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The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons

“February is short and very sweet”



FEB 22

We can look forward with hope....



It may well be a short month but under no circumstances can February be called a quiet month. In fact when I look at my diary, and that of the Province, I am simply amazed at how busy the month will be.

For many of our Lodges the month ahead is a smorgasbord of activities ranging from Initiations, Passings and Raising, interspersed with presentations of 50 and 60 year service certificates, Grand Lodge certificates, lectures and discussion groups.

I am really delighted at the way Lodges have responded to the recent changes in the rules regarding the pandemic. As we enter February I feel sure we are all relieved to know that the Omicron variant of Covid -19 has proven to be less aggressive than first feared. As the science supports a relaxation of the Covid restrictions, the Government has stated that we no longer need to wear a face covering unless it is in a health or care setting, but they do ask that we consider wearing one in crowded, enclosed spaces where we may come into contact with people we do not normally meet.

The vaccination programme is ongoing and I thank those Brethren are assisting with marshalling at their local vaccination centre. I heard from the Communication Officer that Brethren from St Aldhelm Lodge No.2888 were out in force directing traffic and providing guidance to members of the public attending the hub. A huge well done Brethren.

I have already mentioned activity levels in our Lodges and consider it worth reinforcing the message that the Province has over 100 men waiting to be Initiated into Freemasonry, and that new enquiries are being received every week. I understand that a very few Lodges are reluctant to accept Internet candidates preferring to welcome only those men introduced by their own members. While I cannot pretend to understand such a stance, as in many cases a candidate introduced by a member will be no better known to the majority of members than an Internet candidate; I have asked the the membership team to respect the wishes of Lodges which do not want to be offered Internet enquiries.

In 2016 I wrote a short piece about non-Masonic conduct in Lodges. Events during the past few months have led me to conclude that it is necessary to repeat some of the points made previously. I feel sure you will all agree that the future of Wiltshire Freemasonry is at the heart of everything we do, and yet occasions still occur when the harmony of the Lodge is disturbed by incidents which simply do not accord with Masonic behaviour.

As Freemasons we are exhorted to “amicably settle our differences” and to work with that love and harmony which should characterise Freemasons. I am very aware that some issues are more difficult to reconcile, and in such cases it were better that the Brethren retire from the Lodge than allow their presence to disturb its harmony. As and when an ‘issue’ occurs the Province will investigate the matter and where necessary administer the appropriate action. Of course it would be far better for Brethren to dwell together in unity, a situation much more in keeping with the purest principles of our Order.

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Are we a good advertisement for Freemasonry....

It has been said that the purpose of Freemasonry is the pursuit of excellence. All of the teachings of Freemasonry are directed to excellence in performing our duties to God, our country, our neighbours and ourselves. The continuing effort to improve oneself is the true mark of a Freemason. This principle should cause us to remember that in every moment of our life, whether it be in public, at work and even at home, we are Freemasons.

Those who are not Freemasons, but who know we are, will judge each of us and Freemasonry itself, by the way in which we conduct ourselves. We have in trust the reputation of Freemasonry, and every newly Installed Master is asked to “Forcibly impress on the Brethren of your Lodge the dignity and importance of Freemasonry, seriously admonish them never to disgrace it...” The reason for this exhortation is quite simple and straightforward, it is that a Freemason can “prove to the world the happy and beneficial effects of our ancient and honourable Institution.” But before we can expect to attract good men to the fraternity by our conduct and reputation in public, we must learn to conduct ourselves with propriety in the Lodge. But what is ‘propriety’?

The definition of propriety is ‘conformity to conventionally accepted standards of behaviour or morals’ - from which we can safely say that the practice of propriety is not simply about following the law or an adherence to the Book of Constitutions and the Lodge By-Laws, it is much more about observing **sensible** tradition, custom and usage, and like good manners, it has behind it only the force of opinion. Change is the law of life, and progress must of necessity occur. It is no accident that a new member of the Order is told that he is required to - “ever afterwards act and abide by the ancient usages and established customs of the Order.”

While the principles and ideals of Freemasonry are universal, social customs and Masonic traditions can differ. But wherever you may be, you can be sure that respect and honesty toward your fellow Freemason, as taught by the square and compasses, will be the fundamental guide for your conduct. Indeed, no institution can boast a more solid foundation than that on which Freemasonry rests, the practice of every moral and social virtue.

The Provincial Grand Master mentions non-Masonic conduct. I don’t believe this needs to be defined, nor should we or could we provide a list of Masonic do’s and don’ts. Such an attempt would fail for at least two reasons, first, no one would read it, and second, as Freemasons, each of us is expected to apply the tools and principles of the Craft to our own lives. It is justly said that the only advertisement a Freemason needs is to be found in his conduct.

The one word which I believe should be hard wired into our brain is RESPECT which is both the least honour that we require and the highest honour that we can hope for in our dealings with our fellow men. Respect encompasses our words, our actions, our appearance and even our thoughts. Inside the Lodge and outside of it, we should strive to demonstrate in every way our respect for a Brother’s honour, feelings, efforts, hopes and any other part of his life that we may contact.



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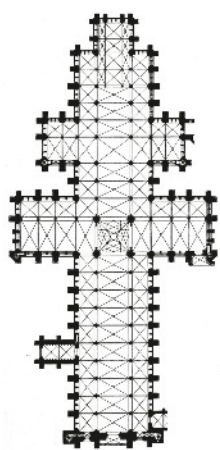
It's a dog's life....

Members of Radnor Lodge No.4451 welcomed their very own Guide Dog into the Lodge. Aptly named Radnor, he was joined by some friends and took centre stage much to everyone's delight. It was a year ago that Radnor started his training programme and what super progress he has made. I'm sure the Lodge Director of Ceremonies wished it was as easy to 'train' the officers of the Lodge - perhaps it just needs a few treats. Seriously, and all joking aside, well done Radnor Lodge for **embarking** on such a fantastic initiative. We look forward to receiving regular updates on Radnor's progress during the year.



Salisbury Cathedral....

To discover who really did build Salisbury Cathedral you need to read Wiltshire Freemason Michael Lee's excellent article. You can access the article either on SOLOMON or the Provincial website (Preceptor's Page) <https://www.pglwilts.org.uk/news/preceptors-notes>





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Gooch Lodge welcomes ...

The warmest of welcomes was extended to Gooch Lodge's newest initiate Bro Julian Willis by all the brethren and guests following an excellent Initiation ceremony performed by WM Steve Halliday and attended by DPrGM of Wiltshire Simon Leighfield.



Sarum Lodge support Connah....

Sarum Lodge No.5137 member Bro Connah Towers was Passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft at the regular meeting of his Grandfather's Lodge, Ashington No. 2868 in his hometown of 17 years before moving to Wiltshire to pursue a military career.

Connah was joined by his grandfather, two uncles, and five Brethren from Sarum Lodge who made the 650 mile round trip to support him. With 28 visitors in total, the support on the evening was unprecedented, and will be a night Connah will remember for a long time.





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Have you booked your tickets? at www.opentotheskies.co.uk

Wiltshire Freemasons

OPEN TO THE SKIES

The open air, picnic & concert of the year with over 3 Hours of Music & family Entertainment.

Free Parking / Disabled Parking
Bring your Own Picnic
Hire an on site Gazebo
Gates open 4:30pm - 10:00pm

Whats On:

Battle Of Britain Memorial Flight
Central Band of the RAF
Military Pipes & Drums
The RAF Squadronaires
The Falcons Parachute Display
The Wessex Male Choir
Matilda Wale (Soprano)
Fireworks Display

The Perfect Valentines Day Gift



Supporting: Wiltshire Air Ambulance, RAF Charitable Trust, Combat Stress, SSAFA, ABF Solders Charity & TLC

OPEN TO THE SKIES @ BOWWOOD

House & Gardens, Calne, Wiltshire.

SUNDAY 24 JULY 2022

OpenToTheSkies.co.uk
The Wiltshire Outdoor Picnic Concert of the year.

Congratulations Philip Powell....

From one 'copper' to another - Francis Wakem was on hand to present a Provincial Grand Master's certificate to Philip Powell to mark his 50 years service to Craft Freemasonry. A very special occasion for a very special man and Mason.





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Talking of training....

Steve Lee and the Learning & Development Team are looking forward to welcoming Brethren to the first of the 2022 training sessions which is being held at Freemasons' Hall, Crane Street, Salisbury on Saturday 2nd April. The session will start at 10.00am and will last for approximately two hours. Tea and coffee will be provided. Parking is available in the nearby Crane Street car park for which you will need some coinage.

The value of the course cannot be overestimated. For many Brethren, the journey from Inner Guard to Master of the Lodge occurs in a blur as eight years just flies by. This is an opportunity to discover what is involved in becoming the Worshipful Master.

The Learning & Development Team use easy to understand user friendly language and practical workshop techniques to help you understand the transition process from Deacon to Warden to Master. To book a place on this course follow the link <https://bit.ly/3414WiR> and fill in the online form or email Steve Lee on 8204@pglwilts.org.uk

If you're up for the chair - be there.

www.wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk

Preparing for the MASTER'S CHAIR

Saturday 2nd April @ 10.00am

Freemasons' Hall | Crane Street | Salisbury

CONTACT | STEVE LEE
07825 713048
8204@PGLWILTS.ORG.UK

And finally....

The Provincial Charity Steward has advised all Lodge Charity Stewards that ten Wiltshire Charities received £500 each and that the Masonic Charitable Foundation has agreed a programme of match funding. Wiltshire Charities benefiting from the scheme include Asthma Relief, Combat Stress, Devizes Opendoors, Doorway Wiltshire, The Hope Centre, John McNeil Opportunity Centre, Little Troopers, Ludgershall Pre-School, Springboard, and Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool. In addition the four principal hospices in the Province received a donation. Dorothy House, Julia's House, Prospect Hospice, Salisbury Hospice.