

## Honour (Past Masters) Board

Having been requested to make a record with regard to the updating of the Strathmore Lodge honours board. I do so only in the interests of our Lodge`s historical records, being aware that my part was, in the grand scheme of things, a minor role.

As in many Masonic lodges the honours board had been neglected. There was no one forth coming to take on the task of adding the much needed extra wings. I offered my assistance. Out of desperation my offer was accepted.

On getting the board home, I spent many hours just looking at it. To my eye, it appeared to have been poorly designed, and laid out. I soon came to realise that it was neither of these. It was in fact a truly well thought out piece of Masonic work, which gave me considerable pleasure, once I realised what the designer was conveying. I have seen a considerable number of honour boards, most of which are constructed as you would a closed window. Our honours board is not only well constructed but those with eyes, will see the symbolism it contains. (Seek and ye shall find.)

The original board consisted of one centre panel, which allowed for three columns of past masters` names. This panel was and still is framed by two pillars on each side. These pillars each have ionic capitals and stand on two squared box sections. The top of the centre panel being capped, by the lodge name and roofed. This upper triangular panel and roof are still there, the whole giving the impression of being an ancient Greek Temple.

The board had, at some time had an extension added. This extension did not run in numerical order. The additional panels did not have the end pillars or boxed sections.

With the new extension the end wings have had their size increased, to accommodate more names. Either end now has its own boxed section and pillars, the pillars each having their own ionic capital. The past masters` names are now in numerical order.

The original board was made with good old English oak; I was not able to source English oak and so used American oak, which is not as close grained. Right from the start I had wished to retain as much of the

original board as possible. Unfortunately I was forced to replace the two original uprights. I have to say, all that remains of the original honour board is the name panel and its associated roof. Sadly all the rest has been replaced. This includes the capitals and pillars. The original capitals were made of plaster which was starting to flake. This really stumped me. Not one of the usual Masonic suppliers could source the capitals. Snookered.

In the words of the old song, then along came Fred, in the guise of Bro. Jem Smith, who took away one of the capitals, made a mould and cast eight new capitals from resin. They should last forever. Well, they`ll see me out. That sounds all very simple but the Lodge really does owe him a debt of gratitude for his skill and ability, without which we could not have stayed true to the original design.

I hope that the future Masters who have their names entered on the honour board will be able to see its beauty and symbolism and be proud to have their name there. I offer my thanks to the Masonic knowledge and skill of one or our ancient brothers, who has given me so much pleasure along the road to the discovery of his hidden secrets.

Brian Harrison. P.P.G.Swd.

17 October 2015.