



XII Talk

Special Edition No 16

10th September 2018

Our Next Meeting **Passing - Tuesday 18th September 2018** **The “High School” Degree**



The Office Bearers and Degree Team at the next regular Meeting will be something different for No XII. The RWM and the Lodge Office Bearers will vacate their offices in favour of a team led by Bro Alistair Glenny PM. It is a team with a difference. The difference is that all who are in the team are former pupils of Greenock High School. Sadly, the High School is no more. It disappeared as an entity in 2007 when it merged with Wellington Academy to form Inverclyde Academy which was built on the red blaes football pitches at Ravenscraig.

This disappearance was after a long history, traceable back to 12th December 1898 when the “Education Department granted recognition to *Holmscroft Higher Grade School*. It was in 1910 that the connection with Holmscroft was severed and the school was officially designated *Greenock Higher Grade*.”

The members of the degree team were well out of school by then! Listed below, their years of attendance at the High School are in brackets. The evening is Bro Alistair’s brainchild, so it is but right that he takes the chair. Bro Alistair came up with the idea in the spirit of what I was saying in the last edition of *Twelve Talk*: “There’s an old adage about getting too much of a good thing. As we grapple in the Craft with the issue of retaining members perhaps we need to acknowledge that the endless hurdy-gurdy of working degrees meeting after meeting in the same way – no matter how well done – can become sterile and may I be brave enough to say boring? Same old, same old – or too much of a good thing!

We have had a great deal of success in No XII of late and that has been marked by the Lodge evolving. The Lodge has changed over the last 9 years.”

So, the High School degree is a bit of a change and we hope that it will create interest, generate enthusiasm, bring a few folks along to the Lodge and create a good atmosphere for the Candidate.

The Degree Team and their years at the High School

RWM Bro Alistair Glenny PM (1961 - 64)
IPM Bro Jack Glenny PM (1953 – 57)
WSW Bro Iain White PM (1966 -72)
WJW Bro David Stevenson (1962 – 67)
SD Bro Ken McDougall PM (1968 – 1974)
JD Bro Campbell Snoddy (1956 – 62)
IG Bro Allan MacFeate PM (1959 – 61)

The Floor Workers

Admit Candidate Bro Allan I MacFeate PM **Prayer** Bro Jack Glenney PM **Obligation** Bro Alistair Glenney PM **Secrets** Bro Iain White PM **Apron** Bro Iain White PM **Working Tools** Bro Allan I MacFeate PM **Tracing Board** Bro Ken MacDougall PM **Charge** Bro David Stevenson

The team is one characterised more by experience than youth – and not just in terms of their ages! This time, service to No XII is given in brackets – coming to a grand total of 227 years!

RWM Bro Alistair Glenney PM (46)
IPM Bro Jack Glenney PM (55)
WSW Bro Iain White PM (44)
WJW Bro David Stevenson (26)
SD Bro Ken McDougall PM (21)
JD Bro Campbell Snoddy (4)
IG Bro Allan MacFeate PM (31)



The Holmscroft Higher Grade School established in 1898. It stood at the corner of Wellington Street and Ann Street and functioned as such till 1910 when it was designated *Greenock Higher Grade*. It operated till 1931, but hosted part of the First Year for a further 3 sessions.



Greenock High in Dunlop Street opened in 1931 with the Janitor's House in the right-hand corner. The lawn in front of the school is just about visible. Putting even a foot on there was punishable by death! After Greenock High moved to Inverkip Road in 1972, it became Cowdenknowes High School and then Notre Dame High School. The site is now occupied by the new version of Notre Dame High.



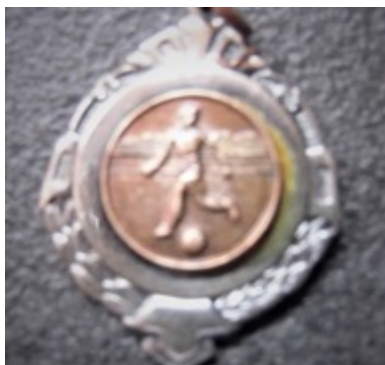
The newest, and last, High School on Inverkip Road. Opened after many years delay in 1972, it was attended by only Bro Iain White (for 6 months) and Bro Ken MacDougall of the Degree team. It closed with the demise of the High School in 2007.

As well as the degree work, there will be some reminiscences of school days from the Degree Team and perhaps from other High School boys who are in attendance. Speaking of reminiscences, Bro Alistair Glenny supplied this photo of his football team, winners of the McMillan Cup against the other local secondaries.



McMillan Cup Winners 1963

**Back: Alistair Glenny, Ronnie Hawthorn, Eddie Strachan, Donald Blair, Russell Brown, Ronnie Rodger.
Front: Craig Lapsley, Billy Aitken, Ian Samuel (Captain), John Piggott, and Robert Gilmour**

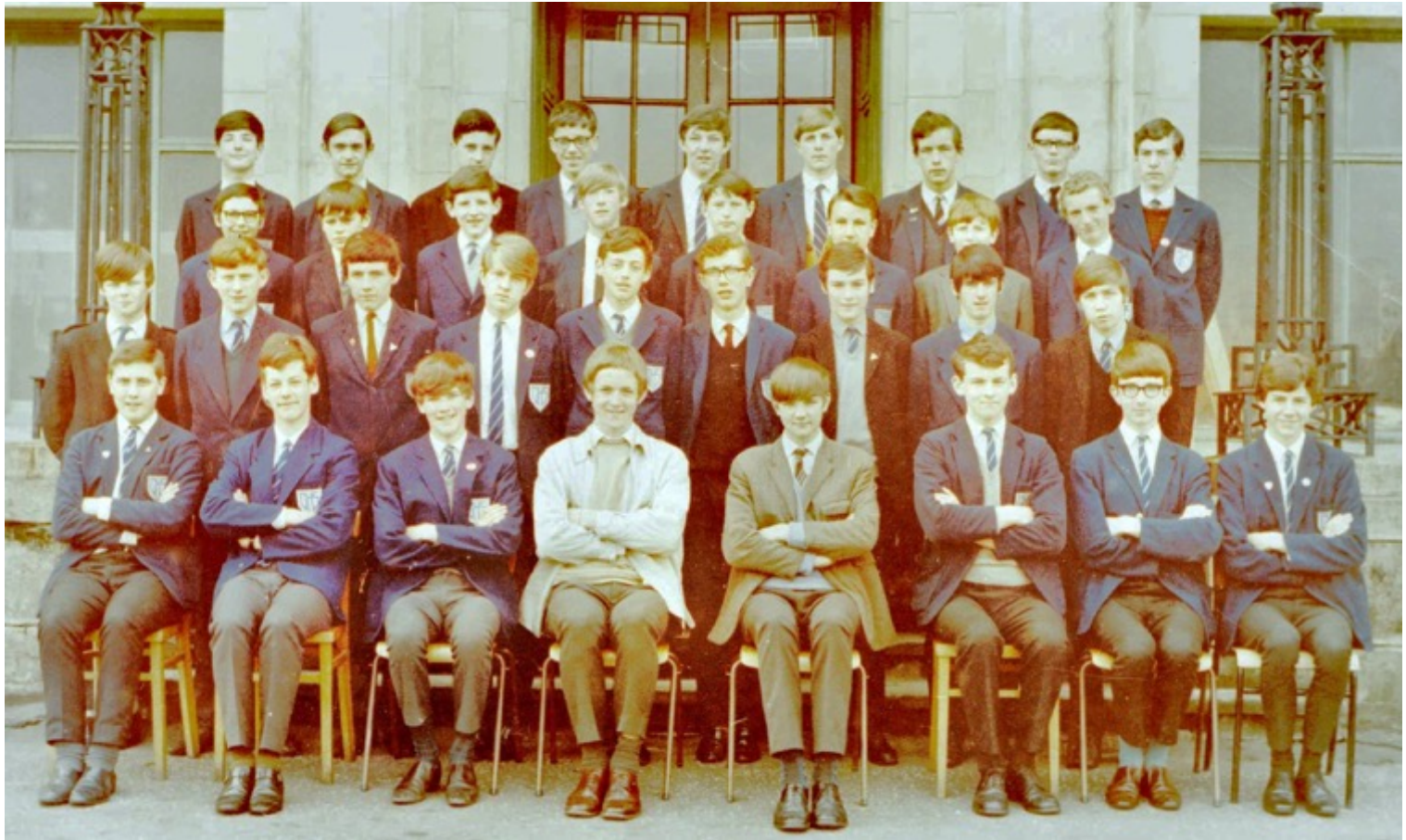


Alistair still has the medal that he was presented with when the under 13s team (above) won the McMillan Cup. His League winners' medal (with largely the same personnel) the next year is to the right.

Apart from Alistair, there are other masonic connections in the team photo. Bro Ronnie Hawthorn is a member of Lodge Crawfurdsburn Greenock No 1121 and the team Captain, Bro Ian Samuel, is in Lodge Greenock St John's No 175. There may be others ...

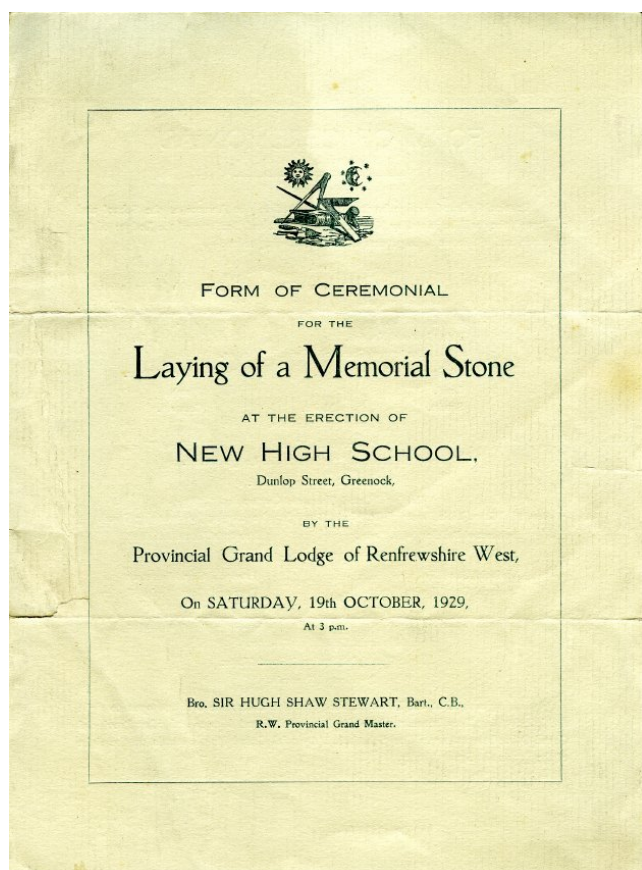


Bro Iain White has supplied his Third Year Class photo from 1968-69. It actually came through Bro Brian McFadyen our WSW. Brian's brother Ian is in the photo at the right of the second back row. See if you can identify Bro White without looking at the legend. The photo is taken on the front steps of the Dunlop Street building.



Back Row: Robert McCabe Jim Brown Hamish Henderson Alan Jones Norman Hart Gordon Paton Jimmy Shannon Hugh Pyper Raymond Redman
Second Back: Leslie McFarlane David Thompson Ian Stewart Unknown Iain White Warden Black George Dyer Ian McFadyen
Second Front: Jim McIlroy Jim Barr Unknown Gordon Nicol Aistair McMillan Jim Armour Nicholas Mason Donnie Purdue David Lavery
Front: John McMaster Gordon McCracken Colin McKenzie Unknown Campbell Shields Kenneth Macleod Douglas Scott Unknown

There are other masonic connections in the photo. Bro John McMaster, former secretary of Lodge Crawfordsburn Greenock No 1121 is at the extreme left of the front row. Behind, and to the right of John, is Bro Jim Barr who is a member of Lodge Greencok St John's No 175. Bro Norman Hart, in the back row, is the son of the late Past Master Bro James Hart of Lodge Crawfordsburn and Norman himself was Right Worshipful Master of a Lodge in the North East of Scotland – perhaps Stonehaven. There may be others ...



Even the High School building itself had a Masonic connection. On Saturday 19th October 1929, a formal ceremony with full Masonic honours was held and a memorial stone placed above the main entrance. It was a very grand occasion conducted by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West. Appropriate vessels were borrowed from the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The *Greenock Telegraph* report published on 21st October 1929 tells us that long before the proceedings were due to start a large crowd started to gather. Admission, however, was restricted to representatives of the different Masonic Lodges in the province, members of the Education Authority and public bodies in Greenock, Port Glasgow and Gourock.

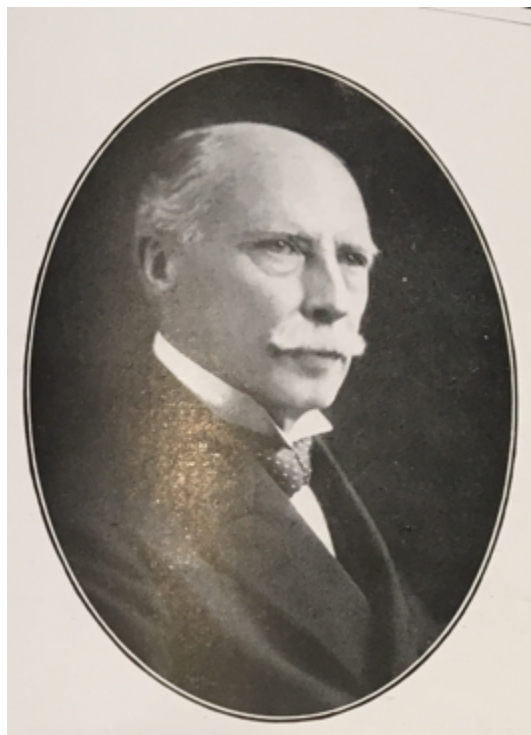
The Provincial Grand Lodge was opened in the annexe at the back of the school (which the Former Pupils remember as being the location of the dinner hall). The members of Provincial were then joined by the Masters of the Lodges in the province and

other brethren. They all processed round to the front of the school, led by the Greenock Military Band. The Lodge Masters assisted with the carrying of the vessels and artifacts to be used in the ceremony. As an interesting aside, the Master of No XII, Bro Robert Steele, was unable to be present on the day. It was determined, by the Provincial Grand Lodge, that his duties would not be carried out by a Past Master. One of the other Masters in the Province filled in for him. As a result, No XII is not recorded in the *Telegraph* as being represented (because of the absence of Bro Steele). However, we know the Lodge was represented and in no small way!

The RW Provincial Grand Master Bro Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart Bart. performed the ceremonial and he, of course, was a member of No XII. Also prominent in the proceedings was Bro RS Murray, Provincial Grand Master Substitute, who was a Past Master of No XII.

After the ceremonial laying of the stone, the Greenock Military Band led the assembled throng in The National Anthem. Thereafter, the procession returned to the annexe where tea was provided. Rev John Chambers presided. Apparently, this was the first ceremony of this type in the Province for some 50 years.

As a footnote, a vessel was placed in the wall containing coins etc. and, at the demolition of the building in 2008, this was retrieved. The RWPGM at that time was Bro James W Miller.



**Bro Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart, RWPGM
Renfrewshire West (from 1893-1943), 8th
Baronet of Greenock and Blackhall**

Views expressed by individuals within *XII Talk* do not necessarily represent the views of Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII. Unless otherwise stated, Bro Iain White PM is the author of all material.

Lodge Greenock Kilwinning No XII
The Saloon of the Town Hall, Greenock
Regular Meetings – 7.30pm 1st and 3rd Tuesdays – September to April
Summer Meeting – 1st Thursday in June

RWM Bro Allan T. Glen 41 Morris Crescent Blantyre Glasgow G72 0DA (07736060280)

Secretary Bro Ken McDougall PM 8 Mount Stuart Drive Wemyss Bay (07810270787)

Treasurer Bro David Stevenson 5 Broomberry Drive Gourrock PA19 1JY (07887904910)

Instituted 27th December 1728

***Represented at Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh, at the Institution of The Grand Lodge of
Scotland on 30th November 1736***