

Good evening, brethren

I have had the enjoyment of attending many celebrations over the last 16 years as a member of a Group Executive, but it is certainly one of the special privileges of an Assistant Provincial Grand Master to be invited to take part in the celebration of a brother's special anniversary.

Brethren it is said that the greatest happiness a man can have is to know that he is loved, and the very fact that there are so many brethren 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 didn't already know!) who that person is.....

Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies can you please place Roger Hollins Arden MBE on the floor of the lodge before me and ensure that he is comfortable.

Brethren, events in the year 1945 included Victory in Europe (V-E Day):

Germany surrendered unconditionally in early May, with the formal surrender taking effect on May 8, 1945. Adolf Hitler had committed suicide on April 30.

- Atomic bombings:
The United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9.
- Victory over Japan (V-J Day):
Following the atomic bombings and the Soviet Union declaring war on Japan, Japan surrendered on August 15, with the formal surrender ceremony taking place on September 2, 1945, ending World War II.
- United Nations:
The UN was officially established on October 24, 1945, after its charter was ratified by the five permanent members of the Security Council and a majority of other signatories.
- Formation of the Cold War:
The year marked the beginning of the Cold War, characterized by growing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union.
- Major leadership changes:
U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt died in April, and Harry S. Truman assumed the presidency.

Some very famous people were born in the persons of Bianca Pérez-Mora Macias, the model who is famous for marrying Mick Jagger, Randy Cain the soul singer, Bob Segar the singer, Priscilla Presley the actress, Dave Lee Travis the DJ, Eric Clapton the guitarist, Jacqueline Du Pre the cellist, Hale Irwin the American golfer and of course maybe the most famous of them all Roger Arden, born in May 1945 in Liverpool to mother Mary and father Eric.

The family name Arden is not a very common name, but what does the name Arden mean?

In ancient Anglo-Saxon England, the ancestors of the Arden surname lived in Ardern in the county of Warwick. The interpretation of the name, however, varies depending on the county of origin.

In Cheshire, Kent and Hampshire, the name assumes the local meaning of dwelling-house, and in Yorkshire, it has the curious meaning of eagle valley or gravel valley.

Roger's father was an army officer, a colonel, and a distinguished lawyer. He served as a solicitor and Liverpool Diocesan Registrar. Roger has a younger sister, Mary, who followed Roger and her father in the legal profession, Mary having a very successful and eminent career in the law, rising to the position of a Supreme Court Justice and being appointed a Dame of the British Empire and now known as Baroness Mance or professionally as Lady Arden of Heswall.

Roger attended Liverpool College and enjoyed sports, especially sailing and being a member of the school Combined Cadet Force.

Such was Roger's enthusiasm for sailing that on one occasion in 1966 he was sailing on the River Dee Estuary when, with another, he courageously engaged in the rescue of a young man in the water and he was subsequently awarded the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society Marine Medal Parchment.

Roger followed his father and sister into the legal profession. He also became a solicitor and held the offices of Registrar of the Diocese and Legal Secretary to the Bishop of Liverpool. He was also Chapter Clerk to Liverpool Cathedral. During this time, he was a member of a small chapter group driven by the vision of the then Dean to develop a nine-acre bomb site in front of the Cathedral, derelict since the end of the war.

The project was to provide 160 affordable homes and accommodation for 450 students at a challenging time in Liverpool's history, this helped pave the way for wider regeneration in the city post 2000.

Roger served on the Liverpool Law Society Committee and various sub committees for over 10 years becoming President in 1988.

He also served on the Legal Advisory Commission of the Church of England. He was a Governor for many years of two Liverpool Schools. He was a trustee of numerous local Charities and on the Board of two Housing Associations, one of which honoured and amused him by calling a 44 unit sheltered housing development in the Bootle area of the city, Roger Arden Court.

Roger built a successful legal practice in Liverpool and became, as I have stated, actively involved in many community projects.

As a recognition of his dedication to the community, Roger was awarded an MBE in the 2019 New Year's Honour's List.

Turning to his family life, Roger married his wife Glenys on 11 March 1978. That union has produced three children, Richard, Edward and Katherine. Roger is now the proud grandfather of India, Wilfred and Eric. Having been born, raised and lived in Liverpool, Roger has re-located to North Wales.

Let us now turn to your career in Freemasonry, you have a long familial connection to Freemasonry, your great grandfather, grandfather and father as well as your father-in-law were all members of the Craft and it was on 23 October 1974 that you were initiated into Coronation Lodge No.2923 now known as Centurions of Merseyside Coronation Lodge No 2923, being passed on 27 November 1974 and raised on 22 January 1975. Roger served in the lodge progressive offices and was installed as WM on 19 September 1984. You resigned your membership of the lodge on 31 May 1985 and subsequently joined Old Lerpooian Lodge No 9270 on 17 October 2000.

The Lodge is associated with the former Liverpool College alumni and supporters, known as The Lerpooians. It was established in 1987 in Liverpool, and its name is connected to the history of the college and its alumni.

Roger was exalted in the Royal Arch in Chapter of Justice No 6850 on 27 April 1979 and resigned his membership of the Chapter on 31 December 2006.

As I have stated, your dedication to the community has been rightly recognized and it exemplifies the central tenet of Freemasonry's philosophy regarding community engagement.

I'm sure I speak on behalf of everybody present that we are absolutely delighted to see you here this evening to celebrate your 50th anniversary and even more so that you have allowed us to celebrate your special evening with you.

Roger, such is the importance of your own diamond jubilee that our Provincial Grand Master 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.....

Many congratulations.

John P. Murphy PAGDC
Assistant Provincial Grand Master