



Dec 2024

In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



Christmas is coming at speed...



I am really looking forward to **Carols At Christmas** in the amazing surroundings of the Marlborough College Chapel. 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. This year the response from our members has exceeded my wildest expectations and I am assured that we have filled the Chapel. I am sure you will forgive me if I don't manage to individually welcome all 650 attendees, but I will make it my mission to shake as many hands as is possible. I was asked recently, what was the purpose of

Carols At Christmas? It isn't to just promote Wiltshire Freemasonry, although I believe it does, it also brings people together, and puts a smile on everyone's face especially the younger members of the congregation - and I'm not just talking about the children. What more could we ask for?

I am particularly pleased to welcome the High Sheriff of Wiltshire Dr Olivia Chappell to the service and to announce that a part of the charitable donations made at the service will be allocated to Horatio's Garden of which Dr Chappell is a Founder and trustee. Teddies For Loving Care (Wiltshire) will also be a beneficiary of your generosity. Among our other guests will be the Mayor of Marlborough Cllr Kym-Marie Cleasby, and Mr Rodney Cleasby, they will be joined by the Deputy Mayor Cllr Emily Trow. We are delighted to also welcome The Master of Marlborough College Mrs Louise Moelwyn-Hughes.

Finally, it is a great pleasure to welcome three Past Provincial Grand Masters, a Past Assistant Grand Master and a current Assistant Grand Master. I feel sure you will all be grateful that **Carols At Christmas** is not a Masonic meeting as it would take an eternity to do the salutations.

The Learning and Development Team held a FINDING YOUR FEET workshop at Trowbridge at the end of November. I was delighted to hear the morning was, in the words of one attendee, "very, very worthwhile." Having attended a few of the sessions I have to say that I believe Wiltshire leads the field when it comes to providing clear instruction to new members, guidance to Brethren looking to advance through the ranks of the officers, and support for those who aspire to reach the Chair. Some may find the emphasis on 'excellence' a little daunting at first, but having a clearly defined level of expectation certainly concentrates the mind and according to the attendees it establishes a standard for which to aim.

For Brethren wishing to extend their Masonic knowledge of ritual and rubric, the Learning and Development Team will be holding several workshops in the first quarter of 2025. For further information please visit the Events page of the Provincial website <https://www.pglwilts.org.uk/events> All events can be booked online.

I have been following the Provincial X (formerly twitter) site and have been pleased to notice just how many Lodges are engaging with the membership by holding curry nights, clay shoots, pub visits, skittles events, and ride outs (if you know, you know). It is so important that this type of social engagement includes as many members of the Lodge as possible, as it is by fostering such a spirit of participation that they will feel included and an integral part of the Lodge family.

As I come to the end of my piece for this December edition of **InTouch>OnLine** I would take the opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a truly wonderful Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.



A message from the Pro First Principal...



A key cornerstone of our work around the Royal Arch is the Pro Grand Master Jonathan Spence's determination that the Craft and Royal Arch work in tandem with one another. He says:

'The Craft and Royal Arch need to work seamlessly together. We must get better at explaining why the Royal Arch enriches the Craft experience of members, how valuable it is and how it is the natural next stage after becoming a Master Mason.'

"As you have heard me say before Companions, Pure Antient Masonry under the English Constitution is unique. I am not just saying this because we have the First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland with us today, although I am sure it does no harm! The Royal Arch has always been an integral part of Pure Antient Masonry and will remain so. The Royal Arch is not an independent, standalone order, as it is in other Constitutions, but a coherent part of the whole

structure. It is a very distinctive part of Pure Antient Masonry, and deserves to preserve that distinctiveness, but it is integral to it and so we must ensure the organisation operates coherently and effectively.

We try to demonstrate this point practically by the Royal Arch and Craft Rulers working as one team. I know many Provinces, even where there are separate Grand Superintendents and Provincial Grand Masters, are increasingly working with joint meetings of Provincial Rulers and their teams and there are also combined Executives.

This is also why we have taken steps to ensure that unnecessary impediments to the smooth functioning of Freemasonry as a whole have been removed, with changes to both the Royal Arch Regulations and the Book of Constitutions in order to align practices. The coherence of the explanation of the key place of the Royal Arch within Pure Antient Masonry is to be improved with the essential tools within the Members' Pathway for the Craft being revised to be harmonised with the tools contained within Archway and I could go on.

This is what we mean Companions by "One journey, one organisation". This is probably best expressed by saying, "Pure Antient Masonry has four ceremonies. Three are worked in Craft Lodges which point the way to the fourth ceremony worked in a Royal Arch chapter". That fourth ceremony will be done at a time and in a chapter which suits an individual candidate.

Companions, you will realise from what I have just stated this clearly does not mean that the Royal Arch will be subsumed into the Craft in some kind of complete merger, that is not what "One journey, one organisation" means. Companions, there remains much for us to do. With your continued enthusiasm and engagement, I am enthusiastic about our future and I have no doubt you will ensure we will succeed and remain a thriving organisation."

This message (abridged) was delivered (in full) by the Pro First Principal at the Supreme Grand Chapter convocation on Tuesday 12th November 2024.



Dec 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**



Perhaps the most important Office...

It would be difficult if not impossible to think of our Lodge ceremonies being carried out without the Deacons distinguished by their wand of office, a dove bearing an olive branch. Yet the Office of Deacon is of fairly modern origin in Lodges warranted by the United Grand Lodge of England. In the early Scottish and Irish Lodges Deacons were important officers as far back as the early eighteenth century, but were virtually unknown in English Lodges until some eighty years later. Indeed, it wasn't until December 1809 that the Lodge of promulgation resolved that "Deacons being proved on due investigation to be not only ancient but useful and necessary Officer, be recommended." Prior to that moment, Deacons had not been considered either useful or necessary which leads to the conclusion that the ceremonies of Making, Passing, and Raising a Freemason must have been of a pretty basic form, with very little of the ceremonial work we now take for granted.

In today's 'modern' Lodges it surely cannot be denied or challenged that there is no more important role than that of the Deacons. The work they undertake can literally make or mar any one of our ceremonies. The Master may well be word perfect and conduct himself with great aplomb, but if his Deacons perform their part of the work in a hesitant or lacklustre manner the whole ceremony is blighted.

For this reason every Deacon should have a clear understanding of what is required of them in every ceremony of the Lodge, his familiarity with the ritual should be pin sharp so much so that he knows what to do, how to do it, and when to do it.

If you want to discover more about the role of the Deacon in your Lodge this event is designed with you in mind. Don't wait - Book now to get a place at the DEACONS' WORKSHOP on Saturday 11th January 2025. Yes, you read it right - 2025. Why not make it a New Year resolution to attend this workshop? Just click the link, it's easy and quick to do <https://tinyurl.com/Deacons-11-1-25>



DEACONS' WORKSHOP

learning never ends

Swindon Masonic Centre
The Planks
Swindon

Saturday 11th January 2025
10.00am - 12noon
Refreshments provided

www.wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk

<https://tinyurl.com/Deacons-11-1-25>



WILTSHIRE LODGE AND CHAPTER MEETINGS FOR DECEMBER 2024

Date	Lodge/Chapter Name	No.	Ceremony	Location
2	Broade Forde Lodge	L8547	1st Degree	Bradford on Avon
3	Lodge of Loyalty	L1533	2nd Degree	Marlborough
3	Methuen Lodge	L8692	3rd Degree	Swindon
3	St Aldhelm Chapter	C2888	Lecture	Chippenham
4	Longleat Lodge	L1478	1st Degree	Warminster
4	The Border Lodge	L3129	2nd Degree	Ludgershall
4	Lodge of Remembrance	L4037	2nd Degree	Swindon
4	Sarum Lodge	L5137	1st Degree * ₁	Salisbury
4	Vale of Avon Lodge	L8432	Installation	Chippenham
5	Clarendon Lodge	L5908	2nd Degree	Trowbridge
5	Lodge of Brothers in Arms	L9540	1st Degree * ₁	Salisbury
5	St Edmund Chapter	C4714	Exaltation* ₁	Calne
6	Calley Lodge	L7525	1st Degree	Swindon
7	Wyvern Lodge	L8620	2nd Degree	Warminster
9	Lodge of Concord	L632	Business	Trowbridge
9	Chaloner Lodge	L2664	Lecture	Melksham
9	Harry C Preater Lodge	L8204	2nd Degree	Swindon
10	Lansdowne Lodge of Unity	L626	Installation	Chippenham
10	Methuen Chapter	C1533	Installation	Marlborough
11	Lodge of Friendship and Unity	L1271	White Table	Bradford on Avon
11	Stonehenge Lodge	L6114	1st Degree	Salisbury
11	Wiltshire Chapter	C355	Exaltation	Swindon
12	Lodge Elias de Derham	L586	White Table	Salisbury
13	Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation	L355	1st Degree	Swindon
14	Tisbury Lodge	L8718	Installation	Salisbury
16	The City Lodge	L5955	2nd Degree	Salisbury
17	White Horse Lodge	L2227	Lecture	Westbury
17	St Aldhelm Lodge	L2888	2nd Degree	Chippenham
18	Gooch Lodge	L1295	1st Degree	Swindon
18	Radnor Lodge	L4451	White Table	Salisbury
19	Corsham Lodge	L6616	1st Degree	Corsham
20	Lodge of Fidelity	L663	2nd Degree	Devizes

*1 = Double Ceremony

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.