



“The thrill of coming home has never changed.”

AUGUST 2021 Freemasonry is coming Home....

Wiltshire Freemasons



I wonder if like me you followed the incredible exploits of GB athletes as they competed in their various disciplines at the Tokyo Olympics. There can be no doubt that we did see some pretty incredible sporting prowess exhibited by the participants. It would be disingenuous for me to claim any understanding of either the BMX or skateboard disciplines, and the same could equally be said for the synchronised swimming, and the various track cycling events. Watching the latter has made me more familiar with the terms Omnium, Keirin and Madison. The Olympics followed another popular sporting event - The Euros. Football is coming home was the daily news headline (had it even been away?). It was while thinking about the ‘football’s coming home’ quote, and pictures of the arrival of the Olympians at Heathrow, that I was drawn to the quote of actor Guy Pearce which is used in this edition of **In touch>On line**. For Freemasons across the Province the desire to return to their Lodge is akin to coming home, and I know that for many, being able to meet with their friends in Freemasonry has been a real thrill.

However, I am also aware that for some Brethren, particularly those with long term illnesses or chronic conditions, there is a natural reluctance to meet in what they might perceive to be an uncontrolled, even unsafe environment. The Province and the UGLE recognise the legitimacy of these concerns, and it is out of respect for these reasons that both bodies have made it quite clear that no pressure must be applied to anyone to attend a meeting. Equally, there must be no pressure applied to prevent a Brother from attending a Lodge meeting. The guidelines issued by the UGLE are quite clear, and for the sake of good order are once again included in this edition of **In touch>On line** (see page 2).

I want to address the question of whether it is right to restrict a Brother from attending a Lodge meeting on the basis that he may not have been ‘double jabbed’ and is therefore perceived as a risk to Brethren who have been vaccinated. Dr Jenny Harries of the UK Health Security Agency recently advised that while having two doses of the vaccine reduces the risk of becoming unwell with Covid it is still possible for a vaccinated person to contract the virus and pass it on to others. Given the age demographic of most of our Lodges it would be amazing if the majority of Brethren were not double jabbed, however, having been vaccinated is not a guarantee that you are not going to contract Covid or pass it on. While no one has the right to demand an answer to the question “Have you been double jabbed?” I would hope that a brother who felt unwell would take the sensible and precautionary action of undertaking a self administered lateral flow test. If the lateral flow test proved positive then a more comprehensive PCR test should be undertaken as soon as possible.

As you read this column the Government is due to make an announcement with regard to the relaxation of almost all of the restrictions with which we have had to comply during the past sixteen months. I am sure that some of our members will remain wary and will take a cautionary approach with regard to returning to the Lodge.

For my part I look forward to meeting with you to celebrate a return to near normality as Freemasons come home.



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New Covid Rules....

Many Covid-19 restrictions were lifted on Monday 19th July and others will be lifted on Monday 15th August. To assist Lodges we are once again publishing the guidelines from UGLE which covers both the Craft and Royal Arch and reflects current Government policy.

1. In holding Lodge and Chapter meetings it is essential that Brethren and Companions comply with all legal requirements from time to time in force.
2. Provided that they do so, it is not UGLE's policy to impose restrictions on meeting beyond those required by the law.
3. No pressure must be applied to anyone either to attend or refrain from attending meetings.
4. The same principle applies to the wearing of face coverings, which should be regarded as a matter of personal choice.
5. The use of the modifications to the ceremonies, introduced in the summer of 2020 to enable ceremonies to be performed, should cease as soon as is practicable, except where local legal requirements are imposed in relation to such matters as social distancing.
6. The ceremony of Raising (and of Exaltation in the Royal Arch) is once again permitted.
7. It is nonetheless sensible to ensure that a candidate for any degree, and in particular that of initiation, is made aware that the ceremony he will undergo will involve a measure of physical contact, so that he can make his own decision as to whether to proceed with it at this time.

	VACCINE PASSPORTS No longer legally required - but will be up to individual venues
	RULE OF SIX Scrapped - no legal limits on social contact
	WEDDINGS/FUNERALS No limit on numbers
	NIGHTCLUBS No restrictions - can reopen for first time since pandemic began
	SPORTS EVENTS No restriction on numbers - meaning stadiums can be full
	FACE MASKS No longer mandatory - but companies can make them compulsory
	PUBS No need to scan QR code on entry and can order at the bar
	ONE-METRE RULE Scrapped in law - meaning restaurants won't have to space tables
	WORKING FROM HOME WFH message will end - but employers can continue if they choose
	CARE HOMES Cap on only five visitors will be scrapped

John Merrett jumps for the MCF....



Throwing yourself out of a perfectly serviceable aircraft might be considered an act of madness, but John Merrett of Wiltshire Lodge of Fidelity No.663 is perfectly sane and is doing his 'jump' to raise funds for the Masonic Charitable Foundation. By the time you read this John will have, subject to the weather, completed his jump, landed safely (we hope) and raised a substantial sum for charity (guaranteed). Otherwise the Lodge will be looking for a new Director of Ceremonies. (We sincerely hope not)

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AUGUST 2021 Heritage Open Days in Wiltshire....

Wiltshire Freemasons

Bradford on Avon Freemasons will be opening the doors of Wallington Hall on Sunday 12th September as part of the National Heritage Open Day event. Showcasing Wiltshire Freemasonry and the two Lodges which meet in the town, principal organiser Tony Haffenden is looking for volunteers to assist on the day, If you can spare an hour or two and would like to be involved, please email Tony: anthonyhaffenden@gmail.com

Devizes Freemasons will welcome visitors to the Masonic Hall in Morris Lane on Saturday 11th September. The Brethren are keen to set up a really good event this year given Covid prevented them doing so last year. The three Craft Lodges that meet at the hall will be displaying Masonic regalia, historical documents, and an amazing collection of Masonic jewels. There will also be tours of the Lodge, which will include talks on the part Freemasons play in the local community. Contact Paul Robinson for further details.

Salisbury Freemasons are hosting two visits by members of the Salisbury History Festival on Monday 30th August. Jeremy Moody from the Salisbury History Festival said: “As a past member of Salisbury District Council and having lived in Salisbury all my life, I have always admired the Masonic Hall and wondered what the interior looks like.”

Provincial Grand Master Philip Bullock said “We wish the Brethren all the very best as they promote the heart of Wiltshire Freemasonry at home.”

Sarum Lodge No.5137 doubles up....

Some Lodges positively balk at the idea of doing ‘double’ ceremonies even though the records show that they have always been a part of Lodge life. The Brethren of Sarum Lodge No.5137 recently initiated two gentlemen on the same evening, and are now planning a quadruple event. Some Brethren may perceive this as ‘conveyor belt Masonry’ while others will observe that the Covid-19 virus prevented many excellent candidates from being initiated in 2020 and the first half of 2021. Freemasonry has a backlog of work to do, and it’s only right that exceptional steps should be taken to resolve the impasse, and welcome new Freemasons in to the fraternity.

Corsham Lodge No.6616....

Talking of taking exceptional steps - congratulations to the Brethren of Corsham Lodge No.6616 as they complete their fifth initiation of the summer. It hasn’t been easy, but with the support of the Lodge and the necessary Provincial dispensations, the Lodge now has five Entered Apprentices. Just to demonstrate the Lodge’s desire to grow, there are plans for a further three initiation ceremonies to take place before Christmas.

Gooch Lodge No.1295....

Has a slightly different problem with three Brethren waiting to be passed to the second degree, and eleven Brethren waiting to complete their third degree. The Lodge is planning double ceremonies to raise their cohort of Fellow Craft Freemason to the degree of Master Mason. What a problem to have, and we wish them all the very best.



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AUGUST 2021 Swindon & Cricklade Steam Railway....



The Provincial Communication Team will be taking the Display Trailer to the Swindon & Cricklade Railway annual Military Weekend which is due to take place on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th

September 2021. This is always a great event and is usually attended by hundreds of visitors.

Provincial Grand Lodge....

Planning is well underway for the 2021 meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge, which this year will move from its home in Salisbury to a new venue - **The Civic, Trowbridge**.

We look forward to welcoming a bumper audience to Trowbridge for the first ‘proper’ Provincial Grand Lodge since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

If members of your Lodge will be attending, why not let us know and let’s do a ‘shout out’ for you. Join members of the Province, at Trowbridge for what promises to be an experience not to be missed. Contact pcowiltshire@gmail.com for further details.

**PROVINCIAL
GRAND
LODGE**

THURSDAY 7TH OCTOBER 2021

The Civic | Trowbridge

Can you help The Royal British Legion?



During the past year funding for the British Legion has been adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Allied to this has been the loss of a number of ‘veterans who collected on behalf of the charity. The Royal British Legion has made a country wide appeal for the support of Freemasons to help them in 2021. Wiltshire Freemasons have been asked whether they can provide volunteers to help ‘sell’ Poppies in **Marlborough**. If you’re a veteran and would like to help please let the editor know, just email pcowiltshire@gmail.com

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Another opportunity to hear....

If you missed the previous meeting, now is the opportunity to hear Professor John Dickie, author of 'The Craft - How the Freemasons Made the Modern World'. The webinar will cover how Freemasonry came about, and it's influence on culture, present and past.

Wiltshire Freemasons

Freemasonry from a Non-Mason

With John Dickie, author of "The Craft - How the Freemasons Made the Modern World"

Join the #SolomonLive webinar at 19.30 on 17th Aug

UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND SOLOMON LIVE

1 Week To Go

Making a Daily Advancement....

The third of the Antient Charges states unequivocally that a Lodge is a place where Freemasons assemble to work and to instruct themselves in the mysteries and antient science. Join the Vastern Lodge No.8977 Discussion Group and discover why education is such a vital part of the whole Masonic experience.

WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS

prudence

justice

courage

temperance

JOIN THE VASTERN LODGE NO.8977 DISCUSSION GROUP

THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

Tuesday 24th August at 7.30pm

zoom pcowiltshire@gmail.com



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The Peter Winton Trophy....

Deputy PrGM David Davies reminds us that as we fast approach the annual meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge, so we also reach the time we have to decide which Lodge will follow in the tracks of Corsham Lodge No.6616 in being awarded the prestigious Peter Winton Trophy.

Has your Lodge made a special contribution to the local community? Have you done something amazing to promote Wiltshire Freemasonry? Is your Lodge a contender for the cup? Tell us why your Lodge deserves to be crowned the winner of the Peter Winton Trophy for 2021. Email: pcowiltshire@gmail.com

Wiltshire Freemasons



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THE PETER WINTON TROPHY 2021



HAVE YOU SUBMITTED YOUR APPLICATION?

pcowiltshire@gmail.com



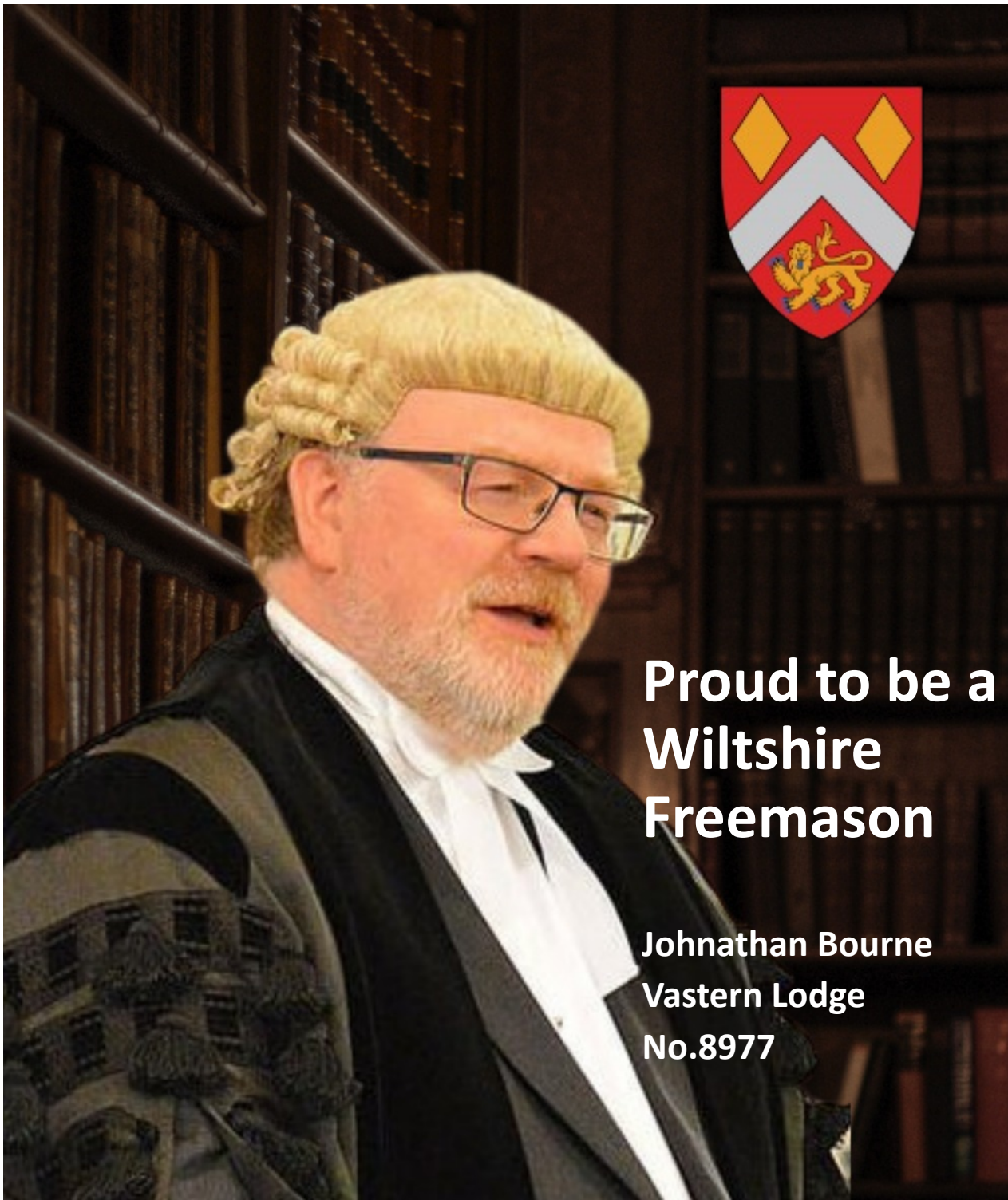
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Johnathan Bourne first Freeman....

On Thursday 29th July 2021, Johnathan Bourne a member of Vastern Lodge No.8977 was presented with the Freedom of Royal Wootton Bassett in recognition and enduring gratitude of his service as Town Clerk for 32 years. The ceremony began with a speech from the Mayor, Councillor Steve Walls which was followed by a fantastic cry by Town Crier Owen Collier who read out the scroll wording. Johnathan was presented with a framed copy of the scroll as well as an antique key, symbolising the freedom to enter and leave the town, gifted by Councillor

Wiltshire Freemasons



**Proud to be a
Wiltshire
Freemason**

**Johnathan Bourne
Vastern Lodge
No.8977**