

Roger Flitcroft MBE

50th Year Membership of the Holy Royal Arch

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The Chapter of Remembrance 3787

Brian J Carter

I have had the privilege of knowing EComp Roger Flitcroft for over 30 years and was very honoured when asked to speak about him,} although somewhat worried when the words} “would you do the eulogy for Roger”}was mentioned} but as you can see Roger is still here} so it’s a tribute.}

EComp Roger Flitcroft MBE, his record and his involvement in the Craft and Royal Arch is well known and acknowledged but I wish to speak about the man although I will just touch momentarily on Freemasonry,

Roger was born in Huddersfield in 1938 his family moved to Barrow in Furness in 1939 not because Roger was born, it was because his father changed his job, as he grew he started his education and after primary school he attended Barrow Technical College and Barrow Grammar school, he then joined HMS Worchester which was a three masted purpose built Cadet training Ship built in Barrow and anchored on the river Thames as the Thames Nautical Training College where he studied both general and nautical subjects for two years prior to becoming a Merchant Navy Officer Cadet with the Blue Star Line on voyages to South America, Cape Town along with other South African Ports, Australia, and New Zealand, he travelled through the Panama Canal and Suez Canal and visited ports in the Mediterranean unfortunately this career ended because of an illness which resulted in his hospitalisation in Australia.

in 1959 Roger then turned towards Civil Engineering working on the M6 Lancaster By Pass, Doncaster By Pass A1(M) and the Llandegfedd Reservoir in South Wales he joined Lancashire County Council Surveyors department in Preston in 1962 initially in the Highways Design and Construction Office, working on the surveying, design and construction for the Wheelton By Pass and the Whalley Eastern By Pass.

His studies led him to gain qualifications Civil Engineering and Highways Engineering, he was then appointed Highways Manager for the Lancashire County Council and remained in that post until his retirement in 1995.

Roger married his wife Joyce on the 3rd of June 1964 and they have been married for some 55years but that's not the whole of the story for it was due to Scouting that they met, Roger became a member of the scouting movement at the age of 8yrs, and Joyce joined in Doncaster at the age of 16, they met when Roger was became a member of the Doncaster Rover Scout Group, after they married and moved to live in Preston Joyce became involved with a Cub Pack, followed by Leader of Cub Packs along with other duties, those other duties continued when they finally moved from Preston to Osbaldeston. Roger still has some Blackburn involvement as **District President**, and Joyce also as the current **District Vice President**.

In Honour of his service to the Scouting Movement Roger was presented last year with the highest Scouting Award– **The Silver Wolf**. While Joyce holds the next honour in line – **the Silver Acorn**.

I said earlier that I would touch briefly on Freemasonry for It was whilst living in Preston that he was Initiated into the Craft in 1968 into Barrow Lodge No.3928, Province of West Lancashire, his Father was the Treasure along with his Brother who had been initiated the month before, Roger was then Exalted into the Royal Arch in Barrow Chapter 3928 in 1970

It was to his credit especially living in Preston that he did a lot of Masonic visiting travelling to and from Preston – totalling some 7,000 miles (only a highways manager would remember how many miles he travelled).

Away from Freemasonry both Roger and Joyce have served as members of Blackburn Samaritans for over 20 years both have served a three year term as Branch Chairman. One of the outreach programs Roger helped to initiate was Samaritan visits to Garth Prison, and for 9 years he was the organiser for the team's weekly visits, they were permitted to enter the Prison Wing's and wander from Cell to Cell to offer a listening ear to prisoner in need. This facility still continues to this day and is well accepted by both Staff and Inmates in Garth and many other Prisons throughout UK.,

I mention these parts of his life as together with the many years in **Scouting, The Samaritans, and Freemasonry**- his name was put forward for consideration of a **National Award in 2015** – completely

without his knowledge. We can only imagine his surprise when at the end of November 2015 an envelope from Buckingham Palace was posted through his letter box, the contents indicating an Award to him as a Member of the Order of the British Empire for service to Scouting, the Samaritans and Freemasonry which he was not to disclose to anyone until New Year Day 2016, the announcement was met with great delight by his Family and all his Friends.

He was invited to attend Buckingham Palace along with his family in March 2016 to receive the Award of **Member of the Order of the British Empire** from **HRH Prince William**.

As I understand very few such honours have been attributed to membership of Freemasonry.

Roger and Joyce are devoted to one another, and whilst both have not enjoyed good health recently, they still enjoy walking} cycling and getting away whenever they can on holidays and long may that continue.

So there we are Companions that is the man.

Still actively contributing to all aspects of his Freemasonry, still mentoring younger Companions and some of the older ones myself included, still passing on the wealth of knowledge that 50years membership has brought, but most of all still enjoying his Royal Arch Masonry}

E.Comp Roger Flitcroft Member of the Order of the British Empire by your example as a Man and Mason, you have earned a great deal of respect from all those who over the years have had the privilege of knowing you, and so on my own behalf and on behalf of the Companions here assembled may we thank you for the contribution you have made to the community at large but particularly for your work and commitment to the Holy Royal Arch over your 50yrs membership. And I pray that the T A L G M H will bless you and Joyce, and that he will keep you both safe and well in the years to come.