

Septem Lodge No:7788 Ladies Festival
Saturday 1st April 2023
Broome Park

On Saturday 1st April 2023 132 Guests made their way to Broome Park Golf and Country Club for a spectacular evening of tradition and festivities organised by the Worshipful Master, W.Bro Alex Coppin and his beautiful Lady Coralie, ably assisted by W.Bro Kevin Kemp, Lodge Secretary, W.Bro Graham Hogben Lodge Treasurer, and the MC for the evening W.Bro Peter Sparrow, who was the MC for the first time.

The event had been planned down to the last detail, table plans set, order of service for the serving of food, and all of the other finer details. 10 members of the Spinoza Lodge with 5 of their wives were attending their very first Ladies Festival, they have nothing like it in Belgium and so it was all new to them, they really enjoyed the whole experience.

First problem of the evening, an additional 2 guests who had been paid for, not on the seating plan, and then a further guest who had also been paid for, not on the seating plan. Did this cause any problems? Not a bit of it, the caterers responded, making the required extra meals available, the waiting staff responded and added the guests to the tables, Graham Hogben being excellent as he coped with the situation on behalf of the President and his Lady, whilst Kevin Kemp's blood pressure rose like the pressure in a steam cooker. Not to worry though it all went very well.

The MC had been provided with a very strict timetable of events, he was able to stick to the plan so that all of the normal formal items were ticked off on time. Taking of Wine and Toasts were made, then came the Ladies Song, a performance by W.Bro Mike Scurfield that was excellent in its delivery and the 2 Wardens Bro Paul Nicholls with Bro John Miller , (rumoured to be Fatehr and Son, but nobody knows which way round they are) lifted the Presidents Lady up on to her chair with ease.

Then came the response to the Ladies Toast and Song, delivered by Coralie in her own unique style, microphone range was a bit of a challenge so to the centre she came, with her prompt cards, using them and then discarding them over her shoulder like pieces of confetti, the content was spectacular, having all of the guests laughing and then crying as she pointed out that we had come together this evening to celebrate the Ladies, that was her goal, what a response, many a Mason saying it was a great response. She explained what the Charity was, Target Ovarian Cancer, which we have been supporting all year. She talked briefly about her sister who attended that evening but was suffering from Ovarian Cancer, she made every person attending understand the whys and wherefores of this deadly disease, some of us wiped tears from our eyes.

Ladies gifts were distributed by the Lodge Stewards who did a fantastic job on the night, led by Bro Chris Curling and ably supported by Bro Mariusz Owczarzak who by the way had friends from Poland attending) and the rest of their team

The surprises didn't end there, as Coralie finished her response unbeknown to any of us, she had arranged a bit of a surprise, some of the young girls who had been serving us with food all of a sudden stopped what they were doing and the music struck up, before we knew it all of the Ladies in their spectacular evening wear were up singing and dancing with the young girls, about 2 minutes in the men started to stand up and dance with their ladies, what a performance, it lasted about 10 minutes and included the President and his Ladies Daughter Millie who is a bit of a star in her own right, and her Theatre Group giving up their time to support the evening and such a worthy cause, brilliant entertainment for everybody.

The next surprise that happened was a Charity Auction, Bro John Miller had donated 3 Watches and W.Bro Peter Smithson Birch had donated a 4th. Auction got under way and within 10 minutes £810 had been raised, well done to everyone who made a bid and to those successful bidders, there are no guarantees!!!!!!!!!!!!

A raffle came next, most prizes being donated by local businesses, but some from the brethren present, it was very profitable and raised a decent amount of money for the Charity. Dancing then became the order of the day, everybody at some point getting up and letting their hair down, the music was of mixed genres meaning that it appealed in different ways to all present, some people never sitting down, not me though, my knees can't take it.

All too soon the end of the evening came, carriages at midnight, our Belgian friends being amongst the first to be ready to go back to their hotel to carry on partying, some of the Septem brethren joining them, for a few drinks. All in all a great evening was had by all who attended, many saying that they can't wait until next year so we can do it all again, oh by the way, we also had 6 enquiries from non-Masons who have shown an interest in joining our Fraternity, these will be followed up by the Lodge Membership Officer and his team.

So the final question to this evening is, what did we raise for the Charity on the evening? I am proud to say that this event raised £2,140 and with a further £1,758 from other socials held, our President and his Lady have raised just short of £4,000 for their nominated Charity in their year. What a fantastic achievement, lots of benefits will be made available from this years profits for Target Ovarian Cancer, we did our WM and his Wife proud, and they have made us proud of all that they achieved. Thank you and well done Alex and Coralie.