

Issue No 11

Spring 2024

PROVINCIAL lite

THE MAGAZINE FOR EAST KENT CRAFT AND ROYAL ARCH

www.eastkentfreemasons.org



SPRING 2024 ISSUE

WHAT'S INSIDE

ARCHWAY LAUNCH PRESENTATION AT MAIDSTONE (P4)

ROCKY ROCKS UP FOR THE LIGHT BLUES (p8)

FACE SAVING? NO—FACE DONATING! (p10)

WIDOWS SONS SPREAD THE JOY (p11)

STEVE SALISBURY ON SOLOMON—FOSTERING CURIOSITY (p12)

THE TYLER: OFFICER OR UNDERRATED MEMBER? (p15)

MON DIEU! C'EST L'ENTENTE CORDIALE! (p18)

HUGH DOUGLAS-SMITH AND PROJECT 2023 (p19)

AHOY, SHIPMATES! 10038 GREETSS THE NAVY (p22)

KURT PROPOSES HIS DAD INTO FREEMASONRY (p24)

GRAHAM CHISNELL ON THE POWER OF MENTORING (p26)

NIGEL DOES THE NORTH COAST 500—TWICE! (p30)

THE FORELAND—A SATURDAY DINING LODGE (p32)

THANKS TO ALLINGTON (p34)

PROVINCIAL MAGAZINE DIGEST 2017-2024 (p36)

THREE JAYS RUN FOR THE FESTIVAL (p48)

BIG GRANT TO 'INVOLVE KENT' (p52)

HAVE A GO AT CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING (p54)

UNEXPECTED JOY FOR SEPTEM'S GERMAN GUESTS (p56)

ALMONERS REVIEW THEIR YEAR—AND LOOK AHEAD (p58)

THE MAGIC BANK ACCOUNT (p61)

FOLKESTONE'S MASONIC CENTRE OPENS ITS DOORS (p62)

EDITORIAL

Spring is always a time for positivity, for re-growth.

You see it in Nature and you see it in thought.



There's a lot of positivity going on in Freemasonry in our Province. We have the new Visiting Officers scheme, with a senior Mason or Companion allocated to each Lodge and Chapter to act as a "best buddy" and a conduit to Provincial HQ. The Members' Pathway is attracting more and more attention, and recent statistics show that the decline in numbers seems to have been arrested. Royal Arch has launched the Chapter equivalent, "Archway", with presentations around the Province. (Brilliant choice of name, by the way, as those in Chapter will appreciate!)

There is also growing enthusiasm for a continuous seam between Craft and Chapter. Further initiatives are in the pipeline, and no doubt we shall be hearing about them in the coming months.

If you are unfamiliar with Freemasonry, you might like to know that in Craft we have a series of three Degrees or morality plays. Once a Mason has participated in all three, he can move on to a fourth, which is performed in the Royal Arch or Chapter, a separate but very closely linked part of Freemasonry.

This is my last publication as your Editor. After seven years in the job, it is high time for me to hand the baton on. I've had the pleasure and privilege of producing some eight hundred pages of news and interviews over the years, which in their way are a public record of the wonderful work that Freemasons do.

I've included a summary of the magazines in an article in this issue. Please help us to keep spreading the word by sending your news to the Communications Team at news@ekprovince.co.uk

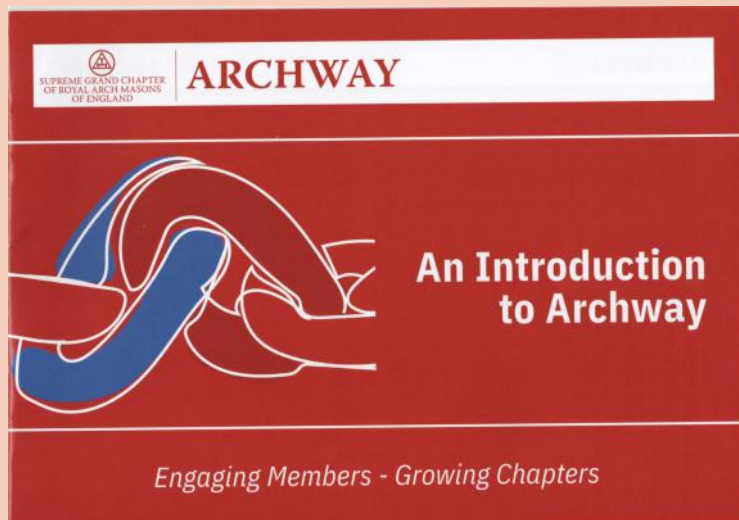
Happy reading!

John Ray

Email: editor@theprovincial.org

ARCHWAY PRESENTATION AT MAIDSTONE 16 MARCH 2024

It's often interesting to be in at the launch of a new Event. Sixty Companions from around the East Kent Province clearly thought so. Up bright and early, they all gathered at the Maidstone Masonic Centre on the morning of Saturday 16th March 2024 to hear all about Royal Arch's brand-new national initiative, 'Archway'.



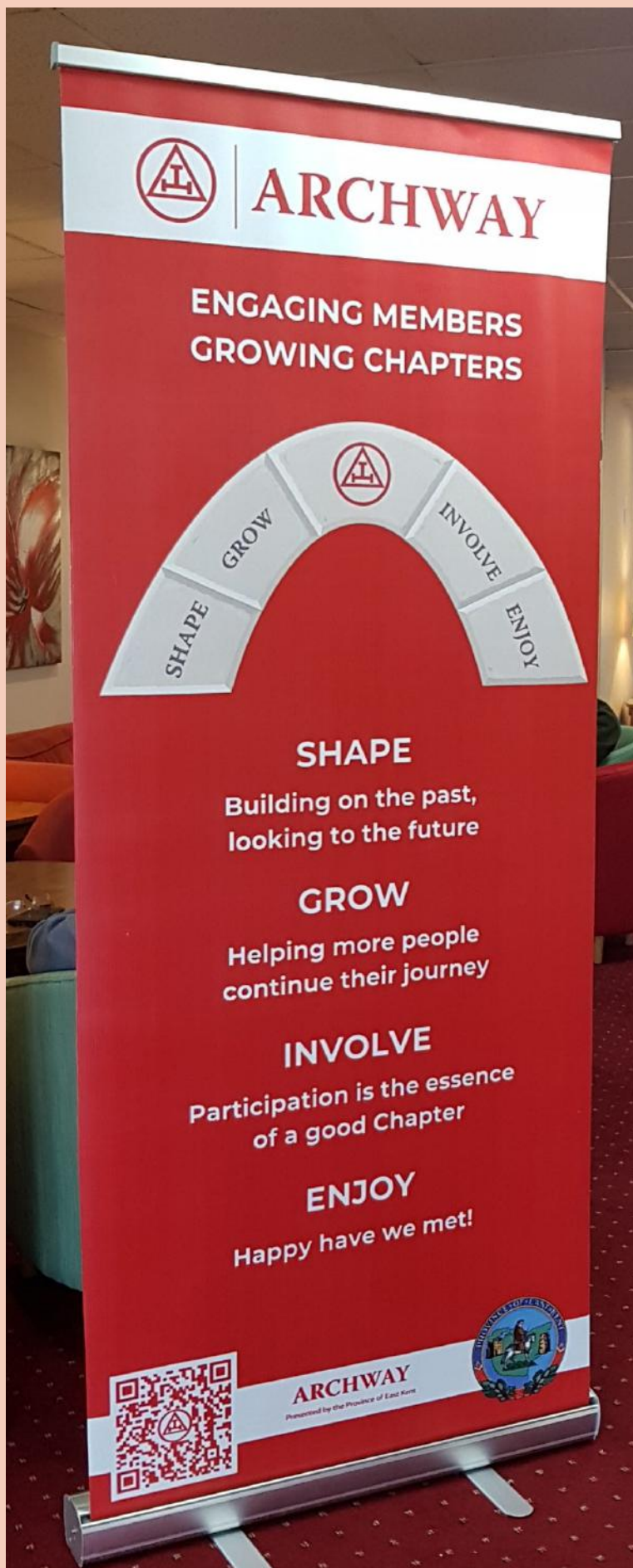
Deputy Provincial Grand Superintendent John Baker welcomed everyone and outlined the challenge facing the Royal Arch. There had been about 2,350 Companions in the Province some nine years ago: now the number was a little over 1,600. Already well aware of the decline, a Working Party had been set up in 2018 to address the issue, but COVID intervened and seriously delayed

progress.

Archway was finally launched in November 2023. Progress in recruitment and retention had meanwhile been having some success, with total numbers in the Province up by six since the start of 2024.



Provincial Grand Superintendent Neil Hamilton Johnstone (pictured) said that Royal Arch now had a much higher profile throughout Freemasonry. We were one Province on one Journey. He encouraged Lodges to include Royal Arch Masonry when Toasting the King and the Craft. He also quoted from the United Grand Lodge of England's Quarterly Communication held the previous day, at which it was announced that there would be a single Initiation/Exaltation fee for each new recruit to Freemasonry. East Kent Province had contributed greatly to the development of Archway. He thanked John Baker and his team for the tremendous amount of work that they had done in bringing it to fruition.



'Archway' was, roughly speaking, the RA equivalent of the Membership Pathway introduced by UGLE in 2022. Its icon consisted of four stones arranged in the form of an Arch: their names were SHAPE, GROW, INVOLVE and ENJOY. Members of the presentation team would now introduce each stone.

Nigel Fitz, Provincial Grand Almoner, talked about SHAPE. How were we to shape and plan the future of our Chapter? The resources available in this part of 'Archway' would allow us to use a review tool to understand the Chapter, its attributes, strengths and challenges, and create a plan for growth and succession. A Chapter Profile was a useful tool for recruitment. Companions needed to be aware of any warning signs and to act on them promptly.

Eddie Halpin, Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals, began by pointing to the GROW stone. Growth, in the form of new Members, would help to ease the workload of existing Members as well as injecting new thoughts and ideas. It was important to review Members' thoughts from time to time. Chapters should be promoted more vigorously. Eddie noted that the Lodge's Chapter Liaison Officer very rarely talked about Chapter in Open Lodge – a missed opportunity that he

found particularly disappointing. Giving a consistent and upbeat message, contacting those who had not attended recently, keeping a track on attendance and creating a happy environment were all ways in which to help a Chapter to grow.



Dennis Fordham, Provincial Grand Membership Officer (pictured), dealt with the third stone: INVOLVE. Promote participation, he said. Maybe produce a Chapter Newsletter. Involve new Members rather than simply leave them to sit and watch. Encourage and support your appointed Officers.

And make sure that everyone had a Mentor.

Back then to Eddie Halpin for the fourth stone: ENJOY. Eddie, with his dry sense of humour, is definitely keen on having FUN. He wanted Chapters to make their meetings really enjoyable. Become less formal, maybe arrange Curry Nights instead of normal Festive Boards, visit other Chapters, invite other Chapters to come along to yours, run Chapter Quizzes – these were all ways in which to make your Royal Arch experience really enjoyable.



Enough about the theory – what about the practice? Time for Ian White (pictured), Third Provincial Grand Principal and just back from holiday, to give us an example. Reculvers Chapter No.4123 at Margate had been down in the Doldrums with only fourteen Members and as few as six attending meetings – and was seriously considering its future, if any. The Members hit upon the idea of the Special Interest approach. What if they specialised in something? How about 'whisky'? A Member had useful contacts with a company selling spirits and wines. Fine Dining – not full cordon bleu – would be part of the experience. The idea took off and, after a lot of hard work, the Chapter has seven new Joiners and four or five recruits in the pipeline. Reculvers has a clear and distinct Special Interest identity, an approach which is allowing it to grow and which others might like to adopt.

The Presentation was rounded off with supporting Handouts and Brochures. Chapter Liaison Officers can obtain extra copies from the Archway team.

PROVINCE OF EAST KENT



BEARSTED HOLY ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER
No.6069

Sunday Carvery Lunch

Sunday 21st April 2024

1pm for 1.30pm

Bearsted Golf Club

Ware St.

Bearsted

ME14 4PE

3 Courses plus Tea/Coffee

£32.00 pp

Bookings to: Ex Comp Chris Byrom

07770 384950

cbyrom74@gmail.com



ROCKY ROCKS UP FOR THE LIGHT BLUES



Kevin D Stones writes:

Can you go immediately from Initiation to joining the Light Blues?

Why not? Andy did.

The Lodge of Loyalty No.9494 held an Initiation Ceremony recently – and the Candidate, Andy Hodges, was determined to get stuck in! Here's what happened.

Andy had an excellent Initiation, delivered in Loyalty's usual light-hearted style, with a flawless explanation of the Working Tools by Junior Deacon Morgan Morey and a splendid rendition of the Address to the Initiate by Jeff Davis.

As Lodge Mentor I had been sending out many informative emails regarding the Light Blues Brothers, and decided the best course of action in explaining what they were and what they did would be to invite one along. Accordingly, I invited Rocky Ramharak, Member of Setech Lodge No.8185 and Founder Member of the newly Consecrated East Kent Combined Services Lodge No.10038, to come to the Lodge as my Guest – with the proviso that he'd have to 'sing for his Supper'!

So, we came to Item 5 on the Agenda: "East Kent Light Blues Brothers – Rocky Ramharak will present a short informative talk on its aims and qualifications for membership".

Right on cue, up popped young Rocky, a natural salesman. He delivered his 'pitch' concisely and to the point, answered a number of questions and mentioned that by sheer good luck he just happened to have some membership forms with him!

Thus, well before the Festive Board, Rocky had signed up four Lodge Light Blues. Great stuff, Rocky! Impressively, this included our Initiate, Brother Andy – such was this young man's enthusiasm for the Craft. Andy's late uncle Bill Tomlin had been a very popular member of Loyalty, so the extended family connection made the day even more special for him and us.

Not a bad day's work, eh?



Lodge Master Keith Hammond presiding over another successful meeting, with newly initiated Brother Andy Hodges looking on. [Photo: Rocky Ramharak]

The Light Blues is a social group open to all Freemasons who have not yet been awarded Provincial Honours and who wear light blue aprons and collars in Lodge.

FACE SAVING? NO – FACE DONATING!

Steve Sherlock writes:



FACE – Faversham Assistance Centre – is a local charity that offers practical help in the form of **garden maintenance** and **decorating** to people who are unable to carry out these tasks themselves due to ageing or disabilities.

Unfortunately, the Charity was refused local funding this year, and contacted Fred Ross of the Lodge of Harmony No.133 to see if the Lodge could help.

Fred discussed this with me at Athelstan Lodge No.4024, and with each Lodge contributing £250, we were able to present two cheques totalling £500 to this very worthy cause.

Pictured at the presentation ceremony on the 12th March 2024 are (L-R): Steve Sherlock, Charity Steward for Athelstan Lodge, Federica Holland, Project Manager for FACE, Fred Ross, Charity Steward for the Lodge of Harmony and Peter Woolnough, Treasurer of the Lodge of Harmony.



WIDOWS SONS SPREAD THE JOY

Whatever the season, the Widows Sons are out around the Province spreading goodwill and joy. Here are some scenes from their Christmas 2023 and Easter 2024 runs.



Dave Gore: road name
"Lucky"



Rising Sun
Domestic Violence
& Abuse Service

Dear Andy and all the members of
East Kent Widows Sons

On behalf of everyone from Rising
Sun Domestic Violence & Abuse
Service, I would like to sincerely

thank you for your kind donation of Christmas gifts for women, children and families affected by domestic abuse.

The gifts were distributed by our youth and adult teams in time for the big day – and you can see some of the heartfelt feedback we had from our families at the end of this letter.

Your support means so much to us, and doubly so for the mums and children we support. The festive period can be a difficult time for domestic abuse survivors who are left feeling isolated, scared and alone at a time when the rest of the world is celebrating and gathering with friends and family. Your gifts made them feel comforted, supported and able to celebrate Christmas properly.

We are so grateful for your support for our charity and hope you, your family and friends have had a good start to 2024.

With kind regards

Emma

Emma Gray Fundraising and Communications Officer

Andy Pilbeam ('3G') has been the East Kent President for three years. He is about to step down in favour of Bryan Humphries ('Messiah') of Fleur de Lis Lodge No.8969



Mark Sparrow: road name "Turkey"

Solomon

Fostering Curiosity and Developing Understanding



Steve Salisbury (pictured) writes:

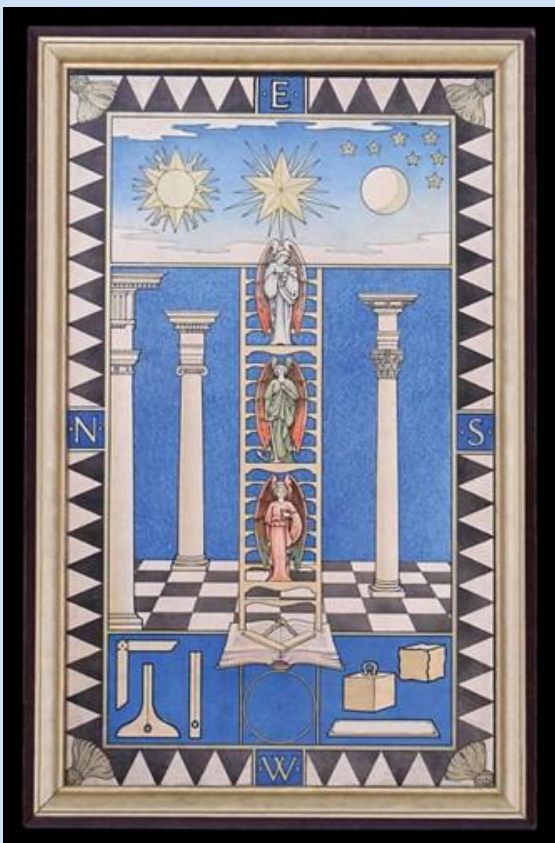


Have you heard of the United Grand Lodge of England's knowledge base *Solomon*?

Surveys carried out by UGLE in 2018 showed that most members were seeking a greater understanding of the Ritual, Symbolism, History and Traditions of Freemasonry.

Many reported that they had unmet learning expectations and needs, that too little time, guidance and support were offered to extend learning beyond performing the Ritual and Ceremonies themselves. Significantly, many expressed their interest in learning more of our history and traditions. Royal Arch (Chapter)

members showed the greatest interest.



The expectation and anticipation to learn was evident across all age groups, but particularly amongst newer and younger members, who wanted a steady advancement of personal learning and understanding.

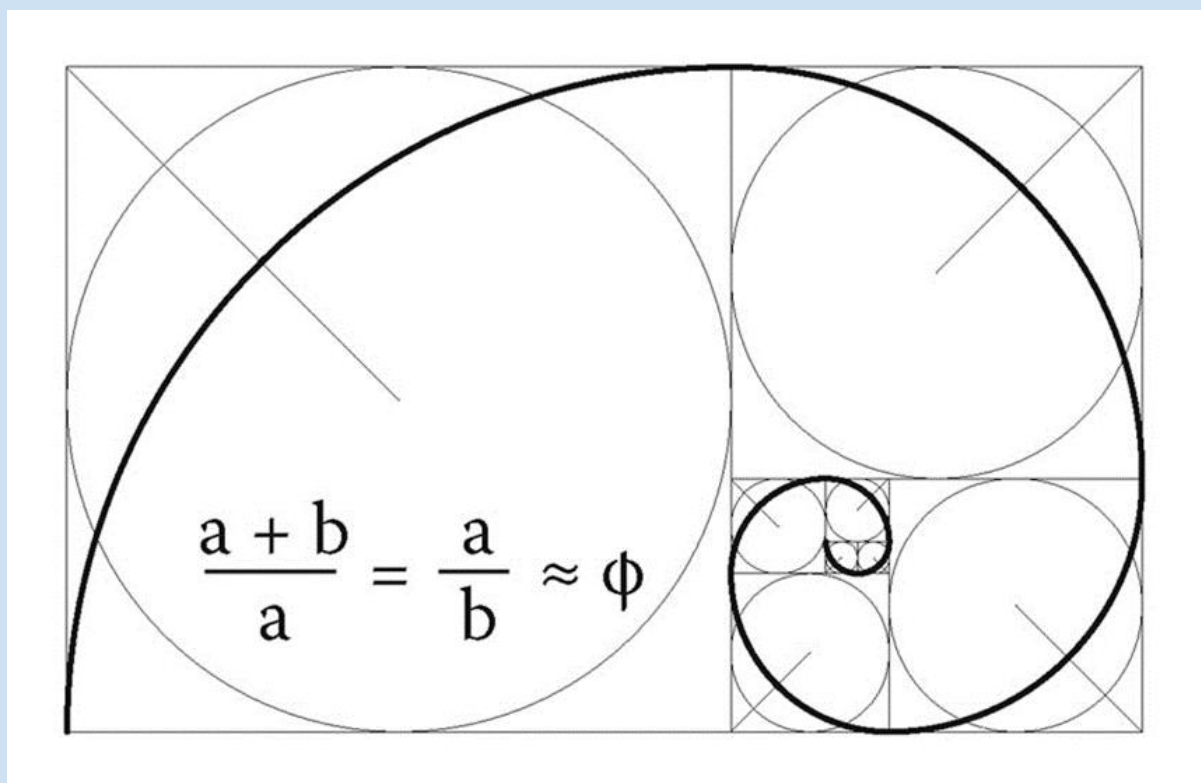
UGLE reacted positively and decisively. By 2021 it had developed and implemented *Solomon*, a computerised knowledge base that could be tapped into by all Freemasons.

From its original configuration of pure text-based material, *Solomon* has been expanded and upgraded in its reach. It provides new ways of learning to new audiences, with new modules including sound recordings and interactive and audiovisual content – and more is planned for future releases. The “Welcome” module for each degree is deliberately more interactive to foster engagement.

Solomon is, however, far more than a library or repository of material. It is a Virtual Learning Environment – like those used by Colleges and Universities. It not only makes it easy to navigate the content but also allows users to customise the ways in which they learn. The content is divided into sections called ‘Modules’. You can enrol into them separately, and you will even receive updates when their content is amended. In addition to the very robust Search functionality, *Solomon* has a Tag system that allows individual Masons to follow their own customised learning pathways.

Every member has his own style of learning: it is part of our mission to enable him to use *Solomon*, whatever his learning style or objectives. He can pursue a structured programme, learning more about each Degree in conjunction with his own progression through the Ceremonies and on into the Royal Arch.

Solomon is not just for individual learning, however. It is important that we share our



enjoyment of discovery and learning with others in and beyond our own Lodges and Chapters. The discussions that emerge from reading items should stimulate the desire to learn yet more. Modules contain “badges” which you acquire on completion; and some Provinces have presented certificates for completing the programme for the three Degrees.

In East Kent we have been preparing Podcasts and Webinars for you on “Getting the best out of *Solomon*” and looking at ways to make members with learning difficulties more at ease with Ritual. We are exploring ways to make material more accessible by means of guided learning sessions and learning circles. We hope to introduce Certificated Workshops for Progressive Offices as well as for those following the Chair.

These should help to ensure that members get the best possible chance to succeed in their chosen path.

Our own Provincial Team is starting to visit Lodges to demonstrate the Initiation Ceremony with added commentary. We were delighted with the reception we got at the Nicholas Ridley Lodge No.8094 in Herne Bay earlier this year: lots of talent there, and lots of enthusiasm.

Details of all these events and opportunities are on the Your Province (YP2) website. If you'd like to become involved in our Learning and Development initiatives, either by attending or as a presenter, please contact Steve Salisbury at education@ekprovince.co.uk for more details.

SOLOMON IN A NUTSHELL

Solomon is UGLE's on-line searchable repository of over four hundred Nuggets, Papers, Presentations, Demonstrations & Quizzes/Q&A, which can be used for personal study or shared in Lodge, Chapter, or a Lodge/Chapter of Instruction or Development.

It is Free, open to anyone in the world, using their computer, tablet or smartphone. You simply register; choose one, two, or all three 'entry' modules (depending on what you think suits your needs); enrol on one or all of the subject areas; and browse, search and download any material you need.

If you change your mind, you can add or delete modules and subject areas, or even un-enrol – it's up to you.

Learn more at:

<https://solomon.ugle.org.uk>



**INTERESTED IN
JOINING
FREEMASONRY?**

Find out more or
apply now online at:
JUST ASK
www.justaskone.org

THE HUMBLE TYLER OR JANITOR
AN OFFICER OF THE LODGE?
OR JUST AN UNDERRATED MEMBER?

Kelvin Curtis ponders:



I have been a Craft Tyler since 1996. I have also been a Janitor for the Royal Arch, Mark Degree, Mariners, Rose Croix, and Knights Priest, all of which require different Entry Ceremonies. During those twenty-eight years I have been Tyler on 1,670 occasions.

It's got me thinking. How much does the average Mason know about the Tyler's job, and is he really appreciated for what he does?

Here, I am focussing on the Craft and Royal Arch (or 'Chapter').

Many Candidates on arrival at a Masonic Hall on the evening of their Initiation are nervous and really don't know what to expect.

When the Lodge is about to open, the Tyler asks for the Candidate to come up to the Office or Changing Room. I introduce myself to the Candidate and ask him general questions about his work, how he got here, and so on. These questions help to settle his nerves while I'm dealing with the knocks on the door during the Lodge opening.

I then explain that the beginning of Freemasonry is like being born into the world with nothing except your parents' love.

I then ask him to take off his Jacket, waistcoat and trousers and ask him to change into some special clothes and explain the need for being 'slip shod' and for wearing a 'cable-tow'. Also, I tell him that he must remove any watches, rings, chains or any other metallic substances. I then take him to the Lodge Room door and blindfold him.

I explain that I will knock three times on the door. When the door opens, I will say certain words about him to another Mason and the door will close. Then, when the door re-opens, he, the Candidate, will be led inside, and will feel something touch his left breast and will be asked a question. I will prompt him to say “yes”.

The Candidate then goes inside the Lodge Room for about thirty minutes and comes out a Brother. He then re-dresses into his Masonic clothes and I make sure he is wearing the Entered Apprentice Apron and white gloves. In some Lodges I go in and do a short Ceremony and present the white gloves to him officially.

In Chapter my role is known as ‘Janitor’. Setting up a Chapter Ceremony can take about an hour – and a Side Degree such as Rose Croix can take even longer.

A Candidate can join Chapter four weeks or more after taking his Third Degree in Craft Freemasonry. This leads to a very common problem if he has not done his ‘homework’: the Chapter Secretary (called ‘Scribe-E’) will come out and ask the Candidate to sign a Form, following which the Candidate must give the Masonic Signs in all three Degrees, including Passwords, plus the so-called ‘Five Points of Fellowship’ and their associated Passwords. Candidates, even the more experienced ones, are often stumped and don’t remember what to do!

Assuming he has cleared this hurdle, the Candidate is then ‘prepared’, the preparation including the wearing of a Master Mason’s Apron. I have to give different knocks on the door and say different words. Throughout the Ceremony the Janitor is very busy: three times the Candidate comes out with two other members of the Chapter.

Clearing up after a Chapter meeting on my own takes about an hour. So for a Tyler or Janitor the whole process will have taken from four to six hours. In my experience very little help is offered at the finish, as most Brethren just want to get to the bar for a drink!

In addition to putting everything back into the Lodge cupboard safely, this time also includes making sure that items such as Goblets and Wands are in the correct place for the DC and Master/Wardens for use during the Festive Board.

The final duty, given at the end of the proceedings, is the Tyler’s Toast, to poor and distressed Freemasons. It is almost invariably treated with great respect.

The whole Tyler process is usually rewarded by the Lodge or Chapter with a small fee or a free meal.

It is fair to say that, if a Tyler were not to turn up, many Brethren would have little knowledge of what to do, especially for a Chapter meeting.



Over the years I have met many Candidates and Visitors of interest. I have been Tyler for people from many occupations and from all walks of life, including Doctors, male Nurses, Solicitors, titled people (a Lord from Essex), several MBE's including one bestowed by the late Queen as a 'Companion of Honour'. I have welcomed military personnel who arrived in dress uniform, river pilots, aircraft pilots, police officers and postmen. Some come wearing all manner of jewellery: one recently wore three different expensive watches ranging in value from £50K to £70K for his three Degrees.

I have been Tyler to Lodges celebrating anniversaries like Centenaries, and one for 250 Years. You meet many of the important Masons of the day from Grand Lodge and the Province of East Kent. One special Visitor of note was comedian Jim Davidson: he proved very difficult to keep serious during a visit to Gravesend Masonic Hall!

I like doing what I do, but as I approach eighty years old, I would appreciate some assistance! Also, there seems to be a decreasing number of Tylers available, and most, like me, are quite elderly. Tylers are a very important part of the whole process and should be recognised and appreciated as such.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Lodges in the Gravesend Centre and for those Brethren who have assisted me in recent years. I assure you that it is very much appreciated.

Now – where's that ceremonial sword?

MON DIEU! C'EST L'ENTENTE CORDIALE!

Malcolm Ketley of the Entente Cordiale Lodge No.9657 writes:



On Saturday 23rd March Entente Cordiale witnessed a very special set of events. First, the Master was proclaimed for his second year in office; then he conducted a Second Degree ceremony; and the evening was rounded off with the presentation of a Grand Lodge Certificate.

Nothing unusual about that, you might say. However, where it differs is that the Certificate was presented by Malcolm Ketley to his son Andrew, whom Malcolm had Initiated, Passed and Raised, making the Presentation the completion of the package.

The Ceremony also coincided with the forty-fifth anniversary of Malcolm's joining Freemasonry in France, and the fortieth anniversary of his joining Royal Arch in London.

What makes this of particular interest is that it is typical of the special nature of Entente Cordiale, whose membership is made up of approximately seventy percent French brethren.

Of the remainder, who are mainly English, most have a very strong connection with France. Of course, the mixture of nationalities is what makes the Lodge so special: so much so that a recent visitor described our Ritual as "a mixture of Emulation and 'Allo Allo'!"

However, more English members are needed, and the Lodge would welcome Joining Members or Initiates *pour équilibrer la balance*.

A 'NEW ARCHITECTURE' FOR FREEMASONRY?

GUEST SPEAKER AT PROVINCIAL GRAND OFFICERS' MESS GIVES US THE LOW-DOWN

It was a pleasant Spring Day as we 'Dark Blues' made our way to the Maidstone Masonic Centre on the 21st March for our twice-yearly Provincial Grand Officers' Mess. The format had been well practised over the years: a pre-prandial posset, a chance to meet old friends and catch up on the gossip, a splendid lunch and the opportunity to hear the latest news from Province and to learn something interesting from a Guest Speaker.

This time there was a change: the speaker was to go first, because he had another engagement later in London. At 1215hrs our Mess President, Neil Hamilton Johnstone, welcomed us and introduced Hugh Douglas-Smith (pictured below). Hugh was in charge of the team developing our new database called Project 2023. It would be replacing the older systems ADELPHI and HERMES, known to and loved by us all but not adequate for the job.

Hugh's own background was very much as a 'hands-on' Freemason. He had been a Lodge Secretary and had risen through the ranks to become Buckinghamshire's Deputy Provincial Grand Master. With a career background in international computer software, he was appointed the United Grand Lodge of England's Chief Information Officer in 2022, with overall responsibility for the Information Technology software within UGLE.



Hugh began by telling us why our current IT system needed to change. The cost of maintaining it, he told us, was prohibitive. The existing ORACLE software was life expired. The data structure needed to be updated. The old system was analogous to a card index, with no opportunity for users to gain direct access. After all, we as Freemasons were the owners of the data about us, and, for it to be effective, the system needed to allow us to get at the data. Thus, out of necessity, Project 2023 was

launched.

Now for the 'Architecture' bit. We were talking computer systems here, not buildings. Project 2023 would ensure that there was one record per Freemason (or 'member'). It would be a modern database with a modern framework, held in Amazon Web Services (AWS), a cloud computing platform. Its aim was to put us the members first, so that we were in control of the data held about us. It would be easy to use and was being designed with us clearly in mind. Indeed, UGLE had been involving leading User Interface experts in its design.

UGLE wanted as many of us as possible to use the system, so that it could engage with us better. To get started, we would have to 'register' ourselves. We'd need to have a unique email address and a smartphone and/or a web browser.

Our email address would become our Username. We should use a personal address, not for example 'SecLodge2345@aol.com' which would at some stage be passed on to another Mason.

Once the system found a match in ADELPHI it would prompt us for a password. We could then complete our profile by adding extra information including, if we wished, a mugshot.

As it developed, it would be able to give us useful information such as, for example, the next three meeting dates of our Lodge or Chapter.

Hugh hoped that Project 2023 would be useful in all sorts of other ways: imagine being able to ask, "Who do we have who can play the bagpipes?"

Secretaries and Scribes E should find it increasingly useful in generating all sorts of statistics including age profiles. Later phases of the Project would include the generation of Annual Returns (did I hear a few "yippee"s rippling round the room at that?), the ability to search for the next Second Degree meeting, statistics on Recruitment, reporting on Official Visits, and so on.

And how about a personal diary of meetings you had attended, receiving 'push-reminders' of upcoming meetings and being able to book in directly for the Festive Board?

So, it was all 'done and dusted', then?

Most certainly not.

Some 250 users would be testing it this April, after which it would go to the Province of Durham for a full-blooded beta test and only then to all of us.

Hugh was very keen to hear from anyone who had their own ideas of an ideal system. It was very flexible, and new facilities could be added as we progressed.

Hugh was an excellent speaker and was warmly applauded. Our Mess President thanked him.

[Ed: the Spring 2024 issue of UGLE's Freemasonry Today has an interview with Hugh Douglas-Smith on pages 12 and 13]



Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone addressing the meeting, with Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies Andy Stevens on his right

Now it was time to digest what we had learnt, along with a tasty four-course meal.

After lunch, our President addressed us. Among the subjects exercising the Province were the importance of recruitment and retention, with tentatively encouraging results in recent months, and the launch of Archway *[see article elsewhere in this magazine]*.

Neil was keen to increase the ratio of Chapter membership to Craft membership. Currently, some 63-64% of Freemasons in our Province were not members of the Royal Arch. Our President was pleased that Masonic Centres were offering their facilities to charities more and more. Looking to the future, he recalled a quotation from Mark Twain: "If you want to change the future, you must change what you're doing in the present."

The Mess Accounts were approved nem con. There was no other business. Provincial Junior Grand Warden Matt Jury delivered a well-thought-out Vote of Thanks to the President, and the 'Top Table' retired at 1510hrs.

It was good to see the Mess so well attended: 'Sold Out' and with the car park full. If you are a Dark Blue and haven't been to a Provincial Officers' Mess, you are missing out on a really enjoyable and informative occasion. My advice: book early to avoid disappointment. Next meeting: Thursday 17th October 2024, also at the Maidstone Masonic Centre.

[Note: the term 'Dark Blue' refers to the predominant colour of the aprons and collars worn by Freemasons who have been appointed to Provincial Grand Rank]

AHOY! SHIPMATES AND BROTHERS ALL!

Kevin D Stones reports:

Shiver me timbers, Shipmates!

The newly Consecrated East Kent Combined Services Lodge No.10038 welcomed its latest Member, Mr John Cameron Scott, at its second Regular Meeting on Saturday 10th February at the Ashford Masonic Hall.

The day had a rather special twist.

Being a Services Lodge, the Members of 10038 are all serving or retired Military or 'Blue Light' Brethren.

And the twist was a rather pleasant one, in that it seemed like a Naval Reunion: there were Shipmates from near and far, all having previously served as Marine Engineers – bar one, a 'Dabber' aboard HMS Plymouth – with one 'Stoker' recollecting his days at Jutland. Their friendship obviously went back a long way!



Retired Royal Navy Brethren with their shipmate and new Brother John Scott (centre).

Lodge Master Steve Simmons welcomed our Guests and Visitors and the Royal Navy Brethren who had come along to support their Shipmate, the Initiate. Combined Services also welcomed two Joining Members – Julian de-Zille and Christopher Gould.

A great Ceremony was topped off by John's Seconder, Phillip Lumsden. Phillip had known John for some forty-two years and delighted in presenting the Working Tools to his fellow Scot and friend. Kevin Gregory, John's Proposer, who had known Phillip for just as long, delivered a passionate 'Address to the Candidate'.



At the Festive Board, our newly Initiated Brother John Cameron Scott sat at the top table as is Masonic custom, surrounded by his visiting Naval Brethren and Shipmates who had all formerly served on HMS Plymouth and had known each other for four decades and more. John gave a good account of himself with a passionate and amusing response to the welcoming speech.

HMS Plymouth was a Rothesay-class frigate warship which was built at Devonport Dockyard in 1959. She served in the Royal Navy for almost thirty years until being decommissioned in 1988 after helping to save the Falklands Islands from Argentinian invasion in 1982.

Masonic generosity was on parade too: our hard-working Charity Steward Bob Hadlow announced that we had collectively raised a remarkable total for the evening of £584 and 5 Kenyan Shillings.

This had been a clearly emotional and memorable day for the ex-Royal Navy Shipmates – and for the Brethren of the East Kent Combined Services Lodge. We all solemnly reflected on the 'empty chair', reserved in memory of a Brother who had departed this mortal life.

I imagine everyone had much to talk about after the Festive Board, as the Bar, fully stocked with Rum and staffed in a 'shipshape' manner, remained open for a considerable time – long after my own bunk-time.

Combined Services is such a welcoming Lodge. For more information on joining or just visiting please contact our Lodge Secretary Graham Doughty at g.doughty109@btinternet.com

KURT PROPOSES HIS DAD INTO FREEMASONRY

Kurtis Neal (pictured with his father Steve) writes:



At a recent meeting of Northfleet Lodge No.4149 we initiated my dad, Steve. He was proposed by me (who had known me all my life!) and seconded by my good friend John Chandler (who had known Steve longer than he had known me!).

I was also privileged to present and explain to my dad the Working Tools of an Entered Apprentice.

Before COVID Steve and I had co-owned three successful catering businesses that targeted the Events industry, winning fruitful contracts with the likes of English Heritage, the London to Brighton charity bike ride and other large Festival and Events organisers. Unfortunately, COVID put an end to these.

We had often speculated in the past about the world behind the ‘closed doors’ of Freemasonry. What was the mystery surrounding the ancient fraternity, and what drew thousands of individuals worldwide to embark on that journey?

During a holiday spent reconnecting with an old Masonic friend, Simon Beagley of the Northfleet Lodge No.4149, our conversation veered somewhat naturally towards Freemasonry. Questions flowed and thoughts were shared, resulting in Simon extending an invitation to me to join the esteemed brotherhood.

Once I had been initiated into Simon’s Lodge, the next step in my mind was to extend the invitation to my father, to share with him the same teachings and mysteries that had captured our attention in the first place. Proposing my father was a profound moment in my Masonic career and one I’ll be eternally proud of.



Says father Steve, “For many years the mystery and intrigue that surrounded Freemasonry had interested me. It was during ‘lockdown’ in 2020 that Kurt and I began to talk about Freemasonry. We both said that we would like to join one day. Kurt was invited to join the Lodge and then subsequently proposed me to join. Here we are now – both members of the same Lodge!”

THE 2025 FESTIVAL

In East Kent we are currently in what is called “FESTIVAL” mode. Every eleven years or so each Region or Province embarks on a five-year campaign to raise funds for our national charity, the Masonic Charitable Foundation. The aim of our current Festival, which ends in 2025, is to raise £3.5 million. This rolling programme of Festivals has made the MCF into one of the largest grant-making charities in the country.

Although each Festival has an end date, monies are not held back until then: instead, they are passed directly to the MCF as soon as they are received. We call it the “revolving door” principle: what comes in, goes straight out. By this means we achieve a steady and continuous flow of revenue for immediate use.

To find out more, head over to the MCF website at <https://mcf.org.uk>

THE POWER OF MENTORING

The United Grand Lodge of England's database 'Solomon' is a treasure trove of information about all kinds of Masonic subjects. Its piece on the Mentor is well worth quoting here:

"The most recent addition to the ranks of the Lodge Officers is the Mentor. This Office was introduced in reaction to what many Brethren saw as an unacceptable rise in the drop-out rate of newer Freemasons.

"The Mentor is charged with the pastoral care and oversight of newer Brethren. The dictionary definition of 'Mentor' is an experienced person who offers long-term advice and support to someone younger, to encourage them to pursue their objectives.

"The Lodge Mentor should therefore be aware of the attendance records of all Brethren who have recently joined so that he (and possibly the Lodge Secretary) can contact those who stop attending Lodge meetings to discuss any problems they may be encountering.

"In larger Lodges, it will not be possible for a single Mentor to take on all the pastoral care required, so the Mentor should ask other Brethren to assist him. Whoever undertakes the actual function of Mentoring should be an experienced Freemason, who has a ready ear and a sympathetic heart."

Graham Chisnell (pictured), Provincial Grand Mentor, writes:



In East Kent, a Lodge will usually have a Lodge Mentor who assigns a Personal Mentor to each individual Member.

At a Mentors' Breakfast in December 2023, Lodge Mentors and Personal Mentors from across the Province gathered to deepen their knowledge of how the Members' Pathway can act as a tool to guide high quality Mentorship in our Lodges.

The key purpose of the Mentors' Breakfast was to support Lodge Mentors and Personal Mentors in their role of nurturing the engagement and interest of both our newest Members and those who have already made some progress on their Masonic Journey.

The Members' Pathway has been with us in its current form for over two years. It is heartening to see Lodge Mentors, Almoners and Membership Officers working in a collaborative and innovative way to enhance their Brethren's Masonic Journey.

Tony Harvey's book 'The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Lodges' has some sage advice for our Lodges. In the book, Tony outlines common themes that are found in highly successful Lodges. The seven themes are:

- 1 Great Ritual and Ceremonial
- 2 Good Lodge management
- 3 Active support for newer Members
- 4 Engagement with all Members
- 5 Distinctive features
- 6 Harmony
- 7 Leadership – energy – enthusiasm

The Lodge Mentor and Personal Mentor have great influence in points 1, 3 and 4. Steve Salisbury, the Province's Education Officer, recently hosted two Ritual masterclass webinars. Therein Brethren were taught a range of strategies to strengthen their ability to learn, retain and recall Masonic Ritual.

These sessions have provided Brethren with tools to develop their Masonic Ritual learning and delivery and are available as recorded webinars on YP2. *[See back page of this magazine on how to access YP2]* Brethren who attended the sessions found the strategies helpful in developing their ability and confidence in learning Ritual. Look out for further Ritual masterclass webinars.



The Mentor and Personal Mentor have a powerful capacity to support the new Member in his understanding of Freemasonry and to help him to participate actively in the life of his Lodge.

The Initiate receives a copy of the Light Blue Passport in the Initiate's Pack from the Provincial Office. The Light Blue Passport provides a list of activities that the new Brother can engage in to develop his knowledge, understanding and interest. Look through the Passport with your Brethren and support them in their endeavours as they tackle the challenges outlined therein.

The Members' Pathway guides the Personal Mentor to undertake key actions in support of his Brother. It suggests the following actions:

1. Build a **supportive mentoring relationship** with a Candidate for Initiation.
2. Provide him with the **information**, personal contact and encouraging support that he needs.
3. **Introduce** him to other Members of the Lodge.
4. **Meet him outside the Lodge** to discuss Freemasonry and his enjoyment and experience of it.
5. **Prepare** him for upcoming Ceremonies.
6. Explain aspects of Freemasonry to him: its **structure, Offices, symbolism, ceremonial**.
7. **Demonstrate to the new member** the correct manner of saluting and firing.
8. Help him to **reflect on and review** past Ceremonies.
9. Help him to **find answers to questions**.
10. **Accompany him** to visits to other Lodges.
11. **Sit with him** at Lodge meetings and at Festive Boards.
12. **Accompany him if he leaves the Lodge room** or arrange for someone else to do so.
13. Help the member to **learn the Ritual**, its **words** and **meaning**, as he progresses in the Lodge.
14. Encourage him to **play a full part in the life of the Lodge**, both ceremonially and socially.
15. **Seek feedback** from him and monitor his interest, involvement and commitment.
16. **Adapt his approach to mentoring** to enhance his enjoyment of Freemasonry and his commitment to it.
17. As he progresses, **hand him over to a new Personal Mentor** when needed.

These several actions can act as a helpful self-assessment of your approach to Mentoring in your Lodge. If you are a Personal Mentor to an Initiate, consider which of the above points are strengths and which need further thought. This will act to strengthen your own role as Personal Mentor and support your newly made Brother as he takes his initial steps on his Masonic Journey.

The challenge ahead for the Lodge Mentor or Personal Mentor is therefore to engage Brethren as they progress on their Journey.

Engagement does not happen by chance but by design. Most of our Brethren are not naturally self-motivated to learn about the Ceremonial or to gain a wider understanding of Freemasonry. Personal Mentors can play a key role here. In the most successful Lodges, Personal Mentors build guided and personal Masonic learning into the culture of the Lodge: in this way they capture the interest, enthusiasm and imagination of their Initiates early in their Masonic Journey.

With care and attention, these attributes will remain with them throughout their Masonic life.





The Royal Arch



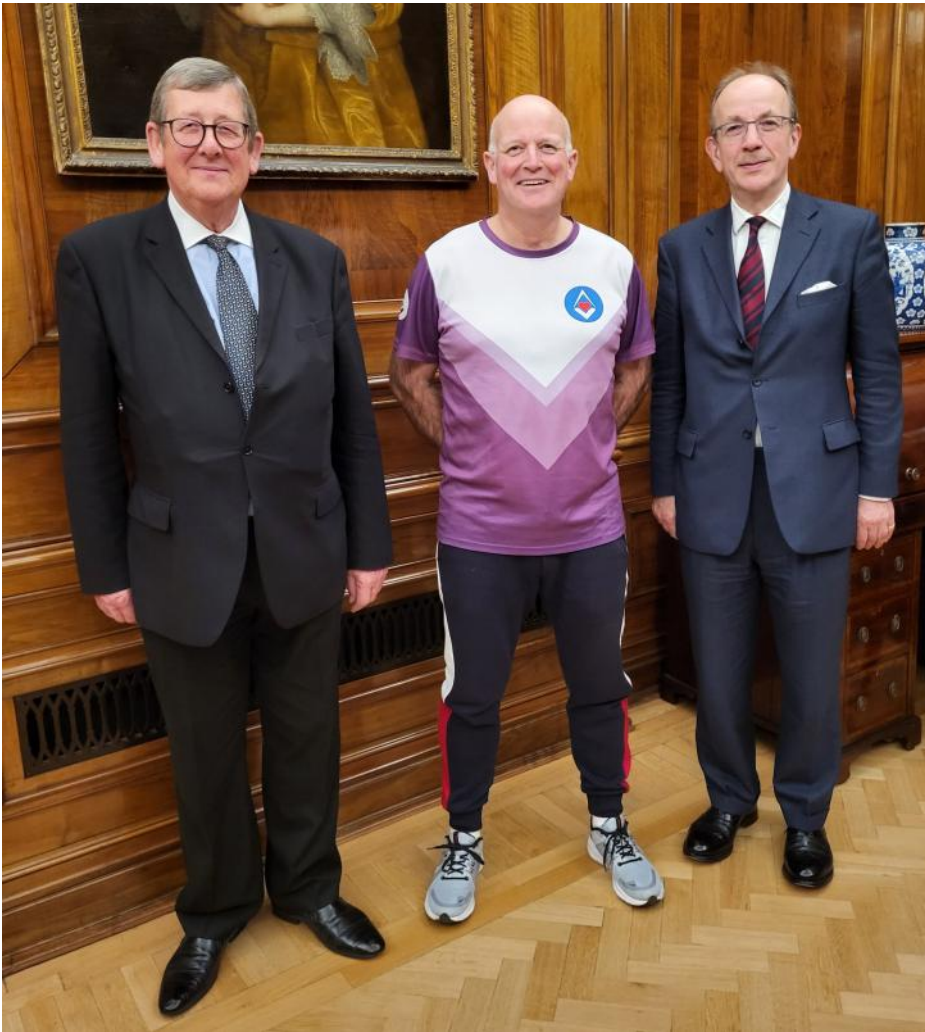
Join Now

Contact Dennis

Speak to your Lodge Chapter Liaison Officer or
email the Provincial Grand Membership Officer
Dennis Fordham
dnfordham@aol.com

NIGEL DOES THE NORTH COAST 500 – TWICE!

A great story that just missed inclusion in our Winter 2023/2024 issue



You've got to be a bit out of the ordinary to take on a 500-mile walking challenge – and then double it. That is precisely what Nigel Mann, Charity Steward of the Royal Navy Lodge No.429 at Ramsgate, East Kent, decided he would do. But he wasn't expecting the eventual outcome!

Nigel wanted to raise £1,000 towards the Province's 2025 Festival. He was looking for something sufficiently challenging to capture the imagination and encourage people to sponsor him along the way.

Pictured: Nigel Mann (centre) with Jonathan Spence to his left and Geoffrey Dearing to his right

Nigel and his family had planned to drive the North Coast 500, a five-hundred-mile road trip around the coast of Scotland. His phone had clearly 'heard' him talking about the trip: its social media algorithm started offering him adverts suggesting that he 'walk' the North Coast 500 as a virtual exercise. For those who are not aware, a virtual walk doesn't mean going to the venue: you simply check off the miles wherever you happen to be walking and an online map charts your progress as if you were following the Route.

Somehow 500 miles didn't feel a suitably challenging distance to Nigel – so he doubled it, took some poetic licence from a certain well-known Scottish pop duo, and the Proclaimers' Challenge was created:

"But I would walk five hundred miles
And I would walk five hundred more".

From mid-June to October 2023, Nigel was out of bed at 5.15am each day and off on a two-and-a-half-hour walk. From Broadstairs he would go to Joss Bay and would then vary his route – sometimes off to Ramsgate, sometimes to Margate – always resisting the temptation to catch a bus back when he realised that he might have gone too far!

“Summer mornings,” says Nigel, “were a fantastic experience. For anyone who walks, runs, cycles or even just walks the dog, there is a wonderful sense of community. It is that time of day when everyone smiles and says, ‘good morning’. You begin to recognise familiar faces and, having greeted them on the way out, you offer a knowing nod on the return. I have seen speed walkers, cyclists (both electric and pedal-power), sea swimmers, personal trainers with their clients, and young children running with a parent – the child often forcing the pace – all fulfilling their own personal challenges. It was great to be part of that.”



Thanks to generous sponsorship from friends and fellow Masons, Nigel raised some £2,000, double his original target. He has donated the full amount to East Kent's Festival.

Pro Grand Master Jonathan Spence, himself an East Kent Freemason, got to hear of Nigel's exploits, and invited him and Lodge Master Peter Rodd, a former Assistant Provincial Grand Master, to visit him at Freemasons' Hall in London, where they were joined by another venerable East Kent Freemason, former Provincial Grand Master and ex-President of the Board of General Purposes Geoffrey Gordon Dearing.

Said Nigel, “It was a wonderful and unexpected finale to the whole event. My sincere gratitude to our Pro Grand Master for finding a window in his busy schedule to meet me and to spend a generous amount of his time chatting about my walk and Freemasonry in general. What a privilege!”

Some final remarks from Nigel:

“For any Lodge or individual who is conscious of raising funds for good causes, just get out there and do something. Your sponsors needn't be exclusively Masonic: you have an opportunity to raise money from outside our institution and can even pique interest in membership. On top of this is the personal feeling of accomplishment and the realisation that you can do something different, next year and the year after and the year after that!

“My thanks to the Royal Navy Lodge for supporting me, to our Worshipful Master Peter Rodd for pushing me, to Union Lodge No.127 for helping me with a generous gift of £200, and to everyone else who has donated so kindly to the Proclaimers Challenge.”

THE FORELAND - A SATURDAY LODGE AND A DINING LODGE

Bob Blowers, Secretary of the Foreland Lodge No.3209, writes:



Late in 1906, a worthy group of Masons decided that it was 'expedient' to form a Lodge in St Margaret's at Cliffe, a small village situated on the high cliffs overlooking the narrowest section of the Dover Strait, where the infamous Goodwin Sands are guarded by the South Foreland Lighthouse, and from which the Lodge took its name. It was initially formed as a 'Summer Lodge' with five meetings a year. At that time, there were just three Lodges in Dover and one each in Walmer and Deal.

The Lodge was consecrated in 1907 with much ceremony in Dover Town Hall and, a hundred years later, the Centenary was celebrated in like fashion with even the original dinner replicated and served in the adjoining Stone Hall.

The initial annual subscription was set as three guineas and included five dinners with wine and champagne at the Installation Banquet.

The Lodge met continuously through the two great wars, though in a much-depleted form as so many members were away on active service or other war duties.



The Lodge now meets on a Saturday afternoon four times a year from October to April in the third St Margaret's Village Hall. The first Hall was burnt down in 1909, together with the Lodge furniture. The second hall, of non-standard construction, was replaced in 2001 by a much larger, attractive, conventional building (pictured above), greatly assisted by Lottery funding. It is also used by Bredenstone Lodge No.8093.

We at Foreland set up the Lodge Room with the Master in the East and the Senior Warden in the West, but Bredenstone sets it in the opposite manner. Bredenstone uses our furniture, and we use its carpet, both of which are stored in lockers in the Hall.

The Foreland is known as a 'Dining Lodge': dress code at meetings and Festive Boards is dinner jacket with bow tie. The members and guests normally dine at various hotels and clubs around the area. The Lodge has always had a reputation for an above-average dining experience.



Foreland was originally very much a professional person's Lodge. It now has a far wider mix of members, with numbers generally in the mid-thirties. Officers are expected to be committed and diligent enough to study their Ritual Book thoroughly and perform the Ceremonies without the need for regular attendance at Lodges of Instruction.

By Lodge tradition, the First World War storming of the Zeebrugge Mole – which, at a time of stalemate on the Western Front, fired up the morale of the whole country – is still celebrated at the Installation Meeting with table decorations of Roses, Irises and Daffodils to represent the ships and men involved in the raid.

THANK YOU, ALLINGTON!

Allington Lodge No.7086 is like almost any other Lodge. It thoroughly enjoys its Freemasonry and does what it can to help the less fortunate in the community.

And, like other Lodges – and Chapters – it receives letters and thanks from some of those it has helped.



Mo Morris, Allington's Charity Steward (pictured), writes:

Serving as Charity Steward has given me the opportunity to focus on local charities as well as supporting the Provincial Grand Charity. Raising over £4,000 through Festive Board raffles has enabled the Lodge to support the RBLI, Heart of Kent Hospice, Prostate Cancer UK, Addison's Disease Self-Help Group, Young Lives Foundation, Mariners of Bewl Water and the Nursing Memorial Appeal.

Here's a recent selection of the letters we have received:

Hi Mo

Lovely to meet you both and thank you to all concerned regarding the generous donation.

These funds will go into our Care Leavers Mentoring fund. As a charity, we recruit volunteer mentors who work with young people (typically aged 18-21), who are leaving their foster home and facing the daunting prospect of living independently for the first time, often many miles away from where they grew up, away from their friends and social lives and support networks.

A mentor visits them weekly, helping with things such as finding a job or college place, cooking, cleaning, budgeting, or making new friends. Our charity needs to raise funds to cover the training, travel and activity costs of the volunteer.

Thanks for choosing YLF once more, we look forward to building closer links with you all in 2024!

Kind Regards

Neil Vickery

Director of Fundraising and Development | Young Lives Foundation.



RBLI



"We are grateful for your sponsorship which has enabled veterans to take part in our annual ride with a veteran event to the Menin Gate, raising money for the RBLI. Since 2017 this event has raised over £250,000 to help the charity provide housing for veterans in our new Centenary Village".

L:R, Penny Dyson, Brendan Touhey. (Event Organizers).



Heart of Kent Hospice



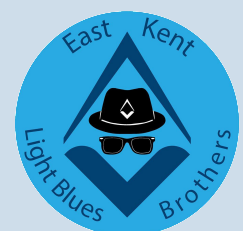
Michelle Brown
Community Partnership Fundraiser

"On behalf of the entire Hospice team, thank you so much for your very kind and generous donation of £500 gifted to Heart of Kent Hospice and raised from raffles held at your meetings" Here at the hospice, our amazing nurses and healthcare assistants care for patients at the Hospice, at Home and in the community, ensuring our patients can have the best quality of life, for as long as they live. The care that we provide is not simply medical, our Family Services Team offer financial and welfare advice and psychological and spiritual support too. Through your kind donation you are helping to fund our vital compassionate care for local families when they need us the most.

It is thanks to the ongoing generosity of our local community that we have been privileged to support over 60,000 local people since we opened our doors in 1991. Each day we care for over 900 people and your kindness is the reason we can provide such compassionate and specialist care, free of charge, to anyone that needs it

LIGHT BLUES BROTHERS

Membership of the East Kent Light Blues Brothers is open to any Mason from the Province of East Kent who has not yet attained Provincial or Grand Rank, regardless of age or experience. To find out more, visit the website at eklbb.org.uk.



WHAT WE'VE ALL BEEN UP TO

A Digest of the Provincial Magazines, 2017-2024

Paul Gear, Provincial Communications Officer, kindly suggested that I put together a résumé of the publications I have edited over the last seven years. The Editor editing himself. What a great idea!

Without more ado, here is a digest of the material that has passed my desk since I took over in 2017. I hope it gives you a flavour of the wonderful things we do in Freemasonry to help make the world a better place.

Estuary View 9: February 2017

Estuary View was named after the location of the Provincial Offices at Whitstable. Originally the publication consisted of single-paragraph summaries of articles with links to where they could be read in full.

Estuary View 9



Middleton Manor Lodge is 70

On the 6th December 2016 Middleton Manor Lodge No.6337 celebrates its 70th anniversary at the Sittingbourne Masonic Centre and receives from Roger Odd a token of appreciation for its support of the Canterbury Cathedral Appeal. [To read more please click here.](#)



Help for Four Good Causes

Freemasons from the Lord Charles Beresford Lodge No.2404 in Chatham donate a total of £4,000 to four local charities – the Kent, Sussex and Surrey Air Ambulance Trust, the RNLI at Walmer, Demelza Hospice and The Chatham Masonic Hall Restoration Fund – and visit the Lifeboat Station at Walmer. [To read more please click here.](#)

Estuary View 10



SPECIAL TERCENTENARY ISSUE

There are many events taking place throughout the East Kent Province to celebrate 300 Years of Freemasonry. To view the Tercentenary page on the Provincial website, [click here](#).

Here is a selection of events coming up in the next few months.

Watch out for "Inside the Freemasons" on SKY® TV in April 2017.....

Commencing on 17th April 2017, SKY® TV will be screening a documentary series entitled "**Inside the Freemasons**". With unique and unprecedented access to one of the oldest social networking organisations in the world, **Inside The Freemasons** asks who Freemasons are and what do they do?

The programmes will go beyond the myth and legend to discover what it really means to be a Freemason today through the words and lives of Freemasons themselves.

The series will be available on DVD after all the programmes have been broadcast. For further details, [click here](#).

Estuary View 11: June 2017

Special Tercentenary Issue 2. On a bright and breezy Sunday 4th June 2017, close on a thousand enthusiastic spectators whooped and cheered as more than 200 competitors in twenty-one teams ran, slid, tumbled and made fools of themselves competing in the 2017 Cornwallis It's A Knockout Competition at the Aylesford Bulls Rugby Club ground.

Estuary View 10: April 2017

EV10 was the first of two Tercentenary issues, celebrating the 300th anniversary of the formation of modern Freemasonry and giving links to many of the Events taking place all over the Province.

Estuary View 11



SPECIAL TERCENTENARY ISSUE 2

There are many events taking place throughout the East Kent Province to celebrate 300 Years of Freemasonry. To view the Tercentenary page on the Provincial website, [click here](#).

Inside The Freemasons

The five-part Sky documentary "Inside the Freemasons", broadcast in April and May this year, attracted a great deal of interest both inside and outside the fraternity. A DVD with all five episodes is being released on the 15th June and is available for pre-order from Letchworth Shops. Click [here](#) to find out more and to order your copy.



On a bright and breezy Sunday 4th June 2017, close on a thousand enthusiastic spectators whooped and cheered as more than 200 competitors in 21 teams ran, slid, tumbled and made fools of themselves competing in the 2017 Cornwallis It's A [A](#) Knockout Competition at the Aylesford Bulls Rugby Club ground.

Sponsored by the Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons Charity, the aim of the Event, part of the Masonic Tercentenary celebrations, was to raise £20,000 for Macmillan Nurses. For a report and photos of the Event, [click here](#).

Provincial Magazine 68: Autumn 2017

The Provincial Engine Room was visited, featuring Jim Beaney, Ron Pinney and Ray Veness. Paul Ricketts reported on the Communication Team's ventures into social media. John Grumbridge, Roger Odd and loads of teddy bears attended the Teddies for Loving Care Event at Harrietsham, where the musical entertainment was provided by Miss Holiday Swing. Group 6 joined in the Hythe Venetian Fete. Head of Communications Richard Carney reviewed the Sky documentary "Inside the Freemasons". Ron Cannon was awarded the MBE for his work with the RNLI, and Dean Faulkner was awarded the BEM for voluntary service to St John Ambulance.



Two New Assistant Provincial Grand Masters and a New Provincial Grand Secretary



David Alexander

The year 2017 is proving to be one of change for the Provincial Executive. At the meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge in April, Roger Waltham "retired" after seven years as an Assistant Provincial Grand Master and David Alexander, the Provincial Grand Secretary, was appointed in his place.

A former serving soldier and later a boarding school master, teaching Mathematics and Science and Computing and Information Technology, David was initiated into Lord Kitchener Lodge No.3402 based in Cyprus. He later joined the White Rose Lodge No.9308 in Dover and served the Province as an Active Junior Deacon, then Past Provincial Deputy Grand Sword Bearer and Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies. In 2009 he was appointed to the Grand Rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer. He served as Provincial Grand Secretary from 2014 until his new appointment this April as APGM. In Chapter, he holds the rank of Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies.

Now settled in Ramsgate, David is married to Joan and has two daughters and - for the moment, he says! - three grandchildren.



Philip South

At the same meeting, Philip South was appointed as Provincial Grand Secretary. Born in Chatham in 1955 where he has lived most of his life, Philip is married to Joan and has three sons, seven grandchildren and one great grandchild. In his career he trained as an Electrical Engineer before specialising in Commercial Refrigeration.

He is the Managing Director of a National Mechanical Engineering Company and also serves as a Director on the Boards of four other Companies. He is keen on all sports, especially cricket and football. Philip has had a very busy masonic career. He has served as Master of two Lodges and belongs to three others, being a Founder Member of the Spirit of Rugby Lodge, and is also active in Holy Royal Arch. He is also a member of three other orders: Mark, Rose Croix and Knights Templar, and has been responsible for all Public Events including the commissioning and running of the Provincial Mobile Display Units. He was appointed to the Grand Rank of Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies in 2015.



Neil Johnstone

Neil Johnstone, the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, was invested as an Assistant Provincial Grand Master at a special meeting on the 1st September.

Before proceeding with the investiture, the Provincial Grand Master, Geoffrey Dearing, paid a warm tribute to outgoing Assistant Provincial Grand Master, Peter

Rodd. He thanked Peter for his tireless and unstinting work in support of the Province's Charities. He mentioned in particular the "It's a Knock Out" event held earlier in the year which had raised over £20,000 in a single day in support of Macmillan Nurses.

Neil served for thirty-three years in the Kent police force, retiring in 2000 as a Chief Inspector. He then joined Kent County Council, where he worked for eleven years in emergency planning and crisis management. Initiated into the Renham Lodge No.8211 in 1981, he has since held several offices at Provincial level. He was appointed Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies in 2014 and has the Grand Rank of Past Junior Grand Deacon. Neil has also served as Second and Third Provincial Grand

Continued on page 2



INTERESTED IN JOINING FREEMASONRY? TURN TO PAGE 11

THE MASONIC PROVINCE OF EAST KENT

1

Estuary View 12



PROVINCIAL WEBMASTER RETIRES

After many years of sterling service, our Provincial Webmaster, **WBro Andy Notley**, has decided to hang up his keyboard to enjoy a well-earned retirement.



Since stepping down as Assistant Provincial Grand Master in 2013, Andy has headed up our website team and has overseen several upgrades and improvements to our online services. His efforts have resulted in East Kent's online communications being among the most widely admired and emulated in the country.

Head of Communications Richard Carney said:

"East Kent owes Andy Notley a huge vote of thanks, not only for his recent work managing our online communications but also for his previous work in areas such as Mentoring and the Kent Museum of Freemasonry. Andy was the Brother responsible for the introduction of Mentoring in East Kent and latterly oversaw the major refurbishment of the Museum and Library at Canterbury. His expertise, work ethic and unfailing good humour will be sorely missed".

Andy, also famous for his role as Drummer with "The Cymbolick Penalties", may think he is in for an easier life, but we understand his five granddaughters may have other ideas!

Andy is succeeded by his long-term deputy, **WBro Paul Gear**. Paul's wide experience in managing the various Provincial sites will be invaluable as the Communications Team continues its efforts to build a positive reputation for Freemasonry in the Community.

Paul summed up the feelings of everyone when he said:

"It has been an absolute pleasure working alongside Andy for the past few years. He is, quite simply, one of the nicest people I have met in Freemasonry".

We all wish Andy and his wife Mary a long and happy retirement.

Estuary View 12: August 2018

200 people attended the annual Charity Awards Celebration Event at the St George's Centre, Chatham, on the 28th October 2017, led by the Provincial Grand Master, Geoffrey Dearing. Representatives of fifteen local Charities were presented with cheques totalling £44,175. Also present were representatives of the Charities that had been awarded grants totalling £79,000 under the Masonic Charitable Foundation's Tercentenary Awards Scheme.

Estuary View 13: March 2018

Kent based disability charity Compaid was awarded a three-year grant by East Kent Freemasons to train disabled adults in computer skills. "Make a promise to look after yourself, those you love and the causes you support – make a will", urged Duncan Washbrook, Legacy Manager for the Masonic Charitable Foundation.

ESTUARY VIEW 13



NEWS FROM AROUND THE PROVINCE OF EAST KENT

	Volunteers needed to help children improve their reading	The local branch of a national charity is looking for volunteers to help children who have fallen behind with their reading. Click here for further details.
	Blackthorn Trust cheque presentation	Montreal Chapter presents a cheque to the Blackthorn Trust from in memory of Gordon Major. Click here for further details.
	A sesquicentennial celebration meeting in Dover	Corinthian Lodge No. 1208 in Dover celebrated its 150th anniversary on the 19th March. Provincial Grand Master Geoffrey Dearing was among those attending. For a full report, click here .
	Duke of Kent Court Spring Fair, 12th May	The Association of Friends of Prince George Duke of Kent Court, the RMBI Care Home at Shepherds Green, Chislehurst, are holding a Spring Fair on Saturday 12th May 2018, 10am to 12noon. Click here for more information.
	Minnis Bay Lodge's Clay Pigeon Charity Shoot	The Minnis Bay Clay Pigeon Charity Shoot will be held at the Martin Gorse Wood Clay Pigeon Club, near Dover, on Saturday 26th May 2018, starting at 9.30am. Find out more by clicking here .
	Roger retires as Chairman of East Kent Provincial Sports Association	Roger Odd retires as Chairman of the EKPSA and hands over the reins to Roger Waltham. For more details, click here .
	Donation to Foreland Fields School	The Emergency Services Lodge 9676 donates the proceeds of a Christmas Raffle to the Foreland Fields School, a School that caters for special needs children, to help them buy light and sound equipment for their swimming pool. Details here .
	Provincial Classic Garden Party	Preparations for the bi-annual Provincial Classic Garden Party are forging ahead. This year the Province is helping to mark the Centenary of the end of World War I. The Garden Party will be a great day out for family and friends. For lots more information, click here .

ESTUARY VIEW 14



NEWS FROM AROUND THE PROVINCE OF EAST KENT

	The PGM/Grand Superintendent's farewell message	Geoffrey Dearing retires as PGM/Grand Superintendent of the Province of East Kent and is appointed President, Board of General Purposes at Grand Lodge. Click here to see his farewell message to the Province.
	Neil Johnstone to be installed as East Kent's new PGM/Grand Superintendent	Neil Hamilton Johnstone will be installed as the new Provincial Grand Master/Provincial Grand Superintendent at the Winter Gardens, Margate, on Wednesday 3rd October 2018.
	Richard Wingett to be appointed APM	Richard Wingett will be appointed as an Assistant Provincial Grand Master at the Winter Gardens on the 3rd October.
	Michael Bailey celebrates 50 years as a Freemason	Michael Bailey, PGM/Grand Superintendent of East Kent from 2004 to 2011, celebrates fifty years as a Freemason. Click here for further details.
	EKP Golf Champions 2018	Nicholas Bills is crowned EKP Golf Champion for 2018 and Weald Rose Croix Chapter win the Team Championship. For a full report, click here .
	Pilgrims Hospice visit and presentation	Past Masters Ian Gregory and Tim Wheeler, Kingsgate Lodge No 4882, attend an informative evening at The Pilgrims Hospice and present a cheque to CEO Cate Russell. Click here for more information.
	Super Charity Marathon Walk	Minnis Bay Lodge are hosting a walk next January to raise funds for the Louie's Helping Hands charity to help them build a Special Needs School in Quex Park, Birchington. For further details click here .

Estuary View 14: August 2018

Geoffrey Dearing retired as PGM/Grand Superintendent of the Province of East Kent and was appointed President, Board of General Purposes at Grand Lodge. Richard Wingett was to be appointed as an Assistant Provincial Grand Master at the Winter Gardens on the 3rd October. The East Kent Chapter of The Widows Sons motorcycle group was up and running and looking for new members. The Widows Sons is an International Association that is open to all Freemasons who enjoy motorcycling and have a desire to ride with and associate with their fraternal brothers.



Provincial Magazine 69: Winter 2018/2019

On the cover, Neil Hamilton Johnstone recalled his Investiture as PGM that October and said we should all take pride in what we had achieved over the past year. Derek Warren gave his views on the Lodge of Instruction. Former PGM Michael Bailey celebrated fifty years in Freemasonry. The Provincial Membership Team got into its stride with the Membership Pathway, the item being headed "Recruit and Retain: Who's Listening?" Paddock Wood Masonic Hall hosted a WW1 Heritage Day.

Provincial Lite 1: Spring 2019

The Provincial Lite was a fully-fledged electronic magazine, replacing Estuary View. PGM Neil Hamilton Johnstone launched the Province's 2025 Festival at the Winter Gardens, Margate with a spectacular visual Blast Off. Seminars were organised giving Charity Stewards the low-down on what was being planned and how Freemasons could contribute. Temple's Ladies Night raised much-needed funds for Dover Lifeboat. We heard what the Cymbolick Penalties Provincial rock band had been up to.



Provincial Lite 2: Autumn 2019

PSA checks were offered by the Millennium Lodge of Charity and sponsored by the Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons' Charity. Gill Waltham, wife of former APGM Roger Waltham, walked the Great Wall of China – well, part of it! – to raise money for Demelza Hospice. John MacCabe had a nasty fall while cycling in Belgium to raise money for the fight against Prostate Cancer, but fortunately recovered. Campbell Wilson told us about Caravanning the Masonic Way. And Kingsgate Lodge donated £1,000 to the Thanet Disabled Riding Centre.



Provincial Magazine 70: Winter 2019/2020

David Graeme would be stepping down as an APGM, with Mark Costelloe taking his place. Manor of Gillingham Lodge celebrated its Centenary. APGM Mark Bassant and others attended a Tribute Event to songwriter Les Reed. Nineteen organisations benefitted to the tune of over £26,500 at the Provincial Grand Master's annual charity awards presentation. The PGM also revealed his eight records when acting as the Castaway for a Desert Island Discs show at Sir Edward Elgar Lodge. His book? Moby Dick. His luxury item? A hammock.

SPRING 2020 ISSUE



Photo: Val Ray

**Wishing you good health
in these difficult times**

Provincial Lite 3: Spring 2020

The Editorial acknowledged in what proved to be an understatement, "Times are tricky." We were all facing arguably the biggest threat to the human race since the Second World War.

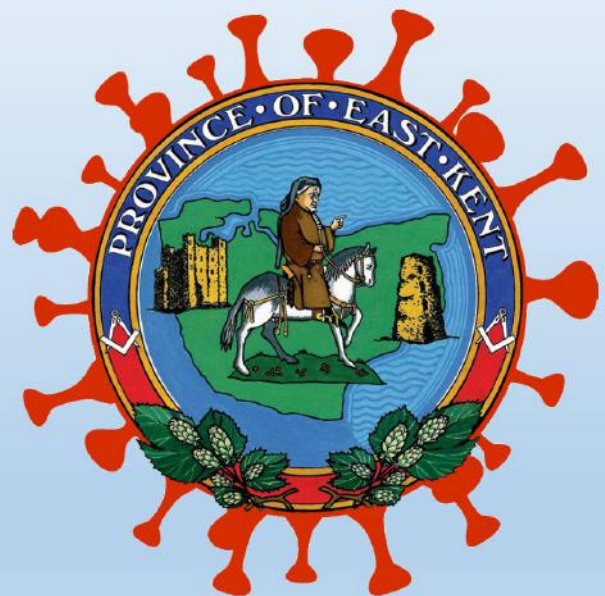
The PGM and his team were fully aware of the impact that COVID was having on us all as Masons and Companions. We were urged to take time to read their messages on the following pages.

In other news, Clive Hallett 'lost' his Barnet and raised £1,350 in the process. The MCF granted £700,000 to Freemasons, their families and to Charities in East Kent. Sandra Matthews recounted her career in Women's Freemasonry. Your Editor described the role of the Escorting Director of Ceremonies. And the effervescent David Graeme told us what it had been like to be an APGM.

Provincial Lite 4: Summer 2020

The East Kent Province's logo superimposed on the COVID logo was a symbolic wish and expectation that goodness would prevail and that we should eventually emerge from that dreadful disease. In his address the PGM gave us words of hope and encouragement. APGM David Graeme had his go at Desert Island Discs, interviewed via Zoom by Light Blues Brothers Chairman Howard Griffin. Your Editor supplied a two-pager on Masonic Etiquette. And Chris Sanford explained some of the big changes taking place at Chapter, with contributions by members of the Provincial Executive. EKP bought 3.6 tonnes for Food Banks in Kent. Provincial Director of Ceremonies Andy Stevens talked about his role. And we learnt the origins of some of our Lodges' more exotic names.

SUMMER 2020 ISSUE



Shining on through

Provincial Magazine 70: Winter 2020/2021

The issue included a free car sticker for the Just Ask One web address. The PGM reflected on the shock to the system that COVID was bringing. Provincial Grand Almoner Duncan Rouse stressed the importance of the Lodge and Chapter Almoner. Provincial Education Officer Graham Chisnell wrote about a Daily Advancement in Masonic Knowledge. East Kent Golfers celebrated a successful season. APGM Mark Bassant and Provincial Grand Charity Steward Peter Rhodes spoke about the good work that the Masonic Charitable Foundation was doing. And for aspiring contributors we included a Quick Guide on How to Write a News Story.



Provincial Lite 5: Spring 2021

We mourned the loss of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Steve Salisbury told us what the Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons' Charity had been up to – including subsidising PSA home testing kits. Septem Lodge showed off their electronic raffle ticket generator: fortunately, the prizes were real! APGM Mark Costelloe talked about Membership, Mentoring and Retention. And we featured upcoming Events connected with the 2025 Festival.

Provincial Lite 6: Summer 2021

Your Editor was pleased that we were getting back into the swing of things following the COVID pandemic, as we dusted off our Ritual Books. He wondered idly: who would be the first to say, "Worshipful Mother"? Andy Notley updated us on the Cymbolick Penalties, the Province's famous rock band. Eleven-year-old George Davis won the Great East Kent Boat Race. Graham Chisnell taught us the visual way to learn Ritual. Sir Ranulph Fiennes gave us an audience in the Province's first-ever Virtual Theatre.



Provincial Magazine 72: Winter 2021/2022

The PGM was pleased that Lodges and Chapters were starting to get back on track. The Light Blues Brothers did so literally, with a day out on the Buckmore Park Karting Circuit. The Spirit of Rugby Lodge donated free beer to twenty-seven Rugby Clubs in East Kent. Freemasons led by the Grand Master HRH the Duke of Kent signed the Armed Forces Covenant, demonstrating their support to members of the Armed Forces in a number of areas, including education, family wellbeing, getting a home, starting a new career, access to healthcare, financial assistance and discounted services.



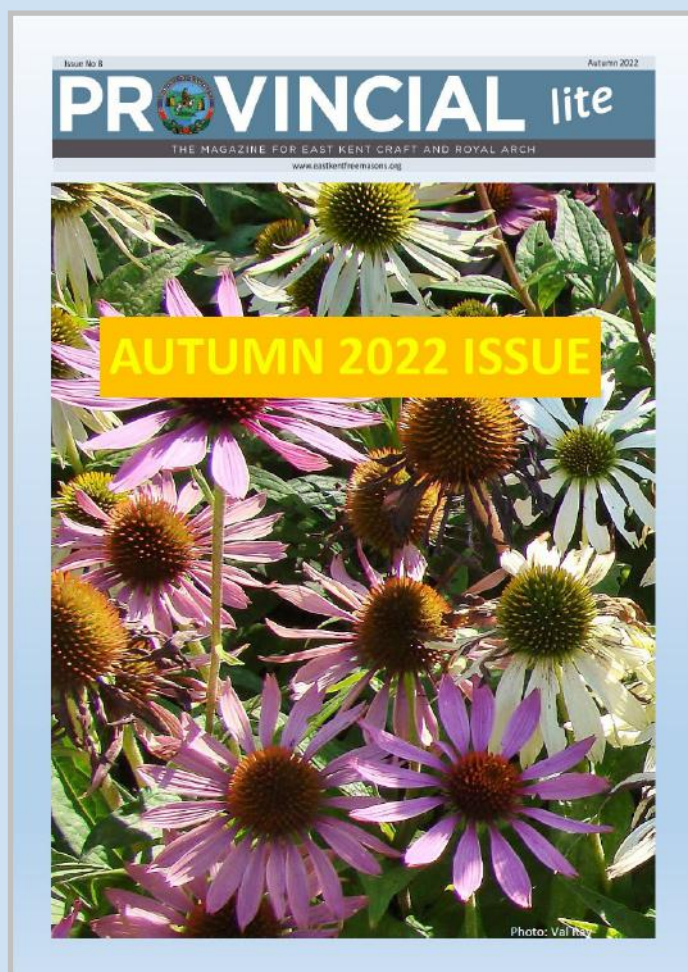


Provincial Lite 7: Spring 2022

Things were getting back to normal. Nine-year-old Oliver Twyman was baking and selling cakes to raise money for the 2025 Festival. The Clay Shooters were back with a bang (sorry – couldn't resist that!). Graham Chisnell introduced and explained the Members' Pathway. The Dark Blues had a lovely Spring day out at the Provincial Officers' Mess. Colin North got on his lawnmower to ride from Land's End to John o'Groats. And we published the winning entries in our Provincial Photographic Competition.

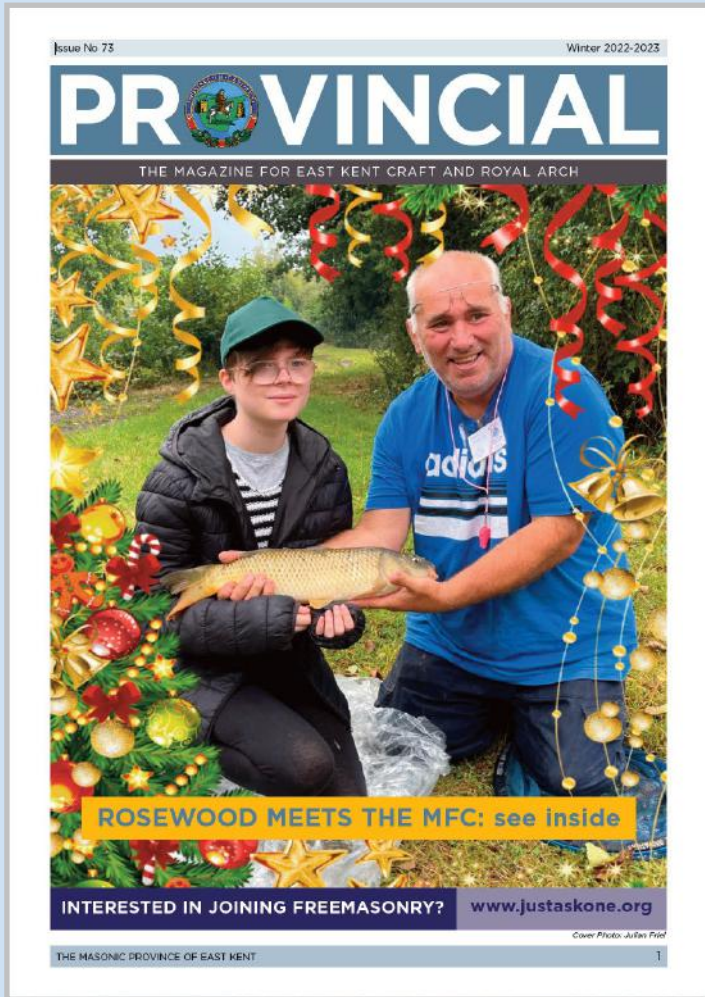
Provincial Lite 8: Autumn 2022

We learnt that Army Veteran Kemsley Whittlesea was a Man with a Mission: to help improve the lives of fellow Veterans and their families – including helping the Charity Walking With The Wounded. Group 8 helped to fund a new Pathology Lab at the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital. Phillip Playle scored a hole-in-one in the annual golfing contest for the Geoffrey Gordon Dearing Bowl. Richard Dixey updated us on the Masonic Fishing Charity's activities. And Septem Lodge paid another epic visit to meet their Belgian friends at Spinoza Lodge.



Provincial Magazine 73: Winter 2022/2023

The Masonic Fishing Club showed us the splendid work they were doing in bringing an interactive fishing and countryside experience to people with special needs. Chapter's Provincial DC Ian White initiated his eighteen-year-old son into Freemasonry. East Kent Light Blues Brothers retained the David Graeme Golf Trophy by a whisker. We learnt where the Lodge names Ardea and Essetesforde came from. Union Lodge showed the mutual benefits of throwing a Masonic Centre open to a Charity for a fund-raising Event. Tony and Anne Craig told us all about life running the United Masonic Club at Sheerness. And Barrie Silman recovered from serious leg damage to raise nearly £6,000 by running Marathons for Charity.



Provincial Lite 9: Spring 2023

Group 8 had been pressing ahead with their “Bums on Seats” campaign, in which a Masonic Centre lent its facilities for a Quiz Night or other entertainment to a Charity – and the Charity benefitted from the increased income that such Events attracted. Agricola celebrated its Centenary. We had a report on the Almoners’ Breakfast Meeting that March. Our PGM Neil Hamilton Johnstone had signed the Province up to the Armed Forces Covenant the previous November. The Royal Kent Lodge of Antiquity No.20 celebrated its Tercentenary. Four-year-old Grace won the hearts of Honor Oak Lodge members, who helped raise £2,500 for the Chatham Charity ‘Step and Learn’.



Provincial Lite 10: Autumn 2023

In a bumper 100-page issue, we learnt about the new Visiting Officers scheme, in which each Lodge and Chapter was to have its own VO who would be permanently assigned to it and would help and advise. Those comparative rarities the Daytime Lodges were featured. Steve Salisbury extolled the virtues of the Solomon information database. Provincial Secretary David Graeme advised us on “how to visit without getting into trouble”. Heather Gear thanked the MCF for paying for her knee surgery. We went angling again with the Masonic Fishing Charity. Malling Abbey Chapter hit seventy-five. And Martello Lodge won the splendidly titled ‘Duncan Rouse East Kent Masonic Bat and Trap Trophy’.



Provincial Magazine 74: Winter 2023/2024

Canterbury's Lord Mayor was fascinated by our Kent Museum of Freemasonry – and said she should have visited long before! We mourned the death of former PGM Michael Robin Bailey. The PGM revealed that his secret for keeping slim was to avoid the bread roll and cheese at the Festive Board. Norman Chapter celebrated its Centenary. Honor Oak helped out at the Maidstone shop of Making Miracles, a birth trauma and baby bereavement care Charity. We celebrated the Consecration of East Kent Combined Services Lodge No.10038. And James Kitney interviewed that lovely chap John Fry, our Provincial Grand Organist.

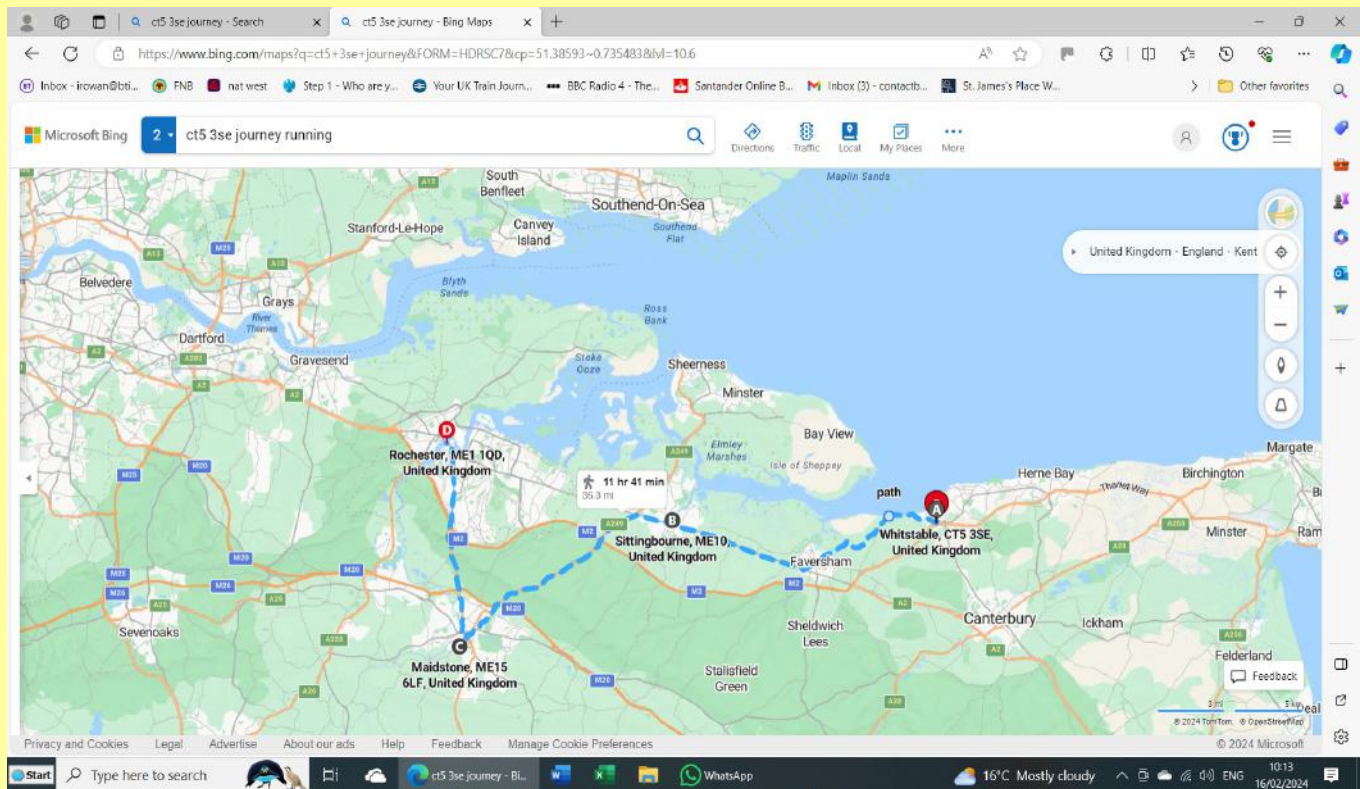


THREE JAYS RUN FOR THE FESTIVAL



“What inducement have you to leave the East and go to the West?”

Ian Rowan of Rochester Castle Lodge No.9260 writes:



Well maybe in search of some money for the East Kent Province’s 2025 Festival! The Province is hoping to raise £3.5 million for the Masonic Charitable Foundation, Freemasonry’s national charity. And three guys are determined to do their bit.

Jake and James Rowan and Joe Gibson, the three youngest officers of Rochester Castle Lodge, are planning to run from the Province’s headquarters in Whitstable to Rochester Castle.

The “Three Jays” will be taking on this challenge over three days in April.

They will set off bright and early on Thursday 25th for the first leg from Whitstable, running through the Kent countryside to Sittingbourne, a distance just under fifteen miles. “It’s the longest leg of the run and a significant effort to get the action started,” says Jake.

“It’s all going to be pretty tough, but hopefully the weather will be kind to us, and we can get the longest leg out the way on the first day with no issues. It won’t be very pleasant if those April showers turn up in force, but the people the MCF supports have to face their challenges every day, come rain or shine, so us three facing a little discomfort is trivial by comparison.”

Says Joe, "The three of us will help each other along the way, as we do with our Masonry. There is always someone who appreciates a bit of motivation and we are competitive and determined in our own way. If one of us is dropping off the pace or struggling a bit, he is likely to receive some form of verbal "encouragement". I'm confident of that, and we will make sure we all do well as a group. We are in this together and we will succeed as a team."

Of the three young Brothers two are familial brothers. Jake and James Rowan are both 'Lewises' following their father Ian into Rochester Castle Lodge and are now Junior and Senior Deacon respectively. Joe Gibson is a school friend of James and works with Jake. They have been friends for a long time.

Joe is looking forward to initiating his brother Billy into Rochester Castle Lodge this year and thinks being able to support Billy in his Masonic journey will be good for them both.

On Day Two the Three Jays will be running the twelve and a half miles from Sittingbourne Masonic Centre to Maidstone Masonic Centre at Tovil.

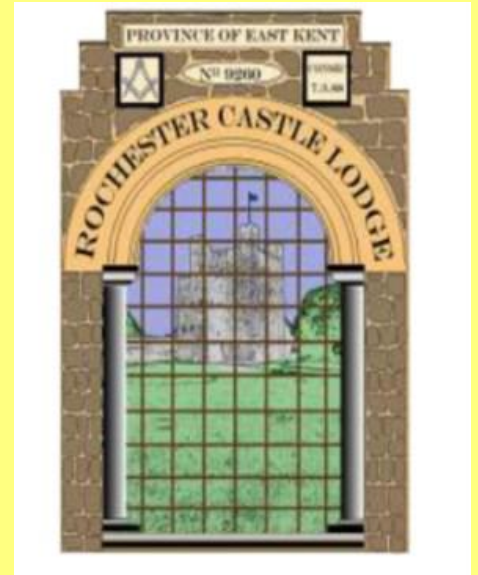
On Day Three they will be running the shortest but hardest leg, from Maidstone to Rochester. "Obviously we can't just run up the dual carriageway of Bluebell Hill," James pointed out. "We will be running up dirt trails and going through Boxley, but it is an even steeper incline and I expect we are going to be pretty fatigued by that stage and if there has been any rain it could be pretty treacherous underfoot."

James damaged his knee in a bad accident in the Peak District where he was treated at a local hospital before returning to Kent. The following day we were summoned to Pembury hospital '*as quickly as possible*' as they had seen something serious on the X-rays. On examining his knee, I remember the consultant telling me, "Well, I think we can save his leg" - and those few words really struck home, as they would with any parent. James was only twenty-one and had had an active life with Rugby and Martial Arts as hobbies. This was obviously not just a simple issue at all.

There followed several years of treatment and reconstructive surgery and after each operation a gruelling sequence of physio and exercises to undertake. For a long time, because of nerve damage James could not lift his foot up and needed a splint to walk. When he was going through his last set of treatment his consultant, who had been excellent throughout, joked with him that if he could walk to the pub he would buy him a pint and if he could ever run there he'd make it Champagne - so the achievement of even being able to take on this challenge is amazing and I am very proud of all three of them for wanting to attempt it.

For the three young officers of Rochester Castle Lodge the three-day run gives them the chance to prove something to themselves and to each other, as well as raising some much-needed funds for the 2025 Festival.

Rochester Castle Lodge would like to thank the Brethren of St Michael's Lodge No.1273 in Sittingbourne for their support and hospitality in opening the Lodge at the end of the first day to refresh the runners as they arrive. Thanks, Brethren: a great example of inter-Lodge support from our fellow East Kent Masons!



HOW TO SUPPORT THE THREE JAYS

If you would like to support the Three Jays, financially, athletically or as part of the welcoming group at Sittingbourne or Tovil, please contact Ian Rowan on irowan@btinternet.com.

To donate, please make a bank transfer to:

Rochester Castle Lodge
Sort Code 60-21-02
Account Number 48301833

Or simply click the QR Code:



What Could East Kent Freemasonry Offer You?

Ever wondered what Freemasonry is all about? To start your journey today visit:

www.justaskone.org





Masonic Province of East Kent



HOG ROAST

Our PGM RW Bro. Neil Hamilton Johnstone would like to invite you
all to the Provincial Hog Roast in aid of the 2025 Festival.

11th August 2024 at 13:00

Little Fowle Hall Oast, Lucks Lane
Paddock Wood, TN12 6PA



Tickets: £20.00 per person
(under 12's £5.00)



SPONSORED BY THE STANLEY WYKEHAM LODGE

- ∞ Major Quiz! Please bring a team along ∞ Games & Raffle ∞
- ∞ Cash Bar; including Beer, Wine, Soft Drinks ∞
- ∞ Hog will be professionally cooked & served on site with vegetarian options ∞

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN SEATS

Secure your tickets now!

Email: lumleys@fowlehall.freeuk.com

Please reserve me ____ tickets @ £20.00 each & ____ tickets @ £5.00 each.

I will require ____ vegetarian option(s).

☐ Please find enclosed my cheque to Provincial Events Committee.

☐ I have transferred money to: A/C 47771897 Sort Code 23-05-80 Account
Name: Provincial Events Committee. Please use your name/Hog as the
reference.

CHILDREN WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS TO BE GIVEN EXTRA HELP



A hundred children and young people aged 16-19 with mental health conditions will be given help to improve their health and wellbeing with support from *Involvement Kent*, thanks to a grant from Kent Freemasons.

The £41,492 grant will support *Involvement's* 'Links!' project, which will support young people to create friendships through fun activities. The activities will be designed with the young people and will be both online and in person.

Involvement's Youth Project Coordinator will meet each young person at home or in the community to increase their confidence, reduce anxiety and build an understanding of what they enjoy and what matters most to them.

The aim is that young people work together to develop the project and create connections through shared interests and experiences which will help them to develop their social skills and reduce isolation.

'Links!' will demonstrate that early intervention (often prior to a formal diagnosis) can improve a young person's outlook and transform their aspirations and their future. One in seven of all young people have a probable or diagnosed mental health condition. Increasingly *Involvement* is working with children and young people where the mental health condition is more severe, and where other factors exacerbate issues such as poverty or parental ill health.

‘Links!’ will provide personalised 1-2-1 support to 100 young people and their families:

intense 1:1 support (home visits, frequent contact, lots of support to attend a group;

longer term support – up to the full year);

lighter touch support i.e. newsletter, phone calls when needed, attends some activities but not all and doesn’t need much support to attend.

This is a strategic project that meets an immediate need for young people to improve their mental health.

It is also part of a broader change called ‘Transformation of community mental health services’.

Says Amelia Kury from *Involve Kent*, “This is a national agenda led by the NHS. Our intention is to test this approach, gather feedback, insight and evidence, and use it to influence transformation plans so that it becomes ‘business as usual’ for mental health services in future.

“We’re very grateful to Kent Freemasons for their generous grant. Our ‘Links!’ programme is designed to improve a young person’s outlook in terms of the way they relate to other people and can transform their future. Thanks to the Freemasons, we’ll be able to help 100 children and their families”.

Says Assistant Provincial Grand Master Mark Bassant, “I’m really pleased we’ve been able to help *Involve Kent* with their hugely important project to help young people with mental health conditions to overcome the loneliness that is so often part of their lives. Improving their social skills does a great deal to improve their quality of life in childhood as well as giving them what they need to make the most of their education and later in the workplace”.

ARE YOU READY FOR CHAPTER?

Chapter, or Royal Arch, is the logical next step once you have become a Master Mason. Sometimes it is referred to as “the fourth degree”. Some of the information you learn in the Third Degree is incomplete: let Chapter finish the story for you. And, once you have been exalted into the Royal Arch, you will find that other doors are open for you to progress further if you want.

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING “COME AND TRY IT DAY”

Roger Wilkes writes:



Clay shooting is a sport that enhances hand/eye coordination; the targets are small clay discs approximately 150mm in diameter. Depending on your level of experience, they will be travelling at speeds of up to eight miles an hour.

The Provincial Clay Shooting Team arrange a “Come and Try It Day” each year where Brethren, their families and friends can visit a clay shooting ground and try the sport for themselves. This year’s Event is on **Sunday 25th May**. The ground that we are using is “Hawley Clay Shooting Ground”, which is located at the top of Church Rd, Sutton at Hone, Dartford DA4 9EX.

The ground has dedicated ‘try it stands’. Those taking part will have the opportunity to try various guns from the usual 12 bore shotgun to the smaller 20 bore. There will be over and under shotguns as well as semi-automatics, so that all options can be experienced. Some targets will be coming towards the shooters and others flying away, offering an all-around variation. The day will be fairly light-hearted, but we’ll all be fully aware that guns are being used, so safety will be paramount. All safety equipment will be supplied: this includes eye and ear protection,. Our Chairman will give us all a safety briefing prior to the start of shooting. The site has full catering facilities as well as under-cover seating should the weather be inclement. We may also have the opportunity to view a clay shoot taking place on another area within the grounds.

The Provincial Clay Shooting Team has been in existence since 2008. It takes part in many Masonic charity clay shoots as well as organising others in the Province of East Kent where other Provinces visit to take part.

It holds an “Annual Clay Shooting Challenge” with up to eleven neighbouring Provinces visiting. Funds raised are given to East Kent charities

such as Demelza House, Peter’s Place, Abigail’s Footsteps, Wouldham Youth Club, Holding On Letting Go, Leybourne Disabled Riding School — and many more.



At these competitions there are categories for Non-Masons, Ladies and Juniors. Anyone who wishes to try clay shooting is most welcome to come along. All you need to do is contact the Secretary Roger Wilkes at eastkentclays@gmail.com or 07768 123449.

Further information about the Club and our programme of Events is available on the East Kent Freemasons’ website at:

eastkentfreemasons.org/east-kent-masonic-clay-shooting-club/

A WHIRLWIND TOUR AND AN UNEXPECTED JOY FOR SEPTEM'S GERMAN GUESTS

Kevin Kemp writes:



Members of Septem Lodge No.7788 had paid a visit to the annual Johannisfest Ceremony in Mainz in June 2023 as the guests of the Friedrich Zur Vaterlandsliebe Lodge Nr.5817, based in Koblenz. Twelve Brethren from 5817 paid a return visit to Septem in March this year, arriving on the 8th and departing on the 14th.

They had a busy schedule planned for their visit, including a drink at the White Horse Pub in Dover to see the signatures of all of the Channel Swimmers, a welcome food and drinks reception at Cullins Yard, where the Bitburger beer made them feel at home (it is their local brew in Koblenz), a visit to a Septem Lodge meeting, a traditional Sunday Lunch, a visit to the Canterbury Masonic Museum and Library, a trip to Grand Lodge and to a meeting at the Royal Military Lodge No.1449. Somehow, they also managed to squeeze in a visit to the Manston Spitfire and Hurricane Museum, a barbecue and a visit to Canterbury Cathedral!



The twelve German Brethren outside their own Lodge Building just before setting off for England.



Alex Walter (pictured), a blind member of 5817, had a particularly memorable visit to the Kent Museum and Library. One of the members on duty that day was Ron Carter. We asked about a Past Masters Jewel that we had been told about that had braille inscribed on it. Ron kindly fetched it and let Alex touch the Jewel: Alex was able to tell us that it had belonged to Stella Maris Lodge No.7279. At the same time Ron asked Alex if he had ever been able to read a Ritual Book in braille. Alex replied that he had never been able to read a Ritual Book, as nothing suitable had ever existed in Germany. He had initially

learned by repeating all his Ritual as it was spoken to him by another Brother. Imagine Alex's delight as Ron then brought out the Ritual Book in braille and sat Alex down in front of it. The look of pure joy on Alex's face as he was able to read Ritual for the first time was absolutely priceless and brought a lump to the throat of everyone present.

There are so many people who helped to put this trip together. My heartfelt thanks go to Mike Gee, Graham Skelton and all of his Staff at the Canterbury Centre, John Miller, the Brethren of the Royal Military Lodge, all the members of the Septem Lodge and of course their families, but most of all to my other two partners who attended just about everything that went on – Alex Coppin and James Wright. I could not have pulled this Event off without each and everyone of you, you are all a delight to work with and socialise with, and long may it continue. Here's to our next foreign adventures: Vienna, Croatia, Belgium, Germany and maybe even to the sunny climes of Scotland!

ALMONERS REVIEW THEIR YEAR – AND LOOK AHEAD

Nigel Fitz, Provincial Grand Almoner, writes:

The Annual Almoners' Meeting took place on a lovely sunny Saturday morning at the Tovil Masonic Centre on the 9th March. Over ninety Brethren and Companions started their day with a hearty breakfast before turning to the business of the morning.

I opened the meeting and introduced members of the Provincial Executive and our guest speakers. Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone welcomed those attending and stressed how crucial the role of Almoner was in both Lodges and Chapters in continuing to look after the care and welfare of their members.

I gave an update on several Almoner-related matters. Two new Visiting Volunteers had been appointed. Mark Poddington was taking over as Group 5 Coordinator and Neville Morris would be taking on the floating position covering for absences and holidays. I was most grateful to both Mick Bremerkamp and John Fry who had served us so well and who had recently stepped down after many years as VVs.

The next edition of the Better Lives Magazine produced by the Masonic Charitable Foundation was to be sent directly to Almoners later in the Spring. The magazine contained news from across the Provinces. I encouraged members to register for their own copy and for a free Lapel Pin. The MCF website and Facebook site would show everyone how the MCF continued to support local communities.

The 2022/23 MCF Impact Report showed that East Kent had received over £490,000 in support to those in need, 60% of this being to cover Daily Living Costs. This trend was likely to continue over the next couple of years. Our support for vulnerable individuals and families was crucial. Already in the first two months of the year East Kent had received over £146,000 in these categories compared to £80,000 in the same period last year - an increase of over 80%.

The role of an Almoner was changing with the introduction of both the Members Pathway and Archway: he was now becoming a key leadership figure in our Lodges and Chapters and was being encouraged to play an active role in addressing our membership challenge. He probably knew the Brethren better than anyone else and was best placed in ensuring we kept Brethren engaged and working for a successful Lodge or Chapter.

Almoners were being strongly advised to give their Lodge Reports in a Three Tier format. The first part of this report was to publicise the work of the MCF to raise awareness of what it could do for our Masonic community. Lodge Almoners were contacted where they were not adopting this reporting approach and asked why this format was not being used. Often the reason given was that the Secretary or Director of Ceremonies had asked them to keep their report brief. Almoners should be challenging this, because it was important to keep the MCF at the forefront of our minds.

Eddie Halpin showed how the MCF was supporting our Province. He gave an emotional presentation highlighting how the MCF over a period of several years had provided fantastic support to Daisy, a young seven-year-old girl with a condition that affected her nervous system together with issues affecting her brain. She also suffered from epilepsy. It was a moving experience for Daisy's Mum and Dad and her grandfather Barry Wiles who were our guests for the morning.



Tony Wooderson (pictured), Suffolk Province's lead on Mental Well Being, gave a presentation on the initiatives being taken in his Province. Deputy Grand Superintendent John Baker followed this with an outline of some of the real challenges we were all facing today: changes to Society in general, our Masonry in particular and the changes we were experiencing in the current economic climate.

The meeting was most positive and concluded with a Q&A session which included excellent feedback for the Almoner Team including a request to improve communications from Province via the Group Coordinators to Lodge and Chapter members.



EMERGENCY SERVICES LODGE NO: 9676.

are holding a lodge meeting on

St George's Day

Tuesday 23rd April 2024

WITH A WHITE TABLE

STARTING AT 6PM

AT

BIRCHINGTON MASONIC CENTRE.

THERE WILL BE A TALK BY THE EMINENT MASONIC LECTURER

DR JOHN REUTHER FREEMASONRY AND WATERLOO.

AN ENGLISH DINNER OF:

POTTED SHRIMP

ROAST BEEF AND YORKSHIRE PUDDING ETC.

APPLE PIE AND CUSTARD

ENGLISH CHEESE BOARD

TEA / COFFEE

SINGING, FLAG WAVING, RED ROSE WEARING AND A RAFFLE WITH VERY ENGLISH PRIZES.

£25 PER HEAD

Booking **only** with **Martin Sims** on nandadsimo@gmail.com or **01843 600771**.

Please note, **there will be no variations, substitutions or alterations to dinner!** Sorry!

THE MAGIC BANK ACCOUNT: WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH IT?

Chris Methereil of Malling Centenary Lodge No.8068 writes:

Imagine that you had won a fabulous prize in a competition at your own Bank. Each morning your Bank Account would receive a deposit of £86,400 for you to use. However, the prize has rules:

Any part of the £86,400 that you don't spend during each day will be taken away from you.

You may not transfer money into some other Account.

You may only spend it, not save it.

Each morning, when you wake up, your Bank Account will receive another £86,400.

The Bank can end the game at any time – maybe without warning – by saying, “*Game Over*”. It will close the Account and you will not receive a new one.

What would you do?

You would buy anything and everything you wanted, wouldn't you? Not only for yourself, but for all the people you love and care for – even for people you don't know: because you couldn't possibly spend it all on yourself, could you?

You would try to spend every penny, because you knew it would be replenished the next morning.

Actually, this Game **is real and already exists**. Each of us is already a winner of this prize. We just can't see it.

The prize is not money but TIME.

Each morning, we wake up to receive 86,400 seconds as a gift of life.

When we go to sleep at night, any remaining time is **NOT** credited to us for use the following day.

What we haven't used up that day is forever lost.

Yesterday is forever gone.

Each morning the account is refilled, but the 'Bank' could dissolve your 'Account' at any time without any warning.

So, what will you do with your 86,400 seconds? They are worth so much more than the same amount in £'s.

Think about it: and remember to enjoy every second of your life, because time races by so much more quickly than you might imagine.

Take care of yourself, be happy, love deeply and enjoy life.

Here's wishing you a wonderful and beautiful day. Start 'spending'!

FOLKESTONE'S MASONIC CENTRE OPENS ITS DOORS

Tony Hill of Temple Lodge No.558 writes:

On Saturday 23rd March the Folkestone Masonic Hall threw open its doors to host a talk on 'Freemasonry in Folkestone' for the New Folkestone Society.



Photo: M. Hourahane

In my illustrated talk I tracked the development of the town and the growth of Freemasonry within it, dispelling some of the myths from times past. We had a full house of some sixty interested people including a Lady Mason. After the talk, we gave them a "tour" of the Lodge Room.

At the interval the Hall's management committee provided tea and coffee and NFS members provided cakes. There were many questions raised and answers given.

My thanks to Ray Cooper of Temple Lodge and Rocky Ramharak of Setech Lodge No.8185 for their help. We all had an interesting afternoon, and our guests from the NFS hopefully went away much better informed about Freemasonry!

FROM THE PROVINCIAL GRAND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Paul Gear, my “boss” in the Communications Team, has very kindly insisted that I include this at the end of the magazine:

“Dear John

“As you prepare to embark on your new journey, I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for the exceptional dedication and professionalism you’ve shown during your tenure with the Communications Team.

“Your hard work and commitment have been instrumental in our team’s success, and your contributions have left a lasting impact. Your ability to navigate complex challenges with grace and efficiency has not only inspired your colleagues but has also driven our projects to new heights.

“The Provincial Magazine has been a real highlight during the year for us all to read, and a credit to your expertise and hard work, single handedly producing and editing such a well-read production isn’t easy, and will be a hard act to follow. With the introduction of the “Digital” Magazine, you embraced the ethos of our new venture and took hold of the helm and once again we have been presented with a work of art.

“We are all going to miss your presence on the team as Editor, your insightful perspectives, and your unwavering support. As you move forward, please know that you leave behind a legacy of achievement and a team that is better for having worked with you.

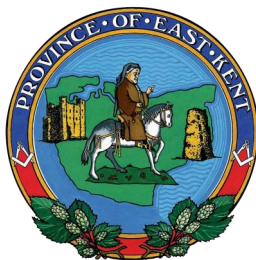
“I am sure that from the Past Heads of Comms, to the newest member of the team, we all wish you well in your ‘retirement’, and thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all the hard work.

“Thank you, John, for everything.

Paul and Team

WBro Paul Gear ProvGCO
Provincial Grand Communications Officer
Province of East Kent”

THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



The East Kent Province's Communications Team, reporting to Assistant Provincial Grand Master Trevor Carter, is here to help keep you informed about activities and events in the Province and to facilitate effective communication between Lodges, Chapters and the general public.

Provincial Communications Officer: Paul Gear

Contact the Team at news@ekprovince.co.uk

or us individually at:

Website and Mailing Services	Paul Gear	website@ekprovince.co.uk
Press and Media Manager	Phil Heath	media@eastkentfreemasons.org
Social Media Manager	Matt Jury	mattjury@msn.com
Provincial and Editorial Manager	John Ray	editor@theprovincial.org
Photographics Manager	Peter Floyd	pjfloyd4501@gmail.com
Communications Officer for Royal Arch	Chris Sanford	thesanfords@screaming.net

And finally, Brethren and Companions: a reminder that the members-only portal "Your Province" – a.k.a. YP2 – is the principal source of information for all Craft and Royal Arch Freemasons in East Kent. This secure website is full of interesting material that will support all Master Masons and Companions irrespective of experience or rank. To register, please visit the Provincial Website at www.eastkentfreemasons.org and click on:

MEMBERS AREA

THE MASONIC PROVINCE OF EAST KENT

The Provincial is produced and published by the Province of East Kent, 11 Estuary View Business Park, Boorman Way, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3SE
Telephone 01227 272804 Email - office@eastkentfreemasons.org www.eastkentfreemasons.org