



MARCH 2026

Winter is behind us and Spring is just around the corner...



John Reid

There's a particular kind of magic in the arrival of spring. It's a shift that isn't just seen but felt, an almost gentle stirring beneath the surface that suddenly bursts into life. The days grow longer, the light softer yet stronger, and the air carries the scent of new beginnings. After months of winter's stillness, something within us wakes up.

For me, spring is a season of joy, not just because of the visible changes, though those are glorious, but because of the energy it carries. There's a fresh momentum, an unspoken permission to move, shift, and begin again. Winter is a necessary season, a time for rest and introspection, but it can also feel heavy, slow, and isolating; spring is a time of growth and expansion. This energy can also inspire us to set new goals, dream big, and take action toward achieving our dreams. It's the perfect time to plant the seeds of change and watch them grow.

it persuades me to rearrange, de-clutter, and tidy my surroundings. It's not just about the physical act of spring cleaning (though that's part of it); it's about clearing space for what's next. For me, this season isn't just about tidying up my physical space, but my mental and emotional space too. I take stock of what I've been carrying, what still feels necessary, and what's ready to be released. There's something deeply satisfying about this and it feels like I'm setting the stage for the months ahead.

When we hold on to things that no longer serve us, whether that's objects, habits, or ways of thinking, it's like keeping winter inside - long after the world has moved on. Spring asks us to let go, to make space, to trust that what's ahead is worth making the change; it reminds us that change is inevitable and that nothing stays the same forever. Spring's a time when we see nature coming back to life after the dormant winter months, stark barren trees of winter transform into lush foliage in spring, and the once-frozen ground gives way to blooming flowers; serving as a reminder that our lives are also constantly changing.

Finally, Spring is associated with hope and optimism. It reminds us that there is always a chance for new beginnings. This sense of hope should inspire us to believe in ourselves and our ability to make positive changes in our lives and to be hopeful and optimistic about the future. I trust that every member of our Province will seize the opportunity and use the season of Spring to make a positive contribution to Freemasonry in general, the Province, and their Lodge in particular.

The future is something I think about quite often particularly with regard to Freemasonry in the Craft, and Royal Arch. March is the month when I meet with the executive committee to review the past year and plan for what will happen following the October meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge.

Our Membership team has been very busy sifting through the many expressions of interest received from the the United Grad Lodge of England's National Digital Marketing Campaign. I thank Colin Cheshire for his unstinting work in progressing each enquiry.

Alan Colman and his Learning and Development Team have been busy and on the 28th February welcomed thirty new Freemasons to Trowbridge for a very well received presentation of **Finding You Feet**. I am always pleased to hear just how appreciative our new Members are of the efforts undertaken by the team, and I know the instruction and information given at these events is well received. Most importantly it helps to establish the firm foundation on which each Brother will construct his own superstructure, perfect in its parts and honourable to the builder.



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W Bro Colin Ayton PrSGW...

I was saddened to be informed of the death of W Bro Colin Ayton who died on Tuesday 10th February. Colin was the Provincial Senior Grand Warden, and Provincial Grand Treasurer of the Royal Arch. My abiding thought of Colin is that he was Mr Dependable, a Freemason who was committed in every role he undertook and who was assiduous in the performance of his duties. Colin will be missed by his many friends in Freemasonry and will be remembered with much affection. Most importantly he will be missed by his family and we pass on our condolences and extend to Caroline and the family our best wishes assuring them of our support and prayers at this time.

Caroline thanks Colin's friends for the many heartfelt tributes sent to the family and placed on social media, and in announcing details of the Funeral Service for Colin wishes as many of you who are able to attend the service and afterwards to meet with the family at Trowbridge Rugby Club when they would like to share happy memories of Colin's life which was lived to the full, punctuated with humour and filled with love.

John Reid

HE LIVED RESPECTED AND DIED REGRETTED

NO GREATER EPITAPH IS REQUIRED



The Funeral of W Bro Colin Ayton PrSGW
Thursday 12th March at 1.00pm
West Wiltshire Crematorium
Devizes Road, Semington, Trowbridge BA14 6HL

All enquiries to be made through
Robert Orford
Cowley and Son Ltd
Funeral Directors
01285 653298



In Touch > On Line

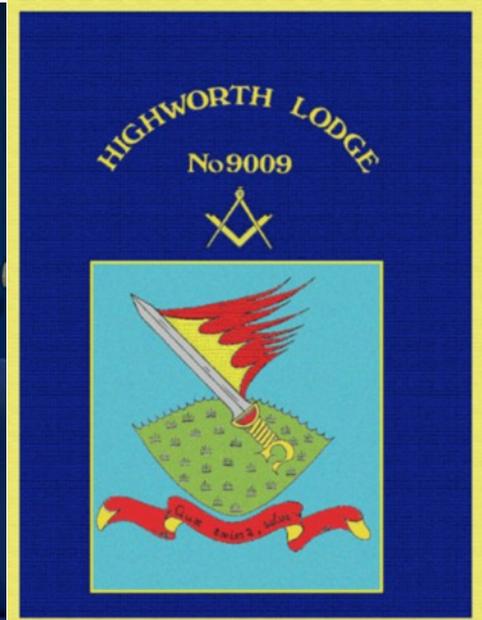
The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



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Highworth Lodge No.9009...

The Master, Wardens and Brethren of Highworth Lodge No.9009 now meeting at The Planks, Old Town, Swindon welcomed Bro Rafal Jasik as their newest member. Raf joins Jamie Hunt who was initiated into the Lodge last month; the Master was also pleased to welcome Bro Darren Tandy as a joining member. The future is certainly look bright for the Lodge with a potential initiate scheduled in their programme for April.



WM Chris Biggs welcomes Bro Raf Jasick as the Lodge's newest member.

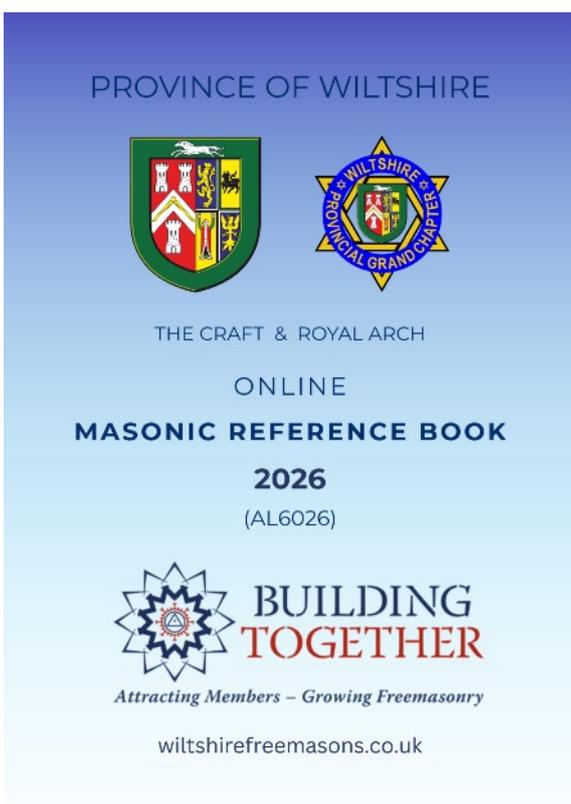
New OnLine reference book...

This month has seen the 'soft' launch of the online 2026 Masonic Reference Book for Wiltshire Craft and Royal Arch Freemasons. The book consists of 212 pages and includes details of every Lodge and Chapter in the Province. As the book is published online it is anticipated that updates will occur more frequently and the content be more accurate.

The editorial team will review Adelphi on a regular basis and subject to Lodge and Chapter administrators processing their Post Meeting Report (PMR) on time pages will be amended to reflect reported changes.

A separate online booklet for the Mark Master Mason, and the Royal Ark Mariner degree has been agreed and this was published during February.

Please do log onto the website and view the online booklet.





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What is Freemasonry?

It's a question to which we all know the answer, or at least we think we do but if you were tasked to explain what Freemasonry was really about how would you cope?

Let me begin by dispelling a couple of masonic myths, the first being that 'Freemasonry is all about charity and being charitable' which in most cases means giving money to good causes. It simply isn't true that operative or speculative Freemasons centred their activities on charity (as noble as it may sound) and historically it's never been true. In the Antient Charges of a *Speculative* Free-Mason (which pre-ceded the forming of the first Grand Lodge in 1717) it is stated that the principle purpose of the Lodge was to be a place where freemasons assembled to work and to instruct themselves in the mysteries of the ancient science. From this it can be said that education and learning was a greater part of the *speculative* Freemasons modus operandi and when you consider the names of those who formed what we now call the Craft it is apparent they were men of intellectual, economic and social significance.

Charity as exemplified by the collecting and distribution of alms was an important element but it was not the reason for the formation and existence of *speculative* Freemasonry. It may surprise many readers that the office of Almoner is relatively 'modern' being found in the Constitutions as recent as 1910 a fact that brings us nicely to another myth which is that 'Freemason's don't look after their own - whereas the truth is quite the reverse and rightly so; if Freemasonry didn't support its members and their dependents the question should surely be "Why not?"

The first mention of charity to the new Freemason occurs at the point he has been invested with the distinguishing badge of a Mason and conducted to the North East Corner. It is here that he is reminded that the distinguishing characteristic of a Freemason's heart is charity. That Freemasons are charitable cannot be denied after all in the ceremony of Initiation we acknowledge to the candidate that charity "doubtless has been felt and practised by you" - but, and it's an important but, the charge made to him is that his giving is in support of a friend or Brother in distressed circumstances. The whole of the charge is highly personalised and directed towards supporting members of the Craft and of the Lodge. Charity from the early Freemason's perspective was very targeted, indeed in 1769 Thomas Dunkerley visited Marlborough charging those responsible for the dispensing of charitable funds to be careful and to examine strictly the bona fides of a Brother seeking relief. Dunkerley was not one to mince his words advising that having been assisted with "such sum as the Lodge shall think proper, assist him with your interest and recommendation, that he may be employed according to his capacity and not eat the bread of idleness."

For Dunkerley and Freemasons of the 18th and 19th century the words of the VSL were very instructional - "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, **especially** unto them who are of the household of faith." A Similar sentiment can be found in the words of the Long Closing in the First Degree in which we are instructed to "be good to all; **more particularly** do I recommend to your care the household of the faithful." Both sentiments remind us that Freemasons, while governed by the Constitutions, and the Lodge By Laws, an adherence to "that Great Light" (the VSL) is an essential element.

Having offered the view that our first charitable obligation should always be to a friend or Brother in distressed circumstances where does that leave the registered charity and good cause? That is an easy question to answer. In modern times Freemasons have taken a major role in supporting local and national charities and worthy causes; there is no suggestion this will not be the case for many years to come



MARCH 2026

New Temple Lodge No.8435....

A very emotional evening when W Bro Andy Thorne Initiated his son Aaron into Freemasonry and welcomed him as Wiltshire's newest Member.



The Border Lodge No.3129....

The Border Lodge No. 3129 was joined by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master when he presented a 50 year certificate to WBro John Scratchley.





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The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



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Learning and Development...

Alan Colman and the Learning and Development Team welcomed Entered Apprentices and fellow Craft Freemasons to the Masonic Hall at Trowbridge for FINDING YOUR FEET. It's always a great event and this one was no exception with lots of super questions from Brethren keen to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.. The next event is designed for Wardens and Deacons and will examine what is involved in PREPARING FOR THE CHAIR. Book your place at Swindon <https://tinyurl.com/chair-mar-26>



Loneliness doesn't mean you have to be alone...

Sometimes you just need someone to talk to and that's just what Joe, Pete, and Nigel are offering - a chat over coffee and biscuits. You don't have to book in, just turn up and enjoy some 'me time'.

NO ONE NEED EVER BE ALONE

STRONGER TOGETHER

MASONIC HALL CORSHAM
SATURDAY 14TH MARCH
10.00AM UNTIL NOON

JOIN JOE, PETER, AND NIGEL FOR
COFFEE AND A CHAT....



contact@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk



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MARCH 2026

The Royal Arch...

Now available - A guide to help new Exaltees to explore fresh perspectives and confidently engage with fellow Companions in completing your journey in pure antient Masonry.

The Royal Arch
Welcome Companion

A narrative for the
21st Century Freemason



PROVINCIAL GRAND CHAPTER
OF WILTSHIRE

Ask me for a copy of Welcome Companion.
John Reid



Wiltshire Freemasons

One Journey • One Organisation



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Meeting Calendar for March 2026...

The March meeting calendar is brought to you by Paul Robinson with the help of the Secretaries and Scribes who provide the information on 'what is going on' in the Lodge or Chapter.

WILTSHIRE LODGE AND CHAPTER MEETINGS FOR MARCH 2026

Date	Lodge/Chapter Name	No.	Ceremony	Location
2	Broad Forde Lodge	L8547	1 st Degree	Bradford-on-Avon
2	Downton Lodge	L9064	1 st degree	Downton
3	Lodge of Loyalty	L1533	Business Meeting	Marlborough
3	Stonehenge Chapter	C6114	Exaltation	Salisbury
4	Longleat Lodge	L1478	1 st Degree	Warminster
4	Lodge of Remembrance	L4037	2 nd Degree	Swindon
4	Sarum Lodge	L5137	3 rd Degree	Salisbury
4	Vale of Avon Lodge	L8432	2 nd Degree	Chippenham
5	Clarendon Lodge	L5908	Business Meeting	Trowbridge
5	Lodge of Brothers in Arms	L9540	3 rd Degree	Salisbury
5	Chapter of Rectitude	C335	Installation	Calne
5	St Edmund Chapter	C4714	Exaltation *1	Calne
6	Calley Lodge	L7525	3 rd Degree	Swindon
7	Wyvern Lodge	L8620	3 rd Degree	Warminster
7	Forget-Me-Not Lodge	L9035	1 st Degree	Ludgershall
9	Lodge of Concord	L632	2 nd Degree	Trowbridge
9	Harry C Preater Lodge	L8204	3 rd Degree	Swindon
10	Lansdowne Lodge of Unity	L626	1 st Degree	Chippenham
11	Lodge of Friendship and Unity	L1271	2 nd Degree	Bradford-on-Avon
11	Stonehenge Lodge	L6114	3 rd Degree	Salisbury
12	Lodge Elias de Derham	L586	2 nd Degree	Salisbury
13	Royal Sussex Lodge of Emulation	L355	1 st Degree	Swindon
13	Chapter of Harmony	C663	Lectures	Devizes
16	Chaloner Lodge	L2644	Installation	Melksham
16	The City Lodge	L5955	Installation	Salisbury
17	White Horse Lodge	L2227	1 st Degree Lecture	Westbury
17	St Aldhelm Lodge	L2888	2 nd Degree	Chippenham
18	Gooch lodge	L1295	Installation	Swindon
18	The Border Lodge	L3129	1 st Degree	Ludgershall
18	Vastern Lodge	L8977	Lecture	Calne
18	Chapter Elias de Derham	C586	Exaltation	Salisbury
18	Chapter of Friendship and Unity	C1271	Lectures	Bradford-on-Avon
19	Corsham Lodge	L6616	2 nd Degree	Corsham
19	Fiat Lux Lodge	L9773	Installation	Devizes
19	Gooch Chapter	C1295	Exaltation * 1	Swindon
19	Wiltshire Lodge of Fidelity	L663	Installation	Devizes
19	Highworth Lodge	L9009	3 rd Degree	Swindon
23	Lodge of Good Fellowship	L8388	1 st Degree * 2	Marlborough
23	Lansdowne Chapter of Unity	C626	Lectures	Chippenham
24	Pleydell Lodge	L4687	1 st Degree * 2	Swindon
24	St Edmund Lodge	L4714	1 st Degree	Calne
25	Radnor Lodge	L4451	1 st Degree	Salisbury
25	Moonraker Lodge	L8737	3 rd Degree	Devizes
25	George Duke of Kent Lodge	L8788	Lecture	Swindon
26	New Temple Lodge	L8435	3 rd degree	Swindon
31	Wiltshire Lodge of Agriculture	L9090	1 st Degree	Corsham

*1 = Double Ceremony * 2 = Demonstration Degree

To email the lodge Secretary or Chapter Scribe, simply add @wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk after the lodge or chapter prefix and number shown



WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS



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

FINDING YOUR FEET

Masonic Hall | Yerbury Street | Swindon | SN1 1JH
SATURDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2026 - 10.00am until 12.00pm
BOOK ONLINE: <http://tinyurl.com/feet-feb-26>
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 MARCH 2026 - 10.00am until 12.00pm
BOOK ONLINE: <https://tinyurl.com/Chair-March-26>
ALL COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO SUFFICIENT NUMBERS SIGNING UP TO A MODULE



PREPARING FOR THE CHAIR

Masonic Hall | Yerbury Street | Trowbridge | BA14 8DP
SATURDAY 25th APRIL 2026 - 10.00am until 12.00pm
BOOK ONLINE: <https://tinyurl.com/Chair-April-26>
ALL COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO SUFFICIENT NUMBERS SIGNING UP TO A MODULE



BUILDING TOGETHER

Attracting Members – Growing Freemasonry



HAVE YOU SIGNED UP?



- Keep in touch.**
- Stay informed.**
- Participate.**



Wiltshire Freemasons

General Information

WhatsApp group

**Scan the QR code with
your mobile to connect
with the Wiltshire Freemasons
WhatsApp group.**



SIGN UP TODAY TO BE A PART OF THIS EXCITING PROJECT



Your insights shape the future - Your participation ensures success by City

SWINDON MASONIC ASSOCIATION

invite you to the

BIG
breakfast

Saturday 28th March

08.30 til 12.00



£14

per person

Buffet Style English Breakfast

Tea, Coffee & Orange Juice

Freemasons | Family | Friends