



NOV 2024

In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



Remember, Remember...



I am sure it will come as no surprise to you that I start this column with a huge thank you to everyone who took time out of their busy lives and made the trip to Trowbridge for Provincial Grand Lodge. I know that for a few of our members the thought of taking a half day holiday from work just to attend a masonic meeting is simply not something they think is right or necessary. I respect their opinion, but of course I cannot agree with the sentiment. In a day gone by the holiday entitlement was two weeks, this was soon extended to three weeks and for many today the holiday entitlement is closer to four and even five weeks - I think, enough said.

A second thank you is due to Tom Snell, a member of Corsham Lodge No.6616 who put together a very special offer that certainly found favour among our members.

For the sum of £10 attendees bought a ticket and collected a 'bottle' - the bottle could have been a good bottle of wine, champagne or a spirit. I am delighted to report that all one hundred tickets were sold and £1,000 raised for Teddies for Loving Care, and no one objected to the content of their bottle bag.

The business conducted at Provincial Grand Lodge is similar in many respects to that of a private (or particular Lodge) and I was delighted to reappoint Simon Leighfield to be my Deputy, and to welcome Steve Lee to be the Assistant Provincial Grand Master. Appointing and Investing a new Assistant means that the Province had to bid farewell to Phil Still who has served the Province as Assistant Secretary, Provincial Secretary, and as the Assistant Provincial Grand Master. I was delighted to present Phil with a memento in recognition of his service.

One of the pleasant duties of a Provincial Grand Master is to appoint and Invest Officers, present and past. I congratulate every Brother who received Provincial honours and I look forward to meeting with you all at some time during the year ahead. The Acting Officers have already attended Installation meetings across the Province and it has been good to see how quickly they have adjusted to the way the Directors of Ceremonies wish them to operate.

It is during November that the nation comes together to remember those who made the supreme sacrifice in the two World Wars and the many conflicts since. On behalf of the Province I thank the Brethren of each and every Lodge that will be laying a wreath at a local Cenotaph, or war memorial on Sunday 10th November.

I am really looking forward to **Carols At Christmas** in the amazing surroundings of the Marlborough College Chapel. This year it looks as if we will fill the Chapel and with only a few weeks to go if you are intending to attend you really should book in today. Last year's event was a huge success and enjoyed by so many, especially the younger members of the congregation who met our very own Father Christmas who gifted them a little 'thank you' for coming; and everyone enjoyed the mince pies and mulled wine - both of which will be available this year. While the Province has to pay for the use of the College facilities, I believe it to be a worthwhile cost as it promotes Wiltshire Freemasonry, brings people together, and puts a smile on everyone's face. What more could we ask for? Remember, this event is for you and your family and your friends, it's not obligatory to 'bring a child' - just bring yourself. You will be made most welcome.

Finally, the new Learning and Development Team held a Deacon's Workshop at Trowbridge in October and will be following this with a workshop for those Brethren 'Preparing For The Chair'. If that's you, please join Alan and the team at 10.00am, Swindon Masonic Centre, The Planks, Swindon on Saturday 9th November.



NOV 2024

In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



Eighteen is not the new twenty-one...

A number of Masters feel the need to change the wording of the question addressed to every new Candidate for membership. When asked why, the response is generally along the lines of, "Grand Lodge has changed the rules and we now have to ask, "Are you a free man and of the full age of 18 years?"

It is certainly the case that Grand Lodge has changed Rule 157 which now states: "No person shall on any pretence whatsoever be made a Mason while under the age of eighteen years nor at the age of eighteen before he shall have finally ceased to be in full time secondary education or training..." However, this does not require any change to the words of the ritual used in Lodge unless the candidate is aged eighteen.

It is the case that for decades it has been perfectly acceptable to Initiate a candidate under the age of twenty-one years, the only caveat was that a dispensation had to be obtained from the PrGM. The change to the BoC was made to allow a candidate of the age of eighteen to be Initiated without the requirement of a dispensation; but, as you can see the new rule comes with its own caveat. The eighteen year old must not be in full time secondary education or training.

I guess to be correct the question to be asked should simply be "Are you a free man and of mature age?"

Sometimes we tend to the literal...

Recently I was asked to offer an explanation the cable-tow, an element of our Masonic ritual appertaining to the new made Freemason. In speculative Freemasonry the cable-tow is used to dress a candidate during the first degree when it is used to symbolise two of the three 'great dangers'.

What may prove interesting is that the Druids, the Greeks and the Brahmins all put a halter round an initiate's neck in their religious ceremonies. The cable-tow, or halter is definitely not restricted to Freemasonry.

Historically a cable-tow was a length of rope used by our operative Masonic forefathers for a multitude of purposes. They used it to bind together heavy objects on floats or rafts, to ensure safe transport to the work-site. It is also claimed to have been used to secure the workers at the job sites. The longer the rope, the higher the worker was able to stand at the building site. This indicated a more advanced and experienced workman.

One thought, expressed to me recently, is that the degrees represent a symbolical rebirth of the man into a Mason, the rope therefore represents an umbilical cord that binds the candidate to the fraternity. I was left with the very uncomfortable feeling that such a view, while interesting, held no provenance and really did stretch the imagination.

Another interpretation of the cable-tow was to consider the rope as being a physical bond that the candidate throws off once he becomes a Freemason by completing the obligation and pledging on his honour to uphold the principles of Freemasonry. Recently I read an essay that suggested the cable-tow is a symbolic connection between land and sea, earth and water so masonry can be universally spread over its surface.

Finally, it has also been suggested that evidence proves that the wearing of a cable-tow can be viewed as an act of submission, indeed there is ample proof that it was viewed as such for over two thousand years.

What do you think is the symbolical significance of the cable-tow?



NOV 2024

Auction Of Promises...

What a super evening was enjoyed by many Freemasons in Salisbury as auctioneer Ian Tanner (he's the one holding the gavel) made sure the incredible auction items on offer were sold to the highest bidder.

Organiser in Chief David Little (Downton Lodge No.9540) was on hand to make sure that everyone who bid for a 'lot' was recognised and received their auction item.

The event raised over £5,500 for the Wiltshire 2028 Festival.

Everyone that participated, especially those who succeeded in buying their chosen item, agreed that the Auction of Promises was a great success and are now looking forward to the next one. Over to you David and Ian.



Talking of the Wiltshire 2028 Festival, it's quite amazing to see the work being done by so many Lodges and Chapters as they rise to the challenge to raise £1,000,000 before the end of 2028.

A wonderful donation of £10,000 from the Royal Arch was one of the highlights of this year's Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge.

The Deputy Grand Superintendent Simon Ellingham made the presentation to the Provincial Grand Master John Reid amid sustained applause from everyone in attendance.

In accepting the donation, John Reid spoke about the unique relationship that exists between the Craft and the Royal Arch. We are not only bound by the indissoluble link as expressed in the Preliminary Declaration found on page one of the Book of Constitutions, but also by the simple stated truth that we are on one journey as one organisation. That journey includes a shared understanding that as Wiltshire Freemasons, charity is in our DNA.





NOV 2024

Join Derek Gibbens on the trip of a lifetime... If you are still wondering whether to join Derek and his friends as they climb the highest peak in North Africa a slight change in the programme might be just the 'nudge' you need to make your final decision.

Derek has negotiated a super improved deal that will only require you to commit to five days trekking. The actual trip is no longer dependant on having a minimum number of people booking - the trip is definitely going ahead. Oh, and did I say, the cost has been reduced to a bargain at only **£1,049**. To register and book your place on the trip of a lifetime (you will have to listen to Derek's awful jokes) register and pay your deposit of **£199** by the end of the year. It's so easy to do, click here <https://tinyurl.com/toubkaltrek>

The trip dates are **Wednesday 3rd September to Sunday 7th September 2025**. Sign up direct with the tour company, who will be limiting the trek team to twenty people - once full that's it, so you do need to book and pay the deposit to secure a place. Derek's advice is that you book no later than the end of December to definitely secure a place. Don't regret missing out, click on the link shown above.



Wednesday
3rd September
to
Sunday
7th September
2025
only
£1,049

**DEPOSIT
£199**

**Join me Derek Gibbens on a 5 day trek as we
climb the highest peak in North Africa
Mount Toubkal**



What is a Lodge of Instruction?

A Lodge of Instruction is often thought of as an ad hoc, unregulated get together, whereas nothing could be further from the truth if the Lodge of Instruction is operating correctly and in conformity to the Book of Constitutions. The rules governing the formation and operation of a Lodge of Instruction are Rules 132 to 135 inclusive. However, a Lodge of Instruction is not a warranted Lodge; it may have a name but it doesn't have a number, rather it owes its existence to the fact it is permitted under the sanction of a regular warranted Lodge, or by the licence and authority of the Grand Master.

The rules for a Lodge of Instruction as set out in the Book of Constitutions do not specify or lay down standards of dress for the meetings, nor, interestingly, does it require the wearing of regalia at them. That said, I am able to confirm that in the Emulation Lodge of Improvement the minimum expectation is that Brethren wear smart casual with a MM or WM apron (pale-blue edging). By long-standing custom, only members of the Emulation Lodge of Improvement Committee wear aprons of rank and the only collars or jewels worn are those of the Officers for the particular evening.

It is also the case that the Book of Constitutions does not provide for the 'office' of a preceptor, a word whose meaning is simply that of 'teacher'. However, while it is undoubtedly the role of the Master to "instruct the Brethren in Freemasonry" it is also incumbent on the more senior and knowledgeable members to teach while others must of course learn, submit, and obey. The proper place for learning is a Lodge.

It has been said that the primary purpose of a Lodge of Instruction is to provide a structured environment for Freemasons to practise and perfect the ritual work and ceremonies of the Lodge. It is clear that this was the original purpose in the formation of the Lodge of Reconciliation, and of the formation of the two Lodges most closely associated with the promotion of the 'new ritual'. It is also true that a Lodge is where Freemasons assemble to improve themselves in the mysteries of the Craft; something beyond just rehearsing words and movement. A Lodge of Instruction today might well see itself as having a wider educational role.

The origins of the Lodge of Instruction and their value in Freemasonry today is a subject that has been raised by a number of Brethren as a topic for a more in depth article. As a result, the editor will include a more exhaustive piece on this fascinating subject in the Winter 2024 edition of Across the Plain.



Welcome Steve...

At the Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge, John Reid PrGM was pleased to appoint, obligate and Invest W Bro Steve Lee as the fourteenth Assistant Provincial Grand Master of Wiltshire.

Steve has been appointed to the Provincial Executive and will oversee the work of the Learning and Development Team, and the mentoring Team.

Steve is well known throughout the Province as the Provincial Grand Master of the Mark Degree in Wiltshire.



Swindon Town FC Community Foundation...



Wiltshire Freemason’s Deputy Provincial Grand Master Simon Leighfield was joined by newly appointed Assistant Provincial Grand Master Steve Lee, and Provincial Almoner Gary Dolphin on a visit to Foundation Park, home of the Swindon Town FC Community Foundation which was founded in 1991 as ‘Swindon Town Football in the Community’ by former Town player Leigh Barnard.

The Foundation delivers football and Multi Sports based programmes within Swindon and the county of Wiltshire, and endeavours to deliver and increase participation for people from 2 – 82 years of age. Under the guidance of the English Football League Trust, they deliver the four key themes of: Sports Participation, Education, Social Inclusion and Health.

With the support of local partners, the Foundation continue to strive and achieve their maximum potential by engaging with over 30,000 participants on an annual basis. The team is friendly and approachable, always ready to lend a helping hand and ensure clients have a positive experience. All of the Foundation’s programmes are delivered with the aims of encouraging engagement, participation and achievement.

Funding is provided through partnership programmes with our sponsors and the £60,000 grant over two years from the Masonic Charitable Foundation will be used to support young people between the ages of 5-16 with registered Special Educational Needs and/or disability who wouldn't access mainstream sport provision. It is anticipated that eighty young people will benefit over the two years of the project.

The budget includes the Project Lead and staffing costs (74%), equipment/resources (will purchase disability specific equipment including wheelchair footballs, Boccia ramps and sensory packs), subsidised facility hire costs and transport (for staff).





L663 making a difference in Devizes...



Our Wiltshire Lodges are great supporters of local charities as was demonstrated when Stephen Botham the WM of The Wiltshire Lodge of Fidelity No 663 presented a cheque for £3,000 to the Devizes Alzheimer's Support Group.

Fundraising Manager Rachel Fear was joined by fellow fundraiser Julian Roberts, and Kerry Rose a Support Worker and Volunteer with the group.

The donation will be used to fund the daily costs of the Day Centre in Sidmouth Street in Devizes which is open Tuesday to Friday.

The charity also run community groups consisting of Music, Movement and Mind.





NOV 2024

In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



What is the expectation?

I have always held that there are three types of Freemasons (can you think of more?)

The first consists of those who made their application for initiation not from a thirst for knowledge, but from a keen desire to aid their fellow man by invoking the Lodge and its members to exercise that virtue which may justly be denominated the distinguishing characteristic of a Freemason's heart - I mean Charity.

The second type is the sociable Member who enjoys the company of his fellows, tolerates the slight inconvenience of having to sit through a sixty minute ceremony, and just loves the camaraderie or companionship of his fellow Freemasons especially at the festive board.

The third type can often appear to be tiresomely boring as their interest is in learning more about Freemasonry, its history, its symbols and above all the meaning within the allegory. Something often referred to as the 'esoteric' aspect of Freemasonry, but in fact is entirely able to be understood by the majority of men who seek to explore the nature of the fraternity they have joined.

Neither of the three types is right or wrong, better, or worse. Different, certainly, but difference is perfectly normal, and not only is it absolutely acceptable, but I would also suggest it is essential. It is a more reasonable definition of diversity in Freemasonry than that promulgated by those who view Diversity, Inclusion, and Equality through an extremely narrow window of prejudice based on social, ethnic, gender or sexual orientation.

In this short article I want to concentrate my comments on the third type of Freemason, the man whose application for admission was being prompted, as the ritual requires, "by a favourable opinion pre-conceived of the Institution, and a desire of knowledge." But what knowledge? We know from our ritual that the new Freemason is enjoined to study the liberal Arts and Sciences, but have you ever stopped to consider what this might mean? The liberal arts, defined as literature, philosophy, languages, and history are intended to develop the mind in a general way rather than to give professional or vocational skills. It is by such a process that the new made Brother makes a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.

As soon as they are initiated, they see in the ceremonies through which they have passed a philosophical meaning worthy of inquiry, and they devote themselves to this inquiry. They obtain Masonic books, read Masonic periodicals, and they converse with well-informed Brethren. They acquaint themselves with the history of the fraternity and investigate its origin, and ultimate design. They explore the hidden sense of its symbols as they seek a personal interpretation. They ask questions and seek answers.

Sadly, for many the answers are less than forthcoming as decades of indifference to the importance of Masonic learning has taken its toll, and the ability of even senior members to respond has been lost and forgotten. Debate, discussion, even argument has given way to a passive acceptance that sometimes the subject matter is too difficult to explain, or that it relates to a previous era and is not relevant for today. Such a dismissive approach is not the experience that the new Freemasons is seeking when he asks his question in his quest for 'light' or enlightenment. It is also the reason given by some Brethren for resigning their membership of the Craft. How often we see "it's not what I expected" or "I thought it would be much more interesting" and finally, "I was seeking something and you just don't provide it."

Perhaps we need to retrace our steps and rediscover the importance of education in Freemasonry?



Are you a Warden?

If you are, then no doubt you will be looking forward to the moment when the Lodge members offer you the highest honour they can afford to any of its members - the office of Master of the Lodge.

The installation of the Master of a Lodge was a pre-condition of the union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813 and the Moderns, actually the First Grand Lodge, declared this to be a true Landmark of the Order and that it must be faithfully observed. In Wiltshire, unlike some other Provinces, the Provincial Grand Master, his Deputy, or the Assistant Provincial Grand Master always preside at a Lodge Installation meeting and many Brethren comment that the presence of the Provincial Acting Officers adds greatly to the atmosphere of the evening.

If you're a Warden (even a Deacon) in your Lodge now is the right time to be thinking about the qualifications and what is involved in being Master of the Lodge. Preparing For The Chair is the ideal way to discover more about what you need to know and do before you take this important step in your Masonic journey.

Book online using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/Preparingforthechair>

WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS
learning never ends

PREPARING FOR THE CHAIR

Swindon Masonic Centre
 The Planks | Swindon

Saturday 9 November
 10.00am | 12 noon

BOOK ONLINE

MAKING A DAILY ADVANCEMENT IN MASONIC KNOWLEDGE

A Reminder...

Past Masters who have been presented with a Past Masters breast jewel are asked to remember that in this Province **the wearing of Lodge specific jewels is restricted to the Lodge to which they apply**; which means that when a member visits or joins another Lodge he does not wear a Past Master's or a Centenary breast jewel of another Lodge in that Lodge.

If you invite a member of another Province to visit it is perfectly in order, and a courtesy, to advise your guest of this ruling. A Freemason will not be offended at being made aware of this and in most circumstances would be grateful for the notification. A similar principle applies when visiting a Lodge in another Province; please make enquiry of the policy of the Province and be respectful of their wishes.



The 'Sansums' have good reason to celebrate...

It was truly a family affair for the 'Sansums' when Roger, Roy and Alex - Roger's Son joined DPrGM Simon Leighfield to celebrate Roger's 50 years in Freemasonry and membership The Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation No.355 meeting at the Swindon Masonic Centre.



Supporting the Festival...

On behalf of the Members of The Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation No.355 WM Kevin Gaskin presented Deputy Provincial Grand Master Simon Leighfield with a bumper cheque for £5,000 as contribution to the Lodge's goal for the Wiltshire 2028 Festival.

Simon in thanking Bro Kevin spoke of the generosity of Wiltshire Freemasons, who despite the current financial uncertainty, continue to support local charities as well as the Masonic Charitable Foundation.

Simon said, "This donation confirms that charity is in a Freemason's DNA."

Wiltshire Freemasons



welcome you to



Carols at Christmas

Marlborough College Chapel

Sunday 15th December 3.00pm

Horatio's
Garden



TLC
Teddy Bears for
Loving Care
Wiltshire

wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk



The unsinkable TITANIC - the real story...

You've seen the film and heard the music, now discover the secret of the unsinkable **SS TITANIC**. Join the members of Fiat Lux Lodge No.9773 for this year's White Table Talk to be given by Bro Geoff Carr (Chaloner Lodge No.2644) While there will be no Celine Dion singing, Geoff will be illustrating his talk with artefacts from the Titanic as he relates a story that not only evokes many emotions but also piques the interest of historians and conspiracy theorists alike.

Was the ship ready for sea, were her watertight compartments shut, did her wrought-iron rivets pop on impact with the iceberg? These an many other elements of the story of TITANIC will be explored by Geoff.

The Lodge Tyles at 11.00am and will conduct a 'swift' business meeting before closing the Lodge and inviting family, and friends to join the members for Geoff's presentation.

Following the presentation a three course lunch will be served at a superb cost of only £20 per person. To book a place at the presentation, and lunch contact Les Welling for full details.

Wiltshire Freemasons
Fiat Lux Lodge No.9773
 INVITE YOU TO HEAR THE STORY OF
The SS Titanic
 WITH ARTEFACTS FROM THE SHIP
 Presented By Bro Geoff Carr
 (Chaloner Lodge No.2644)
 Thursday 21st November
 11.00am
 FAMILY AND FRIENDS WELCOME
 Masonic Centre
 Morris Lane
 Devizes
 Contact: leslieroywelling@gmail.com

Did You Know?

There is no need to have 'Any Other Masonic Business' on a Lodge agenda as it's covered in The Risings.

First Rising report on any Grand Lodge correspondence and directives.

Second Rising report on any Provincial Grand Lodge Business.

Third Rising report on any Lodge business including proposals for membership, and the ubiquitous apologies that are normally 'taken as read'.



WILTSHIRE LODGE AND CHAPTER MEETINGS FOR NOVEMBER 2024

DATE	LODGE/CHAPTER NAME	No.	CEREMONY	LOCATION
1 st	Calley Lodge	L7525	2 nd Degree	Swindon
2 nd	Forget-Me-Not Lodge	L9035	1 st Degree	Ludgershall
4 th	Broade Forde Lodge	L8547	Installation	Bradford on Avon
4 th	Downton Lodge	L9064	3 rd Degree	Downton
5 th	Lodge of Loyalty	L1533	2 nd Degree	Marlborough
5 th	Stonehenge Chapter	C6114	Lectures	Salisbury
6 th	Longleat Lodge	L1478	3 rd Degree	Warminster
6 th	Lodge of Remembrance	L4037	1 st Degree	Swindon
6 th	Sarum Lodge	L5137	Double 1 st Degree	Salisbury
6 th	Vale of Avon Lodge	L8432	3 rd Degree	Chippenham
7 th	Clarendon Lodge	L5908	Lectures	Trowbridge
7 th	Lodge of Brothers in Arms	L9540	Double 3 rd Degree	Salisbury
8 th	Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation	L355	1 st Degree	Swindon
8 th	Chapter of Harmony	C663	Installation	Devizes
11 th	Lodge of Concord	L632	2 nd Degree	Trowbridge
11 th	Harry C Preater Lodge	L8204	2 nd Degree	Swindon
12 th	Lansdowne Lodge of Unity	L626	Lecture	Chippenham
12 th	Chapter of Agriculture	C9090	Installation	Corsham
13 th	Lodge of Friendship and Unity	L1271	Installation	Bradford on Avon
13 th	Stonehenge Lodge	L6114	2 nd Degree	Salisbury
14 th	Lodge Elias de Derham	L586	1 st Degree	Salisbury
15 th	Lodge of Fidelity	L663	1 st Degree	Devizes
15 th	Highworth Lodge	L9009	1 st Degree	Highworth
18 th	Chaloner Lodge	L2644	2 nd Degree	Melksham
18 th	The City Lodge	L5955	2 nd Degree	Salisbury
19 th	White Horse Lodge	L2227	2 nd Degree	Westbury
19 th	St Aldhelm Lodge	L2888	3 rd Degree	Chippenham
20 th	Gooch Lodge	L1295	2 nd Degree	Swindon
20 th	The Border Lodge	L3129	1 st Degree	Ludgershall
20 th	Vastern Lodge	L8977	2 nd Degree	Calne
20 th	Lodge of Innocence & Morality	L9587	2 nd Degree	East Knoyle
20 th	Chapter Elias de Derham	C586	Installation	Salisbury
20 th	Chapter of Friendship and Unity	C1271	Lecture	Bradford on Avon
21 st	Corsham Lodge	L6616	3 rd Degree	Corsham
21 st	Fiat Lux Lodge	L9773	White Table Talk	Devizes
21 st	Gooch Chapter	C1295	Lectures	Swindon
25 th	Lodge of Good Fellowship	L8388	Demo 2 nd Degree	Marlborough
25 th	Lansdowne Chapter of Unity	C626	Lecture	Chippenham
25 th	Chapter of Concord	C632	Double Exaltation	Trowbridge
26 th	Pleydell Lodge	L4687	Installation	Swindon
26 th	St Edmund Lodge	L4714	2 nd Degree	Calne
27 th	Radnor Lodge	L4451	Installation	Salisbury
27 th	Moonraker Lodge	L8747	3 rd Degree	Devizes
27 th	George Duke of Kent Lodge	L8788	Double 1 st Degree	Swindon
28 th	New Temple Lodge	L8435	3 rd Degree	Swindon
28 th	Thynne Chapter	C1478	Exaltation	Warminster
29 th	Lodge of Agriculture	L9090	Lecture	Corsham

To contact any Lodge or Chapter Secretary/Scribe, simply add @wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk after the letter and number of the Lodge or Chapter shown above.

SAT 7
14 14
DEC P
M M

MHA CAROL

Concert

CHILDREN
GO FREE

ENTRY

£5^{PP}

INCLUDING
FOOD

BAR &

MINCE PIES

RAFFLE

£5

Trowbridge Masonic Hall, Yerbury street,
Trowbridge