



Across the Plain



The magazine of the Masonic Province of Wiltshire



Winter 2014



Right Worshipful Brother Philip S A Bullock PrGM

Installed as the fifteenth Provincial Grand Master for Wiltshire on Thursday 2 October 2014

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Welcome to The Provincial Grand Master

A warm Wiltshire welcome to Philip, Sally and Mutley the family dog.

Philip and Sally have a daughter, Sarah, who is married and has a son and daughter of her own. Before embarking on a well deserved retirement Philip was a Senior National Sales Manager for Pfizer UK.

Sally taught for several years at Pewsey school and is famed for her artistic flower arrangements.

The family moved to Easterton in 1982 where they have become an integral part of the local village and Church community.



A love of walking, especially in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales is a pastime Philip shares with Sally when they return 'home' to visit friends and relatives. Mutley the family dog can often be seen in the local area taking Philip for his regular walk.

Philip is not only an avid collector of guitars, he also plays electric and acoustic guitar to a high standard.

He has played with the very best including Johnny Kidd and the Pirates and Birmingham 'pop group' the Applejacks, who got to number seven in the 'hit parade' with their first single *Tell Me When*.

Who knows - perhaps we may yet see the PrGM - guitar in hand giving an impromptu display at your festive board.

If he does, please let us know and do ensure you send a picture to the editor for inclusion in the next edition of the Provincial Magazine .



Brethren, It is my great pleasure to write to you for the first time as your Provincial Grand Master. I do so with an immense sense of pride, humility and emotion.

The events of the past few weeks have been both exhilarating and exhausting in equal measure and I thank each and everyone of you for your support and kind wishes.

It was an honour to welcome the Pro Grand Master to Salisbury where he was received with a very warm Wiltshire welcome. I know he was delighted to join us and preside at the Installation ceremony.

I extend my personal thanks to all those who were able to attend Provincial Grand Lodge. It is not easy for many of our members to take time out from the busy lives they lead to attend our annual meeting; and to those who were unable to attend I offer the hope that we will meet in the course of normal Masonic activity.

To be installed as the fifteenth Provincial Grand Master For Wiltshire is an accolade which comes with an obligation to work tirelessly to proactively pursue objectives which will ensure the future of Freemasonry in Wiltshire and realise continued and sustained growth.

The present good health of the Province is founded on the work of my immediate predecessor, RW Bro Francis Wakem; we thank him for his dedication and commitment to the Province and wish him a long and happy retirement.

In my address to Provincial Grand Lodge I paid tribute to the Brethren who held office last year, I am sure the officers of this, my first year will continue to uphold the traditions of the Province and acquit themselves with honour and dignity as they support the 'Chain Gang' at Installations and other functions.

I am delighted that VW Brother Peter Winton will be at my side as Deputy Provincial Grand Master, I am most grateful for his support and commitment and for the considerable work that he has undertaken to ensure the success of the Masonic Samaritan Fund 2017 Festival progress and Freemasonry throughout our Province.

Additionally, I had the pleasure in appointing W Brother Stephen Bridge as Assistant Provincial Grand Master. Stephen is exceptionally able and skilled and will head the introduction and implementation of key initiatives to be launched in the next few months; I am delighted to welcome Stephen to the team. He has already journeyed with me to represent the Province at the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting in Jersey, and I know you will offer him a warm Wiltshire welcome when he visits your Lodge.

It was my privilege to appoint and promote Brethren in Provincial Grand Lodge – all richly deserved.

I am most grateful to the wives/partners who attended Provincial Grand Lodge in support of their husbands/partners. I was also pleased to see so many members of the Masonic Widows Association and together with Sally enjoy their company at tea following the meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge.

Provincial Grand Master's Address

We must embrace change.

We have begun a new chapter in the history of our Province. It has been said that "change is the law of life and those who look only to the past, or the present are certain to miss the future." Freemasonry competes in a fast-changing social arena for retaining and attracting its members; it is therefore, imperative that we ensure we create a pleasant environment in which our members can enjoy and talk openly about their Freemasonry and importantly grow our membership.

We need to build structures.

Having spent a lifetime in business I recognise the need to build structures which support our objectives and provide the highest standard of delivery to our membership. Mentoring is a learned skill and I am committed to ensure Lodge Mentors have the skills and resources to benefit the membership.

At Provincial Grand Lodge I announced the launch of a professionally designed Mentoring Training Programme. Mentors will be invited to attend training workshops in three specific regions within the Province.

The Mentoring programme will be directed by the Assistant Provincial Grand Master and coordinated by Kevin Logan, in the North of the Province, David Little in the South with Derek Dove being responsible for the Central region.

We must be relevant.

Our objective is to make Freemasonry relevant, acceptable and accessible and to ensure the well-being and enjoyment of our membership.

We will also focus on the many opportunities afforded by the tercentenary celebrations recognising the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England.

The Province will be very pro-active over the coming days, weeks and months as we aim for a splendid showcasing of Freemasonry in Wiltshire and to build on the spirit of openness and transparency.

We must value the family.

My predecessor is an avid supporter of what he described as the Wiltshire Masonic Family - I to support that fine ideal. Family is as important in Freemasonry as it is in well organised society, it forms and underpins our understanding of the society of which we are a part.

The Province is fortunate to have several active sections and it is my intention to continue to develop open and honest relationships with members of the Masonic Widows Association and the social and sporting societies.

I will support their activities, and where possible I will attempt to be an active participant, although I have my doubts as to whether I will ever beat Mervyn Johns on a golf course.

We must prize what we have.

We are reminded that Freemasonry possesses many great and invaluable privileges - none more so, than the traditions which have served us so well over many years.

Heritage is to be prized not scorned, as often it is that seeming archaic aspect of our fraternity which is the fulcrum on which the Freemason depends for support.

I am persuaded of the need to be open and transparent but not at the expense of what can be described as the distinctive characteristics of Freemasonry. To be relevant does not require us to embrace every passing fashion, or to be seduced by the clamour of loud voices which exhort us to modernise or die.

Rather, we should recognise that our strength is founded on tradition and order. It is also founded on the principle of 'brotherly love' - a subject discussed by Tony Rayner in his article on page 25 of this edition of Across The Plain.

All too often we drive people away from Freemasonry by our lack of that very emotion we claim to regard as an essential element which makes us 'different'. I wonder how many men leave our Fraternity because they feel unappreciated - or worse - unwanted, but if asked might cite other reasons, not wanting to be thought of as being soft or weak.

We must Communicate.

In a world where the smart phone, tablet and lap-top rule, it must follow that Freemasonry adapts to the popular means of communication. Social media sites, despite the inherent problems they have experienced are still the preferred method of exchanging information amongst a large group within society - Freemasons included.

I am very aware that the Provincial twitter site has in excess of 900 followers with more joining every day, and I am delighted to see Wiltshire Lodges contributing to the many tweets.

During the next few months our website, and magazine will be revamped; the team will be looking to implement a new and exciting 'App' which can be accessed on mobile phones and the Provincial display stand will receive a 'makeover'.

In the Christmas story we are told that there were, shepherds abiding in the fields and the Angel of The Lord appeared with a message - imagine how much quicker that message would have been received if the shepherds had possessed mobile phones or had access to social media!

Sally and I wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas, with the hope that 2015 will see greater peace and prosperity in the world.

Philip and Sally Bullock

Meet the Deputy and Assistant Provincial Grand Master



W Bro. Stephen Bridge AsstPrGM

Stephen is married to Karen and they have two sons, Matthew and James. The family live in Royal Wootton Bassett.

Having served for 30 years as an officer in the Wiltshire Constabulary, Steve is now very happily retired and is delighted to have time to devote to his many interests and hobbies; particularly the history of the Wiltshire Police Force.

Initiated into Masonry 1994 into Methuen Lodge No 8692 Steve was Master of the Lodge in 2002. Provincial honours include being appointed Provincial Grand Steward, Provincial Grand Sword Bearer and Provincial Charity Steward. According to Steve, all have been rewarding but in different ways.

Stephen is looking forward to his new role as Assistant Provincial Grand Master combined with that of Provincial Mentor in which he will be introducing a new education programme for Lodge Mentors. He is also leading the Provincial programme promoting the Tercentenary of United Grand Lodge in 2017.

Stephen undertook his first duties as AsstPrGM when he presided at the Installation meeting of Calley Lodge No 7525 on Friday 3 October. First night nerves, if they ever existed, were kept under superb control when Stephen addressed the newly Installed Master for the first time.



VW Bro. Peter Winton PGSwdB DepPrGM

Peter was brought up in Bristol where he attended St Brendan's College, and later went onto Liverpool University gaining an Honours Degree in Law.

Peter is married to Virginia and they have a daughter Holly and a son Luke.

His Masonic career began in February 1991 when he was initiated into Calley Lodge No 7525. and was installed into the Chair in 2000.

A Provincial Grand Steward in 2002 Peter was promoted to the rank of Past Senior Provincial Grand Deacon. He has served as Provincial Senior Grand Warden and as Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies.

In 2008 he was appointed Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Wiltshire.

The MW Grand Master HRH the Duke of Kent honoured Peter with Grand Rank investing him as Past Grand Sword Bearer at Grand Lodge in April 2009.

Peter is the Chairman of the Masonic Samaritan Fund 2017 Festival.

At the recent Installation of RW Philip Bullock as Provincial Grand Master, Peter was delighted to play a pivotal role in opening Provincial Grand Lodge and welcoming the Pro Grand Master.

Incidentally, Peter has agreed to shave his treasured moustache in aid of the Masonic Samaritan Fund.

What they do ?



Peter and Stephen will assist RW Bro Philip Bullock PrGM by Presiding at Craft Installation meetings to be held during the next twelve months. They will join Philip and other members of the Province on visits to neighbouring Provinces and the Quarterly Communications of Grand Lodge at Freemasons' Hall in London. Besides their ceremonial duties, Peter and Stephen are members of the Provincial Executive which advises the Provincial Grand Master on strategy and the future development of Freemasonry in the Province.



Senior Provincial Appointments

Junior Grand Warden Mike Wilson

Clarendon Lodge No 5908

Mike Wilson lives with his partner Sue in the former wool town of Bradford-on-Avon. A Yorkshire man through, and through Mike has come to love the county he now calls home.

Having run his own animal feed company, Mike is now semi-retired giving him time to support Sue in her hobby of training horses and to act as a senior invigilator at a local school.

Initiated into the Clarendon Lodge No 5908 in January 1997, Mike served as Master of the Lodge in 2011 and again in 2012.

In 2013 he was awarded a well deserved appointment as Past Provincial Grand Registrar.

Mike joined Senior Warden - Andrew Tiffin and the newly installed Assistant Provincial Grand Master at Calley Lodge 24 hours after being invested as Provincial Junior Grand Warden.

Mike manages the Provincial Display Stand and with Paul Brown can be seen at shows, fetes and Lodge open days where they actively promote Freemasonry throughout the Province.

Senior Grand Warden Andrew Tiffin

Lodge of Loyalty No 1533

Andrew Tiffin, his wife Annette and their two children moved to Wiltshire in 1995 when Andrew finished his military service.

Andrew was initiated into the Lodge of Loyalty No 1533 at Marlborough in January 2001 and became Master in 2006. He held the office of Charity Steward from 2003 to 2010. He is also a member of Wiltshire Masters Lodge No 6731 and was the Treasurer for 5 years.

Andrew received an active appointment to the rank of Provincial Grand Steward in 2011 and the following year was promoted to Past Provincial Grand Sword Bearer.

Andrew is an active Companion in Royal Arch holding office as the Provincial Grand Chapter Treasurer.

Andrew is also a member of Raymond Lance Chapter Rose Croix No.1015 at Warminster.

In his spare time Andrew is a collector of Military Medals and Masonic Jewels often researching the story of the 'man behind the medal'.

Grand Charity Steward Ian Priest

Methuen Lodge No 8692

Ian Priest joined Methuen Lodge No 8692 in 1979 and was Installed as Master in 1987 since which he has held the offices of Director of Ceremonies and Secretary.

The Provincial Grand Master appointed Ian one of his Provincial Junior Grand Deacons in 1993 and Past Junior Grand Warden in 2000.

In 2010 Ian was promoted to Provincial Senior Grand Warden and with his friend Bro Derek Dove proved to be a formidable double act; their actions often resulting in one or both being ceremonially 'sacked' by the PrGM.

Ian is also a Mark Master Mason and a member of Royal Ark Mariners - Wiltshire Anchor Lodge No. 178

Having retired from the Wiltshire Constabulary after thirty years service, Ian is now a volunteer Fund Raising Ambassador for the Prospect Hospice.

Married to Stephanie his hobbies and interests outside Freemasonry include training and working his Labrador dogs to the gun and cooking.



Mike Wilson



Andrew Tiffin



Ian Priest

Editor's Corner



Cover photo taken by Simon Powell at Bradford-on-Avon Masonic Hall

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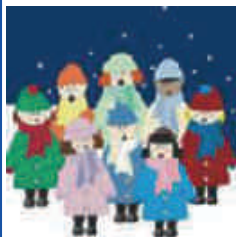


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Join Jim and Judy Speed at Edington Priory Church for a Festival of Carols and Christmas Music on Friday 5th December at 7:30 p.m..

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RMBI Holidays, Malta 2015

The RMBI is organising its annual two week holiday to the picturesque resort of Siemra, Malta.

During the holiday, there will be an opportunity to visit the oldest Masonic Lodge on the island as well as other places of interest including the island of Gozo. The warm weather makes Malta an ideal choice for a winter break.

Provinces generously sponsor people who have been unable to afford a holiday for a number of years or are nervous about going away on their own. We are also happy to consider people who are able to self fund and who would enjoy a holiday with Masonic company.

For more information, please contact:

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The chance to get away from Britain for a couple of weeks during the winter has proved to be of tremendous benefit.

If you know someone in your Province who might benefit from a holiday and whom you would be willing to sponsor or for anyone who would like to self fund, please get in touch with us.

Please note, although the group is accompanied by someone from the RMBI, there is no qualified nurse in attendance. Anyone wishing to go will need to be reasonably fit and able to care for themselves.

Holiday details

Dates: 11 February – 26 February 2015
Cost of sponsorship: £1022.50 for singles;
£1575 for couples

These costs include:

- Scheduled flights with Air Malta (including fuel surcharge) and half board accommodation.
- Full insurance.*
- 10 February 2015 overnight accommodation at a Gatwick Hotel (including dinner and full English breakfast) before next day departure.
- All coach transfers.
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*Insurance may increase in relation to individual circumstances.



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Freemasons at War

By Kevin Logan PrGStwd

In this issue, I unearth events from two World Wars that had a connection to the Lodge of Remembrance and remind readers of the three Swindon Freemasons who died in the First World War.

It is important to note that Freemasons and their families were not immune from the horrors of a conflict which saw families, friends and working colleagues sign up to 'fight the Hun' - often formed into PALS battalions, young men sailed off to war confident that it would all be over by Christmas - it wasn't.

Military records confirm that at least eleven Wiltshire Freemasons died in the Great War. What is not recorded is how many were wounded in action returning to 'blighty' forever scarred by the savagery of the carnage they had witnessed and the conditions they endured.

By June 1918 nineteen brethren of Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation No 355 were on active service, three were killed in action" but only two are mentioned in Lodge records. Perhaps you may know of others whose names are not



A typical day in the trenches

shown on Lodge records - if so please do let me know as I would like to ensure the records held by the Freemasons' Library and Museum are kept up-to-date.

Allan Armstrong - Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation No. 355. Was Initiated 2 November 1911, Passed: 4 October 1912 and Raised: 1 November 1912. He died of his wounds on 19 September 1918.

According to probate records, his address was Bradbury House, Melksham. At his death he was Lieutenant Colonel of the Wiltshire regiment and had been awarded the DSO. He died in Palestine.

Robert Lloyd Davies - Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation No. 355 was Initiated on 7 November 1913, Passed: 5 December 1913 and Raised: 1 February 1914. Killed in Action: 12 April 1917.

According to probate records, he was a Lieutenant Royal Engineers and died in France.

John Elwyn Thomas - Gooch Lodge No. 1295 was Initiated at the age of 26 on 10 March 1915 (but never Passed and Raised). He originated from Pembroke and died after the Falaba was torpedoed and sunk in March 1915. He is listed on the Newport (Pembrokeshire) War Memorial.

Before becoming the first IPM of the Lodge of Remembrance, Major-General Thomas Charles Calley was a member of The General courts-martial which sat at The Middlesex Guildhall, Westminster, sentencing Carl Hans Lody, the first of the convicted World War One spies, to be shot at The Tower of London on 6 November 1914 - the first person in more than 160 years to be executed at The Tower.



Mai Gen TC Calley

In May 1944, the four Swindon Lodges (Royal Sussex No. 355, Gooch Lodge No 1295, Lodge of Remembrance No. 437 and Pleydell Lodge No. 4687) attended the Town Hall, for a demonstration of American working by American Masons. Almost 400 Freemasons, including 70 American brethren, witnessed a demonstration of the opening and closing of the Lodge and part of the third degree ceremony under the direction of W Bro William Moseley Brown, past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Virginia (1934).

W Bro Brown served in both World War 1 and World War 2. In 1945, he served as military governor of Weimar, Germany, during which time he was commander of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp after it was liberated from the Germans.

I would like to thank Diane Clements - Director of the Freemasons' Library and Museum for her assistance in providing detailed information from the archives records held at the Freemasons' Library and Museum.

To view the Masonic Roll of Honour visit the United Grand Lodge of England special website at <http://www.masonicgreatwarproject.org.uk/>

In the next edition of Across The Plain I will focus on the military contribution of Freemasons from the West of the Province.

Kevin Logan is Secretary of Lodge of Remembrance No. 4037. He is currently compiling a detailed record of the history of the Lodge, which will be celebrating its centenary in 2019.



Kevin Logan

Welcome the Provincial Stewards ...

Provincial Stewards wear an apron trimmed with red, scarlet or crimson and a collar of the same colour during their period of office. The jewel attached to their collar is the Cornucopia or Horn of Plenty. When on official duties they will lead the procession of Grand and Provincial Officers, often holding their white wand of office.



Paul Connolly
Border Lodge No. 3129



Kevin Logan
Lodge of Remembrance No. 4037



Philip Mackie
Moonraker Lodge No. 8747

There are many interesting stories and opinions associated with the colour of the Steward's apron. The pale blue used in Craft Masonry is said to be derived from the Order of the Garter - hence the term Garter blue - whereas the red, scarlet or crimson is associated with the Order of Bath and is the emblem of faith, fortitude, divine love and magnanimity. Crimson is said to imply 'justice tempered by mercy' and scarlet 'fervency'. However, and no matter what the story - to the Brethren who have the honour to wear the red apron it will always represent service and dedication to the Provincial Grand Master, his senior officers and the Craft.



John Calvert
St Edmund Lodge No. 4714



Simon Leighfield
Gooch Lodge No. 1295



Andrew Hargreaves
Vastern Lodge No. 8977

"By keeping a close watch on your stewardship you may finally attain higher office in the pleasant knowledge and gratifying conscience of a duty well performed" - RW Bro Philip Bullock -Provincial Grand Master for Wiltshire.

The Organist Entertains - W Bro Mike May PrGOrg.

.Are there any 'rules or regulations' for the Lodge organist? - The answer is an unequivocal no supported by no less an authority than the organists' bible - Lodge and Chapter Music, which states - "The Ritual provides no instructions whatever for the organist, and he occupies a lowly place in the table of precedence. Nor is he very much assisted by tradition. No officer of the Lodge is so entirely dependent on his mother wit and his capability for investing his talent with a sense of its proper Masonic expression."

This places a high degree of responsibility on the Lodge organist who is required to pay attention with regard to the timing of the performance, the appropriateness of its character and the simplicity of its execution. Each Lodge room is different in size and during perambulations discretion as to the tempo employed is essential. On many occasions I have had to "scramble" to finish before a Deacon launches forth to a Warden. The organist should be sufficiently master of his craft to be able to come to a satisfactory conclusion at the right moment. At the same time, it would be appreciated if officers were to allow the music to assist their work by allowing it to act as a means for them to compose themselves before they embarked on their libretto.

This leads me to my biggest regret, which is the introduction of the 'music system' into Lodges. As inevitable as it might be due in the main to the fact that fewer and fewer Masons read and play music, there is a lack of empathy between the operator of the system and the metier of the musician. Sadly, I cannot foresee this situation improving as the years go by, but rest assured myself and the small remaining band of 'real' organists will carry on regardless.

The choice of music plays an important part of any Lodge meeting with quiet background music before the meeting being very appropriate, this can range from music from musicals or popular 'hits' from the past to classical music. However, once the Lodge is opened, a more staid and solemn approach is required. Retiring music must be apposite to the occasion which is particularly true at Installation meetings; although I must confess to having heard Puff the Magic Dragon and Yellow Submarine being employed.

A quick word about my 'worst' and 'best' moments. Turning up with Craft music at a Chapter meeting is embarrassing enough, but falling asleep during an overlong report from a Charity Steward resulting in me falling against the keyboard must be one of the worst! The highlight of the Masonic year without any doubt is playing at Provincial Grand Lodge in the magnificent auditorium at Salisbury. What a pleasure it is to play the complete version of the Provincial Grand March as everyone retires from the Lodge Room in procession..

And finally: a tale about a DC who was plagued by attendance problems where several officers were absent at each LOI. As a matter of fact every officer had missed several meetings, except for the faithful organist. Finally, as the rehearsal for the Installation meeting drew to a close, the DC took a moment to thank the organist for his attendance to which he responded "It's the least I could do, since I won't be at the meeting!"

Charles Winter in the Masonic Organist's Compendium published in 1927 wrote *"let it be said at the outset that it is not written with the intention of informing the professional Organist as to his duties. He is, as a rule, a clever and experienced musician, quite able to carry out his work satisfactorily by the exercise of his own talent and knowledge."*

It is my fervent wish that Lodge music continues to be an essential part of our beautiful and impressive ceremonies and I hope to be able to continue to promote and maintain the rich tradition of Masonic music which does so much for the 'harmony' of the Lodge.



Mike May is the Provincial Grand Organist. Mike's musical pedigree has its origins with the Essex Youth Orchestra in which he played the clarinet. At the age of eighteen, Mike took up the church organ and quickly established himself as the organist at Forest Gate Congregational Church in East London. His passion for the instrument and the sound it was capable of

producing resulted in Mike playing church organs for many years, something he regularly continues to play for churches in both Calne and Gastard.



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Wiltshire Masonic Widows Association

Salisbury - Chippenham - Swindon

Members of the three branches of the Wiltshire Masonic Widows Association attended Provincial Grand Lodge in Salisbury where they were welcomed by RW Bro Philip Bullock the newly installed Provincial Grand Master. The ladies were joined in the main auditorium of Salisbury's City Hall by wives and partners of Brethren who were receiving Provincial Honours.

Earlier in the day Sally Bullock hosted a special tea party for the ladies.

The Celebratory Dinner for retiring Provincial Grand Master - Francis Wakem was the ideal occasion for Chippenham Branch chairman, Veronica Mannings to present Francis and Dorothy with a beautiful garden bench. Over thirty members of the Association joined in celebrating Francis' decade of service at the function which saw 380 Freemasons, wives and partners pay tribute to a man described by RW Bro Philip Bullock as "truly remarkable".

During the past twelve months Francis has visited each of the three branches of the MWA and has been overwhelmed with the outpouring of love and affection shown to Dorothy and himself.

The Wiltshire Masonic Widows Association provides an organisation offering friendship, encouragement, support and comfort to the widows of Freemasons who are living in the Province. All three branches enjoy a full programme of talks, visits to places of interest and other local activities. New members are assured of a warm and friendly welcome

Salisbury played host to the Area Lunch on 10 October, an annual event which attracted members from Swindon, Chippenham, Bristol, North Somerset, Mid Somerset and Yeovil. Members also welcomed Michael Bowyer a well known international flower arranger and demonstrator who made some stunning floral arrangements.



Masonic Samaritan Fund 2017 Wiltshire Festival

VW Bro Peter J Winton - Chairman

Entering year three of the five year Festival, the hope of achieving our target of £750,000 is buoyed by the news that current donations and pledges already total the quite amazing sum of £450,000 for which I can only offer a big thank you.

The fund raising exploits of our Lodges without doubt embrace that essential characteristic of having fun while persuading Brethren to part with a pound or five. During the past two years we have had sheep racing, heads or tails, golf matches, supper evenings and musical soirees - I am looking forward to the ingenuity of members being tested during 2015 as new ways of raising much needed funds for the Masonic Samaritan Fund are devised. I wish you well.

The easiest way to raise money is to make a regular planned donation to your Lodge Charity Chest. Pledging £10 a month for five years will put £600 in an account which is controlled by your Lodge which means it is controlled by you. Please do approach your Lodge Charity Steward and ask him for a 'gift aid' form which will ensure that HMRC repays a nominal amount of tax against your donation.

During 2015 the Provincial Communications Team will be making Lodge presentations. Please find time in what I know are busy Lodge Calendars to allow the team to keep you advised of what is happening with the Masonic Samaritan Fund 2017 Wiltshire Festival.

The Provincial Grand Charity Steward will be in regular contact with Lodge officers, and I know you will afford him the most generous opportunity to promote the festival.

If you haven't yet joined - the '500' Club welcomes new members for the final three years of the Festival.

Jim and Judy Speed have once again arranged a wonderful evening of Carols and Christmas on Friday 5 December at the very beautiful Edington Priory Church, I hope as many as are able will attend this unique event.

As we approach the festive season of Christmas I would like to thank each and everyone for the most generous support given to the festival and wish you and your loved ones a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.



Holy Royal Arch

The Grand Superintendent David Blanchard

At this time of the year I am always reminded that many in our society do not enjoy some of the things we take for granted. A roof over our head, clothes on our back, food on our table and friends to share the joy of Christmas.

It is all too easy to be dismissive towards those who for various reasons have fallen on hard times and in doing so we forget one of the essential tenets of Antient Freemasonry; which is to help a friend or Companion in time of need.



David Blanchard

This exhortation to our conscience is made early in our Masonic journey - indeed it forms part of the Initiation ceremony when the tools of an Entered Apprentice are presented and their moral truth is explained.

Popular surveys suggest a majority of people believe

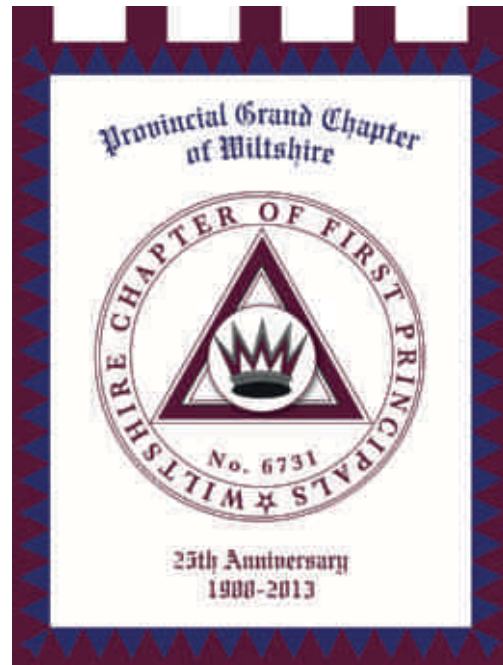
Christmas is a time for families to come together to enjoy each others company and to renew familial acquaintances. Yet many older members will be fortunate to see their children or grandchildren at all during the holiday period, let alone be invited to Christmas lunch .

It is my fervent wish this Christmas that enmity within families be set aside and reconciliation leads to that perfect love and harmony which should not only characterise Freemasons but the whole of mankind.

The angels proclaimed 'Peace on earth and goodwill to all men' - to make this a reality we must first practise it in our own lives.

As we approach the festive season, Christine and I would take this opportunity to wish each and everyone of you a happy and blessed Christmas, with our hope that 2015 will be a year when peace and goodwill is extended to all mankind.

One of the most pleasant duties I am called onto perform is the dedication of a new Chapter Banner and In June the Wiltshire Chapter of First Principals No 6731 unfurled their new Banner which was designed and made under the careful direction of E Comp Colin Cheshire.



E. Comp Michael Lee gave a comprehensive explanation of Vexillology - the creation and development of a body of knowledge about flags of all types, their forms and functions, and of scientific theories and principles based on that knowledge.

He outlined the historical usage of Banners, particularly within Freemasonry explaining why no reference is made in the Royal Arch ritual to any banners, ensigns or flags. Suggesting we should perhaps return to the early 18th Century when the Order was founded and view these furnishings from the West where the Candidate would stand; he outlined the links between the Royal Arch ritual and the overriding duty of the original authors to promote Christianity.

In conclusion, Michael quoted what Banners signify – "They reflect something of the spirit of the organisation, providing an identifiable badge or symbol, they provide a focus for that organisation, and in the case of military colours, they reflect something of its past achievements as well."

Fitting words indeed.

David F J Blanchard Provincial Grand Superintendent

Are you interested in joining a local Chapter ?



Provincial visits

Over the next few months we have two visits from neighbouring Provincial teams.

First, on Tuesday 9 December - Methuen Chapter have their installation. E Comp David Blanchard will be attending with the Grand Superintendent of Buckinghamshire and his provincial team. Instead of dining in the Masonic Hall, the Methuen Chapter will be using the nearby Marlborough Town Hall.

This Installation is set to be a fantastic night and the Town Hall makes for an auspicious venue for the meal following the installation. All are welcome and if you would like to attend or would like more information please email ch1533@pglwilts.org.uk

On Tuesday January 13th the Lodge of Agriculture is meeting in Corsham for an Exaltation and in attendance at that meeting will be the Provincial teams from Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. To book your visit or for more information e.mail ch9090@pglwilts.org.uk

If you have an event at your Chapter which you would like publicised on the Provincial website or a future edition of Across The Plain - please contact the Chapter Communication Officer - Alan Colman using e.mail chinformation@pglwilts.org.uk or tel 07791 985126

New Provincial Scribe Ezra

The Most Excellent Grand Superintendent has been pleased to appoint E Comp Paul Vogwell to the office of Provincial Scribe Ezra. Paul will assume his duties with immediate effect.

Paul can be contacted on 01380 830875 or by email at chscribeezra@pglwilts.org.uk he will be installed at the Wiltshire Chapter of Agriculture Installation on the 11th November 2014.

News and Views

The Provincial Magazine welcomes the submission of articles of interest from members of the Holy Royal Arch. Please ensure your article consists of no more than 400 words and that where required proper acknowledgement is made to reference sources.

At least two pictures of at least 300 dpi resolution should accompany the article. Anonymous submissions will not be considered for inclusion in the magazine.

Are you ready to take the next step in pure Antient Freemasonry ?

Enjoying your Freemasonry - then why not consider taking the next step in your Masonic journey?

Why should I join a Chapter?

The Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch will complete your journey in pure Antient Freemasonry as it is the completion of the Third Degree in Craft Masonry.

Qualification for membership

Membership is open to Freemasons of all faiths who have been a Master Mason for at least four weeks.

Ceremonies

There are two, the Installation Ceremony and the Ceremony of Exaltation, both of which are colourful and moving occasions.

Commitment

Most Chapters meet four times in the year and there is normally a rehearsal prior to the meeting. Every meeting is followed by a Festive Board.

What does it cost?

There is a cost in acquiring the regalia which is unique to Royal Arch, but generally speaking the subscriptions are less than those you might expect to pay in your Craft Lodge.

Interested?

Every Craft Lodge has a Royal Arch representative, who will be able to answer any questions you might have and provide you with a booklet entitled 'Why join the Royal Arch?'

Learn more

To discover more about Royal Arch visit the Provincial website www.pglwilts.org.uk/royal-arch

The Most Excellent Grand Superintendent and his officers wish you a very Happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.



Talk to your Lodge Royal Arch Representative

Provincial Grand Lodge in words and pictures

As Michael May - Provincial Grand Organist, glanced to his right and acknowledged the brief nod signifying all was ready we knew that a historic event was about to be played out in front of an expectant audience. Even as the first notes of the organ were played the stentorian voice of Philip Hall - Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies could be heard to intone - "To order Brethren, to receive the Most Worshipful the Pro Grand Master" - and with one accord over 500 Freemasons rose to their feet in the auditorium of Salisbury's Civic Hall. Thus began the Investing and Installation of the fifteenth Provincial Grand Master for Wiltshire.

For many, excitement coupled with anticipation was the order of the day. Some, having never attended an Installation ceremony didn't know what to expect, but nevertheless they recognised this would be a special day in their Masonic lives.

As for the incoming Provincial Grand Master, well he was to be found in every corner of the hall, talking to every participant and contributor - just checking what was happening and ensuring everything and everyone was okay.

The clear directions of Philip (I've done this before) Hall aided so exceptionally by his three man team brought a measure of calm to the early morning rehearsal and ensured that everyone knew their place and most importantly the duty expected of them.

The auditorium was occupied by small groups undertaking those little jobs which in themselves appear unimportant but when combined play a significant role in the success of the day. Mike May - the Provincial Organist doing a sound check, David Davies - Provincial Secretary ensuring the host Lodge banners are hoisted high, Chris and Debbie Robbins ensuring regalia is returned in time to be re-issued for the afternoon session. There was Phil Still - at his first PGL as Assistant Secretary, whatever happened you just knew that Phil would get his side of things sorted and he did!

In the foyer Brethren had started to arrive - welcomed by Mike Wilson and Paul Brown at the Provincial Display Stand. It was a joyous occasion with friends greeting each other as if they had not seen each other for weeks and even months, yet I'm sure many of them were at Sarum Lodge less than twelve hours ago - such is the way of Freemasons.

Adrian Wooster ably assisted by star apprentice Gary (his dad) set up the photograph area - their task - to take photographs of all thirty seven Provincial Officers, a few of the 'Chain Gang' and sundry others on request. By the end of the day they could be justly proud and declare Mission Accomplished.

Never one to miss the commercial opportunity presented at such a large gathering of Freemasons, Simon Leighfield and his right hand man Gary Dolphin with the muscle of Pete Bint and the charm of Sheelagh Lounds set up shop offering a wide range of 'goodies' in support of the Masonic Samaritan Fund 2017 Festival.

But back to the purpose of the day - the MW Pro Grand Master entered the auditorium to sustained applause and took his place in the Chair.

A hush descended through the hall as the Director of Ceremonies called on the Brethren to receive the Provincial Grand Master (Designate) who entered the auditorium escorted by seven masters including W Bro Richard Wright who carried the Chain of Office on a blue cushion.

The Letters Patent from the United Grand Lodge of England was read aloud by VW Bro Graham Redman the Deputy Grand Secretary (worth every penny of the admission price) after which Bro Philip Bullock took his obligation, approached the Chair where MW Bro Peter Lowndes invested him with the Chain of his office and placed him in the Chair of Provincial Grand Lodge.

RW Bro Philip Stuart Arthur Bullock was proclaimed Provincial Grand Master for Wiltshire having been obligated, invested and installed. The Brethren were called to Order and greeted him in the appropriate manner.

The first duties of the new Provincial Grand Master were to appoint and invest Peter Winton the Deputy Provincial Grand Master and Stephen Bridge the Assistant Provincial Grand Master. Having done so he was able to relax for just a moment as he contemplated the afternoon session .



Photograph by W Bro Adrian Wooster

RW Bro Philip Bullock PrGM

Provincial Grand Lodge in words and pictures

It was always possible that the afternoon session of Provincial Grand Lodge could have been the victim of the morning's events and in particular the Installation of RW Bro Philip Bullock as Provincial Grand Master. However, nothing was further from the truth, with the excitement of the morning being transmitted to the afternoon.

The Deputy PrGM and the Assistant PrGM having been Invested and Installed during the morning ceremony it was with obvious pride they took their rightful place on the auditorium stage - seated either side of a delighted PrGM and amongst a glittering array of PrGMs and Grand Officers they could now relax for a few brief moments.



Photograph by W Bro Adrian Wooster

The Roll of Lodges was called with every Lodge in the Province attesting to their attendance, reports were made and received and elections were undertaken - leading to the high point of the day when Provincial Grand Lodge having been closed - members of the Masonic Widows Association together with the partners of Brethren receiving honours were welcomed into the auditorium. Sustained applause confirmed how welcome they were and recognised their status as members of the Wiltshire Masonic Family.

Having appointed the Senior and Junior Grand Wardens (see page 4) who took their rightful place in Provincial Grand Lodge - the PrGM assisted by the Deputy PrGM received and invested each of his officers.

Special mention was made of W Bro Mike Lawrence WM of Clarendon Lodge No 5908 who due to illness had been invested on a previous occasion - his wife Ann proudly watched as Mike's friends received their honours knowing full well that everyone's thoughts were with them both on this very special day.

The day ended as it had started with the words of the PrGM (see pages 2 & 3) fresh in the mind of every Brother; high expectations, lots of work to be done - but all with one aim in view - to unite in the grand design of being happy and communicating happiness.

As the Brethren made their way home after what had been a long but enjoyable day there was definitely a skip in their step.

“When, where and how to wear the jewels of an Order can be confusing”

In this article Andrew Tiffin a member of Methuen Chapter No 1533 and Provincial Grand Chapter Treasurer explains the Masonic etiquette with regard to the wearing of Royal Arch Chapter Jewels.

The principal Jewel of the Order is the one which a candidate receives at his Exaltation. It is obligatory for a Member of the Order to wear the jewel when attending a Royal Arch Convocation. It is permissible and most desirable that a member of the Royal Arch should wear their jewel when attending Craft Meetings. When worn in a Craft Lodge the Jewel of the Order takes precedence before all other jewels.

The Royal Arch Breast Jewel should be worn appended to a ribbon, white for Companions, crimson for Principals and Past Principals and tri-coloured for Grand Officers, Provincial Officers and holders of London Grand Chapter Rank. The tri-coloured ribbon (dark blue, crimson and light blue) should have the light blue colour nearest to the centre of the body, when appended over the left breast.

Craft Past Masters' Jewels or jewels from any other Masonic order should not be worn in a Royal Arch Chapter. However, the Royal Arch Breast Jewel should be worn on the left breast by all subscribing members of a Chapter when attending a Craft Lodge.

In your Craft Lodge, the wearing of the breast jewel not only identifies you as a member of the Royal Arch to other Companions but Brethren who are not members, who may on seeing your jewel, enquire about the Royal Arch and how to become a member of the Order.

The wearing of other Royal Arch Jewels is encouraged. The Centenary Jewel may be worn by the members of those Chapters who qualify, have obtained permission from and have paid the necessary fee to Grand Chapter, The jewel is worn on the left breast to the left of the Royal Arch Jewel.

The wearing of a Past Principal's presentation jewel (which is not an official jewel but merely a permitted jewel when approved) **does not** replace the wearing of the Jewel of the Order. As this is not an official jewel, once a Past Principal is appointed to Provincial rank he should no longer wear both the Jewel of the Order and a Past Principals Jewel.

Should you wish, it is permissible to wear both jewels when in your own Chapter. The Past Principal's presentation jewel should never be worn in a Craft Lodge.

A Charity Jewel – If recognised and authorised may be worn to the left of the Royal Arch Breast Jewel,

Further information on the Royal Arch Breast jewel can be found under Supreme Grand Chapter Regulations 85 or by contacting the Provincial Grand Scribe Ezra.

This article first appeared in Royal Arch News on the Provincial website and can be 'read again' by visiting Chapter News on www.pglwilts.org.uk

The history of Masonic jewels is an absorbing and very interesting study. In common with many organisations, Freemasonry has a rich and comprehensive history. As a member of the fraternity you will receive **Freemasonry Today** the official journal of the United Grand Lodge of England. The magazine contains articles of interest covering a wide range of subjects including the part Freemasons played in World War 1, the history of the Grand Temple pipe organ and the pivotal role played by the Duke of Sussex in shaping modern Freemasonry.

All Master Masons are permitted to seek admission into The Royal Arch after one month as a Craft Master Mason but you are strongly encouraged to first enjoy and understand the three Craft degrees in preparation.

Every Craft Lodge in the Province of Wiltshire has a Royal Arch representative from whom impartial advice and information may be sought. For further details please speak to him or to your Lodge Secretary, if you are unsure of the identity of your Royal Arch representative please refer to your Lodge summons or your Lodge details as set out in the Provincial Masonic Reference Book.

By the Solemn Act of Union between the two Grand Lodges of Freemasons of England it was declared that pure Antient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more - those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch. (Book of Constitutions - page one)

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Christmas at homealone

Make Your Own Christmas Wreath



At a venue near you

Sally Bullock is repeating her successful **Make A Christmas Wreath** event at the following venues.

Sunday 29 November at the Masonic Centre, The Planks, Swindon. 2.00pm until 4.30pm

Sunday 7 December at the Masonic Hall, Crane Street, Salisbury. 2.00pm until 4.30pm

Saturday 13 December at the Masonic Hall, Morris Lane, Devizes. 2.00pm until 4.30pm

The afternoon will teach you how to make a festive Christmas Wreath which will be the envy of your friends and family.

The cost of £20 includes the base, ties, greenery, cones, ribbon, wires, walnuts, cinnamon sticks and some baubles and decorative pieces.

Profits from the event will be donated to the Masonic Samaritan Fund 2017 Festival.

For more information contact Sally Bullock on 01380 813625

Please bring an apron and a pair of secateurs.

This promises to be a fun filled afternoon when you can put your artistic and creative talents to the test when creating your own festive decoration.

Why not bring a friend to share in the enjoyment of making a unique and individual Christmas Wreath.

The Christmas story is often restricted to a narrative which includes a mention of the journey undertaken by Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem linked to their inability to find a room at the inn and the birth of Jesus in a stable. We are told of shepherds abiding in the fields and wise men travelling from the East to present gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

This story has resonated with generations of Christians throughout the ages and forms the basis of every nativity play performed by children in the weeks preceding Christmas.

Our best loved carols attest to the joy of the Christmas message and yet there is a darker side to Christmas which is often overlooked and sometimes consciously disregarded.

For many people in our society joy at Christmas is not a reality but a forlorn hope. Homelessness and loneliness are just two of the conditions some people will endure during what is portrayed as the season of goodwill.

In the Christmas story we are told that for Mary and Joseph there was 'no room at the inn' - for countless people in Britain this Christmas there will be no room at all - just a cardboard box in a shop doorway. For others Christmas will be celebrated in a hostel or church hall with volunteers giving their time to clean, feed and clothe the welcome visitors.

Children, so often the innocent victims of a failed relationship, will find themselves spending Christmas Day in a refuge hostel; waking up in unfamiliar surroundings devoid of the normal festive bunting and absent of any sense of fun and jollity.

Freemasons' Lodges will have donated all manner of Christmas 'goodies' to refuges and hostels across the Province, and we hope they will provide some semblance of normality at a troubled time.

The family is at the centre of Christmas celebrations, whether it's walking hand in hand to the mid-night service or to the local pub just before lunch is served; maybe it's the walk after lunch preceding the evening's silly games, followed by yet more food.

For some families, particularly older members, Christmas isn't a special day at all. They remain in their own homes, alone and isolated from family who in all truth might even have forgotten they are still alive.

As we are all getting older, living longer and often living far apart, it is not uncommon to be forgotten, especially when family ties are weak.

The joy of being a part of Christmas, part of a family is probably the best Christmas present you could give this year.

Dr Tony Milsom **PAGChap** PrGChap is a licensed lay minister of the Church of England and married to Mollie. In 2011 Tony succeeded the Rev Gordon Mitchell in becoming Provincial Grand Chaplain.



Dr Tony Milsom

So - You're New to Freemasonry !

Becoming a Freemason can be a daunting experience but don't worry - there are lots of people who can help you to understand and navigate your way through what at first may appear confusing.

The first thing to remember is that everyone in the Lodge has been through the same experience - even if they say they haven't.

The second thing to remember is that you are not required or expected to understand everything from day one - your Masonic journey is precisely that - a journey - so enjoy the 'point at which you have arrived' - rather than trying to anticipate the destination.

Thirdly, your proposer and the Lodge Mentor are always available to respond to any questions you might have. If they can't answer them immediately they will always make sure they get back to you with an appropriate reply.

So - don't be afraid to ask questions - even if they seem silly - you would be surprised at the type of questions new Freemasons ask, but rest assured - every question is a valid one.

Enjoy being a Freemason - you really will make lifelong friendships and contribute to helping others.

Open Day produces a positive enquiry

You can imagine the look of delight on the face of W Bro John Clarke - Secretary of Moonraker Lodge No 8747 when he received the following letter from a visitor to the Masonic Hall.

"A couple of weeks ago I visited the Devizes Freemasons building as part of the Heritage Open Days project, and spoke with a number of freemasons about the various Devizes lodges and freemasonry in general.

I was provided with a number of leaflets which I've read through, and I'm very much interested in becoming a member. Unfortunately, I have mislaid the contact number for the gentleman who initially deals with potential applicants, and wonder if I can have his number or alternatively if you could forward this email to him?

I understand from my conversations at the Lodge on the Open Day that an informal chat over coffee is the norm as a first step, before entering a more formal interview process."

Kind regards.

Keeping Cool on duty



The Provincial Display Stand is set up at fetes, open days and special events throughout the Province.

Recently the team has been sighted at Trowbridge for the Veterans Day celebrations and Hullavington for the Emergency Services Open Day .

The display stand welcomed a number of visitors and handed out leaflets explaining who we are and what we do

A very special invitation from Dave

Do you want to meet with members who are new to Freemasonry ?

Would you like to get to know more about who we are and what we do ?

Is there anything you want to know about but don't know who to ask ?

Do you just fancy a pint ?

Give Dave a call on **07979 692504** or email him at **info@pglwilts.org.uk**



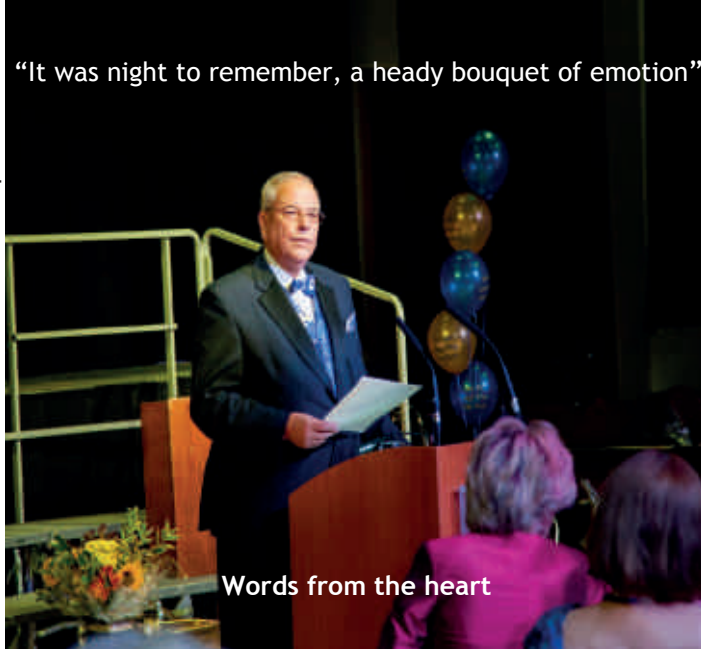
Celebrating in style..... and having fun



Dining in style

A Choir, balloons, good food and 'three little maids' - what more could one wish for when planning an evening of celebration with a few friends - 380 to be precise, and oh yes there was a guest of honour, indeed we had two - Dorothy and Francis Wakem.

The venue was Trowbridge Civic Centre situated in the heart of the county town and ideally located to enable members and their partners to travel from all over the Province to this very special event.



"It was night to remember, a heady bouquet of emotion"

Words from the heart

The Wiltshire Masonic Family came together to say thank you to a man described as 'truly remarkable' - a sentiment shared by everyone in the Province.

There was laughter and there were tears, there was applause - lots of it - but most of all there was love and affection.

Dorothy and Francis will forever hold a special place in the heart of every Wiltshire Freemason.



Photographs by W Bro Adrian Wooster



Three little maids and a very happy PrGM

The Final Tribute and thank you

Of all the letters and tributes paid to Francis Wakem perhaps the most poignant was this one received from Peter Warren - his proposer into Freemasonry, who with his wife Coleen has remained a steadfast friend for nearly 40 years.

Dear Francis,

As your proposer into Freemasonry I would like to say something about your retirement as the Provincial Grand Master for Wiltshire.

Firstly, I must say how terribly sorry and sad I am not to be able to join you this evening but, as you know, we are now on the first leg of our journey to Australia (again!).

We first met in July, 1967, when I was posted to Trowbridge. However, we really got to know each other as colleagues and friends when we were posted as the two Detectives attached to Corsham Police Station. Both work-wise and socially we became good friends and our families also became very close. In fact, you became the Godfather of my daughter.

I joined the Corsham Lodge, number 6616, in 1974 and you became very interested in also joining. I was very aware that one of our guiding principles is that 'you are not to introduce a person to a participation of our secrets unless his future conduct will ultimately reflect honour on your choice'.

I gave this principle much thought before proposing you, but by this time I had no doubt that you were a thoroughly honest, honourable and philanthropic man who would make the perfect Mason. I was not proved wrong in any way!

Following a long and distinguished career in the Wiltshire Constabulary, during which you reached the exalted rank of Chief Superintendent and were awarded the Queen's Police Medal, you became an important and committed volunteer to the Victim Support charity. I remember at the time that you said, "I want to give something back to Society." You certainly did that, not only in your continuing work with Victim Support and Splitz Support Service, but also as a Founding Trustee of the Wiltshire Bobby Van Charity, and a volunteer with the Crown Prosecution Service. I know you never talk about it, but you have also participated in and led multi agency Domestic Homicide Reviews in the County following three murders. Then in your spare time as Vice President of the Wiltshire Scouts. You are also as an outstanding Wiltshire and National Freemason.

My dear friend Francis, I am very, very proud of what you have achieved throughout your working and personal life. You have become a real credit to my proposal of you all those years ago.

May God bless you and Dorothy and grant you both a long and well-deserved happy retirement.

Salisbury was the appropriate location for the finale of the 'World Tour of Wiltshire' and it was the Installation meeting of Sarum Lodge No 5137 where the final tributes were made, a fond 'are thee well' was said and this letter from Bro Francis Wakem was read:

Dear Members of the Wiltshire Masonic Family,

As I stand on the threshold of retiring as Provincial Grand Master after having been privileged to hold such a marvellous and rewarding Office for more than a decade I share with you my personal thoughts and emotions.

We are blessed by the fact that pure Antient Masonry is practised throughout the Province within a 'family atmosphere'. Our achievements within the Province through working together as a family over the past decade have been substantial; forward looking; and imaginative.

Freemasonry is full of beginnings; each year in our Lodges a Master is appointed to serve for 12 months. Unlike the Master of a Lodge, a Provincial Grand Master can - with God's Blessing look forward to a term of several years during which to lead and guide the Province.

Freemasonry stands for the unchanging things, and its landmarks are constant. Whereas the Society of which it is a part is always changing; as indeed are the members of the Province. It is the continuity of a Provincial Grand Master's term that gives the confidence, and strengthens the task of leading and guiding both the Province and its members to fit comfortably into our changing community. The evolutionary changes in Freemasonry are many and varied; some quite small others momentous; I am the first to acknowledge that change is not always 'pain free'.

I am confident that pure Antient Masonry will continue to give future generations the pleasure that we and those who have gone before us have found in it. A small Province we may be, but we have a big heart, we Live Well; Laugh Often; and Love Much; Freemasonry continues to be full of Friendship; Fun; and Fulfilment.

I stand down from Office with feelings of simple joy, humbled in being privileged to have had the opportunity to serve others.

Dorothy and I have been emotionally moved by the outpouring of generosity; kindness; and the demonstration of true and emotional goodwill which culminated in the magnificent 'Evening of Celebration' at Trowbridge - together with the presentation of generous gifts of a piano; a sojourn to our beloved Cumbrian Fells and Dorothy's art materials. It was a rich moment in our lives and an occasion we will treasure forever.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the priceless gift of your loving support, encouragement and friendship. As we now approach the festive season of Christmas, Dorothy and I wish you all the happiness your heart can hold

May God Bless you all.

Trowbridge Hall warm and cosy for winter.....

Many of the Masonic Halls in the Province are in need of updating and renovation with some requiring extensive building, electrical and plumbing works. Lodge committees are faced with the unenviable task prioritising work based on necessity and the availability of funds.

During the summer Masonic recess a number of halls have taken the opportunity to undertake refurbishment projects ranging from decorating to large scale building projects; one of the largest of which was a complete refit of the central heating system at Trowbridge Masonic Hall.

According to the ancient minutes the existing system was installed about 100 years ago at a not inconsiderable cost of 120 Guineas; with Master Masons contributing one Guinea each and other brethren half a Guinea.

The Hall Committee commissioned a detailed survey of the entire building and it soon became apparent that a major overhaul and upgrade of the heating system was required. Tendering to a detailed specification it soon became apparent that only a few companies could undertake the work within the budget and timeline set by the project group. Having been awarded the contract, ALHCO engineers suggested that the uneven construction of the walls in the front hall could be enhanced by strapping, sheeting and insulating the area where the radiators were being installed.

The benefits of doing this is apparent in the improved appearance of the hall and superior thermal efficiency. Pipe

work was neatly secured to the new surface further enhancing the overall appearance of the installation.

The Project Team or 'overseers' monitored every aspect of the work knowing that it had to be completed, tested and running by the middle of September in order to accommodate the two Craft Lodges which meet in the Masonic Hall.

Two Potterton Promax 28kw HE boilers are at the core of a system which includes thirteen new radiators, a number of re-piped existing radiators together with a total of 450 metres of newly installed copper pipe

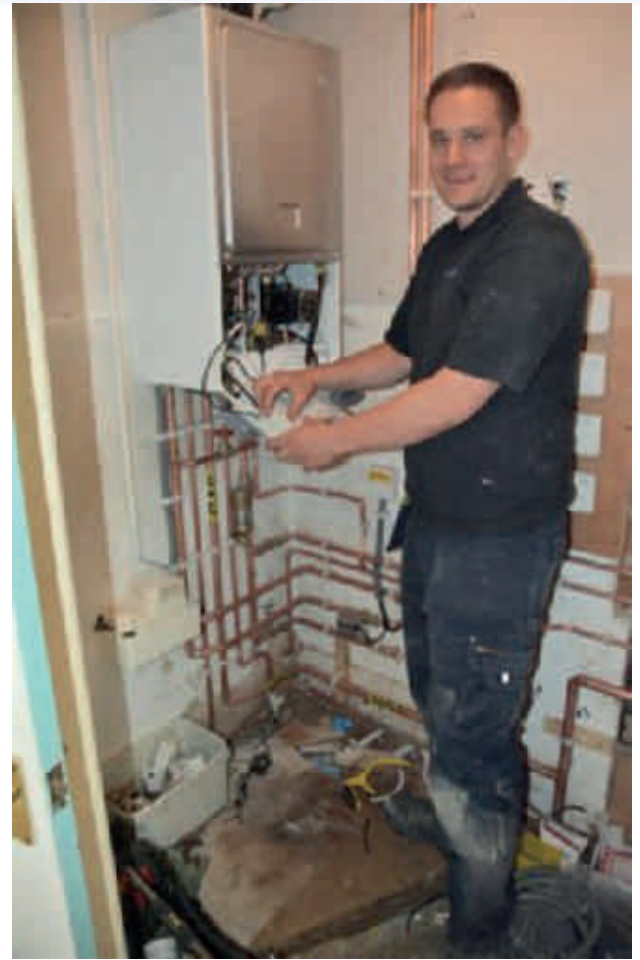
Working in confined spaces the team did an excellent job installing the system and Trowbridge members and their guests will now be able to enjoy the benefits of a more efficient heating system aided by four 24/7 fully programmable, independent temperature controlled zones which will significantly reduce running costs compared to the old system.

Roger Brooks - secretary of the Trowbridge Masonic Association said - "Thanks to the team who did all the work in installing our new heating system and for doing an absolutely fantastic job"



Congratulations to the Masonic Hall Committee, I am sure we can all look forward to an extra warm 'Trowbridge' welcome when we next visit.

If your Masonic Hall has recently undergone or is about to undergo extensive refurbishment please let us know. We would welcome a detailed note of what work has been done together with photographs showing the work in progress. We are particularly interested in any artefacts or items found during renovation work, especially if they are related to past Masonic activity.



Questions And Answers

Have your say

If there is something you want to know about Freemasonry, a question you have wanted to ask or a comment you have wished to make, why not write to the Provincial Grand Master

All correspondence will be acknowledged and your email or letter may be printed in Across The Plain.

Letters and emails are subject to editing control. Send your email to:-

ATPLetters@pglwilts.org.uk

The Provincial Grand Master replies -

Q. I was recently at a meeting where the Provincial Grand Master was announced with the word 'for' Wiltshire, isn't he the PrGM 'of' Wiltshire?

A. This is an very interesting quirk of Masonic protocol. The correct form of address for the PrGM is indeed 'The Provincial Grand Master *for* Wiltshire' and for his immediate deputy and assistant the word '*for*' is substituted by the word '*of*'.

I am sure you will have noticed that the proper way in which to abbreviate rank when writing and referring to the Provincial Grand Master or his deputy and assistant, is by use of the letters Prov or Pr and not a single P. Thus the Deputy Provincial Grand Master can be referred to as DepProvGM or DepPrGM.

This rule also applies whenever reference is made to a Provincial Officer, present or past.

However, while rank has its proper place in our fraternity, we should never forget that in the words of the Second Degree working tools (extended version) we are all brothers, equally entitled to be treated with the same regard.

Our Province is known for its friendliness - let's maintain that virtue.



Think you know ?

Who said ?

1. The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away"

Who was ?

1. Frederick Austerlitz
2. William Cody
3. Charles Harding

Where is ?

1. The Great Blue Hole
2. The Nine Hells of Beppu
3. The Eye of Africa

Answers on page 24

BANNER
BIENNIAL
BINDING
CHEST
CROIX
CORN
EMBLEM
EXPLANATION
HYMNS
PASSING
PILLAR
PORCHWAY
REGISTRAR
RULERS
TOOLS

Find these fifteen words

Masonic Word Search - Thanks to Dr Anthony Price of the Province of Somerset for setting the word search.



Can you hear me, Brother?

In the Summer edition of Across The Plain - Philip Burgess MD. FRCS.- Master of Pleydell Lodge No 4987 and a Consultant Surgeon at Swindon's Great Western Hospital wrote about the need to take care of our bowel. In this edition Dr David Reed reminds us of the importance of not neglecting our ears.



Have you ever wondered what was being said at the other end of the Lodge Room. Even when you ask a brother to repeat what he has said - did you really hear what was said?

So often today in our very busy lives we fail to understand the message, either missing all of it or the important element, especially if it is a joke. If you guess you can be sure you will be caught out by answering incorrectly at some point.

Hearing is a significant 'sense' in our everyday activities, just think for a moment how much you will have missed out on today if you did not hear. However, there is far more to having effective hearing than this. In early September of this year I received an email from the 'Better Hearing Institute' reminding me of the link between hearing loss and dementia, with a number of studies which indicate that maintaining strong social connections and keeping mentally active as we age might lower the risk of cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease.

Research shows that those who address hearing loss are more likely to be socially active—while individuals who suffer untreated hearing loss become more socially withdrawn and are considerably less likely to participate in social activities.

What's more, eight out of ten hearing aid users say they're satisfied with the changes that have occurred in their lives due to their improved hearing. Many enjoy more active social lives, are able to join in groups, improve their relationships at work and at home, develop their mental and cognitive skills, and be more effective in communicating generally.

Studies out of Johns Hopkins University found that hearing loss is associated with accelerated cognitive decline in older adults and that people with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those who retain their hearing. A third Johns Hopkins study revealed a link between older adults with hearing loss and accelerated brain tissue loss. "Even if you have just a mild hearing loss that is not being treated, cognitive load increases significantly. "You have to put in so much effort just to perceive and understand what is being said that you divert resources away from storing what you have heard into your memory."

In terms of rehabilitation, hearing aids today have significant digital processing power and are able to deal with very complex hearing impairments. They perform millions of adjustments per second to ensure that the wearer has the best amplification for the current situation. All of this high quality technology pales in to insignificance when the recipient is only interested in the device being invisible! A typical microchip in a hearing aid measures 6 x 4 x 0.5 mm and can be housed with the battery, microphones and speaker in less than the volume of a teaspoon. So... now the issue is handling something so small! Hearing aids can be wireless and have remote controls, so there is no excuse for not progressing this issue.

There is absolutely no need for you to 'miss out' on the beautiful words of our wonderful ceremonies - transform your hearing experience - if you are having problems hearing or someone else suggests you need help please for your sake and those around you, check out your hearing.



Dr David Reed MSc. MBA AuD is a Consultant Audiological Scientist. He is a consultant at Swindon's Great Western Hospital and also provides specialist audiological services through his private practise. (See Advertisement Page 9)

Editor note: Some of our more 'mature' readers may have identified the title of David Reed's article taken from the catch phrase of 1930's comedian Sandy Powell - "Can you hear me, Mother?"

Answers to Quiz page:

Who said: 1. Pablo Picasso.

Who was: 1. Fred Astaire. 2. Buffalo Bill. 3. Buddy Holly.

Where is: 1. Belize 2. Japan. 3. Mauritania.



Would you like to help the Provincial Communications Team by selling advertising space in the magazine?

Contact: editor@pglwilts.org.uk

Brotherly Love Easier said than done

Assistant Grand Secretary - Tony Rayner challenges us to think carefully about the real meaning of 'brotherly love' and asks the question - "What does it really mean?"

Question: "Name the grand principles on which the Order is founded."

Answer: "Brotherly love, relief, and truth."

Every Mason knows that question and its answer, and the answer runs through our Masonry, whatever the Order. We all accept that 'relief' equates to charity and truth is, or should be, self-evident, yet what do we understand by "brotherly love"? It is a phrase that can slide easily and, dare I say, glibly from the lips, yet what does it mean in the 21st century?

Let me provide an example to spur debate. I cannot speak for every Lodge or Chapter in the Constitution, but I can speak from the experience of membership of several Lodges and Chapters, and from visiting dozens and dozens over the course of my time in the Craft. If a Brother or his wife is ill, has had surgery, or is in medical difficulty, the Almoner will call round or telephone. He will make a judgement as to whether the various charities to which we have access could make things better more quickly. He may drop off flowers or a bottle of something to cheer the Brother and/or his partner and he will stand during the next Lodge meeting and relate how the Brother is and what has been done.

We all sit there and bask in the reflected sense of a job well done and brotherly love displayed. But what of the Brother who has fallen on hard times? Is the first we know when he resigns or, worse, when there is an agenda item on the summons for exclusion? How many of us come together to bail out a man who has been our friend for years without any expectation that he will repay us because we contribute anonymously? What about the new Brother whose work or family commitments make it very difficult for him to attend the Lodge of Instruction? How is he treated in the Lodge? Non-attendance at Lodge of Instruction can make it difficult to make friends and to form the bonds that may support us for the rest of our lives. How do we approach that problem? I suggest that, often, it is with criticism – especially from among the older members.

Shortly after I was Initiated, I first heard the phrase "Lodge politics." I think, I was a Deacon before I truly understood what it meant. In essence, it comes down to the male ego. The male ego is the source of almost every conflict in Masonry. Cliques, schisms, *prima donnas* and the worst of all, the Lodge Monster – the Brother who treats the Lodge as his personal possession and everything has to be to his liking, be it the officers the Master chooses, or the menu at the after proceedings – and he gets away with it!

On the whole, Freemasonry has calmed me down from the angry young man I once was. I was blessed with being surrounded by gentle men with a wonderful calming influence. It has allowed me to ride the personal and Masonic storms I have encountered, but it all emanates from being prepared to suppress my ego for the benefit of the Lodge and my fellow man.

To me, a large part of brotherly love is altruism – defined as a regard for others as a principle of action. Brotherly love is gentleness and kindness. It is also about understanding the wonderful words in the first degree charge and the obligation in the third degree. The address to the Brethren at the conclusion of the ceremony of Installation contains this sentence: "May brotherly love and affection ever distinguish us as men and as Masons." Let us think on those words and approach our Brothers and our fellow men with a gentleness and a consideration that will prove to our detractors that Freemasonry is the force for good that we all know it to be.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all at Freemasons' Hall to wish the Wiltshire Masonic Family a happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

After taking a degree in geography at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, Tony joined Essex Police in 1979 and served for 32 years. Initiated in Prittlewell Lodge No. 4896 in 1996 and Exalted into the Royal Arch a few years later. A member of several Lodges and Chapters in Essex and London, he was made a Provincial Grand Steward and then a Provincial Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies before noticing an advertisement on the Freemasonry Today website for a new Assistant Grand Secretary. He was delighted to be offered an interview and stunned to be offered the job. Tony has been in post since 1 July 2013 and was recently Invested as Assistant Grand Secretary .



If you wish to comment on Tony's article please send an email to editor@pglwilts.org.uk



Teddies For Loving Care

The popular Teddies For Loving Care programme is probably one of the best kept of Masonic secrets, but for one Devonshire Freemason the gift of a Teddy to his grand daughter was a real blessing.

Little Nicole Harris had an accident and was admitted to Swindon's Great Western Hospital where she was given a TLC bear.

A severely cut lip was 'glued' and Nicole was discharged still clutching her precious 'new' friend. Now fully recovered and with hardly a trace of a scar Nicole is riding and jumping her pony Paris.



Granny Jenny Leggett and Nicole

W Bro Terry Leggett, Nicole's grandfather wrote to ATP thanking Wiltshire Freemasons for the valuable contribution that Teddy made. Without Teddies help the repair might not have been so successful and the scar more noticeable - Thank you Wiltshire Masons from a grateful Devon Mason and of course not forgetting Grandma"

With Christmas just around the corner why not make a special donation to TLC - your donation will be thankfully received and faithfully applied.

You can help children like Nicole by ensuring the continuing supply of Teddies to the A&E Departments of the Swindon and Salisbury General Hospitals and to the Air Ambulance.

During the summer Highworth Lodge No.9009 held a BBQ at the home of John Bridgeman and raised over £750 for Teddies For Loving Care.

The members of Gooch Lodge No.1295 raised over £300 at their ladies White Table evening and John Clark, secretary of Moonraker Lodge No.8747 paid out £25 as a fine imposed by RW Bro Francis Wakem.

Large or small - all donations are welcome to this wonderful project. If you want to know more about Teddies For Loving Care contact W Bro John King - Provincial Grand Almoner by e.mail almoner@pglwilts.org.uk



New Video

Who would believe that twenty hours of work could result in less than five minutes of output - that's exactly what happens when you are producing, filming and editing a video.

Members of the Provincial Communications team under the guidance of W Bro Andrew Hargreaves were tasked with producing a new Provincial video which now appears on the home page of the web site.

Filmed over two days at the Provincial Grand Master's home in Easterton and the Masonic Hall, Bradford-on -Avon, the video was released on 2 October to coincide with the Installation ceremony of RW Bro Philip Bullock.

In addition to the Provincial Grand Master the new video includes a number of 'vox pop' items featuring some well known Brethren. See if you can spot them.

Calling Lodge Almoners

The Almoner plays a vital and demanding role in the life of a Lodge, primarily concerned with ensuring the welfare of Lodge members and their widows and dependants.

A good Almoner maintains contact with Lodge members, including those who are not regular attendees, and with widows and dependants of former members. He needs to be alert to problems they may face, and aware of the range of support that can be called on to address them. At the same time, he must be discreet in carrying out his duties - with the result that its significance may not always be fully appreciated.

The newly revised Almoner's Handbook has been sent to all Lodge Almoners enabling them to be proactive in seeking assistance for those who are in need of help and pointing out the correct way to obtain assistance. The handbook is designed as a model of best practice .

Stay Connected

The Masonic Centre at The Planks in Swindon has installed free to use Wi-Fi which will allow members and visitors to stay connected and use their iPhone, iPad or lap top computer in the lounge and robing room. It is hoped this new facility will be of value to those Brethren who need to keep in contact with their place of work and will enable them to attend Lodge meetings, rehearsals and Lodge of Instruction. The password leading from techno darkness to internet light is available from Rita or Carol. Brethren, please remember that the password is not to be communicated indiscriminately but only to those who are qualified through their membership of a Lodge.



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