



Leonard Ernest Baker

1929 – 2017

Leonard Ernest Baker was born on 29th May 1929 in London.

Len was a brilliant man who accomplished a lot in his life. He was the youngest of four and was the Apple of his mothers eye. Sadly his father died when he was just 7 years old.

When he was 10, Len was evacuated to Oxfordshire and that County made a lasting impression on him. (Much later Len returned to the village where he spent those war time years with his Grandchildren who were fascinated to hear the stories of his life there and to see it with their own eyes.) After returning to London after the war Len left school at 14 to become an apprentice butcher eventually graduating to be a Master Butcher.

In 1947 Len was called up for his National Service with the RAF and served for two years as a gunner, I think it fair to say he was very proud to serve.

After his National Service he became a ‘Teddy Boy.’

This so impressed his future wife Sheila Rose (as well as his access to the black market nylons), that a loving relationship developed. They married in 1951 and the following year their daughter Victoria Ann (Vikki) was born.

Len was an ambitious man and started up and became Director of his own haulage business which he ran for many years, he later became an expert in Antique Silverware and then an Auctioneer.

After a successful career, Len and Sheila retired to Cyprus in 1994 settling in Limassol. After his arrival he joined the Royal Air Force Association (RAFA) at Akrotiri and eventually became President of his branch of that Organisation.

Sadly Len’s beloved wife Sheila passed away in 2008

Len’s hobbies included Fine Silver and 50s music, he was a regular attender of Apollo Lodge and District Social functions especially the Dinner Dances where his impeccable style and dress drew the admiration of the Ladies and the envy of the Gentlemen. He often requested one of his favourite songs ‘ A white sports coat and a pink carnation’, which perfectly summed up his style.

Masonic History

Len, as he was known to all, was Initiated into Apollo Lodge No.7886 on 10th October 2000 at the age of 71. He was passed on 11 December 2001 and Raised on 8th December 2001.

He joined Apollo Chapter No 7886 on 4th December 2003 and by this time he was 74 years of age.

A late starter you might say and certainly a great loss to Freemasonry that he didn't have the chance to join our Fraternity much earlier in his life. However as it turned out in his 17 years in the Craft he would epitomise what a good Freemason should be. He had very special characteristics and a tremendously warm personality, a genuine interest in and concern for all those around him. His adherence to admirable standards in life earned him the respect of all those who were fortunate enough to have known him.

Even in the trying days towards the end of his life Len retained a grace and charm that made him a delight to be with. Keith and Sue Butcher came to Len's aid when he found the routine demands of the day too much to cope with, offering him the comfort and security of their home. Sue reflected, *“ Sadly we have lost a good friend. I will always remember holding your hand Len and walking with the dogs; you eating all the food I cooked for you – with a smile ; the long talks we had about old times; picking out your clothes when it got too much for you to do, then you walking out of the bedroom looking so smart, it made me smile. The short time you stayed with us when things got hard for you was a great pleasure for Keith and myself. Rest in peace Len. It was a great honour to spend some time with you – a very special gentleman.”*

As V.W. Bro Rob Cowin put it, *“He was a very distinguished and excellent Mason who was a fine example of what we should all aspire to be – kind, loving and considerate to all. Brother Len was the epitome of a gentleman, dapper in dress, courteous in manners and always ready to help.*

Or in the words of Robert Burns,

‘The rank is but the guinea’s stamp, the man’s the gold for all that’. “

Final words go to V.W. Bro Eric Williams who said, *“One of the pleasures of being a Freemason is the Brethren who you would not have met had you not been a member of the fraternity. Bro Len was one of the top Brethren on my personal list, a Gentleman and an excellent Mason he will be missed but not forgotten.* “

After a gradual decline in his health over the previous 6 – 9 months, Len passed away peacefully at home on 2nd July 2017 with his Daughter Vikki by his side.

He was laid to rest at Erimi Cemetery, Limassol area on Tuesday 11th July, and a celebration of his life was thereafter held at the Buccaneer Bar & Restaurant in Erimi.

Len is survived by his Daughter Victoria (Vikki) and his Grandsons Ben and Jake from New Zealand and Edinburgh respectively.

Len's memory will live on in the hearts of all who knew him, a true Friend and Brother, he will be sorely missed.

Thanks to Len's family, Keith & Sue Butcher, V.W.Bro Rob Cowin and V.W. Bro Eric Williams for their contributions.

