

# The Life and Times of Ian Anthony GILLESPIE

Good evening, companions,

I have had the enjoyment of attending many celebrations over the last 14 years as a member of a Group Executive, but it is certainly one of the special privileges of an Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals to be invited to take part in the celebration of a companion's special anniversary.

Companions it is said that the greatest happiness a man can have is to you know that he is loved, and the very fact that there are so many companions here this evening who have made the journey to take part in this evening's celebration only serves to reinforce that statement and shows the high regard that our celebrant is held in.

But to do that I must first tell you (as if you did not already know!) who that person is.....

Companion Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies can you please place Ian Anthony GILLESPIE PPrGStdB, on the floor of the lodge before me and ensure that he is comfortable.

In the year 1947 two years after the end of World War II, food and other essential goods rationing was still in force in the UK, and there were number of major news stories which included:

- The International Monetary Fund began to operate advising and lending money to governments all over the world, a service that still operates to this day.
- The year saw the start of the 'Cold War' as it was to become known, which would last for four decades.
- Talking of cold, the worst winter snowfall of the 20th century in the UK took place in the winter of 1946-47
- In March the River Thames flood and other widespread flooding occurred as the exceptionally harsh winter ends in a thaw
- India and Pakistan gain independence from Great Britain.
- The United Nations votes in favor of the creation of an Independent Jewish State of Israel.

Some very famous people were born in the persons of Hilary Clinton the former first lady of America, Elton John the rock singer, Arnold Schwarzenegger the movie actor, David Bowie the rock singer, HM Queen Camilla, Johann Cruyff the footballer, Farrah Fawcett the movie actress and of course maybe the most famous of them all Ian Anthony Gillespie in May 1947 at Mill Road Hospital, Liverpool, to parents Thomas Anthony Gillespie (born April 1905) a sugar refinery superintendent and Emily Marie Gillespie (nee Rose).

Ian lived the early years of his life in the family home at Fordlea Road, West Derby, Liverpool with his parents and his elder sister Joan who was 20 years older than him and who sadly passed away in 1996.

He started his education by attending Broad Square Primary School in Norris Green, Liverpool in 1952, before moving to Roscoe Secondary School in 1958. Ian finished his education at John Hamilton Technical High.

Ian's first job was as an apprentice electrical engineer at Tate & Lyle Sugar Refinery in Liverpool, where he obtained his City & Guilds Electrical Certificate. In 1969, Ian moved to Plessey's Telecommunications Limited as a plant maintenance electrician. It was here that Ian met Bill Cooper and who eventually proposed him into Freemasonry.

In his private life Ian did marry a young lady by the name of Brenda in 1970 but the marriage only lasted a few years.

In 1977, Ian decided to become an independent electrical and plumbing contractor, he openly admits that working for himself had an impact on his attendance at the lodge, although he always tried his best to attend meetings.

In 1985, Ian took a job with A.M. Maintenance as a mobile service engineer repairing various machinery and catering equipment. Ian subsequently met Kevin Langshaw at Plessey's who seconded him into Freemasonry.

During his working life Ian also had short spells running his own grocery store, working for Manpower

Employment Agency and he eventually retired from work in 2012.

Ian spends much of his time since retiring enjoying his partners cottage at Kendal in the Lake District where he enjoys doing 'Do It Yourself.' Ian also enjoys driving holidays throughout Europe especially France, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and Spain.

He and his partner have also started to enjoy the river cruises and have cruised many of the major river of Europe including the Rhine and the Danube.

Let us know turn to your career in Freemasonry, it was on 16 September 1972 that you were initiated into James T Callow Lodge No.3596, your proposer was Lord Colin Bertram Smith, and your seconder was the father of Michael Home. You were passed to the degree of a fellow craft on 16 December 1972, and raised to the sublime degree of a master Mason on 17 February 1973. Following the usual pattern of fulfilling all the progressive offices in the lodge you became its WM on 16 October 1982 for the first time and went back into the chair for a second time on 18 October 2008.

Over the years you have held many offices in the lodge including assistant secretary, assistant director of ceremonies, director of ceremonies and chaplain, which is the office you still currently hold. Ian is known as an excellent ritualist so often filled in various positions at short notice.

Ian has also joined Sant Beuno Lodge No.6733 in the Province of North Wales meeting at Connah's Quay, Deeside and is currently chaplain of that lodge. This membership came from Michael Holme who was WM two years before Ian, who due to work moved away and became a member of Sant Beuno Lodge. The brethren of James T Callow Lodge and Sant Beuno Lodge have enjoyed visiting each other over the years.

Ian, you received your first appointment to Provincial grand rank in West Lancashire as Past Provincial Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies on 19 May 2003, you were then promoted to your current high rank of Past Provincial Deputy Grand Superintendent of Works on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

Turning to your career in the Royal Arch, you were exalted in James T Callow Chapter No.3596 at Prescott on 18 December 1973, becoming its first principal on 21 October 1984. Sadly, James T Callow Chapter surrendered its charter and was erased on 26 April 2007.

You did not wish to cease membership of the Royal Arch and as a number of your colleagues were members at Widnes Masonic Hall, you joined Widnes Chapter No.2819 on 19 September 2006 and are still a member today.

I am informed that you continue to enjoy your Royal Arch Freemasonry and that you have served the chapter as a steward.

Ian, you received your first appointment to Provincial Grand Rank as a Past Provincial Grand Standard Bearer on 22 April 2004.

I am sure I speak on behalf of everybody present that we are absolutely delighted to see you here this evening to celebrate your 50th anniversary as a Royal Arch Mason and, even more so, that you have allowed us to celebrate your special evening with you.

Ian such is the importance of your own golden jubilee that our Grand Superintendent Mark Matthews has caused a certificate to be struck to mark this wonderful achievement which I shall now ask our group chairman David Atkinson to read.....