

PROVINCE OF WEST LANCASHIRE



**50th ANNIVERSARY
OF
DOUGLAS ERIC WILLOUGHBY**

**LUNE LODGE NO. 4724,
AT ROWLEY COURT, LANCASTER
ON 5th JUNE 2019**

50th ANNIVERSARY OF DOUGLAS ERIC WILLOUGHBY

We are here this evening to celebrate 50 years as a Freemason with Douglas Eric Willoughby, Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden and both he and I are very grateful for your attendance and your support this evening. You know, brethren, to be a member of any organisation for 50 years is a remarkable achievement and something that many of us, myself included, are very unlikely to achieve. It is, therefore, very appropriate for us to celebrate this special occasion together.

In order to fully appreciate such length of service it might be helpful to remember some of the things that were happening in 1969 when Douglas Willoughby took his first steps in Freemasonry:

- Buzz Aldrin, Michael Collins, and Neil Armstrong, flew to the moon in Apollo 11 and Neil Armstrong became the first human to set foot on the moon
- Dwight D. Eisenhower, a former United States General and President, died in the Walter Reed Army Medical Centre, after a long illness.
and Richard Nixon, became the 37th president of the United States.
- The British-built prototype of the Anglo-French supersonic airliner 'Concorde 002', made her maiden flight.
- The world's largest aeroplane, the Boeing 747, made its first-ever commercial flight.
- Robin Knox-Johnston became the first person to sail around the world without stopping and entirely on his own.
- Prince Charles was invested with the title 'Prince of Wales' at Caernarfon in a televised ceremony.
- And on the 4th June 1969, at Church Street Masonic Hall in Lancaster, Douglas Eric Willoughby was initiated as a Freemason and took his first steps in this Lune Lodge No. 4724.

Bro Prov Dep Grand DC would you please place our celebrant before me so that I might address him.

Doug, I hope we have known each other long enough for me to use the name you are more familiarly known by.

You were born here in Lancaster on the 15th November 1944, at the home of your grandmother in Wingate Saul Road. You attended Dallas Road Primary School and Lancaster Royal Grammar School, before graduating to Leeds University, where you attained degrees in History and Education before moving on to City of Leeds and Carnegie Colleges for teacher training. You later continued your studies and achieved a Masters Degree in Education at Lancaster University.

You subsequently enjoyed a teaching career in local High Schools of some 38 years, teaching young people in the age groups 11-16 and 11-18 and you ended your career as an Assistant Head Teacher.

It was through work that you met the lady who was later to become your wife. Susan was also a teacher and a Lancashire Schools advisor and you were married in July 1972. Susan, like yourself, is now retired but is still the secretary of the Blackburn Diocese Mothers Union.

Your marriage was blessed with three children, Andrew who is married and lives in Liverpool, David also married and lives in Providence, Rhode Island in the United States of America and Helen who lives with her husband in Bilberron, Nr. Garstang. You have three grandchildren, Caitlin, Francesca & Edward and I know from personal experience how much enjoyment they will give you.

In your leisure time you have been a qualified soccer referee since 1968 and have officiated at semi-professional level. You are currently an FA referee's assessor working particularly with younger referees and a season ticket holder at Everton Football Club. In addition, you have found time to serve as churchwarden of Garstang St. Thomas Church, since 1996, where you are a member of the Diocesan and Deanery Synods and currently Lay Chair of the Garstang Deanery Synod. You were also elected

to the governing body of St. Thomas' C. E Primary School in Garstang in 2001 and elected as chair in 2010.

Your masonic journey began on 4th April 1969, after what you described as a daunting interview with the good and the great, you followed your fathers footsteps and were initiated into Lune Lodge No. 4724.

I would now like to ask our the secretary to read an extract from the minutes of your initiation.

I am sure those names mentioned bring back many happy memories and it must have been very special to have your father present at your initiation as one of the lodge stewards.

Doug, your subsequent Masonic record since your initiation is extremely impressive and is an example to us all. It didn't take long for the lodge to recognise your talents and in 1974, just five years after becoming a member you were appointed assistant secretary. You held that office until 1977 when you were appointed secretary and your very distinguished Masonic journey was well and truly under way. You remained as secretary until 1981, when you resumed your progression through the wardens chairs enabling you to be installed as WM on 2nd March 1983. Having served your year as immediate past master in 1984, you were quickly re-united with the office of secretary between 1985 and 1987. In 1987 you were appointed director of ceremonies and held that position for the next 11 years until 1998. Following a short spell as assistant director of ceremonies between 1998 and 2000 you felt ready for yet another challenge and in 2000 you were once again installed as WM of Lune Lodge. Following your year in office you were again appointed assistant director of ceremonies between 2001 and 2005, director of ceremonies between 2005 and 2010 and again between 2014 and 2019. In addition to these offices you were appointed almoner in 2005 and have held that position ever since.

You became a joining member of Plantagenet Lodge of Installed Masters No. 9357 in October 1991, served as senior warden in 2006 and were installed as WM in 2017. You have held the office of lecture secretary for the past 14 years and currently serve as the group representative.

In Provincial Grand Lodge you were appointed PrGStwd in May 1988 and became a member of Quingenti Lodge No. 8516 in November of that year. You were subsequently promoted to the rank of PPrSGD in May 1992, to PPrJGW in October 1998 and having heard all of that it will come as no surprise to any one present that in May 2014 you were promoted to the very, very high rank of PPrSGW.

Brethren, if you think, that resumee of Doug's Masonic journey in the Craft is impressive, let me assure you that it is mirrored by his record in the other orders of which he is a member.

In the Royal Arch you were exalted into Rowley Chapter on 20th January 1975, you were installed as zerubabbel on 18th November 1996.

You served as Scribe Ezra from 1998 until 2003 and as assistant director of ceremonies from 2003 until 2004. You were appointed director of ceremonies in 2004, an office which you continue to fill.

In Provincial Grand Chapter you were appointed PPrDGSwdB on 22nd April 2004 and promoted to PPrGSN on 7th April 2010.

You became a joining member of Vale Chapter of Installed 1st Principals and served for one year as Haggai in 2009.

In the Ancient and Accepted Rite, you were perfected into Phillips Chapter No. 52 on 30th September 1986.

Installed as Most Wise Sovereign in 1995 and elected to the 30th degree.

Having served as assistant director of ceremonies between 1995 and 2003, you were appointed director of ceremonies in 2003, an office which you still hold to this day. You were elected to the 31st degree on 12th January 2009 and to the 32nd degree on 19th March 2019.

In the Royal Ark Mariner Degrees, you were advanced into Garnett Mark Lodge No. 146 on 29th November 1993 and served as treasurer between 1994 and 2001.

You were installed as Worshipful Master on 25th March 2002 and appointed Secretary in 2005, an office which you continue to fill.

In Provincial Mark you were appointed Provincial Grand Registrar (an acting rank) in May 2007, promoted to PPrGJW in May 2012 and to PPrGSW in May of this year

You were elevated into the Royal Ark Mariners on 10th September 2007 in Kent Dale Lodge No. 195.

LANCASTER MASONIC HALL

In other Masonic duties you were appointed as a Director of Lancaster Masonic Hall in 1989 and served as House Chairman. You were, subsequently, elected as Chairman of Directors in 2003, an office which you continue to hold. You were heavily involved in the process of selling 74, Church Street and the move here to Rowley Court.

Brethren this is a truly remarkable story of one brother's extraordinary commitment to Freemasonry and to the community in general and is an outstanding example to each and every one of us here this evening.

Doug, having served as a Freemason for 50 years our PGM, RW Bro James Anthony Harrison, wishes me to convey to you, his heartiest congratulations on this outstanding milestone in your masonic journey.

As the head of this great Province of West Lancashire, he has issued a certificate to commemorate this very special day, and I would now ask our group chairman Neil McGill to read this certificate to you and all the members present.

Doug, it gives me the greatest pleasure to present you with this 50 year certificate to commemorate this milestone in Freemasonry. Your story is one of outstanding commitment to Freemasonry and the community in general and it has been a great pleasure for me to be able to share it with all the brethren present.

On their behalf, I thank you for all you have done over the last 50 years and wish you good health and continued happiness in all you do in the future.

Doug I extend to you our heartiest congratulations.