



## Lots to look forward to...



I'm starting my contribution to the November newsletter with a huge thank you, and it's directed to everyone who took the time out of their busy day to attend my first 'proper' Provincial Grand Lodge meeting as your Provincial Grand Master. That is not to suggest there was anything improper about last year's meeting, it's simply a recognition of that meeting being my Investiture which was a quite amazing experience.

If you haven't already booked, please do register to attend the Christmas Carol Service in the quite amazing surroundings of the beautiful Marlborough College Chapel on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 3.00pm. It really will be a wonderfully festive event with lots of popular Christmas carols, mulled wine and mince pies. It's a great way for all the family to get into the festive spirit and we are sure everyone will be pleased with the wonderful venue chosen for this very special event. Our very own Rev Dr John Railton is organising the service and he assures me it is going to be the perfect start to Christmas. Book today using the link [tinyurl.com/bd7nwpxy](http://tinyurl.com/bd7nwpxy)

**Wiltshire Freemasons**  
Invite you to join them for

# Carols at Christmas

Marlborough College Chapel  
Sunday 17th December 3.00pm

Family | Friends | Children  
Special guest appearance from Santa Claus

[www.wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk](http://www.wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk)

Organiser in chief Colin Cheshire, together with his team of 'little helpers' will make sure the afternoon runs with military precision with stewards from the Craft and Royal Arch on hand to assist attendees.

After the Carol Service there will be light refreshments available in a convenient room close to the Chapel. The team is unable to confirm the exact location until they have received the online return form registering your interest in attending. There will also be a visit from Santa Claus. Use this link to book your places online.

[tinyurl.com/bd7nwpxy](http://tinyurl.com/bd7nwpxy)



## Sometimes a speaker is really special....

And this year's Prestonian Lecturer certainly fits the bill. VW Bro Akram Elias is the Prestonian Lecturer for 2023/24 and will be delivering his lecture **THE 1723 CONSTITUTIONS: THE INDISPENSABLE TROWEL; CEMENTING AMERICA'S FOUNDATIONS** at a meeting hosted by Methuen Lodge No.8692.

- Date: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December.
- Time: 6.15pm.
- Location: Swindon Masonic Centre, The Planks, Swindon.



## METHUEN LODGE NO.8692

invite you to

### THE PRESTONIAN LECTURE 2023

## VW Bro. Akram R. Elias

Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Washington



## "THE 1723 CONSTITUTIONS: THE INDISPENSABLE TROWEL; CEMENTING AMERICA'S FOUNDATIONS"

### Tuesday 5th December 2023

### 6.15pm

### Swindon Masonic Centre | The Planks

For more information and to book for this event contact  
Ian Priest [L8692@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk](mailto:L8692@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk)

## About Akram Elias....

Akram R. Elias began his Masonic journey on 18 June 1996, when he was initiated into the Society of Freemasonry at Potomac Lodge No.5 under the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (Washington DC). He received all three degrees of Freemasonry in his Mother Lodge. Since those early days in his Masonic life, Brother Elias has been the Master of several Lodges: La France Lodge No. 93 in 1999; Benjamin B. French Lodge No.15 in 2001; Cincinnatus Lodge No.76 in 2003; and Pythagoras Lodge of Research in 2004, all in Washington, DC.

After a nine year journey starting in December 1999 with the appointment as the Grand Marshal of the Grand Lodge of Washington DC and following a seven year elected line as Grand officer, Brother Elias was installed as Grand Master on 8 December 2007, and served in the Grand East until 13 December 2008, under the theme of *Energize – Engage – Enlighten*.

On 26 April 2023, he received the grand rank appointment of Past Grand Sword Bearer.





# In touch > On line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



## Coffee time is anytime and all the time...

The Perfect Ashlar Smooth Coffee was a winner at the annual meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October. Mark Newman, Paul Sharp and Paul Robinson served coffee, tea and biscuits in the reception area of The Civic (by kind permission of The Civic management) who agreed to donate all profits from sales of The Perfect Ashlar Smooth Coffee to the Wiltshire 2028 Festival, and Teddies For Loving Care (Wiltshire). Thank you to everyone who supported this fabulous initiative and enjoyed a drink before the meeting. If you want to support the festival by becoming an Ashlar Coffee drinker please contact Mark [contact@wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk](mailto:contact@wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk)







### Festival Jewels - have you got yours? asks Simon Leighfield...

Sometimes something is said that causes me to do a 'double take' and ask the question "Did you really actually say that?" The 'something said' was. "I've not seen anything about how to get a Festival Jewel". That caused me to stop and think about how many times the Festival and Jewel had been mentioned in the monthly newsletter, Across the Plain, Twitter, Facebook and on the front page of the Provincial website [www.wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk](http://www.wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk) . The pragmatist in me simply put the question to one side and concentrated on the solution to the problem.

The Wiltshire 2028 Festival Jewel has clearly captured the attention of many members of the Province, so much so that the Provincial Grand Master has commented on the number of Brethren wearing a jewel. It really is a nice jewel and if you are unaware of the qualifying process for a Festival Jewel, your Charity Steward is the 'go to person' as the face of the Festival in the Lodge.



- A Brother or Companion qualifies for the Festival Jewel when they have given either £600 to the Festival or signed up for a Regular Payment Plan (RPP) that will reach £600 by December 2028 (or a combination of the two).
- Jewels are available from the Provincial Communication Officer - place your order by email to [comms@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk](mailto:comms@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk)
- Please pay £10 per jewel by bank transfer to:
  - Provincial Grand Lodge of Wiltshire
  - Sort Code: 23 05 80
  - Account: 43153161
  - Reference: L xxxx **jewel** (the xxxx is your Lodge number).

### Supporting the Wiltshire 2028 Festival....

There are so many ways that Lodges can support the Wiltshire 2028 Festival. Tony Ellis, Charity Steward of Lodge of Remembrance No.4037 meeting in Swindon thought a nice, enamelled lapel pin would be just perfect.

Lodge Secretary Dave Barrie presented a lapel pin to the editor and we are delighted to promote the lapel pin in this edition of In touch > On line.

If you have an 'idea' for raising funds for the Wiltshire 2028 Festival, all you have to do is discuss it with your Lodge Charity Steward who will undertake the necessary due diligence with the Festival Comms Team. As long as it's legal and doesn't contravene any of the protocols governing what can and can't be done there should be no problems.

Festival Chairman Simon Leighfield said "What a superb lapel pin. For many Freemasons it will be a great addition to their collection."





### Why do we do things?

The history of Giving Greetings immediately after the Third Rising is one of those 'traditions' where its origins have either been lost in the mist of time or as is more usual, completely misunderstood. What is true is that it has become a point of discussion in our Lodges, particularly since the PrGM has asked that at Installation meetings one visiting Brother undertakes the greeting on behalf of all the visitors.

For those avid students of Masonic history the root of greetings can be found in various ancient manuscripts and it is to these documents that we must refer in order to understand the origin of this delightful practice.

The original form of greetings was taught to the Fellow Craft Freemason in order that he could identify himself when visiting another Lodge. It wasn't taught to the Apprentice as it was presumed he would not and indeed possibly could not visit.

The spoken words were "The Worthy Masons and Honourable Company that I come from, Greet you well, Greet you well."

The 1723 Book of Constitutions, that is celebrating its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary contains a very important note that helps us to understand little more about 'greetings'.

*All particular (that is to say, private) Lodges are to observe the same usages as much as possible; in order to which, and for cultivating a good Understanding among Free-Masons, some member out of every Lodge shall be deputed to visit other Lodges as often as shall be thought convenient.*

This suggests that visiting was a more formal exercise and that apart from some form of formal identification to prove a man was a Free-Mason, it was also necessary to inform the host Lodge which Lodge you represented.

It is often forgotten that in the early days of Freemasonry it was only the Master who gave greetings or who authorised another brother to do so on his behalf. Today, when a Master is not present, the senior member present of his Lodge will speak on behalf of the Master. In theory this should only be done with the prior approval of the Master.

As a matter of etiquette, a member of a Lodge should not give greetings in his own Lodge as representative of another Lodge, unless he is the Worshipful Master of that (other) Lodge.

The Provincial Grand Master asks that Brethren adopt the following protocols when giving 'greetings'.

1. Please do not give greetings from more than one Lodge. You are visiting on behalf of a Lodge not a multiplicity of Lodges. "Whilst I'm on my feet" is not something that should ever be said.
2. The correct form of address is "Greetings Worshipful Master from the Master, Wardens and Brethren of the [Lodge Name and number]" which incidentally should correspond with the details entered in the Visitors book.
3. Points to remember. The Brother gives greetings and not congratulations, and that greetings are in respect of a single Lodge. Leave congratulations to the Brother responding to the visitor's toast.



# In touch > On line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



## Is your Chapter in the Spotlight?

Royal Arch Communication Officer Comp David Clatworthy is keeping Companions across the Province up-to-date with where and when Chapters are meeting. Please do follow @PGCWiltshire on X (formerly known as Twitter) To feature your Chapter please contact David: [racomms@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk](mailto:racomms@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk)

This month the featured Chapter is Thynne Chapter No.1478 which meets at The Masonic Hall, Market Place, Warminster. Coincidentally it's also the mother Chapter for the Grand Superintendent. A warm welcome awaits visiting Companions, and the Chapter welcomes interest from Craft Masons.



### THYNNE CHAPTER No 1478

Meets on the fourth Thursday in February, April, September and November



The Royal Arch  
[www.pglwilts.org.uk/royal-arch](http://www.pglwilts.org.uk/royal-arch)



Meeting at The Masonic Hall, Market Place  
Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 9AZ



[RAcommsWilts@outlook.com](mailto:RAcommsWilts@outlook.com)



## @Wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk

Have you noticed a new email address for your Lodge and Chapter?

As part of the Province's standardisation initiative, Lodge Secretaries and Chapter Scribes are being asked to sign up to [@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk](mailto:@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk)

Many Lodges and Chapters already use @gmail and some use @outlook to send and receive emails, while others use a personal email address (often the same one they use for all their correspondence). Using a distinctive [@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk](mailto:@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk) address offers greater security, increased privacy and allows the Lodge/Chapter to transfer a unique email address to a successor in due time.

The Province does not have access to the content of emails sent and received using the email address [@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk](mailto:@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk) and all emails are private and confidential.





# In touch > On line

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## Finding Your Feet...

Making a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge can take many forms and be achieved in different ways. One way is to attend a presentation given by the Learning and Development Team. The next event is on Saturday 4th November at the Masonic Hall, Yerbury Street, Trowbridge and while it's designed for the 'new' Freemason, everyone is welcome to attend.

You can book a place online using the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/3rvz95ma>

 EDUCATION@WILTSHIREFREEMASONS.ORG.UK

**Finding your FEET** *the start of a journey*

**Saturday 4th November @ 10.00am**

Masonic Hall | Yerbury Street | Trowbridge

Book Online | <https://tinyurl.com/3rvz95ma>

## Teddies For Loving Care - your chance to make a difference....



Will your Lodge help us to raise the funds to buy cuddly teddies that will make a real difference to the life of a child being treated in the Accident and Emergency Department of Salisbury General Hospital, or the Great Western Hospital in Swindon?

Every year Wiltshire Freemasons donate over five thousand TLC Bears

If your Lodge can give £250 to Teddies For Loving Care (Wiltshire) we can and will continue to make a difference. Thank you.



# In touch > On line

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## Stonehenge Lodge No.6114....

When Iain Oxley was in the Chair of Stonehenge Lodge No.6114 he did what every good Master should do and asked his wife for some help to decide which charity the Lodge should support during the year. It was a very wise decision and the choice made by Iain's wife Abbie was received with great delight by the members. APrGM Phil Still and Iain presented a substantial cheque to the Salisbury Hospice Charity that will be used to help other families like Abbie's.



### Teddies For Loving Care (Wiltshire)

**WILL YOUR LODGE HELP RAISE THE MONEY WE NEED TO MAKE A CHILD'S EXPERIENCE IN HOSPITAL LESS OF AN ORDEAL?**

[WWW.WILTSHIREFREEMASONS](http://WWW.WILTSHIREFREEMASONS)





### The Private Lodge defined....

The comment "We are a Private Lodge" is used by some to justify a disregard for a request or instruction from the Province or from the UGLE. The claim to be a Private Lodge is often accompanied by the rejoinder "and we can do whatever we like." Sadly, the claim to be a Private Lodge and to be able to "do whatever we like" is to misunderstand the constitutional make up of a Private Lodge.

To appreciate the terminology, it is first necessary to reflect on the meaning of two words - Peculiar and Particular. In describing what Freemasonry is we use the word 'peculiar' - as in "a peculiar system of morality". We do not mean that Freemasonry is strange, odd, queer, or even funny, rather we use an old world expression that means special or different.

A good example of the word peculiar being used in this context can be found in the relationship between Church and Sovereign. A royal peculiar is a Church of England parish or church exempt from the jurisdiction of the diocese and the province in which it lies, and subject to the direct jurisdiction of the monarch or, in Cornwall, of the Duke of Cornwall. The clergy and congregation of a royal peculiar would not consider themselves to be strange, but they do consider their status to be special.

In the Antient Charges of a Free-Mason, a summary of which is read to every new Master at his Installation, we are told that "A Lodge may be either general or particular" and it is from the latter that the word private has been generated.

To list all the synonyms describing particular would fill a sheet of this newsletter, suffice to say that individual, and specific are two of the most widely used.

As we are informed, there are only two types of Lodges, and that a Private Lodge is a 'particular' Lodge, it follows that a 'general' Lodge is and must be a Grand Lodge, of which there are four. The Grand Lodge is the governing body of all Freemasonry in England, Wales, and the Channel Islands, while Metropolitan Grand Lodge governs London, Provincial Grand Lodges govern the Provinces, and District Grand Lodges govern those overseas areas outside of London and the UK Provinces.

The term private does not mean that a Lodge, as in its members, can do anything they like or ignore a request or instruction from the Grand Lodge. In fact, it's quite the opposite as every Master promises "strictly to conform to every Edict of the Grand Lodge."

And finally, I was recently asked whether a Master who was not present when his successor was Installed can be invested as Immediate Past Master at some later date, very much like an officer absent at the Installation meeting is Invested on the next suitable occasion (although it should be pointed out that there is absolutely no requirement to do so.)

The answer to the question is not found in the Book of Constitutions but in the booklet titled INFORMATION FOR THE GUIDANCE OF MEMBERS OF THE CRAFT. Such guidance, as it come from the Board of General Purposes should be given equal weight as one might to the Book of Constitutions.

The relevant clause states:- If he is not present at the installation of his successor **he cannot be invested on some later occasion** but is nonetheless the Immediate Past Master.

Wiltshire Freemasons



**Have You  
Booked?**

# Carols at Christmas

Marlborough College Chapel

Sunday 17th December 3.00pm

[tinyurl.com/bd7nwpxy](https://tinyurl.com/bd7nwpxy)

[wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk](http://wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk)