



At last, a drop of rain and a cool wind...



John Reid

For many of our members, particularly the more senior among our numbers, the recent prolonged spell of hot weather probably lost its attraction after week number two, and even possibly before. I often walk the dogs over Salisbury Plain and have seen the grass change from a lush green to a parched straw-like colour with the ground being firm underfoot. However, the past few days have seen a significant amount of rain and I am pleased to report that the Plain is showing signs of undergoing a revival

On the 23rd August I was joined by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master Simon Leighfield on an early morning visit to Ludgershall where we met eighteen intrepid cycle riders who were going to ride, firstly to Downton and then to Crane Street Salisbury, a total of 38 miles - no motors, electric or otherwise just pedal power generated by human effort. To say I was in awe of their achievement would not be giving it the credit they deserved. I was particularly delighted to receive confirmation that the four rides over the last four years on behalf of the Wiltshire 2028 Festival raised an amazing £5,225.00 and to be presented with an 'Ian Lever special' cheque from Alan and Richard. Thank you.

Talking of Alan Colman, his team have set out dates for three Learning & Development events; all are being held at the Swindon Masonic Centre and details can be found on page 6. These themed events have proved extremely popular and an invaluable aid to Brethren wishing to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge as they seek to discover more about the fraternity they have joined. I encourage as many Brethren as possible to book a place as I promise you there is always something you can learn from attending.

UGLE is particularly keen to encourage Provinces and Lodges to form closer links to our local communities, I know that many members are active participants in supporting the work of local charities and good causes including responding to calls for help from local authorities. At the end of August Swindon Borough Council invited volunteers to take part in the Town Centre Clean Up and I was pleased to hear that a number of Swindon Centre members extended their clean up of The Planks car parks to an area outside the Centre's perimeter and were thanked by members of the public for making a difference to the road, and the pathway leading to the front of the Locarno. Joe Solera was intending to continue down Kingshill but was persuaded that really was a step too far.

I am always pleased to hear when members take time to ask questions of the Province. It is not the sole preserve of the Lodge officers to direct enquiries to the Executive team and I would encourage any Brother who has a question to send it to contact@wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk I guarantee it will be answered as quickly as possible. I will always support the right of members to test ideas, express unpopular opinions, and even to question received wisdom without fear of censorship or harm.

Richard Wright and his team have been putting officers through their paces in preparation for the annual meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge on **Thursday 1st October 2026** at The Civic, Trowbridge. This edition of **InTouch>OnLine** contains the final notice (Summons) for the meeting and I do look forward to welcoming as many of you that can make the meeting. This event is truly one of the most important of the year and all Master Masons are summoned to attend. I am sure that if you have a Lodge member receiving a first appointment or a promotion in Provincial Grand Rank, they will be pleased for your support.

Finally, if you haven't done so please do book in for Carols At Christmas on Sunday 20th December 3.00pm at Marlborough College Chapel. It really is quite magical and I can guarantee the mince pies are superb.

Provincial Grand Lodge of Wiltshire

of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of England



RW Bro John C Reid
Provincial Grand Master

VW Bro Simon R Leighfield **PGSwdB**
Deputy Provincial Grand Master

W Bro Steve Lee **PJGD**
Assistant Provincial Grand Master

July 2026

Dear Sir and Brother

By command of the Provincial Grand Master for Wiltshire the Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge will be held in the Lansdown Hall, The Civic, Trowbridge under the banners of Pleydell Lodge No.4687, St Edmund Lodge No.4714 and Harry C Preater Lodge No.8204 on **Thursday 1st October 2026 at 2.30 pm.**

All Present and Past Provincial Grand Officers, Masters, Past Masters and Wardens of the Province are summoned to attend. Master Masons are invited to be present.

Yours Sincerely and fraternally	10 West Park Road
	Corsham
John H Deane	SN13 9LN
Provincial Grand Secretary	Telephone 07484 386 566

Brethren are to wear dark Lounge Suits or Morning Dress with full dress Regalia (no gauntlets) and are requested to be in their seats in the Lansdown Hall by **2.00 pm**. It is the wish of the Provincial Grand Master that members wear the Provincial Craft Tie.

Never miss a word...



Having trouble following your Lodge or Chapter meeting? Help yourself and the Wiltshire 2028 Festival by booking a hearing consultation with Reeds Hearing Care who will provide you with expert advice and guidance, while you contribute their normal fee (£85.00) to the Festival. We cover everything to do with hearing, tinnitus, wax removal and can provide help, support and advice for all issues.

Reeds Hearing Care is a professional, independent, caring, business based in Swindon.

e.mail: reeds@reedsear.co.uk or text: 07585 525993



In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons

SEPTEMBER 2026



Cycling in support of the Wiltshire 2028 Festival...





In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons

SEPTEMBER 2026



Cycling in support of the Wiltshire 2028 Festival...



EVERYONE'S A CHAMPION



Congratulations to you all...

Simon Leighfield

A huge well done to everyone for making the amazing cycle rides in support of the Wiltshire 2028 Festival such an enormous success. It wasn't just an organisational triumph, although listening to Richard Legge's preamble before each event led me to believe it was akin to planning a battle with precise instructions for where you were meant to be, what obstacles you were likely to encounter along the way and how if you were wounded you would not be left behind.

The sheer determination of the riders was incredibly inspiring, albeit not quite enough to persuade me to resurrect my bike from the attic, pump up the tyres, and grease the chain, especially when I received a briefing from Simon Ellingham on his bike's disc brakes, electronic gears and its special tyres.

Steve Hawkins arrived on his trusty steed with panniers containing everything but the kitchen sink, I was told he actually had a tent just in case he had to have a rest and I reckon he probably had a primus stove – to make a brew. I'm sorry that he didn't get time to finish his pint at Downton but the Peloton (there's a new word for me) waits for no man. Mitch Bryan was taking no chances as he cycled with the doctor but he needn't have worried as he was hardly out of breath having completed the two stages in fine form. Bill Wyatt joined the ride at Downton having cycled from Salisbury – we all knew that he would know the best way back to the city.

The day had so much to offer by way of comment and as an observer it really was fun, as for the participants I know they enjoyed the ride and anyone who cycles 38 miles gets a huge cheer from me. No event like this just happens by itself – it requires a lot of work behind the scenes, something I discovered talking with Alan and Richard. So, a huge thank you to Richard and Shirley's daughter and their son-in-law who provided the backup, and to Dave Rees for making sure there was medical support if and when required.

Thank you to the non-masonic participants that joined us for the day – we enjoyed your company and we look forward to meeting up with you again soon.

A huge thank you to Jordan who provided the catering at Crane Street – you didn't cycle but please be assured your contribution was just as important, and finally, a big thank you to the members at Ludgershall, Downton, and Salisbury for opening your doors and welcoming the cyclists.

While it is true that everyone that took part can claim to be a winner (you all are) the real winner is the Wiltshire 2028 Festival and the Freemasons' Charity for which Alan and Richard presented Provincial Grand Master John Reid with a cheque for £5,225.00p





WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS



**JOIN ALAN AND THE TEAM AS THEY HELP YOU
NAVIGATE THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF FREEMASONRY**

FINDING YOUR FEET

Swindon Masonic Centre | The Planks | Swindon | SN3 1QP

SATURDAY 19th September 2026 - 10.00am until 12.00pm

Book here <https://tinyurl.com/FyF26-27>

ALL COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO SUFFICIENT NUMBERS SIGNING UP TO A MODULE



DEACONS' WORKSHOP

Swindon Masonic Centre | The Planks | Swindon | SN3 1QP

SATURDAY 3rd October 2026 - 10.00am until 12.00pm

Book here <https://tinyurl.com/Deacons26-27>

ALL COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO SUFFICIENT NUMBERS SIGNING UP TO A MODULE



PREPARING FOR THE CHAIR

Swindon Masonic Centre | The Planks | Swindon | SN3 1QP

SATURDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2026 - 10.00am until 12.00pm

Book here <https://tinyurl.com/Chair26-27>

ALL COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO SUFFICIENT NUMBERS SIGNING UP TO A MODULE



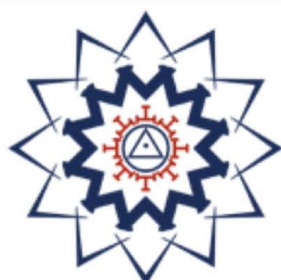
DE-MYSTIFYING THE ROYAL ARCH

Masonic Hall | Yerbury Street | Trowbridge | BA14 8DP

SATURDAY 24th OCTOBER 2026 - 10.00am until 12.00pm

Book here <https://tinyurl.com/DtRA2026>

ALL COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO SUFFICIENT NUMBERS SIGNING UP TO A MODULE



**BUILDING
TOGETHER**

Attracting Members – Growing Freemasonry



Wiltshire Freemasons played a part in Swindon's railway history ...

David Lewis

The history of Swindon, the Great Western Railway, and of Freemasonry are linked in so many ways. Bro Dave Lewis a member and Past Master of Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation No.355 has always had a keen interest in the development of the town he calls home. This short piece is compiled from various articles, journals and historical records freely available to anyone interested in researching the historical relationship between Freemasonry and society and invites the question "What is it that motivates people to contribute to their community?"

In 1850 Minard Rea was appointed Works Superintendent of the New Swindon, Great Western Railway Workshops. In addition to his official duties, Rea accepted the honorary position of president of the New Swindon G.W.R. Medical Fund Society, and Vice President and Treasurer of the New Swindon Mechanics Institution. Minard Rea was also a prominent Wiltshire Freemason being a PM of Lodge No. 453.

A scheme in 1853 was advanced for the establishment of a Market with shops, and a building to house the Mechanics Institution and its library, together with facilities such as hot and cold water baths, a dining room for the workmen, and an adequate Lecture Room. The instigator and chief promoter of the scheme was Minard Rea in his capacity as Chairman of the New Swindon Improvement Company. The Architect for the project was Bro Edward Roberts, of Lodge No 415 in the Province of Wiltshire, and P.M. of Lodge No 167 in London, and the contractor Bro Edward Streeten who also a member of Lodge No 453.

Three weeks before the Foundation Stone at the new Mechanics Institute was to be laid, Minard Rea placed an advertisement in the Swindon Advertiser, (the paper had only been launched earlier that year by William Morris who was a member of Gooch Lodge No.1295) which summoned Freemasons from all over Wiltshire to attend The Grand Master of Wiltshire, the Rt Hon Lord Methuen, at his Provincial Grand Lodge at Swindon on 24th May 1854, when a new Lodge of the Order would be consecrated followed by the laying of the Mechanics Institute Foundation stone with full Masonic Rites.

Over five hundred Freemasons in full regalia assembled for this special ceremony with Brethren of high Masonic rank attending. The Provincial Grand Lodge of Wiltshire having been declared open, an imposing ceremony for the consecration of the Methuen Lodge No. 914 took place with the Installation of Lord Methuen as the first Master. Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Wiltshire W Bro Daniel Gooch performed the Installation in the presence of ninety installed Masters; after which the Brethren dealt with the remaining business of the day. After the meeting they proceeded to St. Mark's Church for a service conducted by the Rev. Mr. Huish the sermon was given by the Vicar of St. Mark's Church W Bro Rev. George Campbell, who was the Provincial Grand Chaplain.

The Masonic procession was joined by Directors of the New Improvement Company, members of the New Swindon Mechanics Institute, plus members of the Ancient Order of Foresters. Once the procession was formed it made its way towards the Mechanics Institute, via Faringdon Street, East Street and London Street. After the Provincial Grand Chaplain had offered prayers, the foundation stone was raised, the Provincial Grand Secretary Minard Rae read from the inscribed brass plate, which was to be placed on the stone.

The first foundation stone of this building, dedicated to the encouragement of Literature and Science, was laid on 24th May 1854, with full Masonic Rites, by the Right Worshipful Lord Methuen, Provincial Grand Master of the most Ancient Fraternity of Freemasons, for the Province of Wiltshire, assisted by the Worshipful Brother Daniel Gooch, Provincial Deputy Grand Master and Worshipful Master of Lodge No 453 in the same province,



Wiltshire Freemasons played a part in Swindon's railway history ...

Cement was laid on the lower stone and adjusted by the Provincial Grand Master with a trowel handed to him by the Superintendent of the Works, Mr. A Weaver, and the stone lowered into place for his Lordship to adjust it with three strokes of the mallet before he said "I declare this stone to be true and well finished", the attending band played "Rule Britannia", the assembled crowd gave hearty applause.

After corn had been strewn, and oil and water poured upon the stone, the choir sang and the proceedings were concluded with a short speech by Lord Methuen. The Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Wiltshire then withdrew to their temporary Lodge room in the Works, for the Grand Lodge to be closed, and following that, some one thousand or more, including the Ladies, proceeded to the Cricket Field, (Faringdon Road Park) where a great banquet had been prepared in two marquees. Mr. Phillips of the Queen's Royal Hotel at Swindon Station carried out the catering arrangements. After the banquet, and the usual Loyal toasts, speeches and further toasts were offered

For Minard Rae the day had been both an organisational triumph and the realisation of two considerable achievements for a man just 32 years of age. First, the re-formation of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Wiltshire (at his Initiation) had resulted in the consecration of a new, locally based Masonic Lodge. Second as a result of his enterprise and influence, money had been raised, a site acquired and work was in hand on buildings which would light a torch of enlightenment in a dark and largely ignorant world, and at the same time, in the well-chosen words uttered by Lord Methuen. Provide a means for the inhabitants of New Swindon and its vicinity to purchase "the produce of the earth, and the necessities of life".

The Medical Fund Committee (a model for the NHS) which was under Minard Rea's leadership had been very much concerned with sanitary matters in the Railway Village, were able to note, within months of the Market's opening, that the practice of keeping chickens and pigs in the tiny rear yards had been virtually eliminated.

In December 1854, Minard Rea, launched a "New Swindon Committee" of the National "Patriotic Fund", which had been established for the relief of suffering amongst the victims of the Crimean War and their stricken families. Following a collection amongst the men in the factory, a remarkable sum of £200 was raised for the Patriotic Fund (equivalent, in today's terms, to approximately £30,000 from a work force of fewer than 1000). A rally, followed by entertainment, was held in the New Hall. The Chief speaker at the rally was Minard Rea, and a further sum was raised for the Fund.

Throughout the following year Minard Rea's name appeared in various accounts in the local newspaper of activities at the Mechanics Institution and in the growing social life of the town. Sadly, Minard Christian Rea died on 18th June 1857 of tuberculosis he is buried in St. Mark's Church cemetery.

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PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE

THURSDAY 1ST OCTOBER 2.30PM

THE PREMIER MASONIC EVENT OF THE YEAR FOR ALL WILTSHIRE CRAFT FREEMASONS

BOOK HERE





Supporting The Freemasons' Charity...

Gary Dolphin and Ian Lever

Have you noticed the name change? Yes, the Masonic Charitable Foundation has changed its operational name and is now known as the **Freemasons' Charity**, the national charity of Freemasonry. While the name has changed other key elements of the charity remain the same including the fact that the Freemasons' Charity is funded entirely through the generosity of Freemasons, their families, and their friends. The Freemasons' Charity remains **one** of the largest grant-making charities in the country - (Please don't claim it is the second or third).

The **Freemasons' Charity** helps to build better lives by enabling opportunity, advancing healthcare and education and promoting independence.

Values

Responding to Need

We listen, understand, and respond to the needs of individuals, families, and communities, providing practical and meaningful help when it is needed most.

Making a Difference

We dedicate ourselves to initiatives and grants that create positive, measurable impact, improving lives and strengthening communities.

Striving for Excellence

We act responsibly, transparently, and professionally in all we do, managing resources wisely and striving for the highest standards in support, governance, and collaboration.

Our strategy

These are the three strategic goals that have helped us to achieve our mission between 2018 and 2022:

- We will enhance our support and services
- We will improve our ways of working
- We will raise our profile

We are currently working with our staff, volunteers and trustees to create our next strategy that will take us up to 2030.

Your support donating to the Wiltshire 2028 Festival is key to enabling the Freemasons' Charity to continue its amazing work supporting the Royal College of Surgeons of England, medical research charities, local Hospices and many other worthy causes in Wiltshire plus providing a 'helping hand' to Wiltshire Freemasons in need.



Freemasons' Charity



In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons

SEPTEMBER 2026



Your Events promoted here...

Members are reminded that Lodge Funds from a charity account or general account cannot be used in support of a Lodge Ladies Festival or similar event, in particular Lodge funds cannot be used to cover any deficit that might occur. However, a Lodge may establish a fund specifically for an event but Rule 153(e) BoC must be followed. The editor will be pleased to promote a Lodge event in [InTouch > OnLine](#) (restrictions may apply)



Downton Lodge No.9064

RACE NIGHT

SATURDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

£10

Per Person

FREEMASONS' HALL
CRANE STREET
SALISBURY SP1 2QD

7.00PM (FIRST RACE 7.30PM)

ADMISSION INCLUDES RACE CARD

LIGHT BUFFET SERVED DURING THE EVENING

Book Online: <https://tinyurl.com/DowntonRaceNight>

Email: chrisearse1957@hotmail.co.uk

dlittle9064@gmail.com

Call: 07836 203815 or 07979 692504

Supporting the Wiltshire 2028 Festival



LUDGERSHALL FREEMASONS
INVITE YOU TO JOIN THEM ON

SATURDAY
31ST
OCTOBER
10AM UNTIL
NOON

Tea | Coffee | Cake | Biscuits



BREW AND BAKE

IN SUPPORT OF

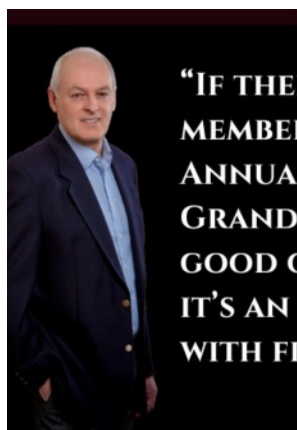
COMBAT STRESS

FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH

LUDGERSHALL MASONIC HALL

STATION APPROACH

LUDGERSHALL SP11 9LZ



"IF THERE IS ONE EVENT I WOULD ASK MEMBERS TO ATTEND IT HAS TO BE THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE. IT HAS EVERYTHING, GOOD CEREMONIAL, GREAT MUSIC AND IT'S AN ENJOYABLE AFTERNOON SPENT WITH FRIENDS".

John Reid PrGM.



PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE

THURSDAY 1ST OCTOBER

2.30PM

THE CIVIC
TROWBRIDGE



To read or not to read, that is the question...

To paraphrase Prince Hamlet's words may appear at first sight an unlikely way to grab your attention, hopefully it has worked because if there is one 'issue' that is raised on a regular basis it is the question "*Why can't we read the ritual?*" - and there are any number of answers one could put forward, but neither the question nor the answers are in any way new to Freemasonry. UGLE has never, to my knowledge, endorsed the reading of ritual in Open Lodge preferring to promote and recognise that time and practice will allow the Brother experiencing difficulty in learning to master the ritual.

In the first few pages of a book first published in 1929 the author prefaces his remarks with the words "*The Master-Elect has offered me a collar; I must begin to look up the work.*" The same words apply today almost 100 years later, which begs the question is procrastination and indifference as prevalent today as it was then and is this a contributory factor to the question posed above?

For Freemasonry to grow it needs to remind itself what it is that makes it unique in a world full of 'sameness.' It should not be expected to reduce its principles in an attempt to meet the supposed expectations of today's new way of thinking and it must not succumb to following what our forefathers referred to as the "*constantly changing doctrines of the outside world*" and give in to the temptation to modernise 21st century Freemasonry into mediocrity. Inclusion is important but should not be at the expense of excellence.

Society has always been made up of those who can't do and those who won't do. The reasons why some can't do are many and varied but include physical disability, and what has become generally referred to as neurodiversity. The can't do group is the easy fix as what they require is recognition that they may have a physical disability or a condition that requires extra tuition or extra time to achieve a given end, what they don't need is to be patronised with well-intentioned attempts to make their Masonic journey easier by shortcutting processes or by making special allowances for them. To do so could actually diminish rather than celebrate their success when they achieve their chosen goal. Equality of opportunity is different from equity of outcome. The won't do member is another issue completely.

Recently UGLE added Rule 162A to the Book of Constitutions: "*It shall be incumbent on every Lodge to make adjustments, if reasonably practicable, to accommodate a disabled person.*" The Secretariat then clarified the term disability: "*A reminder to everyone that following the introduction of Rule 162A, which reminds Lodges of the need to make suitable adjustments for members relating to disabilities, that this may extend to learning and delivering ritual. UGLE's advice more broadly is that Lodges should consider how best to share ritual so as to involve as many Brethren as possible.*" No mention of reading the ritual, just common sense advice that rather than expecting a Brother with a neurodiverse condition to learn long passages of ritual it is perfectly acceptable to share the work.

Conditions such as ADHD, dyslexia, and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can and do affect the way a brother learns. This is not about ability, but about learning style. With the right approaches, every brother can enjoy the satisfaction of learning and delivering ritual from memory; with the key being a willingness to adapt support to suit different needs while keeping the process inclusive and encouraging. The underlying message is very clear and makes the point that supporting different learning needs is not about lowering expectations - it's about giving Brethren the tools and environment they need to succeed. By making small adjustments, we strengthen the bonds of Masonic membership and ensure the Craft remains a place where all can contribute with confidence and pride.

WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS



CAROLS AT CHRISTMAS

Marlborough College Chapel
Sunday 20th December
3.00pm

SCAN ME



Family | Friends | Children

www.wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk