

## **GOLDEN JUBILEE - W.Bro. Eric Cowly Salter P.Pr.J.G.D. (Surrey)**

Saturday 20th February 2010 saw the celebration of 50 years in Freemasonry of W.Bro. Eric Cowly Salter, who was Initiated into the Lodge of Hope No. 2679 on the 24th February 1960, proposed by his father. He was passed on 27th April 1960 and Raised on 26th October 1960, after which a relocation to Surrey meant that he did not progress through the Lodge Offices, but maintained his links with his mother Lodge throughout. He became a Joining Member of Star of Stoneleigh Lodge No. 8244. Meeting at Croydon in the Province of Surrey and became Master in 1975. In 1977 he became Treasurer of that Lodge, an office he held for 11 years, which service was recognised by his appointment as P.Pr.J.G.D. Eric was a member of Absalom at Home Lodge No. 8382, which comprised many ex-pats from German Lodges and was also a Founder Member of White Rose Lodge No. 9308. His interest in Freemasonry extended to the Royal Arch, joining Gothic Chapter No. 5525 in 1969 and following 10 years as Treasurer was rewarded with London Grand Chapter Rank and is now an Honorary Member of the Chapter.

W.Bro. Eric's life has been extensive and varied, and which to cover took five pages of information, which is difficult to consolidate into a meaningful summary and yet too much to submit in full. He was born in Hyde, Cheshire in 1922, as was Bro. Tommy Cooper amongst a host of other celebrities. The family home was a stone built cottage, lit by oil lamps and water from a spring. Eric attended schools in Salford, where he excelled in History and Geography and captained the School Rugby Team. At 14 years of age his first wage was six shillings per week. He went on to gain qualifications in Commerce and Bookkeeping and continued his interest in Rugby.

After being in a reserved occupation at the outbreak of war in 1939, following an operation in 1942, he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant and served in Burma, was promoted to Lieutenant and seconded to the West African Frontier Force, a Honorary title he is still entitled to use - wonderful recognition of his service.

Following his War Service he worked as a Quantity Surveyor for Sir Lindsay Parkinson which enabled him to travel across many parts of the world and whilst in Cyprus met an Inspector from the Lancashire Police which led to undercover vehicles being provided to the Cyprus Police.

Returning to Britain in 1960 Eric became Superintendent Surveyor to Lindsay Parkinson and a move to London followed. He retired from a firm called Bates in Essex in 1992 at the age of 70 years.

He married Marjorie on Christmas Eve 1948, celebrating their Golden Jubilee in 2008. He has three children, eight grandchildren and one great granddaughter.

The ceremony was conducted by W.Bro. Jon Clipsham A.Pr.G.M. on his first visit to the Lodge, when he was accompanied by the Group Chairman W.Bro. Stuart Shea P.A.G.D.C. and W.Bro. Paul Hesketh Pr.Dep.G.D.C. and he told the assembled Brethren that on asking W.Bro. Eric for the highlight of his life he had two answers - the first was his initiation into the Craft, and the second when a witness for a housing project in Greenwich, which was successful.

When asked what advice he would give to a new initiate his replay was 'to read the book and follow the rules'.

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Finally the A.Pr.G.M. quoted Samuel Johnson 'Praise, like Gold and Diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity.'

*"Brother Eric in today's society, to find a man like you is a rarity - you, like gold and diamonds, are a scarce commodity. Your life story is a fascinating one, which cannot fail to have resonated amongst the brethren here today. I cannot praise you highly enough for your lifelong commitment to your family, your country, your professional life, your friendships and your freemasonry. You are a man of integrity, humility, diligence and loyalty and we congratulate you."*

The picture shows from l to r :

W.Bro. Stuart Shea; P.A.G.D.C. Group Chairman

W.Bro. Eric Cowly Salter; P.Pr.J.G.D. (Surrey)

and

W.Bro. Jon Clipsham; A.Pr.G.M.



Item courtesy of W.Bro. John Tooley PPrAGDC.; Eccles & District Group Publicity Officer