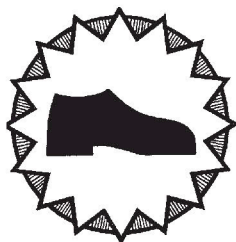


An Introduction to



**The Inverness
Shoeist Brotherhood**

**Compiled by Brother Zinda Hood,
Chief of Publications**



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Introduction

This booklet has been compiled for the benefit of those interested in the story of the Inverness Shoeist Brotherhood and the work which it carries out. It is not a complete description of the Brotherhood; merely an introduction to it. Those who wish to learn more should read "Our Mission", written by Brother Walter van Wheels, Abbot of the Brotherhood.

Background

The most important event in the history of the Inverness Shoeist Brotherhood took place in the early hours of Monday the 23rd of October, 2000.

Walter van Wheels Jnr, of Houston, Texas, USA, was at the time coming to the end of a week-long tour of the Scottish Highlands. Having spent the day undertaking a monster-spotting expedition to Loch Ness, van Wheels enjoyed a meal in the town centre and a number of drinks in various Public Houses before making his way back to his hotel, on the opposite side of the River Ness.

However, approaching the bridge across the river, he noticed an old shoe lying by the waterside. Overcome by a strange sense of curiosity, van Wheels climbed down to investigate this shoe further. What took place next would not only change the life of this one man, but would also have great implications for the future of the human race.



The Hermit's Revelation

In his book "Our Mission", Brother Walter van Wheels Jnr., now Abbot of the Brotherhood, describes what took place by the banks of the River Ness on that night:

'And as I reached for the shoe, the hermit appeared to me amidst a great blaze of light, and said:

"Listen closely, my friend, for a Momentous Duty is about to be bestowed upon you.

"Four days ago I set out from a place in the hills, where for the past half century I have laboured over a task set me by the mighty Powers which control this universe. In this lonely place I have written down mankind's Instructions for the part it must play in the Next Great Era.

"Yesterday I arrived here in this town to announce the existence of these Instructions, as a test of the human race's readiness for such a Revelation. At two hours past midnight, however, I was confronted by doubters and found myself flung into the water before you, where I met my end.

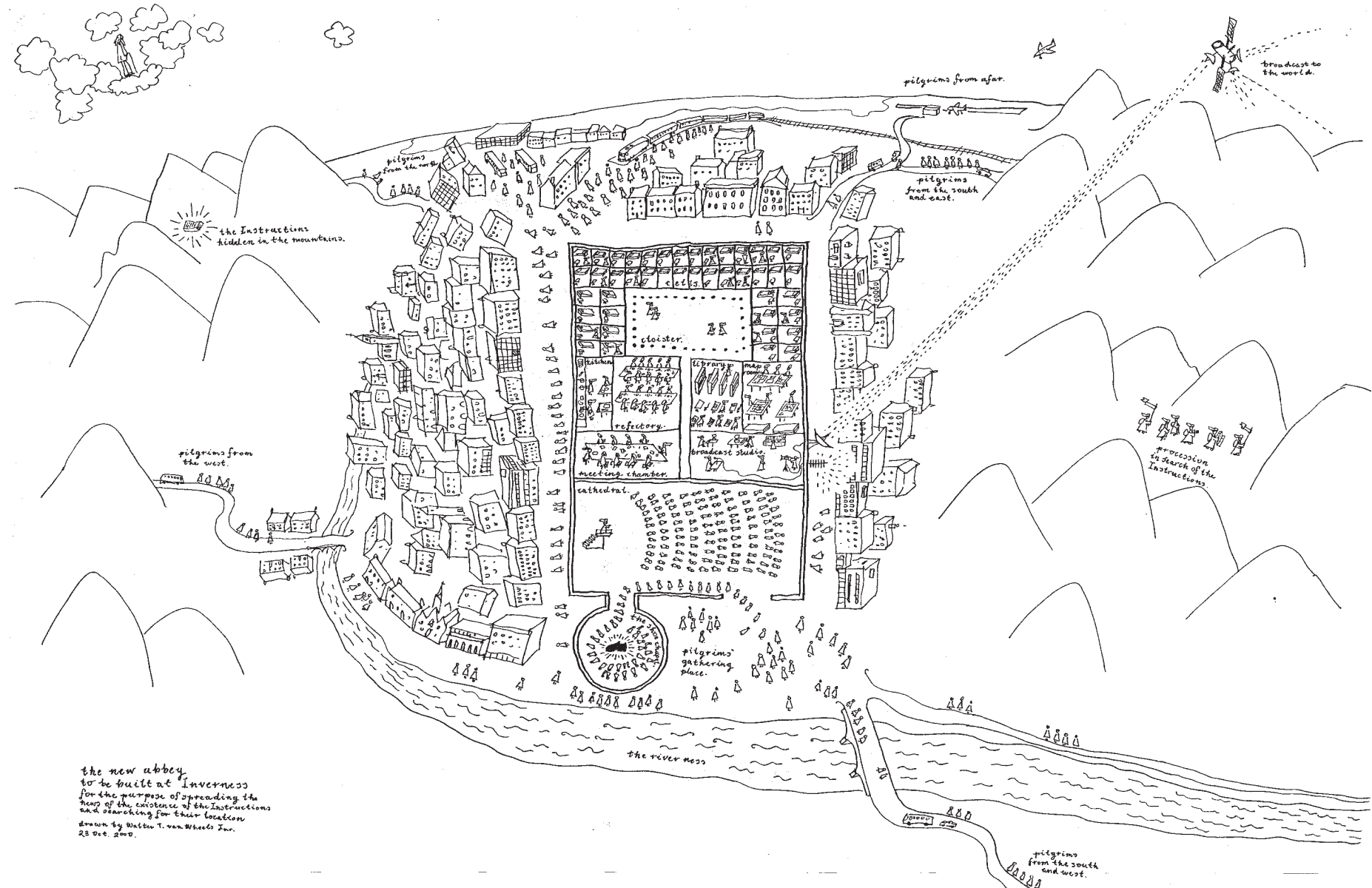
"Therefore, my friend, you are required to continue my work. You must gather around you a number of good people who will devote themselves to the preparation of mankind for the Revelation of the Instructions. They must also begin to search for the Instructions, hidden at my former dwelling place in the mountains. These they will discover after much perserverance, and once the mighty Powers consider that the world be suitably prepared.

"Good luck in your task, my good friend! You have been given the opportunity to lead the human race into a Great New Era of peace and prosperity!"

With these words, the hermit was gone and I knew that I should start my work immediately.'

Brother Walter's Plan for an Abbey

Drawn by Brother Walter shortly after his revelation, this plan describes the functions required of the Shoeist Abbey.



The Organisation of the Brotherhood

The types of Brothers and their various duties.



The Holy Brothers

The most senior brothers, responsible for overseeing the brotherhood's most important activities.



The Senior Brothers

These specially trained brothers are entrusted with the management of the brotherhood's various fraternities and hold specific, permanent posts.



The Brothers

The majority of the brotherhood is made up of brothers who may be assigned to various tasks at different times. Some of these brothers are specially trained for specific duties.



The Abbott

Founder and leader of the Brotherhood



The Five Floating Holy Masters

The most spiritually developed of the Brotherhood, these five Brothers take turns to participate in search processions, lead services, man the styleite preaching booths, as well as various other important activities.



The Holy Master of Searches

This Holy Brother is in charge of the ongoing search for the Instructions. He oversees the work of the Research Department and the Expedition Groups.



The Chief Researcher

This brother leads the team which undertakes research into possible locations of the Instructions. Information produced by this team is passed on to the search expedition teams.

The Two Expedition Leaders

These brothers each lead an expedition team. These expedition teams periodically set off on foot in search of the Instructions.



The Research Team

Made up of 20 brothers



Two Expedition teams

Made up of 3 brothers each



The Holy Master of the Spread of the News

This Holy Brother is in charge of spreading the Brotherhood's message to the wider world through the mediums of radio, television, the internet and the printed word.



The Chief of Broadcasting

This brother oversees the work of a team of brothers who operate a television and a radio broadcasting studio.

The Chief of Publications

This brother is in charge of a team who produce printed publications regarding the brotherhood's work.

The Chief of Internet Communication

This brother oversees the promotion of the brotherhood through the medium of the internet.



Broadcast Staff

Made up of 10 brothers



Publications Staff

Made up of 5 brothers



Internet Staff

Made up of 5 brothers



The Holy Master of Ceremonies

This Holy Brother is in charge of all events taking place in the chapel, including regular services, processions and other special events.



The Chief of Ceremonial Logistics

This brother leads a team of brothers who undertake various ceremonial duties during events as well as ensuring the safekeeping of vestments and other objects used during these events.

The Chief of Pilgrim Welfare

This brother and his team ensure that pilgrims' needs are attended to during their visit to the Chapel, and is responsible for their safety and security.

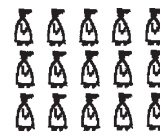
The Chief Musician

This brother leads the choir and the other musicians who partake in services and ceremonies.



The Ceremonial Assistants

Made up of 15 brothers



The Pilgrim Stewards

Made up of 15 brothers



The Musicians

Made up of 20 brothers



The Holy Master of Education

This Holy Brother oversees the education of novice brothers as well as organising various public education events.



The Novicate Leader

This brother is in charge of the education of novices and is also responsible for their general welfare.

The Chief of Public Education

This brother is responsible for public education events.



Novicate Education Assistants

Made up of 2 brothers



Public Education Assistants

Made up of 2 brothers



The Chief Administrator

This brother oversees the general administration of the brotherhood and the abbey.



Administrative Staff

Made up of 5 brothers



The Catering Chief

This brother oversees the provision of meals for the brotherhood.



Catering Staff

Made up of 10 brothers



The Retail Chief

This brother is in charge of the shop selling publications, pilgrim souvenirs and similar items.



Retail Staff

Made up of 5 brothers



The Librarian

This brother is in charge of the abbey library.



Library Staff

Made up of 15 brothers



The Chief Caretaker

This brother manages the caretaking, cleaning, maintenance and use of the abbey building.



Caretaking Staff

Made up of 15 brothers



The Treasurer

This brother is in charge of the financial management of the brotherhood and its activities.



Finance Staff

Made up of 5 brothers

The Shoe



The shoe found by Brother Walter, believed to have been worn by the Hermit until his unfortunate demise in the River Ness, is a size eight-and-a-half and for the left foot. The upper is mainly of leather, the sole being of artificial materials. The shoe was probably originally of reasonable quality, but has become very worn through use, the sole having a small hole in it.

The Shoe remains not only as a reminder of the Hermit's existence, but also as a symbol of his poverty, sacrifice and dedication. The Hermit must have walked many miles in pursuit of his all-important task.

Thus the Shoe is revered as a holy relic by the Shoeist Brothers and their followers, and many believe that to be in its presence brings them closer to the higher Powers of our universe.

Some even claim that the shoe has healing powers, although the Brotherhood stresses that even if these powers do indeed exist, they are only accessible to those who approach it with a suitable dedication to the Shoeist cause.

The Search for the Instructions

As well as promoting the Shoeist message and story, the Brothers have one other very important mission: the search for the Instructions, which remain hidden in the Hermit's former dwelling place somewhere in the hills of the area surrounding Inverness.

Therefore there is a constant process of research, carried out by the Brothers on the basis of various Revelations made to and passed on by Brother Walter, the Abbot. When the Brothers believe they have identified a possible location of the Instructions, a search expedition sets out for the mountains.

These expeditions are carried out by two teams of highly trained brothers. All expeditions are carried out on foot, in the spirit of the Hermit who lived and travelled by simple means.



A search expedition team at work in the Northwestern Highlands.

The Abbot

Brother Walter van Wheels Jnr, now Abbot of the Inverness Shoeist Brotherhood, was born in North Zulch, Texas, USA on the 14th of January 1943.

Prior to his discovery of the Shoe, and the Hermit's apparition to him, Brother Walter was director of a major corporation based in Houston, Texas, ownership of which he took over from his father in 1989.

However, since the events which took place in Inverness on the 23rd of October 2000, Brother Walter has committed himself to the founding, promotion and spiritual leadership of the Shoeist Brotherhood. As is the requirement of all members of the brotherhood, his contact with those involved in his earlier life is kept to a minimum. It must be remarked, though, that Brother Walter's connections in the business world have proven to be of much help during the founding of the brotherhood.

As the one chosen by the Hermit for the receiving of the revelations, Brother Walter is the most holy of the Brotherhood and the other Brothers look to him for answers to their most difficult questions and problems regarding their work in the Brotherhood and pursuit of the Shoeist life.

Brother Walter's importance and holiness is also confirmed by the number of divine inspirations that he has received since the finding of the shoe. It is these inspirations and revelations which, relayed through Walter, inform and guide the work of the Brotherhood.



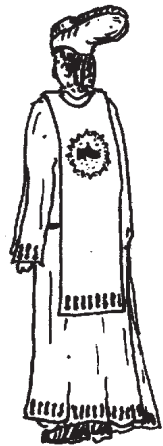
Brother Walter pictured shortly after his discovery of the Shoe.

The Brothers

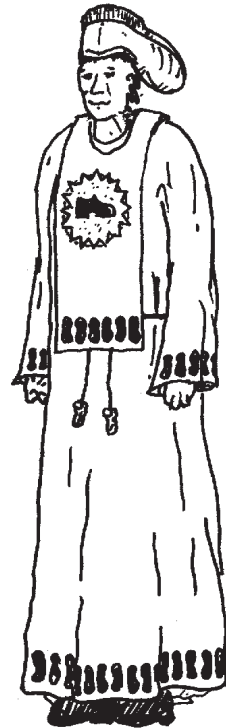
On entering the Brotherhood, the Shoeist brother agrees to live a simple life solely dedicated to the Shoeist causes, namely the promotion of the message and the ongoing search for the Instructions.

This means that all personal possessions must be given up, as well as all non-essential links with the world outside the Brotherhood. The Shoeist brother must be prepared to become part of a communal way of life and accept the sacrifices of personal freedom that this entails.

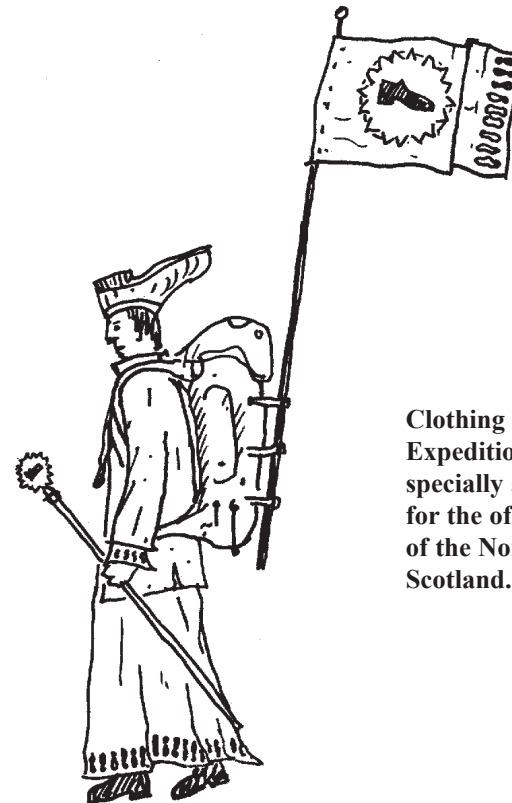
However, these are more than compensated for by the sense of purpose and spiritual satisfaction gained by the dedicated Brother.



Full ceremonial dress. This is worn by the Brothers for all ceremonies, meetings and daily services, and for any duties which involve contact with the public.



The clothing worn by the Brothers while carrying out their day-to-day duties which do not involve contact with the public.



Clothing worn by the Search Expedition Teams. This is specially adapted to be suitable for the often harsh climate of the Northern Highlands of Scotland.

