

# The 2011 Cryptic Newsletter of the Provincial Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Aberdeenshire



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R.I.P.?

Are you one of those Royal Arch Masons who got their Cryptic degrees at Woodside St. Machar No.280 some years ago and never went back? If you are, you're not alone. There were many who did just that.

Are you one of those who is pleased to be a member of a Cryptic Council, but have just never found the time to keep going? Has there always been something else that needs to be done? If that's you, you're not alone. There are many in the very same boat.

What if I were to tell you that the Woodside St. Machar Cryptic Council No.280 is teetering on the brink of extinction, but a small band of enthusiasts is trying to save it by moving it to Inverurie? What if I were to tell you that if you come and support it, it will be saved, and, if you don't, it'll be gone? Are you coming?

Are you one of those Royal Arch Masons who have not yet joined a Cryptic Council? Is it just another degree? What is its importance? Well, without giving too much away, in Craft Masonry we learn that HAB's genuine secrets were lost, and in the Royal Arch they are found. The Cryptic degrees go some way towards filling in the gap in our knowledge between these two events.

You are a past Z., you must surely be interested in this subject. If you would like to join, or talk about joining, one of our Councils, please do get in touch. Nowadays, there is no Cryptic Masonry in Aberdeen. Our Councils are in Stonehaven, Fraserburgh and Peterhead, and (we hope) Inverurie.

## Woodside St. Machar No. 280 Cryptic Council

As you may be aware, since the sale of the Woodside Lodge, 280 Cryptic meets in Stonehaven. This has proved to be not very successful. There are only a few stalwarts attending who keep it running, but this situation cannot be good for Cryptic Masonry or 280 CC in particular.

Agreement has been reached with Lodge St. Anthony No. 154, Inverurie, to hold a number of **informal** CC meetings in their Lodge building to try and gauge if there is enough support and interest to warrant a relocation to Inverurie. Should this prove negative then we are afraid that 280 CC shall have to apply for dormancy.

These informal meetings will be held at 7.30pm on:  
Thursday 3rd February  
Thursday 3rd March, and  
Thursday 7th April

The 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month has been chosen because it clashes least with other Orders and meetings. Also, the Inverurie Lodge building is available for the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in the month and, on relocation, this would then become the day of the regular 280 CC meeting.

So, all ye Cryptic Masons of 280, and out of touch from your Mother Council Cryptic Masons, if you are at all interested in assisting us, please come along. This move would give a good even spread of Councils within the Province, which can only be good for Cryptic Masonry.

Ian Ross, PTIM, Recorder.

Aberdeenshire's other Councils' details:

- |    |  |                          |                |      |
|----|--|--------------------------|----------------|------|
| 11 | ABERDEEN CC  | 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday  | 1,2,3,4,10,11  | 7:30 |
|    | M.H., 43 Ann Street, Stonehaven                                      |                          |                |      |
|    | Rec.: V. Gray, 22 Charleton Park, Montrose DD10 9XB                  |                          |                |      |
|    | Other contacts: Bill Mitchell, John Airth, David Starritt            |                          |                |      |
| 38 | SOLOMON CC   | 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday  | 1,3,9,11       | 7:30 |
|    | M.T., Commerce Street, Fraserburgh                                   |                          |                |      |
|    | Rec.: D. Russell, 52a Low Street, New Pitsligo, Fraserburgh AB43 6NR |                          |                |      |
|    | Other contacts: Mike Steven  |                          |                |      |
| 44 | KEITH LODGE CC   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday | 1,2,3,10,11,12 | 7:30 |
|    | M.T., 20 Broad Street, Peterhead                                     |                          |                |      |
|    | Rec.: T. Mclvor, 36 Western Avenue, Ellon AB41 9EU                   |                          |                |      |
|    | Other contacts: Val Pearson  |                          |                |      |

## Editorial

When Woodside St. Machar CC No.280 was meeting in Stonehaven, it was clear to me that there was a vacuum in the middle of the Province. There were Cryptics in the north, and Cryptics in the South, but nothing in the middle. And I thought that one based in either Bucksburn or Inverurie would have a really good chance of doing well.

So, with the help of Ron Gordon, I tried to have the Felix CC No.90 reopened in one of these places. Sadly, I was unable to find enough support to ensure it would succeed, and I was unwilling to take the chance that I might be creating another lame duck. So, that was that.

I had also tried to persuade the ailing & failing Rosehearty CC No.360 to allow me to move it to Inverurie, but it didn't move, and then it died.

So, I am now delighted that Ian Ross is going to try and move WStMCC280 (there, that's a good abbreviation for a long name!) to Inverurie, and wish him all the very best of luck. If you are at all interested, get along to the informal meetings, where you can ask your questions, and maybe influence decisions. It is virtually certain that the meeting night will be a first Thursday, but it is not yet clear (to me, at any rate) if the months of meeting are finalised. You've nothing to lose and everything to gain. Go! It might make you very happy.

David Starritt, Past Grand Superintendent

## Aberdeen Cryptic Council No.11

The Council has been meeting in the Masonic Temple, Ann Street, Stonehaven for a number of years now, since taking the decision to leave Crown Street. We've been lucky enough to have a steady stream of Candidates and interest from Companions in taking Office. All of the ritual is rehearsed from memory and the Candidates always report their experience of the Cryptic Degrees is a very good one. We have a number of Companions who travel to Stonehaven from some distance and meet in the Market Arms on The Square at about 6:30pm, before going along to the meeting. Afterwards the Masonic Club in the room downstairs hosts our Harmony and the we spend an hour or so in good companionship. Our calendar has a particular highlight in the January meeting with the Provincial Visitation and then a Burns Supper, complete with piper to keep tradition alive.

The Council starts the new year at 7:30pm on Tuesday 25th of January with the working of the Cryptic Degrees for two Candidates, the Provincial Visitation and then the Burns Supper to follow. We'd be delighted to welcome any Companion who can join us, be they returning to Aberdeen Cryptic Council or visiting us for the first time, for some polished Degree work, good company, great food and a wee dram to finish off a grand evening.

Bill Mitchell, PTIM, DM



***CRYPTIC COUNCIL***  
***SOLOMON No.38,***  
***FRASERBURGH***

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At Chapter meetings I am always surprised at the number of RAC Companions who have not progressed on to the Cryptic Council, and also Lodge and Council.

The Cryptic Council Degrees, all three of them, are full of wonderful ritual and are such a natural extension to the story of the Sacred Vault of the Temple of King Solomon. Each of the three degrees has a unique story to tell, full of Masonic symbolism, and they are no less impressive to a candidate than that of a RAC Exaltation.

For a variety of reasons there are now very few Cryptic Councils active within the Province. Solomon No.38 has not long been resurrected from many years of being in the doldrums. Office bearers at the moment are a mixture of 'old stalwarts' and younger Companions still fairly new to the Cryptic Council working.

To those Companions who are RAC members only I would encourage you to proceed onwards and become a Cryptic Council member. If you are already a Cryptic Member and perhaps have not attended for a few (or many) years then do think about coming back. And to those active CC members I would ask you to 'fly the flag' for the Cryptic Council at your regular Chapter meetings. A bit of gentle persuasion is sometimes all that is needed to get new members to come along and support this great Degree.

M. A. Stephen

Past T.I.M.