



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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BRO. Sir Joseph Banks & Lodge Sir Joseph Banks No. 300

Sir Joseph Banks - The 'Father of Australia' was a Freemason.

In view of the importance of this matter to Australian Freemasonry some time will be devoted to this aspect of Sir Joseph Banks.

Sir Joseph Banks has often been referred to as the 'Father of Australia' due to his intense & on-going interest in the establishment & promotion of the colony of New South Wales following his visit here with Lieutenant James Cook R.N. during 1770. Sir Joseph Banks is documented (and accepted as such) for being the first Freemason to set foot on the continent of Australia. This event occurred on April the 29th. of 1770. It is highly unlikely that anyone will be able to take this particular honour from him at this late stage as that incident occurred soon after Captain Cook had anchored his vessel "Endeavour" in Stingray Bay (since renamed Botany Bay).

Note A: The cost of the Cook's expedition voyage was, in part, under-written by Banks. A considerable part of the expense involved the necessary modification to the ship which included ample storage-spaced for Banks intended collection of natural science exhibits. One figure given for Banks financial outlay for Cook's voyage is given as in excess of £12,000 sterling (\$A24,000) in 1770 - quite an enormous sum in those far-off days.

For many years (prior to 1950) the knowledge as to whether Sir Joseph Banks was actually a Freemason and of which lodge(s) he was a member & when, was unknown to Australian Freemasons and apparently no-one had made any real attempt to clarify the matter. Certainly, in 1915, the founder members of the lodge bearing his illustrious name could have had no idea as to the actual truth of the matter.

There had been some interest in the matter amongst some Masonic scholars in Australia prior to 1950 but this had remained vaguely 'academic' until the first positive attempt was made by Rt.Wor.Bro.K.R.Cramp, O.B.E., M.A., F.R.A.H.S. (a Past Deputy Grand Master of this constitution - and a Past Master of the Lodge University of Sydney), during a visit to Britain (c.1950). He was assisted in his efforts by the Reverend Cook, who was at that time, the Sub-Dean of Lincoln Cathedral. The basis of Cramp's enquiries was to establish & verify (if possible) any of the Sir Joseph's Masonic activities using Lincolnshire as a starting point, due to his deep personal involvement in that county, which had also been the Banks 'family seat' from 1710.

The Reverend Cook was able to confirm from correspondence held in Lincoln Cathedral, that, in the year 1801 the Freemasons of Lincolnshire were more than somewhat dissatisfied with the lack of activity of their incumbent Provincial Grand Master (Prov.G.M.) and that on the 31 March of that year Sir Joseph Banks had been invited by a Bro. S. Thorold of Harviston, Lincolnshire, to stand for the position of Prov.G.M. of Lincolnshire. Sir Joseph wrote back to Bro.Thorold words to the effect that whilst he had long been, and continued to be a member of the Craft, his extreme ill health (chronic gout & renal problems), and being confined to a wheelchair, plus his commitments in London prevented his accepting the honour. The text of both letters are given at the conclusion of this appendix.

In 1801, Sir Joseph Banks was also a member of Lodge Witham (now Lodge N^o 297 - U.G.L. of England) which, to this day, still meets in the cathedral city of Lincoln.

Copy of letter by Bro.S.Thorold to Sir Joseph Banks

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31st.March 1801

Rt.Honourable Bro. and Sir,

I hope that you will excuse the liberty I take in addressing this letter to you, which comes to inform you that I am now a member of the Witham¹ Lodge, and that we in our extensive County feel our selves depressed by the Deputy Grand Mastership² being represented by very inferior hands.

May God prosper the long established Institution, and that you may condescend to be our Grand Master³, which with your leave, I intend at our next Lodge, to propose for the honour of St.John and our respectable County.

Your leave kindly granted to me to propose you as our Grand Master will greatly oblige the Brotherhood of our Lodge.

And I beg to subscribe myself,
Your Most Obedient Servant and Brother,
Samuel Thorold.
of Harviston.

Copy of reply written by the secretary of Sir Joseph Banks to Bro.S.Thorold
(London 30 March 1801)

Holborn
30/31 March 1801

Sir Joseph Banks presents his compliments to Bro.S.Thorold. He is very sorry that his extreme ill health, his very numerous avocations and his ignorance of the higher mysteries of the ancient and honourable institution render it impossible for him to accept the great honour which Bro.Thorold and his Brethren have kindly intended to confer on him.

He sincerely wishes that God may preserve the long established institution and that the Grand Mastership may be placed in hands better able to exercise its functions with attention, regularity and diligence than he can possibly be.

Yours faithfully & fraternally,

for Sir Joseph Banks

Suffixes:

1 = Witham was spelled Wiltham in the original documentation; this was

incorrect for the name of the lodge. Witham is the name of the river which, rising in the county of Rutland, runs for the major part of its one hundred and ten mile course, through the county of Lincolnshire and through the ancient cathedral city of Lincoln en route to the 'Wash' via the seaport of Boston.

- 2 = As Bro.Thorold has stated, he had just become a member of Lodge Witham; I also feel that he was also a fairly new Freemason and then throughout the letter continues to confuse the situation of Masonic ranks & titles between the Grand Lodge of England and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Lincolnshire. It is considered that the position really under discussion was that of Provincial Grand Master of the Masonic Province of Lincolnshire.
- 3 = The suggestion that Sir Joseph Banks even considered accepting the nomination for the Grand Mastership of the Grand Lodge of England is so remote as to be almost not worthy of consideration. The animosity & division between the 'Moderns' & the 'Antients' in English Freemasonry was at its height. The Earl of Moira (Acting Grand Master was still striving to bring about a unification of the two rival Grand Lodges. For Sir Joseph Banks to have accepted nomination and stand against the incumbent Grand Master of his own Masonic constitution (the Prince of Wales) would not have been consistent with his long & great friendship, which he valued so much, with King George III & the members of the Royal family.

Further, as Banks indicated in his reply to Bro.Thorold, his poor health, he was confined to a wheelchair for much of his latter life due to complications from gout, his host of other activities ie. being a Privy Councillor, President of the Royal Society, Royal Horticultural Society, worldwide correspondence, etc. To which must be added his correspondence to his 'agents' in N.S.W. and in France where he was in constant with Bro.Benjamin Franklin, the famous American revolutionary's Ambassador to France and with the French equivalent of the Royal Society.

Note B: Sir Joseph Banks is often referred to as being a 'Lincolnshire' man along with other noted explorers ie. George Bass, Matthew Flinders & Sir John Hunt (a noted Arctic explorer and former Lt.Governor of Van Diemen's Land who died whilst trying to find the North West Passage). Each of these four men have strong associations with early Australia. Banks is thought by many to have been born in that Lincolnshire, such is not in fact the case.

Whilst his family seat was at Revesby Hall in Lincolnshire and he was a major landowner in that county, Sir Joseph Banks was born near the old Physic Garden in Angel Row, Chelsea, London and died at his country home 'Spring Grove' near Hounslow in the county of Middlesex - now one of the suburbs of what is Greater London.

(Refer to sub-appendix 3)

The most common nick-name still given to the those born in the county of Lincolnshire is 'yellow bellies'. This is due to the yellowish colour of the clay which used to adhere to their clothes before the huge fens (marshlands) were drained.

Banks in fact spent most of his time in London at his home at 32 Soho Square and generally made only an annual visit to his large estate which comprised some 268 tenant farms. These visits to Revesby lasted from August to October during which time, whilst he spent a lot of time in the fens & woodlands, he did not reside at Revesby Hall but nearby at his large house in Horncastle, a magnificent nine bay mansion which is still in existence on High Street, which today carries the town clock. Banks also founded the Horncastle Dispensary for the poor, and has a number streets named after him in local towns such as Spilsby.

However, Sir Joseph Banks always managed to attend the Annual Fair held every October held at Revesby Hall (also often referred to as 'Revesby Abbey' due to the estate containing the ruins of a old Cistercian abbey.) It is recorded that the fair was eagerly awaited by the locals, as Sir Joseph Banks would liberally provide all who attended with food & drink, and this would cost up to the princely sum of twenty pounds!

Note C: Sir Joseph Banks remained a member of Lodge Witham until his death in 1820. There is little of interest relating to Sir Joseph's Masonic career in the history of Lodge Witham N° 297, neither is there any relevant mention i.e. date of initiation or previous membership of other lodges of Banks. It is also somewhat surprising that so famous & influential a man and former member of Lodge Witham should receive no mention in the biography of another famous member of Lodge Witham N°297 - the famous Masonic author, researcher & philosopher - the Rev.George Oliver who was also, at one time, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Lincolnshire.

Note D: Lodge Witham was one of the lodges who remained loyal to the Premier Grand Lodge of England ('Moderns') during the dispute with the 'Antients'.

Such information, whilst satisfying the basic query as to whether Banks was a Freemason, left the matter of his Masonic membership / career prior to 1801 still open. Several enquiries were made through the Archives & Library of the U.G.L. of England per Wor.Bro.John M. Hamill P.A.G.D.C., B.A. who is a Past Master of the premier Masonic Research Lodge - Quatuor Coronati N° 2076 English Constitution (E.C.) of London. John Hamill was finally able to confirm that Sir Joseph Banks is listed as having been a member of the Old Horne Lodge "prior to 1768". We are also indebted to the research of the famous late Victorian era Masonic historian Wor.Bro. Robert Freke Gould P.S.G.D., for helping to re-open the trail. Gould does this in his monumental work "The History of Freemasonry - its Antiquities, Symbols, Constitutions, Customs, Etc." - Volume 2; Chapter XVII - 'The History of the Grand Lodge of England 1723/60' (Pages 192-400 [1931 Ed.]).

This particular section of Gould's work details some of the individual histories of the four 'original lodges' which had formed the Premier Grand Lodge of England at the Goose & Gridiron Inn, London during 1717. The particular lodge of interest to us is the 'original' N° 4 which met initially (prior to 1716) at the "Rum & Runner Inn" - Westminster. This lodge later moved to the Old Horne Inn - Westminster where it became known by that name, 'The 'Old Horne' Lodge.

Unfortunately, the actual minutes of this particular lodge which used to meet at the 'Olde Horne Inn' (N°4) are incomplete for the purpose of our researches. Whilst the lodge continued to supply the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns) with sufficient detail for it to remain in the 'engraved lists' right up to the early 1800s, they omitted to record the specific initiation &/or joining dates of the majority of their initiates and affiliates - this covers a period of approximately thirty years and relates to the time-slot when Mr. Joseph Banks was initiated - which fact has been confirmed by John Hamill, the Grand Archivist of the United Grand Lodge of England as being ("prior to 1768").

Note E: The "prior to 1768" recording established by Hamill is quite important as it definitely verified the fact that Sir Joseph Banks was a Freemason when he set foot on Australian soil in 1770.

In addition Robert Freke Gould, from other existing records, had also been able to confirm that Sir Joseph Banks was in fact a member of the 'Olde Horne Inn' - N°4 and quotes his name on page N°345 of Vol.2 and used the older style spelling of 'Sir Joseph Bankes' name.

What now matters is a matter of chronological sequence, and whilst we may probably never be able to specify the actual date when Mr. Joseph Banks of Revesby Hall, Lincolnshire & London, became Brother Joseph Banks, we can certainly narrow it down to a fairly moderate span of years by taking into account such matters as his age, the engraved lists of lodges of the Premier Grand Lodge and other prominent members of the 'original N°4' lodge who are also mentioned in that era by Robert Freke Gould. These included such famous historical figures as Thomas Dunkerley (the natural son of King George II), Lord Gormastone, Viscount Hampden, James Hesletine (the Grand Secretary of the E.C.1769/1780, Grand Treasurer 1785/1804, Senior Grand Warden 1785), Admiral Peter Parker (who was later the Deputy Grand Master of the E.C. 1787/1811), the Earl of Moira & Marquis of Hastings - Viceroy of India (acting Grand Master 1790/1813). (Refer to page N° of this appendix for chronological basis of 'guesstimate' on year of initiation)

It has always been acknowledged that the 'original N°4' lodge was the most important & influential of the 'original' lodges and generally responsible for the relatively rapid increase in the numbers of members of the 'quality' joining the society. This also resulted in a rapid upsurge in prestige which the Society enjoyed and which also tended to coincide with the time of Prince John, 2nd. Duke of Montague, being the Grand Master in 1721 & the Duke of Richmond becoming the Worshipful Master of the original N°4 in 1723. Mr. Joseph Banks (as he was at the time of Cook's landing) was a member of this, the most famous & influential of the original four Masonic lodges who in 1717 formed what became known as the premier Grand Lodge of England.

Whilst the early minutes of the old Lodge N°4 which are available to us do not allow the physical confirmation of the actual date of Joseph Banks initiation, it is obvious that he joined at an early age, possibly whilst still a student at Oxford University. This can be fairly accurately assessed from the references in Robert Freke Gould's famous work "The History of Freemasonry" and other reliable reference sources. Refer to the list of relevant dates at close of this appendix.

Note F: Over the last two hundred or more years the "Olde Horne Lodge" has had many famous men listed in its roll of members and has combined with other lodges to ensure its survival and also to further consolidate its Historically important position in English Freemasonry.

Note G: The original lodge has been renamed on more than one occasion these being:

- (a) "Olde Horne Inn Lodge" N° 4 [in 1723]
- (b) "Somerset House Lodge" N° 4 [in 1774]
- (c) "Royal Somerset House & Inverness" N° 4 [in 1828]

Note H: This is still the same old lodge which the young Joseph Banks joined in the mid-1760s and can clearly show an unbroken existence from pre 1717 until today - 1995.

This history of the lodge bearing his name is not intended to become a biography of Sir Joseph Banks, however, it is worth noting a few items in his long & active life. Banks was a disciple of Carl von Linnaeus, the Swedish botanist - the founder of modern botanical science. Joseph Banks was primarily responsible for the introduction of the methods of Linnaeus into Britain and the implementation of the Latin naming system for botanical purposes. Bro.Sir Joseph Banks was also responsible for sending out to the colony of New South Wales his chosen botanists & geologists. These specialists included such famous names as George Cayley, Allan Cunningham & George Sutter, etc. therefore it comes as rather a surprise to Australians to find that Sir Joseph Banks is better known in the history of British scientific matters for his classification of the flora & fauna of Newfoundland & Labrador than for matters Australasian.

After his return to England with Cook, Banks was honoured with a baronetcy, made a member of the Privy Council and later was invested as a member of the Order of the Bath. He was a member of the Royal Society for the Advancement of the Arts & Sciences at an early age (23), ultimately becoming its president for a record term exceeding forty years, during which period the society made great advances. It was during the early years of Sir Joseph's presidency of the Royal Society that he led the drive to eradicate all the, then powerful, influence of alchemists from the society and in doing so made a number of life-long enemies.

Note I: It is not generally known that Banks refused outright the Order of the Bath when first offered the honour. When the honour was 'offered' for a second time by the king he was in fact then 'commanded' by the king to attend the investiture.

Banks was a founding member of the Royal Agricultural Society and a member of the prestigious Royal Antiquarians' Society which was founded by the famous English Freemason Elias Ashmole who was initiated at Warrington, Lancashire in 16 . He was also the second largest landowner in the county of Lincolnshire and it was he who started the tree planting & drainage of the Fens (marshes) which provided an enormous amount of some of the most productive agricultural land now available in England's second largest county. This latter project was not popular with quite a number of other land-owners in the county and the enthusiasm & energy with which he approached that particular project earned for him, locally, the nick-name

of the 'Bull of Revesby'.

Sir Joseph Banks & the ladies

Sir Joseph Banks was married only once and apparently this was a happy union. However; prior to his wedding to Dorothea Huggesen on the 23 March 1779, the young Mr. Banks dabbling with the members of the fair sex whilst at Oxford University earned him such notoriety that his exploits even made the pages of the famous London journal "The Spectator". Another problem for Banks arose during the voyage en route to start his expedition in Iceland; this was due to his very attractive & curvaceous 'cabin-boy', who had come aboard muffled in a heavy cloak and with 'his' face obscured. The 'cabin-boy' never mixed with the rest of the crew and remained within Banks cabin until the captain of the ship brought matters to a head, and the 'boy' was disembarked at the next port of calling!

Another well documented affair occurred whilst the "Endeavour" was laying over in Tahiti. There, he had a 'liaison' with the native queen Obera whilst also concurrently carrying on with Otheothea, her hand-maiden! This state of affairs did not continue very long after Queen Obera (also known as Porea) discovered what was going on.

The affair which seemed to put a brake on his amorous affairs was the famous breach of promise case brought against Banks by a Miss Harriet Blossett on his return to England from Cook's voyage. She had somehow managed to tie the youngish Joseph Banks into some sort of 'engagement' immediately before his departure with James Cook. It is suggested that Banks was too drunk to realise what was happening on the occasion. The case actually reached the law courts but was settled without going to trial. One item in the final settlement was that the several fancy embroidered waistcoats which Miss Blossett had engaged herself in making whilst Banks was away were to be given to him!

To return to matters Australian, for the remainder of his long & productive life Sir Joseph Banks was looked on as the supreme authority on most matters concerning & involving the new colony & matters Australian. Most appointments to positions of authority in the colony were referred to him. Even Brother Colonel Lachlan Macquarie, on being appointed Governor in 1810, wrote to Sir Joseph for advice and called to receive the customary & 'paternalistic' pat on the head from this powerful man. Being a shrewd man, Lt.Col.Lachlan Macquarie, as he was at that time, would not have neglected to mention the earlier association with, plus the hospitality of, the Clan Macquarie to Banks during his expedition to the Hebridean Isles.

Note J: Whilst Macquarie is the generally accepted spelling of the clan name in Australia, the proper Scottish spelling was more correctly 'Macquarrie' which was derived from the Gaelic 'Guarie' or the Anglicised 'Godfrey'. Among the Septs of the Macquarrie's are the Maccorrie, Macgorrie, Macgorry, Wharrie, etc. all bearing the double 'r'. Ref.Bain's Clans & Tartans of Scotland (1973 ed.) & 'Scots Kith & Kin'(2nd ed.)

Note K: Governor Lachlan Macquarie was also a Freemason having been initiated in a lodge at Bombay during his service with the British Army in India, on the 16th.January 1763.

Whilst Sir Joseph Banks did not actually set foot in the area which now comprises today's City of Bankstown, two of his protegees - Matthew Flinders & George Bass and the boy William Martin, most certainly did when they made their famous exploratory trip up the Georges River in their tiny boat "Tom Thumb" in 1795. Matthew Flinders, who was also a Freemason, is considered to have been initiated whilst he was a French prisoner of war on the Ile de France, which was later renamed as Mauritius.

It is considered that the conditions which Flinders had to endure during his imprisonment were lightened considerably, and that his eventual release was assisted, by the efforts of Sir Joseph Banks. Correspondence is now being conducted with the Masonic Lodges of Mauritius and research is in progress in both Australia & Mauritius to try and confirm the specific French lodge and actual date of the initiation of Matthew Flinders. However, due to the antipathy shown towards Flinders during the period of this detention by the Governor of Ile de France. It is my opinion that Flinders initiation (whilst he was 'technically' considered a prisoner of war) would have been kept rather low key by the more sympathetic of the Frenchmen, and the actual date of his initiation may never be known. There are sufficient Masonic references to lead us to justify our understanding that Flinders was a Freemason. Unfortunately, as we are so well aware, it is not uncommon for certain Masonic records to be lacking in the specifics which researchers some two hundred years in the future may be seeking. As it is a reasonable finding that Matthew Flinders was initiated in a French Masonic lodge, he thus became one with at least two other famous Australian colonial historical characters, namely Brothers Captain Anthony Fenn Kemp & William Charles Wentworth, MLA, who were also initiated in French Lodges.

It is not commonly known that, although Sir Joseph Banks had no formal military training other than basic tuition in swordsmanship whilst a student at Eton, during a period of civil unrest in Lincolnshire he was commissioned as a lieutenant-colonel in the Lindsey Battalion (a local militia unit raised in 1796 as a result of the 'Slodger' riots) and had command over ten captains, ten lieutenants and ten ensigns. During this period he also held the position of High Sheriff of Lincolnshire and was one of the county's chief magistrates.

Sir Joseph Banks remained a Freemason right up to the time of his death on the 19th June 1820, at which time he was still an active member of Lodge Witham N°297 E.C. The Witham Lodge still meets in Lincoln to this day. The name 'Witham' is taken from that of the river which flows through the county of Lincolnshire and via the Wash into the North sea; en route it passes through both Lincoln and the historic sea-port of Boston. In that town's famous St.Botolph's Church there is a plaque which marks the appreciation of Boston's citizens for the service given to the town by George Bass when he was the port's doctor & surgeon for a period of five years.

Note L: None of the many biographies of Sir Joseph Banks are really specific as to actually where he died in 1820, other than vaguely mentioning Houndslow in the county of Middlesex. For many years the principal dwelling of Banks in London was No 32 Soho Square from which premises he conducted his enormous correspondence on scientific matters and where he also gave his famous breakfasts.

In 1776 Sir Joseph & Lady Banks bought a largish country manor

house named Spring Grove (also known as Strawberry Hill). The impressive house & largish country estate were just off the Houndslow Road in Isleworth which is only a few miles from Kew Gardens. This locality was also known as Heston and is the name of the parish where the church is located in which Sir Joseph was buried. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Sir Joseph Banks died at his at Spring Bank home.

The Houndslow area is in the general locality which is now London's Heathrow airport, whilst Heston can be located from the services area on the M4 Motorway.

An unwanted effect of Sir Joseph Banks on New South Wales & Queensland.

The British Army, prior to the arrival of the First Fleet, were a problem. The 'red coats' of their soldiers were dyed from the juice of the cochineal insect, which found itself a host in the cactus known as the 'Prickly Pear'. The Portuguese & Spanish, often adversaries of the British at that period, had a virtual monopoly of this dyeing agent, and, quite sensibly from a commercial point of view, outfitted their own troops in a uniforms of a different colour. Some cynics think that this was to make the British better targets than the French in their pale blue or the Spaniards in their green. Joseph Banks made the suggested that the new penal colony would be a suitable location for the British to establish their own cochineal industry to free themselves from the Iberian monopolists.

Captain Arthur Phillip was ordered to obtain samples of the Prickly Pear when he called in to Rio de Janero for supplies whilst en route to New South Wales in 1787 and to ensure that it was distributed widely & grown. Unfortunately, in spite of having a favourable climate the cochineal insect did not prosper at all and the imported cactus was often used as protective fencing in the settlements where it flourished virtually unchecked and created enormous problems. In the period 1788 to 1926, New South Wales alone lost 9,880,000 acres or 15,500 sq. miles of good agricultural land which were infested and severly restricted output and was spreading at a rate of 1,000,000 acres per year, Queensland was affected in a similar fashion. Sir Joseph Banks could have little realised how his idea have 'back-fired'.

Famous men & Masonic membership:

It is all too common a fault with most auto-biographies & biographies of many famous men that the details of their Masonic membership are not included in such writings as it is often considered by the writers of an auto-biography & biography as being of something of a private nature ie. Sir Winston Churchill, Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, etc. are typical of this type of omission - Sir Joseph Banks was certainly no exception to this practice. However, some notable exceptions have been the many American Presidents who were Freemasons from George Washington onwards to Gerald Ford, and even President Clinton has Masonic associations due to he his back-ground in the De Molay movement.

An outstanding example of a Masonic president was Harry S.Truman, a former Grand Master of Missouri, who publicly made known his membership to such an

extent that his political opponents often criticised him for it. Other notables who make no secret of their membership include members of the British Royal family, ie.the Duke of Kent, the incumbent Grand Master of the English Constitution, the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince William, etc.

General

During the compilation of this appendix and other relevant material, certain errors in both spelling and historical fact became apparent; these have been corrected where convenient and explained where appropriate. Also refer to notes & suffixes as indicated.

Basic data/statistics in a chronological sequence on which to postulate S.J.B.'s approx. date of initiation into Lodge No.4

Born at Turret House, Paradise Row, Chelsea (Near the Physic Garden)	15 February 1743	
Entered Harrow School	aged 9	in 1752
Left Harrow & entered Eton school	aged 13	in 1756
Entered Oxford University (Christ College) as a Gentleman- commoner. He is hardly likely to have been admitted as a Lewis as William Banks (father) not known to be a Freemason. The style & type of the membership of the Olde Horne Lodge make it rather improbable that Banks would have been admitted under the 'age of majority'.	aged nearly 18	in 1760 *~
Therefore Banks would have been (At which time he inherited estates in Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire and Sussex. At that time these yielded an income in excess of £6,000 per annum.)	aged 21	in 1764 *
Year Banks bought the house in London (1764/67 - This is the time during which Banks could have joined Lodge N°4.	aged 21	in 1764 **
Finally left Oxford University (Did not take any degree; this was not an uncommon situation for the wealthier classes in those days.)	aged 22	in 1765 **
Became a member of the Royal Society	aged 23	in 1766 **
Listed in U.G.L. of England archives as being a member of Lodge N° 4 "prior to 1768" ie. prior to his 25th birthday.	pre.1768	

Date invited to join Cook's expedition (June/July 1768) Already a member of Lodge N° 4 probably too busy preparing for the voyage to have attended lodge in this period. Banks contribution to cost of modifying H.M.S. "Endeavour" & providing scientific equipment was in excess of £10,000	aged 25 in 1768 *^
Date commenced voyage with James Cook (Already a member of Lodge N° 4)	aged 25 in 1768
Date of Banks landing at Botany Bay with Captain Cook.	29 April 1770 ** aged 27 years & 2 months
Date returned from voyage with Cook	aged 28 years & 5 months
Date Banks & Solander landed at Deal in Kent on the 12 July 1771 and journeyed straight to London. Following his return Banks became a 'lion of society'.	(12 July 1771)
Year when Thomas Dunkerley joined Lodge N°4 (Ref Gould Vol.2.)	c.1768
Date(s) of portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds F.R.S. of Mr.Joseph Banks when aged 29 years, following his return from Cook's first voyage.	Painted in 1772 Hung in the Royal Academy of Portraits during 1773
Death of Sir Joseph Banks	19th June 1820
Period during which Lodge N°4 did not submit initiation/joining dates of members to the Grand Lodge of England.	1730 - 1803 (Now largely irrelevant)

1. From an assessment of the above verified data, it is my contention that Mr.Joseph (later Sir Joseph) Banks, being recorded as a member of the Old Horne Lodge 'prior to 1768' (ref.*^), was therefore a member (at the latest) in 1767 at which time he would have been aged 24 years as at 15 February of that year. Such being the established fact, Mr.Joseph Banks as he was on the 29 April 1770, was a Freemason when he landed with Captain James Cook in Botany Bay.
2. William Banks M.P. (father of 'our' Sir Joseph) was not known to have been a Freemason, therefore the availability or provision of membership as a 'Lewis' (18 years in 1760 [ref.*]) is unlikely in such a prestigious lodge as the 'Old Horne'. No enquiries have been made on this subject to either the P.G.L.'s of Lincolnshire or Northamptonshire.
3. Joseph Banks became 21 years of age on the 15 February 1764 at which time he not only inherited the Banks estate & fortune (ref.* & **+) but also bought his first house in Hounslow, London.
4. The period of 1764 to 1767, with the most likely year being therefore 1765 for Joseph Banks to have been initiated into the 'Old Horne' Lodge

during which time slot he would have been with in the age group of 21-24 years.

5. Such being the case, and, Sir Joseph remaining a member of the Craft (Lodge Witham N° 297 Prov.G.L. of Lincolnshire) until his death on the 19 June 1820, he was a member of the Masonic fraternity - admittedly perhaps & probably not a very active one because of his host of other activities, for a period in excess of a minimum fifty-three years.

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HISTORY OF LODGE SIR JOSEPH BANKS N°300 - Rt.Wor.Bro.Arthur Astin.(1995)
Appendix 2. Page 13

Numerous articles published by the Lincolnshire Tourist Board based upon material supplied by the Lincolnshire Historical Society.(Some copies held)

There is some fairly good general material in the City of Bankstown Council's bi-centenary (1995) publications. Also refer to The Research Lodge of N.S.W. transactions Vol.10: N°4 (August 1987) "Sir Joseph Banks" by V.Wor.Bro. Arthur Astin.