



“Life's trials will test you, and shape you, but don't let them change who you are.”

April 2021

We can look forward to a brighter future together,....

Wiltshire Freemasons



In the March edition of **In touch>On line** I reflected on a phrase written by Aaron Lauritsen in his best selling work ‘100 Days Drive: The Great North American Road Trip’. I have returned to Lauritsen this month and used another of his quotes on the header of the newsletter *“Life's trials will test you, and shape you, but don't let them change who you are.”* I am sure you will agree with me that the past year has tested the resolve, and the courage, of every member of society. I know that for many, the events of 2020 have shaped their lives in a way which they could never have

imagined. For some, the year will be remembered as a time when they lost a loved one, and were denied the opportunity of being with them when they needed that most basic of human need, to be with someone and to share that moment when at the closing hour of existence they passed from this sublunary abode to be received into the presence of the Great Architect Of The Universe. For others, there has been the sadness of not being able to celebrate a significant birthday or anniversary, be present at the birth of their child, or visit a loved one resident in a care home; finally, just about everyone has suffered as a result of not being able to meet friends and family in a social environment.

These are immensely desperate trials which test our resolve and shape our thoughts. Lauritsen asks us to resist the temptation to let these huge disappointments *“....change who you are.”* In a thought provoking series of online interviews a number of Brethren have spoken about their own mental well being (a follow on from the excellent talk given by Bro Chris Wall at the Vastern Lodge Discussion Group), and the Provincial Almoner has reinforced the need to signpost anyone in need of help to contact the MCF sponsored counselling support team whose freephone number is 0800 035 60 90 or email help@mcf.org.uk

I deliberately use words that are familiar to every one of us, words which are instructive, comforting, inspiring, and motivational, and convey a deep moral, social and spiritual message. I am very conscious of the need to recognise the fact that the pandemic has restricted the opportunity for Lodges to pay the proper tribute to ‘departed merit’ - I am equally persuaded that every Lodge secretary will be mindful of this, and that proper recognition will be afforded to those Brethren at the next Regular Meeting of the Lodge.

Thank you to all the Lodges that have responded to the Provincial Secretary advising of plans to hold meetings during the summer months. I know some Lodges are planning to hold multiple meetings in order to welcome in to Freemasonry good men who have patiently been waiting to be initiated.

The Province has also been affected by the Covid vaccination programme. Regrettably, but understandably the City Hall in Salisbury has been booked by the authorities to operate as a vaccination hub until the end of the year. Today, I am able to confirm that Provincial Grand Lodge will be held at the Civic Hall in Trowbridge on Thursday 7th October. Please do put this date in your diary as I am confident that many Brethren will be anxious to attend this meeting. I can do no better than close this short piece with the words written by HM The Queen *“We look forward to a brighter future together.”*



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NHS Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day....

Wiltshire Freemasons have certainly embraced the opportunity to join in the celebration of NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers Day at 10.00am on 5 July 2021.

The Provincial Secretary has confirmed that a number of Masonic Halls, including Bradford on Avon, Chippenham, and Corsham have set plans in motion to celebrate **NHS Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day** on Monday 5th July. This is a superb opportunity for us to show our appreciation of NHS and Care workers. Masonic halls across the Province have made enquiries about purchasing a NHS banner to display outside their building, or as one Lodge has decided, the nearest set of railings. If you have a suitable fixing point at your Masonic Centre or hall, or space to hang a banner, they are available from the supplier's website <https://www.nhsfrontlineday.org/merchandisers/j-w-plant-co-ltd/> (please note that only official flags, bunting and banners can be used).

This is a fantastic opportunity for you to show your appreciation of NHS and Care workers. If your Lodge or a member of your Lodge is doing something special to mark the occasion, please do let the Provincial Communication Team know of any plans you may have. I know they are keen to promote your efforts with local media and the in-house team responsible for producing Freemasonry Today.

Spring Competition

Thursday 29th April

First Tee 12.04

**Tidworth Golf Club,
Bulford Rd,
Tidworth,
SP9 7AF**

**Cost £40
(Golf and 1 course meal)**

BOOK NOW →

Wiltshire Masonic Golf Society

merv@chromatic arts.com

A Lodge website must have a Charter Mark....

Did you know that all Lodge websites must be approved by the Province and be awarded a Charter Mark. A Lodge website which does not have a Provincial Charter Mark cannot use any material, including logos, which identify the site with either the province or UGLE and must request permission to use any images which are the intellectual property of the Province or UGLE. Wiltshire's Provincial website has been awarded the prestigious UGLE Charter Mark which is formal recognition that the site meets the exacting standards required by the UGLE digital team.



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Not many people know this....

With the increasing ease with which emblems can be designed and placed on media sites, it has become necessary to review the use of logos, emblems and designs being used throughout the Province. The purpose of the review is not to prevent the use of such emblems, but to make sure the use is properly authorised. Many Lodges have included designs on their Summons or paperwork without first seeking and obtaining proper approval. During the coming months members of the Communication Team will be asking Lodge secretaries to confirm whether or not the Lodge has the required permissions, and where necessary offer help and assistance to make sure the Lodge remains legal.

Border Lodge members do some gardening....

Two jobs requires a degree of co-ordination and a significant amount of delegation which is why volunteers from Border Lodge No.3129 split into two teams - one led by Bro Rick Whitehead who did the usual "litter pick" in the village, while Charity Steward Dave Kyte, and Master Steve Smith went off and constructed a beautiful flower garden within the main garden area at Ludgershall Pre-School.



Help is available...

Mental wellbeing is a subject which no longer has to be discussed in whispered tones or behind closed doors. Today we recognise that a person's mental well being is just as important as their physical well being. The MCF sponsors a confidential counselling service for Freemasons and their families. It's available today and free to use*

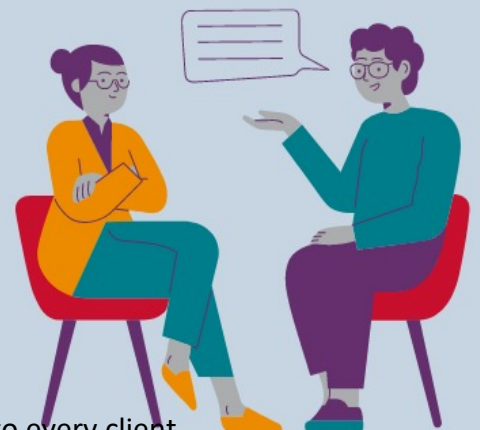
IT'S BEEN A HEAVY MONTH OF NEWS

ACCESS OUR CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELLING SERVICE

Tel: 0800 035 60 90

Email: help@mcf.org.uk

• Subject to conditions which will be explained to every client





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April Fools' Day....

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April Fools' Day spread throughout Britain during the 18th century. In Scotland, the tradition became a two-day event, starting with 'hunting the gowk,' in which people were sent on phony errands (gowk is a word for cuckoo bird, a symbol for fool) and followed by Tailie Day, which involved pranks played on people's derrieres, such as pinning fake tails or 'kick me' signs on them.

Although its exact origins remain a mystery All Fools Day is celebrated on April 1st each year, and is observed by many different cultures, its traditions include playing hoaxes or practical jokes on others, often yelling 'April Fools' at the end to clue in the subject of the April Fools' Day prank. While its exact history is shrouded in mystery, the continued use of April Fools' Day jokes by the media has ensured the unofficial holiday's long life.

Some historians speculate that April Fools' Day dates back to 1582, when France switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, as called for by the Council of Trent in 1563. In the Julian Calendar, as in the Hindu calendar, the new year began with the spring equinox around April 1st.

People who were slow to get the news or failed to recognise that the start of the new year had moved to January 1st and continued to celebrate it during the last week of March through April 1st became the butt of jokes and hoaxes and were called 'April fools.' These pranks included having paper fish placed on their backs and being referred to as 'poisson d'avril' (April fish), said to symbolize a young, easily caught fish and a gullible person.

Historians have also linked April Fools' Day to festivals such as Hilaria (Latin for joyful), which was celebrated in ancient Rome at the end of March by followers of the cult of Cybele. It involved people dressing up in disguises and mocking fellow citizens and even magistrates and was said to be inspired by the Egyptian legend of Isis, Osiris and Seth.

There's also speculation that April Fools' Day was tied to the vernal equinox, or first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, when Mother Nature fooled people with changing, unpredictable weather.

What a fabulous time we had....

Provincial Mentor David Little was in the hot seat on Friday 26th March and kept his audience of over 70 prospective new members and Brethren enthralled with a poignant reflection on his early life, and an uplifting account of how with the help of the Freemasons' charities he came through a difficult period in his life.

I think the evening was best summed up by one email which said: "I just didn't know, but it makes what David's achieved so very special." Lodge Mentors have an important role in making the newly made Freemason welcome, and in supporting every member of the Lodge. It's so important that everyone is happy and contented, and fully involved in the life of the Lodge.



David Little



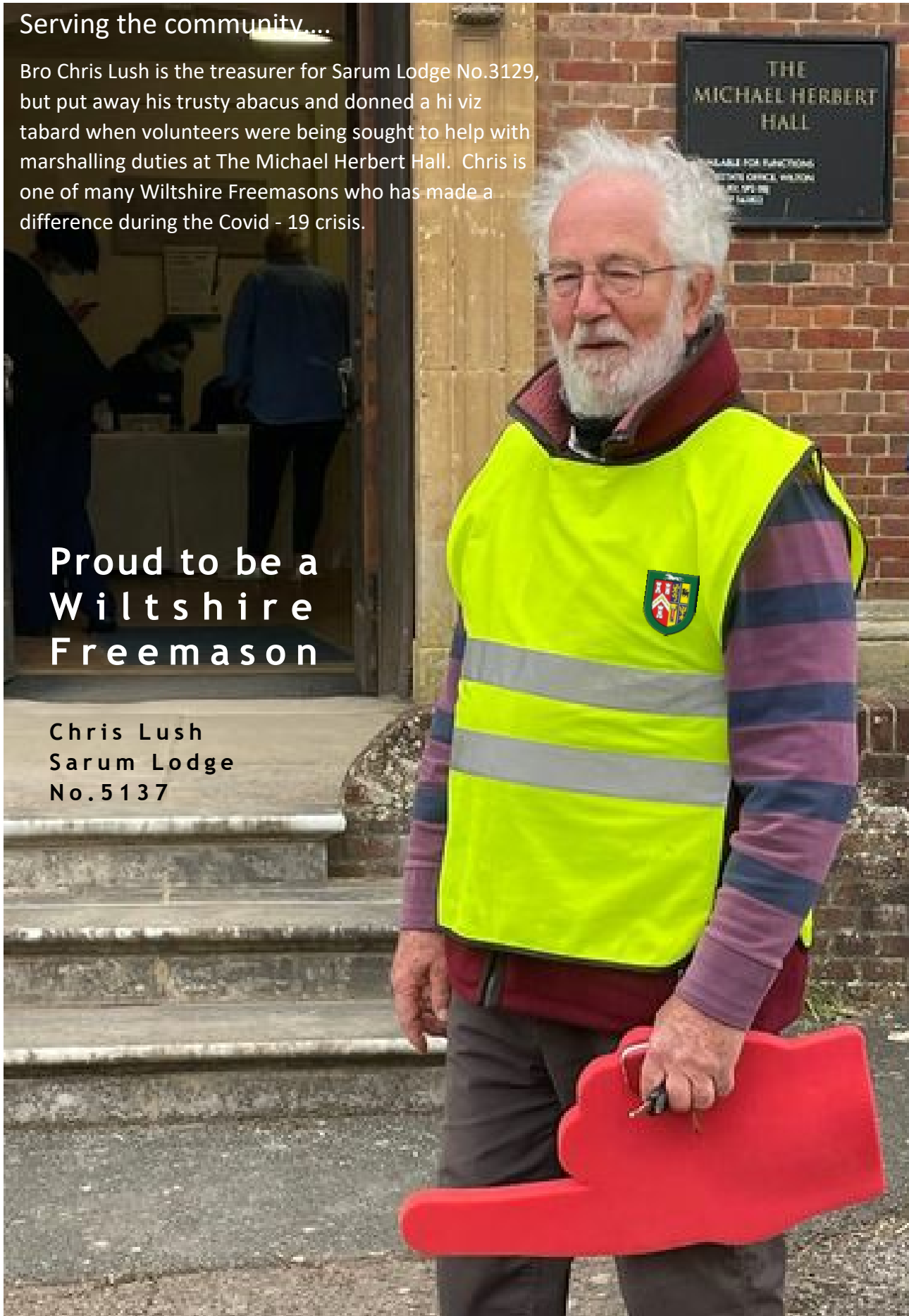
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Serving the community...

Bro Chris Lush is the treasurer for Sarum Lodge No.3129, but put away his trusty abacus and donned a hi viz tabard when volunteers were being sought to help with marshalling duties at The Michael Herbert Hall. Chris is one of many Wiltshire Freemasons who has made a difference during the Covid - 19 crisis.



Proud to be a
Wiltshire
Freemason

Chris Lush
Sarum Lodge
No.5137