District Grand Lodge of India S.C.
&
Grand Chapter of U.S.R.A.F.I.C.

NEWSLETTER

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E D I T O R I A L

"THE LOST ART OF BROTHERHOOD"

We live in an age of unprecedented connectivity, yet many people have never felt more alone. Messages travel instantly across continents, conversations occur continuously through screens, and social networks grow larger by the day. Yet, beneath this constant communication lies a quieter reality — a growing absence of genuine human connection.

Modern society has become increasingly hurried, transactional, and fragmented. Civility is often replaced by confrontation, dialogue by outrage, and companionship by convenience. Many people today possess countless acquaintances, yet very few true companions. In such a world, the idea of brotherhood is no longer merely admirable; it has become necessary.

Within Freemasonry, brotherhood has always meant far more than membership in an institution. It is a conscious commitment to mutual respect, encouragement, and moral support. It is the understanding that men of different backgrounds, beliefs, professions, and experiences can still meet upon the level and regard one another with dignity.

True brotherhood requires presence. It requires listening without judgment, disagreeing without hostility, and guiding without arrogance. These qualities seem increasingly rare in public life today, where division is amplified and patience diminished. Yet the lodge reminds us that civility is not weakness, and courtesy is not outdated. They are marks of discipline and character.

Equally important is the role of mentorship. Throughout history, wisdom was passed not merely through books, but through relationships — from teacher to student, elder to younger man, experienced hand to apprentice. The Masonic tradition preserves this spirit beautifully. Every Mason learns not only through ritual and instruction, but through the quiet example of brethren who embody integrity, humility, and service.

In a culture that often glorifies individualism, brotherhood reminds us that no man truly builds himself alone. Each of us is shaped by the guidance, encouragement, and kindness of others. A kind word, a shared burden, or the steady support of a brother can profoundly alter the course of a life.

Freemasonry also offers something increasingly uncommon in modern society: a place where men gather not for competition or status, but for self-improvement and fellowship. Within the lodge room, worldly distinctions are set aside. Titles and professions fade in importance beside character and conduct. Such spaces are rare, and therefore precious.

The challenge before us is to ensure that brotherhood does not become merely ceremonial language. It must remain a living practice. It is reflected not only in formal meetings, but in how we treat one another beyond the lodge — in patience, generosity, mentorship, and genuine concern for human welfare.

Perhaps the world has not entirely lost the art of brotherhood, but it has certainly forgotten much of its value. Institutions like Freemasonry therefore carry an important responsibility: to preserve and demonstrate those virtues that strengthen both individuals and society itself.

Finally, the greatest legacy any fraternity can leave is not its buildings, titles, or ceremonies, but the quality of human character it helps cultivate — and the enduring bonds it inspires between men.

PRESERVING TRADITION WHILE EMBRACING CHANGE

Freemasonry in the Digital Age:

The world around us is changing at an unprecedented pace. Communication has become instantaneous, communities increasingly exist online, and younger generations now seek meaning, connection, and learning through digital platforms. In such an environment, institutions rooted in tradition often face a critical question: how does one preserve timeless values while adapting to modern realities? For Freemasonry, this question is particularly significant.

Freemasonry has always stood upon enduring principles — brotherhood, moral discipline, charity, self-improvement, and the pursuit of light. These principles are not bound to any century. They remain as relevant today as they were in the candlelit lodges of earlier generations. Yet the methods through which we communicate, educate, and engage with society must inevitably evolve.

The digital age offers both opportunity and challenge. On one hand, technology enables lodges to remain connected across distances, share educational resources instantly, and engage younger members who live much of their lives online. Virtual lectures, digital archives, podcasts, and online discussions can enrich Masonic learning in ways previously unimaginable. Administrative efficiency has improved, and brethren separated by geography can still maintain meaningful fraternal contact.

At the same time, Freemasonry must guard against losing the very qualities that make it unique. Ours is not merely an organization of information; it is an institution of experience. Ritual cannot become performance alone. Brotherhood cannot be reduced to social media interaction. The solemnity of initiation, the atmosphere of the lodge room, and the personal bonds formed through shared presence remain irreplaceable.

The challenge, therefore, is not whether Freemasonry should embrace technology, but how it should do so wisely. Digital tools must support the Craft, not substitute for it. Technology should strengthen human connection rather than diminish it. The square and compasses still teach lessons no algorithm can replace: integrity, balance, restraint, and moral responsibility.

Importantly, the digital age also calls upon Masons to demonstrate discernment. We live in an era of constant noise, misinformation, and superficial engagement. Freemasonry, by contrast, encourages reflection, thoughtful discourse, and the patient pursuit of truth. In many ways, the values of the Craft may be more necessary today than ever before.

Younger generations are not abandoning tradition altogether; rather, they seek authenticity and purpose. Freemasonry possesses both in abundance. The task before modern lodges is to communicate these treasures in ways that resonate with contemporary society while preserving the dignity and depth of the institution.

The strength of Freemasonry has never rested solely in ancient customs, nor solely in adaptation, but in its ability to unite timeless principles with living relevance. If we remain faithful to our core values while wisely embracing the tools of a changing world, the Craft will continue not merely to survive, but to flourish. For while the methods may evolve, the quest for light remains eternal.

FOSTERING BONDS

The team of Lodge St. Andrew's in the East No. 343 S.C. at Pune emerged victorious as Champions on 9th May 2026 at the 'The Square and Boundary Cricket Championships' organised as a part of Lodge Leslie Wilson (E.C.) Centennial Celebrations, held on 9th May 2026 at the picturesque Kalyani Nagar campus of The Bishop's School.

More than merely being a sporting contest, the tournament was conceived in the true spirit of Freemasonry — fostering fellowship, strengthening family bonds within the fraternity, and encouraging meaningful participation of brethren and their families in the social fabric of the Craft.

Each of the eight teams, comprising a child, a lady, and seven Brethren, beautifully symbolised the harmony, unity, and togetherness that lie at the heart of our Masonic values. Against the backdrop of spirited camaraderie and healthy competition, the team from our Scottish Constitution distinguished itself with remarkable consistency and enthusiasm, remaining unbeaten through the league stages and advancing to the finals as deserving favourites.

In the final championship match, having been put in to bat, our Brethren and family members rose magnificently to the occasion, amassing a formidable 143 runs in the allotted five overs — an extraordinary display of fearless batting and collective determination. The target ultimately proved beyond the reach of our worthy opponents, sealing a memorable and emphatic triumph for the Lodge.

The tournament also witnessed several stellar individual performances from our contingent. Mrs. Ankita Bachuwar and Master Avyukta Bachuwar shone brilliantly with bat and ball respectively, earning the well-deserved distinction of being adjudged the Most Promising Players of the tournament. Bro. Gautam's athletic brilliance in the field earned him the Best Fielder award, while Bro. Shivam's exceptional all-round performances throughout the competition deservedly secured for him the prestigious Player of the Tournament honour.

While the trophy now proudly belongs to Lodge St. Andrew's in the East No. 343 S.C., the true success of the event lay in the joyous fellowship shared between Brethren and their families — laughter on the side-lines, encouragement from teammates, and the strengthening of friendships both old and new. Such occasions remind us that Freemasonry flourishes not only within the Lodge room, but equally through these informal moments of warmth, unity, and shared celebration outside it.

May this splendid victory inspire many more such gatherings in the years to come, further cementing the spirit of brotherhood and family participation that makes our fraternity truly unique.

A CENTURY AND A HALF OF MASONIC EXCELLENCE

Sesquicentennial Celebrations of Lodge Friendship & Harmony

The diversity of regalia donned at the meeting bears testimony to a memorable occasion in the presence of a multitude of Masons

To have upheld the Masonic traditions over a period spanning 150 years, is no mean achievement by any count and the District Grand Secretary of DGLI had the opportunity was invited to witness the sesquicentennial celebrations of Lodge Friendship and Harmony under the Grand Lodge of India.

Lodge Friendship and Harmony was originally established as far back as on 14th February, 1876 (A.L. 5880) as Lodge Islam No. 587 S.C. under the command area of the Grand Lodge of All Scottish Freemasonry in India beholden to the Grand Lodge of Scotland. It was consecrated by Captain Sir Henry Morland on 6th April 1876.

On 15th April 1961, on the formation of the Grand Lodge of India, it opted to join the Indian Constitution under the name Lodge Islam No. 27. Later, on 21st November 2014, it was re-nomenclated as 'Lodge Friendship and Harmony No. 27' on the rolls of the Grand Lodge of India. The history of the Lodge has witnessed changing eras, passing generations, and evolving societies truly proving the old Masonic maxim: "*Time tests all things — but true brotherhood only grows stronger".*

On Saturday, 9th May 2026, the Lodge celebrated its sesquicentennial jubilee in style in the presence of the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of India and a motley gathering of Masons from all Sister Constitutions.

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS

A momentous occasion in the annals of Freemasonry in Eastern India will be witnessed on 24th October 2026**,** when **Bro. Subir Dutta,** Secretary of our Lodge Endeavour No. 474 S.C. will be installed as the Right Worshipful District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of Bengal, E.C. The Installation Ceremony, to be held in Kolkata, will be conducted by the Pro

Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, lending exceptional dignity and prestige to the event. This significant milestone marks the commencement of Bro. Dutta's stewardship of the English District and reflects the confidence reposed in his leadership, dedication, and commitment to the timeless principles of Freemasonry.

Bro. Subir had been extremely helpful in our efforts in successfully reviving Lodge Endeavour in the year 2024 which had been inactive for a few years and we sincerely desire that he further strengthens the Masonic bonds that tie us together.

"A LEGACY ENSHRINED"

The Inauguration of the Rt. Wor. Bro. Percy Driver Masonic Temple

… a report by Bro. Noshir G. Paghdiwalla

The DGM with the FJHC Officers

The entrance to the Temple

Unveiling of the Plaque

Part of the gathering

It was both an honour and a privilege for me – as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Freemasons' Joint Hall Committee together with the President Wor. Bro. Jamsheed Master - to join the Brethren from our sister Constitution on Saturday 11th July 2026, on the memorable occasion of the inauguration of the beautiful Masonic Temple located on the second floor of the Freemasons' Hall, Mumbai. This Temple - earlier totally ravaged by the unfortunate fire incident in February 2025 – bears a modern look that will, for generations to come, serve as a sanctuary for the practice of our ancient and honourable Craft.

The Freemasons' Joint Hall Committee constituted in equal numbers by the two joint owners belonging to the English and Scottish Constitution, in its incessant efforts to raise resources for restoration, had earlier resolved to name one Temple each from either Constitution against a single donation of ₹ Twenty-five lacs or over. Whereas one of the Temple was named after **"Lodge Rising Star of Western India"** S.C., the current Temple under report - earlier known as 'the Lodge Room' - is now named after **"Rt. Wor. Bro. Percy Driver"** the Rt. Wor. District Grand Master of the Constitution after the English Pro Grand Master of United Grand Lodge of England refused to be named after himself and had preferred to be named after an Indian Mason who had contributed to Freemasonry in India.

It is particularly fitting that this Temple bears the name of **Right Worshipful Brother Percy Driver**, whose distinguished leadership of the English Constitution in India over the past many years has earned him the admiration and affection of Brethren across all Constitutions. Throughout his Masonic journey, R.W. Bro. Percy Driver has exemplified wisdom, humility, integrity and unwavering dedication to the welfare of the Craft. Besides, from day one after the fire incident, he had been the guiding spirit in our efforts to restore this wonderful and cherished edifice to its pristine glory.

A Masonic Temple is much more than a physical structure. It is a sacred space where men meet in equality, where friendships are strengthened, where moral and spiritual values are nurtured, and where every Brother is inspired to continue his journey towards self-improvement under the guidance of the Great Architect of the Universe.

It needs to be reiterated that these two Temples so named as above, are the product of a unique cohesive partnership between the Scottish and English Constitutions in India. While each Constitution proudly preserves its own traditions and rituals, we are united by the timeless principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. These Temple stands as a lasting testament to the harmony, mutual respect and cooperation that have long characterised the relationship between our two Constitutions.

By naming this Temple after him, we honour not only an outstanding individual but also the ideals of service, leadership and fraternity that he so ably represents. It is a tribute that is both richly deserved and one that future generations of Freemasons will continue to appreciate. I congratulate and thank the President of the FJHC Wor. Bro. Jamsheed Driver for all his efforts and every Brother on the Committee, whose vision, generosity and dedicated efforts have made this project a reality. Such an achievement is never the work of one person alone. It reflects the collective commitment of many Brethren who have worked with patience, perseverance and a shared sense of purpose.

As this Temple is dedicated today, let us also renew our own dedication to the principles that define Freemasonry. May this always be a place where harmony triumphs over discord, where wisdom guides every deliberation, where charity is practised with sincerity, and where every worthy Brother finds friendship, encouragement and Light.

Ultimately, the greatness of any Temple lies not in its architecture but in the quality of the men who assemble within it. Let us ensure that the work undertaken within these walls always reflects the highest ideals of our Order and leaves a legacy worthy of those who will follow us. May the Great Architect of the Universe bless this Temple, bless Right Worshipful Brother Percy Driver, bless the enduring friendship between the Scottish and English Constitutions in India, and bless every Brother who will labour within these walls in the years ahead.

BENEVOLENCE, RELIEF AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Brethren of the Lodge St. Andrew's in the East No. 343 S.C. at Pune, contributed essential provisions, including wheat, rice, sugar and other staple items to support Pune Vidyarthi Gruha, a charitable institution dedicated to the care and education of orphaned children. The institution currently provides residential support to approximately 165 students on its campus. We commend the Brethren for their generosity and dedication to service and wish them many more meaningful and fruitful initiatives in the future.

Year after year, Lodge Cataract No. 909 S. C. at Belgaum maintains the Masonic Virtue of Benevolence, Charity and Amelioration of Poverty by their frequent Charity Drives.

Accordingly, on the occasion of the Universal Brotherhood Day, the Brethren of the Lodge got together and contributed their mite towards the following charitable purposes:-

a) Donation of two Computers, one office cupboard, two ceiling fans and a public address system to the Khadarwadi School in their local area.
b) Two medical cots and two wheeler chairs for the medical destitute at the Surendra Shivajirao Angolkar Foundation.
c) A refrigerator to the Ashray Foundation at Belgaum.
d) Kindergarten Desks for the school children at the local Cantonment School.

The District is indeed justifiably proud of the charitable disposition of our Brethren at Belgaum, who not only excel with their Masonic numbers and performance of Rituals, but also maintain the high Masonic ideals. May their tribe increase.

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