



A ROYAL REPORT FROM ScR MIKE MARTIN

**GOWR HOUSE DINNER**

**In the presence of ComR PRINCE MICHAEL of KENT**

**and his son, LORD FREDERICK WINDSOR**

**(Grays Inn Rd., Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup>. 2017)**

**Pictorially enhanced by WR JOHN MCKENZIE**



*A King greets a Prince, as Preceptor ROGER De COURCEY provides security!*

A special occasion indeed, with the lodge room transformed into a dining extravaganza *par excellence*, as we welcomed our Royal Companion and his son. It was the first time for several years since ComR PRINCE MICHAEL had joined us for such an event, but he has always made it clear how much he enjoyed his nights with his Brother Rats. Thus we turned out in force...

Fresh from Las Vegas, KR IANRICHARDS was on his best behaviour as he led the Royal couple into the Order's inner sanctum, greeted by rapturous, warm hearted applause. King Rat's opening words were faultless, worthy of Hampton Court Palace itself... I can see that knighthood shimmering in the near distance...

It was a night of classy fun, embellished by some nice food (with Grace from Prec. ROGER) which had been supplied by our very own Sally Fox, the manager of our downstairs pub. A starter of smoked salmon and a main course of HRH's favourite dish, steak and kidney pudding, which he was particularly delighted with. "Wonderful!" he chortled, regally, "I never get this at home, you know..."

The wines were tasteful too, and thanks must be extended to WR ANTHONY BYGRAVES for kindly sponsoring the after dinner port and brandy. Lovely touch!

With the chatter and banter going full swing, it was not long before the “I says” kicked in, instigated by CR and “Vegas Babe Magnet” KENNY CANTOR.

“I say, I say, King Rat... what is the difference between a lady’s high heeled shoe and a photographer from Barnsley?”

It took some time to get this out, but the answer is... “One takes five toes and the other takes (*imagine heavy Yorkshire accent*) four toes!”

Geddit? Kenny certainly did... the Egg!



WR DUGGIE BROWN, not to be outdone, swooped in with the difference between the Rolling Stones and a Scottish shepherd... “One sings, *Hey, you, get off of my cloud*, and the other, *Hey, McCloud, get offa ma ewe!*”

Something was really started now, as AsstScR DAVE BROCK kept the momentum going... “I was going to have a tattoo but the neighbours can’t stand the skirl of the pipes...” (Jester’s!)

Then PTG KEV ORKIAN with “My wife says I’m obsessed with football, but it’s not true... I’ve been with her for 13 seasons now!”

There was even a little aside wherein Lord Windsor was fined (I was unsure of the reason) but, having no cash on him, he tossed his wallet of credit cards into Collecting Rat’s pan. All was saved, however, when Prince Michael himself came up with a crisp £20 note!

“Sorry,” chipped in TR RAY MARTIN, “we don’t accept family photographs...” (Worthy of a Jester’s, I thought, but it was overlooked...)

PKR JESS CONRAD **OBE** stood and drew attention to his Royal award but KR IAN suggested that, at his age, maybe it stood for “’ome before eleven...”

Jess told a gag about a duck but the reaction, or lack of it, prompted him to enquire, "Am I missing something?"

"The comedy?" suggested PCR RICHARD GAUNTLETT, winning him the Jester's.



KR IAN had already presented our Royal Companion HRH PRINCE MICHAEL with the GOWR 125<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary ties, but Lord Frederick, not being a member of our Grand Old Order, was not entitled to this gift and was therefore merely handed our personalized computer stick! This was swiftly remedied, however, by those present when it was decided that his Lordship should be invited to become our 4<sup>th</sup>. Royal Companion. This was formally done from the top table, and, to everyone's delight, Lord Windsor humbly, and most gratefully, accepted.

TR RAY MARTIN had one of his poems, hastily composed on the train into town that evening, which he was invited to recite... the emphasis being to honour our Royal guests... and this was well received.



*A Royal Ode from TR RAY, and our next Royal ComR, Lord Windsor, in conversation with PKR RICK.*

Very close to celebrating his 70<sup>th</sup>. birthday, WR ANTHONY BYGRAVES called for a toast to our recently departed PDepMusR STEVE CLARK, along with a fond story about dear Steve, bless him.

And on the subject of honours, it was announced out that our very own PKR RICK WAKEMAN has recently been inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in the U.S.A.. This was met with great applause but Rick graciously pointed out that there were also 3 other Rats similarly honoured... BRIAN MAY, ROY WOOD and(via *Iron Maiden*) NICKO McBRAIN.

All this and a splendid cabaret too from WR DUGGIE BROWN (who was hilarious), a tasteful triplet of songs from vocalist Lisa Marie, ventriloquial fun from ChTG STEVE HEWLETT (assisted by PTR UDO and a false jaw!) and a truly sensational spot from WR ANDY EASTWOOD who proved, as always, that the uke is an instrument to be taken very seriously indeed when played so brilliantly. (Even Prec. ROGER was impressed.)

Although a small number of Rats had to leave early owing to travel issues and parking, etc., it was a superb event, brimming with the bonhomie and warmth which has always marked the best Rat's gatherings over the years. It was generally agreed that, in addition to lodge meetings, we should arrange far more of them.

And finally, before taking his leave with Lord Windsor, ComR HRH PRINCE MICHAEL stood to thank us for a most entertaining evening, adding, with Royal tongue in cheek, "Indeed, I always enjoy bringing myself down to your level..." a remark which virtually brought the house down!

Fair enough... if we're going to be put in our place, let's get it from the top!



