

Anfield Lodge No 2215 meets at the Masonic Suite, Woolton Golf Club.

The Lodges and Chapters occupy the first floor of the golf club which has been converted into two lodge rooms with ample committee rooms and robing facilities, all very tastefully decorated and furnished.

Lodge meets on the 3rd Thursday of October, November(Installation), December, January, February, March and April.

History – Anfield Lodge and Football!

There is a strong link between football and Freemasonry. The first rules of football were drawn up by the new Football Association in six meetings at the end of 1863 at the Freemasons' Tavern on Great Queen Street in London, now the New Connaught Rooms next door to Freemasons' Hall. After the first match under the rules, in January 1864, a toast was drunk – how very masonic in itself – to 'success to football, irrespective of class or creed'.

Many of the founding fathers of famous football clubs were Freemasons, none more notable than John Houlding, a brewer from Liverpool who owned the land on Anfield Road where Everton football club, founded in 1878, played from 1884 to 1892.

When they moved to their own ground at Goodison Park, Houlding filled the vacancy at Anfield by creating a new football team: Liverpool FC. Of the original six directors of the club, four were masons. Houlding, who also served as a Tory MP and Mayor of Liverpool, founded Anfield Lodge, No. 2215, and had been Master of Everton Lodge, No. 823, and Hamer Lodge, No. 1393.

He was Provincial Senior Grand Warden in West Lancashire and, in 1897, was appointed Senior Grand Deacon; he was also a 33° member of the Ancient and Accepted Rite.

Other notable Liverpool football administrators in masonry, all members of Cecil Lodge, No. 3274, were John McKenna, Liverpool's first manager and president of the Football League for two decades from 1910; Will Cuff, chairman of Everton and the Football League in 1938; and Sidney Reakes, who as chairman of Liverpool took the shrewd decision in 1959 to appoint a then little-known Scot called Bill Shankly to be the club's manager. Under Shankly, Liverpool went from the foot of the old Second Division to winning the Uefa Cup.

Another notable football administrator who was a mason was Sir Stanley Rous, a schoolmaster who began refereeing Football League matches in 1927, four years before he was initiated in Exonian Lodge, No. 3415, in London, and served as secretary of the FA from 1934 to 1962. He was President of Fifa, the sport's world governing body, from 1961 to 1974.

Then there is Manchester City, a club so masonic they even play in light blue. The club, founded in 1880, was rescued from bankruptcy in 1894 by local masons who

asked that they change their strip from red and black to the colour of a master mason.

That is the claim, anyway, although the club's early records are patchy. By the 1960s, though, the masonic influence on the club was clear. Five of the six directors in 1965 were masons and they appointed another mason, Joe Mercer, as the club's manager.

Mercer, the son of a footballer, played for Everton and Arsenal, but was robbed him of his best years. He played twenty-six wartime international matches for England, many as captain, while serving as a sergeant-major. In 1941, he was initiated in Rivacre Lodge, No. 5805, in his home town of Ellesmere Port, but he resigned soon before the end of his playing career in 1955.

It is unknown whether the Manchester City directors were aware he was a lapsed Brother when they appointed him manager ten years later – his predecessor, Les McDowall, was also in the Craft – but it was certainly a shrewd move. In his first season at Maine Road, City won the Second Division title.

Two years later they were First Division champions.

A 1969 FA Cup victory was followed by wins in the League Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup a year later. Three years after that, England failed to qualify for the 1974 World Cup when they failed to beat Poland at Wembley (a game commentated on by Hugh Johns). Alf Ramsey fell on his sword as manager and was replaced by Mercer, one mason succeeding another to arguably the nation's toughest job.

But Sir Alf Ramsey and Joe Mercer were not the only England managers to be Freemasons.

Don Revie took on the job in 1974 after Mercer's brief spell as Ramsey's successor. Revie played for five clubs in his career, most notably for the strongly masonic Manchester City from 1951 to 1956, but he did not become a mason until 1965, when he was managing Leeds United, his last club. He was initiated in Leodiensis Lodge, No. 4029, in Leeds and remained a member until his death in 1989. His three years as England manager were not distinguished, with the national team failing to qualify for the 1976 European Championships or the 1978 World Cup.

Ron Greenwood made amends during a five year spell as England manager from 1977-82. Greenwood took England to the 1980 European Championships and the 1982 World Cup in Spain. They began the latter with wins over France, Czechoslovakia and Kuwait and held West Germany and Spain to 0-0 draws in the second group stage, but their inability to score denied them a place in the semi-finals.

Greenwood became a mason in 1956 at the end of his final season as a player, a career that took in spells at Brentford, Chelsea and Fulham. He was initiated in London at the Lodge of Proven Fellowship, No. 6225, and remained in the Craft during a long spell as West Ham United manager but resigned in 1977.

You'll Never Walk Alone

David Kennedy Has Uncovered The Reds' Blue Roots

Liverpool FC is the most successful club in the history of English football, winners of eighteen First Division titles, seven FA Cups, a record five European Cups and seven League cups. In 2011, the club is scheduled to move to a new stadium at Stanley Park, but since 1892 they have played at Anfield Stadium, on a ground originally leased by one John Houlding. The original incumbent at Anfield was Everton Football Club, now Liverpool's arch rivals...

In 1882, in order to maintain the club's local competitive superiority, Everton moved from Stanley Park, a public amenity, to an enclosed ground. A meeting was held at the Sandon Hotel in Everton, which was owned by John Houlding, a successful local brewer. This resulted in Everton moving to a rented field off Priory Road. The arrangement was short lived. In 1884, the club moved to a pitch at Anfield Road, bought by Houlding from a fellow brewer called John Orrell for £6000. The outcome of the first game played by Everton at Anfield, on September 28th 1884, was a five-nil win over Earlestown. Changing facilities were situated in the Sandon Hotel.

Everton went from strength to strength at Anfield. Stands were erected and attendances topped eight thousand per game. In 1888, the club was a founding member of the Football League. In 1891, Houlding, in an attempt to recoup his investment out of Everton's ever-increasing income, raised the rent from £100 to £250 per annum and upped the interest on loans that he had made to the fledgling club. This caused great acrimony and the argument culminated in Everton decamping to nearby Goodison Park, purchased for £8000, in 1892.

Liverpool Kick Off...



John Houlding (1833–1902)

Houlding was left the proud owner of a football ground with no football team to play on it. The solution was obvious. He created his own team, originally intended to be called Everton Athletic, but when the Football Association refused to countenance two Everton teams, Liverpool FC was born.

Playing in blue and white shirts and white shorts, until 1894 when they adopted red tops and white shorts (the familiar all red strip was only introduced in the 1960's), Liverpool played their first game at Anfield – a 'friendly' against Rotherham Town – on September 1st 1892.

The Liverpool Daily Post reported that, 'Amidst applause, Councillor J. Houlding started the ball...' We are left to wonder whether he kicked-off with the left foot. Liverpool won, six-one. The first goal ever scored for the club was by a player called McVean – most of the players had been acquired from the Scottish League and were known as 'The Team of the Macs.' The ground had a capacity of twenty thousand, but only a hundred supporters turned out for Liverpool's debut. The situation improved, rapidly and radically. Liverpool won the Lancashire League in their first season and were promoted to the Football League Second Division for 1893-94. They ended it as Division champions. Promoted to the First Division, they were League Champions for the first time in 1900-1901.

Goals Are Achieved...

John Houlding was an active Freemason. He was also an Alderman, a Tory MP and subsequently Mayor of Liverpool. He was elected Senior Grand Deacon in the same

year that he was Mayor, 1897. He had already held the office of Provincial Senior Grand Warden in West Lancashire and was a Past Master of Everton Lodge, No. 823; Hamer Lodge, No. 1393, and Anfield Lodge, No. 2215, of which he was a founder. Shortly before his death in 1902, he was a founder of Sir Walter Raleigh Lodge, No. 2837, along with an old friend and fellow shareholder in Liverpool FC, the then Conservative Member of Parliament for Liverpool, Sir John Wilcox.

Houlding's obituary in The Liverpool Courier noted that 'Of the various and multitudinous orders and high degrees of the craft – including that known as the 'Thirty Three Degree' – there were very few that Mr. Houlding had not passed or held at one time or another in his Masonic career,' click [here](#) for more details on funeral and memorial service.

Houlding's brethren had rallied round to support him in the establishment of the club. Out of the original forty-six subscribers seventeen were Freemasons. The Lodges most closely associated with the club in its earliest days were: Sincerity Lodge, No. 292, and Everton and Anfield Lodges, as mentioned above. Of the original six directors, four were local Freemasons: Houlding himself, John James Ramsey, John McKenna and John Ashbury. Even after Houlding's death, the Masonic presence on the board continued to be strong right up to the outbreak of the Great War. Between 1892 and 1914, fifteen out of Liverpool's twenty-three directors were Freemasons.



Oakfield Road, Anfield. Sandon Hotel on the left.

At one end of the ground was a banked stand which was officially named the Spion Kop in 1906, commemorating a hill in Natal where over three hundred men of the Lancashire Regiment had been killed in a battle during the Second Boer War. The Kop was enlarged over the years until it could accommodate twenty-eight thousand spectators. Safety improvements following the 1989 Hillsborough disaster reduced the capacity and it was finally replaced by an all-seater stand, still on a single tier, which holds over twelve thousand..

It was in remembrance of the ninety-six Liverpool fans who died at Hillsborough that the flames were added to the Club's crest, which depicts the Liver Bird surmounted by the 'Shankly Gates' – named after one of the club's greatest managers, Bill Shankly, under whose guidance Liverpool won three League titles, two FA Cups and

the UEFA Cup, the Club's first European trophy. The motto is 'You'll Never Walk Alone' from the song in Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical Carousel, adopted by fans as an anthem in 1960's after it was recorded by the Liverpool band Gerry and the Pacemakers, who readers of this magazine will probably be too young to remember. Below, the simple legend: Founded 1892

The Sandon Hotel, which remains a popular watering hole for Liverpool supporters, was named for the Sandon Group of Lodges in the Province of West Lancashire, of which a substantial number of Liverpool FC's original investors, directors and managers were members.