

Minutes of the Education & Training C'ttee – Monday, 10th August, 2009

Present:

V. Thomas, J. Benson, T. Sherman, D. Jackson, G. Crawford and A. Kersley

Apologies:

D. Young, R. Hirst and J. Boughton

Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the last Committee Meeting, held on March 5th 2009 were accepted as circulated and there were no matters arising, other than those on today's agenda.

Reports from the various sub committees

Libraries and Museums

J. Boughton had submitted a short report to the Committee which pointed toward the efforts and outcome of the investigations into material and artifacts held at Freemason's Hall in Northampton. This had resulted in a very interesting article being published in Freemasonry Today, which all Masons should have received and we should refer to.

Work is still ongoing on cataloguing everything in the Library. At some stage it is also planned to put a notice on the door identifying the room as the "Library" and not "Private"!

Lodges of Instruction

J. Benson has been working with D. Young to look at the current status and practices of the "Lodges of Instruction" in the Huntingdon area and how they might be improved or changed.

They have concluded that the existing arrangements should be left alone, as they are all serving a purpose and it is not worth pushing through potentially unwelcome changes.

The alternative idea of a "Masonic Dining Club" is being considered, similar to that currently held at Brixworth by Bill Purcell and others. John read a letter from Bill Purcell, offering his help if it is required. The meetings would consist of a meal, drink and sit-round discussion on any Masonic subjects, questions and answers. It would be open to all brethren and would be held quarterly to begin with, probably at the Priory in Huntingdon. The aim of this would be to allow any brethren an informal atmosphere to further their Masonic knowledge. John will keep the committee informed of progress on this at future meetings.

G. Crawford pointed out that there is a similar club in Towcester called the Square & Compass club and that both this and Brixworth are featured on the Provincial Web Site.

Mentoring and Officer Training

R. Hirst submitted a written report along with his apologies. He has been asked to concentrate on the subject of Mentoring and Reg is already organising Mentoring meetings around the Province to improve best practice out in the Lodges. It appears that our Province is well ahead of most in the country on this subject, in no small part to Reg's efforts.

The Officer Training meetings are all going well. However, A. Kersley stated that there is a specific requirement to have annual training for existing and new Lodge Almoners from feedback he has received. V. Thomas agreed to pick this up with the PrGAlmoner.

Orations

D. Young and V. Thomas have been working through the 30+ Orations from Grand Lodge, with a view to producing a "short list" of those for presentation during the coming season. This list of Orations, and the dates they are being presented, will soon be made available. They are to be published on the Provincial Web site and DailyAdvancement.com in due course (AK to contact N. Pope for this).

D. Young, V. Thomas, R. Hirst and J. Boughton will be responsible for presenting the chosen Orations around the Province. The aim of the Orations is to provoke discussion in the Lodge on their subject matter, not just to be presented as a Lecture.

Demonstrations

Since the launch of the Demonstration team, under the stewardship of T. Sherman, this initiative has proved an unprecedented success and merited congratulations and thanks to all involved.

Following the last E&T meeting, there had been a further 4 presentations, an article submitted and featured in "The Square" magazine and a further article to come in "Freemasonry Today" in the future. For the coming season the team is almost fully booked, including 3 bookings outside of the Province.

Trevor is looking for new members to run a "parallel" team of players to assist with existing and new plays and to help increase their capacity. Bookings are now being handled by Gordon Walker of Danetree Lodge.

Future plays are being researched, written or in reading for future performances, including subjects such as "Royal Arch", "Antients and Moderns", "RNBI", "The Early Making of a Mason" and others still at the ideas stage. V. Thomas suggested looking into getting research on "Chevalier Ramsay" as a future topic and Trevor said this could be considered if he could find someone to research it. It is also planned to produce some Provincial History playlets in due course.

Discussion was held on setting up a Lodge, or finding a Lodge to 'premier' new plays. AK suggested using the Richard Sandbach Lodge of Research for this, as an addition to the Annual Lecture it now holds. He will suggest this at the next RSLoR committee meeting.

Finally, going into the new season, the Demonstration Team finances were a healthy £2,000, but new props, costumes etc., would be required.

IT Database (DailyAdvancement.com)

A. Kersley reported that he had submitted an article for publication in the Password, although available space meant that this would be cut down for the next edition. He has suggested that he submit a regular item each edition for inclusion, to keep up the site profile and this was tentatively agreed by R. Turpin.

A new list of Lectures and Lecturers is needed for the site and V. Thomas said he would chase this up with N. Pope.

Material being submitted is gradually drying up and any assistance in this direction would be appreciated. AK requested more information on Royal Arch and the new initiative on the Dining Club be submitted if possible.

During peak months, up to 7000 pages per month were being viewed by 235 members and there were now over 400 items (posts) to read on the site.

AK agreed to submit his full article for inclusion on the Provincial Web site.

Provincial Web Site

G. Crawford reported that the site now contained an introduction to Mentoring, along with downloadable versions of the Mentoring Booklets. Visitors had increased by one-third, year-on-year, which was encouraging.

GC had submitted a paper to the Communications Committee to have a big push to move toward more electronic communication around the Province. AK suggested that, if the Province could accumulate members' emails from each centre (this is available in P'boro already), then these could be used for regular broadcast of information (and an electronic "Password") directly to the members. This would provide a real opportunity for direct promotion of any events and messages from Province.

GC asked if there was any reason why we could not publish more about what is happening at committees such as our own on the Provincial site and it was agreed that there was nothing contentious in what we discussed and it would be a good idea to publish a version of our minutes for all to see what work is being carried out.

Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 3.20pm.

Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held at Northampton at 2pm on Monday, 16th November.