



# In touch > On line

## The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons



Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.

January 2021

### Another false dawn or are we about to break through?



One thing Covid-19 has taught me is that now is the time for us to look after the members of our Wiltshire Masonic family. How our Province responds in times such as these, will shape future levels of loyalty, commitment, and long-lasting engagement from a membership which finds itself separated from the friends they have made, and with whom they want so desperately to meet. At the start of January I asked the question "When will be placed in Tier 4?" I truly did not envisage that the government would impose a third national lockdown with all the negative connotations such action brings with it. Shielding self isolation, physical distancing, and more besides. A new mutant variant of the virus has become the latest enemy with whom we have to do battle, and as I write this article it appears the first round has gone its way, with Covid infection rates up, hospitalisations up, and sadly a similar increase in mortality rates.

We are going through the most terrible pandemic the modern world has ever seen; people are justly terrified, anxious, depressed, heartbroken and hopeful, all at once. Which reminds me of the words spoken by Marie Curie who said "*We are persuaded that nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.*" I think these words can be a comfort to us all during the days which lie ahead.

In the last newsletter I wrote that "*when you think all is lost, when all is dire and bleak, there is always hope.*" In trying to gain a greater appreciation of the dreadful Covid -19 virus I found myself reading an account of the outbreak of Polio which occurred in Glasgow in 1950. This led me to discover a little about Dr Jonas Salk the American virologist and medical researcher who developed one of the first successful polio vaccines. Salk was an optimist and said "*Hope lies in dreams, in imagination, and in the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality.*" I think optimism is a characteristic shared by many Freemasons, and it is the desire for an outcome and a belief in that outcome's possibility that fuels our hope in the transforming power of the approved vaccines for Covid-19. It is only right that the lexicon of Covid should now be Pfizer, Astra Zeneca and Moderna - these are the game changers which will enable us to once more meet in our wonderful Masonic Lodge Rooms and to once again engage in the performing of our beautiful ceremonies.

The Mentoring Team are close to finalising what will be a first for Wiltshire (and possibly nationwide) when they offer the first of a series of on-line training modules for Lodge Mentors. I am sure there will be some who will ask why we need such new fangled stuff when we have managed perfectly well for over 300 years. Adapting to new processes is something we have acknowledged is essential, and I am sure Lodge Mentors will recognise the benefits of this latest initiative and cheerfully embrace it.

Not to be outdone (although it's not a competition) I gather the Learning & Development Team is preparing some new material for 2021 together with a new format for presenting their programme to Brethren seeking to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.

Finally, I do trust you will ZOOM in to the first in a series of online meetings when you will have the opportunity to hear from a Provincial Officer, first up is Almoner Gary Dolphin.

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## Mentoring Matters says David Little Provincial Mentor....



As you would expect from the Provincial Mentor, I really believe Mentoring Matters, especially so in these strange and unfamiliar times when social isolation leads to a sense of loneliness and contact with friends and family is restricted or not allowed.

The vital importance of mentoring was recognised in 2012 by the introduction of a 'collared office' at Provincial and Lodge level. Over the past 8 years the vital role played by the Mentor has been further enhanced by the many initiatives which have been introduced to help consolidate the work the Mentor does and to provide the essential tools that enable him to perform the role. In Wiltshire the Provincial Mentoring Team has published a newsletter aptly titled **Mentoring Matters** which has been sent to each of the 44 Lodge Mentors.

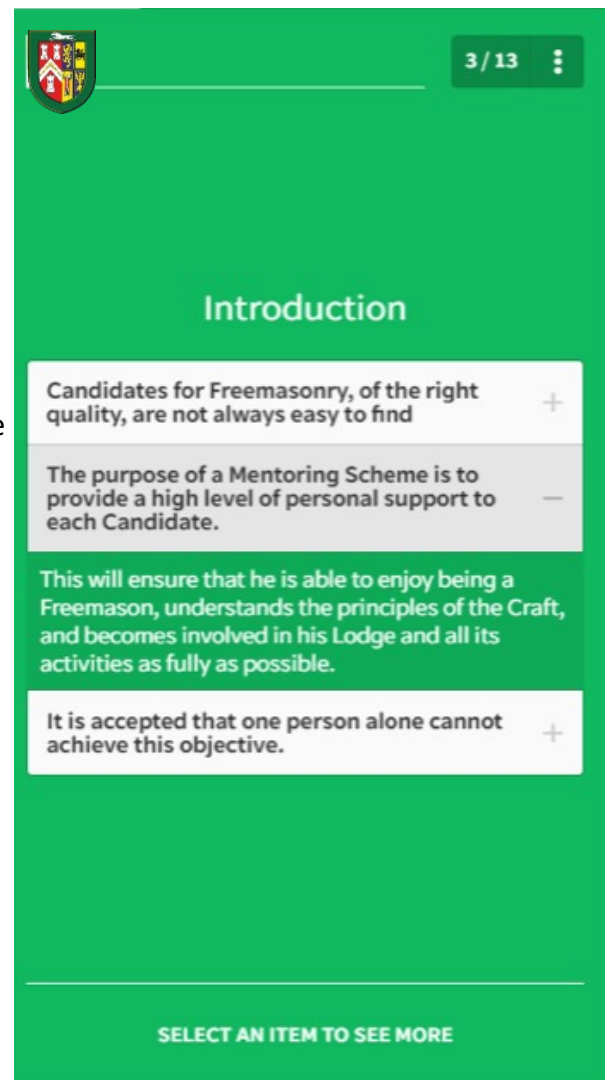
The responses to date suggest the newsletter is a welcome addition to the Mentor's email inbox. But rest assured we are not resting on our laurels, but are working even harder to make sure that what we are producing is what our Lodge Mentors need, and helps them to perform the important duties of their office.

The team is also close to launching a series of online training modules specifically designed for the Lodge Mentor. Alan Colman, Richard Wright and Foster Telford, the Divisional Mentors, are in the final stages of completing Module #1 which they fully intend to 'roll out' by the end of February.

As we move into 2021 with the news that 'lockdown' will probably continue until Easter, the work of the Lodge Mentor will be even more critical. I am sure they will be working behind the scenes keeping in contact with younger and newer Brethren, while not neglecting those members who are missing the camaraderie associated with our wonderful fraternity.

It's almost certainly true to say that the Lodge Mentor has probably never had such a important part to play in the day to day affairs of the Lodge than he does today.

If you are unsure of the name of your Lodge Mentor, the easiest way to find out is to look in the Provincial Year Book, or contact your Lodge Secretary who will be only too pleased to provide his name and contact details



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### Great result from video....

The Corsham Lodge Christmas video has been viewed by over 4,000 people which is absolutely fantastic. Even more impressive is the fact that the Lodge has received three firm membership enquiries as a result of it being seen by Corsham residents. Interviews have been conducted, Form Ps have been despatched and plans to Initiate eight candidates are underway. What a fabulous position for the Lodge to be in - well done Corsham.



### Good news from Clarendon Lodge....

It's always a pleasure to receive a 'Good News' story and this one from Clarendon Lodge meeting in Trowbridge makes a great start to 2021. The Lodge made a donation to the Wessex MS Therapy Centre and Graham Greenhill, and Charity Steward Derek Phillips presented a cheque for £500 to MS Centre volunteer Rosie Elliot.



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### Braving the perils of the North Sea....

Perambulating around the Lodge Room under the watchful eye of Director of Ceremonies John Davies might be scary for some, but for Moonraker Lodge No.8747 member Kyle House a former soldier and now a paramedic there are even scarier things. Kyle is currently undertaking a tour of duty serving the communities which make up the people who work the many oil and gas rigs located in the North Sea. Inhospitable weather and freezing conditions, coupled with volatile seascapes combine to make the North Sea one of the most dangerous natural environments known to man.

Kyle lives in transit accommodation in Scotland and provides emergency paramedic response via helicopter, and provides medical care for anyone on the rig or platform who has an accident or is suffering from an illness. He had to virtually self finance the training courses for his paramedic qualification. Moonraker secretary John Clarke (tongue in cheek) advised the editor that the Lodge encouraged Kyle to qualify on the basis of self interest given the age of some of the members. I'm sure Kyle will look after them very well.

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Proud to be a  
Wiltshire  
Freemason

Kyle House  
Moonraker Lodge  
No.8747