

Rt W Bro Derek Richmond  
Provincial Grand Master of Durham 2006 - 2008

Rt W Bro Derek Richmond Died in office on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

He was appointed and installed as  
Provincial Grand Master on 5th May 2006.

He was made a Mason on 16th December 1976 in Lodge of Philanthropy No 940 in Stockton.  
He was Master of that Lodge in 1984.

His first appointment in Provincial Grand Lodge was to the office of  
Provincial Senior Grand Warden in 1993.

He was appointed to the office of Assistant Provincial Grand Master  
in 1996 and to Deputy Provincial Grand Master in 2005.



Derek Richmond  
1941 – 2008

In 2006, Derek was appointed the Provincial Grand Master for the Province of Durham - that is, he became the number one Freemason in the county of Durham - from the Tees to the Tyne – for, like first class cricket, the ancient institution of Freemasonry works on the old county boundaries and in respect of the thousands of members of the Lodges in the Province of Durham I am particularly honoured to have been asked to speak on their behalf, first, in offering our sincerest condolences to Helen, Mark and Ian and all of Derek's relatives and friends on their sad loss and secondly, to pay tribute to the man who achieved so much and who affected the lives of so many, until being taken away from us all too soon

To understand the magnitude of Derek's Masonic achievement, it needs to be put into its historical context. It was in the year 1734 that the first Provincial Grand Master for the County of Durham was appointed. In the centuries since then, there have been a further 19 holders of the office who have included the first Earl of Durham, the fifth Marquis of Londonderry, the ninth Baron Barnard, Lord Ravensworth and more recently The Right Honourable Lord Barnard. In 2006, on the retirement of Derek's predecessor, Dr Alan Martin Davison, there could not have been a more popular succession than when Derek was appointed as the 20<sup>th</sup> holder of that high office and joined the illustrious company of his predecessors

How did he achieve such an honour? Well, Derek was an honourable man. He was made a Mason in 1976 when he joined the Lodge of Philanthropy in Stockton-on-Tees, of which he later was to become Master in 1984. Between 1992 and 2007 he became either a founder, joining or honorary member of 13 other Lodges. In 1993 he received Provincial honours becoming Provincial Senior Grand Warden and in 1997 became a Grand Officer of the United Grand Lodge of England.

He served as Provincial Assistant Grand Master from 1996 to 2005 and was Provincial Deputy Grand Master from 2005 until 2006 when finally to the delight of all who knew him he became Provincial Grand Master - all achieved with commitment, enthusiasm and an unfailing cheerfulness.

He brought with him to Freemasonry all of his undoubted skills as a communicator and educator *par excellence* – and what an inspirational teacher he must have been - there must be many here who are fortunate and grateful to have been taught by him.

He brought out the best in people, in the true sense of the meaning of education, by using those considerable skills of communication. I used to watch in admiration as Derek would chair a meeting at which I have no doubt there was an agenda that he had in mind but he achieved the desired result not by being dictatorial or tutorial but by skilful rhetorical questioning and coaxing answers from people in such a way that they then believed that they themselves had thought of the idea which Derek had had in mind all the time. It was quite brilliant to see.

Derek was a life enhancer. All who met him were charmed by the warmth of his personality. I never heard him say an unkind word about anyone. Above all he had an unfailing sense of fun and humour - something which often stood him in good stead during his lifelong touching, but blind, faith in that frequently underachieving football team that he supported. He would no doubt have approved of the Riverside as a venue for the reception later this morning

Derek was the most effective and persuasive of speakers - articulate and with that wonderful, powerful voice, put to such admirable effect only last year when he delivered that marvellously moving eulogy for his old friend Michael Manning.

Although a fine speaker, it was Derek's love of music and singing that makes it more appropriate that there be less talking and more singing this morning. He had a fine singing voice and was a consummate musician. Churchill once said of someone words to the effect, "He is a modest man, but then he has a lot to be modest about." Derek was a modest man, self-effacing and unassuming, but unlike Churchill's target, Derek had many admirable qualities and attributes of which he could rightly have been proud, only some of which I have touched on this morning. It was a mark of the man that, despite his high office, he did not stand on ceremony but was content to share his musical talents and play the organ at regular meetings of his own Lodge and did so only recently.

Derek was one of life's good guys - a thoroughly decent man who saw Freemasonry as a power for good in our society and was keen to extend the openness of Masonry even more in the community. He achieved much towards that aim by way of encouraging the training and support of the young in the all too short a time he had as Provincial Grand Master. He would no doubt have gone on to have become one of the finest holders of that office.

Above all he was a family man and never missed an opportunity to talk about them with love and pride. I end as I started - by saying on behalf of the thousands who came to know Derek over the years and who held him in such high esteem, that we extend our sincerest sympathies to all his family and friends. We shall all miss him deeply but we will remember him with such very great affection.

Of Derek it could truly be said:

*He rose to eminence by merit; he lived respected and died regretted.*

Eulogy Given by His Honour Judge Peter Armstrong 8<sup>th</sup> March 2008.