



In touch > On line

The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons



"The journey of today can only begin when we learn to let go of yesterday"

SEPT
2022

Wiltshire Freemasons

A time to Reflect - Relax - Recharge.....



As I write what will be my final contribution for In touch > On line, I was surprised to discover there have been 89 previous issues of the monthly newsletter. The very first carried a story about the youngest Initiate in the history of Wiltshire Freemasonry, an 18 year-old Joshua Bates, the son of Nigel Bates a stalwart of Lodge of Loyalty No.1533; another amazing first was the televising of 'Inside The Freemasons' on Sky TV; and who could forget that almost five years to the day, hundreds of Wiltshire Freemasons and family members took an active part at the evensong service in the magnificent surroundings of Salisbury Cathedral.

Every Provincial Grand Master retiring from office aspires to leave the Province in a healthy state. A significant part of my tenure has been during a period in which Covid-19 brought about lockdowns, isolation, and the unprecedented suspension of Masonic activity. The effects of Covid will resonate through our communities for years to come and Freemasonry will not be excluded.

Wiltshire Freemasons can be justly proud of several initiatives that have demonstrated the professionalism of the Provincial Teams. I am especially proud of the work undertaken by the Membership Team who have embraced the fact that we are a member organisation and have worked tirelessly to attract good men to join our Order. Engagement with the membership is something the Mentoring Team, working with the Learning and Development Team have fine-tuned. Their work will be rewarded over time as effective engagement is a medium to long term process.

The creation of the Wiltshire Masonic Charitable Foundation, which is halfway to raising its goal of £1 million pounds, is a project that will benefit Freemasons in Wiltshire for many years to come. I commend it to you as a means to making a difference.

I thank the amazing teams, present and past that have supported me during the past eight years. It is certainly true that there is almost no limit to the potential of an organisation that recruits good people, raises them up as leaders and continually develops them.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my wife Sally for her unfailing support to me and our Province. Sally has been a constant by my side at numerous Masonic functions and played an important part in raising funds through her floristry workshops. It is often said that we should never take our partners for granted and I am pleased to endorse that sentiment.

It is traditional for the Past Provincial Grand Master to limit his appearances across the wider Province following his successor's appointment. I will observe that tradition while continuing to support my Mother Lodge, White Horse Lodge No. 2227, and other Lodges of which I am a member.

I am sure that every member of the Province will join me in congratulating John on his appointment and will pledge to him their wholehearted support as he leads Wiltshire Freemasonry in the future.



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Lodge of Brothers in Arms No.9540

Alzheimer's Support is a Wiltshire based charity supporting people affected with dementia and family carers. They are transforming Scots House in the heart of the Salisbury to provide Day Care and support for people living with Dementia, their families and carers.



Supporting People with Dementia in Wiltshire



This certificate is awarded to

*Brothers in Arms Salisbury
Masonic Lodge*

in recognition of valuable contributions to

Alzheimer's Support Wiltshire

£500 donation towards the new Day Centre in Salisbury... **Thank you!**

Rachel Fear, Fundraiser for Alzheimer's Support, presented with a cheque by members Kevin Parkes (R) and the Charity Steward Neil Gordon (L).

Boys' night out for Chippenham Freemasons....

Members from Lansdowne Lodge of Unity No.626, and Vale of Avon Lodge No.8432 met to enjoy a game of skittles and a pint .. or two.





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Join me at Provincial Grand Lodge



By now our readers, and hopefully that's all 2,200 Wiltshire Freemasons, will have read the summons for the Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge that has been sent to all Lodge secretaries and can also be read in the Summer edition of Across the Plain on the Provincial website.

For many Wiltshire Freemasons the meeting prior to the Annual Meeting will be the first opportunity to formally welcome the new Provincial Grand Master John Reid.

I am sure that everyone will agree that the annual meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge is the jewel in the crown in terms of an event at which the attendance of all present and past Provincial Officers is expected. I am confident that every active officer of the current year, together with those appointed to serve for 2022/23 will join the Assistant Provincial Grand Master and myself at the meeting.

On this very special occasion the Province is honoured with the presence of the newly appointed and Installed Assistant Grand Master David Medlock and officers from Grand Lodge. David is well known to Wiltshire Freemasons as the Provincial Grand Master for Somerset and a member of Lodge of Rectitude No.335.

I know the team has already experienced a great deal of interest from Brethren wishing to attend the meeting, and to enjoy the traditional lunch. Currently, the lunch has been oversubscribed and a reserve list created. If you wish to be placed on the list, or to register your intention to attend Provincial Grand Lodge, please complete the online booking form by clicking on the following link <https://tinyurl.com/42m25w9j> If you are unable to attend, the form will also serve as an apology.

I look forward to welcoming you to Provincial Grand Lodge.



WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS
INSTALLATION OF JOHN REID

WELCOME

THURSDAY 6TH OCTOBER

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE

THE CIVIC ST STEPHEN'S PLACE TROWBRIDGE



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Thinking - why should I support the Festival?



As a member of the Festival Committee, I am always interested to hear from the readers of **In touch>On line** on how they are gearing up to support the Masonic Charitable Foundation over the course of the Wiltshire 2028 Festival. Indeed, some of the Province's members are asking for even more information about what they can do to make the Wiltshire 2028 Festival a great success.

In August I was told of how a grant from the Masonic Charitable Foundation has had an amazing impact on the lives of young people in the county. Youth Action Wiltshire & Outdoor Education is a charity based in Devizes that provided mental health support to young people affected by Covid-19. In two published case studies the team was able to offer support to John* who cared for a person with a life-limiting condition, and also to Susan* a young person who had been bullied at school over a long period and which had a massive negative impact on their confidence and self esteem. The charity received £22,000 that enabled them to allocate specialist counsellors to help John and Susan make informed decisions, helping them to manage and process what is happening in their lives. * The real names of both young people have been substituted.

The second piece of good news was the award of a grant of £60,000 over 3 years to the Youth Adventure Trust based in Swindon and whose aim is defined as 'Creating the Best Start in Life for Disadvantaged Children and Young People'.

The Youth Adventure Trust is a well-established local charity working to support vulnerable young people aged 11 – 15 years in Wiltshire who have complex needs and are living in deprived communities. These young people have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 lockdowns as their home life often created a 'toxic' environment. The charity reports that the instances of self-harm and those suffering from an eating disorder as a result has trebled.

Most of the beneficiaries they support have suffered from Adverse Childhood Experiences in their lives. The charity works with schools in the most deprived areas of Swindon and Wiltshire to identify beneficiaries to be referred.

The Youth Adventure Programme aims to equip these beneficiaries with greater resilience to enable them to overcome their challenges and reach their full potential. The charity provides a sustained, long-term programme over three years, consisting of three intensive residential camps with structured activities outdoors including sailing, rock climbing, bushcraft skills and canoeing. All activities are designed to help the beneficiaries to reach personal goals and build self-esteem and confidence. Sessions are delivered by qualified Youth Support Workers and specially trained volunteers. Towards the end of the programme the beneficiaries attend four Pathway Days, in which they reflect on their learning and are linked with other youth organisations to ensure they continue to receive support after they leave the programme. The programme is the charity's flagship programme and is ASDAN accredited, enabling the young people to gain credits towards qualifications from skills they have learnt over the three years.

The grant will fund 20 young people to participate in the full three-year programme. I'm sure you will agree these stories confirm why Freemasons should support the MCF.



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Seal Of Solomon

In 2021 the Province introduced Wiltshire Freemasons to Middle Chamber Dry Gin. Aptly named 'Tyler's Toast' this boutique gin was quickly snapped up by discerning gin drinkers across the Province. It will come as no surprise to learn that the Wiltshire 2028 Festival team has commissioned a flavour filled successor 'Seal Of Solomon'. Enjoy a great new taste at the same fabulous price of only £40.

Middle Chamber Dry Gin will be available at Provincial Grand Lodge at Trowbridge on Thursday 6th October, and you can reserve your bottle by emailing Mark Newman at mn@s33kers.co.uk (What was/is The Seal of Solomon see page 6)

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Seal of Solomon.....

The latest version of Middle Chamber Gin has been called the Seal of Solomon, but what is or was the Seal of Solomon, and does it have connection to Freemasonry?

The Seal of Solomon also known as the Ring of Solomon is believed to have been a magical seal owned by King Solomon of Israel. The symbol has its roots in Jewish beliefs but later gained importance among Islamic and Western occult groups, as both of these adopted it from Jewish tradition.

The name 'Solomon's seal' was given to the hexagram engraved on the bottom of drinking-cups in Arab tradition.

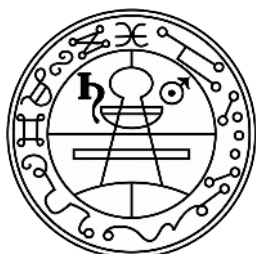
As a symbol, the Seal of Solomon is still in use today and one of its simplest depictions is either as a pentagram or as a hexagram, the latter being similar to the Star of David.

The legend of the Seal of Solomon was developed primarily by medieval Middle Eastern writers, who related that the ring was engraved by God and was given to the king directly from heaven. The ring was made from brass and iron, and the two parts were used to seal written commands to good and evil spirits, respectively. In one tale, a demon, either Asmodeus or Sakhr, gained possession of the ring and ruled in King Solomon's stead for forty days. In a variant of the tale of the ring of Polycrates from Herodotus, the demon eventually threw the ring into the sea, where it was swallowed by a fish, caught by a fisherman, and served to Solomon.

In different traditions, the hexagram can be seen as the combination of the four elements. Fire is symbolized as an upwards pointing triangle, while Air (its elemental opposite) is also an upwards pointing triangle, but with a horizontal line through its centre. Water is symbolized as a downwards pointing triangle, while Earth (its elemental opposite) is a downwards pointing triangle with a horizontal line through its centre. In a hexagram, therefore, it was assumed that the symbols of all four elements could be seen combined.

The hexagram is featured within and on the outside of many Masonic Lodge Rooms as a decoration.

"The interlacing triangles or deltas symbolise the union of the two principles or forces, the active and passive, male and female, pervading the universe ... The two triangles, one white and the other black, interlacing, typify the mingling of apparent opposites in nature, darkness and light, error and truth, ignorance and wisdom, evil and good, throughout human life." – Albert G. Mackey: Encyclopedia of Freemasonry.





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Germany comes to Wiltshire....

Fiat Lux Lodge No. 9773 is the host Lodge for the visit of Zur alten Linde Lodge No. 368 to Devizes over the weekend of the 9th to 12th of September. Members present and past of Fidelity Lodge No. 663, Moonraker Lodge No. 8747, Chaloner Lodge No 2644 and Wiltshire Lodge of Agriculture No. 9090 will also join in the weekend festivities.

Friday 9th September will be a meet and greet social evening with supper at the Devizes Masonic Hall, Morris Lane.

On the Saturday morning there will be a Lodge Meeting at the Masonic Hall, Devizes when there will be a demonstration of the 1st Degree ceremony. A visit to the Wiltshire Museum with a talk about the Thomas Hardy exhibition has been organised for the ladies.

Saturday early evening members of Zur alten Linde Lodge No. 368 will give a demonstration of a ceremony commonly held prior to a festive banquet in Germany. While not a Masonic ceremony it is conducted in Masonic style. No regalia is worn nor Masonic ritual used. This event will be followed by a festive banquet.

On Sunday there will be a visit to Lacock Abbey and the Fox Talbot Museum. Sunday evening at 6.30 pm there will be a Farewell Social Evening with skittles and a two-course supper. For further information please contact Jim Speed Tel: 01225 708121

The City Lodge No.5955 says 'ahoy there'....

The City Lodge No. 5955 presented a £1000 cheque to a representative body of the Salisbury Sea cadets consisting of the Commanding officer, along with a junior and senior sea cadet and two marine cadets. Bro Roger Perris IPM was accompanied by the Lodge Charity Steward Bro Kevin Tedd.





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Hermes - it's the future



Hermes is the winged herald and messenger of the Olympian gods (the Romans called him Mercury)

For modern day 21st century Freemasons, particularly the Lodge secretary and the Chapter Scribe E, Hermes is the name given to a project which will transform the way in which they work. It's about moving away from endless form-filling, and providing a web based system enabling administrators to process data in real time.

A Craft and Royal Arch Steering Group has been working towards the release of Hermes. The project has been in design and development for almost three years, and the feedback from those Secretaries and Scribes E who have so far used the system has been very positive. The package is well designed, easy to use, and will significantly reduce paperwork, making the life of the Secretary or Scribe E very much easier.

Craft Secretaries and Royal Arch Scribes E. will receive training on the new system. The training will be delivered by carefully selected volunteers from across the Province, who will ensure that the transition goes as smoothly as possible and that support is just a phone call away, should it be needed. Training sessions will be delivered throughout October and there will be plenty of opportunity to practice the new skills before we go live.

Outgoing Provincial Grand Master Philip Bullock said "Hermes presents us with the opportunity to help Lodge and Chapter administrators eliminate unnecessary paperwork and processes by taking advantage of the latest technology has to offer Freemasonry and our membership. I am sure all of us are looking forward to the real benefits it will bring in streamlining the way in which we assemble and manage essential data".



WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS

The Lodge Secretary

CHANGING THE WAY WE DO THINGS.

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It's Back To School....

Holidays are over and a new term begins with the Learning & Development Team led by 'head teacher' Steve Lee. But don't worry there will be no detentions and definitely no troublesome exams to take at the end of the year.

In fact the emphasis will be on having fun while learning, and what better way to start the new term than joining the team on Saturday 24th September as they guide the new Freemason through the process of **Finding Your Feet**.

A short introductory classroom session will be followed by a walk through the Lodge Room with lots of practical hints and tips, plus you get the chance to ask the questions and the team will provide the answers.

Everyone who has attended a **Finding Your Feet** session has said now helpful it was - now it's your opportunity to find out whether they were telling the truth or just being nice to teacher.

You can register online <https://forms.gle/aeLsgEyCkEwC1vyt9> to book your place.

NEW DATES FOR TRAINING....

Finding Your Feet

Swindon - Saturday 24 September

Salisbury - Saturday 26 November

Deacons Workshop

Salisbury - Saturday 29 October

Swindon - Saturday 17 December

Preparing for the Chair

Swindon - Saturday 5 November

10.00am until 12 noon

<https://forms.gle/aeLsgEyCkEwC1vyt9>



www.wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk

Contact us: info@pglwilts.org.uk