



The Orsett Times

The Newsletter of Orsett Masonic Hall



ISSUE FIVE

JANUARY 2020

Hall Update

Twelve months have passed very quickly since our last Newsletter. The Board has continued to work and improve the facilities at the Hall. Tree cropping to the back of the premises took place which also aided the Church relieving them of the cost but meant that there would be a ten-year period before the OMH building would be affected by the encroaching branches from the trees.

Further improvements and upgrades to the kitchen have taken place. A new dish washer to meet the updated codes of catering cleanliness has been installed. Further modifications to the gas supply and ovens have been implemented.

New LED light units have been in the toilet area continuing with the five-year plan to upgrade all the facilities, also reduce energy and our carbon footprint as is the countries general directive.

We have added an easy access storage area to our loft space. The area above the bar area could prove beneficial to the hall if we can store various archives in the area. Details of this will be sent out shortly.

During the July/August shutdown we carried out the decoration of the Dining Room, Toilets, Banner Room, Storage Areas and Office. Next year it is our plan to decorate the Bar and Entrance Hall area in accordance with our five year plan. A new non-slip easy clean floor was fitted in the kitchen area. The deep cleaning of the kitchen was completed prior to the installation of the flooring.

For safety reasons the stairs on the fire escape staircase were replaced, which should last for many years to come.

In the Temple the Master, Senior, and Junior Wardens podium tops were increased in size and refurbished.

The building committee under the Chairmanship of W.Bro. Roy Meleady, is constantly reviewing ideas for improvement of our facilities, and we would welcome your suggestions.

Break in at Orsett Masonic Hall

Several of you may have heard that there was a break in/burglary at the hall which is true. On the 12th July at approximately 11.30 p.m. the thieves gained access to the premises by ripping away the security bars on the ladies toilet window on the south side of the property. Smashed through the window and after crow barring the locked toilet door which gave them access to the bar area. The thieves smashed their way through the bar shutters then ripped out the till and smashing it on the floor, removed its contents.

Unfortunately, they also took our collection pots for the Royal British Legion, and Help for Heroes.

As a result of this we are now reviewing our security and will be making improvements to the premises. The only plus side was that nobody got hurt, but it has certainly opened our eyes for the future.

Per Capita Increase

All the Secretaries/Scribes/Recorders/Registrars have received a communication that the per capita cost is going to be increased to £10.00 per Brother per meeting. The current board has been very conscious of keeping costs to the Lodges as low as possible, and to this end we have trimmed costs and challenged prices to ensure that we have secured the best value for money agreements and works for OMH.

Unfortunately, we are now at a point that all the costs outside our control have increased and we have no option but to increase the per capita charge.

As you may be aware the minimum wage has risen by 26%, over the last four years, although OMH pays above the minimum wage the increase has had a considerable bearing on the wages cost.

With general maintenance charges increasing, together with small increases in utilities, although we have been able by long term contracts keep utilities costs to a minimum, all this has again added to the increase.

The increase small and amounts to 2.3% per year and keeps the per capita cost for our Hall at a very competitive cost.

Rainham Lodge LOI dinner
Saturday 30th March 2019

Rainham Lodge again had its LOI dinner at Orsett Masonic Hall. The Lodge chooses a different Brother and his wife to host the event according to their merit and ability. This year's event was hosted By Bro Anil Shastri and His wife Helen. The entertainment was by Marcus Boll an excellent singer. Every one enjoyed the fine food and the evening Raised £500 for Anil and Helens Chosen Charity Headspace, which supports people with Brain Injuries.

W. Bro Grayham Curtis Thomas and his wife Jennifer organised the very enjoyable event and those who attended would like to thank them for their superb efforts.



Members Of Rainham Lodge with their Ladies and guests



W. Bro Grayham Curtis-Thomas and his Wife Jennifer



Bro Anil and his wife Helen Shastri



Marcus Boll entertainer

Editors Note.

We welcome any articles on functions held at orsett Masonic Hall. Please can you forward your own accounts of functions held by your Lodge or Brethren, so that we can keep all of the Hall Patrons updated on the many enjoyable events held.

Fine Dining

Further to a number of enquiries by Lodges a fine dining menu has been added to the Craft Catering Menu on the Orsett Masonic Hall website www.omhl.co.uk. Why not request a special meal for your special meeting? Prawns, Cockles, Winkles, Jellied Eels as a Sea Food Starter. Fillet Steak with a Lobster Tail as a main course. These are very achievable and as not as expensive as you think. Dream up your special menu, Amanda of Craft Catering who will only be too glad to price and assist you in your selection. (Craft Catering Amanda Milligan. E-mail; r_milligan120@hotmail.com).

St. George's Dinner
26th April 2019

As part of our regular Social Occasions for the benefit of all the Members of Orsett Masonic Hall and the local community we held a dinner on Friday 26th April to celebrate St. George's Day.



As usual Jackie had decorated the bar, dining hall and tables in a spectacular and patriotic manner. It was disappointing that only thirty-three people were there to enjoy a magnificent meal prepared by Amanda and Robert Milligan.

The atmosphere was greatly enhanced by the live background music, which accompanied the meal and the finale of a rousing sing song being reminiscent of Last Night at the Proms.



Lingfield Race Day
17th July 2019

Another great day for those who joined us. Weather was glorious and with the improved outside seating areas and mini bars everyone enjoyed a relaxing day.



Mini bars were an excellent addition serving a glass or jugs of Pimm's, soft drinks and a variety of beers and wine, all within a few yards of your seat. Most people did well enjoying a little flutter, as Lingfield is predictably a favourites course. Short odds but mostly a return. Amanda did us proud, as always, with tasty breakfast rolls to send us on our way and a delicious baked gammon and salad supper on our return, to save us having to cook when we got home.

A very pleasant day with convivial company was enjoyed by all. Why not join us next year, watch out for the date!!

Spanish Evening
27th September 2019

With splendid Spanish Food provided by Amanda & Robert Milligan and decorations made by Jackie the Hall Manager this night transported us to sunny Spain. Over 30 Masons their partners and Orsett villagers enjoyed an authentic Spanish evening with wonderful food, wine, music and a Mediterranean atmosphere.

With such positive comments it was a shame that more were not there to enjoy the hard work of our caterers and Jackie.

Remembrance Day Lunch
10th November 2019

Over 40 came together to commemorate Remembrance Day and the 75th Anniversary of D – Day.



We were pleased on this occasion that more Lodges were represented including Beneficence, Bulphan, Fellowship & Unity, Haven and Stanford-Le-Hope Chapter plus 7 local residents. Once again, the occasion was enhanced by the wonderful decorations provided by Jackie and the splendid traditional English Lunch provided by Amanda and Robert.



A raffle was held in aid of the local branch of the British Legion, which raised £300. The large number of complimentary comments made all the hard work worthwhile and the generosity of those present enabled us to support the worthy charity.

Burma Star Association
Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony
18th August 2019

On Saturday 18th August the nearest Saturday to V.J. day, the Annual Wreath laying ceremony took place at the Burma Star Remembrance Garden in Wingfield Drive Orsett, at 11.00 a.m.



The occasion was attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, the local Rector, local Councillors and many other people including war veterans. Freemasonry was represented by the Assistant Provincial Grand Master W.Bro. Peter Hollingsworth.



The event has become a regular occasion on the Orsett Village calendar and promotes Freemasonry in the community.



After the ceremony at the garden everybody returned to Orsett Masonic Hall where refreshments provided by OMHL, were served.

Christmas at Orsett Masonic Hall

The Annual Christmas Lunches were held on Sundays 1st, 8th, and 15th December with traditional Christmas Fayre.



Christmas lunches this year were very successful. The usual support of Spectrum Brass band to play carols in the bar set the festive mood. Bells and tambourines given to the children gave sound effect to Jingle bells. They had great fun.

We Wish You A Merry Christmas heralded the signal for dinner to be served. The meal and service were complemented by all. Amanda, Robert and their staff did a great job serving 90 plus at each sitting. David, our 'Music Man' continued the entertainment through dinner, the culmination of which was a dimming of the lights which triggered a crescendo of table drumming and Santa appearing with the Christmas Puddings aflame with brandy to a rousing chorus of 'In Dulce Jubilo'. Lights up and Santa returns to give out Christmas presents to the 'children' young and older!!

Some embarrassed faces. One in particular was an invited guest of Marc Watts's. Christoph Kuhnke a German student at college with his son Max. He was taller than Santa and took the gesture of going to collect a present in the good humour in which was intended. Finally, David had everyone joining in singing carols. The Twelve Days of Christmas sees each table stand and sing their verse as the carol progresses. Often turns into a competition of who can sing the loudest. Lots of laughter, good food, a seasonal atmosphere to share with family and friends, what could be better.

£700.00 was raised by the raffles over the three Christmas lunch days, which was donated to Little Havens Children's Hospice.

The Directors and Staff of Orsett Masonic Hall hope you all had a Very Merry Christmas and wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year from us all.

The dates for later this year are Sunday the 6th, 13th, and 20th December 2020, and we thank you for your tremendous support over the past years and look forward to receiving your continued support.

Orsett Masonic Hall Building

Have you noticed the buildings History panel put together by Jackie Firmin?



If you have any information, pictures, or comments to add to the History panel, please let our centre Manager Jackie Firmin know on E-Mail: jfdiver@live.com

W.Bro. James Edward Bell **PPJGW**

W. Bro, Jim Bell a former member of Rainham Lodge who now lives in Kings Lynn, but still a member of Rainham Mark Lodge at Orsett was presented with his 60-year membership certificate of the craft by W. Bro, Brian Barton at the Admiral Lord Nelson Lodge in Norfolk.



We congratulate W. Bro. Jim on such a magnificent achievement and wish him well for the future.

Rainham Chapter donation to the Scouts

In September on behalf of Rainham Chapter, E.Comp. Derek Dellow presented a cheque for £100.00 to the Second Stanford Le Hope Scout Group. The donation was towards the cost of a new floor for the Scout Hall.



The Rainham Chapter has supported the Scout Group over many years, have seen the Group become very successful and have increased their numbers. A good example of Freemasonry in the community.



The Second Stanford-Le-Hope Scout group.

Coming Orsett Social Events

The Directors very much want to arrange social events for all the Members that meet at Orsett, their families and friends, so that they can make use of their Centre to enhance the Masonic camaraderie and family social life. Also, our Centre can be seen to be part of the local community not to be locked away behind closed doors.

We will be holding a Barn Dance on the 29th February 2020, a St. George's Day celebration meal on Friday 24th April 2020, a Quiz Night on the 27th June 2020, another trip to Lingfield races with a meal at the hall afterwards in July, and an Italian Gourmet Evening on the 25th September 2020 so look out for further information at the Hall and advertisements coming from your Lodge secretaries. You should also check out our website www.omhl.co.uk

Orsett in Bloom Open Gardens Day

The hall will again be open to the public on the 12th July 2020, the day of Orsett in Bloom Open Gardens Day.

Those who visit the centre are shown around the building including the temple, which sparks many interesting questions, and has resulted in new members joining Freemasonry.

It also has increased the number of lettings for functions which brings in revenue to assist in the running of the building.

On the day you can also visit 15 private gardens in the village, a passport for which will cost £5.00 on the day. There will also be an opportunity to purchase plants, and enjoy several side shows, refreshments and food.

A good opportunity to introduce family and friends to the centre.

Hall Bookings

The hall is available to hire for private or business functions. For more details, visit the OMH website.

All hall bookings must be made through Brian Smith and his contact details are e-mail: b.s.smith@sky.com.

Your booking will be confirmed by Brian and will appear on the Bookings Calendar which can be found on the website: www.omhl.co.uk

Museum

Again, a special thank you to Jackie for keeping our museum up to date. Several new items have been added, more historic masonic jewels and several booklets, one of which was explained in a previous newsletter giving an insight into early Freemasonry in Grays.

Please have a look at the publications, as they are very interesting.

We would also appreciate receiving items from your Lodge with a brief history which can be loaned to us and put on display, instead of locked away in a cupboard.

Cancellation of Lodge of Instruction

Should it become necessary to cancel a Lodge of Instruction, please can you advise the Hall Manager, Jackie Firman on 07758-237726 or e-mail: jfdiver@live.com as soon as possible.

Pull Tab Lottery Cards

No doubt many of you may have noticed the Pull Tab Lottery machine that has been installed in the bar area. The Directors did think about reviving the 500-club monthly draw, but the Pull Tab Lottery Machine gave all of the prospective partakers a better chance of winning, which has been borne out by two brethren winning £150 and £50 respectively. There have also been many smaller amount winners.

All the proceeds of the machine are going to be used for improvements to the hall facilities, so please support this scheme if you fancy a flutter.

Shares

The Board of Directors are continually updating our share register. According to the Memorandum and Articles of the Company, all shareholders must be either a Lodge or a member of a Lodge, who meets at Orsett Masonic Hall.

If you know of any Brethren who are no longer members of your Lodge, please advise them that their shares must either be transferred to a Lodge or a Brother who meets at OMH otherwise the shares will become null and void. Likewise, if you are aware of a widow, or family member who may own shares, the same rule applies.

The Directors did send out to all the Lodge Secretaries copies of the Articles of Association for onward transmission to the shareholders in their Lodge. If you have not received a copy, please contact Mark Evans on mark@jnoad.co.uk who will be only too pleased to supply a copy.

Appointment of New Directors.

At the AGM of the OMHL shareholders two new Directors were elected. they were W.Bro. Mark Crabb a member of Fellowship and Unity Lodge and Stephen Joyce a member of Orsett Lodge. Both are joining the building committee, and both bring varied skills to that committee. We wish them every success in their endeavours.

Change of Lodge Secretaries or Treasurers Details

Should either your Lodge Secretary or Treasurer's contact details change please can you advise Brian Smith on b.s.smith@sky.com. To enable us to provide the correct service to Lodges it is imperative that we have the correct contact details.

Contact Details

Orsett Masonic Hall web Site; www.omhl.co.uk

Hall Manager - Jackie Firman

Tel: 07758-237726

E-Mail: jfdiver@live.com

Hall Bookings - Brian Smith

E-mail: b.s.smith@sky.com

Craft Catering - Amanda Milligan

E-mail; r_milligan120@hotmail.com

OMHL Share enquiries – Richard Bowyer

E-mail orsettmasonichall@gmail.com