



Wiltshire Masonic News

The newsletter for Wiltshire Freemasons

July 2018

Wiltshire Freemasonry

We are halfway through the year.....

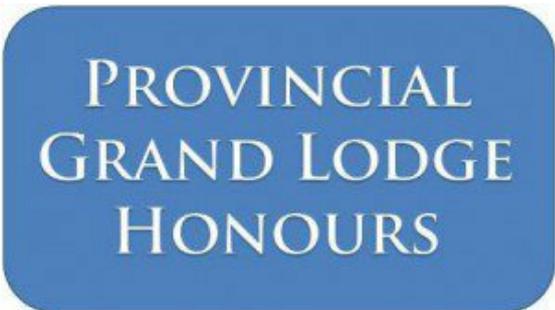


And where has it gone? It hardly seems six months ago that I wished you all a Happy New Year and yet here I am planning my diary with Christmas events. During July the Christian church celebrates St. Swithin's Day named after Saint Swithin who was Bishop of Winchester. According to folklore 40 days of bad weather will follow if it rains on this day, which this year is the 15th July.

In the June newsletter I wrote about the Quarterly Communication meeting of Grand Lodge and expressed my hope that members of the Province might attend. I was delighted to meet Andy Potter and Mark Duckett from Lodge of Friendship and Unity No.1271 when we discovered we were travelling to the capital on the same train. I have since heard that they enjoyed their day out and were so impressed they have said they want to go again. I feel sure they would welcome the company of any other Wiltshire Freemason who wishes to attend the next Quarterly Communication meeting which is on the 12th September.

Our mobile display unit was 'out and about' during June and I want to thank the Brethren who take time out from their busy lives to man the stand - they assure me they enjoy meeting people and promoting the Craft and that the opportunity to present the real face of Freemasonry is very worthwhile. The team was at Trowbridge Park at the end of June for the Armed Forces weekend and also attended the Calne Summer Festival where they were joined by Brethren from St Edmund Lodge. On the subject of the display unit, I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to every member of the Province to consider whether they could spare some time actively to support the team either by manning the unit or by towing it to and from venues. Experienced caravan or trailer towers will have no problem handling the unit. I have asked the Communication Officer to establish a register of at least 16 people for this purpose, if you would like to help, please let him know; you can email Des at pco@pglwilts.org.uk Incidentally, Gordon Lindsay would welcome your support when the display unit visits Stratton Fayre, Swindon on Saturday 7th July.

As you can imagine the Provincial Grand Secretary has been finalising the responses to the Appointments and Promotions list for 2018. I am looking forward to welcoming every Brother receiving a Provincial honour to the meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge in Salisbury on Thursday 4th October. Please do put the date in your diary and let's try to fill the auditorium at City Hall for what is the most important meeting of the Provincial calendar.



I have received my copy of the Summer edition of **Across the Plain** and what a fine read it is. Five years ago I agreed with the editor that our Provincial magazine should be a publication offering more than just recycled news stories, and I tasked him with producing 'something different' a magazine which informed, entertained and challenged. The thought provoking articles, coupled with the light humour to be found in the wonderfully titled '*do you suffer from a wiggly thumb*' offer readers a veritable cornucopia of reading material; and I am pleased to hear that a number of Brethren have already commented on or asked questions of the content.

Finally, my heartiest congratulations to intrepid wing-walker **Seb Salt** who made his first sponsored Wing Walk when his bi-plane took off from Compton Abbas airfield near Salisbury on Sunday 10th June. Seb has chosen Cancer Research UK as his nominated charity, to sponsor him, contact Seb at sebattheforge@live.com



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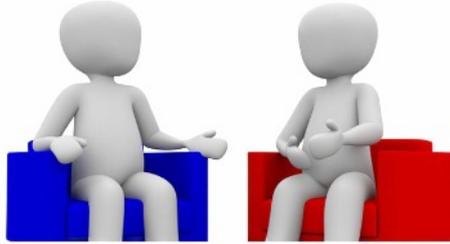
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Just Ask campaign launched in Wiltshire.....

Interested in
Wiltshire Freemasonry?



Just Ask

The Provincial Grand Master Philip Bullock has launched the 'Just Ask' leaflet which seeks to answer a few of the many questions asked by men attracted to Freemasonry. The colourful leaflet is not intended to be a complete reference work on Wiltshire Freemasonry or of the Craft in general, rather its aim is to invite the inquirer to 'Just Ask' for more information. The cover design and content is deliberately neutral and does not use images of Freemasons, although we do have a leaflet with Masonic imagery. It is anticipated that when the 'Just Ask' leaflet is given to an interested person, a friendly local Freemason will be on hand to give a little 'sales' pitch, and engage with the person and answer their questions.

The leaflet is intended to be handed out at popular shows, festivals, sports events and other special occasions where big numbers of people will be visiting. Location is all-important if leaflet distribution and personal contact is to be successful and we propose to target busy shopping centres and high streets at the weekend and attend a number of events during the coming months. These are great places to make an impact. However, to make it work we need volunteers to work alongside the current team. Volunteers don't have to give up an entire day, although some do, all we are asking for is an hour or two on the event day. Manning the Provincial Display Unit can be a very rewarding experience, welcoming Freemasons from neighbouring Provinces, meeting people with a genuine interest in becoming a Freemason and chatting with members of the public who have been recipients of Masonic charity. Many Wiltshire Freemasons often say "I want to help promote Freemasonry" others ask "What can I do to help?" being a willing volunteer on the Communication Team's register of helpers is a great way to start.

The futures not ours to see, que sera sera.....

Sometimes I do think it would be advantageous to see into the future, just imagine what it would be like to know what numbers were going to win the lottery; will England get beyond the last eight in the World Cup (miracles do happen) and yet I'm not sure a life of certainty is all it might appear to be. Uncertainty and the lack of knowing what new adventures lie in store for us form part of our social DNA. Pressing a button and being able to glimpse what lies ahead may have a momentary attraction, but for every benefit there is an equal drawback. However, some days when I'm tapping the keys on my computer I find myself looking outside my window and musing about the future, I think how cool it would be to know where Freemasonry will be and what it will be like in 5, 10 or 15 years time. I don't know the answer to the question but I sincerely hope we don't transform



ourselves from a hugely relevant 'fraternal' organisation (defined as made up of members who share an interest or purpose) - which contributes a great deal more than just money to the society of which we are part, and become instead a business oriented commercial construct where the measure of success is defined by what is handed out from the centre in charitable donations. We mustn't lose what makes Freemasonry different.



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Teddies for Loving Care - a Masonic mystery.....



Speaking with Provincial Almoner John King about Teddies for Loving Care is always a wonderful experience, especially when his eyes light up with emotion as he delights in recounting the many amazing stories of young children whose traumatic experience of attending a hospital accident and emergency department has been vastly improved simply by receiving a 'Teddies for Loving Care' teddy bear.

It was just over ten years ago when John first introduced 'Teddies for Loving Care' to Wiltshire, and in that time he has overseen the distribution of nearly 60,000 TLC bears to the county's two general hospitals at Salisbury and Swindon. That's 5,000 bears every year!

What continues to amaze me, says John, are the two misconceptions surrounding Teddies for Loving Care. The first is the public perception that the teddy bears are funded and supplied by the NHS, which they most certainly are not. The second troubling misunderstanding is that some Freemasons are seemingly still unaware that Teddies for Loving Care is a charity started by and still administered by Freemasons and that the generosity of Wiltshire Lodges is the only source of funding for the purchase and distribution of TLC teddy bears.

Do I stand or do I sit?.....

Only three addresses, seems so simple doesn't it? And yet at the moment when the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies escorts the Provincial Junior Grand Warden onto the floor of the Lodge and intones "*Would the Brethren of (name of Lodge) below the rank of Warden please stand*". The seeming dilemma is 'who should stand' - which begs the question 'who are the Brethren to whom the address is being made?'

The answer may seem to be perfectly logical based on the fact there are only three addresses; the first to the Master, the second to the two Wardens, and the third to those who remain – the Brethren. Thus, all becomes crystal clear; if you are not the Master or either of the Wardens (the Principal officers) you must by default be numbered amongst 'the Brethren' and therefore it seems only appropriate to stand. After all if the Master stands, and the Wardens stand, why would the Brethren of the Lodge not stand? In some Lodges neither the Master, Wardens or the Brethren stand, which egalitarian situation may find favour in some quarters.

Why not stand? The precedent of custom and practise, allied to that of tradition will often be cited, alongside the more popular refrain of "we don't do it that way in this Lodge". Fair comment say I - but I think it's fair to ask whether a reluctance to stand emanates from a belief that seniority confers privilege, and if so how does that accord with the immortal line 'humility in each being an essential requirement'. Many Wiltshire Lodges have asked the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies to amend the invitation to stand to be made as follows: "*Would the Brethren of (name of Lodge) with the exception of the Master and his two Wardens please stand*".

Many senior Brethren, including the Provincial Grand Master have cheerfully embraced the opportunity to stand when called on to receive the words delivered by the Provincial Junior Grand Warden; and have not considered it derogatory to their status to join with 'junior' Brethren in the Lodge to hear the uplifting and challenging words of the 'Address to the Brethren'. (Does your Lodge sit or stand? Share your views with the editor by emailing editor@pglwilts.org.uk)



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CALLING ALL LIGHT BLUE MASONS
Light Blues Reception.

Where: Chippenham Masonic Centre
 When: Saturday 1st September.
 What time: 7.00pm with supper at 8.30pm
 Who: New members, their wives and partners
 Why: Meet the Provincial Grand Master and his team and tour a Lodge.

There will be presentations on Freemasonry, charity and the work carried out in Lodges with Q&A s.
 Light buffet supper served at £8 per person.
 Contact Rob Evans robteveanspglw@gmail.com



“ASK NOT WHAT YOUR PROVINCE CAN DO FOR YOU – ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR PROVINCE.”

With apologies to John F Kennedy

The Provincial Communication Team is looking for volunteers to help organise and man the Provincial display unit at venues throughout the county. If you can help please contact - pco@pglwilts.org.uk

Lodge Installation meetings and special meetings in July and August for your diary

Friday July 6 Summer Lodge 9548 T.B.A.
 Friday Aug 31 Masters 6731 T.B.A.

Have you received your copy of the Summer edition of the magazine which was sent to the last known home address of all subscribing members of a Wiltshire Lodge?
 Have you changed your address and if so did you tell your Lodge secretary? If he doesn't know, you may never receive your copy of the magazine.



Are you ready to complete your journey in pure Antient Masonry ?


 Step 1. Entered Apprentice


 Step 2. Fellowcraft


 Step 3. Master Mason


 Step 4. Companion

