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SPRING 2023 ISSUE

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EDITORIAL

With Easter now past, we can begin to take stock of the Masonic season, look forward to the summer and, for many of us, take a break from regular Lodge and Chapter meetings.

It has been a mixed season, hasn't it? We have sadly lost some Lodges – as you will read in the magazine – but we are fighting back with the revised Members' Pathway and its emphasis on recruitment and retention. And there'll be a brand new Lodge in October!

Group 8 have been pressing ahead with their "Bums on Seats" campaign, in which a Masonic Centre lends its facilities for a Quiz Night or other entertainment to a Charity – and the Charity benefits from the increased income that such Events attract. Several Centres have run Open Days too – another fertile source of new recruits to our fraternity.

As our Assistant Provincial Grand Master Mark Costelloe would tell you, it's no good recruiting new members if you don't look after them – and that goes for existing members too. If you haven't seen someone for a few weeks, give them a call and let them know that you care. It can make all the difference.

APGM Mark Bassant and his 2025 Festival team will be working hard throughout the summer helping us in any way they can with our fundraising Events. Mark will also be urging us, I'm sure, to set up Regular Payment Promises, one of the best and simplest ways in which to support the Festival. And, if you like a bit of bling – who doesn't? – you can earn yourself a Festival Jewel when you contribute a certain amount. Details on the website.

One of the pleasures of editing this magazine is reading the reports from all over the Province of the many different things we are all getting up to. We do have fun! Whether your taste is gourmet French cuisine or addressing the haggis, you'll find it here. And anyone fancy a bit of fishing?



John Ray

Email: editor@theprovincial.org

AGRICOLA DOES THE TON

Peter Floyd writes:

On Friday 27th January 2023 Agricola Lodge No.4501 celebrated its Centenary: one hundred years of continuous meeting.

Shortly after World War I, James Hillier, a Past Master of Belvidere Lodge No.503 and Secretary of the Kent branch of the National Farmers' Union, conceived the idea of forming a new Lodge consisting mainly of farmers and others interested in agriculture.

The Lodge was consecrated at the Corn Exchange, Maidstone, on Friday 26th January 1923 by the Provincial Grand Master of Kent, Col. Fiennes Stanley Wykeham, afterwards Baron Cornwallis.



Members of the Provincial Executive with Lodge Master David Kershaw in centre

A relative of the Baron, Fiennes Neil Wykeham Cornwallis, became a joining member of the Lodge in 1964 and remained a subscribing member until he was made Assistant Grand Master in 1971, after which he was elected an Honorary Member of the Lodge.

Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone and his Deputy Phil South attended the Centenary meeting at Tovil along with Assistant Provincial Grand Masters and a number of the Provincial Executive of East Kent.

The PGM congratulated the Lodge on its Centenary. The current Master, David Kershaw, gave a résumé of the Lodge's history, after which the Centenary Warrant was presented to the Lodge.



Agricola Members [L:R]: Keith Corder, David Penman, Mark Kirby, Mark Lillis, Neil Marshall, Chris Churchouse, Bob Burns, Michael Keohan, WM David Kershaw, Jay Gregory, Ian Packer, Peter Jacobs, Jonathon Hearn, Eden McKenzie, Malcom Graham, JimDeSave and Jeff Garnett



David Kershaw then presented a cheque for the appropriate sum of £4,501 on behalf of the Lodge to the PGM as a Charitable Donation.

The Provincial Grand Master also spoke to and congratulated the newest member of the Lodge, Mark Lillis.

ANDERSON'S CONSTITUTIONS OF 1723: OUR EARLIEST RULE BOOK?

From Richard Wingett:

In 1723, just six years after the formation of the first Grand Lodge of England, scientific publisher Senex and Hooke published *The Constitutions of the Free Masons*.

Compiled by the Revd. James Anderson, the book consisted of a legendary history of Freemasonry, ancient charges, the rules of the new Grand Lodge and some songs. The book was illustrated with an elaborate frontispiece, as below:



Engraved by John Pine in Aldersgate Street London

Four new editions, following the same format, were published between 1738 and 1784.

On the 31st January 2023, the United Grand Lodge of England celebrated the tercentenary of the original 1723 version of Anderson's Book of Constitutions.

In our Museum and Library at Canterbury, we too have a 1723 Anderson's Book of Constitutions, together with others throughout the subsequent years.

Some of the language may seem a bit flowery and a little too direct for modern taste, but the basic messages contained in the Book have changed little over the centuries. See what you make of these extracts:

2. BEHAVIOR after the LODGE is over and the BRETHREN not GONE.

You may enjoy yourself with innocent Mirth, treating one another according to Ability, but avoiding all Excess, or forcing any Brother to eat or drink beyond his Inclination, or hindering him from going when his Occasions call him, or doing or saying anything offensive, or that may forbid an easy and free Conversation, for that would blast our Harmony, and defeat our laudable Purposes. Therefore no private Piques or Quarrels must be brought within the Door of the Lodge, far less any Quarrels about Religion, or Nations, or State Policy, we being only, as Masons, of the Universal Religion above mention'd, we are also of all Nations, Tongues, Kindreds, and Languages, and are resolv'd against all Politics, as what never yet conduct'd to the Welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will.

5. BEHAVIOR at HOME, and in Your NEIGHBORHOOD.

You are to act as becomes a moral and wise Man; particularly not to let your Family, Friends and Neighbors know the Concern of the Lodge, &c., but wisely to consult your own Honour, and that of the ancient Brotherhood, for reasons not to be mention'd here. You must also consult your Health, by not continuing together too late, or too long from Home, after Lodge Hours are past; and by avoiding of Gluttony or Drunkenness, that your Families be not neglected or injured, nor you disabled from working.

<https://freemasoninformation.com/masonic-education/books/andersons-constitutions-of-1723/>

Do pay us a visit at the Museum and Library in Canterbury. You will be amazed at what other treasures we have there!

<https://kentmuseumoffreemasonry.org.uk/>

ALMONERS' BREAKFAST MEETING: AN OBSERVER'S REPORT

It takes a special kind of person to be an Almoner. You need patience, empathy, understanding and a generous dollop of love for your fellow creatures. You also need time to get out there and offer practical advice and help to your fellow Masons and Companions. In many ways, the Almoner's is one of the most important roles in Freemasonry.

Which is why it was an especial privilege for me to be one of the ninety-five people attending the Annual Almoners' Meeting for East Kent Province at the Maidstone Masonic Centre on the 11th March 2023.

I was intrigued to see some brethren such as Richard Dixey (pictured, right) wearing identity badges with "MCF" and "Visiting Volunteer" on them. "What could it mean?" I wondered. No doubt all would be explained.



Danielle Day and PGM Neil Hamilton Johnstone

After a scrumptious full-English breakfast, the morning began with a brief introduction from Nigel Fitz, Provincial Grand Almoner. Nigel welcomed the day's Guests including Danielle Day from the MCF's Advice and Support Team, pictured (left) with Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone.

First up, as you would expect, was our PGM himself. He stressed that Almoners were an integral part of the Membership Pathway, especially in the area of Retention. "You may think your role is important," he said, "but I think you are **critical** for our future."

Having congratulated Nigel Fitz and John Ray on their forthcoming appointment to Grand Rank, Neil handed over to Nigel to chair the session.

Nigel reminded us of the Group Structure we had in place in the Province: eight Groups with a Chairman and, most importantly, Group Coordinating Almoners for Craft and Chapter. He stressed how important these chaps were and that they should be the Almoner's

first port of call for any guidance and support he might need. He urged us to know who our Coordinators were and how to contact them as they had the experience and knowledge to help us. They were also our hard-working Visiting Volunteers (*aha - that term again!*) who liaised closely with the MCF and made visits across the Province to provide assistance to those seeking help – but we would hear more on their work later that morning. An alternative approach if Almoners needed assistance was to contact the MCF directly through their Enquiry Number 0800 035 60 90 – or in emergency they could contact Nigel himself.

Nigel reminded Almoners that they were entitled to receive the magazine “Better Lives”, published by the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF). In 2022 the MCF had granted more than £486,000 to help support people in East Kent. If Lodges or Chapters had funds earmarked for the MCF sitting in their bank accounts, would they please send them to the MCF now, so that the benefits could be realised more quickly.

Nigel also drew attention to the PSA testing session (to check for Prostate Cancer) being sponsored by the Provincial Almoners’ Fund and the Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons’ Charity (CEKFC) on the 13th May at the Maidstone Masonic Centre. Bookings could be made online at <https://www.mypsatests.org.uk> He hoped as many people as possible

would attend, as lives had been saved following testing in previous years.



Peter Rodd (pictured), a retired Solicitor, former Assistant Provincial Grand Master and now Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the CEKFC, then hopped up to the microphone, not showing the slightest sign of jetlag following his recent return to the UK – and addressed us all on the challenging subject of “Somebody stole my house”. It turned out that the victim, who lived in Wales, had had his identity stolen and a house he owned in England had been “sold” to an unsuspecting buyer, the fraudster pocketing

the money. Apparently, this was not a unique situation, but it should prompt everyone to be cautious (*good Masonic word!*) and always to be on the lookout for scams. Anyone who felt that a property could be at risk from fraud, whether it was their own property or not, could register it with the Land Registry’s free Property Alert Service.

Peter explained the dangers of “spoofing” – a technique through which cybercriminals disguised themselves as a known or trusted source and made use of emails, phone calls and other means to deceive their victims into parting with their money. Humans had a natural inbuilt desire to trust one another and were particularly vulnerable in times of risk and uncertainty. The charity Age Concern had lots of useful information on its website www.ageuk.org.uk/barnet/our-services/latest-scams/ and there was a handy quiz at <https://quiz.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk>

Moving on to passwords, Peter reminded us that strong ones could make the fraudsters’ tasks much harder. Words strung together were a formidable defence: for example, the password **Freemasonryisfree** (*laughter*) would take a computer 471 billion years to crack!

Finally, Peter urged us all to make a Will and, equally importantly, to make a Lasting Power of Attorney, to enable someone we trusted to take over our affairs quickly should the need arise.



The next act – yes, the morning was turning out to be as entertaining as it was informative – was the Kemp and Halpin Show. Kevin Kemp (pictured left, and who insisted that he was prettier than Eddie, pictured right) explained that he was Group 7 Almoners Coordinator and Visiting Volunteer, and that his less attractive colleague Eddie Halpin was ditto for Group 3. They were going to tell us what a Visiting Volunteer really did.

The MCF’s Advice and Support Teams made visits to those in need of help throughout the country: the Province’s Visiting Volunteers helped them.

Kevin told us that as many as one in thirty-five Masons in East Kent was currently being supported in some way by the MCF.

Eddie told us that, while visiting Lodges as the PGM’s representative, he had found that not many people knew what Visiting Volunteers did. Once someone had approached the MCF, a VV would visit the applicant and determine the nature of the problem and what needed doing to solve it. This entailed asking the applicant for all kinds of financial and other personal details, all in the strictest confidence, of course – and sometimes extended into areas that the applicants themselves

hadn't mentioned or realised. An average case could take up to five hours of the VV's time: the visit itself, completing the application form, and travelling, sometimes outside the VV's own area. He would then re-visit the applicant about a year after the grant had been awarded, to see whether everything was okay and to give any additional help if required.

Our dynamic duo then finished by showing us a lovely letter they had received from a grateful beneficiary:

The MCF had already paid some £2.5 million back to the Province since the start of the Festival, but we had only had to raise £3.5 million for its five-year period. Typically, there would be a gap of six years between Festivals. By anyone's reckoning, we were getting good value for our money!

Dear All

I am writing this letter to convey my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for your grant, and for the mobility scooter and riser/recliner chair. I will be forever in your debt. I really appreciate the kindness that has been shown to me.

I am now able to continue my life (shopping, doctor's, chemist's and hospital appointments) in a cost-effective manner. Being able to leave the building for nothing more than just fresh air and a different scenery is priceless.

Thank you again for your support!



Nigel Fitz (pictured, left) then chaired a short Question and Answer session, and Provincial Communications Officer Paul Gear (pictured, right) spent a couple of minutes telling us how important it was for Lodge and Chapter Almoners to tell the Communications Team of their activities and successes so that their good work could become better known, both within the

fraternity and in the world at large.

The sun was shining brightly as Nigel wrapped up the morning. I could tell by the buzz of conversation that everyone had enjoyed themselves. My breakfast neighbour Brian Giles, Almoner of the Gillingham Lodge of Benevolence No.184, summed the mood up perfectly: "Everyone needs someone". And the Lodge and Chapter Almoner is often the "excellent Mason" called upon to fulfil that need. I am in awe of these guys. I really am.

John R.

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

The Armed Forces Covenant is not a charitable organisation. It is a promise from the nation to those who serve or who have served, and their families, which says we will do all we can to ensure they are treated fairly and are not disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives. The Armed Forces Covenant relies on the people, communities and businesses of the UK to actively support it in order to make a difference.

Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone signed the Province up to the Covenant in a special ceremony last November. He is pictured here with countersignatory Lieutenant Colonel David Hirst.



As part of this exercise the Province is researching in what ways it, as an organisation, can help its armed services veterans. To start with, it proposes to set up a series of coffee mornings to bring all veterans together, not only to capture their thoughts and ideas but also to introduce them to fellow brothers with similar backgrounds.



The Masonic Province of East Kent

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans, and military families contribute to our community's and our country.

Province of East Kent
Signed:

Name: *Neil Hirst*
Position: *Provincial Grand Master*
Date: *29th November 2022.*



The Ministry of Defence
Signed:

Name: *D.J. HIRST*
Position: *SO1 Training HQ RSME Gp.*
Date: *29th November 2022.*



Ministry
of Defence

To help set these meetings up, the Province needs to identify its ex-forces brethren. Therefore, if you are or were in the Armed Forces, please complete this very short survey: <https://forms.gle/HfPHPorftQM7fYK16> The questions are brief and only ask for your name, email and Regiment or Branch of the Armed Forces.



SUICIDE AWARENESS TRAINING

Kemsley Whittlesea (pictured) is one of those leading the new Armed Forces Covenant project for East Kent. He can be contacted at AFC@EKPROVINCE.CO.UK

Kemsley is currently working on a campaign with **Help for Heroes** for tattooists to take free **veterans suicide awareness training**. Tattooists spend a good deal of time with individual veterans, who will often open up about the problems in their lives, so it only makes sense, he says, that they should have the knowledge on how to spot if someone is in crisis and on how to help.

Now that the Province has signed the Armed Forces Covenant, this seems to Kemsley to be the perfect way to start showing its support for the Armed Forces community.

Twenty-six members of Chillington Manor Lodge No.4649 recently led the way by taking the free training. Kemsley believes strongly that other Lodges, Chapters and Provinces should follow their example.



Says Kemsley, “I have lost fifteen friends to suicide, six in 2022 alone, and a further two family friends early this year. This is a conversation we **need to start having**.

“I have been overwhelmed with the comments and conversations just from our members who in some way or another have been affected by someone taking their own life.

“The training can be taken by anyone. It is FREE at [Suicide Awareness Training](#). The course takes approximately thirty minutes. It does not just cover the military: the examples used in the training can be used for anyone from any walk of life. At the end of the training, you can print off a Certificate – as the members of Chillington Manor Lodge have done. I strongly urge the rest of the Province to show their support for the Armed Forces Covenant and take the training.

“Let’s see photos of Lodges with their certificates and see who can have the most members complete the training.

“Help for Heroes are already writing up a story about us so it would be brilliant to get more photos sent off for them to use. helpforheroes.org.uk

“And please remember, **suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.**”



Armed Forces Covenant

Proudly supporting those who serve

Here are some other contact details you may find useful:



If you’re currently serving or have served in the UK Armed Forces, you can call the 24-hour mental health helpline. If you’re a family member or carer worried about the mental health of a loved one, or need to talk to someone yourself, you can call the helpline too. Also via: [Contact Us](#) | [Combat Stress](#)



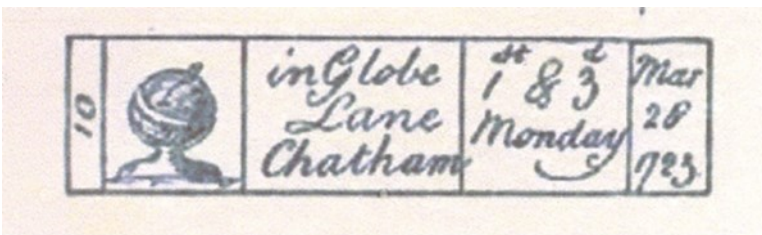
If you need support for yourself or anyone, including suicide prevention, please call [0800 138 1619](tel:08001381619) or via [this link: Samaritans](#) | [Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy](#) | [Here to listen](#)

LODGE 20 CELEBRATES ITS TERCENTENARY

The Royal Kent Lodge of Antiquity No.20 holds the unique position of being the senior Lodge under the United Grand Lodge of all Districts and Provinces throughout the world (apart from the metropolitan area). It is the tenth by date of Constitution, and only five Lodges exceed it by one year.

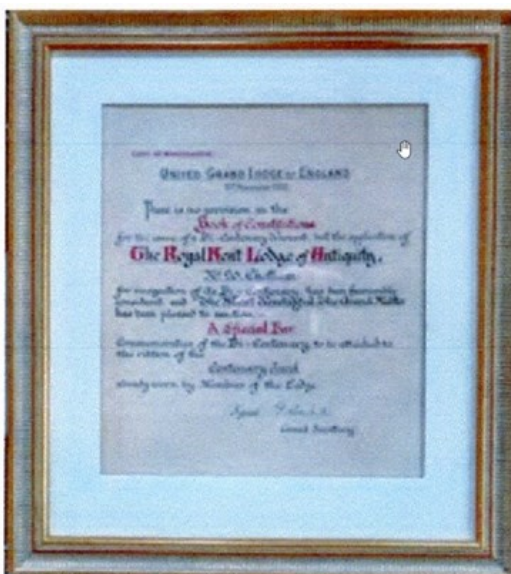
In 1717 Freemasonry as we know it today was formed by an amalgamation of Guilds Bands which had existed from time immemorial. In 1723 the Lodge was constituted at the Anchor Inn, Dutchy Lane, off the Strand in London. Joseph Maisters was the first Master. There were fourteen members in all.

Prior to 1728 Lodges were not numbered: in that year the Lodge became No.12. In its long life it has had many homes, both in London and Chatham. In 1755 it was renumbered to No.10, and in 1787 a Warrant of Confirmation was granted.



A Warrant for a Royal Arch Chapter in connection with the Lodge was granted in 1783, but the Chapter now works under a new Warrant dated 1845.

In 1813 the two existing fraternities, the “Antients” and the “Moderns” were amalgamated into the United Grand Lodge of England. This entailed a complete renumbering of the Lodges, the Royal Kent Lodge of Antiquity being allocated the number 20, by which it is known today.



As you might expect, the Lodge has had a chequered history. In 1820 a disastrous fire occurred known as the “Great Fire of Chatham”. The Sun Tavern, where the Lodge met at that time, was among the many buildings completely destroyed. Practically all the Lodge’s books, records and papers up to that date were lost, together with all the valuable furniture.

The Lodge was not granted a Centenary Charter until 1873, whereupon members were able to wear a Centenary Jewel.

The Lodge moved to its present home at the Masonic Hall, Manor Road, Chatham in 1905.

Over the years many other Lodges were formed in the Chatham area. Some later moved away, but the Gillingham Lodge of Benevolence No.184, for example, lives on. So does the Manor of Chatham Lodge No.4688, which was formed in 1924 on the initiative of Lodge 20, with all the original Officers coming from the Mother Lodge.

The 300th Anniversary Meeting was held at Manor Road on the 22nd March this year, with Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone and several senior members of the Province in attendance. David Haddell was installed as the 301st Master, thirty-four years after his first installation. Pictured are David, senior members of the Province and members of the Lodge.



A prominent Freemason once remarked, "Lodge 20 is an ancient Lodge, but unlike some of the old Lodges it has not become decadent. It has always maintained and cherished its unique position of being the Premier Lodge, outside London, of all Provinces and Districts. This is its lawful heritage, and, combined with its unblemished record, confers upon the Lodge a sense of responsibility and an ever-present duty to uphold and keep its high and honourable place in the Masonic World".

A TASTE OF CHAPTER 'IN THE BEGINNING'

Chris Sanford writes:

Russell Race, the 2nd Grand Principal, together with Geoffrey Dearing, John Baker and some of the Provincial Chapter Executive were given the opportunity to see the new playlet, "In the Beginning" performed by the Provincial Demonstration Team at Pentangle Chapter No.1174 on the 10th March.

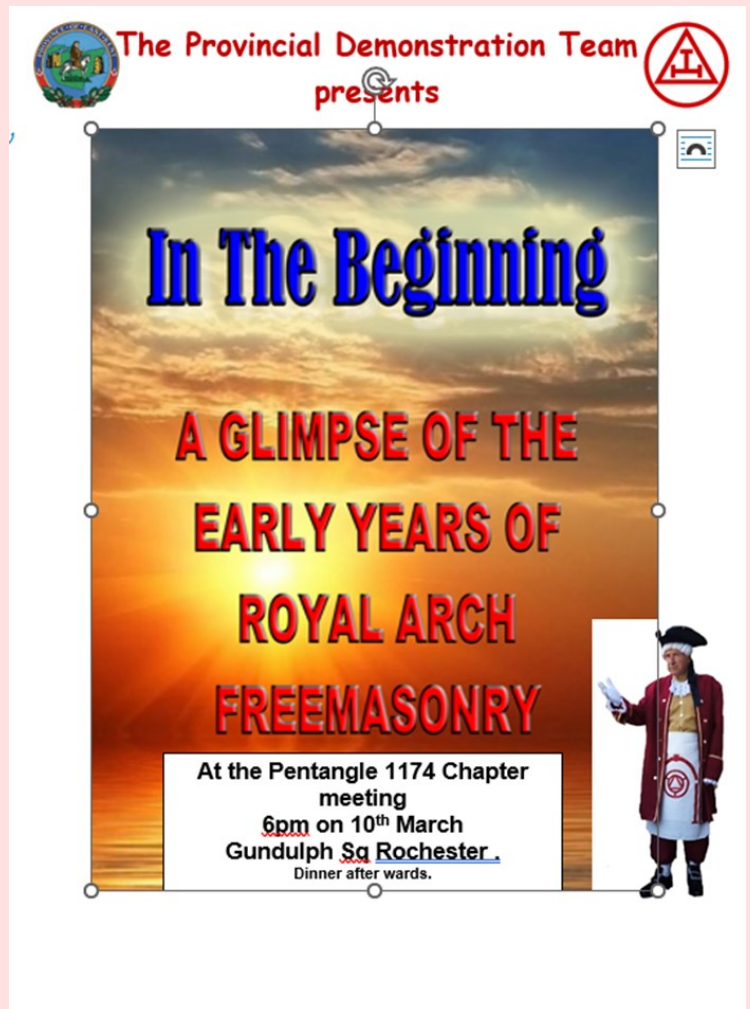
Before the demonstration, the Deputy Grand Superintendent presented a Grand Certificate to Pentangle's newest member, Jeffrey Agyapong.

"In The Beginning" is a playlet based on the Cana Chapter prior to the formation of the first Grand Chapter in 1766. The presentation is a mixture of narrations interspersed with short demonstrations of parts of the old ritual. Props are used in the form of pull-up banners to illustrate Cana's regalia, their Tracing Board and facsimiles of the aprons worn by some of the cast.



The Demonstration Team took the roles of the Principals and the Sojourners, roped in the assistance of Pentangle's two Scribes and opened the Chapter in a manner that would have been used in the 1700s. They continued to entertain and inform the Companions with various snippets of ritual from 300 years ago and finished with a question-and-answer session.

It was a very entertaining way of learning the history of the Order. I would recommend any Companion to watch it. The Demonstration Team plan to go around the Province during the year, so look out for adverts and go and see the show if you can.



BUMS ON SEATS MK II:

COMMUNITY LIFESAVERS CHARITY QUIZ

In the Winter 2022-2023 issue of *The Provincial* magazine, we reported on Group 8's successful initiative for getting "bums on seats" at Lodge Centres, to the benefit of charities and the Centres themselves. Guess what? They're at it again.

Jim Mason, Group 8 Chairman, writes:



This time the venue was the Ramsgate Masonic Centre, the date Saturday 11th February and the Group's chosen charity for 2023 '**The Community Lifesavers**', a not-for-profit organisation that aims to turn youngsters from School Year 7 upwards and those in youth organisations – Scouts/Guides etc. – into lifesavers by teaching effective CPR and the confidence to use a defibrillator.

Nigel Mann (Group 8's Royal Arch Charity Co-ordinator) had been approached with the idea and suggested it to the Group's Coordinator Committee. Gareth Johns from the Community Lifesavers Charity then gave a Zoom presentation to the Committee and the proposal to make it the 2023 Group Initiative was adopted enthusiastically. Nigel (from Royal Navy Lodge No.429) organised the Event together with Ray Hazelton (from Trinity Lodge No.7021 and Group Craft Charity Coordinator), with much help on the night from Paul McGuirk (from Lodge No.429). The Charity provided the Quizmaster, the raffle prizes and, most importantly, the 'Bums on the Seats'.

Pictured, right: Nigel Mann and Paul McGuirk



Freemasons hosted the evening by providing the venue and the use of the bar facilities. The charity profited from the money raised from the Event, and the Centre profited from the sales over the bar. There was also the prospect of attracting new recruits to the fraternity.



Fifty-six people attended, including teams from the Royal Navy Lodge No.429 and Union Lodge No.127, with support from members of Kingsgate Lodge No.4882.

Quiz questions were not too hard, ensuring a convivial atmosphere which resulted in a good time being had by all.





The Royal Navy Lodge team (pictured above) were winners of the 'Wooden Spoon' with Union Lodge placed third, but the overall winner of the evening was the Charity, which raised **£630**, which will allow them to purchase two resuscitation dolls.

Gareth Johns (pictured) for the charity commented, "Events such as these, together with the support from the community, enable us to provide a lifesaving skill to our younger community and one for us all to eventually participate in".

For many this was their first contact with Freemasonry. An enjoyable evening such as this with the obvious interaction shows that Freemasonry is working well within our communities.



EAST KENT COMBINED SERVICES LODGE No.10038 WORKING LUNCH

Kevin Stones writes:

April Fool's Day probably wasn't the best choice of days to arrange a Working Lunch, but I did! And with much on the agenda, we Founding Officers designate of the soon-to-be-Consecrated East Kent Combined Services Lodge discussed the inner workings of our brand-new Lodge over a fine Italian Luncheon at Trattoria Romana, Ashford.

Many 'Traditions' have now been agreed upon and much work and coordination are needed to make the Consecration in October one to remember – which I am positive it will be.

The Consecration of the East Kent Combined Services Lodge No.10038 will take place at The Kent Showground, Detling, on Saturday 14th October

2023. If you are a Mason, you are cordially invited to witness this spectacular Ceremony in the company of the Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone and his Consecration Team; and then afterwards to join us at our Festive Board.



Membership of the EKCS Lodge is open to all members and ranks, serving or retired, of the Armed Forces, Police, Ambulance, Fire, Prison Service or Home Office: in fact, if you have been employed by the Crown you could be eligible to join our Lodge. If you think you qualify and wish to join us, please talk to us.

The photo shows Steve Simmons (Primus Master) right of centre; on his left in the white shirt is Michael Salter (Junior Warden designate); and Kevin D. Stones (Senior Warden designate) is standing far right.

For more details of membership or to book in at Detling please contact me at kevindstones@gmail.com

DUKE OF KENT LODGE HELPS THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Iain Knox writes:

In June 2022, Duke of Kent Lodge No.5818, took part in the Watringbury village fête. Alan Chitty, who lives in the village, decided that we needed to be promoting the benefits of the Craft while assisting in a local Event. He would help organise one.



Some of the stalls at the Duke of Kent's Summer Event

We picked a glorious summer's day. The Lodge ran a number of old-fashioned stalls including a golf game, bottle stall and coconut shy with many brethren and families helping to run the stalls: these all proved to be very popular with visitors.

We raised over £400 and decided that the proceeds should be returned to the local community. Accordingly, on the 31st March 2023 we presented a cheque to Tony Garrett, chair of the Watringbury Junior Football Club. Thanking us, Tony explained that there were now several very active Club teams playing in lots of age groups with conspicuous success. The girls, especially, were doing very well. Funding was always a problem, however, and this money would assist greatly in keeping the club competitive.

Lodge members were impressed with the Club's very positive commitment to sport in the community. Without the help of people like Tony none of this could be achieved.



Tony Garrett with the cheque he received from the Duke of Kent Lodge



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www.justaskone.org

A BANNER DEDICATION FOR ERASMUS WILSON – AND MUCH MORE

On the 19th January 2023 the Erasmus Wilson Lodge No.1464, based in Gravesend, held a Banner Dedication Ceremony. Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone and Deputy Provincial Grand Master Phil South attended, along with sixty-eight other Masons.

David Heley tells us what else transpired on that splendidly busy evening:

Although the Lodge will be having its 150th Anniversary next year, it has never had an official Lodge Banner - so it was decided it would be nice to have one in time for the sesqui-centennial celebrations.



PGM Neil Hamilton Johnstone (centre) with other senior members of East Kent Province

The new Banner with the donors Reg Walter [L] and David Heley [R]

The Lodge is named after its founder, Sir William James Erasmus Wilson. Erasmus was a philanthropist and is possibly best known for his role in bringing Cleopatra's Needle from Egypt and having it placed on the Embankment in London.



The Rough Ashlar in the Lodge is a chip of granite from the base of Cleopatra's Needle. It is mounted in a silver tray (hallmarked 1878) and bears the inscription:



*Fragment of the Egyptian Obelisk
Cleopatra's Needle
being part of the base cut away to obtain a broader surface
and thereby give greater stability to the column;
presented to the Erasmus Wilson Lodge No.1464 as a
Rough Ashlar, by the donor to the nation of the Monument
and first WM of this Lodge.
Obelisk erected Sept 12th 1878*

It is this connection that the Lodge has with its founder and with Cleopatra's Needle that led to the idea behind the design of the banner – with an image of Erasmus, from the Margate statue (albeit with a little artistic licence with the colour of the coat), and of Cleopatra's Needle.



The Lodge has a policy of involving its newer members as early as possible in their Masonic Career, so the Banner Bearer for the Ceremony was the newest member, Ryan Watts, and the Banner Escort Party was a mixture of Past Masters and Master Masons.

Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone meets Ryan Watts (above) and the Lodge Master, John Hannam (right).





The Banner Party



Officers of the Lodge



During the meeting Richard Lukes presented the Lodge with three silver Goblets for use by the Master, Senior and Junior Wardens at the Festive Board. The goblets are inscribed and are in celebration of the forthcoming 150th Anniversary of the Lodge.



As if that weren't enough, the meeting was followed by the Lodge's traditional "Burns Night" themed Festive Board. To start things off, John Baker addressed the Haggis in fine Scottish tradition.



And a good time was had by all!

GRACE WINS THE HEART OF HONOR OAK LODGE

Honor Oak Lodge No.1986 is sponsoring Grace, a four-year-old girl from Chatham who has been attending the charity **Step and Learn** since she was only a few months old, having suffered two strokes in her first week of life.



Step and Learn is dedicated to the physical and educational improvements of children with Cerebral Palsy and associated motor difficulties. The service they provide is not available on the NHS but is nonetheless provided free of charge to those who need it. The charity is based in Medway. Currently there are some fifty children across the county who are benefitting from this service with a few more waiting to be assessed.

Honor Oak made their announcement following their annual Christmas party, which they have held in aid of Step and Learn ever since 2013. Over 120 people attended the party at the Howard Memorial Hall, Wigmore in December, where the children and their families

were guests of the Lodge.

Honor Oak donated £1,250 on the day, and a further £1,000 was donated in match funding by their friends at Lloyd's Bank. The Lodge will now be sponsoring Grace's sessions at Step and Learn on a continuing basis and looks forward to receiving regular updates on her progress and supporting her on her journey.

Chairman of Step and Learn, Patrick Barden said, *"The sponsorship scheme allows donors to follow the progress of their sponsored child and will highlight the positive impact that Step and Learn can have on a child growing up with Cerebral Palsy or other associated disorders"*.

A positive and proactive approach is adopted by Step and Learn. They encourage a child to say, “I can” rather than saying “I can’t”. They respect and value parental contributions and put them at the forefront of their child’s development, helping them to adopt the programmes for use in the home, turning the skills learned into a meaningful array of abilities that will help in their everyday life.



Grace’s mother, Lianne said, *“The sponsorship idea sounds wonderful and such a valuable way to personally support children in their journey. I’m both humbled and privileged that Honor Oak would like to be part of Grace’s ongoing care at Step and Learn. I can’t sing their praises high enough for what they’ve done for Grace since she was just a few months old.”*



Step and Learn is funded solely by charitable donations. If you would like to find out how you can help, or perhaps sponsor a child yourself, please get in touch at patrickbarden@stepandlearn.org.

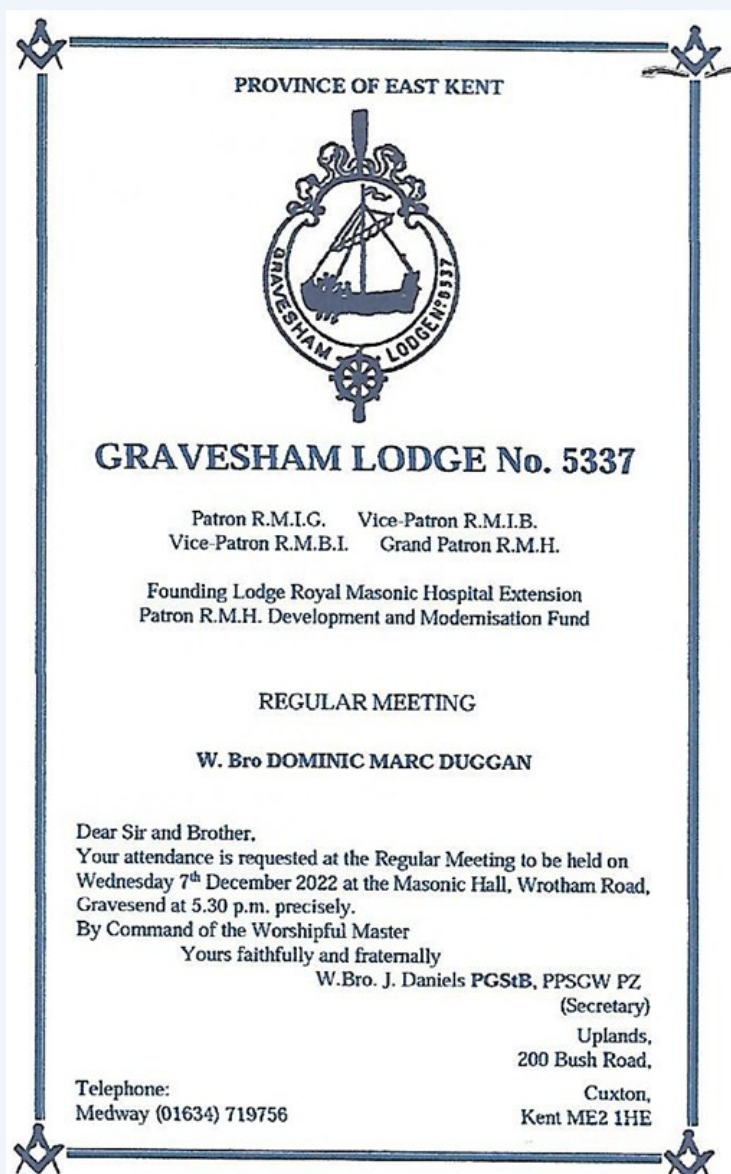
Further information is available at www.stepandlearn.org and www.honoroaklodge.org

The pictures show Grace enjoying one of her sessions at Step and Learn.

FROM GRAVESHAM TO GRAVE – THE DEMISE OF A MUCH-LOVED LODGE

It is always a sad occasion when a Lodge hands back its Warrant. Some ninety years after its Consecration, Gravesham Lodge No.5337 met for the very last time on Wednesday 7th December 2022.

Kelvin Curtis (pictured) writes:



In laconic phrases, the Lodge Secretary requests the attendance of Lodge members at the next regular meeting – just as he and his predecessors have done year after year, decade after decade, since 1932.

It all seems pretty straightforward and familiar.

But this is not simply another meeting.

It is the very last time that the remaining members of the Lodge will assemble. Gravesham is handing back its Warrant and will shortly be removed from the records of the United Grand Lodge of England as an Active Lodge.

And so it came to pass.

Gravesham Lodge No.5337 was created in 1932 by eighteen Founder members. It was consecrated on Tuesday 29th March 1932 with a lavish meeting held at Gravesham Town Hall. In total 192 Brethren attended, including the Provincial Grand Master, the Lord Cornwallis, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, William Frederick Blay, and three Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, Present and Past. Also present were the Provincial Grand Secretary and other members of the Executive plus nine Grand Officers and thirty-seven Provincial Lodge Officers.

The meeting was also attended by many members from other Lodges in Gravesend: twelve from the Lodge of Freedom No.77, fourteen from the Lodge of Sympathy No.483, and forty-two visiting Brethren. Some would have travelled by train to Gravesend from London, Dover or Canterbury, but most local Brethren would have arrived either by the 'Gravesend and Northfleet Electric Tram service' or on foot.

Lord Cornwallis opened the proceedings. He explained to the Brethren the 'Motive' of the meeting and then called upon the Provincial Grand Chaplain for Masonic prayer. The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies then addressed the consecrating Officers, and the Founders of the Lodge were lined up in order. The Provincial GDC then read out the Warrant of the Lodge, after which the Founders signalled approval in Masonic Form. The Nature and Principles of the Institution were given by the Provincial Grand Chaplain, then an anthem was sung, after which the Lodge Board was uncovered.



Above: a Founder Member's Jewel

FIRST OFFICERS & FOUNDERS			
DERIVATION OF NAME OF LODGE			
W. Bro. Robert Redman P.M.	W.M. W. Bro Herbert William Shearing P.M.	Almoner.	
W. Bro. William Hubert Coveney, A.C. I.P.M.	W. Bro. Albert Ernest William Willmott P.M.	Orgt.	
Bro. William Potter	S.W. Bro. Percival John Baker	Asst. Sec.	
Bro. Frank Thomas Leslie Lipscombe J.W.	Bro. John Frederick Beacon	I.G.	
W. Bro. George Paterson P.M.	Treas. Bro. Donald Gilroy	Stewd.	
W. Bro. George Ashenden P.M.	Secy. Bro. Frank Leonard Burne		
W. Bro. Edward Barford Wilks P.M., P.P.W. D.C.	Bro. Thomas Sidney Willbank Challis		
Bro. James Walter Baylis	S.D. Bro. George Lipscombe	Tyler.	
Bro. William Weir	J.D. Bro. Leonard Alfred Couves		
Bro. George William Thomas Coles. A.D.C.	Bro. George Collingridge Bennett.		

The first Officers and Founders of Gravesham Lodge

In a Ceremony that would be familiar to modern-day Masons, the consecrating Officers then scattered 'Corn' the Symbol of Plenty, poured 'Wine' the Symbol of Joy, then 'Oil'

the Symbol of Peace and Unanimity. The Founders were then lined up again and the Consecration Officers sprinkled the Founders with Salt, the symbol of Fidelity and Friendship.

THE GRAVESHAM LODGE

NO 5337

Consecrated, 29th March, 1932

by

The Right Wor. The Prov. Grand Master,
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Cornwallis, C.B.E.,
Deputy Grand Master,

ASSISTED BY

The Worshipful The Deputy Prov. Gd. Master,
W.BRO. William Frederick Blay, PAST GRAND DEACON.

The Worshipful The Assist. Prov. Gd. Master,
W.BRO. Alfred Ernest Hobbs, J.P., P.A.G.D.C.

W.BRO. Ernest Frederick Sall, M.R.C.S., PROV. S.G.W.

W.BRO. CAPT Charles Ernest Cheetham, M.A., J.P., PROV. J.G.W.

W.BRO. THE REV. Norman Lyceff-Lyceff, PROV. S.G.CHAP.

W.BRO. THE REV. Frank Hosmer Manser, M.A., PROV. J.G.CHAP.

W.BRO. Julius Kingsford, P.A.G.D.C., PROV. G.TREAS.

W.BRO. Francis James Bryan, P.A.G.D.C., PROV. G.SECY.

W.BRO. Arthur Atkinson, Jnr., PROV. G.D.C.

W.BRO. Albert Ernest W. Willmott, A.R.A.M., PROV. G.ORG.

W.BRO. Morton S. Dewsberry, P.G.P., PROV. A.G.SEC.

W.BRO. William Frederick Chandler, PROV. G.PURST. I.G.

Lord Cornwallis vacated the chair in favour of the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, who installed Worshipful Brother Redman as the first Master of the Gravesham Lodge.

Gravesham Lodge was "up and running".

As the final Secretary will doubtless confirm, reading the Lodge Secretaries' notes in the early years is very hard, as most were written with ink pen and are very faded.

Meetings continued as normal up until the outbreak of the Second World War. From 1939 to 1945 some meetings were held but many were cancelled due to hostilities. Normality returned in 1946, when Fredrick Young was installed as Master. Fred later served as Preceptor in the Lodge of Instruction for some thirty years.



Gravesham Lodge photo taken in 1991

The Lodge has all the details of Lodge matters from 1946 and information on the professions and progress of all candidates from 1932.

One or two anecdotes:

I have a glass given to me by the Widow of S W Auger at his Ladies night in 1960.

The Master for 1964, Peter Clarke, donated a Motor Bike as a raffle prize.

Jim Daniels and Alan Wills kindly donated both of the Lodge Columns to the Lodge of Freedom No.77 in respect of departed merit – Jez Clark, who passed away unexpectedly in May 2022.

Kelvin Curtis was promoted to Past Provincial Grand Registrar in 2021 and received a Senior Deacon Jewel, dated 1933, for twenty-seven years' service as Almoner of the Lodge and for being Tyler at the Gravesend Centre for over twenty-five years.

The final Master, Dominic Duggan, was presented with a Steward's Foundation Jewel from 1932.

One of our most honoured brothers was Reg Butcher, a member for almost forty-four years, who was awarded the British Empire Medal last August for services to Marine Conservation in the City of London but who sadly passed away on the 16th February this year.

The Kingfisher Angling and Preservation Society had long been associated with the Port of London Authority and its efforts to clean up the River Thames in the City. Reg, a former Master Butcher and a Freeman of the City of London, worked tirelessly with the Society for some fifty years and was justifiably proud of its achievements.

2009-2010	Reginald Butcher	Retail Butcher
2010-2011	David Sharpling	Account Manager
2011-2012	Hopeton Robinson	Contract Manager
2012-2014	David Gladwell	Port Master. Stevedore
2014-2015	Kevin Gregory	Company Secretary
2015-2016	Kelvin Curtis	Driving Instructor
2016-2017	Dominic Duggan	Builder
2017-2018	David Young	Self Employed
2018-2019	David Young	Self Employed
2019-2020	Kevin Gregory	Company Secretary
2020-2021	Dominic Duggan	Builder

Gravesham Lodge had its heyday in the 1950s through to the 1990s and ran many well-attended social events, Ladies Nights, Social evenings, themed evenings, quiz nights, summer barbecues and so on. Membership tailed off, however in the 2000s and 2010s, with a lack of recruits. The COVID outbreak dealt a further– and, as it turned out, fatal – blow.



Modern mentoring has helped the situation elsewhere, and retention has improved thanks to the efforts of UGLE and the Provinces with the 'Members Pathway'. Unfortunately, these initiatives came too late for Gravesham Lodge, and we made the sad but inevitable decision to hand back our Warrant.

My thanks go to Ralph Cochrane (pictured) for his time and help in creating this History of Gravesham Lodge. We shall all retain fond memories of our years in good old 5337.

EMERGENCY SERVICES GIVE TO EMERGENCY SERVICES

Frank Stocks writes:

Members of Emergency Services Lodge No.9676, based at Birchington, visited Ramsgate Lifeboat Station in February and presented the Station with a cheque for £200, part of the proceeds raised from Lodge Master Simon Fosse's Ladies Evening last year.

Ramsgate lifeboat is of course fundamental to saving lives at sea. The crew also educate children about water safety – a key part of the station's prevention work. The more youngsters they can reach with their water safety messages, the more lives they can save, both now and in the future.

The Lodge members were given a tour of the station and both lifeboats. The Trent class is the station's first all-weather lifeboat, capable of 25 knots and a range of 250 nautical miles. The B class inshore lifeboat is one of the fastest in the RNLI fleet.



Pictured [L:R] Lodge members Paul Newman, Brian Beard and Frank Stocks

After the tour everyone adjourned to the Racing Greyhound pub in Ramsgate where twenty members, wives and children enjoyed an excellent Sunday lunch. As well as donating to the RNLI, the Emergency Services Lodge has given £200 to the Pilgrims Hospice and £150 to the Thanet Disabled Riding Centre.

MARTELLO LODGE CELEBRATES ITS HARD-WORKING MEMBERS

Peter Herbert writes:

As time marches on, we can all be certain of one thing: we get older. And it is all too easy to take people for granted and not appreciate all the hard work they have done until it is too late.

Martello Lodge No.8712 were determined not to let that happen. Accordingly, they decided to honour five members and their partners by inviting them to Afternoon Tea with their appreciative colleagues.

The honoured brethren were **Colin Cooper, Nigel Hatton, Frank Wood, Mick Smithers and Colin Grant.**

But that was not all – not by any means! The Lodge gave £750 to each of them and invited them and their partners to donate the money to a charity of their choice.

As a result, £750 went to the Mersham Sports Club, and £1,500 each to Demelza House and Pilgrims Hospice – a splendid total of £3,750.



[L:R] Colin Grant, Pauline Grant, Peter McHugh, Paul Akast, Mick Smithers, Pat Smithers, Peter Herbert

CATCH THE SMILE!

The cover page of the Winter edition of *The Provincial* magazine showed the success enjoyed by the Masonic Fishing Charity.



Now it's your turn to help us further. We do not require our Anglers to be Freemasons: we welcome expressions of interest from any dedicated and enthusiastic anglers with the capacity to encourage and engage with young people.

Requirements –Some of your time to create a memorable day; and Passing your knowledge to the Students.

Benefits – a rewarding day out, knowing you made a difference for someoneand most importantly to:

CATCH THE SMILE

You don't even need fishing tackle: we can supply everything, even breakfast and lunch !!!!

So get off the fence and give it a go, we guarantee you'll enjoy it !

For further information and to register your interest please click here:

ekmfc@btinternet.com

Events for 2023

Horsham Fisheries, ME9 7AP, Thursday 4th May 2023

Cottington Lakes, CT14 0AR, Thursday 15th June 2023

Chart Fisheries, ME17 3EZ, Thursday 13th July 2023

Longshaw Fisheries, CT3 4ND, Thursday 7th September 2023

CHARITY GOLF DAY SATURDAY 3RD JUNE ST AUGUSTINE'S GC

IN SUPPORT OF THE STROKE UNIT, QEQM HOSPITAL



T OFF 1PM

£45 PER PERSON

**WHICH INCLUDES
18 HOLES AND LUNCH
ADVANCE BOOKINGS
ONLY**

VARIOUS PRIZES TO BE WON ON THE DAY

NEAREST THE PIN

LONGEST DRIVE

NEAREST THE BOX

TEAM GAME (OPTIONAL) £5 PER PERSON EXTRA

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE AND AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

PLEASE CALL STEVE CLIFFE ON 07795 836123

£20 HOLDING DEPOSIT REQUIRED (NON REFUNDABLE)

BALANCE TO BE PAID NO LATER THAN FRIDAY 19TH MAY

SEPARATE DONATIONS OR EXTRA RAFFLE PRIZES WOULD BE

MOST WELCOME. THANKS



SUPPORTED BY MINNIS BAY LODGE NO 8496

ST GEORGE BAHRAIN'S BURNS NIGHT SUPPER AND CEILIDH

Burns Night is always a great occasion on which to warm up a cold winter's night.

On Saturday 28th January Members from Lodges in Ashford, West Malling and Folkestone, plus families and friends, returned to Lympe Castle after a three-year break to support the St George Bahrain Lodge No.7389.

The Supper was held in the historical setting of the castle's Great Hall. A piper supported the evening's events which included traditional fare, the address to the haggis, a toast to the immortal memory, a whisky draw and a raffle. Over £700 was raised for the Province's 2025 Festival.

Guests later listened to a Scottish band and enjoyed traditional Scottish dancing. The one hundred guests had braved the cold weather and enjoyed a wonderful evening. A return in 2024 has already been booked!



MINNIS BAY LODGE STARTS THE YEAR FULL OF JOIE DE VIVRE

Members of Minnis Bay Lodge No.8946 don't do things by halves. From French cuisine to long-distance walking, they'll have a go – with a little help from members of Union Lodge No.127, Kingsgate Lodge No.4882 and Trinity Lodge No.7021.

John Matthews of Minnis Bay Lodge tells us how:

On Saturday the 21st January 2023, the Lodge held a traditional French Night at the Masonic Hall in Birchington.



John Matthews and his wife Jacqueline (pictured above) arranged the evening and manned the bar. The event was advertised as limited to fifty seats but in a record seven days it had sold out and extra places were made available.

On the night, fifty-five people sat down in a colourfully decorated dining room. Several were sporting French costumes which added to the party atmosphere.

The evening began with a lucky ticket draw where one lucky person won a bottle of French Champagne to enjoy with the meal. Traditional French music played in the background to add to the ambience.



The traditional meal comprised French onion soup, a pâté/terrine platter, a main course of chicken breast cooked in wine, a dessert of crêpe suzette and a selection of French cheeses. And the odd bottle of wine, *naturellement*.

The event was to raise money for two chosen charities. The first, **The U Foundation**, <https://www.theufoundation.org/> promotes educational projects and support for rural villages in Zambia. John and Jacqueline Matthews have supported them for the past eighteen years.



Peter and Sylv Stewart from Union Lodge No.127 and Stephen and Susan Llewellyn from Kingsgate Lodge No.4882 entered into the spirit of the occasion.

Magnifique!

The second charity, **Spartan Warrior**, <https://www.spartan-warrior.com/> is small but dedicated to help military veterans cope with problems such as PTSD. Initially, it was set up to assist on a local basis but is now extending its services further afield and into non-military situations.



It was good to see several visitors from other local Lodges as well. There was also considerable support from Birchington residents: Minnis Bay Lodge strives to attract the local community by hosting such non-masonic functions. Jim Mason, Chairman of Area 8, and his wife Polly also attended, and Jim said a few words about the general idea of Freemasonry raising money for good causes. Overall, the night was very successful and raised £440, to be shared equally between the two charities.

Nicki and Graeme Law from Minnis Bay Lodge No.8496

FIFTY-MILE ENDURANCE CHARITY WALK

For the last eighteen years, John Matthews has organised and taken part in a charity walk. Most of the walks have been over a distance of around twenty-six miles, and traditionally they have taken place in January to coincide with John's birthday.

This year was no exception – but this time the walk was extended to over fifty miles, spread over five consecutive days. Willing volunteers joined in as and when their work commitments allowed. John and co-walker Shelley Scullion (pictured) did all five days.



There were two routes selected for the walks so that if weather conditions had been very bad an alternative was available. The first, primary, route was from the Birchington Masonic Hall to Reculver and back via the sea defence wall. That is a particularly bleak location - as the walkers found on three of the five days!

The alternative route was from the Hall up to the main road and along to Margate Harbour. The group then turned back along the sea wall to Minnis Bay and finally up the slope to the Hall.

Jacqueline arranged for the Hall bar to open early on the final day in readiness for the walkers' return. They enjoyed a lovely welcoming buffet that Jacky had prepared for them.

John and Shelley raised funds for the same two charities, U Foundation and Spartan Warrior, as on the French Night. Jointly they collected well over £1,000.



The finishing group at the end of the fifth day of walking. [L:R] Richard Steel, John Matthews, Christine Steel, Shelley Scullion, Lorraine Weller, Mike Salter

AMAZING, THE PEOPLE YOU MEET ...

Here's something you might have missed from a few months ago. Brad Doultton of the St John's Thanet Lodge No.2753 writes:

It was to be a very interesting day.

There we were, my wife Kathryn and I, wandering around Kolkata (once known as Calcutta), retracing family footsteps, when she stopped me and pointed out the entrance to a Masonic Lodge. (She has always been more observant than I have.)

Intrigued, we moseyed up the driveway to two large old buildings, where we were stopped by a chap who asked who we were.



I introduced us and said I was a Mason in East Kent, and I would love to have a look around, if possible.

"Come with me," was his reply. He guided us into one building, down a hall, and into an office where others were busy working.

He explained to another chap our request. He, in turn, asked who I was, where we were from, and to which Lodge and Province I was attached. Name, Lodge, and Rank given, a phone call was made, and again I gave the same details.

"Wait there for a reply," I was told.

After I'd put down the phone, a young lady at a desk started talking to me about Masonry in our area. So, I asked her to pull up our Lodge website, St John's Thanet No.2753, and showed her. Much impressed, after a few clicks she exclaimed, "That's you!". A few pictures later, with the red apron on show, she said something to the chap at the desk, who then introduced himself as the District Grand Secretary for West Bengal!

Following another call, we were ushered out of the office and given a grand tour of the magnificent temple, dining hall and splendid Event Hall, before being taken to the pre-school that they funded, and then back to the office where we are asked to wait for a short while.



A few minutes later, we were taken to the office of the District Grand Master, Devendra Lal Thapar (pictured), to have afternoon tea with him and his wife.

What a surprise!

An hour or so passed as we chatted about Masonry here and there and what their plans were for their centre, while our wives chatted about being "Masonic Widows" and how it never stopped with just one meeting.

Brother Devendra said he often came over to England, so an open invitation was extended, and details exchanged.

A truly pleasant and unexpected afternoon for us both, with friends made and hands extended across continents.

Historical Note: On 27th December 1728, George Pomfret was authorised by the Grand Master, James King, 4th Baron Kingston, Lord Kingston, to introduce Freemasonry into Bengal in Calcutta and in 1729, Capt. Ralph Farwinter was appointed the first Provincial Grand Master for East India in Bengal. The first Lodge established in Bengal is mentioned as Lodge East India Arms constituted in 1730. Thereafter a number of Lodges, including Military Lodges, were consecrated in Bengal. Meetings are held at the premises currently known as No. 19, Park Street. The Corner Stone of the West Wing of Freemasons Hall was laid in 1911 by the Deputy District Grand Master, W.Bro. W.A Dring, who was the Agent of the East Indian Railway Company.

LORD MAYOR HELPS CELEBRATE MUSEUM'S NINETIETH BIRTHDAY



When you've got something good to celebrate, it's even better if you have a "State Visit". Richard White and Richard Wingett report:

Our Kent Museum and Library were delighted to welcome the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Cllr Anne Dekker, and her Consort, husband Ken, on the 27th March. The Lord Mayor was received by Richard Wingett, Chairman of the Trustees, Neil Hamilton Johnstone, East Kent's Provincial Grand Master, and Ian Gallehawk, West Kent's Deputy Provincial Grand Master. The visit was to mark the ninetieth anniversary of the Museum and Library on the 19th April.



The Lord Mayor in conversation with Richard Wingett (left) and Neil Hamilton Johnstone (right)



Marcus Sherwood-Jenkins explains the origin of a museum piece to the Lord Mayor

The Lord Mayor expressed a keen interest in the Museum, having herself a good knowledge of local history and glassware in particular. When shown into the Masonic Centre next door she was fascinated by the canopied seats that had been saved from an old monastery that once stood in or near the High Street.

During the visit Neil and Ian were pleased to hand the Lord Mayor a cheque for her Charity Fund and to give her a small ornamental trowel.



Neil Hamilton Johnstone presents a cheque to the Lord Mayor, while her Consort Ken and West Kent's Deputy Provincial Grand Master Ian Gallehawk look on

[Photos by Richard White and Richard Wingett]

After the visit, the party retired for a buffet lunch in the Masonic Centre. Before that, the Lord Mayor couldn't resist the temptation of trying the Master's chair for size. Yes, I could get used to this!

The Lord Mayor was clearly much taken by the Museum and Library. She had known of their existence for some time, she said. She had never visited until now - but should have done so a long time ago!

www.kentmuseumoffreemasonry.org.uk



HERE'S WHAT WE ARE DOING IN OUR PROVINCE:



Our impact 2021/22

In East Kent

Local community



14

grants awarded to charities



£52,338

in grants given to charities



Individuals and families

169 disadvantaged and vulnerable Freemasons or their families supported with grants totalling **£504,047**



16

people accessed our free and confidential counselling service



£300,843

was awarded to help cover the costs of everyday living



£167,649

was provided to support health, care and wellbeing



£35,555

was given to help support the education of children and young people

And beyond

This year we awarded a total of **£19.6M** to support the work of **726** charities and help **3,281** individuals and families across England, Wales, the Channel Isles, the Isle of Man and internationally.

Read our full Impact Report!

Scan the QR code using your phone camera or visit impact.mcf.org.uk/poster



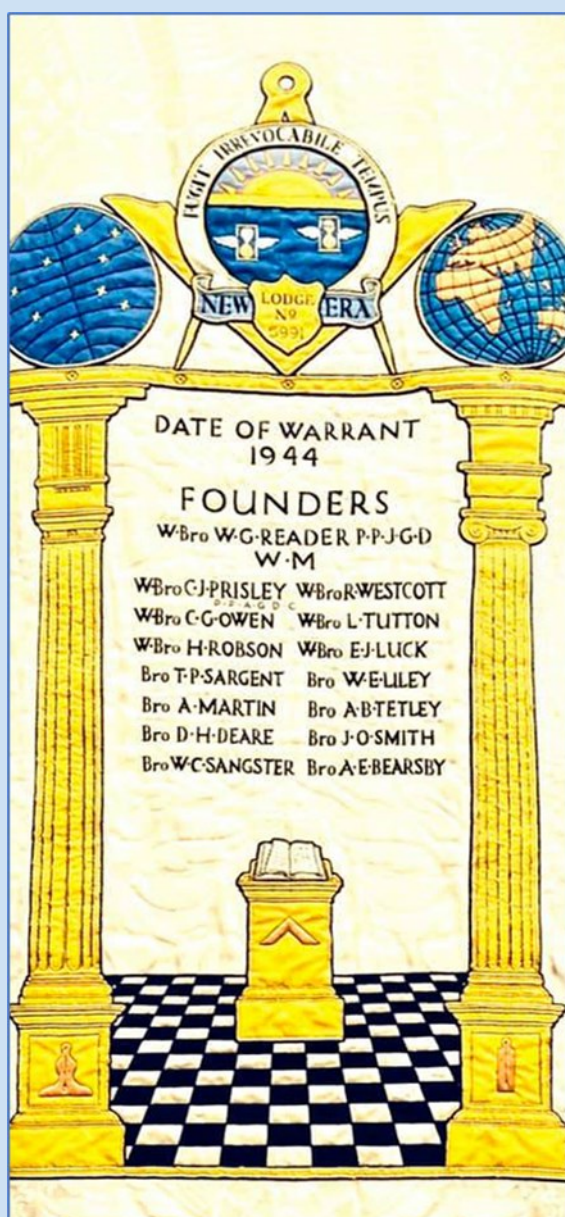
NEW ERA SAYS FAREWELL – BUT NOT BEFORE SETTING A RECORD

Ian Busbridge writes:

This is a story from New Era Lodge No.5991. You won't find it in the current Provincial "Blue Book", because it closed its doors last September.

New Era was created in August 1944, by Macartney Lodge No.3283 and the Lodge of Sympathy No.483, in celebration of the fact that World War Two was coming to an end.

Our meetings were held in the months of February, April, June, September, November and December.



Sadly, due to declining attendance, after seventy-eight happy years, we decided to hand back our Warrant.

We believe we have created a unique "First-and-Last" Historical Record at the Gravesend Masonic Hall.

Older Members of New Era believe that the Lodge was the **first to sing "God Save the Queen"** at the Gravesend Masonic Hall, on February 6th 1952 at their Festive Board, the day when Queen Elizabeth II ascended to the throne, and the **last to sing "God Save the Queen"** at the Hall on September 7th 2022, the day before Her Majesty died.

The handing-back ceremony took place on Wednesday 7th September 2022. Fifty-one Masons attended, of whom twelve came from New Era. The Province was represented by Steven Read, John Burgess (who received our Warrant) and Terry Smith.

Many members of the Lodge of Sympathy were invited. Richard Pantrey of Macartney Lodge agreed to sit in the Senior Warden's Chair, while Nick Bannister acted as Junior Warden and Tony Weller as Inner Guard.

Also in attendance were members of East Kent Lodges Chantry, Northfleet and Windmill and West Kent Lodges Eglantine, Pickwick and Chestfield.

The Lodge thought it only right to request Tony Robson Lewis, earliest surviving Master of our Mother Lodge Macartney, to sit on the top table at the Festive Board, along with Tony Weller from our other Mother Lodge, the Lodge of Sympathy.



We had a guest of honour in the shape of James Martin, a founder member of Windmill Lodge and who from 1976 for the next thirty years or more attended every New Era Meeting. Age (he was now ninety) and illness had prevented him from attending many in recent years, but on this special evening his son Andrew brought him along. Jimmy really enjoyed seeing old friends and making new ones – which, for me, is the most wonderful thing about Freemasonry.



The Farewell Festive Board. Photo by Paul Livett, Secretary of the Lodge of Sympathy No.483

Brian Germaney was there – celebrating forty years of Freemasonry on that very day. Graham Turner, our longest-serving member with nearly forty-six years on his “Masonic clock”, was there, too. And dear old Harold Gilbert, who is now eighty-five and living in Devon, is, I know, waiting in anticipation to read this article because he loved New Era, like we all did, and is glad the Old Name of New Era will be displayed for one last time.

And one final piece of good news: New Era 5991 has been awarded a 2025 Festival Gold Certificate, signifying that it has met its target for contributions towards the Province’s 2025 Festival. Although I had been Charity Steward for six years, my health has not been too good recently, so Matthew Turner, a Third Generation Mason from New Era – his Grandfather Michael and his father Graham were Lodge Masters before him – will have a seat reserved for him at the Provincial Grand Lodge Meeting this April so that he can collect the Certificate from Provincial Grand Master Neil Hamilton Johnstone.

As for the future, many of us have since joined Chantry Lodge and some have joined the Lodge of Sympathy. Our love of the Craft continues unabated.

**PER MARE PER TERRAM LODGE REINFORCES COMMITMENT TO THE
MILITARY COVENANT BY SUPPORTING THE
CHATHAM ROYAL MARINES CADET UNIT**



On Tuesday 13th December 2022 the Master of Per Mare Per Terram Lodge, John Dean, supported by other members of the Lodge, attended the Chatham Royal Marines Cadet Unit 2022 Presentation Night at the Chatham Masonic Centre. The Event was held to mark the cadets' achievements over the previous twelve months. This was the first time that the cadet unit had been able to hold it since the recent pandemic.

During the evening various awards and trophies were given to cadets who had excelled during 2022. John

was honoured to make the final presentation of the evening, the 'Brian Carroll Memorial Trophy', to Cadet Sergeant Mason Palmer as Cadet of the Year for 2022.

Brian Carroll, a former proud Royal Marine and Freemason, passed away in 2014. The trophy was commissioned in 2015 by the Cadet Unit to mark Brian's links with the Lodge and as an Instructor with the Unit. It was partly funded by a donation from the Lodge.



Earlier in the evening, as part of the Lodge's commitment to the Freemasons Military Covenant, John presented a cheque for £250 to Mark Paris (pictured), Chairman of the Cadet Unit, to help support the valuable work the Unit does in youth development.

Per Mare Per Terram Lodge No.3609 was formed in 1912 by serving Royal Marines from the Chatham Division. The Royal Marines Cadet Unit was formed in 1903 also by serving Royal Marines. With the passage of time the only remaining links with Chatham and the Royal Marines are the Lodge and the Cadet Unit. However, these links remain very strong, with many former Cadets joining the Lodge.

PROVINCIAL OFFICERS' MESS 16 MARCH 2023

An informal observer's account

There's something of a military ring about it: the Officers' Mess. A place where the higher ranks talk about tactics, battles and manoeuvres and the problems they are having keeping the lower ranks disciplined and engaged. Informal it may be, to some extent – but you still know your place!

No – that's nothing like the Provincial Officers' Mess. Ours is a glorious mishmash of Freemasons from all over the Province who have attained Provincial Grand Rank at some time in their career and have gathered for a jolly nice meal, a good gossip and a chance to catch up on what's going on in the masonic world.



No uniforms here. The invitation from Mess Administrator Andrew Berry made it quite clear: "Jacket and Tie – No Regalia". The only sartorial comment I heard was from Provincial Grand Mentor Graham Chisnell – that's him, in the foreground – who remarked on my colourful tie: "Keeping in touch with your feminine side, John". He says the loveliest things!

By 1300 hrs all 140 of us were assembled in the dining room at the Maidstone Masonic Centre. After Grace from Third Grand Principal Terry McGlone, we sat down to a meal of Loaded Potato Skins with cheese and bacon, Gammon with Cumberland sauce, Apple Strudel and ice cream, cheese and biscuits, coffee and mints. I was fortunate enough to be sitting next to Assistant Provincial Grand Master Duncan Rouse. "I was always taught never to talk to journalists," he quipped. Ho hum! Nevertheless, we had a lovely chat.



At 1435 hrs the Mess got down to formal business. Provincial Grand Master/Mess President Neil Hamilton Johnstone (pictured, with Provincial Grand Secretary/Mess Secretary David Graeme on his right and Guest Speaker Peter Marno on his left) opened the proceedings by calling on David Graeme for apologies. There were a few, including APGMs Richard Wingett and Mark Costelloe. Our President remarked that neither had signed his Holiday Application Form – and, if they were on holiday together, he would be asking them some questions! (Laughter)

William Daniels, Provincial Grand Treasurer/Mess Treasurer, then presented the Accounts for the year ended 30th September 2022. Net assets were some £25,000 down on the previous year at £13,614, but that was thanks largely to impressive donations of £5,000 to the Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons' Charity (CEKFC) and £25,000 to the Province's 2025 Festival. The Accounts were adopted by the meeting *nem con*.

Time then for our President to address us. He spoke of the seven-year Strategy Plan that was being put forward by the United Grand Lodge of England and was being implemented in our Province. One of the key items was the Membership Challenge: we would be hearing more about that as time went by. The Membership Pathway would be playing a big part, and we were already seeing the benefits of the work being put in by Lodge Membership Teams. A Membership Pathway was being developed for Royal Arch too.

Three areas were currently attracting a lot of the Province's attention: Learning/ Development; the role and work of the Almoner; and our dealings and engagement with the public.

On the 29th November 2022 Neil had signed the Armed Forces Covenant, which tasked us with supporting serving and retired armed forces members and their families. He had asked APGM Richard Wingett to see how we could take the commitment forward in a practical way – hence he was most pleased to invite Peter Marno of the Douglas Lodge No.1725, and himself a services veteran, to address the meeting.



Peter told us that he was standing in for Kemsley Whittlesea who had unfortunately been unable to attend. The aim of the Armed Forces Covenant was not only to support personnel who were already Masons but also to attract new recruits to the fraternity. Peter was Mentor for the charity **Supporting Wounded Veterans** (<https://www.supportingwoundedveterans.com/>). He was helping two men at the moment, one of whom, he had discovered, was a lapsed Mason but who had now re-joined. Peter was looking to the Communications Team headed by Trevor Carter and Paul Gear to help with publicity. It was up to us all to “roll up our sleeves to help”. (*Applause*)

Thanking Peter for his contribution, our President turned to the Province's 2025 Festival. Since he had launched it in April 2019 it had been severely impacted by COVID – and hard on its heels had come the so-called cost-of-living crisis. It was time for APGM Mark Bassant to give us the low-down.



Mark was in ebullient mood. If there had been steps up to the rostrum, he would have taken them two at a time! He opened with refreshing honesty: regarding reaching our target of raising £3.5 million for the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF), we were “behind the curve”. But we could still reach that target. Did we all know the amount of money the MCF was pushing our way? In the last year we in East Kent had received well over £560,000 in grants! We could read about the benefits of the MCF in the Impact Report for East Kent that was being handed out to us as he spoke.

There were lots of ways in which we could all help to raise funds. He and David Graeme were going to go for a sponsored wing-walk. I can’t wait for the video! Others with less lofty ambitions (*ho ho!*) could help by setting up a Regular Payment Plan. Direct Debits would be acceptable up to the end of December 2026.

And there was more: did we know that monies transferred from our Lodge/Chapter Relief Chest to the 2025 Festival Relief Chest would attract a Notional Interest of 5.75%, all of which would be credited to our contribution?

And another thing: “We’re all behind on our Gift Aid envelopes”. Of course – as we hadn’t been attending meetings during the COVID crisis, many of us had not found alternative ways of collecting or paying Alms. Mark’s suggestion: how about upping our payments now, to compensate?

Once our money was received by the MCF, it didn’t hang about: it went straight out again to all those charities and other worthy causes. He called it the “revolving door” effect.

Finally, Mark reminded us that, if we contributed a certain amount, we could qualify for a Festival Jewel. Details were in the Mid-Festival Booklet sent to us all last autumn. “Wear your jewel with pride”, he said, holding up a specimen article. “Together we will change lives!” (*Applause*)

Thanking Mark, our President quoted the remarkable statistic: “One in thirty-five of our members in East Kent is currently being supported by the MCF”. Golly, I thought, there could be four or more in this very room!

There being no questions from the floor, our President asked our Mess Secretary if there was Any Other Business. “Theburlbulubabis” came the reply. I think I got that right. Amid hoots of laughter, David Graeme rearranged his vocals and declared “There’s no other business”. We all have days like that, don’t we?



Reminding us that the next Officers’ Mess would be on Thursday 19th October, our President thanked us all for coming and wished us a safe journey home. Charles Pottle, Provincial Junior Grand Warden (pictured), then proposed a warm Vote of Thanks to our President, which was met with acclamation.

At 1518 hrs Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies Andy Stevens, always the consummate professional, called us to order as the President, his top team and his Guests retired. No salutes – we were not a Military Officers’ Mess, were we?

[Photos by Peter Floyd and John Ray]

FIFTY FOR MARTYN AND NINETY FOR RON

John Kirtley writes:

On January 25th 2023 the Saint Lawrence Lodge No.3350 had the pleasure of receiving the Deputy Provincial Grand Master Phil South accompanied by Graham Cuthbert, Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies, and six escorting officers.

The occasion was to present a Fifty-years' Service Certificate to Martyn Rowlands. Martyn had been a member of Saint Lawrence since January 1973. He was also a past member of Wellington Chapter No.784 in Sandwich and a founder member of the Lodge of Rectitude and Harmony No.9093 in Birchington.

Phil South gave a detailed history of Martyn's life and connections to Freemasonry and presented the Certificate to Martyn to warm applause. At the Festive Board afterwards, Phil also wished member Ron Dean a very happy Ninetieth Birthday, which Ron was celebrating that very day.



[L:R] Graham Cuthbert, Phil South, Martyn Rowlands, Ian Ireland (Lodge Master) and Peter Rodd

RAMSGATE OPEN DAY FOLLOW-UP IS A SUCCESS

Nigel Mann writes:

Ramsgate Masonic Centre opened its doors to the public on January 7th to provide an insight into our fraternity.



The Lodge Room at St Luke's Avenue, Ramsgate

The Event was so successful that a Follow-up Event was held on February 3rd – an evening for those visitors who had expressed an interest in knowing a little more about Freemasonry and who also had an inclination to explore potential membership.

We welcomed twelve non-Masons and two unattached brothers to the Centre, where they were introduced to the representatives of the Ramsgate Lodges who were in turn supported by brethren from Kingsgate, Stella Maris and St John's, Thanet Lodges.

Following a welcome drink and few initial questions answered, we moved into the Lodge Room where former Assistant Provincial Grand Master Peter Rodd gave a twenty-minute presentation on the origins and history of Freemasonry. Other Lodge members then gave short presentations on Symbolism, Sports & Social, My Masonic Story, Fellowship & Visiting, and Charity. All were enthusiastically received.

The formal part of the evening completed, we moved back to the dining room for traditional Masonic fare and a chance for the prospectives to ask further questions and enjoy the camaraderie of a Festive Board.

We had seated the visitors among the attending brethren to ensure that conversation would flow, and that any further questions could be asked in a social environment and on a personal basis.



After the meal, a "traditional" raffle was held and £175 was raised for the Foreland Fields Charity, whose mission is to offer support, education and life opportunities to young people living with Profound, Severe and Complex Needs, enabling them to achieve their own goals.

<https://www.foreland.kent.sch.uk/>

Our visitors seemed very keen to linger. The evening continued with a good deal of chatter and laughter - and by the time we bade farewell to our last visitor three prospective candidates and one unattached Mason had completed application forms.

Of those who did not sign up on the night, telephone numbers have been exchanged and invitations to Masonic Social Events are being sent. We fully expect another six new applications and will be keeping the Provincial Grand Membership Officer updated with any further progress made.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone who gave up their time and effort to make both the Open Day and the Follow-up evening the so successful. We could never have done this without the industry and support from all of the Group 8 brethren. The Ramsgate Lodges are supremely grateful to everyone who played a part.

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.



THIS LOOKS INTERESTING ...

Some adverts catch your eye more than others – especially if there's food involved!

A promotional poster for the EKLBB AGM & Breakfast. The top half features a background image of a rustic dining room with wooden tables and chairs. Overlaid on this are three circular graphics: a blue circle with a white triangle and a black hat icon, labeled 'East Kent Light Blues Brothers'; a yellow circle with a red pushpin and the text 'AGM'; and a white circle showing a plate of food including eggs, tomatoes, and sausages. Below these graphics, the text '20th May 2023' and '9am to 12 noon' is displayed next to a calendar icon. The location 'George Vaults, 35 High Street, Rochester. ME1 1LN' is shown next to a location pin icon. On the right side, a blue vertical banner contains the text 'EKLBB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & BREAKFAST' in white capital letters.

The East Kent Light Blues Brothers (EKLBB) are holding their Annual General Meeting in May – and food is definitely on the agenda!

Organiser Steven Ford gives us the low-down:

EKLBB is a group within the Province that aims to bring new and young Masons from across the region together to broaden their experience, connect with new friends and colleagues, and to enhance the value of being a Freemason. Now more than three years old, the group hosts regular social events throughout the year and is fully supported by the Province of East Kent.

Membership of the East Kent Light Blues Brothers is open to any Mason from the Province who has not yet attained Provincial or Grand Rank, regardless of his age or experience.

The AGM and breakfast are being held in the George Vaults, a two-minute walk from the Rochester Cathedral Car Park and with other car parks also close by.

Breakfast Options

Option One: 2 sausages, 2 bacon, 2 eggs, 2 hash browns, beans, mushrooms & toast.

Option Two: 2 vegan sausages, avocado, 2 hash brown, mushroom, toast & spinach.

Event Fee

This is a Mason-only event. The fee to attend is **£10 for EKLBB Club Members** and £15 for their guests. Guests are considered to be those who are Masons but do not have EKLBB membership. **The fee includes your breakfast choice as well as unlimited tea and coffee.**

Dress Code

The dress code for this event is **smart casual**.

Voting

Only those who are members of the EKLBB Club and have not at the time of the Event received Provincial Honours are eligible to vote.

Afterwards

If anyone would like a drink afterwards, the venue will happily accommodate this and will serve us upstairs in the general public area. Alternatively, we can move on to another establishment.

Booking Your Tickets

This Event is limited to fifty attendees. The closing date for booking is **Saturday 6th May**. Follow this link to book and find out more... www.eklbb.org.uk/events/2697/

Parking & Transport

The George Vaults are not far from the Cathedral Rochester Car Park (*2 minutes' walk*), Gas House Road Car Park (*3 minutes*), Rochester Multi-Storey Car Park (*4 minutes*) and Rochester Train station (*5 minutes*).

About The Crypt

The Crypt owes its origin to a chamberlain of the priory during the time of Bishop Gundulph. Originally known as Saint George & Dragon, the building burned down in 1768: the present structure was created over the vault. The Vault was rediscovered only in 2002.

The chamber is fifty-four feet long, sixteen feet wide and eleven feet high, with four quadripartite vaults, the shell of the vault being made up of chalk ashlar. There are ribs on the groins with nine carved ornamental bosses at the intersections.

The Crypt is also said to mark the site of the Church of St Mary, within The Walled City of Rochester, but has never been found ...

THERE'S MORE TO THE TRACING BOARD THAN YOU MIGHT THINK!

A few Lodges include in their meetings an explanation of the First Degree Tracing Board. The East Kent Wheel of Friendship Lodge No.9750 has gone a little further. Richard White explains:



On Saturday 25th March, the Lodge held its regular meeting, kicking off as usual with a “really full” English breakfast – cereal, a continental course with slices of meat and cheese, and a fish course followed by the traditional English breakfast with extra toast.

After that, we made our way to the stunning Lodge Room in Canterbury Masonic Hall, where Derek Rogers from St Johns Thanet Lodge No.2753 entertained us with an exceptional explanation of the 1st Degree Tracing Board.

Derek combined the standard Emulation Ritual version with the explanation of the “3rd last and grand reason” and the reason why Freemasonry deemed the wind favourable when blowing due east and west. The conclusion stated that Virtue, Honour and Mercy were the distinguishing characteristics of a good Freemason.

Lodge Master James Goggans then invited Derek to explain Virtue, Honour and Mercy at length, in the manner given in the 7th Section of the 1st Lecture.

This ritual should remind us that, in addition to the ceremonies that we practise using our little blue book, there are also (in Emulation Ritual) the Lectures of the Three Degrees. The 1st Lecture alone consists of 245 questions and answers. Eleven of these questions form the “usual questions” that a new recruit (the Entered Apprentice) is asked at the start of the next stage in his progression, the Passing Ceremony – and it is to the other 234 that the Worshipful Master refers when he says, “I will put others if any brother wishes me to do so”.

Some of the questions have quite lengthy answers. These answers provide the material for the extension to the explanation of the Tracing Board and the definitions of Virtue, Honour and Mercy.

After the meeting, we went back upstairs for a mini Festive Board consisting of sausage rolls and wine, at which the usual wine-taking and masonic toasts were honoured. By about midday the meeting was over, and we went our separate ways, fuller in both knowledge and food!



UGLE IS INVITING ALL FREEMASONS

to roll up their sleeves and join the
Big Help Out on 8th May to mark
His Majesty The King's Coronation.

Share your Big Help Out story with us.
The best stories will appear in FMT Magazine.
Email your story to [*bighelpout@ugle.org.uk*](mailto:bighelpout@ugle.org.uk)

Scan the QR code and find
volunteering opportunities
big and small, near you.



If you can spare an hour, fantastic. The day, amazing!

ANOTHER SCOOP FOR THE MUSEUM – THANKS TO HONOR OAK

From Richard White:

On the 25th March, Ian Dent, Master of Honor Oak Lodge No.1986 accompanied Mrs. Ellen Horn, some brethren of the Lodge and their ladies on a special visit to the Kent Museum of Freemasonry.



The visit was special because Mrs. Horn had brought with her the beautifully framed set of regalia of her late husband Raymond. Richard White, a Trustee and the Secretary of the Kent Masonic Museum and Library Trust, was pleased to receive the regalia from Mrs. Horn. It will be on permanent loan to the Museum for the lifetimes of Mrs. Horn and her daughter.

Ray Horn had been a Past Assistant Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Spain. This is the highest office ever achieved by an English Freemason in the Spanish Constitution. He was initiated into Grove Park Kent Lodge No.2824 in 1968 and was awarded Senior London Grand Rank in the Craft.

It was in Spain, however, that his masonic career took off after he retired there in 1993. A founder member of Javea Lodge No.40, consecrated in 1989 and warranted by the Grand Lodge of Spain, he became Master in 2005. Ray soon rose through the higher ranks, being appointed Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies and later promoted to Past Assistant Grand Master. He was also heavily involved in other masonic orders in Spain, including the Mark Master Masons, the Royal Ark Mariners, the Knights Templar, the Order of the Secret Monitor and the Allied Masonic Degrees.

Richard White thanked Mrs. Horn on behalf of the Trustees for the loan of her late husband's regalia. He was also grateful to the Worshipful Master and brethren of Honor Oak Lodge for wishing to see the regalia offered to the Museum, and for all the hard work in making the day a great success.





Ellen Horn presenting her late husband's regalia to Richard White on behalf of the Museum



THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The East Kent Province's Communications Team 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.

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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 website at yourprovince.org/yp2