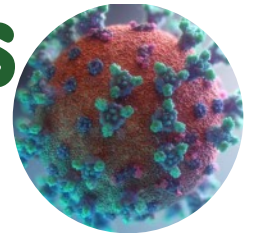




# Wiltshire Masonic News

The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons



**"The English nation is never so great as in adversity."**

**Benjamin Disraeli**

**April 2020**

**Now, more than ever, we must pull together'....**



**T**he words attributed to Benjamin Disraeli *"The English nation is never so great as in adversity."* might well be considered particularly relevant, given the situation in which the country finds itself with Coronavirus. The picture at the top right portrays the virus as quite ugly looking, as indeed it is. Due to the seriousness of the current situation, which I am sure you all appreciate, I have asked that this edition of the Monthly Newsletter be used to outline action taken by UGLE, the Province and HM Government; and in particular how these actions affect each and every one of us. During the past few weeks the Province has taken a very pro-active approach on matters concerning the Coronavirus by writing to every Lodge secretary, and the message has been reinforced by advice from the Communication Team at Freemasons' Hall. As you would rightly expect, the Province has been and will continue to be guided by the advice given by the Government, Public Health England, and the United Grand Lodge of England.

**The current instruction received from Grand Lodge is that all Masonic activity is suspended for a period of 4 months.** I am sure this is the correct decision, and I am pleased to report that all of our Lodges have complied with the instruction, even to the point of 'abandoning' meetings due to be held on the evening of the announcement being made. I want to thank the Brethren who have made it their task to inform members of the changes, and to the goodwill and understanding of Brethren who so swiftly complied with the instruction. Of course, the suspension of Lodge meetings raises a number of interesting questions with regard to Masonic protocols, and I want to assure all Lodge Secretaries that guidance will be forthcoming from Grand Lodge and the Provincial Grand Secretary which will help you to navigate your way through the Book of Constitution.

The Government has now moved to put in place further measures which are intended to maximise self-isolation, thus preventing the spread of the coronavirus through human interaction. The Prime Minister has acknowledged that this action contradicts his own strong belief in what we all refer to as 'personal freedom'. However, I am sure every member of the Province, irrespective of age or vulnerability, will acknowledge, accept and more importantly conform with the restrictions.

The main thrust of the work being undertaken by various agencies of the State, particularly the NHS, is to save lives: so I would ask that Brethren who experience symptoms associated with Coronavirus take the necessary precaution of 'self-isolating for a period of 14 days and contacting the NHS Helpline number 111. Please do not attempt to attend the Accident and Emergency Department of your local hospital as to do so will place pressure on the system. If your condition is considered serious you will be brought in to hospital, and you will receive the very best of care and attention.

Self isolating yourself does not mean that you must be 'lonely'. Brethren, you all belong to the family of Wiltshire Freemasons, and Provincial Grand Chaplain Bro Michael Barratt, and the Provincial Grand Almoner Bro Gary Dolphin are available should you feel the need to discuss any matter related to the current crisis. Please do contact them, even if it's just for a reassuring chat; and to those Brethren who are younger, in good health and are able to assist, please do keep a watch over those of our fraternity who are most at risk from this virus. Provincial Almoner Bro Gary Dolphin has also asked Lodge Almoners to make an extra effort to keep in touch with senior Brethren and Masonic widows;

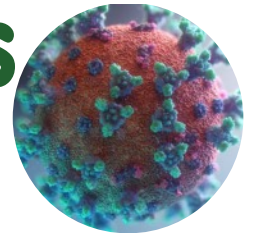
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Wiltshire Freemasonry



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he has also introduced a **How can we help you?** page on the Provincial website. I know that all our Lodge Almoners work very hard to keep in touch with members, but these are unprecedented times which require extra special activity, and I am grateful for your help in 'going the extra mile'.

Like you, I have been amazed at the actions of those who have stripped shops bare of all sorts of goods. Such actions, whilst understandable, are clearly unhelpful, and they can be injurious to those members of society who are unable to join the early morning melee. Human behaviour is extremely well researched, but even so I struggle to understand what motivates such irrational actions. Another quote from Disraeli, "*Circumstances are beyond human control, but our conduct is in our own power*".

We do not know how long this period of crisis will last, what we do know is that it will not be over in days or weeks, but rather it will be months before the windows are thrown open wide and the light of a new day will dawn in our lives. In the intervening time let us always be kind to one another.

Many Brethren, from across the Province will have received a letter from the Provincial Grand Secretary advising them of a promotion or first appointment to Provincial Grand Rank. I take this early opportunity to congratulate everyone who has been honoured, and to thank you for the service you give to the Province in particular, and to Freemasonry in general. I look forward to welcoming every recipient of a Provincial honour to the annual meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge which will be held in the City Hall at Salisbury on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

I am particularly delighted to congratulate Colin Cheshire on his promotion to Past Junior Grand Deacon, and Phil Still who has been appointed a Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies. The Rev John Hughes, who until recently was Metropolitan Grand Lodge Chaplain has been honoured as Past Assistant Grand Chaplain, and Richard Wallis as Past Assistant Grand Standard Bearer.

In the March Newsletter I made reference to the appointment of the two Wardens for 2021. I am also able to confirm that in October, Dr David Reed (Lodge of Remembrance No.4037) will be appointed Divisional Officer for the Central part of the Province, succeeding Andrew Tiffin, to whom I give my grateful thanks for the work he has undertaken for the Province over the years.

The Provincial Mentoring Team will be strengthened by the addition of three Divisional Mentoring Officers. Bros Richard Wright, Foster Telford and Alan Colman. I will be delighted to confirm their appointment at Provincial Grand Lodge in October.

I am very pleased to join with the Pro Grand Master in wholeheartedly supporting the comment he made at the recent QC meeting; that our Order benefits from the active participation of young, inexperienced Freemasons in Lodge ceremonies, especially, when the ceremony is conducted really well. I think it fair to say that in Wiltshire we welcome and support new Freemasons, irrespective of their age in years, taking an active part in the working of their individual Lodges, especially when the ceremony is conducted really well.

Finally, please do make a note of the numerous changes made to the schedule of events that were due to be supported by the Provincial Communication Team. We are aware that Downton Cuckoo Fair, and Bradford on Avon's Green Man Festival have been cancelled.

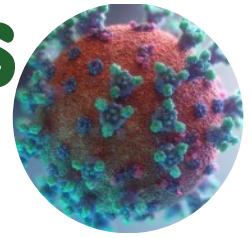
It only remains for me to wish you all well, with a heartfelt wish that you and your families stay safe during this difficult time. I am looking forward to when we will be back to normal, hopefully, soon.

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## Go beyond the stones....

If you have never attended the annual meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge, why not plan to do so this year. In fact why not make a day of it, and attend with other members of your Lodge, enjoy a leisurely lunch, take in the sights and sounds of Salisbury and support your Province at 2.30pm in City Hall on **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.**



Wiltshire Freemasonry



Annual meeting of Secretaries and Directors of Ceremonies

**CHIPPENHAM MASONIC HALL**

Friday 15th May 2020

7.00pm

Hot buffet available for which a small charge will be made



**CANCELLED**

## The Peter Winton Trophy...

Is your Lodge doing something 'special' this year? Something which promotes Freemasonry in your local community, something which makes your Lodge a contender for **The Peter Winton Trophy**. The Nomination Form is available on-line, visit the Provincial website [www.pglwilts.org.uk](http://www.pglwilts.org.uk) and click on The Peter Winton Trophy picture



## Disabled Children's Riding Charity

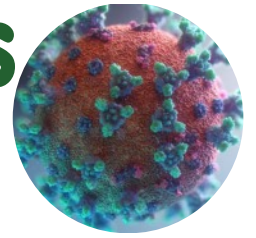
John Reid and Steve Darlington visited the Wylve Valley Disabled Children's Riding Charity on 10 March. On behalf of the Provincial Grand Chapter of Wiltshire they presented charity supporters Wendy and Helen with a cheque for £500 to help with the costs of this years riding camp. Every penny raised, by various means, including raffles, dances, quizzes, auctions of promises, music festivals, and collection boxes, goes towards providing a free week-long camping holiday. For more information on the charity -visit their website <https://www.wylvevalleycamp.org/about>

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Wiltshire Freemasonry

### The Provincial Grand Chaplain ...

Dear Brethren,

We find ourselves in unprecedented strange and difficult times with ever increasing restrictions being placed upon us by Government guidelines aimed at protecting our health from this dreadful contagious virus. Many have likened it to the last World War but in many respects this is even worse in that we can no longer meet members of our families, friends and in our case fellow brethren unless living in the same household. Since yesterday (March 23<sup>rd</sup>) all our place of worship have been closed and we must now practise our respective faiths in our own homes. Let us never forget that in some parts of the world even this is no longer possible.



My wife and I had chosen to socially distance ourselves before the new regulations came into force and we have sought to ensure that we have a structure to the day – part of that structure is to maintain our daily prayer life and to perform the Morning Office at 8 a.m. every morning in our garden room. Likewise to think and pray for all you absent brethren at 9 pm especially those who have been stranded overseas. I invite you to join us in those prayers in the morning and at night as part of your own daily routine.

Today's morning devotional from theologian, Henri Nouwen, I thought particularly appropriate for the situation we find ourselves in and I have adopted it for all you brethren and your families. The words "love" in this passage are synonymous with "charity". May the Great Architect of the Universe keep you forever safe.

*"It is central to the theme of the Volume of the Sacred Law that the Great Architect of the Universe's love for his people should not be forgotten. It should remain with us in the present – when everything is dark, when we are surrounded by despairing voices, when we do not see any exits, then we can find salvation in a remembered love, a love that is not simply a wistful recollection of a bygone past, but a living force that sustains us in the present. Through memory, love transcends the limit of time and offers hope at any moment of our lives".*

### A Message from Deputy Provincial Grand Master David Davies....

At this time of unprecedented crisis, I am in awe of the imaginative initiatives being developed by Brethren from Lodges across the Province which allow their members to keep in touch. I have been impressed by the On-line quizzes, learning material and chat rooms; and genuinely touched by the quite incredible acts of kindness, and generosity of spirit, as exemplified by offers of help, and support; all are measures by which to know a Freemason.



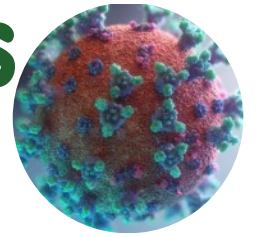
As Marion and I self isolate, it has to said with a cache of wine, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family, good health as we work to get through this national crisis.

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April 2020							Installation and other meetings				
Monday	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Monday	Apr	2	Clarendon Lodge	Trowbridge
							Monday	Apr	2	Brothers in Arms	Salisbury
		1	2	3	4	5	Tuesday	Apr	7	Methuen	Swindon
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Wednesday	Apr	15	Border Lodge	Ludgershall
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	Friday	Apr	17	Highbury Lodge	Swindon
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Tuesday	May	5	Lodge of Loyalty	Marlborough
27	28	29	30				Monday	May	18	Rectitude Essay	Corsham

CANCELLED

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ROYAL ARCH**

25 April - Swindon  
TBC - Salisbury

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL MASTER MASONS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ROYAL ARCH

**The Sarsen Club**

Bringing Young Freemasons In Wiltshire Together

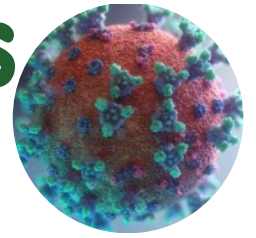
Support | Connect | Educate | Empower

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*A story for our time....*

Fred was called in from the garden – Charlie was on the line. *'Fred, is there any thing I can do. Any shopping?'* Charlie was very anxious to help. Coronavirus had arrived and forced the Masonic community to cancel all their meetings. The only link now was the weekly phone call or Lodge Secretary's email. Charlie knew Fred's wife was rather ill and for the next twelve weeks or so Fred wouldn't risk any infection by leaving the house to shop. Charlie recognised it was perhaps time, as well as for friends and family, for Masonic colleagues to step up the plate and demonstrate what true Brotherhood 'Agape' was all about.

Charlie's offers of shopping were gratefully accepted and a list promised for the next day. Charlie seized the chance of chat. *'There 's talk of the virus continuing for another twelve months, Fred. Many businesses will fold. Do you think Freemasonry can survive the loss of the younger members? Chaps will have got out of the monthly habit too.'*

Fred sipped a proffered coffee. His wife knew how long Charlie's phone calls could take! *'Over the past three hundred years, Charlie, Freemasonry has had to survive much worse – an attempted revolution and brutal suppression in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the forced amalgamation of the Antients and Moderns in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and two World Wars in the 20<sup>th</sup>. It has survived them all – and in fact grown more vigorously after each'.*

*'Why, Fred, what made Masonry rebound like that?'*

[Hearing this, Fred's wife refilled the cup and added a plate of chocolate digestives. She knew the signs, thinking *'...and they say women can talk...!'*]

*'Let me try to explain, Charlie. A year or so ago I sat in the Temple at Great Queen Street with about 2000 other Masons. Distinguished visitors apparently included judges and clergy, academics and accountants - in short men of every profession, trade and business. They'd travelled from as far as Malaya and Borneo in the East to the Caribbean and Eastern Canada in the West and included reps from India and Africa too. Significantly, most had come at their own expense.'*

*'Looking around this very relaxed and amiable assembly one question kept coming to my mind – what on earth was it about Freemasonry that made all the effort and expense of the lengthy journeys here so worthwhile? How did – how does - Freemasonry inspire such commitment to overcome all the hurdles along the way?'*

Charlie broke in. *'Fascinating. Did you come up with an answer?'*

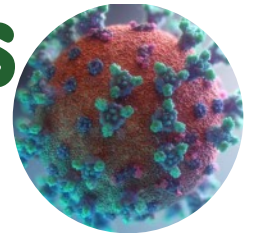
*'Well at one level, Charlie, we offer warm friendship out of the Lodge and a good -humoured conviviality within it. For many it provides relaxing company after the stresses of the working week There's also a comforting sense of well-being – a feeling of easy acceptance for simply being who we are, rich or poor, young or old.'*

*'Many organisations can claim that, Fred', said Charlie 'and they raise huge sums for charity as well - the Rotary, Lions, Buffalo, Caribou etc. all come to mind. What do you reckon makes the Freemasons so different?'*



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Fred munched a biscuit, gathering his thoughts. *'Could it be that these other bodies have largely ended up as fund raising social clubs where the emphasis is on the club and how much it raises, not on the chaps within it?'*

*'Freemasonry however starts and ends with the chap. The lodge is merely his location. We offer him a global system of morality and its principles are very clear and unwavering – a brotherly love and natural charity towards others and hopefully the courage to always remain true to one's own nature.'*

Charlie mused: *'Some of the younger chaps simply look forward to dressing up -white shirt, dark suit - for the monthly sliver service dinner which is a nice blend of formality and light hearted banter. It makes a pleasant change from eating in our working clothes. We're Brits – we like that bit of formality and ceremonial. It make us who we are.'*

Fred laughed. *'You could also say that our three hundred years of history makes Masons who we are. Our traditions are of very long standing and for many Masons that's important too. They make us aware of our system of morality, Many are inspired by historical stories and even have links with the tools used by the old operative masons. Charlie, we can take great pride in this 300 and more years of English history.'*

*'What makes you so confident about that helping us to survive the Coronavirus, Fred?'*

*At heart, Charlie, while Rotary and the others can raise oodles of money, our Masonic morality tells us that true charity comes from the heart, not the wallet. In the middle of a virus pandemic it is not a raffle or wodge of ten pound notes that matters to people; it is the welcome voice on the phone, the cheery email, the kindly offer of shopping or collecting the medicine. For Masons, Charlie, it is always people, not money, that matters most.*

**Note from Editor:** Fred & Charlie is the brainchild of W Bro Michael Lee of Stonehenge Lodge No.6114 which meets in Salisbury. Michael is a regular contributor to the pages of Across the Plain, the Provincial Magazine, and he has provided a number of articles and papers for **SOLOMON**.

Michael's easy to read, conversational style of writing, coupled with his wealth of knowledge, provide the perfect antidote to being constrained from attending Lodge of Instruction, and even a regular meeting. During the next few weeks the Province will publish a number of Michael's Musings.

### The Assistant Provincial Grand Master....



April is the month in which we think of April Fools, and Saint George's Day; two very different events but both firmly entrenched in the psyche of an Englishman. This April we will all be self-isolating (a term I never imagined would enter the English language) and we may be doing this for many weeks to come. I can fully appreciate how many of our Brethren will be suffering from 'withdrawal symptoms' and a lack of Masonic companionship. However, we should not let this national crisis stop us from keeping in touch with our Brethren in Freemasonry. My friend the

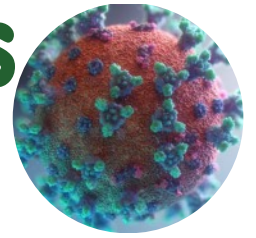
Provincial Almoner is encouraging members to be a part of the **How can we help you?** campaign, please do think of how you can be a friend to someone in need of anything, even if it's just a chat over the phone. Being alone should never ever lead to loneliness.

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Quick Quiz..... (Answers can be found on the website from Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April)

Wiltshire Freemasonry



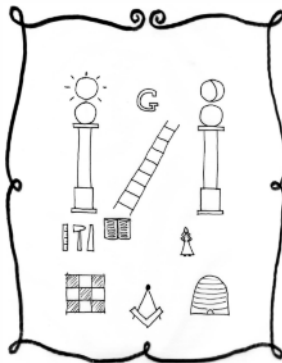
1. What is this object called?
2. Where would it be found in a Lodge ?
3. What is it used for?



4. Grand Officers are appointed by who?
5. The dress collar of a Grand Officer is decorated with what?
6. What is distinctive about the apron of an active Grand Officer?
7. When PrGMs process into Grand Lodge, what is the order of precedence?
8. In what Degree is Grand Lodge opened?
9. What is the salutation to the Grand Master and the Pro Grand Master?



10. Who am I?
11. What Provincial Office do I hold?
12. What is the jewel on my Provincial collar?



13. During which degree would you use this Tracing Board?
14. What does the ladder represent?
15. What does the ladder connect?
16. What is the object in the right hand corner?
17. What was it meant to represent?
18. When did it disappear from the Tracing Board?



19. On what can you see in full this image?
- 20 Who are the active Provincial Standard Bearers?
21. What is the correct abbreviation of the rank of their office?



22. Why do Provincial Grand Stewards wear red regalia?
23. What is a 'Horn of Cornucopia'?
24. How many Provincial Grand Stewards are appointed by the PrGM?
25. What colour are their wands of office?



26. If you knew the answer to the first question - what is this object called?
27. Where would it be found in a Lodge ?
28. What is often connected to this item?
29. What symbolically does this item signify?
30. This object is one the three ----- jewels of the Lodge.

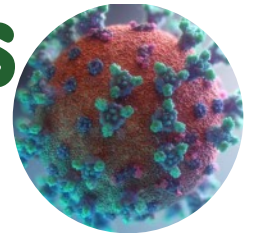
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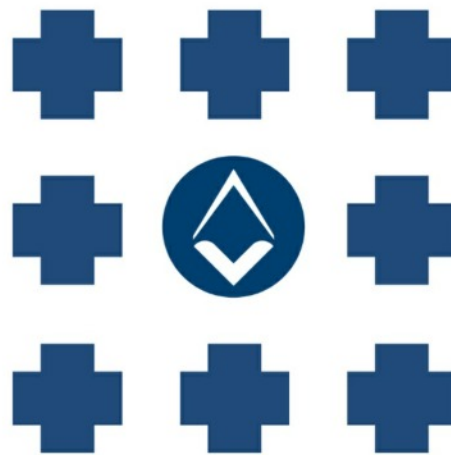
April 2020

We've already asked a lot....

Thank you to everyone who has responded to the Provincial Almoners **What can we do to help you?** Campaign; and an equally huge thank you to everyone who has taken to heart the Provincial Mentor's 'big ask' - that you work with the Lodge secretary and keep in touch with new members. Many of you are already keeping in touch via phone, Skype, Zoom and Whats App, and I know that wherever possible Brethren are collecting shopping or delivering prescriptions, even walking the dog.

Now there is another call being made on your charity - can you help the NHS?

Join here <https://www.goodsamapp.org/nhs>



THE NHS NEEDS OUR HELP

## VOLUNTEER AND HELP 1.5 MILLION PEOPLE STAY SAFE

- Deliver medicines from pharmacies;
- Drive patients to appointments;
- Bring patients home from hospital;
- Make regular phone calls to check on people isolating at home.

VOLUNTEERS MUST BE OVER 18 AND FIT AND WELL WITH NO SYMPTOMS

Visit the Provincial website [www.pglwilts.org.uk](http://www.pglwilts.org.uk)

Wiltshire Freemasonry