

PRESTON GROUP DINNER FEBRUARY 2006

The Preston Group Dinner was held on Friday 24 February 2006 and the principal guest was E Comp S P J Reid, The Deputy Grand Superintendent.

Prior to the dinner 31 reigning Masters and First Principals were seated at round tables in groups of approximately six or seven and the distinguished representatives took it in turn to visit each table in order to discuss any Masonic issues the Brethren/Companions wished to raise. The distinguished representatives this year were E Comp S P J Reid, The Deputy Grand Superintendent, W Bro W R Seddon, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, E Comp S Oldfield, Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals, W Bro I W Greenwood, Preston Group Chairman and Ex Comp E Baxter, Provincial Scribe N.

The two Provincial Grand Directors of Ceremonies, W Bro N A Thomas, and W Bro K Walmsley, ensured the whole proceedings ran like clockwork.

The toast to the principal guest was proposed by E Comp S Rigby, First Principal of Winckley Chapter No 5438. He drew an analogy between Rembrandt's painting, "Anatomy Lesson of Professor Nicholaes Tulp (1632)" which was depicted on the reverse side of the place cards, and Freemasonry. The portrait is a favourite of E Comp Reid and forms the basis of one of his lectures.

E Comp Reid responded with great eloquence and appropriate humour. He thanked E Comp Rigby for his very original, thoughtful and well constructed toast. He continued by addressing some of the issues that had been raised at the meeting prior to the festive board and thanked all the participants for their wholehearted contributions. He extolled the virtues of the Craft and the Royal Arch and encouraged more to join the latter as the combined experience was well worthwhile and had the capacity to lift ones life to a higher plain. He touched on the Preston Group being forward thinking and congratulated the Group for their management of amalgamations in order to tailor the number of lodges to the current membership. He referred to the close relationship between Freemasonry and charitable acts and requested all to support the New Masonic Samaritan Fund 2010 Festival.

Finally he thanked E Comp Rigby, who in his role as Group Secretary, had organised a wonderful evening and combined this with thanking W Bro Ian Greenwood, Group Chairman and the other Group Officers for their hard work and wished Freemasonry in general and Preston Group in particular all the very best for the future.

Ex Comp E Baxter, Provincial Scribe N, proposed the toast to the Preston Group of Lodges and Chapters and W Bro Greenwood, Group Chairman responded. He referred to the success of amalgamations and echoed E Comp Reid's comments in encouraging more to become members of the Royal Arch.

He thanked E Comp Reid for attending and extended his thanks to E Comp Rigby for organising the evening and to the two Directors of Ceremonies for their assistance. Finally he presented a bouquet of flower to the principal guest for his wife. E Comp Reid thanked W Bro Greenwood for the kind thought and commented on the timely nature of the flower presentation, as it was his wedding anniversary on the 1 March.

The evening concluded with the Tyler's Toast.

**PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES DISCUSSING
TOPICAL ISSUES WITH THE BRETHREN AND COMPANIONS**



E Comp S P J Reid, The Deputy Grand Superintendent (far left)



W Bro W R Seddon, Assistant Provincial Grand Master (far left)



E Comp S Oldfield, Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals (centre)



W Bro I W Greenwood, Preston Group Chairman (right)



Ex Comp E Baxter, Provincial Scribe N (right)