro David Birkinshaw's sponsored bike ride and a donation from Bro Andy Street's Christmas fair. Congratulations on raising a superb amount!



Oliver's Mount – Sunday 10th November

The brethren of St Nicholas Lodge will be attending the Armistice Day commemorations at Oliver's Mount on Sunday 10th November, to pay respects to those who made the ultimate sacrifice. W. Bro Roger Kay will lay a wreath on behalf of the lodge.



Daily Advancement

Tomb of the Unknown Warrior

Up until 1913, Europe had enjoyed 100 years of peace. It's hard to imagine that now, and despite modern conflicts, even 100 years since the end of WWII would be 2045. The First World War took a terrible toll on the nation with 886,000 fatalities, and around 1.5 Million casualties. No corner of the nation was untouched by the war and visible reminders were everywhere, not just with the maimed casualties, but with the mental scars of those who survived. The lack of a body or grave to mourn was a great hardship for those left.

The Cenotaph in London had already been conceived and designed by Sir Edward Lutyens as a national memorial to be unveiled on 11 November 1920 - as remarked by David Lloyd-George - 'was the token of our mourning as a nation and the idea of a grave of an unknown warrior would be the token of our mourning as individuals'.

The idea was conceived in 1916 by the Reverend David Railton, while serving as an Army Chaplain and no stranger to loss, was in Erkingham near Armentieres who saw a grave marked by a rough cross with the pencil written legend 'An unknown British Soldier'. And so an idea was forged. He wrote to the Dean of Westminster in 1920 proposing that an unidentified British Soldier from the battlefields of France should be buried in Westminster Abbey 'amongst the Kings' to represent all those thousands who had fallen.



Supported by the King and Prime Minister, the process began with four unidentified bodies exhumed from battlefields in Aisne, Somme, Arras and Ypres. The bodies were brought to an Army chapel near Arras where they were received by Reverend George Kendall, Brigadier Wyatt and Lieutenant Colonel Gell. The remains placed in four plain coffins and covered by Union flags. The two Officers, not knowing from which battlefield each came, the decision fell to Brigadier Wyatt who with closed eyes rested on one of the coffins. The choice was made and the others were reinterred with dignity. The National Army Museum has determined that the warrior was likely to be a soldier from 1914 due to the amount of decay of the four bodies exhumed and was likely a regular of the British Expeditionary Force and one of the 'Old Contemptibles'.

The coffin was then transferred on the 9th November 90 miles to Boulogne, with troops lining the route, where it was kept overnight. A company of French Infantry recently all awarded the Legion d'Honneur kept vigil overnight as a mark of respect and to honour a fallen comrade.

A special casket had been sent from England, made from solid oak taken from a tree at Hampton Court Palace, and banded with iron, a 16th century sword chosen personally by King George V from the Royal

Collection and an iron shield bearing the inscription 'A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914-1918 for King and Country'.

The following day the mile long cortege, drawn by six black horses made its way to the port, watched by thousands of onlookers, tolling church bells and escorted by a division of French troops. The coffin was draped in the Union flag, now known as the Padre's flag (as it was the one that Padre David Railton had used on improvised alters during the war) and with due ceremony was placed on HMS Verdun to make it's way to Dover, escorted by a flotilla.

Arriving in Dover to a 19 gun salute the casket was carried to London Victoria Station in a special carriage. A large crowd gathered and their silence was deep and profound. People openly wept.

The Unknown warrior was to be granted the honour of a state funeral, the only time this has happened for an anonymous person. On the morning of November 11 the casket was placed on a gun carriage drawn by six black horses, covered with a Union flag followed by the King, Royal family and Ministers of State and pulled through the streets of Westminster, past the Cenotaph that had been unveiled that day, and on to its final resting place at Westminster Abbey. Witnessed by thousands in an eerie silence of mourning and tears with those present remembering how profound the sense of grief was.

The final resting place dug inside the abbey close to the West door (near the resting place of Edward the Confessor and Elizabeth I). The casket was flanked by a honour guard of 100 recipients of the Victoria Cross, and guests of honour included 100 women, all of whom had lost their husband and all of their sons.



The King scattered French soil from a silver shell, the drums beat before fading in to silence for the bugle notes of Reveille. The grave was later filled with earth from the battlefields of France sealed with a black Belgian marble stone, inscribed with words melted down from First World War ammunition.

Servicemen from the armed forces stood guard as tens of thousands of mourners filed silently past in what was a huge cathartic moment of collective mourning on a scale not seen before in this country, and helped in getting some kind of closure.

To this day we continue to remember all those fallen in all wars and conflict and remember:



- *The term warrior is used instead of soldier it is meant to be a symbol of all three services.*
- *The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was unveiled on the same day in Paris*

I hope you have enjoyed this edition, if you have anything that you would like to include, please let me know!

Yours fraternally

Jamie Wallis

Editor

The St. Nicholas Bugle

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