



The creation of The Bourne Lodge in 1950 was very much the result of a new 'Class of Instruction' created in Bournemouth two years earlier and called the Charminster Class of Instruction. Of the thirty founding members of the class, seventeen were members of Vortigern Lodge 4854, which went on to be the sponsoring lodge and provided the first Master, W. Bro. Jack Edwards.

Twenty-nine (29) Founders assembled at Bournemouth Town Hall on 12 April 1950 for the consecration ceremony including the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W. Bro. Wilfred Attenborough who conducted the ceremony and 273 other Masons.

The first regular meeting of the lodge took place on Friday 12 May 1950 with 91 brethren present. As well as the initiation of Mr Bertram Old, there was also a vote for a joining member, Bro. Sam Emberton. If Bro. Sam had not had a prolonged hospital stay, which precluded him from dealing with the necessary forms, he would have been another Founder. Bro. Sam went on to become Worshipful Master of the lodge in 1957. After the passing of the last of our Founders in 2003, W. Bro. Sam was our last remaining link with the formation of the lodge until his sad passing on 27 July 2006.

The dining fee for the installation meeting in 1957 was 12/6 (62½ p) (including two bottles of beer), and while many things have changed over the years, there was a familiar plea from the Dining Steward for dining applications to be sent in early as difficulties were occurring due to late applications.

1957 was another major date for Bourne and other Bournemouth Lodges as this was the year that The Knole, our current home, was purchased, and the lodges that had been meeting in two different locations came together.

1960 marked the time that the first Past Master of the lodge received Provincial Honours when W. Bro. R. H. Chapman was awarded Past Provincial Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies.

In 1970, one of our Founders, W. Bro. Reg. Chapman received a promotion to Provincial Senior Grand Warden. This honour was followed in 1974 by a further promotion to Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies, the first Grand Officer in the lodge and to mark the occasion, W. Bro. Chapman presented the lodge with three new sets of collars and gauntlets for the Worshipful Master, and the Senior and Junior Wardens. The second Grand Officer to be appointed within the lodge was W. Bro. F. Beer, who received the rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer in 1979. Having been initiated in 1952, he was installed as Worshipful Master in 1963 and then served as Director of Ceremonies of the lodge for ten years until 1980.

1970 marked the year that W. Bro. Cliff Lees initiated his three sons who went on to follow each other through the offices of the lodge. In 1981, this sequence led to the very unusual, if not unique ceremony of W. Bro. Graham Lees installation into the Chair of the lodge, and Bro. Stuart Lees appointment as his Senior Warden, Bro. Roger Lees appointment as Junior Warden, and W. Bro. Cliff giving the address to the Master. This happy event saw four members of the same family working together in one evening.

One of the first pieces of furniture presented to the lodge was a set of two Alms boxes made by Bro. Arthur Dominey and we were grateful for their skilful refurbishment by W. Bro. Peter Langdon in celebration of our Golden Jubilee in 2000. The boxes continue to be used by the Junior Deacon when enquiring of an initiate whether he has "*anything to give in the name of charity.*" Other donated furniture includes a magnificent set of Warden's columns presented by W. Bro. Peter Adams in memory of his father, W. Bro. Fred. In addition, a full set of working tools in a three-drawer chest presented by W. Bro. Terry Hughes and W. Bro. Mike Langdon formed part of our Golden Anniversary meeting.

The early nineties saw the retirement of two of the lodge's major characters, W. Bro. Peter Gear, PPJGW and W. Bro. Ken Mills, PPJGW.

In 1992, W. Bro. Peter stepped down from Director of Ceremonies after 16 years while between 1974 and 1984 he also was Preceptor of the weekly Charminster Class of Instruction and barely missed any of its 480 meetings during that time. During his tenure, he helped to keep the tradition of high-quality ritual within the lodge and on his retirement presented the lodge with a splendid Tyler's sword, which is still in use today.

In 1993, W. Bro. Ken relinquished the office of Secretary after 26 years of service continuing a tradition of long-serving Secretaries. To mark the occasion of W. Bro. Ken's outstanding service, W. Bro. Mike Ballam and W. Bro. Ian Young presented a Minute Book lectern to the lodge. His replacement was W. Bro. David Carter, the son-in-law of our first joining member, W. Bro. Sam Emberton. W. Bro. David went on to serve as Secretary for a total of 21 years meaning that in the 64-year history of the lodge, only four brethren have served as Secretary.

For over 50 years Bourne Lodge had only installed 'Brothers' into the chair that was until in 2003 when W. Bro. Ian Young was placed into the chair of King Solomon eleven years after the previous occasion by W. Bro. Andrew Brown. In its 65 plus years history, Bourne Lodge has only had two other brothers who have occupied the chair on more than one occasion, W. Bro. Neil West (2000 & 2006) and W. Bro. Andrew Brown (2002 & 2007).

Although the first ten years of the new Millennium meant some disruption in the regular progression of brethren through the offices with some repeat performances; there is no doubt that the standards stayed at the same high level. This high standard of ritual is evidenced by the fulsome praise given to all who took part in the ceremony of Passing in February 2003 when the then Assistant Provincial Grand Master, W. Bro. Michael Wilks honoured the lodge with an official visit.

Charity as with all lodges played an important part in the way that Bourne Lodge worked with its first Charity Steward, W. Bro. Victor Clements appointed in 1976 after Grand Lodge had authorised the office of Charity Steward and fundraising responsibilities passed on from the Almoner. There is no better example of this generosity than the Festival Trowel, which sits proudly at the Secretary's desk at every meeting celebrating the lodge's achievement at having raised double the target set by the Province for the 2005 Festival then titled New Masonic Samaritan Fund.

Bourne Lodge has, particularly in the second half of its history played an important part amongst the Bournemouth Lodges with the involvement of brethren in many aspects of Masonic life relating to the Bournemouth group and the Province as a whole. While many lodges may refer to brethren, who have made an impact on Freemasonry in Bournemouth, few can top the achievements of W. Bro. Mike Drayton whose legacy lives on not only in Bourne but also particularly in the Bournemouth Masonic Museum, in which he worked so hard to make it the important and valuable resource we have today. As we approach our seventieth year, the influence of the lodge and its members continues as evidenced by Bourne hosting four Visiting Officers, 2 Area Vice Chairmen, 3 Grand Officers and some other hard-working officers of the Province.

Edited by W. Bro. Brian Crane, PPAGDC to Oxford and Ars Quatuor Coronatorum Style Guides – November 2016.