



In touch > On line

The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons

Freemasons are going back to work



Mid August 2020

The rule of six, and what it means to Freemasonry....

Wiltshire Freemasonry



At the start of this month I congratulated everyone who had made herculean efforts to prepare risk assessments, safe operating procedures, specific Covid-19 protocols, and physical signposting, all with one purpose in mind, that being the safety and well being of Brethren who are able and wishing to return to Lodge activities. I was also very much aware of how many Wiltshire Freemasons were keen to resume their Masonic activities, even if that meant truncated ceremonies, and no festive board. Equally, I am aware that for some Brethren the prospect of returning to their Lodge without the safety net of a Covid-19 vaccine is simply something they are unable to countenance. Lodges which have been able to hold a meeting, especially a Passing ceremony, have assured me the occasion was a resounding success. I hope this will encourage Lodges to take a very positive view to hold meetings, and more importantly to make sure a Brother who wishes to be Passed to the Second Degree is able to do so.

Recently I received further clarification from Grand Lodge with regard how the rule of six will affect our meetings, in short it is not unexpected and can be summarised as follows. Following a meeting of the Craft Rulers and the Standing Committee of the Board of General Purposes, and in consultation with the Royal Arch Rulers and the President of the Committee of General Purposes, it has been decided to restrict English Lodge and Chapter meetings to no more than six attendees. This is in response to the new laws which come into force on Monday 14th September.

Sadly, this means that the special meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge, which was to be held on Friday 16th October at Chippenham is also cancelled.

UGLE also now advises that face coverings are worn at all meetings, even though the law does not currently require this. For the avoidance of doubt those who are exempt under the law from wearing face coverings in shops are not expected to wear them at meetings. The, admittedly small, good news is that if they wish, the six or fewer who attend a meeting may now dine together. While the announcements will disappoint many Brethren, I am sure you will agree it does clarify the position and enables Lodges in the Province to plan for the next few months.

Amid, what appears to be only doom and gloom, I am delighted to share with you some really good news. As many of you will know, W Bro Stanley Iles (Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation No.355) donated a trophy in memory of the late VW Bro Peter Winton. Stanley wanted the trophy to be awarded to the Lodge which, in the opinion of the PrGM "has made an outstanding contribution in the Wiltshire community." At Provincial Grand Lodge in 2019 we announced the launch of the trophy and invited nominations to be submitted for consideration by a small committee headed up by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master David Davies. Brethren, I am pleased to say that a number of excellent nominations were made, and the committee spent a considerable amount of time considering the merits of each one. To coin a phrase, there could only be one winner of the trophy, but I am sure you will agree there are countless winners, and no losers when it comes to people engaging in charitable works. I am not going to steal the Deputy Provincial Grand Master's thunder, therefore please go to page 4 and discover the winning recipient of the inaugural presentation of The Peter Winton Trophy. Suffice to say, I offer my congratulations to the winning Lodge, and my thanks to the Brethren of each of the other Lodges nominated.



In touch > On line

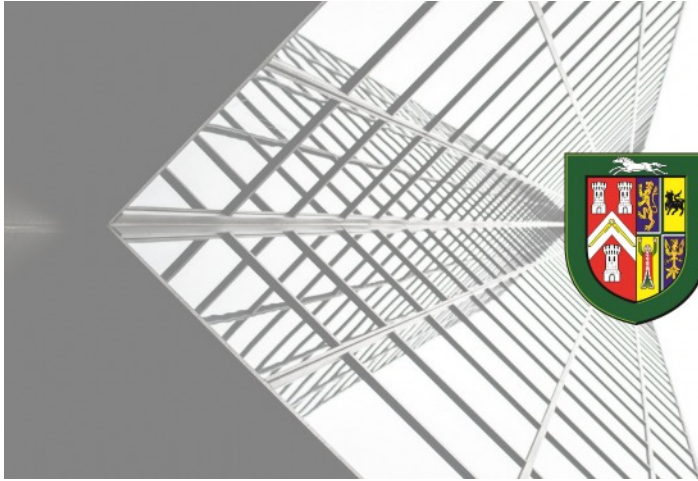
The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons

Freemasons are going back to work



Mid August 2020 Have you seen the 'wobble'....

Wiltshire Freemasonry




WILTSHIRE
FREEMASONS

The 'Wiltshire Wobble' has attracted quite a few fans, and not only Wiltshire Freemasons. For those of you who haven't seen it, all you have to do is visit the Provincial website www.pglwilts.org.uk and watch the shield logo give a little 'wobble' as the words WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS zoom in from right to left. It's a simple piece of animation which just adds a feature and interest to the website.

The Communication Team is always looking for new and interesting ideas to make viewing the website easier and enjoyable. After all the website is our window to the world and as such we recognise the need to keep it fresh and vibrant. Have you an idea? if so, please email pcowiltshire@gmail.com

Vastern Lodge Discussion Group....

The Master and Brethren of Vastern Lodge No.8977 invite you to join them on Tuesday 29th September when they welcome Dr David West as their guest speaker to the ever popular Vastern Lodge Discussion Group. The group, which has been meeting every Tuesday since 'lockdown' has been at the forefront in welcoming guest speakers to their events - Dr David West is the latest and will be speaking on his latest book *The Enigma Of The Royal Arch*, and two of his most popular works 'Managing The Future Of Freemasonry' and 'Masonic Recruitment'. Join Vastern Lodge for what promises to be an interesting evening, and you can have the best seat in the house.



THE ENIGMA OF THE ROYAL ARCH

DAVID WEST

VASTEREN LODGE No.8977
DISCUSSION GROUP
invite you to join them

A ZOOM presentation by
Dr DAVID WEST
'Writing a Masonic Book'

Tuesday 29th September 7.00pm

Contact: pcowiltshire@gmail.com



In touch > On line

The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons

Freemasons are going back to work



Mid August 2020

Help in time of need a message from Gary Dolphin....

Wiltshire Freemasonry



The Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) continue to provide support for the Province whilst working remotely from their respective homes. It has proved a hugely effective system and has provided applicants with much needed support, particularly those requiring urgent attention for cancer, heart and ophthalmic related treatments. The MCF are continuing to maintain medical support for the foreseeable future, but only for the three aforementioned urgent treatments. They continue to work toward reopen support for a wider range of applications as soon as circumstances permit.

Enquires and grants approved by the MCF for the Province are as follows:

Last year - (4 October 2018 – 2 October 2019)

This year - (3 October 2019 – 29 August 2020)

Enquires – 43

Enquires - 33

Grants awarded – 44

Grants Awarded - 42

Grants total - £137,876

Grants total - £145,071

The reduction in the number of enquires and grants awarded over the past year, is due to a reduction in the types of support available during the Covid epidemic. The general feeling is that, as the furlough scheme starts to be reduced, the applications for assistance from the MCF may increase.

Visiting Volunteers. The visiting volunteer scheme has not been able to operate in support of our members throughout the Covid epidemic. All cases requiring visits have been attended to remotely by telephone by a member of the AST (Advice and Support Team), who continues to cover Wiltshire, Dorset, and Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The MCF are eager to reinstate the scheme in support of the AST members, and this is planned to restart from 14th September, when current Visiting Volunteers (who have completed their on-line training), will be asked to undertake remote applications and interviews.

Teddies for Loving Care. The Province currently have stocks of 25 boxes, or 1800 teddy bears, which are currently being stored by WBro. John King. Further stocks are subject to a 48 hours delivery window. The 'new style' bear will be available to order from PMS as soon as existing stocks of the original design have been exhausted. We are very fortunate to have John King, and Ian Priest coordinating the supply of the TLC bears to the A&E Departments of Salisbury and Swindon Hospitals.

Lodge Almoners. Lodge Almoners across the Province provide support to members and their families. During the current Covid-19 crisis they have maintained regular contact with members and Lodge widows, which has been essential in helping to prevent the feeling of isolation and loneliness experienced by single and senior members of society as a whole. The MCF factsheets addressing the problem are readily available to read on-line, and I have ensured that all Lodge Almoners are aware of the available resources.

Masonic Widows Association. I continue to communicate with the three branches through the respective liaison officers, and am delighted to report that the ladies remain extremely positive in spite of the circumstances of Covid which has played havoc with their plans for 2020.



In touch > On line

The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons

Freemasons are going back to work



Mid August 2020 Congratulations....

Wiltshire Freemasonry



One of the great pleasures associated with being a member of the Provincial Executive team are the myriad opportunities to meet Brethren who have undertaken some incredible works in promoting Freemasonry. By promoting, I don't mean donating money (as important as that is) but rather by the giving of time and talent. Two elements which we all are capable of sharing but which often tend to be thought of as 'too hard to do'. I never cease to be amazed at the projects and initiatives entered into by Lodges and individuals, and over the past few years the breadth of achievements has left me very humbled.

In 2017 W Bro Steve Bridge introduced '300 hours for 300 years' which asked Lodges to consider giving 300 hours of time to promote Freemasonry as it celebrated 300 years since the formation of the first or premier Grand Lodge. The initiative was a great success. In 2019 W Bro Stanley Iles approached the Province with a proposal designed to honour the name of the late VW Bro Peter Winton, and to encourage and reward a Lodge which promoted Freemasonry in the community. A magnificent trophy was donated to the Province by W Bro Iles at Provincial Grand Lodge in 2019, and inaugurated as 'The Peter Winton Trophy'.

Strangely Covid-19 that has done so much to frustrate and demoralise was to prove the catalyst for a resurgence in Masonic charitable activity, with Lodges developing new ways to help their members 'get through' lockdown, self isolation, and shielding. In addition some Lodges joined forces to provide Personal Protective Equipment and morale boosting goody bags to front line care home workers; while others produced the wonderful 'Hearts That Care' (see top right of page) which they donated to NHS and emergency service staff. These acts of kindness epitomised everything that we mean when we refer to 'that virtue which distinguishes a Freemason's heart' and even moreso when we quote Wiltshire's own version - 'charity it's in a freemason's DNA'.

Over the past few weeks a small committee considered each of the nominations made for the Peter Winton Trophy. Believe me when I say that it was both a joyous task and a difficult one. Joyous because the committee was able to read about the incredible commitment of Lodges and individuals to helping others; difficult, as there could only be one winner of the trophy.

But a decision was reached, and I am delighted to be able to confirm that the first winner of the magnificent Peter Winton Trophy awarded to the Lodge which made a significant contribution to promoting Wiltshire Freemasonry in the local community is **CORSHAM LODGE No.6616**

With the suspension of Freemasonry in March and the national lockdown, Corsham Lodge created an emergency food box delivery service for those members self isolating or shielding and therefore unable to leave their homes. The initial success of the food box initiative led to an expansion of the service to include Masonic widows, neighbours, friends, and members of the local community. Several weeks into lockdown Corsham Lodge joined a venture initiated by White Horse Lodge No.2227 in conjunction with St Joseph's RC School in Salisbury to distribute full face shields to local care homes. In addition to the full face shields the Lodge delivered morale boosting packages to front line care home workers.