



In touch > On line

The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons

Stay Alert, Control The Virus, Save Lives



May 2020

What does the future hold for Freemasonry?



As the Government announces the need for a further period of social restrictions I hope this mid-month edition of the Provincial Newsletter finds you all well and keeping your spirits up by way of doing all those jobs around the home that built up over the winter months.

First, I'm sure you will have noticed that the newsletter has a 'new look' and it's not the fact that I'm writing the front page item. Rather I am referring to the new title **In touch > On line** which more accurately describes what the newsletter does and how it does it; by helping to keep everyone **In touch**, and doing so **On line**. I do hope you like the new format.

I would like to reiterate the sentiments of UGLE by saying that in today's uncertain times, Freemasonry provides an anchor of stability for our members. The Masonic principles of integrity, charity and respect for others are as valid during these times as they have ever been. Notably the immense contribution made by Freemasons of all backgrounds within their communities is a great tribute to the value of this organisation in the modern world.

On behalf of the Provincial Grand Master I would like to thank all those Wiltshire Freemasons who have given of their time and resources, not only now but in the time leading up to this crisis. It is your dedicated support in contacting the older brethren, delivering groceries, enthusing our new made brothers with Lodge quizzes, having virtual get togethers and all the other initiatives that enables Freemasonry to continue as a vibrant, credible and useful part of society. This makes me immensely proud to be a Freemason and to be your Deputy Provincial Grand Master.

The Prime Minister has announced that restrictions on movement and social distancing will continue for the next six weeks. With little, if any real easing of the situation, I believe we must now accept that the provisos attached to the five conditions to be met before full interaction with each other is possible, makes it very unlikely that we will meet together for some time. In truth many of our members may only feel able to return when there is a vaccination against the Covid-19 virus, and even then social distancing may well continue until the vast majority of the population is protected and numbers of new cases have fallen to an extremely low and acceptable level. With regards to Freemasonry, the concept of 40/50 men meeting in closed rooms and then sitting shoulder to shoulder at a dinner is not, in my opinion a conceivable notion until it is declared safe to do so, and even then I suspect some restrictions will apply for a period of time yet to be decided.

The Provincial Executive is acutely aware that the present situation in which there are so many unknowns, and an equal number of unanswered questions, leaves us all in a quandary as to what we will do and more importantly whether we will ever return to how we were. We now await further advice from UGLE which will be shared with you through your Lodge secretary and bUGLE.

My message to you is simply this. Thank you for your dedicated support and continued patience. Thank you for the marvellous work you are doing making sure that all our Lodge members are being looked after and kept as safe as possible. Thank you to everyone who has followed the guidance from the Government and the scientific community to restrict making unnecessary journeys, and to close by reminding you of the new message - **Stay Alert, Control The Virus, Save Lives.**

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Good News is what we want to hear....

In these very difficult times one of the most cheering aspects is in discovering the true nature of the 'kind heart' and the capacity of people to surprise you by their generosity of spirit. We think of Captain Tom Moore who reached his 100th birthday this month. Tom has not only raised many millions for NHS Charities, he also made it to the top of the 'charts' duetting with Michael Ball in a rendition of 'We'll never walk alone', and to cap it all we read that he has received over 120,000 birthday cards from well wishers from across the globe. Now that is a good news story.

We are sure there are many good news stories out there just waiting to be told, and confident you have one or two which we would just love you to share. It doesn't have to be about raising millions of pounds for the NHS or running a food box delivery service; it can be anything that you think is good news. All we ask is that you share it with us, and if you can please send a picture, for as I'm sure you will remember, a picture paints ten thousand words. Send your story to pcowiltshire@pglwilts.org.uk

Corsham extends its food chain....

The secretary of Corsham Lodge No.6616 John Deane, reports on the success of the food box delivery service for Freemasons and Masonic widows who, for various reasons are unable to shop for themselves. Following the instruction from HM Government that certain categories of people must self isolate for 12 weeks, and others are restricted in their movements, Freemasons from Corsham put in



Tom Snell and John Deane
"A job well done"

place a scheme to deliver Food Boxes to the most vulnerable in the local area.

Working with Totally Food which is owned and managed by Tom Snell (one time private chef to the Saudi Royal Family and chef at Michelin starred 'The Hare restaurant') the Corsham Lodge members, under the direction of local resident and secretary John Deane, have created a fresh food package which is then distributed to addresses in Corsham, Chippenham, Melksham, Bath, Devizes and Swindon. Currently John and his team of 12 helpers make up 25 to 30 boxes every week and deliver them each Friday. Want to know more about the Food Box scheme? Email: pcowiltshire@gmail.com

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Having fun and raising funds the Moonraker way....

The late Peter Winton often used to say that the most important element of fundraising could be found in its first three letters. If fundraising isn't fun then it becomes a chore, and no one really enjoys having to do 'chores'. The Brethren of Moonraker Lodge No.8747 which meets in Devizes have recently held three online quiz events each one organised (what a great pun) by Provincial Organist Gary Cook who told me that the quizzes were intended as self entertainment as a way of bringing families together in this difficult time. To enter, all they had to do was send Gary their answer sheets and make a minimum donation of £2 to the Masters Charity. After a week the quizmaster (that's Gary) would send the answers out, declare the winner and send out the questions for the next quiz. Donations were made to the quiz banker (yes that's Gary) by paypal or bank transfer. The three quizzes have so far raised £125. Well done Gary for **ORGAN**ising and well done Moonraker.

Marlborough collect for NHS....

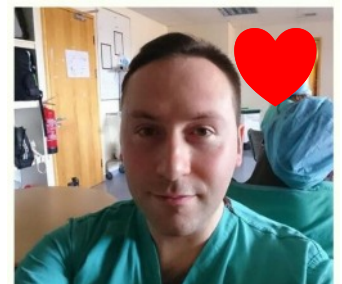
When a local Freemason's wife Alison Bates needed a central collection point for donations of toiletries and essential items for staff and patients in the Coronavirus wards of local hospitals, Lodge of Loyalty No.1533 Almoner Nigel Bates swung into action and opened Marlborough's Masonic Hall. The team at Southmead Accident & Emergency Department said a huge THANK YOU to Alison and the Freemasons meeting in Marlborough, Wiltshire. Essentials and 'goodies' do make a difference.



Southmead Hopsital A&E staff say "Thank You"

A Wiltshire Warrior... Antonio Pinna of Sarum Lodge No.5137

Sarum Lodge No.5137 member Antonio Pinna is on the NHS front line working with doctors and nurses on a Covid-19 ward in Salisbury's General Hospital. He joins many Freemasons across the country who are providing support and nursing care to the victims of the awful Coronavirus. Antonio visited the Provincial Display Trailer in April 2019 and following a number of other interactions joined the Lodge in November. In October this year he will be getting married to Maria.



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Stop Press....

Wiltshire Freemasons through the Masonic Charitable Foundation have made a Grant of £10,000 to St Joseph's School in Salisbury. The Grant will enable the school to produce 20,000 full face visors which will be distributed to local care homes, ambulance stations, GP surgeries and anywhere an emergency services worker requires Personal Protective Equipment. The MCF has set aside over £1 million for Covid-19 related support with £100,000 being allocated to RCG9.



Hearts That Care....



Will you help John Moorehouse and the Brethren of White Horse Lodge No.2227 raise funds to buy a Heart That Cares? For only £3 you can make a huge difference to a NHS front line nurse, doctor, porter, cleaner, physiotherapist, radiographer or pharmacist. Your donation can provide a Heart That Cares to a care assistant or nurse in a nursing home. Your contribution can show an ambulance service paramedic that someone, somewhere really does care. Don't take my word for it, this is what one paramedic wrote after finishing a pretty gruelling shift.

"Thank you so much sending over the "hearts that care". It means so much at the end of a really hard shift to put my hand in my pocket and find that my beautiful heart is there. The kind words show that the community really does care and thinks of us constantly. I have shared your hearts with the control room, Covid-19 nurses, and with other ambulance personnel. Thank you so much and thank you to your lodge for supporting and giving these to us. They mean the world. Sometimes we feel very low, overwhelmed and very much on our ownbut your hearts mean we know you are all looking out for us. Thank you."

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Forget-Me-Not Masonic Horse Brass....

We can always depend on Jim Speed a member of Fiat Lux lodge No. 9773 to come up with a great idea, and his latest one is an absolute cracker. During a lull in his day (there's not many of those, it has to be said), Jim was looking at the antique Masonic swinger horse brass on the wall at his home while at the same listening to the build up to the VE Day celebrations on the television. The thought occurred to him that Freemasonry is in a similar state today as it was in the war years when the forget-me-not flower became the remembrance symbol of the Craft.

From that initial thought Jim set out a scheme where the forget-me-not could be aligned with the square and compasses to form a uniquely different Masonic horse brass, and provide a poignant reminder of how Freemasonry survived Covid-19.

From the sale of the first Masonic horse brass, members of Fiat Lux Lodge were able to raise £500 for **Teddies for Loving Care - Wiltshire** Jim's hope is that this latest initiative will raise even more for the MCF Covid-19 Appeal.



PLACE YOUR ORDER TODAY
jimspeed@gmail.com



Overall width of brass 2 1/4" 57mm.
Section marked X cut out.
Forget-me-not painted blue.
Black area recessed unpainted

The picture on the left shows Jim's horse brass with a tiny forget-me-not flower in the centre of the Square and Compasses. From this idea the drawing on the right was produced. This shows the square and compasses have been drawn larger without the inner ring, so that the flower petals of the forget-me-not will look more impressive.

The height of the brass would be 4" and the width 2 1/4" and the retail price £22 plus packing and UK postage £3.50. It will also be possible to offer a wholesale price for 5 brasses or more. Priority could be given to the production of these brasses when the foundry return to work following the lock-down. Consideration is being given to provide a base for the swinger brass so that it could be displayed on the mantelpiece.

To order your Masonic Horse brass please contact Jim by email jimspeed42@gmail.com
All profits will be donated to the **MCF Covid-19 Appeal** and will be paid through Fiat Lux Lodge No 9773 charity account.

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