

Provincial Grand Lodge of Herefordshire

Nomination in advance

It is the responsibility of the Director of Ceremonies, in conjunction with the WM, to ensure that proposers of the Initiate and Visitor toast are nominated in advance of the meeting. Also the brother responding on behalf of the visitors should be agreed with the WM and his host. Both the proposer and responder should be provided with the respective name.

Initiates should be advised he would be expected to make a short reply to his toast and be provided with a note of the preferred address.

Toast to the Visiting Brethren

Normally kept to a minimum – aim for no longer than three minutes. You can include the number of visitors; that our evening is enhanced by their presence and we look forward to their return. Again it is not your place to comment on the performance of brethren in the temple. You should also mention the name and rank of the name of the brother replying on behalf of the visitors.

Humour

Contrary to popular belief, humour is not frowned upon but encouraged: but like many other issues it has to be appropriate and timely. Masonry has to maintain its traditions and decorum but above all it must be enjoyable. A good speech does not have to contain a funny story but may be included if that story has some relevance. The overriding rule is appropriateness and nothing smutty.

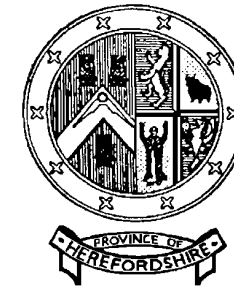
Tyler's Toast should ideally be given before 10.00 pm and where possible the Tyler's toast should be said from behind the WM's chair.

Finally

May we stress that these notes are for your guidance as individuality and creativity are encouraged. And remember a short well thought out speech is always more appreciated than a long dull one.

Thank you brethren for the way you have received this missive.

(With thanks to Tony Crockford for the preparation of this leaflet)



Suggestions as to the Content and Structure of Toasts At the After Proceedings

For circulation to every lodge

Information and Guidance Group

Suggestions as to the Content and Structure of Toasts at the After Proceedings

To many people the preparation and delivery of a toast can be a daunting task and whilst we take great pains to assist junior brethren in rehearsing the ceremony, little attention is paid to assisting them in proposing toasts. It may be worth considering sparing a little time at LOI or rehearsal with an experienced brother to practice giving toasts.

Guidelines to proposing a Toast

Aim:

Always be clear in your own mind what you hope to achieve; remember you are proposing a toast not making a speech. The words used therefore should be complementary to that purpose rather than to entertain. As your purpose is to propose a course of action the brethren should be clear about what you want them to do.

Shaping your Speech

Random ideas need order and few of us are capable of organising our thoughts on the spur of the moment. Therefore a framework is necessary.

Introduction - the address & what you are going to do (Propose a toast to...)

Body or theme – Support for taking the action

What have he/they done to warrant the toast

Details of the effort, dedication, ability etc

Conclusion – the action you want the brethren to take. Rise and take wine

DC often leads Masonic Fire. “Brethren take the time from me.”

Timing

It is not always possible to maintain strict control of the timings but we must be mindful of the distance some brethren, particularly visitors, travel to attend meetings.

As a general rule therefore the Director of Ceremonies should aim to conclude the evening by 10.00pm at the latest.

Taking Wine

The taking of wine is a sign of respect and gratitude to those brethren who have in some way contributed to the well being of the lodge. This may be by way of their attendance as in the case of the PGM, his representative and other visitors.

Alternatively it may be to recognise the contribution an individual or group has made eg the founders, the stewards, or officers who took office at the last moment. The list therefore is endless and on some occasions it is seen in that light. Every lodge has their own list of people with whom the Master takes wine but the Master and Director of Ceremonies should be selective and not automatically go through the same list on each occasion. Some are obligatory, eg the first wine taking should be with the Wardens, but be circumspect and reduce to a minimum wherever possible.

Address

You will hear numerous variations in the forms of address. Some short, many lengthy and some quite ingenious. None of these is incorrect but the accepted forms currently in use are contained in your Year Book.

Senior Warden’s Toast to Grand Lodge

The first occasion the SW proposes this toast will be at Installation and should contain reference to the contribution made by Grand Lodge to the well being of masonry. The length of the toast should be approximately 2 – 4 minutes.

Whilst not compulsory it looks more professional if the toasts are memorised and not read. On all other occasions the toast to Grand Lodge is formal but if a Grand Officer is in attendance as the representative of the PGM or a guest then it is permissible to comment on his/their attendance.

As a mark of respect at one evening during the year a brief mention should be made of the assistance and advice received from the Grand Officer /s in the lodge (if applicable).

NB It is not the prerogative of the Wardens to comment on the performance of the brethren in the temple.

Junior Warden’s Toast to Provincial Grand Lodge

Similarly, the JW’s first toast to Provincial Grand Lodge will be at Installation where comments on the effectiveness and efficiency of Provincial Grand Lodge should be included. Length 2 – 4 mins. During the year a formal toast, but when the Provincial Wardens represent the PGM, mention of their presence should be made.

Toast by the Immediate Past Master to the Worshipful Master should be confined to the performance of the work of the WM in the temple and the contribution he makes to and on behalf of the lodge throughout the province. Mention may also be made of his work towards the charities, outside interests and the contribution of his lady and family. The IPM should not allude to others.

Worshipful Master

To a large extent the Master has a free rein but should confine his response to matters Masonic. He should not pick out individual performance in the temple but should focus on the achievements of the team. Where an individual’s contribution is worthy of note, comments should emphasise effort and dedication and not performance.

IT IS THE PREROGATIVE OF THE VISITOR TO MAKE JUDGEMENT AND PASS COMMENT ON INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP PERFORMANCE.

Absent Brethren

Absent brethren are normally remembered at 9.00 pm. If it is before the toast to the Queen and the craft we take wine with absent brethren and if after it is included in the toast list.