

### The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



#### So much going on, I don't know where to start.



As the last Lodge meetings of the Masonic year are held and our tools are put away I wish you all the very best as you cease labour and go to refreshment, a term that justly can be applied to the summer break. Whether you are holidaying at home or abroad I do trust the weather will be kind to you and that you will return to your Lodge fully refreshed and ready to perform your allotted tasks.

One of the pleasant tasks afforded to a Provincial Grand Master is the opportunity to select and appoint the acting officers of the year, many of you will be aware that I have invited Mark Whitmarsh to be the Senior Warden, and for Keith Rundle to be the Junior Warden. I am delighted to confirm that they have agreed to accept the office and they will be Invested at Provincial Grand Lodge on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

The Provincial Secretary, and his assistant have been busy sending emails to the acting team for 2024/25 and I am pleased to confirm that acceptances have been received from everyone offered an office. When I was appointed as PrGM I made it clear to the team that holding an acting office required them to be visibly 'active' in the Province. For some, especially those members still working full time, this is a big ask, not least due to the geography of the Province and the land mass we all know as Salisbury Plain. However, if the past year is anything to go on I am confident that the newly appointed team will rise to the challenge and provide quite amazing support to the 'chain gang' throughout the coming year.

It is not only the acting team that have received emails with a letter attached. I have been pleased to promote and appoint a number of Brethren within the powers granted to me in the Book of Constitutions. I look forward to Investing each and all of the Brethren who have been recognised and I am sure that you will join me in wishing them well for the future. For it is on the future that we must always set our sights. I wrote at the head of the page about ceasing labour and going to refreshment, you will know that the next exhortation will be to return from refreshment and resume labour.

Which brings me nicely back to the summer break, which for some, particularly the Lodge Secretaries, and Chapter Scribes will indeed seem truly short. In 2024 the delayed HERMES project will move to its implementation stage and I have asked Steve Lee to head up a small team, to work with Lodges and Chapters to get HERMES up and running. We have already had an online meeting with London and the Provincial team will meet with them during the next few weeks to work on specific issues with a view to implementing HERMES before the end of June. Having spoken with neighbouring Provinces that have implemented HERMES, I believe the new system will provide many benefits to Lodge Secretaries and Chapter Scribes. It is easy to be sceptical, much harder to be a keen advocate. However, I trust all those responsible for the administration of our Lodges and Chapters will adopt a positive approach to HERMES.

I have been impressed with the way in which Secretaries and Scribes have embraced the use of the new @wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk email facility. The Provincial executive transitioned from their regular email to the new system and we are now converts. With that in mind I am confident that those responsible for the administration of Lodges and Chapters will work closely with Steve and his team to get HERMES done.

Finally, a huge thank you to the Lodges, individuals, societies, and groups that have contributed to the Wiltshire 2028 Festival appeal. I never cease to marvel at the generosity of Wiltshire Freemasons or at the ingenuity they display in raising money for such a good cause. THANK YOU.



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#### HERMES is back....

Or to be more precise, HERMES is back on track to be introduced to all Wiltshire Lodges and Chapters, and a new team is working to make sure the implementation process is carried out with as little delay and disruption as possible.

HERMES is the winged herald and messenger of the Olympian gods. For modern day 21<sup>st</sup> century Freemasons, particularly the Lodge Secretary and the Chapter Scribe E, HERMES is the name given to a new system that will transform the way in which they work. It's about moving away from endless formfilling, and providing a web based system enabling administrators to process data in real time.

HERMES has been rolled out in a number of Provinces and the feedback from Secretaries and Scribes has been very positive. The messages being fed back is that the package is well designed, easy to use, and will make life very much easier for the Secretary, and Scribe.

Craft Secretaries and Royal Arch Scribes will receive training in the new system. The training will be delivered by Steve's team of selected volunteers from across the Province, who will ensure that the transition is implemented as smoothly as possible. Ongoing support will be just a phone call away, should it be needed. Training sessions will be delivered throughout the summer months providing plenty of opportunity to practice the new skills before we go live.



WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS

# The Lodge Secretary

CHANGING THE WAY WE DO THINGS

www.wiltshirefreemasons

#### Did You Know?

The earliest mention of Deacons is in 1734 when two Officers were described as Senior Deacon or Steward, and Junior Deacon or Steward. The Minutes of another Lodge and dated 1743 refer to a Master's Deacon and a Warden's Deacon which accords with the placement of the Deacons that we see in our Lodges today. During the early years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, it was unusual for English Lodges to have Deacons, and they were not generally known until, in 1809, the Lodge of promulgation resolved that Deacons were not only ancient, but useful and necessary Officers. I think we would all agree Lodge life would be poorer without the Deacons.



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#### They think It's all over ... well it is now...

"They think it's all over" is a quote from Kenneth Wolstenholme's BBC TV commentary in the closing moments of the 1966 FIFA World Cup Final, when England beat West Germany 4–2 after extra time to win the World Cup. In the final few seconds of the match, Wolstenholme said:

And here comes Hurst! He's got... (Wolstenholme is distracted by some of the crowd spilling onto the pitch). Some people are on the pitch! They think it's all over! (Geoff Hurst scores to put England two goals ahead). It is now, it's four!

Now you can experience a part of that great day when England became Football Champions of The World by acquiring a replica number 10 shirt signed by living legend Sir Geoff Hurst. Beautifully framed this iconic shirt will take pride of place in your home and remind you of the time when the Three Lions really did come home with the Jules Rimet Trophy. To win this amazing prize you need to enter the draw and it's only £5 per ticket (you can buy as many as you like). For more information contact Mitch Bryan, just click on the image, or phone 07540 166664

To enter, donate £5 to the Wilts 2028 Festival by clicking below. Remember to add your name & Lodge No.

#### https://tinyurl.com/yzy6k94k



### **Guidance for Fund Raising.**

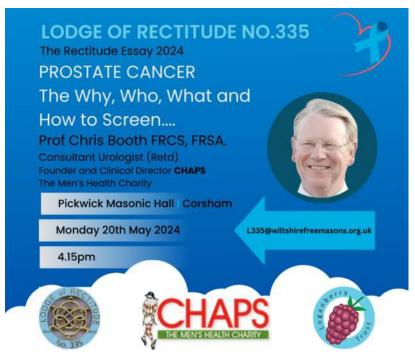
Did you know that appeals to be made to the Craft in general (that is outside of a single Lodge) to support any particular objects, causes, or movements, including Masonic Charitable objects, must first be approved by the Provincial Grand Master. (Information for the Guidance of Members of the Craft p44).



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#### Prostate Cancer - what you need to know....



Prostate Cancer is the most common major cancer in UK men and the second most common cancer killer causing over 50,000 new cases and nearly 12,000 deaths each year. The UK has one of the worst death rates in Europe, even though trials running up to 20 years now clearly demonstrate that PCa screening with the simple blood test PSA could halve this death rate.

Wiltshire Freemasons have supported the work of The Loganberry Trust since 2015 during which time hundreds of men have had a PSA test. However, as events such as Covid affected the ability of The Loganberry Trust to deliver PSA tests we have entered into discussions to partner with CHAPS

a charity that aims to be an advocate for all Men's Health issues and for Prostate Cancer in particular. The case for better provision of resources devoted to improving the health and well-being of men is indisputable and we hope that a collaboration will result in benefits to Wiltshire residents.

You are invited to hear Prof Chris Booth Founder and clinical director of **CHAPS** when he delivers the tenth Rectitude Essay on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Book now to avoid being disappointed.

#### Does it matter?

Q1. At what page is the Volume of The Sacred Law opened when the Lodge is working?

**Answer.** There is nothing in the Book of Constitutions or in any general Ritual that prescribes for a particular page. It really is simply a matter of choice for the Lodge to decide. Some Lodges have 'bookmarks' identifying where the VSL is to opened. The Bristol workings are very explicit as are some old Yorkshire Lodges, in this respect it should always be borne in mind that it is the members present that decide the way in which the Lodge works. (Rule 155 BoC.) For many Lodges the VSL is opened in a way that the tools stay on the right hand page as viewed by the WM.

**Q2.** Must a Brother who occupies a Warden's chair temporarily during that Officer's absence be one who has previously been invested as a Warden?

Answer. It's another resounding no.

Q3. Should a sign of reverence when used, be 'drawn' (cut) or 'dropped'?

**Answer**. A sign of reverence should always be dropped and **not** cut.

Q4. Can any Brother be elected or appointed Tyler of the Lodge?

Answer. Sadly no. Every Tyler must be a Master Mason. (Rule 113 BoC.)



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#### The Border Lodge walk, talk and pick....



On Sunday 24th of March 2024 four members and one wife The Border Lodge No.3129 completed a ten mile march across Salisbury Plain in support of the Combat Stress Charity which gives support to members of the Armed Forces, who for whatever reason, are suffering from mental Health issues. It was decided to incorporate the march with the regular Border Lodge monthly litter pick, which prompted a few grumbles from the two Army veterans in the team who were adamant that soldiers in their day never left rubbish lying around like this. Despite the grumble grumble six full bags of rubbish were collected by the end of the day.

The group consisted of Nick Williams, who set up the Just Giving Page and drummed up support brilliantly, the Worshipful Master, Dave Rees, Ray Coverson, and Rick Whitehead, accompanied by his wife Rae. The support wagon and route was superbly marked out by John Crozier who suggested we do this as a Lodge and invite serving personnel to join us. His encouragement and support was greatly appreciated, unfortunately John and his wife Maggie could not walk the event due to recent illness.

The Border Lodge march has raised in excess of £900. This is from donations approved by Dave Rees and also participant's friends and family, as well as kind donations from other Masonic organisations such as the Ludgershall Castle Assemblage of Operative Freemasons.

The weather on the day of the event was dry, but in parts exceptionally windy and rather cold. The terrain was fairly even which prompted some comments that there were less potholes on tank tracks than on some of Wiltshire's public roads.

It was decided (mainly by the younger participants) that Rick and Rae should set off first, presumably because they would catch up with us en-route. That happened with Nick Williams, who elected to run for most of the 10 miles, wearing full combat Uniform, a superb effort.

After a fairly flat start for the first 3/4 of a mile the route suddenly took an upward turn. While that wasn't initially thought of as a problem, because "what goes up must come down, right" The trouble was that it kept on going up and then flat then down then up again. It was a real 'roller coaster in places. This was a real challenge (Rick Whiteheads legs sent many messages to his brain asking what a fat lump like him thought he was playing at!) and especially for the return journey when we were on the 7, 8 and 9 mile point did create a real test. That said the oldest team of Rick and Rae Whitehead (over 120 years between them) still completed the route in less than 4 hours.

On the Monday, everyone in the Whitehead household looked like they were doing involuntary impressions of John Wayne having just got down from a horse that he'd been riding for 12 hours!

A great day, a great effort and all in aid of a great cause.

**Editor note:** This is a great account of an event that served a number of purposes, apart from allowing veterans to vent their feelings about the soldiers of today (albeit they made a very good point) - it brought members together to support a very special charity and at the same time enabled them to make a very positive contribution to the environment. Litter picking might seem a trivial endeavour, but just imagine if every Lodge committed one hour a month to a litter pick - the result would be significant.



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#### Giving Greetings, a reminder....

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.

The Provincial Grand Master asks that Brethren adopt the following protocols when giving 'greetings' in a regular Lodge meeting.

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



### Christmas is just around the corner....

Well it might seem like that , but honestly we all know how time just flies by and good intentions such as putting the date of Carols at Christmas in the diary are easily forgotten. So why not get your diary or calendar right now and put 3.00pm on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December in big letters (so you won't forget) and make a date to join John and Carole Reid in the beautiful Marlborough College Chapel. It's Carols for Christmas whichever way you write it.

We are delighted that once again the Rev Dr John Railton and Rev Sandy Railton will be conducting the Carol Service and we are sure there will be some special guests.

More details in the June edition of In Touch > On Line or click on the picture and register your interest in attending Christmas Carols in Marlborough 2024.

Whatever you do - don't miss out on this fabulous event. Book today https://tinyurl.com/CarolsinChapel



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#### So what are the rules on regalia....

"The regalia, clothing, insignia and jewels to be worn are as hereinafter prescribed, and not Brother shall be admitted into any meeting of the Grand Lodge, or of any subordinate Lodge, without the clothing appropriate to his rank under the Grand Lodge". Rule 239 BoC

"Why would anyone not want to wear the regalia to which they are entitled?" is the question that sparked the urge to write this short piece, but let's clarify my intention. I don't believe Brethren set out to deliberately disregard the rules on the wearing of regalia, and that includes the improper wearing of jewels, but due to misunderstanding the protocols or a simple ignorance of the rules, or even just receiving the incorrect advice, they have fallen into error. After all, who can claim to have read every rule in the BoC or Graham Redman's excellent work on etiquette?

There are rules and then there is etiquette, where one stops and the other starts is often cause for debate but as a general rule common sense will inevitably prevail. A few Lodges have very distinctive aprons for the Master and his Wardens. These are ornamented with the emblem of the office in silver or white within a double circle, usually with the name and number of the Lodge. There is no rule that prohibits such aprons being worn outside of the Lodge to which they relate, but in practice the Master's apron is the only one commonly to be seen elsewhere. The maxim here, is to make sure you have the approval of the Lodge to wear the apron when visiting, never presume it to be a right.

One of the most common errors concerns the Past Master's collar, and here it's important to stress that it is not an Immediate Past Master's Collar, there is no such collar in English Freemasonry. Every Brother who has served a full year as Master of Lodge and has vacated the Chair on the installation of a new Master is not only entitled to, but he must wear the collar and jewel of a Past Master at all Craft meetings - until he is able to exchange it for a collar of a higher rank. Sadly, a Brother who resigns during his first term of office, or if the Lodge surrenders its Warrant during his tenure, loses the right to wear a Past Master's collar until he completes a full year at a later date.

A similar fate awaits the Brother who joins a Lodge in the English Constitution from one outside it. That Brother, if he is a Past Master, must wear the apron of a Master but he cannot wear the collar and jewel of a Past Master until he has served as Master of a Lodge in the English Constitution.

A Provincial Officer who holds office in his Lodge must wear his dark blue collar beneath his Officer's collar. However, what he must not do, and it really is 'bad form' - is to fold the point of the collar backwards so that the jewel hangs through the 'v' of the Officer's collar.

Wearing the correct regalia is not only a matter of observing etiquette, but also practicing courteous and proper respect. If you have been awarded Provincial Grand rank, or have served the office of Master of the Lodge it is only right and proper to wear the collar with which you have been invested and which marks you out as a Past Master. To those who choose not to do so I would ask them "Why?"



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#### Did you know?

Thank you to members of Longleat Lodge No.1478 who asked for some clarification on Rule 157 BoC which recently has been changed. For those who don't know the rule, it's the one that deals with the age at which a man can be Initiated into Freemasonry.

The old rule stated that: No person shall be made a Mason while under the age of twenty one years, unless by dispensation. The new rule (2024 edition) states that: No person shall on any pretence whatsoever be made a Mason while under the age of eighteen years nor at the age of eighteen years before he shall have finally ceased to be in full time secondary education or training. So, it's not quite as straightforward as saying "an 18 year old can be Initiated." It is a qualified permission and before proposing an eighteen year old the advice would be to contact the Provincial Grand Secretary.

I have been asked to confirm that the Immediate Past Master can **only** be invested (he is not appointed) at the Installation meeting, and only in the part of the ceremony referred to as The Inner Workings. That is certainly the case but don't worry If he is missed out, there is no need to panic as he is by right the Immediate Past Master (IPM) and at the very next meeting he can take his place at the left of the Master (assuming he hasn't taken an office that requires him to sit elsewhere in the Lodge). It's also worth pointing out that a Brother leaving the Chair who is already a Past Master or a Provincial Officer is not invested with a Past Master's collar. In the case of the former, he should already be wearing his Past Master's collar, and the Provincial Officer's collar eliminates the requirement for a Past Master's collar.

### To win it - you have to be in it....

And that's certainly true if you want to win a fabulous prize in the Downton Lodge No.9064 amazing **AUCTION OF PROMISES.** Click on link to book a place **https://tinyurl.com/auction-of-promises** 



### **DOWNTON LODGE NO. 9064**

is hosting an



Saturday 29th June 2024









Browsing from 7:00pm First auction from 8:30pm

Tickets only £10

including nibbles and a drink on arrival

Vineys Barn | Amesbury | SP4 7HW



For more information on LOT details please email David Little: dlittle9064@gmail.com Richard Noon: noon.richard@googlemail.com





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#### Make a date....

To meet the Prestonian Lecturer Dr Ric Berman when he visits Wiltshire as the guest of members of Methuen Lodge No.8692 and delivers the 2024 Prestonian Lecture.

The impact of the Grand Lodge of Ireland and of Irish freemasonry extended beyond, indeed, far beyond, the island of its birth. This is seen perhaps most clearly in the development of 'Antients' freemasonry, which was established by London's expatriate Irish community in the mid-eighteenth century.

More inclusive and mutually supportive, Antients freemasonry was not only shipped back to Ireland but transported across Britain's burgeoning Empire, particularly North America, where it was carried by migration, trade, and the regiments of the British Army. It was also absorbed formally into English freemasonry following the 1813 union of the original Grand Lodge of England (the 'Moderns') and the Antients Grand Lodge to create the United Grand Lodge of England.



#### Did You Know?

The Prestonian Lecture is the only lecture given under the authority of the United Grand Lodge of England, or that during his lifetime William Preston (1742-1818) developed an elaborate system of masonic instruction which was practised in association with the Lodge of Antiquity of which he was at one time Master. On his death in 1818, Preston bequeathed to Grand Lodge the sum of £300 for the perpetuation of his system of instruction. Lectures in accordance with this system were delivered from 1820 until 1862, when the Lectureship was permitted to lapse. In 1924 the Prestonian Lectureship was revived with a modification to the original Scheme, the lecturer now submitting a Masonic subject of his own selection, and with the exception of the war years, 1940-1946, regular appointments have been made annually since 1924 to the present day.



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#### Trekking with Derek....

Most people think the famous climbing phrase "because it is there" was first uttered by Edmund Hillary when he and Tenzing Norgay conquered Mount Everest in 1953. Sadly, it's but an urban myth as actually George Leigh Mallory, three decades earlier, said it as he prepared to scale the world's highest peak.

Derek Gibbens (Lodge Elias de Derham No.586) has the mindset of Mallory and the drive of Hillary which is why he has arranged a six-day charity trek to Mount Toubkal scheduled for September 2025 to raise funds for the Wiltshire 2028 Festival. Derek, who is currently on a trek in support of The Stars Appeal to the Lost City, Colombia, is inviting any Wiltshire Freemasons who have an adventurous spirit to register their interest in being a part of this incredible experience. Discover more https://tinyurl.com/Trekwithderek

After flying to Morocco as part of a closed group of friends you will be led by experienced guides to trek Mount Toubkal the highest peak in the Atlas Mountains. However, it's not just a trip of a lifetime, it's also a way to support the Wiltshire 2028 Festival, so, even if you can't make the trip you can help Derek to raise lots of money for the Wiltshire 2028 Festival and you can do this do by getting sponsorship from family, and friends. The funds raised should be in addition to Lodge or Individual targets. Just follow this link or click on the picture https://tinyurl.com/Toubkaitrek



### Celebrating 50 Years....

The Swindon Masonic Association celebrated fifty years of active Freemasonry in Swindon's Old Town with a celebratory dinner at The Planks. It was a pleasure and an honour to acknowledge the foresight of the Brethren who recognised the need for a permanent hall and laboured to provide a facility that will endure for another fifty years.

### What's on in May?

There are 24 meetings in May, to discover what Lodges in the Province are doing in the month why not visit Paul's Diary on the Provincial website https://www.pglwilts.org.uk/events





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#### Masonic Bikers Ride Out.

April has seen spring finally arrive and the weather take a turn for the drier. Our Great Provincial Ride Out at the end of April saw twenty bikes rendezvous at Devizes Masonic Hall to ride to a number of Masonic Halls in the Province in support of the Wiltshire 2028 Festival appeal. The weather and roads were very kind to us, and a great day was had by all participants. The Stonecutters thank the brethren who kindly donated towards our ride raising £510 by the day of the ride. However, anybody wishing to donate towards our continued endeavours in support of Festival can do so at http://tinyurl.com/stonecutter-2024









### Wiltshire Freemasons at Quarterly Communications.

A wonderful lunch at Mark Masons Hall with good company and fine food. After lunch it was off to Freemasons' Hall to celebrate Simon' Ellingham's promotion, and Clive Emerson's appointment to Grand Rank





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#### What is an Open Mic night?

The second Chippenham Masonic Centre OPEN MIC is happening on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July **a**nd lead organiser Leon Philips has been talking to the editor about the event.

Editor: Leon what is an Open Mic night?

**Leon:** It's an event where individuals, bands and groups are encouraged to turn up and perform. It's not a free for all as it does have a structure, but it does provide an opportunity for new and emerging talent to showcase what they can do.

**Editor:** What is the prime purpose of the evening?

**Leon:** We're aiming to raise the public profile of Freemasonry in Chippenham and involve people who may have never seen the inside of a Masonic Hall and Lodge Room. We also want to raise money for the Masonic Charitable Foundation and an Open Mic night just seems a good way to achieve both aims.

Editor: So, what do you need to happen to make the Open Mic night a success?

**Leon:** We need acts to perform on the night (some of which we'd like to be Masons). We provide a full professional digital sound stage and sound engineer. You can get up and sing to a backing track, bring your own instruments or even a band. We are offering bands a maximum slot of 30 mins and individual acts a maximum of 20 mins, but if you just want to sing one song then that is ok too. Sound checks run in the afternoon before the event and there is a possibility of sharing a drum kit (dependent upon who signs up)

**Editor:** I'm guessing acts like to be seen and heard.

**Leon:** Absolutely, so we need an audience and we are inviting members of the Masonic family and their friends to attend and be the audience. We want to create a friendly 'live lounge' atmosphere for the acts and an environment in which the audience can appreciate good music .that we can invite enquirers on the members' pathway to.

Editor: Will it be loud?

**Leon:** Nobody need worry, we are aiming to keep the sound levels in check so the audience can be up close. We've discovered this really improves audience participation and their enjoyment, after all the evening is intended to be entertaining.

**Editor:** How are things progressing with preparing for the event?

**Leon:** We have a wonderful team but there is a lot that goes into organising and running an Open Mic night including marshalling the acts, compering, mixing the sound, serving food and drinks, to mention just a few things, and extra help is always welcome.

**Editor:** So not only good music but also food and drinks from the bar.

**Leon:** Food will be available but must be booked in advance, and there will be a bar, which is cashless, so card payment only please.

**Editor**: Sounds perfect to me. All we need is for readers to go to page 14 to find out more.



CHIPPENHAM MASONIC CENTRE

Saturday 6th July



Contact: Leon 07712 458660



TSHIR WALL

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



# Wiltshire Freemasons

One Journey • One Organisation



### **#DISCOVERMORE** in the **ROYAL ARCH**

OPEN DAY INVITATION • SATURDAY 19th OCTOBER 2024 10.00am till 12.00pm • The Masonic Hall, Chippenham SN15 3AU

OPEN TO ALL WILTSHIRE MASTER MASONS

More details to follow