

How Many Lodges?

In response to the above, I relish in taking this opportunity in submitting and sharing a few of my most remarkable and memorable experiences since joining Freemasonry, which I hope will be of value to the requirements of this competition and enjoyed within Freemasonry as a whole.

Due to spending most of my career within the railway industry and having to move country wide for promotional reasons etc.

I was initiated into Onward & Invicta (Railway) Lodge 2912 London, on 10th February 1982, during which time I progressed through the relevant offices until achieving the most prestigious honour in occupying the Chair of KS during 1989/1990.

I also expanded my Masonry in joining other Orders such as Royal Arch, Mark Master Masons and Royal Ark Mariner.

Throughout this time I have been most fortunate in having the opportunity to visit other Lodges, in doing so I was privileged to have met some wonderfully, interesting and most dedicated Brethren. None more interesting than the ones I am about to mention within this short paper.

In 1995 I was living in Brighton and I was travelling on a train to from London, after attending a Royal Ark Mariners meeting at the Royal Masonic School for Girls. A Brother Mason approached me and said "where are you going to, Queens Road" which is the Masonic Centre at Brighton. I replied that I was returning from a meeting at Rickmansworth. He informed me that he had been working abroad and has recently returned home to the UK and he is going to resume both his Masonic commitments and interests and also how much he missed and enjoyed his Freemasonry. To the extent that he had been in forty two different Lodges which included seven different Mark Lodges, of which I thought was most astounding.

But the experience that will always be exceptional in my thoughts was in 1990, the latter part of my term in the Chair of KS at Onward & Invicta Lodge. The Lodge Secretary received a letter from our Grand Daughter Lodge, being Catford Lodge (3649) West Kent, inviting him and myself to their Installation Meeting in June that year. So, we attended and it was announced that a Senior Brother (W/Bro Sidney Ernest Ward) had sadly past away just prior to this. His son was the Lodge Secretary and his grandson was taking office for the first time at that meeting. It transpired that he was a member of sixty eight different Lodges, being one of the few Brethren who was in every order of the Craft, which as you will appreciate I found very astonishing to say the least.

During October 1990, which was the meeting when I was Installing my successor into the Chair of KS at Onward & Invicta Lodge. We invited members of the Catford Lodge (3649) to attend, who were the Master, the Secretary being the son and the IG being the grandson of (W/Bro Sidney Ernest Ward) who had previously past away.

So I asked the son for confirmation if it was correct what was announced at their Installation meeting, that his father was a member of sixty eight different Lodges. At which point the Master laughed and stated, they lost count at sixty eight and eventually discovered that he was a member of seventy five different Lodges. When the grandson immediately commented “the thing about my grandfather was, he had plenty of time on his hands and was financially secure”, to which I totally understood and agreed with etc.

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