

**Kevin Poynton's address to the brethren of the lodge for Gordon Smith's celebration of a long and devoted service to Masonry.**

WM, I thank you for allowing me to occupy your chair and for the opportunity of allowing me to join in this evening's celebrations. May I have your permission to have the outer-guard tyle from the inside of the Lodge?

Good evening brethren.

Very often as we progress through life we discover that some decisions we made were better than others; some make us happy and some, unfortunately make us think that perhaps we should have been a little wiser. However, each and every one of us in this room tonight have at least one common bond. That is that each and every one of us some time ago took a decision that has continually contributed towards our happiness – what I mean is we each made the decision at various moments in our lives to join this ancient and honourable society. To some of us it's been enjoyable just to turn up at rehearsals, to attend social events and ladies' nights, to some of us Freemasonry is a hobby; to others it has become a little more integrated into our lives in fact it can become a way of life.

But it's worthwhile thinking that the Freemasonry that we have today hasn't just happened. It's been formed and perfected by people who have used thousands of hours of their experience to enable us to enjoy our ceremonies, our social lives and our learning to a level whereby we can pass that experience onto the newer members to enhance their enjoyment of the society.

Some have taken a seat in the backroom and committed themselves to looking after the administration and finances of their lodge and by doing so they have helped keep our lodges in good order, and some have handed over that light so that can they relax a little take further enjoyment from seeing the benefits of their good work still being done. And so Brethren I am here to join in the celebrations of a brother who for the past 50 years has been part of the formation of this wonderful society that we should all be proud to be a member of. That brother is of course our very own Gordon Smith.

I would now like to offer you a short history that Gordon prepared and I have rearranged slightly in the hope that you will, in some small way, share with me the happiness of this celebration.

Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies, would you please be kind enough to place Gordon Henry Smith on the floor of the lodge and ensure that he is extremely comfortable

Gordon you were born in October 1939 and your family home was in Glen Road, Old Swan, Liverpool 13. Your only brother was Stephen Vernon. Your father Henry served with the RAF and your mother's name was Uephance Gertrude, also nicknamed 'Effie'.

You attended Broadgreen Road Infants School and then to the junior school situated in Cunningham Road and then on to education at Saint Margaret's, Anfield which was actually situated on Belmont Road. Your mother church was All Saints' at Stoneycroft in Broadgreen Road. The Vicar, the Reverend Barnsley Webber in 1939 formed a cub and scout troop to help mothers with children who had husbands who were on active service and you joined the ranks at the age of 4 years and you left as a Senior Scout at the age of 18. You also sang in the church choir for a long time when you lived in Aigburth.

Your first Job on leaving school was to be employed by R Silcock and Son, on Edmund Street which was part of the Unilever Group and you started as a clerk in the commissions department keeping accounts and records relating to the employed sales agents in different parts of the country. This company was involved in the distribution of animal foodstuffs. You eventually moved on to employment with the Littlewoods organisation in the Retail Chain Store Division, ultimately moving into the finance department.

In your next employment you took up an appointment at J & P Jacobs at Charlotte Road Aintree where you were employed in the lease and works department and then the accounts department and you left after a very short time as you were not happy.

From there you moved to Louis Nicholson & Co, who were Chartered Accountants and had their offices on Castle Street Liverpool where you became assistant manager of building society property and the liens and

small audit department. Through the Properties Department, you were handed the keys to a property in Burford Road, Childwall with a reduced rent, for you and your future wife Shirley who you were soon to marry.

As it turned out brother Ramsden of this lodge also lived in Burford Road and he was the manager of the Abbey Cinema in Wavertree. Also, Ted Aspinall, who was a contractor that was used by the estates office's company. John Howard Duff-Lowe was one of the partners. For those who know Castle Street they were on the opposite side of the road to Harry Morris regalia

Your next employment was a move to Grant Thornton Chartered Accountants in Stanley Street. Then for 23 years you were employed with them as registration manager providing a highly specialised service to their clients carrying out all company secretary work which required an intimate knowledge of company laws and secretarial practise. Douglas Corkish who was the financial director of Liverpool Football Club was the senior partner and David Rowlands who was Ken Croft's brother-in-law was the insolvency partner. You were also secretary and registrar of a publicly quoted property company and were responsible for managing all types of meetings such as Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings, as well as chiring meetings, preparation of minutes and all statutory forms, and you had the services of a female assistant who did your typing until you got yourself computerised. All of this was done in combination of your studying at night school for exams for the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators. You were taught economics by Ken Herbert. Unfortunately, due to ill health and the lack of student membership you were not able to complete some of the final examinations ....

Gordon throughout your life you have always been passionate about dogs and have never been without a rescue dog. Your last pet was your beloved Lady, adopted from the Animals in Need Organisation; sadly, she died a few years ago after 13 and a half happy years together. And now unfortunately your health prevents you from caring for another animal.

When you moved to Allerton you attended All Hallows in Harthill Road of which you are still a member of the congregation; that was over 40 years ago and you have been a member of the finance committee of the Parish Council for over 35 years. Also you are an elected representative of both Deanery and Diocesan Synods.

Your hobbies included being a member of the Aigburth Chess Club and you also had an interest in dancing. You attained your Premier award in both ballroom and Latin-American dancing through the Billy Martin school of dancing on Derby lane; you are a classical-music buff and in 1989 you passed grade 5 in the pianoforte examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, and you also attained the credit of grade 4 in Music theory.

### **Masonic Career**

Having known Ken Herbert for some time it was in 1969 that he contacted you with a request to meet him privately to discuss joining Anfield Lodge No 2215. And so, it was that your proposer was to be Ken Herbert seconded by David Toplis and you were initiated in a double first degree ceremony with Paul Medicot on 16 of October 1969. You followed each-other up the ladder. brethren, Gordon mentioned that of the staff in the company that he worked for there were a number of Freemasons who asked: "Why are you not on the coach going to Blackpool?"

I suppose Gordon that you were too busy at work to spare the time and later, sadly due to pressure of work, ill health and medical advice you came off the ladder instead of moving to senior warden of the lodge. But you kept your membership and thankfully you returned to your Lodge and you were installed into the chair of King Solomon becoming WM in 1994. The installing master on that night was Eric Carroll.

You became a representative on the Lodge committee for private brethren and also joint auditor with Frank McNaughton. At this time Ken Herbert was treasurer. You were also secretary of the lodge social committee for some time.

At this time there was a shortage of candidates for initiation, and you were the last WM to perform the installation ceremony on your own when you installed Ian Jones in 1995. Eventually you took over as treasurer from Roy Hazlehurst.

Computers were not really the thing those days and therefore you maintained a large financial record by hand for 13 years ultimately handing over to John Ward. During Ken Herbert's term as treasurer, you were the one that collected and accounted for the dining fees at every festive board and I understand you were lucky to get either a complete or a hot meal for that time during your masonry!

In May 2003 you were appointed to the rank of acting Provincial Assistant Grand Director of ceremonies. On 15 October 2008 you were promoted to Past Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works. You became a member of the Royal Arch in October 1997 being exalted into Alliance Chapter No 667 which later amalgamated with the Chapter of Friendship No 241 in April 2007 and in which you became third principal.

You became a Mark Master Mason in 2001 and hold Provincial Rank in that Order. You are a member of Royal Arc Mariners and also a member of Rose Croix.

Philip Gunning suggested that you might consider working in the charity office at Hope Street. In the first instance you became a member of the team checking applications for assistance sent in by almoners and regional care offices, recording all the details on a specialised computer programme until ultimately the applications were collected by trustees of the individual charities for immediate action. Eventually it all changed with the office being staffed each day by two people; you were 'Man Friday' and all of you were supervised by Ray Martland.

You have been chaplain of Anfield Lodge and Garston Mark Masons for a number of years which still gives you a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction.

Brethren bearing in mind that just a few days before this meeting Gordon celebrated his 80th birthday I think his commitment is commendable and I am happy to see that you still work very hard to make it 'Work' and long may that continue.

Brethren it is said that a celebration is much more pleasant if you have someone to share it with and Gordon we are all privileged to be able to be part of your celebration. Since your initiation in 1969 you have seen no less than six Provincial Grand Masters lead our Province and to further mark this evening's celebration our current Provincial Grand Master Tony Harrison has caused a commemorative certificate to be prepared to mark your 50th year in Freemasonry which I shall now ask our group vice chairman Mike Cunliffe to read before I present it to you.