Master's Report September 2026

As I reflect upon the past year as Master of Lodge St Ayles, I do so with a deep sense of gratitude, pride and optimism for the future. Every Masonic year brings its own opportunities, successes and challenges, and this year has been no exception.

One of the most significant privileges afforded to me during the year was the opportunity to sort through and preserve the Masonic effects of our late Past Master Bro. Alex McDonald. Following the family's decision to entrust these treasured items to our care, we were reminded of the lasting bonds that Freemasonry creates and of our responsibility to safeguard the history and traditions of our Lodge. It was a both humbling and rewarding task, allowing us to honour the memory and service of a respected Brother whose contribution to St Ayles will not be forgotten.

Another particular highlight has been the initiation of a new member of the lodge into the Craft. This represents an important milestone in the history of our Lodge, being the first individual to make contact with us through our social medial presence after discovering our public profile on Facebook. This demonstrates the value of maintaining an active and visible presence within the wider community.

In today's world, social media has become an essential tool fort organisations of all kinds and Freemasonry is no exception. If Lodges are to thrive and attract new members, we must ensure that we are visible, approachable, and relevant to those who may be interested in learning more about our ancient fraternity. Every member has a role to play in this effort. Whether by sharing Lodge events, engaging positively with community activities, speaking proudly about Freemasonry when appropriate, or simply directing interested individuals towards our online presence, we can all contribute to ensuring that the values and principles of our Craft continue to reach future generations.

I would also like to acknowledge the unwavering support of our regular attending members. While we may be a relatively small Lodge in number, we continue to prove that our strength lies not in size but in commitment, friendship and dedication. Time and again our brethren have stepped forward to support one another, contribute to the work of the Lodge - not only delivering ritual on the floor, but behind the scenes stuff too which in some ways is of greater importance from a Master's point of view. Collectively we ***all*** ensure that our gatherings remain enjoyable and meaningful; friendly and supportive. The passion and loyalty shown by our members are the foundation upon which St Ayles continues to prosper. And I hope we never lose that bond.

Of course, every year presents difficulties and it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge some of those challenges. It has been disappointing to see some of our younger Brethren choosing to step away from active Masonic involvement for personal reasons. While we respect their individual decisions and wish them every success in their future endeavours, their absence serves as a reminder of the importance of continually nurturing and supporting newer members as they find their place within the Craft. Do we perhaps place too much expectation and pressure on new Freemasons?

We have also witnessed occasions where the stresses and demands of everyday life have understandably impacted some brethren's ability to participate and rationalise as fully as they might wish; me included. Family responsibilities, work commitments, heavy emotional burdens and personal challenges inevitably affect us all at various times. However, one of the abiding