

# **Hollywood Charity News**

Hollywood Charity Committee Newsheet

Autumn 2003

## **Record Gift Aid refund from Inland Revenue for 2002/2003**

Thanks to a lot of hard work by the Province of Down Charity Executive, the nine District Charity Committees, and the Stewards of Charities and Treasurers of all the Lodges, Chapters, Councils and Preceptories throughout the Province of Down, a record amount of £25,544 was reclaimed from the Inland Revenue at the end of the 2002 tax year via the Gift Aid scheme.

This fantastic amount equates to a 21% increase over the amount claimed for 2001 of £21,119, and is the equivalent of each Brother in Down giving another £3 on top of his personal donations to our Charities.

This additional income is most welcome to those benefiting from annuities or grants paid out each year by the various benevolent institutions, and together with similar refunds from the Inland Revenue made to the other Northern Provinces, means that those managing the various funds are now in a position to consider increases in the benefits paid out.

In Hollywood, we saw the largest increase in Down in the amount reclaimed, up from £821 to £1810, a staggering 122% increase. This figure included however Gift Aid envelopes we processed on behalf of both Provincial Grand Lodge

and the Provincial Priory of East Ulster. When those are removed from the calculations, we still saw a huge 72% increase by the Hollywood Brethren themselves. This is a superb achievement, and is a credit to all those using the scheme.

Overall 46% of Hollywood's total Charity donations last year were Gift Aided, which while being good, can certainly be improved upon. Hopefully now that the momentum has begun, it will drive itself along and we will see that percentage rising higher.

Your Charity Committee will do all that we can to help you maximise your charitable donations. The presence of your representative at the Committee will strengthen us and allow us to gauge accurately the feelings and concerns of the Hollywood Brethren. At the end of the day our only aim is to assist to the utmost those in need.

### **Do you complete a Self Assessment Tax Return ?**

From April 2004 it will be possible for those Brethren completing Self Assessment Tax Returns to nominate a Charity to benefit from any rebate they may be entitled to from the Inland Revenue, and we in Hollywood have embraced this important advance in how we receive donations. We have been allocated a unique reference number which will be circulated in the new year to all Brethren via the Committee, and will also be available through the Inland Revenue website. Those higher rate taxpayers among us can now do even more to help our Charities at no cost to themselves.

### **Charity Committee Elected Officers for 2003**

President	R.W.Bro. Jim Kelly
Vice President	R.W.Bro. Sam Scott
Chairman	W.Bro. Norman Armstrong
Treasurer	R.W.Bro. Sam Scott
Secretary	W.Bro. Barry Brewster
Gift Aid Treasurer	W.Bro. Jim Kilpatrick

The remainder of the Committee is made up of representatives from each of the bodies sitting in the Hall. The Committee meets in January (AGM and election of officers), April or May and September, and any other such dates as decided by the members depending on the business to be transacted.

## Progress of the Hollywood Covenanting/Gift Aid Scheme to date

YEAR	TOTAL DONATED	TAX RECLAIMED
1996/97	£295	£93
1997/98	£540	£158
1998/99	£730	£218
1999/00	£970	£290
2000/01	£1750	£494
2001/02	£2913	£821
2002/03	£6418	£1810
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£13616</b>	<b>£3884</b>

From this simple table (left) the phenomenal rise in Gift Aid usage can be clearly seen. The reclaim for 2002/03 of £1810 shows an increase of 1,145% over the first full year reclaim in 1997/98. People know it now works, and is simple to use. No tax payer now has any excuse not to use Gift Aid. Envelopes are readily available on the mantle piece in the anteroom, along with the pink and cream forms each Treasurer needs to complete when returning envelopes to the Gift Aid Treasurer, W.Bro. Kilpatrick.

The Committee hope that this rate of increase can continue for years to come. We in Hollywood, despite being the smallest Charity District in Down, have always prided ourselves in being in the top three every year for the average giving per head. Your increased use of the Gift Aid envelopes at every available opportunity can only enhance that.

### Hollywood Lodge widow gets new set of wheels

For a number of years the Brethren of Sharman Crawford Lodge No 403 have been supporting a widow who has seen her health deteriorate quite substantially over time. She was receiving assistance from the Victoria Jubilee Masonic Benevolent Fund, but was removed from it in 2001 when she exceeded the Fund's income criteria. Recently she suffered a major setback when due to diabetes she had to have both legs amputated, leaving her severely immobile.

The Brethren of the Lodge set about the task of raising funds to purchase an electric wheelchair for her – the only way she was going to be able to get around. Her age, her lack of physical strength and her house being at the bottom of a hill, all made a conventional wheelchair unsuitable.

An approach was made to the Hollywood Charity Committee for

advice, and assistance was sought and willingly granted from both the VJMBF and the Masonic Welfare Fund. We as a Charity Committee assisted financially too, and in due course a suitable electric wheelchair was purchased by the Committee for use by the widow. It will remain the property of the Committee and could in the future be used in similar circumstances if required.

The widow was re-instated onto the VJMBF and will receive her annuity as before.

Proof, if ever it was needed, that local Masons can resolve local issues. Charity is not just some ideal, it is real and all around us.

If your Lodge has a dependent needing assistance and you are unsure what to do, please speak with our local Provincial Grand Almoner, W.Bro. Barry Brewster, who will be only too glad to help in any way he can.

### Contact Details

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#### Treasurer

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#### Gift Aid Treasurer

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