

## WBro Frank Gouldsbrough - Tribute

WM, WBro APGM, it is my pleasure this evening to present a tribute to WBro Frank Gouldsbrough, the longest serving and eldest member of this Lodge. As many of you know, Frank is a constant of the Lodge, but a member who not very much is known about. Sadly, his long term Lodge friends such as Jack Riley, Ted Marshall, Jack Howarth etc are no longer with us to share their stories, so I had the pleasure of visiting Frank and Mrs Doreen Gouldsbrough at home a week or two ago to get a better idea of his life and adventures, so we could share them here this evening.

Frank was born on the 4th of December 1929 in Blackburn and attended St Stephens Primary School, before moving with his family to Windsor Road in Knuzden, where he attended Accrington Road Secondary School.

He left School at 14 to become an Apprentice joiner, continuing in that job until his call up for National Service at the age of 21. In the Army, Frank became an Army PT instructor and also a prolific boxer representing his Battalion and becoming the 6th Army Division Light Middleweight Champion, where he remained unbeaten throughout his entire time in the army!

After finishing his National Service, Frank continued to be a Joiner for the next three years before going into the Launderette business with his Father Bob, who had opened his first shop in Darwen in 1950. Frank continued to literally build the launderette business, culminating in a laundry empire which included 3 Darwen Launderettes, 4 in Accrington and 2 in Haslingden, totalling nine. Frank handed over the business to his son in law several years back when he 62/63 years old, but still keeps his hand in and looks after things when his daughter and son in Law are away on holiday, even at 89yrs of age!

Frank also started another business in his early career when he built cabins at knuzden, originally intended to be for pigs but ended up as broiler houses with over 220000 Buxted Chickens. A few ups and downs ensued, including Doreen never being comfortable with where the chickens eventually ended up, made Frank sell it on after about three years. His hand made cabins are still there to this day.

Frank met Doreen when they were at Accrington Road School and eventually started courting when he was 18. They both have a shared enjoyment of the Scouting movement and Doreen has shared in the demands of the business with Frank. They have two children, Carol & Anthony.

Tony is a former teacher and Carol is a Nurse, becoming a Sister at Blackburn Royal and still volunteers to attend at community groups teaching resuscitation. She has given Doreen and Frank a Grandson, a Police officer called Christopher, who in turn (and with the assistance of his wife!), have given them two great children, Harris and newly born Jason.

Doreen and Frank will celebrate 69 years Marriage on the 6th of December. Unfortunately for Doreen, she hasn't enjoyed the best of health in the last few years suffering with severe pain in her legs. With Franks support she does do as much as she can and you can tell how much she loves her family by the way she was talking about her newest baby great Grandson, they certainly bring her much happiness.

Doreen has been a Superintendent of the St John Ambulance, an Archaela and a very active Member of the Mothers Union, along with her support of the family business.

Frank actually picked Doreen over Football when he was as a promising player, signed for Padiham looking to make the next steps. In an ultimatum from Doreen, it was either her or the football! Frank

sensibly made the right choice, though he carried on playing in the Blackburn Combination league until he was 34.

They've enjoyed their holidays and many cruises around the Mediteranean, Greenland, Iceland, Scandinavia and Russia. Frank has also been to Australia to visit his sister Enid. He also has a brother called Kenneth who lives in South Wales who will be coming up to see him in December for Franks 90th Birthday.

Scouting and sport has always played a big part in his life. With his Scouting, he has attended two world Jamborees and was involved in Scouting for over six decades in St Thomas's Scout Group, being awarded the second highest possible honour in Scouting, the Silver Acorn for his commitment and service.

A keen swimmer, he was on a Team from the Hyndburn Centre and also was involved with teaching the Scouts Swimming Badge and organising Swimming Galas between neighbouring Towns. Frank has also been a keen squash and badminton player, actively playing Badminton in a Hyndburn Club until just last year, where an an 88 year old competitor his knee finally called time on his career.

Now he plays snooker 4 afternoons a week in the Winter and bowls in the good weather for Oakhill Park Veterans where he is the President and has also been the A Team Captain for 18years. In fact in the Display cabinet in the bar, you will find the Gouldsbrough Bowling Trophy, named after his father Robert (Bob).

Turning to Masonry, as we know, Frank was initiated into the Lodge on the 6th of November 1969, at the age of 39, where the Initiation was carried out by his Father. In fact his father also Passed and raised him, which is most unique and must have been personally rewarding for them both. His father was DC of this Lodge from 1977 until 1985, himself being initiated in 1953 and Worshipful Master in 1966. WBro Bob Gouldsbrough served this Lodge admirably for four decades before he sadly passed to the GL above in 1993.

Following his initiation, it took a further 15 years for Frank to reach the chair. There was no delay, that was just how long it took during that time period. I actually have the Menu card here from his installation, where it shows that his father was the DC. No pressure then Frank!

After he installed his successor, he soon became the Assistant Director of Ceremonies to WBro John Barnes. Frank was actually the ADC for our 150th Celebration in 1989 where a certain Bro Keith Procter was the Worshipful Master.

Frank has and continues to be, a stalwart of this Lodge. He is the last remaining member of the Cabal of elders that nearly always sat at the top of the Junior Wardens leg at our Festive Board. Elders that included amongst others Jack Riley, Vincent Mulhall, John Iddon, Ted Low and our perennial guest Ted Marshall.

WBro Gouldsbrough, you have given 5 decades of unassuming, steadfast support not only to this Lodge and Freemasonry, but to Scouting and the Community at large, all with support from Doreen.

On behalf of the Lodge and I'm sure all the visitors here present, we thank you for both for that commitment and support, we sincerely hope that you enjoy the rest of your deserved celebration this evening.