

## Warm welcome at Brecon County Show 2019



L-R VVBro Dr Paul Calderwood, WBro Richard Ackroyd

Surprise and pleasure - as well as warm applause - greeted the opening of the first ever Masonic exhibition stand at the Brecon County Show in August.

The Show – which claims to be the oldest agricultural Show in the world and is organised by the Brecknockshire Agricultural Society which was founded in 1755 (almost as old as the Premier Grand Lodge which was founded in 1717).

However, this year witnessed the arrival of the first ever Masonic stand in the famous Show's long history.

Many visitors stopped and stared when they saw the stand and many took a long backwards glance after they passed to make sure that their eyes had not deceived them. many

A wide cross section of the community spoke to the brethren on the stand to say how pleased they were to see Freemasonry behaving as a part of the community and not apart from the community.

WBro Richard Ackroyd who was responsible for organising the exhibition stand, and VVBro Dr Paul Calderwood were kept busy all day long talking to members of the public about Freemasonry and answering questions, providing information and handing out printed material.

“At this stage it is hard to know if any of the many people that we spoke to today will ever decide to join Freemasonry” Richard pointed out “but we have laid a foundation of much better awareness and understanding that has opened the eyes of a lot of the visitors to the Show. Many said “We just did not know that about Freemasonry”.

“As one of the biggest societies in Brecon, it seemed only right that the Masons should have a stand here and be seen alongside Rotary and the many other groups that make up our community”.

Quite a few of the people who stopped to talk at the stand were Freemasons who had stopped attending lodge meetings and who wanted to reconnect with the Craft. As a result, details were exchanged which it is hoped will also bear fruit over the coming months.

The Show attracts up to 10,000 visitors every year from a very wide area. Some of those who visited the Masonic stand came from as far afield as Milford Haven and Gloucester and so greater knowledge and understanding about our great organisation is ever growing.

By VWBro Dr Paul Calderwood