



INSPECTOR GENERALS' MISSIVE WEEK 14



25th June - In this extended period of social distancing, or even isolation in many cases, I am sure many of us are reflecting on our previous masonic activity. We are pondering not only when we shall be allowed to resume meetings but also whether we will want to go back with the same enthusiasm that we had in the pre-Covid past. Why do we go to masonic meetings? Yes, to see the ceremonies conducted by our brethren (particularly perhaps Rose Croix and Royal Order ceremonies in my case) but mostly it is the people and belonging to a wonderful organisation. In my professional working life there were always problems to be solved and setbacks to be overcome but going to lodge and chapter meetings was always a relaxing slice of peace and calm away from work, even when it was me overcoming my nerves to conduct a ceremony. One of my Mark lodges recently held a Zoom meeting. It was a most enjoyable occasion with lots of amusement watching others coping with glitches in the technology and hearing the voices of friends I have come to enjoy being with. No actual formal business was discussed beyond the likelihood of the current master having to continue until next year's Installation but the friendly conversation, including the usual bantering jokiness amongst the 25+ members present, was wonderfully comfortable. There will undoubtedly be

procedural changes when we do get back together but the atmosphere in that Zoom meeting reminded me why freemasonry is such an enjoyable activity. That is what we have in store for us and what I am looking forward to as soon as circumstances allow.

Last week's answers:

1. Dexamethasone is a steroid used for years as an anti-inflammatory and which now turns out to be very good for Covid sufferers on ventilators
2. $C_{22}H_{29}FO_5$
3. Quarantine comes from the Italian/Latin words quaranta giorno meaning "forty days" and was first used in 1347-8 to make ships stand off from the quay in Venice for long enough to ensure they were free of bubonic plague. It started as 40 days, probably derived from 40 being a good biblical number; therefore only "14" days of "quarantine" is oxymoronic.
4. The 6th Earl of Donoughmore was M.:P.:SovGCdr from 1912 – 1948.
5. They are the 3 bones in the middle ear.
6. The London Palladium is the largest theatre in London with 2286 seats.
7. Billingsgate Fish market is closed on Sundays and Mondays (as are many others) so there is no fresh fish available until Tuesdays.
8. A Mole is just a number which represents a given quantity of a substance (like a dozen means 12 of something and a score is 20 of something). Jean Perrin, a French physicist, is credited with using Amadeo Avogadro's work on the number of molecules in given volumes of gases to develop a theory that if one divided the weight in grams of a specific sample of any element by the atomic weight of that element then one would arrive at a fixed number, which he called Avogadro's number. It is 6.022×10^{23} – a very large number but invaluable to chemists.
9. You get ↑ by holding down the Alt key and then pecking 2 followed by 4 on the numeric pad.
10. You get ° by pressing the Alt key and pressing 0176 on the numeric pad.

Peter Corbett also pointed out that if one types 2234 in a word processing program, highlights it and presses the Alt and x keys together, one gets ∴! Very useful - thank you Peter.

This week's questions :

1. What is unusual about the numbers 1•6180, 2•4142, 3•3028, 4•2362, 5•1926, and 6•1623?
2. When and why is \mathbb{T} day?
3. Who was the first to devise a temperature scale?
4. What is Mendelssohn's fourth symphony called?
5. Which writer and poet are "linked" by "willows" and "reeds"?
6. What did Tonto call the Lone Ranger and what does the word mean?
7. Who first discovered radioactivity?
8. Can stars and planets ever appear to be tracking backwards through the sky?
9. To what do the words "characteristic" and "mantissa" refer?
10. What are the four basic cloud designations?

It appears the 4th July is going to be an enjoyable day for most of us but do continue to take care – no rushing out to illegal raves!!

God Bless, Stay Safe and keep phoning around.

Peter Harborne 33°,

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