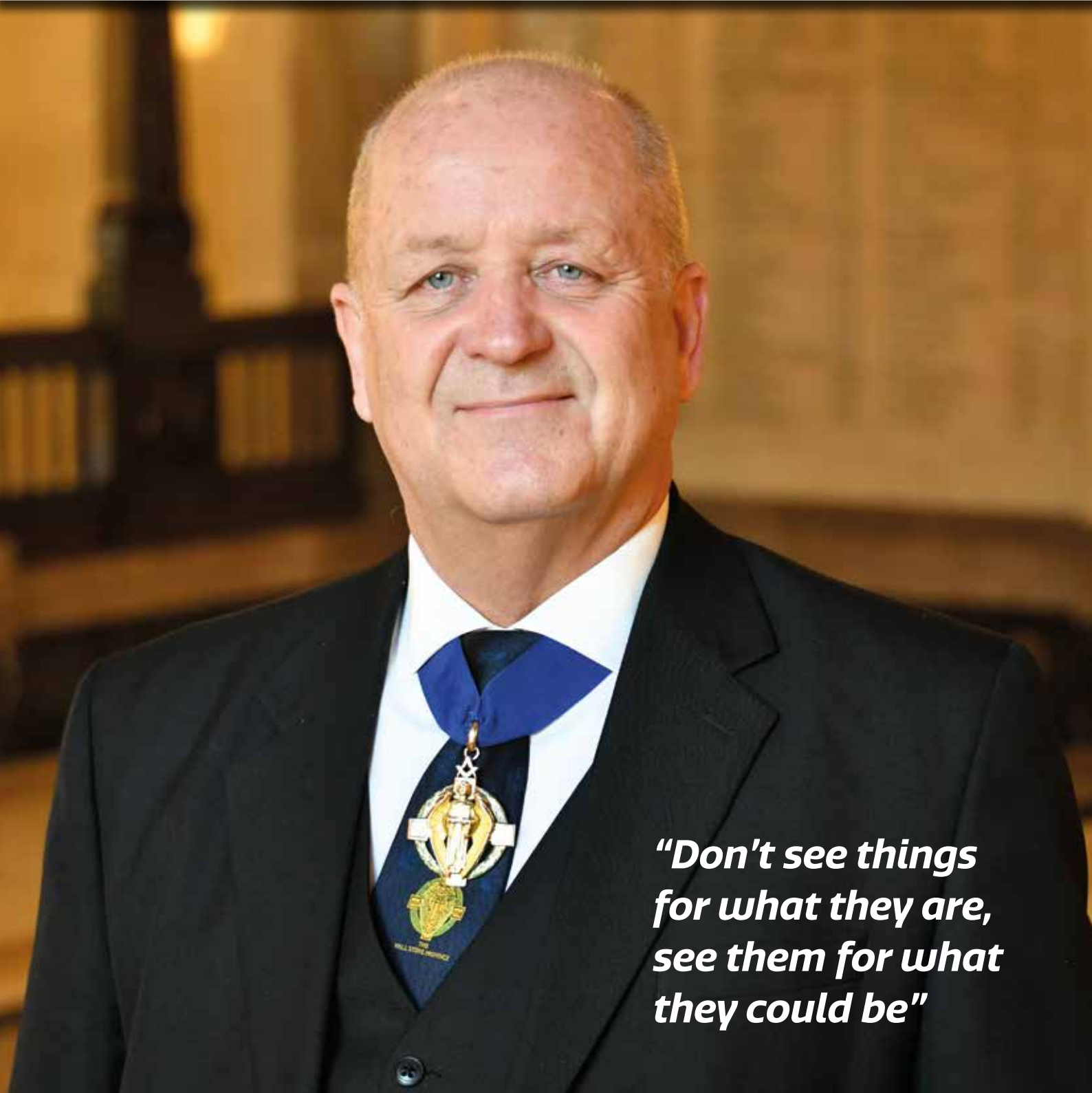


CONCORD



"Don't see things for what they are, see them for what they could be"

10 PROVINCIAL
GRAND LODGE
MEETING

22 ONCE IN A
LIFETIME
PROVINCE

40 SUPERHERO
RECOGNITION
FOR ALAN CLARK

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CONCORD CONTENTS

- 3 **Welcome from the Provincial Grand Master**
- 4 **Provincial Executive Meeting**
Fly on the wall report
- 5 **Marcellians Celebrate 100 years**
Centenary event in the Great Hall
- 6 **A note from the Grand Superintendent of Bucks** – New Year address and important changes
- 9 **Wisdom of Solomon**
The toast to Absent Brethren
- 9 **Almoners Corner**
Charity begins at home

PROVINCIAL NEWS

- 10 **Provincial Grand Lodge Meeting**
- 12 **Masonic Research**
Roman Way Chapter
- 13 **MCF's partnerships change**
- 14 **3 companions in a boat**
Bourne End Chapter lay down a challenge
- 15 **New Master for Cymbaline**
A return to the fold
- 16 **Bro Faisal Shaq**
Faith and Freemasonry align
- 17 **250 Years of Masonic Service**
5 reach their 50
Beaconsfield Centre Ladies Club
- 18 **Inglefield receives its Centenary Warrant**
- 19 **Bucks Masonic Benevolent Fund supporting mobility**
Learning and Development initiative – The Foundation Stone challenge
- 20 **Household Division Lodge captures record attendance**
- 22 **Once in a lifetime Province**
A new Deputy Provincial Grand Master
- 23 **Buckinghamshire Emergency Services Lodge seeks support**
- 24 **Haddenham stages a Winterfest**
Stephens Through the Seasons
- 25 **In memory of Trevor Stubbins**
Update on the Tommy Fleming appeal
- 26 **Stev Perry steps in to wing walk**

- 24 **Paul Ricketts celebrates 50 years**
- 27 **Worthy winner of the Don Varney award**
David Clark is the 25th winner of this prestigious award
- 28 **Haddenham dresses for the occasion**
- 29 **Stokenchurch dedicates new banner**
Derek Jones celebrates 60 years of service
- 30 **Marlow Masonic Centre celebrates Christmas**
- 31 **A Lewis' tale**
The return to Freemasonry of Mark Linley
Donald Gibbons celebrates 60 years of service
- 32 **Marlow Ladies enjoy a great year**
Temple Manor witnesses a Field Promotion
Andre de Grave is honoured
- 33 **Bucks Motorcycle Lodge rides out again**
- 34 **Superhero initiative development**
Tribute to the Primus Master of Vale Lodge
Regalia of Sir Lawrence Verney adorns the Lodge
- 35 **Annual Interlodge hog roast at Radnage Village Hall**
St Georges support fund raiser
- 36 **Tales of a Provincial Warden**
The role explained by Matt Perkins
- 37 **News from the Cricket Lodge**
- 38 **The 12 Days of Christmas**
Festive Initiation initiative
- 40 **Superhero recognition**
- 42 **History of the Province**
The first in a new series of articles celebrating the Province, its history and its Lodges
- 43 **Bletchley Ladies Luncheon Club open for business**

FREEMASONRY IN THE COMMUNITY

- 44 **Open evening at Willen Hospice well received**
Lee Buckingham leads volunteers at the last Midnight Walk

- 45 **Damian Leaver demonstrates his Lodge motto**
Malcolm Wheeler garners support for the RBL Poppy Appeal
- 46 **A new team supporting Teddies for Loving Care**



- 48 **Gateway Foundation receives help from the BMCF**
- 49 **Bourne End Sports Club supported by the PGM**
- 50 **Mats All Folks!**
The BMCF provides equipment to a Judo Club
- 51 **Green Ridge Academy gets BMCF boost**
Veterans enjoy Remembrance Lunch in Winslow
- 52 **Bucks Freemasons drive support for Blood Bikes**
Wolverton Blind Club receives support from Malcolm and Sue Aspinal
- 53 **Sean Summerell of Burke Lodge experiences homelessness**

SPORTS

- 54 **Bucks Masonic Bowls Club Annual Lunch**
- 55 **Bucks Masonic Golf Society welcomes new members**

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Welcome

From the Provincial Grand Master

Welcome to the latest edition of Concord Magazine. I hope you are all well and enjoying good health.

We have seen a great deal of positive change this year. I am sure you are aware of the Pro Grand Masters new Strategy for the United Grand Lodge of England. This fits perfectly with our 2022-23 strategy for Buckinghamshire which has been updated for 2023-2024 with revised figures and goals and now includes the launch of two exciting new projects in the province, Project Nurture and Project Transform. These will both help us build on our now increasing membership.

At the Provincial Meeting in October Phil Blacklaw and Tony Robinson stepped down as Assistant Provincial Grand Masters. Both are outstanding individuals who have played a significant role in what I consider to be the best team I have ever had the privilege to work with. Tony will continue to work for you all by taking responsibility for the Masonic Clubs and Phil will now head up Membership Services which includes Charity, Mentoring, the Northeast Corner Club and the Shows Team. Phil is also to be appointed as Deputy Grand Superintendent in the Royal Arch at the March AGM with a particular responsibility for increasing membership. We will be working very closely with the Royal Arch on this.

Who knows, if every lodge put forward one candidate for the Royal Arch, maybe we could have a BIG RED 100 this year?

I would also like to welcome Matthew Eaton (Fortitude Group) and John King (Prudence Group), my new Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, to the team. Both have exceptional track records and will be working very hard for you.

As you know our new Pro Grand Master took up post in September 2022 and in the short time since he has delivered a clear and actionable strategy for UGLE. The ProGM is very decisive and in December 22 has recruited the exceptional skills of our own Hugh Douglas-Smith as Head of IT at UGLE. This is a permanent, full-time role, based at Freemasons Hall with some significant challenges and as a result Hugh then asked to step down as Deputy Provincial Grand Master in January this year. Hugh has transformed our systems with the

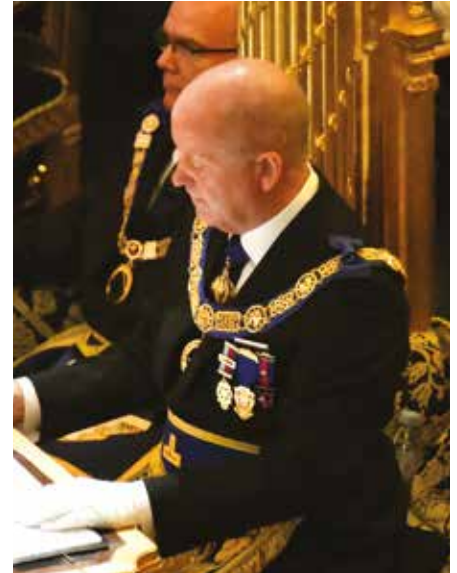
advent of HeliPAD, a development which would have cost hundreds of thousands of pounds which he has gifted to the province. I thank Hugh for his friendship and good council over so many years.

Neil Robertson has now replaced Hugh as DepProvPGM and alongside the running of the Temperance Group has already made a significant impact with his work on updating our strategy. Neil will have a different role to Hugh as we now have all processes automated within HeliPAD. Neil's particular responsibility will be in reducing resignations and further increasing membership in line with the goals set out in our strategy.

On another note, I am pleased to tell you that because of the huge uplift in photos submitted from interesting lodge meetings and these being posted on social media, we have received over 100 enquiries to join our wonderful province in January alone. I thank you for creating the buzz and playing your part in this. Our Communications and Membership teams have honed their procedures using a system called Metricool to schedule and monitor our performance in this critical task. Well done everyone.

We have recently held two Secretaries forums at Bletchley and Slough to present the newly updated 2023-24 strategy, Hermes and the HeliPAD, automated, Appointments and Promotions online system. What was exceptional about these is that we had almost 100% attendance from secretaries in the province which shows the high level of support for the work our Provincial Executive is undertaking on your behalf.

Project Nurture is currently being rolled out to reduce our controllable losses and care for our new candidates, especially the answering of the questions they must learn. If they do this badly it is not their fault. It is the responsibility of their proposer, seconder, the lodge Director of Ceremonies and Worshipful Master to make sure that they are helped to do this well. Questions answered well will give them a real sense of satisfaction which is essential for them to want to do more and get involved. As part of this project we have asked lodges to provide dining attendance data for the last two years so that we can partner with them to provide the



support needed to Brethren at risk of being left behind.

Project Transform led by Tim Anders, is being launched in its initial stages at the Slough Centre on the 23rd February 2023 where I shall be conducting a double 3rd Degree for Cymbeline Lodge. ***"This involves paying great attention to detail in our ceremonies to add that wow factor"***. Next week a new lighting and sound system will be installed which will turn our ceremonies into theatrical performances that people will be talking about everywhere. Another innovative first for Buckinghamshire.

Brethren we are doing very well indeed, but please do not be complacent. We must continue to do the basic stuff to make our new candidates feel wanted and valued and at the same time do what comes naturally and keep a careful eye on those elders and their families who may need our assistance. I ask you all to plan your meetings to make them the best they can be. If you don't have an organist, then take along a bluetooth speaker and play some classical music at the appropriate point. Don't let the arrival of the summons be a surprise. Maybe arrange some entertainment for the festive board make every meeting and festive board amazing. If you have planned well and reached for the stars, then you will all enjoy the meetings even more. Be proud of the success you will create.

"Don't see things for what they are, see them for what they could be".

I am very excited at the prospect of what we might achieve this year and I am looking forward to working with you all and enjoying your company very soon.

John Clark

Provincial Grand Master



Fly on the wall report of the Provincial Executive Meeting

8AM WEDNESDAY 12TH OCTOBER.

It was during an informal chat with the PGM that he asked “we have an Exec meeting in a couple of weeks, would you like to come?” I had no idea what an Exec Meeting was and admittedly curiosity got the better of me.

Our Provincial Executive meet four times year to review the progress being made toward the Provincial Strategy. This quarterly event is just one of many other meetings that take place on a regular basis. At first sight it is a very imposing affair with lots of suits and ties sat around a huge board room table. Thankfully, there were many familiar and friendly faces beckoning me in. “Sit here Peter”. “Have you been given a job?” “I’m not sure that I have, have I?”

The day starts at 8am prompt with a morning coffee then straight to business. It’s a fast-moving meeting with invited Provincial Team Members having just 5 minutes to make a presentation about their area of

responsibility. Facts and figures flash across the screen and are scrutinised against the pre agreed targets. Is this working? Why? How can we do better? You get the feeling that each five-minute presentation could easily take half a day but is just a snapshot of the progress being made by a lot of hard work going on in the background. Your head starts to spin at the pace of it all and you wonder how you never knew that all of this sort of thing was going on. There’s energy, enthusiasm, drive and vision. There’s a buzz in the room, it’s infectious, everything is possible. There’s also self-critique in a positive way and you get the feeling that everything is fluid.

Membership is a particular focus. Numbers are on the up again this year, the initiatives are working. If it weren’t for the effort that’s being put in we would be 300 members down on our current position, moving in ever decreasing circles until we cease to exist. You have to run fast to stand still these days, faster still to progress, oh, and it’s a marathon not a sprint.

The ProvGM reminds us that everyone present is there for one reason only, to be of service to the Province.

Additionally, there’s progression planning going on to ensure that there’s new blood coming through, our Executive of the future. People who can not only maintain the good work that is already being done, but have the vision to take it to new horizons. Accordingly there is a quest to identify talent within our ranks, to nurture that talent, to empower our people, and to let them share in the exciting, exhausting and rewarding task of driving the Province ever forward.

You may be that person looking for challenging and rewarding advancement. If so, I would recommend that you speak to your Visiting Officer, he’s the talent scout. This brief insight into the work of the Executive was an eye opener, you just don’t know what’s going on behind the scenes on our behalf.

W Bro Peter Bennett

Marcellians Celebrate 100 years as a Lodge

Jack Clark, the current Worshipful Master of Marcellians Lodge, welcomed over 150 Freemasons and guests to a magnificent Centenary evening in the Great Hall at The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn.



This was the 362nd regular meeting of the Lodge since its consecration, which took place on 20th November 1922 at the nearby Clarendon Restaurant. The Centenary meeting



was held inside the Great Hall itself, and this 600-year-old estate seemed fitting for the evening's celebrations. The Great Hall was opened in 1845, by Queen Victoria, and its 18th Century gabled roof, lined with beautifully worked oak, Minstrels' Gallery, striking fresco, and walls festooned with coats of arms and works of fine art, added impact to the meeting. The atmosphere of the evening was heightened yet further by seeing Jack occupying the same chair in which his father, Grandfather and Godfather had previously sat.

Marcellians Lodge 4450 was originally consecrated as a London Lodge, a daughter Lodge of the now defunct Marcians Lodge. Marcians was a school Lodge, but Marcellians seemed to attract a large membership from the railways. After moving around various venues in London, the Lodge moved in 1989 to Southgate Masonic Centre. As membership fell, a proposal spearheaded by John Clark and Hugh Douglas-Smith, was put forward to move the Lodge from London to Buckinghamshire.



In March 2006 Marcellians met for the first time at The Dairy, Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire. Keeping with the social traditions of Marcellians, and ensuring the active support of wives and partners, the ladies were treated to a guided tour of the manor followed by afternoon tea.

By popular demand, the Lodge decided that each meeting should be a white table and that tradition has now become the norm. The Lodge meets at Horwood House and The Chapel at the Da Vere Beaumont Estate. The number of members is kept at 33, it holds 2 meetings per year and initiations restricted to the sons of members of the Lodge.



“THE ROYAL ARCH AND THE CRAFT AS The Link Has Never Been Stronger Than It Is Now

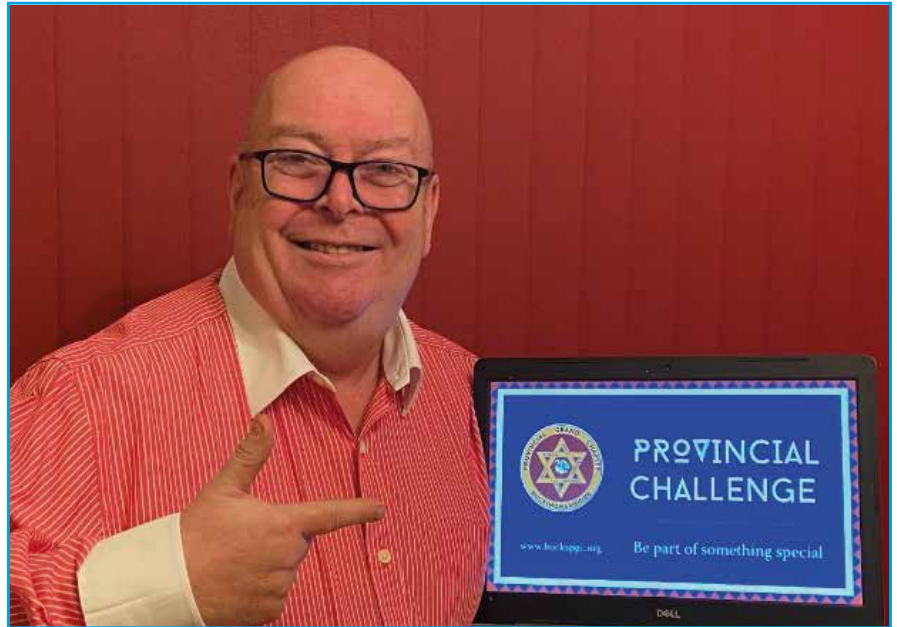
NEW YEAR ADDRESS AND IMPORTANT CHANGES

Firstly, Happy New Year to you all and to your families. Let’s all hope for a 2023 full of happiness, new opportunities, love and above all, health for all.

2022 was a tough year, the first quarter once again affected by Covid. However, it did not stop the enthusiasm for the Royal Arch in Buckinghamshire or indeed the enjoyment had from being a member. The key to the year was not just looking after our current members and ensuring their wellbeing. It was also about attracting new members from the Craft, inviting them to take that next part of their Masonic journey. I am delighted to say we have been successful in both our goals. Working with the Craft, we have ensured we have focused on our more vulnerable members, ensuring they are continually engaged and kept in regular contact, also where required support is offered to assist companions who need help. It is a continual message we must never lose and one which is always very high on our Provincial Grand Master John Clark’s agenda. It is something everyone in Buckinghamshire Freemasonry should all be very proud of.

Attracting new members is obviously key to our future also to our ongoing enjoyment of the Royal Arch. Since Covid first came to fruition in March 2020, the Royal Arch across the world has seen a drop in membership. However, I am now delighted to inform you that Buckinghamshire in 2022 grew by 0.56% in the year, this is against a loss in 2021 of 5%. We still have a very long way to go but I am delighted to look back on 2022 and feel that everyone’s hard work in attracting new members has been successful. Thank you all, let’s continue with our Provincial Challenge and make 2023 even better.

The new UGLE/SGC strategy starts to



bring the Craft and the Royal Arch even closer together, something which has been in place in Buckinghamshire for many years. The closer we all work together, the more successful we will all be. This has been evident over the past few years, as we have used many experienced and senior Craft Masons for Royal Arch roles. You may remember, I was one of those. Asking Philip Blacklaw and Stephen Knight to be my two Principals once again demonstrated this togetherness. Their Craft role experiences, along with the Royal Arch experiences of my Deputy Mike Stephens and my Scribe E Mel Shah, has meant we have been able to use that joint knowledge to create something very special. I thank them all for their amazing hard work in 2022 and for putting up with me. I know at times I am not easy to work with.

The one thing we know in life is that everything changes, and I therefore would like to inform you of some very important senior changes in the Royal Arch Executive.

Michael Ralph Stephens

When I was first appointed to Grand Superintendent back in 2019, I needed to choose a Deputy. There was only one person on my list. I needed someone who

I could trust, who had knowledge and experience, a passion for the Royal Arch, was well liked and was not afraid to tell me if he thought I was wrong. Michael Ralph Stephens was the ideal companion for the job and has proved to be the perfect Deputy for the Province and for me.

However, after three years in that role Mike will be stepping down in March 2023. There are not enough thank you’s to give to Mike, but over the next 3 months I am going to try. I would also ask you all when you see Mike to thank him for what he has done for the Royal Arch over a period of over 13 years in senior office, serving three Grand Superintendents with distinction.

Mike will be staying on the Executive, working for me on bespoke projects. Please don’t think he is going into retirement, he won’t be and will continue to be a valuable confidant to me, as we look to continually move the Province forward.





ONE FOR THE GOOD OF FREEMASONRY”

New Deputy Grand Superintendent and Executive Changes

In October 2011, I was appointed Provincial Grand Charity Steward in the Craft. On the day of the Provincial meeting, I took my seat in the Grand Temple and sat next the new Provincial Grand Almoner, a certain Philip Blacklaw. I didn't realise it at the time, but Philip and I not only became firm friends, but I have had the pleasure and honour of seeing just how hard Philip has worked over those 12 years. I doubt if there is anyone in the Province who is not aware of his masonic achievements. He is a true Masonic force of nature and someone I am immensely proud to call my friend, brother and companion. It is therefore with great pleasure I announce Philip Bernard Blacklaw as the new Deputy Grand Superintendent, he will be invested at the Provincial Convocation in March. I am sure many of you will want to be there to celebrate Philip's next part of his Masonic journey.

These Three Will Meet And Agree From 27th March 2023

With Philip being promoted from 2nd Provincial Principal, I am pleased to be able to ask Stephen Knight to move up to 2nd Principal. Stephen has proven himself to be not only a valuable member of the Royal Arch executive, but continues to help and support so many areas of Masonry in

Buckinghamshire. I think I have a thing about past Craft Almoners of the Province. Again this is a great example of working with the craft senior brethren in ensuring we are all walking in the same direction. Stephen is someone you would always want on your team.

With Stephen moving from 3rd to 2nd Principal, I now had the opportunity of promoting someone who has worked so hard for the Province during his two years as an APGP. I am therefore delighted to be appointing Joseph Le Roi Smith as my 3rd Principal. This is a one year appointment, and is to not only thank him for his hard work but utilise his experience and work ethic which has proved so valuable over the past two years as an APGP. Joseph's enthusiasm for the order and knowledge of other orders has given me a fantastic opportunity to complement my already brilliant Executive.

Other new senior officer appointments in the Royal Arch, who will be invested in March 2023 are:-

NICK WILSON

as Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principal, (reappointed), supporting Stephen Knight

MICHAEL CLANFIELD

as Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principal, supporting Joseph Le Roi Smith

DARREN MANTELL

as Provincial Grand Scribe N

PAUL LEAR

as Deputy Director or Ceremonies

DAVID DURN

as Provincial Grand Almoner

JAMES HUNT

as Provincial Grand Charity Steward

JOHN PALMAN

as Provincial Grand Mentor

DAVID ADAMS

as Provincial Grand Membership Officer

STEVE ADAMS

a Provincial Grand Communications Officer

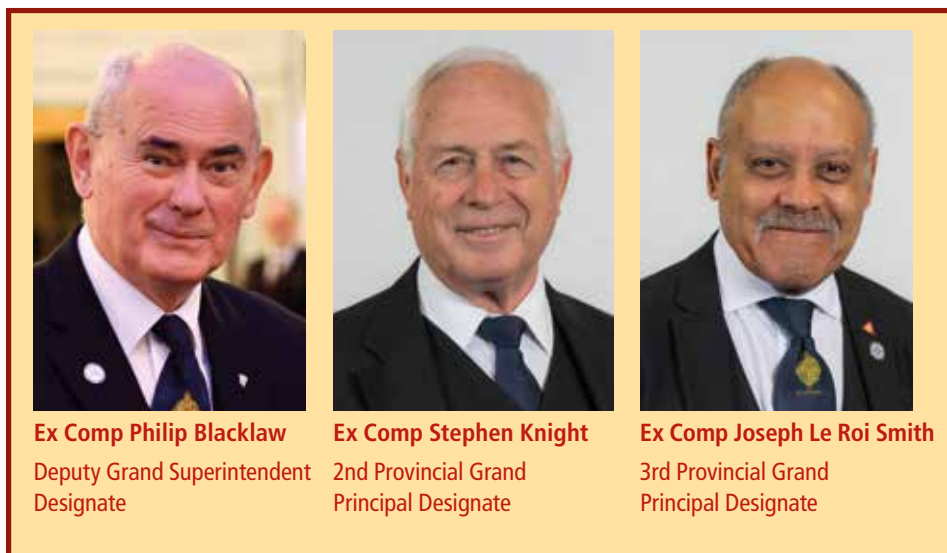
All of the above will be instrumental in delivering on our strategy along with assisting all Chapters and Companions in making Buckinghamshire Royal Arch aspirational to those who have not yet taken that next part of their Masonic journey.

To everyone who is receiving an appointment or promotion in March 23, congratulations. Honours are awarded on merit and do not come easy. We will ensure your investiture day will be the best we can deliver for you.

Companions, as you can see we are having some major changes in the Royal Arch and I am sure when you see any of these companions out and about you can congratulate them on their preferment. All of them would appreciate as many members as possible to come and see them invested in March and start their new important and influential roles.

If you would like to assist any of our teams who will be delivering our vision of the Royal Arch we would be delighted to welcome you.

For a full list of appointments and promotions please go to our website www.buckspgc.org



Ex Comp Philip Blacklaw
Deputy Grand Superintendent Designate

Ex Comp Stephen Knight
2nd Provincial Grand Principal Designate

Ex Comp Joseph Le Roi Smith
3rd Provincial Grand Principal Designate



MOVING FORWARD

“Every Journey Begins With A Single Step”

MAYA ANGELOU

Companions, I truly believe that 2022 was our single step to return to some Masonic normality and get companions back in Chapters and the enjoy the Royal Arch to the full.

Having taking that single step we must now all continue our combined journey into 2023 and work in every Chapter to grow your Chapters, by increasing the enjoyment and engagement for everyone. It is not one person's responsibility to achieve this, it is every member of the Province's responsibility.

ATTRACTING MEMBERS GROWING YOUR CHAPTER

Over the next month I will be writing our Provincial Strategy document which will set out how we as a Province and an Executive can help you all in your endeavours.

We, as always, will have lots of ideas of what can be done to assist. However, I am never slow to realise we have 41 Private Chapters in the Province, and to coin a well used phrase “One size doesn't fit all”. Every Chapter will be different, and every Chapter will have a different way of doing things, the only thing I would say is do something.

Here's one radical suggestion for you in the first quarter of the year. Hold a GP meeting for the Chapter and have one thing on the agenda “THE FUTURE”. I guarantee it will be an interesting meeting and may make you look at things differently going forward. If you want some subject headings.

PLAN – ATTRACT – ENGAGE – RETRIEVE

If you think you have heard those words before, they come directly from the Members' Pathway in the Craft. This has proved so succesful for so many Lodges, why wouldn't you want to adopt this in your Chapter. This is another example of that indisoluble link between the Craft and the Royal Arch.

One of my favourite quotes is:-

“We are stronger together than we can ever be apart”

This phrase has never been so true and in 2023 we will start to enjoy more examples of this solid bond between the Craft and the Royal Arch.

Companions, if you have not taken part in the Provincial Challenge yet, 2023 is your year. Please don't leave it to others.

Graham Dearing

Most Excellent Grand Superintendent

Annual Convocation Of The Provincial Grand Chapter Of Buckinghamshire

The annual meeting of the Provincial Grand Chapter of Buckinghamshire is being held on Monday 27th March 2023, at the Berkshire Masonic Centre, Mole Road, Sindlesham, Berkshire. This will be our Most Excellent Grand Superintendent's third meeting of the Province as Grand Superintendent. This meeting will be an opportunity to celebrate the appointments and promotions of all those companions for 2023. As you have already seen we have a lot of changes and new appointments to celebrate on the day.

Tickets for the convocation, are already selling out quickly. To avoid disappointment, please book early.

TO BOOK PLEASE GO TO: Online booking preferred: www.buckspgc.org annualconvocation

SOLD OUT!

Provincial Grand Chapter Buckingham

Andrew Ludlow, ProvAGSE, Provincial Office, The Old School House, Windsor End, Beaconsfield, HP9 2JW
email: provagse@buckspgc.org

COST PER TICKET £43.00

Bookings close on Saturday 4th March 2023.

No refunds after Friday 17th March 2023

Your daily advancement in Royal Arch Knowledge.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE WORD COMPANION COMES FROM?

The history of words teaches us that food is the fuel of relationships. The word “companion”, from the Latin com “with” and panis “bread”, reminds us that food and the brief respite allotted to people throughout history for sharing a meal, feeds more than the physical body; it also nourishes generosity and friendship.

“Come and be a true Companion and break bread with us on the 27th March 2023”

E Comp Mel Shah Provincial Grand Scribe Ezra



www.buckspgc.org

PROVINCIAL CHALLENGE

Be part of something special



The toast to Absent Brethren

The toast to Absent Brethren is often given at a Festive Board at a fixed time and is commonly known as The Nine O’Clock Toast. However, the timing of the toast is not always as it should be and invariably it has to fit in with the proceedings of the evening.

As the hands of the clock at 9 o’clock represent an angle of 90°, it is another of those Masonic associations which we Masons like to make. However, I have known Brethren who, when they have been away from home, have drunk a toast at 9 o’clock in the evening to remember their colleagues at home and I have done the same myself. During Covid you may have noticed on Social Media various toasts to Absent Brethren, most of them appearing at or near 9.00pm.

Its antiquity is not really known; however, a reference in the minutes of the Lodge of Antiquity No. 2 of 1759 recorded the toast being made. However, a 9 o’clock toast is not specifically mentioned. I understand that it was generally accepted that the toast ‘Absent Brethren’ actually came into

prominence in England and Wales during the First World War, when so many of our Brethren were killed or injured in that terrible conflict.

In certain Provinces, the toast to Absent Brethren is accompanied by the singing of the hymn ‘Eternal Father Strong to Save’. Only two verses of the hymn are sung, the first as here:

*Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who bidd’st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;*

*Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,
For those in peril on the sea.*

In many Ports and adjacent areas, it is given as ‘To Absent and Seafaring Brethren’. In the north of Lancashire and east Yorkshire, the toast is given at 10 o’clock, as many Lodges do not tile until 7.00 p.m. making it impractical to have a toast at nine. This is also given to ‘Absent and Seafaring Brethren’. In one East Midlands Province there is a Lodge which does toast Absent Brethren - but seated and in silence.

There are several variations and even poems related to the toast which unfortunately are too long for a short paper such as this. Sadly, however, the use of the toast to Absent Brethren is not universal in England and Wales, which is unfortunate.

“CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.”

We must consider the importance that Charity plays in the life and faith of a Freemason.



It is one of those virtues that form the basis of a Freemason’s heart. Masonic Charity is organised charitable support within Freemasonry, caring and spending time and not just money, freely and confidentially given by every able Brother in aid of the sick, aged and needy.

Every form of Charity derives from compassion, from love, from empathy towards those who suffer and who are less fortunate than ourselves.

We all collect money for Charitable purposes in our Lodges / Chapters via the Alms collection, raffles and social events.

We must however, especially in these unprecedented times of high inflation, remember the old saying that “Charity begins at home”, and that we can use part of our own Lodge monetary collections or our own skill and abilities to help a Brother in need.

This should not detract from our usual objective of donating our Charitable funds to local charities or good causes, or the giving of our time to assist with a project where this would be the best use of resources, but they should run in parallel.

We should all be the extra eyes and ears of our Lodge Almoner.

I am appealing to you all to come together and help each other to ensure the Welfare of our Members, their Widows and dependents.

W.Bro Tony Martin

Provincial Grand Almoner

Email: ProvGAlm@buckspgl.org



Provincial Grand Lodge meeting

This year's AGM of Buckinghamshire was held on 24th October 2022 in Freemasons' Hall, the headquarters of the United Grand Lodge of England.

Freemasons' Hall is a fantastic Art Deco building built as a peace memorial to honour the thousands of Freemasons who fought and died during the First World War. Due to its authentic 1930's decoration, it features in many films and TV productions including James Bond and The Crown.

The AGM is the highlight of the Masonic year where members of the Province gather in London to receive the annual address by the Provincial Grand Master and for some brethren to receive appointments and promotions for distinguished service.

It is a meeting of two parts, the first being a short administrative meeting, carrying out essential business, followed by the second

part where the meeting is opened up to allow the member's friends and family to join in and celebrate their loved ones receiving their well-deserved honours.

In the first part of the meeting, The Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro John Clark, welcomed the members then everyone stood in silent tribute for the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This enabled everyone to reflect on their own sense of loss at her passing and how they can in some small way try to emulate her perfect example. After the silence honoured guests from other Orders and Provinces were given a very warm welcome.

The 2022 AGM also saw the standing down of two excellent Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, W Bro Phil Blacklaw and W Bro Tony Robinson, after many years of loyal, dedicated service to the Province. Subsequently the investiture of the two new assistants, W Bro Matthew Eton and W Bro John King took place; both already have a distinguished record of Provincial service and are



Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, W Bro Phil Blacklaw (Left) and W Bro Tony Robinson (right).

considered very worthy successors. Finally, the other officers who assist in the smooth running of Buckinghamshire Freemasons were appointed and the administrative part of the meeting was closed.

Whilst the first part of the meeting was in progress, the friends and families of the members were entertained in the gallery suite by actress and impressionist Jessica Martin with excerpts from her autobiographical cabaret stage show. Before the friends and family came into the Grand Temple, the members were treated to a delightful musical interlude by violin trio Elektra.



Above: Violin Trio Elektra.
Right: Actress and impressionist Jessica Martin.



After welcoming the friends and family, the Provincial Grand

Master led the memoriam for the inevitable loss of members that occurs annually in a large organisation such as Buckinghamshire Freemasonry. Those exceptional characters will all be sadly missed and the Chaplain reminded everyone of the names of those inspirational members to the solemn tones of Nimrod played by the Organist.

Buckinghamshire Freemasons raise an enormous amount of money for good causes and the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, VW Bro Hugh Douglas-Smith, reported on the two Provincial charities. The first is the Buckinghamshire Masonic Centenary Fund established to assist non-masonic charitable causes and is funded entirely by



Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro John Clark



W Bro Matthew Eton and W Bro John King



Violin Trio Elektra performing at the Grand Temple

Buckinghamshire Freemasons. Since 1991 it has distributed over £1.3 million to worthy causes. The second is the Buckinghamshire Masonic Benevolent Fund and is dedicated to providing a speedy relief to the suffering of any Mason or their families within Buckinghamshire. The fund has been running for 120 years and has more than £2 million at its disposal. It has provided a lifeline to many Masonic families within Buckinghamshire who have suffered in the aftermath of Covid and the current economic climate.

The Freemasonry in the Community Lodge Award was awarded to Old Paludians Lodge. Their Secretary, Waljinder Chahal, led an initiative to help those less fortunate in the Slough area with both food and sleeping bags during the previous winter. The Lodge itself has transformed from only having 4 members a few years ago to over 20, showing what can be achieved with great leadership and determination.

The Freemasonry in the Community Individual Award was presented to one of the new Initiates from the BIG 100 event last September, Preston Brooker of Heatherden Lodge. He arranged and coordinated the efforts of many of our members to staff the Slough Vaccine Centre, liaising with the NHS on the project.

The next award presented was the Don Varney award, which is for junior members who have excelled in their Masonic career in an exceptional manner before being Master of their Lodge. This year's recipient takes exceptional to another level. David Clark was initiated into Marcellians Lodge during the pandemic just 2 years ago. His ritual is word-perfect and he has a willingness to stand in



The Chaplain takes a moment to read the names of those inspirational members sadly lost this year.

for various Lodge offices as well as having an active office in his own two Lodges. He has been instrumental in assisting the recovery of Stephens Lodge and organises their popular Sunday walks. If that wasn't enough, he also organised a Swimathon for the Buckinghamshire 2021 Festival, raising an amazing £6,000 in sponsorship across the team. This truly demonstrates the essence and ethos behind this well-deserved award and he should be an inspiration to us all.

The Provincial Officers were then invested followed by members being appointed or promoted to Provincial Grand Ranks giving rise to an immense amount of pride for their friends and family who were in attendance.

The meeting came to an end with what was for some the first time they had sung the National Anthem to our new King and this was followed by a stirring rendition of Land of Hope Glory as everyone left the temple.

The Festive Board in the evening was very well received with good food and good company finished off with a splendid medley of violin music from Elektra.

Congratulations to all those who were appointed or promoted and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.

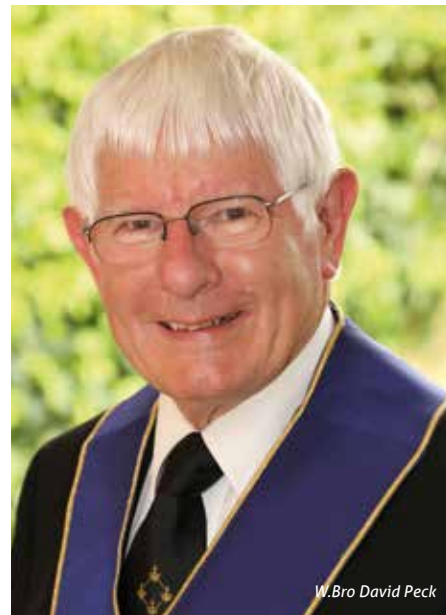
MASONIC RESEARCH

W Bro David Peck, a member of Haddenham Lodge 8944, is also currently Senior Warden of the London - Quatuor Coronati (QC) Lodge No. 2076, the Premier Lodge for Masonic Research, see www.quatuorcoronati.com and Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Association for Masonic Research www.bamr.co.uk. has recently delivered to QC Lodge a paper about the first person to hold the rank of Provincial Grand Master for Buckinghamshire in 1796. The paper has been published in QC Lodge's Transactions called *Ars Quatuor Coronaturum* or 'AQC', more details available via the Lodge's website. The paper is entitled 'Sir John Courtney Throckmorton: A Catholic Freemason in Eighteenth-Century England'.

In 1782, when Sir John joined the masonic fraternity, Roman Catholics had to live with many legal restrictions, such as they could not vote, attend university, own schools and were fined if the family did not attend the Anglican Church on Sunday. Yet, there appear to have been no restrictions on Roman Catholics becoming Freemasons and progressing to the highest of offices. Not only were there Roman Catholics in the Fraternity, including four Grand Masters before Sir John was initiated but these men were often in highly influential leadership roles in the Roman Catholic laity who are described in Bro. Read's paper in ACQ 98 entitled "Let a man's Religion

....be what may...". A close Roman Catholic acquaintance of Sir John, the 9th Lord Petre who was the Ancients Grand Master between 1772 and 1776, could well have influenced Sir John to become a mason. The paper was recently presented at the East Kent Masters Lodge No. 3931 in Canterbury. Also a delivery version of the presentation can be seen on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=lu-tWJuJ48c.

In 2012 - W Bro David was the winner of QC Lodge's prestigious Norman B Spencer Essay Prize with a paper entitled - 'Did the threat of a German Invasion in WWII pose a risk to British Freemasons?'. David wishes to encourage



W.Bro David Peck

Buckinghamshire's "young" masons to prepare and submit essays for this prize, more details via www.quatuorcoronati.com/research/spencer-prize/.

W Bro David would be pleased to deliver this paper or others he has written, to Lodges in Buckinghamshire and beyond. He can be contacted via davepeck@bamr.co.uk.

ROMAN WAY CHAPTER

I just wanted to thank you for the very kind reception you and the companions of your Chapter gave me, along with the reception of my escort Paul Bird and all the Provincial Officers who attended this fantastic evening.

It is always a joy to come to Roman Way, it always feels like going to a close friend's house, a very comfortable and enjoyable place to be.

The exaltation of my good friend Companion Bill Holland was of the highest standard; everyone who took part in this ceremony deserves a 10 out of 10. To hear the traditional version of the signs was lovely and delivered with style made it extra special. Also, the historical lecture was another highlight of the day, well done and thank you, companions, Ron and Paul. When the three Principals are

at the top of their game, it makes for a great meeting. I am not sure Companion Bill could have had a better exaltation. Companion Bill is an excellent addition to the Chapter; I have always enjoyed Bill's company, and he will always be a true masonic star.

I know how hard everyone is working on memberships, and I thank everyone for their efforts. I can assure the Chapter; the province will always support if required and asked.

Roman Way is one of the Province's leading Chapters, and I look forward to seeing it flourish over the next few years. Its ability to engage with its older members and encourage the newer members makes for a mix of perfect masonry.

Thank you and your wonderful companions for ensuring your Royal



Saturday 12th November MEGS and a large team of the Bucks HRA team attended Roman Way Chapter in Winslow to watch and support William (Bill) 'Dutch' Holland in being exalted into the Holy Royal Arch.

Arch meetings are enjoyable; they are a fantastic example of what can be achieved when your members create a great masonic event. **Well done.**

Graham Dearing
Grand Superintendent

The MCF's partnerships: past, present and future

Two of the MCF's important partnerships have undergone recent changes: one with Age UK, which has come to an end, and the other with Hospice UK, which recently introduced a programme that provides bursaries to hospice staff.

Both partnerships align with the MCF's mission to support vulnerable, and in many cases, elderly people in England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. In the context of these two partnerships, the MCF is both looking back on what's been achieved, and looking forward to what's to come.

In 2018, the MCF launched a £1million, four-year partnership with Age UK, which would allow their Later Life Goals project to roll out in 13 areas across England and Wales, benefitting 10,000 older people who were experiencing loneliness. Thanks to the MCF's support, Age UK Later Life Goals' advisers have been able to offer time, compassion, expert information and advice to help older people to feel less lonely, access more money, and get the most out of later life.

In total, 10,219 older people have benefitted from holistic support, over 4,846 have received support in their homes and more than £21million in unclaimed benefits and income have been claimed, which is an average of over £4,000 per person in extra income each year – a truly life-changing sum.

In the Hospice UK partnership, the same overall aim applies: helping to provide the best quality care to vulnerable and mostly elderly people across England and Wales. This objective hasn't changed, but the journey to achieving it has – and it begins with staff. To address the issue of staff retention in hospices, the MCF has created a

bursary scheme with Hospice UK to support the professional development of staff and health professionals. As a result, hospices will be able to provide better and more specialised support to their residents.

The new bursary scheme will provide grants for hospice staff to take courses such as in palliative care or dementia care to help them deliver better support to patients. This new scheme replaces the annual core hospice grants programme, which had a limited measurable impact. Instead, the same budget of £300,000 per year will now be focussed on the bursary scheme, providing ongoing support which has a clear purpose within the Hospice movement.

"The first MCF bursaries have already been awarded and received with much enthusiasm, and as the programme develops we look forward to allocating more bursaries and learning about the impact of the funding."

Karl Benn, Head of Grants, Hospice UK Support and Development

Hospices in every masonic Province in England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are eligible for funding from the MCF's partnership with Hospice UK. In order to spread the funding equally, there is a maximum amount available for each hospice. Those who apply must be working in an eligible organisation as one of the following roles: Nurse, Healthcare Assistant, Doctor, Allied Health Professional, Social Worker, Bereavement Counsellor, Administration Staff, Spiritual Care Worker, Pharmacist, or Complementary Therapist. Individuals can apply for a maximum of 50 per cent of course or module fees, up to £1,500 in any one year.

It is not only the Hospice UK partnership that focuses on professional development; through the MCF's work with Age UK, funding has been provided for their National Volunteering Programme. This programme provides training and resources that help to engage new volunteers and ensuring continued positive experiences for more than 30,000 people who currently volunteer for the charity.



Since the MCF was established in 2016, it has developed its grants, services and partnerships in line with a long-term strategic goal to help the most disadvantaged people in society. The success of the Age UK partnership sets a high standard for the results of the Hospice UK bursary programme, and the MCF's Charity Grants team has been working hard to ensure it will be achievable. The MCF is looking forward to sharing the positive results of this latest partnership, as well as updates on the long term impact of Age UK's later life goals programme.

"I love volunteering for your charity. I get as much out of it as my telephone friend does and genuinely look forward to speaking with them every week. I feel like my life has been enriched immensely since I started my volunteering role."

Age UK Volunteer



Are you interested in learning more about the MCF's partnerships and Charity Grants programmes? Visit mcf.org.uk/FMT61/Charity or scan the QR code with your phone ▶



THREE COMPANIONS IN A BOAT



Left to Right: Alfie Claydon, Liam Reed, Kitty Reed, Stephen Knapp, Jim Hunt, Kate Hunt, Dan Cole, Elliot Cole, James Wright, Krzysztof Kordaczka (Kris)

In a typical moment of brilliance earlier in the year Jim Hunt decided that what was needed was for ten or so volunteers to join him in a challenge by Bourne End Chapter to row one hundred miles down the Thames, in the aid of Masonic charity.

With no planning, little appreciation of the scale of work needed and no apologies, he selected his volunteers, and without dissent they all appeared at Henley Rowing Club on a given Sunday in early April to be given an introduction to rowing by Peter Nickless, an excellent coach with supreme patience and a sense of humour, both of which were invaluable.

Over the next five months a bunch of strangers evolved into two teams of four each with a cox, most with no previous rowing experience. Rowing several times a week, technique and timing improved and at some point both crews began to get competent and then even capable. The coxes also learned their craft and stopped bumping into things so often, having previously run in to objects both moveable and immovable, including at least one bridge and lots of greenery.

Having agreed on early September as being the best time to complete the challenge, Jim went in to planning mode. This required

finding the start point, a suitable place to finish, and locating where the crews could change. This was further complicated by the need to negotiate thirty-four locks, one every three miles.

Suddenly it was September and very early on a Saturday morning everyone found themselves somewhere in Oxfordshire launching the boat. The forecast was for heavy rain throughout the weekend, the weather was glorious! Changing crews every five miles, progress was made on day one through Oxford and Abingdon, finishing at Benson.

Sunday was another beautiful day, with another thirty miles added, from Benson, passing through Wallingford and Reading, ending back at Henley. There were two major highlights. An appearance by Graham Dearing first thing lifted the spirits of everyone, even those who had no idea who he was! At Goring lock Elliot, the young cox, attempted to defy gravity as he got out of the boat and didn't succeed. He was understandably upset but recovered quickly when he realised that his phone was undamaged and was quickly back in the boat. It was the only time anyone fell in throughout the five months although there were a few close calls.

The forecast for the following weekend was heavy rain, so an early start was made from Henley in bright sunshine. Good progress was made through Marlow, Maidenhead



Crew A: Alfie Claydon, Kate Hunt, Krzysztof Kordaczka and Jim Hunt.



Crew B: Elliot Cole, Kitty Reed, Liam Reed, Stephen Knapp, James Wright and James Wright.

and Windsor, where the day was due to end, but being well ahead of schedule and as the conditions were so good it was agreed to complete the row in one day. Pushing through south west London the row was completed at Molesey Rowing Club at 6.30pm in radiant sunshine.

Congratulations to Jim for getting the challenge organised and completed. Thanks to others who contributed to the rowing, including Ben Scarborough, Annie Hunt, who rowed on the first weekend, and Paul Smith, who completed the training but had to drop out because of injury. Many thanks also to Peter Nickless for his time and expertise and to Henley Rowing Club for their generosity in lending the boats and blades.

£12,500 was raised for Masonic charities. Thank you to everyone who donated, notably Bourne End Chapter, Bourne End Lodge, Stephens Lodge, Buckinghamshire Classic Car Lodge and Buckinghamshire Grand Stewards Chapter.

Serendipitous Encounter Leads to a Return to Splendour for WM of Cymbeline Lodge

There are many reasons why we enjoy passing time as Freemasons, and there are occasions when we need to pause, regroup, and go again. The newly installed WM of Cymbeline Lodge is no exception.

W Bro Frank Duncan joined Masonry on 18 March 1980, was Passed on 18 November 1980, and was Raised on 15 September 1981 at Fraternity Lodge No 4315 in East Lancashire. His year as Worshipful Master for the first time was 1991 to 1992. Frank then moved away from Freemasonry for many years due to business.

Fast forward 30 years! It was a chance meeting and conversation, at Kop Hill last year with RW Bro John Clark, that brought him back into the fold as he eagerly joined Cymbeline Lodge. On Thursday 22 September, W Bro Duncan was Installed as Master of the Lodge and enjoyed a surprise visit from the Provincial Grand Master and his Provincial team. Reports suggest that the Festive Board was a riot of laughter, the speeches were short, and the drinks were long!

About the Lodge:

The Lodge is named after the nearby hill called Cymbeline's Castle, the remains of a motte-and-bailey castle below Beacon Hill on



the northern edge of the Chiltern escarpment. Its commanding location overlooks the villages of Ellesborough and Little Kimble with wide views across the Vale of Aylesbury. To the southeast of Beacon Hill lies the Chequers Estate, the Prime Minister's country residence. The Lodge was consecrated in September 1981 and its first Master was W.Bro.J.W.Cheetham.

About the banner

It was dedicated on 26th February 1981 by W Bro J.R.Bennion PAGChap. The banner of the Lodge depicts the Buckinghamshire swan standing on Cymbeline's Castle and was hand-made by Stan Court and his wife to a design by the founding Treasurer W Bro John Anderson. The name Cymbeline is associated with the king of the Catuvellauni, a powerful, pre-Roman Celtic tribe in southeast Britain. The area controlled by the tribe encompassed modern-day Herts, Beds, Bucks, and parts of Greater London, Essex, Oxon, and Cambs with its focal point at Verulamium (St. Albans). The King's name appears in history as Cunobeline or Kymbellinus (Latin) or Cymbeline as per William Shakespeare. Cymbeline became tribal chief or king around 9AD and died in c35AD.

The village names of Little Kimble and nearby Great Kimble and Kimble Wick are likely corruptions of Kymbellinus (Cymbeline). Little Kimble, Great Kimble, and Ellesborough are recorded in the Domesday Book. Archaeological finds link the Cymbeline's



Castle site to the Norman, Roman, and Iron Age (Celtic tribes) periods. Witchcraft too - local legend says that, if you run seven times around Cymbeline's Castle, the Devil himself will appear. It is not known whether you must do it at night or if it is the hill or the mound itself that one must circumnavigate. It is much bigger than it looks from the road and the sides are hellish steep (pardon the pun) - only 'super-fit Satanists' would dare attempt it. Although Cymbeline is a comparatively new Lodge, its name and location evoke historical connections back into the mists of time.

To find out more about Cymbeline:
<https://www.rsc.org.uk/cymbeline/about-the-play/who-was-cymbeline>





THE STORY OF BRO FAISAL ISHAQ

a Muslim brother who discovered how his faith and freemasonry are aligned.

Bro Faisal Ishaq with John Clark ProvGM

Zakat is one of the fundamental pillars of Islam, the faith I follow. Zakat means charity and it's obligatory for all Muslims who are able to, to donate a proportion of their wealth to the needy.

As a fundamental tenet of my faith, I was always aware of the concept and meaning behind Zakat but it always felt one-dimensional in terms of handing over a cheque or making a donation and being oblivious to where or how it was distributed.

When I considered joining Freemasonry, by far the biggest attraction was the charitable side of things. Not just being able to donate money, but having the opportunity to make a real, hands-on, difference to my community. Through Old Paludians (7181), I was introduced to SHOC (Slough Homeless, Our Concern) and recently I was invited by W Bro Wal Chahal to offer my time, one afternoon, where we were able to serve up a meal to

nearly 50 local people where this would possibly be their only hot meal over a weekend.

When I told my daughter what I was doing, she immediately wanted to get involved and also spent the afternoon, making up plates, serving coffees and just showing an amazing attitude. The impact of that afternoon was felt immediately. In Islam, we are taught, "always look down, never up". When you look up, you see those that have more than you and you always want more, when you look down, you are aware of those who are not as blessed as yourself and you become thankful for what you do have.

The afternoon spent with SHOC truly showed me how aligned my faith and freemasonry actually are and joining the brotherhood has been one of the best decisions I have personally made. I look forward to getting more involved with SHOC and the opportunity to get myself (and my family) more hands on in my community. "Mighty oaks, from little acorns grow". I hope my small contribution snowballs into something significant and we all take the opportunity to support our communities.



Mandy McGuire Project Manager (SHOC), Bro Faisal Ishaq, W Bro Wal Chahal PPAGDC, and a Helper with a donation of 10 winter quality sleeping bags, 30 pairs of boxer shorts, 25 pairs of socks and 20 pairs of Gloves.



aisal's daughter, Inaya Yessir, plating up the food ready to give to the SHOC service users

Celebrating 250 years of Masonic service

For anyone to achieve 50 years' service in any walk of life is a tremendous achievement, requiring commitment, dedication, loyalty and many other qualities.

During the past few weeks Assistant Provincial Grand Master, Gary Brodie, has enjoyed the huge privilege of thanking five Buckinghamshire masons for their 50 years' service to masonry and presenting them with their well-earned certificates.

The first recipient was W Bro Terry Baker of Penn and Tylers Green Lodge who received his certificate on Friday 30th September. Terry is a past AsstProvGM of Middlesex who eventually found his way to the best province in the country (Bucks) where he is a highly valued member of P&T.

Next came Bro John Wood of Great Ouse Valley Lodge who was awarded his certificate during a lovely meeting at the North Crawley centre on Wednesday 5th October where he told the AsstProvGM how much he has enjoyed his 50 years in masonry.

W Bro Keith Robinson received his certificate at the meeting of Fairway Lodge at Aylesbury

on Wednesday 12th October. Keith originates from the north of the country but saw sense and settled in Bucks where he lives with Maxine, his wife of 59 years, another tremendous achievement.

W Bro Peter Bishop of Wexham Park Lodge has played a huge part in the development and running of Slough Masonic Centre. He received his certificate at Slough on Wednesday 19th October. His son Seb, secretary of the Lodge and an active provincial grand officer was there to see his father awarded the certificate.

On Saturday 12th November W Bro Jim Tilbury received his award at a white table meeting of Bourne End Lodge at Marlow. This allowed Jim, a well-known character at Marlow centre, to have family and friends attend and see him receive his well-earned certificate.

W Bro Gary Brodie said: *Five very different masons with varied personalities and achievements, in all a great example of the diverse nature of our membership. Congratulations to each of them on their wonderful record, their recognition is well deserved and I am proud to have been able to play a small part in their special meetings.*



BEACONSFIELD CENTRE *LADIES CLUB*

We are delighted to say that the Ladies Club has recently started up again after a long break due to the pandemic.

The club now meets informally at the Beaconsfield Centre fortnightly on a Monday morning for coffee, a chat and a good old laugh.

Our December meeting was a little different; it was a craft morning where artificial Christmas wreaths were created. Even though everyone had access to similar decorations, every wreath was different. Some decided to use theirs as a door hanging; others as a table decoration, adding a candle in the centre.

If any Ladies are interested in coming to our next meeting, please contact Yvonne Cawte on 01494 562638 or Magda Smart on 07765 115583

Inglefield Lodge No. 4238 Centenary Warrant

On Friday 4th November Inglefield Lodge No. 4238 held a special meeting where it was presented with a Centenary Warrant by our Provincial Grand Master, accompanied by his Provincial Team, at the Slough Masonic Centre.

The Consecration of Inglefield Lodge took place on the 26th April 1921 and was named after the Provincial Grand Master of Buckinghamshire at the time, RW Bro Rear Admiral Sir Edward Inglefield. When the Lodge was being formed, there was a reluctance to sanction the naming of a Lodge after an individual so it was quite an achievement that the Lodge was still named after him. He conducted the Consecration Ceremony himself at Freemasons' Hall and as is the wonted custom, the Provincial Grand Officers who assisted him were all made Honorary members.

The Lodge was sponsored by Herschel Lodge No. 1894 and with several Founder members coming from Theodore White Lodge No. 3795 this made a strong affinity between all three Lodges. As Inglefield Lodge No. 4238 was formed by tradesmen and professional men in the Slough area, they decided to meet on Wednesdays as this was a half day for the local shops.

Rear Admiral Inglefield continued his interest in the Lodge over many years, dedicating the first Lodge Banner and later presenting a Loving Cup in 1938 which is passed around the Festive Board, and a beautiful Secretary's Goblet in 1940. The Inglefield family link continued when he was joined by his son and nephew as founder members of Inglefield Chapter No. 4238.

Their first meeting, a month after the Consecration, was to Initiate Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Buckingham P.H. Eliot. The Lord Bishop became the first Lodge Chaplain and eventually went on to be Provincial Grand Master for Buckinghamshire himself. It is a tribute to the Lodge traditions that his Past Master's



W Bro Stephen Summerley, Bro Geoff Walsh, W Bro Cormick Tormey W Bro Kulvinder Sanghera, RW Bro John Clark, W Bro Amandeep Grewal W Bro Kip Griffiths, W Bro Mark Skyrme

Jewel has been handed down through the years and is still in use today. They have also been honoured with having members who were a Deputy Provincial Grand Master, two Provincial Grand Secretaries and an Assistant Provincial Grand Secretary.

In 1938 the Lodge received a beautifully bound Bible as a result of a legacy in which all Masters append their signatures at their Installation. In 1962 they were presented with a magnificent set of Working Tools from one of the widows which were handed over to the new Slough Masonic Centre in 1968 when the Lodge moved there.

Before the outbreak of war in 1939, Dinner Jackets were worn at all meetings and the Officers dined in their Collars. There were no Festive Boards after meetings at the start of war though they were gradually reintroduced but without the DJs and Collars. The cost of the meal was five shillings for a normal meeting and ten shillings for the Installation meal. The subscription at the time was just £2 2s 0d. How times have changed!

By 1929, Inglefield themselves sponsored the formation of Upton Manor Lodge then again Langley Lodge in 1944 in which several Lodge members were Founders and held offices.

Over the years, an immense amount of money has been contributed to the Royal

Masonic Charities, too many to list here, but they reinforce one of our most important grand principles – Relief.

In 1932 the Lodge was presented with a Hall Stone Jewel by the Grand Master. This recognised the contribution made to the building of Freemasons' Hall which is a memorial to the Brethren who made the supreme sacrifice during the First World War. In 1969 the Master's collar was appended with a Jewel to mark the 250th Anniversary of the original Grand Lodge. The funds gathered from this Jewel are made available to the Royal College of Surgeons for research into the science of surgery.

Special meetings such as this one brings together visitors from many Lodges and indeed different Provinces. As an example of the cooperation and harmony in Freemasonry between different Lodges and Provinces, a couple of members of Cookham Manor Lodge No. 4191 in Berkshire are now joining Inglefield and a pair from Inglefield are reciprocating by joining them.

The history of Lodges is always captivating to read - how they were formed, the differences in customs compared to nowadays as well as discovering the numerous achievements they have made over time.

Long may Inglefield Lodge No. 4238 continue and pass its history on from generation to generation.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MASONIC BENEVOLENT FUND (BMBF)



We offer a range of Mobility Scooters in the Province for loan to those in need. Each Scooter is second hand and has been donated to us by people who no longer require them. We supply them fully serviced, with new batteries and puncture proof tyres. The chargers are all electrically safe.

They are held at Slough Masonic Centre. If you are able to collect them that is helpful, but we may be able to deliver them to you. Part of the loan agreement is that you take out mobility scooter insurance; should you be in a financial difficulty we can arrange this for you if required. Before taking your scooter, you will be given familiarisation training and safety instructions. They are available on long or short loan, so if you are recovering from an operation, you can borrow one for a month or so. If you borrow a scooter for a year then we ask you to get it serviced; or we can arrange to do this for you.

We also have a good stock of second hand 4-wheel/stroller walking aids and a range of manual wheel chairs; both self-propelled and human assist. These are medical devices and considered Durable Medical Equipment, and may be available to you through the NHS, who will ensure you receive the most suitable type. While there are a number of types and designs, at the end of the day, all are optimised to transport the elderly, infirm, and those with mobility issues, and provide a greater degree of independence. We cannot supply specialist chairs but our aim is to help out if we can.



The BMBF also offers a range of lengths of Stairlifts, professionally fitted in your home. Regrettably we only can offer stair lifts going in a straight line. To arrange for your home visit to assess your needs please call Andre de Grave, Mobility aid Coordinator on
Tel: - 07769 170 664
Email: andre@degrave.co.uk

We are here to help you

Learning and Development Initiative

A major new initiative is being launched to help newer Bucks freemasons to get more from their Freemasonry.



Cliveden's Master, W Bro Bryan Harfield, guiding the Lodge's latest Initiates, Bro Jonathan Krylczuk and Bro Ryan Challis.

Provincial Learning and Development Officer Steve Cleary is unveiling a boost for the on-line education programme, Solomon, run by the United Grand Lodge of England It's called the "Foundation Stone Challenge", and is a structured series of lectures which lead naturally from one idea to the next. Each new member can get the online modules by going to Solomon at solomon.ugle.org.uk/login. There they will be able to create an account and gain access to access the "Welcome Apprentice" module. The topics include subject such as the tools, the tracing board and charges. They are delivered in bite size pieces that really help you to understand the ceremony of Initiation.

Steve says: *"This is all about getting more fun from your favourite hobby in 2023. I am challenging every new member to make it their New Year resolution to fully engage with the Solomon programme. It is a vital tool to help each member progress at their own speed."*

Steve adds: *"Bucks is already leading the way in recruiting new members. So our duty is clear – we must ensure the next generation of Bucks masons have a sound foundation for their personal development. Self-learning is the key to making a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge. The overall benefit is a wave of more informed, engaged, and above all confident freemasons who can serve their lodges with pride."*

All freemasons can learn more about the craft at solomon.ugle.org.uk



Solomon
2020WOU

Household Division Lodge 9545 - record attendance "make it fun and they will come"

In 2020 W Bro Ryan Elliott had been due to install his successor, but owing to Covid this was delayed by a year. In 2021 at the first meeting after the Masonic hiatus W Bro Neil Knowles was installed as Worshipful Master of Household Division Lodge.

In his year as IPM, Ryan had taken over as the Lodge Secretary following the death of Founding Secretary W Bro Peter Hardwick who had held the office since the Consecration of the Lodge in 1994.

The week following the installation meeting Neil and Ryan met to discuss how they would ensure people would come back to the Lodge. Several ideas were passed back and forth before Neil said, "make it fun and they will come". That was it, that phrase became the strategy for the Lodge.

Household Division Lodge already had a unique membership, being the Lodge to represent all ranks of those who have served within the Guards Regiments of the British Army. The ritual had historically been smart and delivered with the Guards style and panache and attracted regular visitors. The idea was to take the



(L to R) W.Bro. Ted Fell, Jed Lawton, Ryan Elliott, Ray Parsons.



L to R) W.Bro Guy Cholerton, Scott Veitch, Bro. Danny Lyons W.Bro. Neil Knowles, Jed Lawton, Dave Ried, James Tribe, Mark Woodhouse at the Epsom Derby.

Lodge to a new level and a plan was made to have meetings that went beyond pure Freemasonry. Each year the Lodge holds one white table meeting with military music, a Burns Night meeting, a guest speaker meeting, the Installation and one other meeting. In addition to the plans for the Lodge, a further commitment to visiting other Lodges was made by Neil as WM and Ryan as IPM/Secretary. This included visiting as many Buckinghamshire Lodges and Military Lodges as possible whilst telling all who would listen about Household Division Lodge.

At the first meeting after Installation, the Lodge took part in BIG at Freemasons Hall. Neil and his team of Officers, supported by friends of the Lodge from other military Lodges, took over temple Ten with fifty five attending to witness Household initiate five candidates into the Lodge.

In November 2021 the Province signed the Armed Forces Covenant at Household Division Lodge. To enhance the evening Ryan arranged for the Pipes & Drums of the Irish Guards to attend and perform at the white table. Sixty five Masons and guests enjoyed the evening as well as great support from a large contingent of Active Provincial Officers.

In January 2022 the Lodge held its first Burns Night, initiating a further

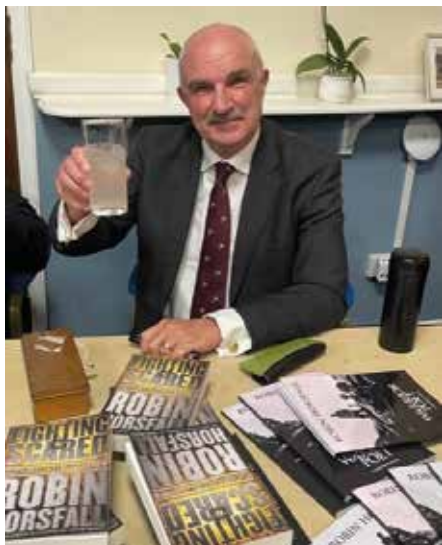


two candidates. Bro Ian Alexander, former Scots Guards Piper, piping in and addressing the haggis. The meeting was attended by sixty seven members and visitors who all thoroughly enjoyed the evening, in particular the response on behalf of the haggis by long standing friend of the Lodge, W Bro Ewan Gordon.



Duty Piper.

With increasing numbers of attending members and visitors at each meeting the Lodge was moving in a good direction but it was the meeting in March 2022 when it saw its highest attendance since the consecration. Former SAS soldier, W Bro Robin Horsfall, of Pegasus Forces Lodge was booked in to give an after



dinner speech. The meeting sold out with one hundred and ten booked in for the festive board. The meeting was so successful that over £4000 was raised for charity.

By June 2022 the Lodge was riding a high wave of success, membership increased with significant numbers of candidates and joining members. W Bro Adrian Martin was elected to become the first Welsh Guards Worshipful Master in the history of the Lodge and over sixty attended to see him installed as Master. In his first full meeting as Master at the September 2022 meeting, he welcomed two further joining members and initiated the eighth candidate since 2021, before welcoming another joining member at the November 2022 meeting. At this meeting the white table festive board had ninety guests booked in to enjoy the hospitality of the Household Division Lodge as well as military music by the Highland Pipes and Drums.

Since returning from the enforced hiatus, the Lodge has initiated eight candidates and welcomed nine joining members. Membership currently sits at thirty eight with three more candidates to be initiated in January 2023 and plenty more interest from prospective candidates. Every officer from the Junior Warden down wears a light blue apron. Administrative roles, such as



Busy bar at Slough - March 22.

Membership Officer, Almoner and Charity Steward are filled by light blues, all supported by dark blue and crimson aprons in other offices. There is a steady flow of light blues offering to partake in the ritual. This will see the Household Division Lodge work hard and steadily through the seventeen ceremonies they currently have to complete. The Lodge is more social than it has been for years, meeting for coffee, for drinks and for a curry on months when there are no meetings. Members are visiting other Lodges at other centres together and at their own meetings members stay and socialise together long after the festive board – because of all this, membership attendance is higher than ever – the Lodge really does have a bright future!

Many have asked the Lodge members, how they have done it, what has been key to the success. The Lodge is open about the secret to their success and is happy to share it with every Freemason in every Lodge. Neil set it out to Ryan over coffee one morning following the installation in 2021... *"make it fun and they will come"*.



DepProvGM Hugh Douglas-Smith with Founder, W Bro Deek Stratford MBE

Wraysbury Lodge Charity Golf Day



Above: Milo Petrovic, John Murphy & AsstProvGM Gary Brodie



Above: Sophie Blackmore & John Murphy



Right: Peter Stainrod & John Murphy

On Thursday 21st July Wraysbury Lodge held their third Charity Golf Day in aid of the Bucks 2021 Festival.

In fantastic weather some 66 players teed off at the Lambourne Golf Club and a great day was had by all present culminating in a splendid lunch and presentation on the patio outside the clubhouse. The event was sponsored and organised by John Murphy of Wraysbury Lodge with able assistance from Paul Holdship, Phil Manning and Nigel Quince. Peter Stainrod won the Men's prize with Sophie Blackmore winning the Lady's Trophy for the second time running. Milos Petrovic, Wraysbury's newest member, received a special prize for lowest score. He paid his money, having never played before, and owning no clubs and unable to play. The reward for his enthusiasm is a free lesson with the club Pro!

AsstProvGM Gary Brodie was delighted to announce that the day had raised over £4500 for the Festival, well done Wraysbury Lodge and thank you John Murphy and all those who attended.

THE ONCE IN A LIFETIME PROVINCE!



Worshipful Brother Neil Robertson, pictured with his Escort Team.



This time it was Worshipful Brother Neil Robertson who took centre stage for another one off occasion in Buckinghamshire, when he was promoted “in the field” as Deputy Provincial Grand Master at a surprise ceremony on Monday 12th of December at Orion Lodge.

The Province of Buckinghamshire is building a reputation for thinking outside the accepted norm, without ever losing sight of our proud history, or foregoing ritual and procedure in the pursuit of innovation.

So, when Very Worshipful Brother Hugh Douglas-Smith requested to stand down from the office of Deputy Provincial Grand Master, to enable him to focus his efforts at UGLE delivering game-changing systems throughout national Freemasonry as the newly appointed Chief Information Officer, the cogs started spinning fast and the wheels were set in motion.

Challenges to our Provincial Grand Master, John Clark, don't exist. There are only items that need solutions, and with a dedicated team behind him amazing things can happen when the focus is all encompassing.

Within a week Worshipful Brother Neil Robertson had been dined, invited, appointed, obligated, invested and installed as Hugh's successor in a ceremony never to be forgotten at the masonic centre in Slough.

The evening began as part of yet another BucksPGL Initiative, “The 12 days of Christmas.” were just shy of 50 Candidates for Initiation were joining Lodges across the entire County of Buckinghamshire, in a project coincidentally organised by Worshipful Brother Neil Robertson, alongside Worshipful Brother Matthew Perkins.

Old Paludians Lodge had earlier held a short administrative meeting and Wexham Park Lodge had just finished



A very proud Dad.

their own Initiation ceremony for their candidate, so both Lodges were invited to join the Orion Lodge meeting and swell the numbers to 90.

Having completed the ceremony, the Worshipful Master was about to rise at the end of the meeting when The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, Bill Smithson, rose himself and asked permission from the Worshipful Master to allow the Provincial Grand Master to take the chair for a short while. Mutterings began and then grew when the Provincial Grand Master requested Bill for the Lodge to be adjusted, by placing designated officers in the roles of Senior and Junior Wardens and Inner Guard.

When you place Past Provincial Grand Master Ray Reed as Senior Warden, Past Deputy Provincial Grand Master in Charge Robert Wharton as Junior Warden and Past Grand Sword Bearer, PMEGS John Keeble as Inner Guard, those in attendance began to realise something very special was about to happen.

Our Provincial Grand Master expressed sincere and heartfelt thanks to Very Worshipful Brother Hugh Douglas-Smith for the incredible commitment he had given the Province before and during his tenure as Deputy Provincial Grand Master, and offered the congratulations of the brethren to Hugh in his new role at Great Queen Street.

Worshipful Brother Neil Robertson was invited to retire, before the Provincial Grand Master informed the



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE EMERGENCY SERVICES LODGE

NEED YOU

Whilst our membership is increasing, we really need other Joining Members to fill the vacant Offices or just be part of a Themed Lodge.

From January we will hope to be evolving into a lodge that will be wearing miniature medals, Military berets, or anything appropriate to your Service.

We also aim to introduce themed music at the appropriate parts of the ritual probably starting with Dad's Army! If you would like more information, just give me a call.

07850 423045

Mike Clanfield. BESL

Lodge that he was to succeed Hugh as Deputy Provincial Grand Master. The bemusement in the Lodge turned to approval and the atmosphere visibly rose in the Temple, as everyone realised the recognition of Neil's work was being rewarded.

The Provincial Grand Master listed the many outstanding achievements in Neil's Masonic career, calling him the perfect mason who had never needed to cling to the coat tails of his father Gordon Robertson, our Past Provincial Grand Master, but forged his own masonic career in exemplary fashion in every aspect of his work.

A stellar Escort Team was called out consisting of two Past Provincial Deputy Grand Directors of Ceremonies, WBro Philip Witney PAsstGStdB & WBro Dan Cunningham, followed by four Present

and Past AsstProvGM's WBro's Matt Eaton, John King, Graham Dearing & Philip Blacklaw, they were accompanied by four present and past Provincial Grand Stewards WBro's Paul Bird PJGD, Tim Anders PPGW, Gary Strickland from Neil's mother Lodge Heatherden, and Jack Clark. To complete the line out as his cushion bearers, and make it even more special for Neil, was his long time friend, AsstProvGM Gary Brodie carrying his patent and finally his father, Past ProvGM Gordon Robertson bearing his chain of office.

Gordon said *"In my 41 years of Freemasonry I have never seen this before, I am very pleased and proud as well"*



Lee Buckingham and Steve Smirthwaite.

Haddenham Winterfest 2022

On a beautiful crisp, cold, but dry Saturday December 10th the village of Haddenham held its annual Winter Beefest on the Village Green in front of St Mary's Church.

Haddenham Lodge, 8944, once again played its part in the local community, when they were in full cooking mode on the barbecue. For both summer and winter Beefests, over the last 16 years, the Lodge has been the primary sausage and burger provided to those enjoying the Christmas festivities, beer, wine, cider, mulled wine, and gin bar.

With over 1000 people in attendance the Lodge members cooked more than 400 sausages and burgers to help sustain the locals during the afternoon.

W Bro Lee Buckingham the Lodge Charity Steward said: "Haddenham Lodge has been a prominent part of the local community for many years and has now raised more than £30,000 over the years from the Annual Beefests and Winterfests. We're already looking forward to next summer (the first Saturday in July) for the summer Beefest, at which there should be more than 4000 revellers needing good soakage for what is thought to be the largest single day Beefest in the Country".

Those in attendance to help with the set-up, cooking and serving were WM Lloyd Davies, ProvGDC Bill Smithson, PAsstProvGM Tony Robinson and his wife, Jean, JW Chris Money, SD Stewart Ward, JD Steve Adkins IG Tim Airstone and a number of Lodge members – thank you all!

Stephens Through the Seasons



Group from 2nd walk.

A glorious sunny Autumnal Sunday morning on the 9th of October 2022 saw the inauguration of the Stephens Lodge No. 3089 Monthly Walk as part of its resurgence as a Sporting-Themed Lodge.

The location for this initial walk was the small village of Turville in the Chiltern Hills, a delightful setting which was the location for the filming of The Vicar of Dibley. Unfortunately, The Reverend Geraldine Granger was otherwise engaged.

A group of over 40 members, friends and family accompanied by a numerous retinue of dogs, set off together in the fresh country air then separated into one of two predetermined routes of either 1.8 or 3 miles.

The two groups completed their walks in good time with just a slight detour on the longer route due to cows blocking the way! On their return, many of the walkers visited the local pub, The Bull & Butcher, for a well-deserved drink and to enjoy a tasty Sunday Lunch in convivial surroundings.

On the 27th November 2022, the second walk gave rise to a Winter's Tale starting at the Stag and Huntsman which is situated in Hambleden, a quintessential picture-postcard village nestled into the Chiltern Hills. The quaint local buildings being made from medieval timber frames along with the use of brick and flint.

Another group of around 40 walkers with their canine friends set off for a muddy stroll along the bank of the river Thames on the way to Henley and then back again. This time much flatter routes of 2.5 or 5 miles were requested after the highly elevated course of

the first walk.

Despite the mud, everyone managed to avoid falling over and had a great time whilst getting some exercise in the fresh country air. On their return, a much-appreciated buffet lunch with sandwiches and cake was laid on at the local Hambleden Sports & Social Club.

Regular social events like this are a great way to make new friends, involve the whole family and demonstrate to potential candidates what it is we all love about Freemasonry.

The Stephens Lodge walks are open not only to Masons but their friends, family and children, along with our four-legged friends. If you'd like to join in the fun on the next walk, contact the Rambler-in-Chief, David Clark for details - davidclark25@icloud.com



WM of Stephens Lodge 3089.



Left to right; Robbie Devery Cymbeline Lodge 9004, David Clark Stephens Lodge 3089, Giorgio Guarino Marcellians Lodge 4450, Jack Clark Buckinghamshire Motorcycle Lodge 9926.

IN MEMORY OF TREVOR STUBBINGS

- The Tommy Fleming Appeal Update

It is almost 4 years since Trevor passed to the Grand Lodge above and we still miss him. During the latter part of his life Trevor was most supportive of a local family living in Maids Moreton whose son, Tommy Fleming, was born at the same time as Trevor's own grandson.

Sadly Tommy was born severely disabled with Wolf Hirschhorn Syndrome which was diagnosed when he was eight months old.

Following Trevor's passing in 2018 Grand Union Lodge 9641 and Nightingale Lodge of Mark Master Masons 1768 decided to launch an Appeal to continue to support Tommy and his family in Trevor's memory. At that time Tommy was eight years of age.

Donations came in from many members of the craft as well as other Lodges. Fund raising events were well supported and the BMCF responded to a request for a hoist to lift Tommy on to his trampoline by purchasing that unit for £2800.

Until now approximately £10000 has been raised and donated to the Tommy Fleming Appeal. This money has been used to purchase various items of equipment, a lifting sling and a telescopic hoist, as requested by Tommy's parents. Physiotherapy treatment has been financed from the Appeal as required following the several operations Tommy has had.

Recently Tommy's parents have applied for him to be accepted for a placement in the PACE centre in Aylesbury, a special needs centre well known to Buckinghamshire Freemasons who have supported it since it's start up thirty years ago.

As this placement required Council funding it was necessary to appoint a local company of Consultants who were familiar with the procedures needed to support Tommy's application. The cost of the consultancy was £4000 which was paid from the Appeal funds and as a result of their work the AVDC has accepted Tommy into the PACE centre and he will start there in September 2022.



Above: Janice and Trevor Stubbings. Below: Tommy Flemming.

Below is a note from Tommy's Mum, Sarah, expressing her thanks to Buckingham Freemasons and explaining the benefits the PACE centre will bring to Tommy's life.

"Tommy's placement at PACE in Aylesbury is so important for his future development. Tommy will benefit from the fully integrated and holistic approach that PACE is known for. He will also benefit from smaller class sizes (number of children) in larger rooms, which means he will be able to focus and concentrate better - it helps him process if the environment is quieter and less busy.

He will also benefit from better equipment, in-house therapists who are on site, and a higher ratio of staff to pupils.

With his spine operations behind him, and a double hip operation ahead, it was really important to ensure Tommy had the provision to be able to give him the best opportunity for recovery and development at this stage, because this is the last chance prior to adulthood for him (and that brings a whole new set of challenges with it!).

The alternative provision that the Council wanted to send him to has been oversubscribed this year so he would have been in a very small room with a lot of children and external therapist provision.



They would have struggled to meet his needs.

We are so pleased with the result and just want to say a massive thank you to everyone at the Bucks Freemasons who has helped make this possible. Without the funds raised by the Bucks Freemasons we would not have been able to employ the service we needed to challenge the Council and win. We are forever in your debt!"

On behalf of Keith Perrett of Nightingale Lodge of Mark Master Masons and myself, Tony Cersell, of Grand Union Lodge we thank you all for your support for our Tommy Fleming Appeal.

WING WALK PUTS WIND UP STEVE



Back in 2019 W Bro Derek Hircock, then almoner of Manor of Swanburn Lodge 8647 announced to the Lodge that he wanted to do a wing walk in order to raise funds for the 2021 festival.

Charity Steward Steve Perry set the wings in motion by booking a flight at Rendcomb Aerodrome Cirencester with Aero Superbatics. Sponsorship forms were prepared and monies pledged. After booking the flight Derek experienced some ill health and his doctor advised him not to attempt the wing walk and Derek reluctantly agreed. This left Steve with the unenviable task of finding a replacement. At the next meeting Steve asked for volunteers. To his delight four hands were raised. Steve then explained the necessary criteria for the wing walk – no one over 14 stone or over 6'2" tall. Four hands were lowered! It was then Steve realised he was the only person who fitted the criteria and with his fear of heights very reluctantly agreed to take on the challenge.

Covid followed resulting in postponement after postponement. Eventually a date was set for September 5th 2022. Lodge members, friends and family booked hotels and camp sites (sorry Mike and Rose



Steve strapped on and ready to fly.

Clanfield for wasted trip) to witness the daredevil feat. Steve's nerves were in tatters when the call came just hours before that the wind was too strong and the flight was postponed again.

A new date of 27th September was set. Once again Steve and supporters booked in at Cirencester. The day arrived and there was no turning back. Steve's wife Kerry presented him with "Biggles" goggles and leather helmet and he was set fair. Safety talk completed Steve was strapped to the top wing of the bi-plane. 15 minutes later it was all over.

He did it! Congratulations followed and Steve's legs eventually stopped shaking.

Many thanks to all sponsors who contributed to an amazing £4225 raised of which £2000 was pledged to the MCF. Well done Steve Perry.



W Bro David Field (WM), W Bro Paul Ricketts, W Bro Ian Bailey (ProvGSec).

50 years in Freemasonry

On 6th November 2022 W Bro Paul Ricketts of Penn & Tyler's Green Lodge No 5876 celebrated 50 years in Freemasonry having been initiated on 6th November 1973. At the Lodge meeting on Friday 9th December 2022 the Provincial Grand Secretary was delighted to attend to present W Bro Paul with a certificate to commemorate this milestone in W Bro Paul's masonic career.

At the meeting the members of the Lodge also Raised Bros Nicholas Truelove and Darren Pinson.



Congratulations to Bro David Clark - 25th Recipient of the Don Varney Award

The Don Varney award was conceived by V.W. Bro. Don Varney, our Past Deputy Provincial Grand Master in charge and is awarded to junior brethren who have excelled in their masonic career in an exceptional manner before reaching the chair of their lodge.

This year's recipient is no exception but has truly gone way beyond this.

He was Initiated during the pandemic just 2 years ago.

He has become a regular at Lodges around the Province, delivering the working tools in all of the degrees standing in as both Inner Guard, Junior Deacon, and Senior Deacon at short notice on many occasions.

He even delivered a perfect rendition of the Ecclesiastes to the candidate in the third degree and went on to deliver the working tools while at the same time acting as Inner guard at the same meeting.

He has delivered the address to the brethren at installations on many occasions.

He is a member of 2 Lodges (Marcellians and Stephens) with an active office in each and is a regular



visitor supporting many lodges throughout the Province.

He has been instrumental in assisting the recovery of Stephens Lodge by taking office and organising the first, very successful Sunday walk a couple of weeks ago.

He also organised the swimathon for the festival, rallied support, took part, and achieved more than £6000 in sponsorship across the team.

This year's recipient has truly demonstrated the essence and ethos behind this award that Don Varney wished to promote.

We send our congratulations to David for this well-earned reward.

Bro David Clark now joins this illustrious group of recipients:

2008 Bros P J Bennett
J A Hunt
A Holmes
F P Sambrook

2009 Bros T C Arnold
A I King

2010 Bros C J Coombs
J K Iyengar
F S Mills

2011 Bro P A R Cole

2012 Bro N G Wilson

2013 - Bros A G Niblock
J T Cooney

2014 Bros S C Blair
T I Carter
G Fraser

2015 Bro C Devereux

2016 Bros G Laws
D Thrower

2017 - None

2018 Bros D J Winterburn
P Williams
S H Williams

2019 Bro J Palman

2020 Bro S Barker

2021 None

2022 Bro. D Clark

LODGE OF ST BARNABAS LADIES NIGHT



W Bro Mike Bull and W Bro Chris Soper presented the cheque to Mr & Mrs Harry Sear.

The Lodge of St Barnabas held its Ladies night in March this year. Over 120 attendees had an enjoyable weekend held at the Voco Spires Hotel Oxford.

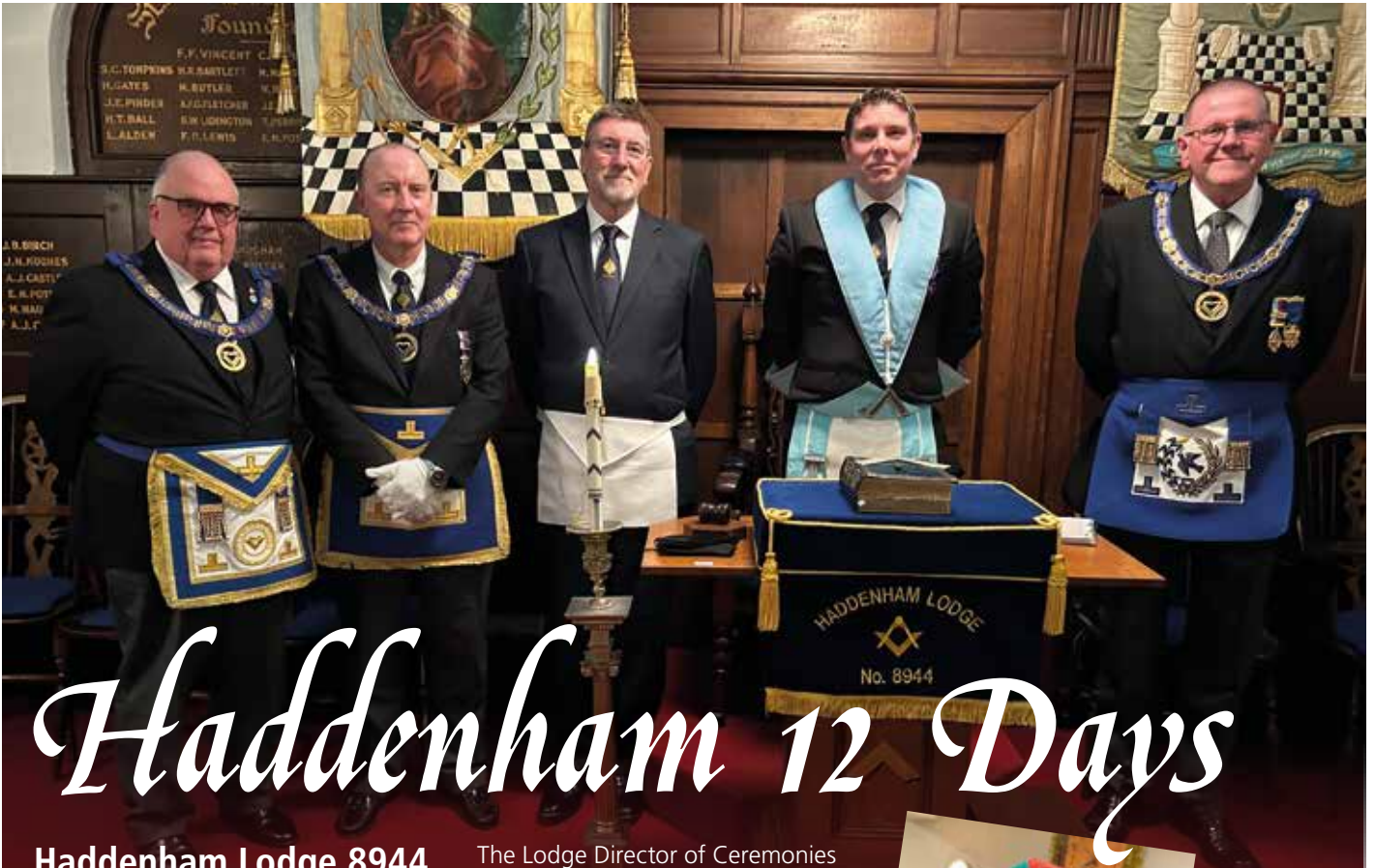
On the Friday night, after an excellent buffet meal, a quiz was held, which was quite interesting with the London underground stations being the star of the show after several other rounds of general knowledge and specific subjects. An introductory speech was given by Mr Harry Sear, the Principal for the charity RECLAIM LIFE, a local charity in Leighton Buzzard.

Reclaim Life is a charity offering therapeutic life coaching using the Human Givens approach to promoting emotional wellbeing, based in Leighton Buzzard supporting people in the local community across Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire. The volunteer therapeutic life coaches offer practical help that deals with mental and emotional distress.

Saturday night was the Gala Dinner with speeches and a raffle and various other charity raising collections were made during the evening followed by a disco to midnight. A very good and enjoyable night was had by all.

Overall a sum of £2,500 was raised and donated to RECLAIM LIFE.

Our Master W Bro Mike Bull and the Treasurer, W Bro Chris Soper presented the cheque to Mr & Mrs Harry Sear at their new premises in September 2022.



Haddenham 12 Days

Haddenham Lodge 8944 served up its annual Christmas Fare, on the 7th December, in the form of an Initiation as part of the *Provincial "12 Days of Christmas"*.

With a plethora of current AsstProvGMs (two from Bucks and one from Oxfordshire) one PAsstProvGM (Bucks) six other Grand Officers and more than 50 members and guests in attendance, the Lodge was treated to an excellent ceremony to welcome Bro Chris Plumb into Freemasonry.

In particular, W Bro Gary Brodie AsstProvGM praised the 'light Blues' who conducted the ceremony, Worshipful Master Lloyd Davies, Junior Warden Chris Money (Charge to the Initiate), Junior Deacon Steve Adkins and Fellow Craft James Redden (working tools) for their excellent ritual.

The Lodge Director of Ceremonies (aka W Bro Bill Smithson ProvGDC) had invited all those attending to bring along a favourite or meaningful hat from their past rather than wear Christmas cracker hats at the Festive Board. This created much hilarity at the range of headwear being sported. Along with schoolboy caps, military berets, flat caps, and fedoras, of various hues, there was a Storm Trooper helmet, a three foot high Flamingo, a Rab C Nesbitt lookalike (W Bro Barry Sparks) and a particularly good likeness of Roy 'Chubby' Brown by the Lodge ADC, W Bro Steve Smirthwaite, although in mitigation, he did point out that he had actually worn that particular flying helmet during his time as a helicopter pilot in the RAF (sadly, that didn't stop the mickey taking).

The Festive Board was graced with an excellent meal and a lot of fun with the singing of carols and the Entered Apprentice song, as usual all led by the Lodge Choir Master W Bro Tony Robinson PAsstProvGM.



Images From Top: The Master and Initiate with the AsstProvGM; Lee Buckingham; Tony Robinson; W. Bro Gary Brodie; The 3 services L-R ... Bro Chris Money RN, W Bro Steve Smirthwaite RAF and Bro Stewart Ward Royal Regiment of Fusiliers; W Bros Neil Robertson and Bill Smithson.



Stokenchurch members and Banner.

Stokenchurch Lodge No. 7438 BANNER DEDICATION

On 28th November 2022, in the Marlow Masonic Centre, Stokenchurch Lodge No. 7438 held a Dedication Ceremony to acknowledge their new Banner.

The Almoner, W Bro Dean Hawes, was initiated into Stokenchurch Lodge 25 years ago and was honoured to be unveiling and introducing the new Banner.

The Stokenchurch Lodge was consecrated in 1956 with 30 members and a new Lodge Banner. Now 66 years later, they also have 30 members and a new Lodge Banner, albeit at a cost of £3,500.

He explained that the Windsor Back Chair in the middle of the banner represents both the importance chairmaking played in the Stokenchurch economy of the 1950s and also that many of the founders worked in the furniture industry.

The Lodge still has links with the furniture industry, W Bro Eric Heath having his own furniture workshop, with Bro Kevin Long and W Bro Brian Elson being former polishers. Dean himself is a former cabinet maker with his father and grandfather both being chairmakers.

Behind the Windsor Back Chair is a Beech tree, Beech being the preferred timber for frame making in the furniture industry. The greenery at the base of the chair alludes to the fields and meadows that surrounded Stokenchurch in the 1950s.

Just before the Banner Dedication, the members conducted a Lodge of Sorrow Ceremony in memory of Bob Smith. This is a very moving Commemoration of Departed Merit for an honoured and much-loved Lodge member.



It's not every day that an opportunity to see just one of these ceremonies comes along so it was very special for Stokenchurch Lodge to honour both their departed member and also their new banner.

It will be a day that the members and visitors will remember for many years to come.



Long Service Award – W Bro Derek Jones

The long service award certificate was presented to W Bro Derek Jones for his amazing achievement of 60 years in Freemasonry. This was presented on 12th January 2023, exactly 60 years to the day after Derek was initiated into River Lodge, Slough.

The certificate was presented by the Provincial Grand Master RW Bro John Clark and attended by the Provincial Grand Secretary W Bro Ian Bailey. Also In attendance from Marlow Bridge was his proposer and seconder W Bros Lawrence Haines and Roger Page and the Lodge Almoner, W Bro Mike Perry.

Derek was born in Edmonton, North London and spent his early years living in Wood Green whilst attending Trinity Wood Grammar School. He moved to Maidenhead in 1961 and was employed all his working life as a professional accountant for George Mellor Ltd in Slough. Derek joined River Lodge, Slough in 1963 and then joined Marlow Bridge Lodge in 2005 after River Lodge handed in their warrant.

Derek has 2 children and 6 grandchildren, 3 of whom live in Australia. Derek has been a keen member of the Salvation Army all his life. His other hobbies and interests include Freemasonry and football.

Marlow Masonic Centre Christmas

The Marlow Masonic Centre hosted many Lodge Christmas meetings and Lodge socials during December. The Centre also hosted various charitable meetings, and lunches for local groups and businesses. The Centre Committee and the Centre Management, implemented a number of initiatives leading up to the Christmas period, including:

Toys and Gifts for Needy Children in Bucks

The Marlow Centre dining room was opened, during October and November, for the Brethren to donate Gifts / Toys to be passed on to "Inspire Bucks", a charity which donates gifts to needy children not only at Christmas but also on their Birthdays. The Brethren donated a multitude of gifts, and W Bro Tony Martin drove over to the Bucks County Council Offices where he handed 12 large boxes of toys and gifts to an approximate value of £2500, to Councillor Paul Irwin, who thanked him for the generous donation from the Brethren of Marlow. Paul knows it will make a great difference to some children in Bucks. Many children will now wake up on Christmas morning and receive a gift from Santa. A very big thank you to all those that donated, and for making this a worthwhile initiative.

Marlow Masonic Centre Chairman's Carol Service

On the 9th December the Marlow Masonic Centre Chairman hosted his annual carol service. Brethren, wives and families met for a pre-concert drink in the bar, before retiring to the Temple where they were rewarded by a full rendition of new and old Christmas songs and Carols from the Marlow Glee Choir. Following the Carols the Brethren transferred to the dining room for a full three-course Christmas dinner, followed by the obligatory raffle. All monies raised will be donated to the Marlow Opportunity Playgroup.

Marlow Centre Elderly Persons Christmas Lunch



On the 16th December, the Centre hosted 70 of the Elderly of Marlow, and its surrounding areas, to a Christmas Lunch and Drinks. Unfortunately the head count was reduced due to the very cold weather.



The participants were visited by Father Christmas who handed out some gifts. Each of the attendees was given free raffle tickets and a draw took place in which each person dining received a prize. At the end of the day they all also received a miniature Christmas tree, a cup cake, a box of mince pies, scratch cards and other small Christmas gifts. All the raffle prizes and gifts were generously donated by Tony and Gail Carter, and Keith and Terri Ward.

Marlow Masonic Centre Christmas Raffle

On the 17th December, members, wives and families met at the Marlow Centre for the Annual Xmas Raffle. This raffle has been held since 2019. Raffle prizes each year are donated by the Brethren of Marlow Lodges and local businesses. A fine turnout of Brethren and their families and friends gathered for the draw, where over 30 prizes ranging from restaurant vouchers, a hedge trimmer, hampers, bottles of spirits etc., were distributed. Following the raffle the Marlow Centre Committee laid on a Sumptuous Free Snack Buffet for all who attended. The £2000.00 proceeds from the Raffle will be donated to the Marlow Opportunity Playgroup and other local children's charities.

A LEWIS' TALE

A journey into, away from, and back into Freemasonry

"My first recollection of what I now know was Freemasonry was at the very young age of maybe 7 or 8. One of my uncles, namely Uncle Fred, was the steward at the Cole Court Masonic Centre in Twickenham. Our families slept over many times on what I now know were Meetings and Ladies nights. I remember Uncle Fred, Uncle Norman and my father disappearing for the evening downstairs from Uncle Fred's accommodation in dark suits and carrying briefcases, leaving us under strict instructions to not go downstairs.

The highlight of the evening for my brother, myself and any other cousins that may have been staying over, was chicken or scampi and chips in a basket followed by the 70's favourites of profiteroles or Black Forest Gateau – yum yum.

Ten years or so on I had decided being a chef was my chosen career and left home at around the age of 18, travelling around the country gaining experience at different hotels and restaurants. Father and now my elder Brother were going to meetings and we had several weekends away in various hotels for Ladies nights, some great weekends with great company.

Dad had always mentioned about becoming a mason but I was too busy working here and there moving to this job or that. In about 1997 I set up home fairly local to Mum and Dad in the village I grew up in Croxley Green. I had a complete career change which meant my evenings were now free so I joined Freemasonry. The Lodge I joined was the afore-mentioned village, Number 8636, both my Dad and brother were members so this was an obvious choice.

I spent many happy years at this Lodge and really started to spread my masonic "wings" I ended up in Royal Arch belonging to Penmans Green Chapter, Mark Master Masons belonging to Chevalier Lodge and finally Knights Templar belonging to Hatfield Preceptory, as you can imagine I had a fairly busy diary. I still went to Lodge of Instruction every Tuesday for my mother Lodge, in which I was the Senior Warden.

Somehow, amongst all this masonic work. I had time to have my 3 children who were rapidly growing up and starting to, quite rightly, need more and more of my time in the evenings and at weekends.

My departure from the Masons started with not making LOIs, then meetings and although going into the Master's chair of my Mother Lodge was imminent, I made the heavy-hearted decision to step back from all of my Lodges. Being a burden on both my time and finances, I resigned from all of them.

A little while ago and now my children are grown up, I started thinking about rekindling my masonic career, my main worry was that my Mother Lodge meets at Ashwell House in St Albans so on a good day a 45-minute drive up the M25 from my home in Slough. Then all of a sudden, an advert popped up on Facebook about Buck's freemasons. I completed the on-line form which was a very quick and easy thing to do.

This page is well managed and the next day I was both e-mailed and phoned. I spoke to James who was easy to talk to. After a quick synopsis of my masonic career he soon pointed me in the direction of the Old Pals. The next week I met with a few of the members for a chat and was made to feel at ease and invited to attend the meeting to install the new Master, which I did.

Meeting new people can be a bit daunting especially if you don't really know anyone that well, but I was made to feel welcome and at home straight away, from the entered



W Bro Wal Chahal (Proposer), Bro Mark Linley and RW Bro Ray Reed (Second).

apprentices all the way up to the Worshipful Master and all the "Dark Blue" Aprons I was sat with at the festive board. The workings were superb – I particularly liked the working tools in all the 3 degrees, I can honestly say I have never heard better, well done all 3 of you. I think I need to start looking at my ritual book!!

The Entertainment at the festive board was another highlight, as was the food. To sum up, I already feel at home within the Old Pals and I hope I can add to the success of not only this Lodge, but all Lodges. Thank you for taking the time to read this I hope it was informative in one way or the other."

Bro. Mark Linley

Vale Lodge celebrates a special 60th

On Monday 7th November 2022, the Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro John Clark was delighted to present Bro Donald Gibbons with a Long Service Award recognising 60 years in Freemasonry. RW Bro John was accompanied by W Bros Webster Springer (Past



Master of Vale Lodge No 6632), Peter Russell (Secretary, Vale Lodge No 6632) and Ian Bailey, Provincial Grand Secretary. The presentation was made at Bro Don's home in St Albans.

Bro Don was initiated into Vale Lodge 6632 on 19th September 1962 at the age of 24 years. The Worshipful Master on that day was his father W Bro Sidney Frank Gibbons, who was the Primus IPM at the Vale Lodge consecration on 29th April 1948. Don remains a member of Vale Lodge 6632 to this day.

Don has a love of music and still plays. His working life was with British Telecom. He is now retired and lives in St Albans.

Marlow Ladies - a great end to a great year!



We had a lovely Christmas Lunch at Harleyford Golf Club. Good food, good company and a very successful raffle in aid of our chosen charity – Mind Uk. All our fundraising this year will be going to the local branch.

But we are not just about fundraising – that's a bonus – we are about friendship and enjoying a variety of trips, speaker evenings and lunches together.

We have been to Bletchley Park, Eltham Palace, Sudeley Castle and also enjoyed a variety of topics on our speaker evenings.

Like many organisations things have been a little down on attendance following the lifting of restrictions but we are slowly getting back to full membership again which is great. We would love to see more guests, friends and potentially new members so please come along and join us.

We have many interesting trips and speakers planned for the coming year. We start with our very popular Quiz Night on 24th January at Liston Hall Marlow. This is always a really fun start to the year and if you would like to know more please call us, the contact details are on the poster.

MARLOW CENTRE LADIES CLUB



Don't let the name fool you!

We welcome all ladies who have any (direct family) connection with Freemasonry (any Lodge) to become members of this friendly club.

We also welcome their partners and friends to participate in our varied daytime outings, and local social events (evenings and some afternoons).

So, if you'd like to become part of our friendly group, then simply contact us for more info.

To find out more and a friendly chat, please phone Sheila on 07793 209019



Temple Manor Lodge Field Promotion

At the Temple Manor November meeting, their Visiting Officer, W Bro Tony Martin ProvGAlm, was in attendance for his annual official meeting.

W Bro Andre de Grave had missed the previous Installation meeting due to being Covid positive so was being invested again, as Almoner, having held the post for 6 years. The WM, W Bro Tim Anders, thanked him for all the good works he carries out for the Lodge and the brethren. As he resumed his seat in the Lodge two brethren stood, and following on from the WM, thanked Andre for everything he had done for them during their recent illnesses.

On the second rising the VO stood to talk about the Role of a Provincial Grand Almoner, and explained the hierarchy of the Provincial Almoner team. He asked W Bro Andre to join him on the floor and thanked him, on behalf of his two predecessors, for all the activities he had carried out in the last few years, and also for the manner in which Andre had organised the mobility aids and stairlifts for the Province. W Bro Tony Martin then informed Andre that he had a message from the ProvGM, and this was that the badge on his Apron was wrong. He then quickly explained that was

because on behalf of the ProvGM he was there to give Andre a Field Promotion to Past Provincial Grand Registrar. This was followed by a short period of time when W Bro Andre was speechless, something rarely experienced, but he soon turned that round and made an acceptance speech.

Andre was born in Belgium then adopted by Dutch parents when he was 3 years old. His family then moved to England when he was 11 years old. Through playing rugby at boarding school he became hooker for the Berkshire County team.

Starting out as a medical engineering apprentice, he became a national medical salesman. An opportunity to start his own medical supplies company came along and his was the first to supply ultra-low hospital beds to the NHS. After the business was bought out, he was able to retire, enabling him to devote his time to helping his fellow brethren in their time of need.

Often the help provided by Almoners goes unmentioned but it is, of course, very much appreciated by those receiving it. Andre has been the Almoner for many Lodges and Chapters in his Masonic career and getting this high-ranking field promotion just goes to demonstrate the high esteem that the Province holds for this vital role.



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MOTORCYCLE LODGE ON THE MOVE YET AGAIN!



On Saturday 8th October the members of Bucks Motorcycle Lodge, aka 'The Rabble', upped stands and headed for the beautiful Masonic Centre of Guys Cliff House in Warwickshire. The building is a wonderful old manor house much of which was burnt down years ago, making it a spectacular setting for a masonic meeting.

The meeting itself was held in an old crypt, providing an atmospheric feel for the initiation ceremony being held. Andrew Lawson was initiated into the Lodge in a faultless ceremony by the Worshipful Master, W Bro Giorgio Guarino, witnessed by our Provincial Grand Master RW Bro John Clark and Assistant Provincial Grand Master Gary Brodie, both members of the Lodge, together with W Bro David Greenwood, the Assistant Provincial Grand Master for

Warwickshire. There was also a new joining member welcomed into the Lodge, W Bro Ivor Wood.

It was yet another hugely successful awayday for the Lodge with two new members and a great turn out which included several visitors from Warwickshire and beyond.

After the meeting, the members and guests enjoyed a fine festive board with lots of fun and good food had by all, with great service from the catering staff.



At the next meeting of Bucks Motorcycle Lodge, on May 27th, 2023, they are travelling to Grantham in Lincolnshire where they will be initiating yet another candidate. Motorcyclists or four wheelers are welcome at our meetings and if you would like any further information about this exciting Lodge, please contact Gary Brodie at: garybrodie@btinternet.com



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE SUPERHEROES



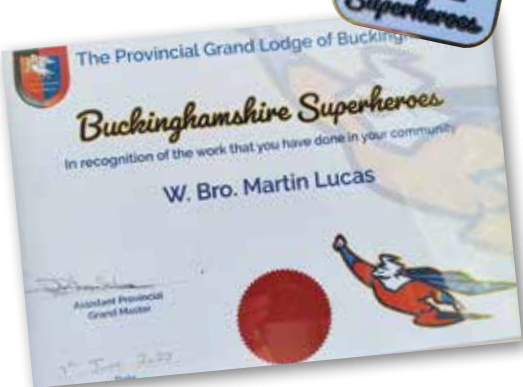
The 'Buckinghamshire Superheroes' project started with a simple comment to a member of the Executive about the amazing work individual Brethren were doing in communities.

Initially, it was a well done and a handshake from members of the Executive team. But our Province wanted to acknowledge these Brethren in a more meaningful way and so the Buckinghamshire Superheroes was started.

This is a very special club as there are only a few Superheroes badges given out each year so Brethren can wear them with pride. Connecting with local communities is so important for Freemasonry in the Community.

To say thank you for all the work being done we have produced a Superhero certificate (see photo) which will be presented to Brethren at their Lodge meetings.

We would like to thank all those who have become Superheroes to date for everything they are doing in their communities.



SIR LAWRENCE VERNEY, TD, DL 19/07/1924 to 25/07/2014

On Thursday the 12th of May W Bro Gary Brodie attended Claydon Lodge No. 9178 at the Eliot Hall, Winslow, and unveiled a tribute to Sir Lawrence Verney, the Lodge's Primus Master.

Sir Lawrence's Regalia and Founders Jewel had gone missing after his death in 2014 but was found and returned to the Lodge by The Provincial Grand Master RW Bro John Clark. The Regalia was placed in a display case with the following resume of Sir Lawrence's career.

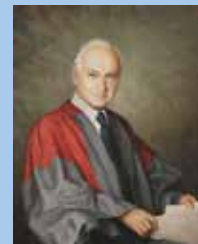
Sir Lawrence Verney was Initiated into The Old Harrovian Lodge No. 4563 on 17/6/1950. He joined Methuen Lodge No.631 on 23/5/1957, Bucks Masters Lodge No.3305 on 23/7/1971 and joined Guildhall Lodge No. 3116 on 28/3/2002. He was a founder and Primus Master of Claydon Lodge No. 9178 consecrated on the 29/1/1986. He was an Honorary member of 77 Lodges.

His Honour Sir Lawrence John Verney, TD, DL, was born into the aristocratic Verney family based at Claydon House, the fifth son of Sir Harry Verney. He became a circuit judge at Aylesbury in 1972 where he served until 1990. Sir Lawrence was also the judge on a number of high-profile cases including in 1977 when Rolling Stones guitarist

Keith Richards was tried at the court for possession of drugs. He let Richards off with a fine when many expected him to be jailed. Sir Lawrence went on to serve as the Recorder of London from 1990 to 1998. The Recorder of London is the only judge not appointed by the Queen. As part of the role, he was also the senior resident judge at the Old Bailey. Sir Lawrence was involved in the setting up of the Florence Nightingale Hospice. He was an early committee member and chaired the trustees from 1988 onwards. He was also instrumental in the initial public campaign to help raise half a million pounds for the hospice. He said on stone laying day: "Without the people of Aylesbury we would not be standing here on this cold and windswept site. With a great deal of effort, they raised the money to start the hospice."

His nephew, Sir Edmund Verney, described his uncle as 'a lovely man'. He said: "He always had a twinkle in his eye. He was a very professional man who always took his job very seriously but at the same time he had a boyish yet sophisticated sense of humour."

Sir Lawrence married Zoe Goodeve-Docker, in 1972.



AsstProvGM Garie Brodie and W Bro Phil Manning.

The Annual Interlodge Hog Roast

The latest Annual Interlodge Hog Roast / Garden Party was held at Radnage Village Hall on Sunday 3rd July 2022.

Tony Martin of Wycombe Lodge said, "it was another wonderful day, the weather came as was ordered by the organiser, so lots of sunbathing, the food and drink were plentiful and the day was attended by 105 members, guests and their children from 18 different Lodges and Chapters"



Don't Look Now Band.

The assembled guests were treated to a musical extravaganza for the afternoon by the "Don't Look Now Band", who provided a selection of music to suit most tastes.

Thanks to the generosity of the people who attended the function, the various sponsors, and the sale of raffle tickets, the day raised the sum of £1800 for Charity.

The money raised will be donated to the following: the sum of £1000, to the Marlow Opportunity Playgroup, who provide a happy and caring environment for children under 5 with disabilities, where they can learn through play in a secure and experienced setting. A donation was made to the Temple Manor / Hughenden Cycle Challenge, and the remainder will be allocated to either a Masonic or a Children's charity.

The organisers would also like to say a big thank you to W J Webb and Sons, Marc McLaughlin, Keith Ward, Bill Thomas, and the Burke, Seer Green, Wycombe, St Lawrence, and Hughenden Masonic Lodges who provided various levels of sponsorship for the day, and also to all the help from various Lodge members for the setting up and clearing up on the day, a group of people that no event can run without.

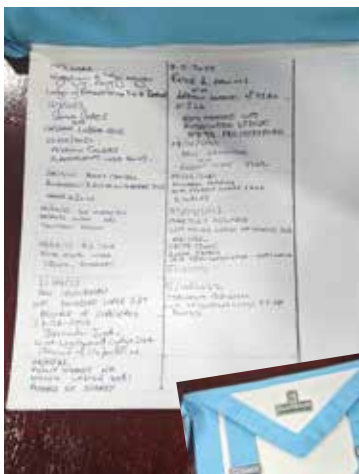


St Georges support fund raiser

On Wednesday 5th October, St George's Lodge welcomed W Bro David Craner of Beaminster Manor Lodge No 1367.

W Bro Craner has embarked on an extraordinary challenge to raise money for the MCF by visiting every Lodge in his home province of Dorset and 1 Lodge from every province in England.

In 2021 W Bro Craner required a knee replacement. On consulting his doctors and specialist, the wait time for the NHS was 2-3 years. Mentioning this to the ProvgM, he suggested contacting the Provincial Almoner, who in turn contacted the MCF. On speaking to the MCF representative, they agreed to fund a consultation of up to £500. The consultant agreed the surgery was required and submitted a report to the MCF and David got the go ahead for the knee replacement to happen. The surgery itself cost £15,500.



Right: David's apron and the reverse side of the apron above.



W Bro Malcolm Aspinall (left) & W Bro David Craner (right).

Feeling guilty about the donation, David wondered what to do in order to raise funds for the MCF. He set upon the task to visit all 48 Lodges in Dorset, asking the Lodges to cover the cost of the meal, which he would add to the fund, and donating the raffle proceedings for the night to his MCF fund raising. To set his task a little tougher, W Bro Craner decided to visit one Lodge

from every province in UGLE. At the point of the meeting, W Bro Craner has visited 17 provinces with a further 2 in the next 2 days with a total raised thus far for over £4000. The brethren of St George's donated over £300 towards his charity. W Bro Craner was welcomed to the first meeting from the summer break to an initiation and a packed festive board.



Tales of a Provincial Warden

Matt Perkins PPGW

In 2021, the Provincial Grand Master was pleased to appoint me to be Provincial Junior Grand Warden, alongside the now Deputy Provincial Grand Master, Neil Robertson, as the Provincial Senior Grand Warden.

I thought it might be good to share a few of our experiences and highlights, and give some insight into the work of a Provincial Warden. Previous to being appointed, I was a Provincial Grand Steward, Provincial Grand Pursuivant (for 2 years) and then a Past Provincial Grand Registrar. I set up and ran the Provincial Ritual Support Team, then was

appointed as editor of this very publication and was part of the redesign. I was then appointed as Provincial Communications Officer and ran our social media, website, Concord and press relations teams for three years. I am also lucky enough to have been a Trustee of the Masonic Samaritan Fund (before the inception of the MCF) and I am now the Special Dental Advisor for the MCF and sit as a committee member of the MCF Charity Grants Committee.

A Call from the Blue

The call from the ProvGM came totally out of the blue. I spoke to John Clark regularly with my role on comms, so his number flashing up on my phone was not as unusual one. The content of the call, however, was a total shock. Being asked to be his Provincial Junior Grand Warden was a great honour. And one that I had to keep completely to myself for three months until it was announced - complete nightmare! Not even my father

(a Bucks Master Mason) knew until the announcement was made.

The role of warden is a very special one, and in Bucks, we have a particularly active role. Firstly, we are privileged to be able to represent the ProvGM at installation meetings and, due to the one year nature of the appointment, we are able to choose the meetings we want to attend BEFORE the Chains get to choose. The ability to attend a meeting, see new masters being installed, and sharing their special evening is something that I will treasure for a long time. I was a Steward Escort before being warden and let me tell you, delivering the Address to the Master is a lot more stressful when you are front and centre!!!

As a warden, we are also invited to the quarterly executive meeting and this is where the business of the province is sorted. Attended by the executive and their advisors, these meetings were a real



eye opener. I had no idea how much time and energy was spent trying to get the strategy and execution of the running of the Province. The energy, skills and experience in the room is extraordinary and I was pleased to be able to experience it.

The Not So BIG event

It is fair to say that Neil Robertson and I quickly developed a reputation with the ProvGM for being mischievous and having fun in Lodge meetings. The Not So BIG event, organised expertly by John King when he was Provincial Grand Mentor, saw the ProvGM initiating over 35 candidates personally over 10 days. A fantastic achievement and testimony to the amazing success of our marketing, comms and membership teams. Neil and I attended every meeting and, as wardens, we were offered up as sacrificial lambs to take any office that the Lodges required on the night. Neil and I did every office over the 10 days, and on one evening we did the deacons roles for first initiation of the evening and then swapped over for the next one. It is fair to say that, after so many initiations, we got a little delirious and had to stay apart from each other at one meeting because we couldn't stop ourselves from laughing at each other. The Not So BIG event will stand out as one of the personal highlights of my year, and I was pleased to make my own contribution to those new Bucks Freemasons.

The other role that Wardens are asked to perform is to sit on the Bucks Masonic Centenary Fund (BMCF) and assist in the great works they do for the local community. Again, this team provides invaluable help to those in need and the levels of care and due diligence are comparable with those of the MCF when giving many thousands of pounds to charity. The tireless work of Andrew Hough and the Past DepProvGM, Hugh Douglas-Smith, is something that is rarely recognised and was another eye opener.

The 12 Days of Christmas

Shortly before completing our year as wardens, Neil and I were asked to organise another membership initiative to once again showcase the innovation and forward thinking nature of our provincial executive. The 12 Days of Christmas was born and,

as I write this, we are half way through it. 46 initiations in 12 days is no mean feat and we are once again pleased that (so far!) it is all going well and the festive boards have been well attended - so thank you to all who supported us.

The best and worst day of being a warden for me was the PGL meeting in October. It is a great honour to sit in the Grand Temple in the Wardens chair and open the Lodge with the ProvGM. But it is tinged with sadness that the year is over - in the blink of an eye.

I have been very privileged to be Provincial Junior Grand Warden and it offered me even more insight into our wonderful, thriving and diverse province. For those who wish to get involved, Buckinghamshire Freemasons provides a great way to make a difference and expand your horizons.

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

During the first two weeks of December, Buckinghamshire Freemasons held their Twelve Days of Christmas Initiation Initiative. 45 candidates were initiated into 28 Lodges across 11 Masonic centres in the Province, with fun-filled meetings and festive boards providing a very merry build-up to Christmas 2022.

As the 12 Days of Christmas came to a close, we were totally blown away by your support and the amazing work done both behind the scenes and in the temples of Buckinghamshire.

The 12 Days initiative came about as we were, once again(!), inundated with new candidates for Buckinghamshire Freemasonry. The incredible hard work of our communications, marketing and membership teams meant that, once again, we had a backlog of interested parties looking to join our wonderful Province.

The Provincial Grand Wardens of 2021/22, W Bro Neil Robertson and W Bro Matt Perkins were tasked with organising the event, engaging as many Lodges as possible throughout the province. The Deputy and Assistant Provincial Grand Masters were also heavily involved in ensuring the Lodges that received candidates were well supported and able to fill all of the offices required.

As usual, the Bucks Freemasons rose to the challenge superbly, especially given the tight timelines that were in play. The membership team, headed by Mark Harry, worked tirelessly keeping candidates engaged and working with Lodge secretaries to ensure a smooth experience for all. Communications and marketing (headed by Grae Laws and Phil Witney) were essential in attracting yet more enquiries and spreading the word about 12 Days to engage as many brethren as possible. And behind the scenes, the AsstProvGMs, DepProvGM and the Provincial Office worked to make sure everything was above board and dispensations were issued. A special thanks also goes to our Bucks Hermes Champion, Nick Hills Sands-Potter, who worked with the Lodges that required help to get everything through the new Hermes system.

The meetings themselves were excellent and were too numerous to mention them all here but there were some particularly unusual and memorable meetings, including a meeting at St Martin's where the Junior Deacon took his own son around the floor to be initiated. This was attended by a further 8 pairs of fathers and sons, making the evening very special indeed.

Haddenham Lodge decided that hats were the order of the day, with those at the meeting encouraged to wear their fanciest headgear. The sight of our AsstProvGM Gary Brodie (wearing a police helmet) attempting to arrest our ProvGDC, Bill Smithson (wearing a Flamingo on his head!), is a sight that will live long in the memory.

Slough Daylight Lodge have recently become a shooting Lodge and, true to form, they initiated a serving soldier into the Lodge, followed by a shooting range being set up in the car park for all to try their skills. A jovial brunch as a festive board and

a good time had by all.

But the most memorable meeting for many will be the joint meeting of Old Paludians and Orion Lodges, where the combination of Emulation and Logic workings gave a *ahem* unique ceremony for all. The new initiate was well looked after and will have a great time as a member of Orion Lodge. But the surprise event of the evening was the announcement that, after being appointed as CIO to UGLE, VW Bro Hugh Douglas-Smith stepped down as DepProvGM and W Bro. Neil Robertson, organiser of the whole event itself, was appointed and invested as DepProvGM at the meeting. Attended by the Provincial Executive and his father, the PProvGM RW Bro Gordon Robertson, this was a very special meeting indeed. It was also made possible by the selfless attitude of Wexham Park Lodge who, with the help of AsstProvGM Matthew Eaton, moved their regular meeting to accommodate this event. A truly masonic act and very much appreciated by everyone. Thank you.

So many thanks go to everyone who helped in Twelve Days of Christmas. From the team organising the whole event, to the members of Lodges and all those who visited a meeting. It was a special and memorable event indeed. And with more than a dozen more initiates lined up for the New Year it looks like it is going to be a prosperous New Year for the Freemasons of Buckinghamshire.

And to those candidates who have joined us? Welcome! You are members of a wonderful organisation and the best province there is!

Photos clockwise from top left: Grenville Lodge; Concorde Lodge; Stephen Lodges; Roman Way & Golden Fleece Lodges; Buckingham & Cymbeline Lodges; St Martins Lodge; Bowen Lodge; Longueville Lodge; Beaconsfield Lodge; St Barnabas Lodge; Claydon Lodge.



- 1st - Watling Street Lodge No. 1639 in Stony Stratford
- 2nd - Longueville Lodge No. 9322 in Bletchley
- 2nd - Windsor End Lodge No. 9361 in Beaconsfield
- 3rd - Slough Daylight Lodge No. 9699 in Slough
- 5th - St Martins Lodge No. 2812 in Bletchley
- 5th - Thames Schools Lodge No. 6216 in Marlow
- 5th - Cestreham Lodge No. 6674 in Beaconsfield
- 5th - Beaconsfield Lodge No. 2849 & Wraysbury Lodge No. 8689 in Slough
- 7th - de Bohun Lodge No. 8175 in Aylesbury
- 7th - Great Ouse Valley Lodge No. 9235 in Newport Pagnell
- 7th - Grenville Lodge No. 1787 in Buckingham
- 7th - Haddenham Lodge No. 8944 in Thame
- 7th - Lodge of St Barnabas No. 948 in Linslade
- 8th - Claydon Lodge No. 9178 in Winslow
- 8th - Burke Lodge No. 6154 in Marlow
- 9th - Chalfont St Giles Lodge No. 9139 in Beaconsfield
- 9th - Buckinghamshire Motorcycle Lodge No. 9926 in Slough
- 10th - Bourne End Lodge No. 7943 in Marlow
- 12th - Orion Lodge No. 8756 & Old Paludians Lodge No. 7181 in Slough
- 12th - Carrington Lodge No. 2421 in Thame
- 12th - Wexham Park Lodge No. 8171 in Slough
- 13th - Roman Way Lodge No. 9533 in Stony Stratford
- 13th - Lodge of Concorde No. 8721 in Beaconsfield
- 15th - Buckingham Lodge No. 591 in Aylesbury
- 15th - Cymbeline Lodge No. 9004 in Aylesbury
- 15th - Bowen Lodge No. 2816 in Beaconsfield
- 15th - Stephens Lodge No. 3089 in Marlow
- 16th - Old School House Lodge No. 9770 in Beaconsfield



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE SUPERHEROES

IN THIS ISSUE OF CONCORD,
WE TALK TO BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
SUPERHERO **ALAN CLARK**

Where were you born?

I was born in Oldham in Manchester but have lived in Buckingham for 32 years with my wife Denise and a dog called Ryley.

What do you do for a living?

I worked in logistics as a finance director. I have now retired, but still work as a consultant within the same industry.

How did you find out about Freemasonry?

We used to go with a next-door neighbour for a Sunday evening drink and on one occasion they were at the Old Thatched Inn in Adstock. Behind the bar they got to know a barmaid called Anita Stubbings. We got a lovely greeting, so it became their local. After a while we got an invite to Anita's 21st birthday and they then met her father Trevor Stubbings. We were also invited to a few Ladies Nights and 4 years later the question came up why you are not joining? I thought about it and we had



so much fun and made good friends, it was a no brainer. I joined Grenville Lodge No 1787 in Buckingham on 14th January 1998.

What interested you in Freemasonry?

At the top is the friendships we had made; these friendships went on to become great life friends. Then there is the camaraderie.

What do you like about Freemasonry?

Working and supporting the community and Charity work. I also like learning the ritual, the social side, having fun and also raising money for good causes.

When did your charity fundraising start?

In 2007 I did my first charity fund raiser for my Lodge. It was the first of many race nights which has helped other Lodges raise money. Over the last 12 years with the help and support of Grenville, New Urban and Grand Union I have raised over £15,000. I have also done race nights for the Shenley Retirement Village and other local charities.

So what has your Masonic journey been like?

With my skillset I was elected Treasurer in 2008, which I still hold having done such a great job. Exalted in Wineslai Chapter in June 1999 and became MEZ in 2011.

What is the best thing that has happened in Freemasonry?

I'd say, it's the number of friends I have made all around the Province. But the best thing which I am most proud of is obtaining Grand Rank in Chapter.

What is your best memory?

Going through the Chair in October 2006. The Ladies Festival was held at the Villiers Hotel Buckingham. Loads of relatives travelled from Torquay and Oldham. Denise even did her speech which was most out of character for her.



Paul with W Bro Hugh Douglas-Smith and partner, Renata with Alan Clark.

Why do you think Freemasonry should support the community and charity?

I feel it is important for local Lodges to help their local community. For example, our Lodge has helped a local girl who is disabled by paying for a lift in her home and a special chair for her car with the support of the BMBF.

How do you support your local community?

It all started in 1979. I was an Adventure Scout, and I wanted my community badge. So I went and helped out at radio Cavell at Oldham general hospital. That was it, I loved it and I have been now doing this for over 40 years.

Why do you enjoy it so much?

Well, it's all down to bingo. I enjoy the interaction with the patients and the staff. Visiting the wards and getting requests from family, patients and staff. While visiting the wards I would hand out Bingo tickets for a game later which everyone used to love and it brought a lot of smiles to the wards and staff. This would then be followed by the request show.

It made me feel so good bringing so much joy to the wards and bringing people together. And I still get the same feeling even after all these years.

Do you have any stories of things going wrong?

We would broadcast and do the commentary for the local football team Oldham Athletic throughout the two hospitals in Oldham. On more than one occasion the commentary suddenly stopped, we would then receive loads of phone calls wanting to know what had happened. This meant I would have to rush down to the ground below to carry on with the commentary game side.

Have you had anyone famous on the radio?

Well, you could say yes, I interviewed Ena Sharples from Coronation Street and Steve Penk who was on Radio 1.

How are you funded?

The Hospital provides us with a room for our Studio, this has now increased and we have two studios, but we must pay to kit it. It costs us around £5,000 a year to run.

You mentioned you had help from local Freemasons, how did that work?

Grenville Lodge donates every year and in 2020 the BMCF funded a new studio. In addition, the local Freemasons have supported the hospital by paying for a large garden to be developed for patients, their families and staff. This is used all the time. There was also a donation to the new Cancer ward and the Teddies for children has been a major success.

Earlier you mentioned race nights, tell me about that?

These have proved to be a great success and a fund-raising opportunity for Lodges, charities and local causes like Round Table and Rotary. In this time, I have raised over £20K

What does this involve?

These are filmed races with 8 horses in each race. We sell the tote tickets. There is sponsorship for each race. There is so much fun and excitement and it is lovely to see the celebrations from those who win.

What else do you do?

I am also involved in the armistice Sunday lunch which is held at the Bell Hotel in Winslow.

I was heavily involved in the original Bike ride from Land's End to John O'Groats. I was with the support team. This was so successful it was the start of the Rock Ride from Gibraltar to Buckingham. There was a Rock Ride 1 & 2. which involved other charities and raised over £200,000

Before lockdown with Covid our Lodge provided a Christmas party for the Young Carers of Buckingham and Winslow and I would be the DJ for the night. We have done those for about



At the Studio 2 Opening with Phil Blacklaw and Andrew Hough, Alan and fellow presenter (Martin Thorpe (2)).

4 years as part of Freemasonry in the Community and Grenville was the first Lodge to receive provincial recognition.

What has Freemasonry meant to you?

Freemasonry has meant so much to me, it has changed me as a person and given me the opportunity to do what I like best, support my local community.

Thank you for your time, Alan

SEE WHAT THEY SAY

"We are extremely proud to have a community radio service that is fully embedded across the whole hospital as we know the benefits that it brings to our patients.

Not only is this a vital platform for informing patients about updates taking place at the Trust, the welcome relief and distraction provided by the expert team in the form of music and light entertainment is so important with supporting their recovery.

It is fantastic to see how the team is using new technology to ensure that more of our patients are able to benefit from their brilliant service."

Joe Harrison

Chief Executive

Milton Keynes University
Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

A Short history of the Province of Buckinghamshire

This new feature on Provincial History will, in future editions, focus on individual lodges and their banners. The work to draw this together has been painstakingly completed by Grae Laws, Frank Byrne and David Thrower (photography) and our thanks go to them for their dedication in doing so.

Buckinghamshire and Berkshire were originally a joint Masonic Province, but, in 1890, they became independent, with Lord Carrington as Provincial Grand Master for Buckinghamshire. However, Sir John Throckmorton, an 18th Century Catholic Freemason, had been ProvGM in 1796, although there were no Lodges, it being purely a nominal office within Grand Lodge.



Buckinghamshire was without a Lodge until May 1852, when Buckingham Lodge No. 591 was formed at Aylesbury. Sir John was also ProvGM for Berkshire, but on his death in 1819 no further appointment was made for Buckinghamshire until 1847, when the two Provinces were united under the Marquess of Downshire.

Lord Carrington's Installation took place at the then County Hall, Aylesbury. The entire range of



buildings was used for the occasion. The actual Ceremony took place in one of the courts, whilst the luncheon was held in the Corn Exchange. The first Lodges in Buckinghamshire were consecrated in 1892, and in 1901, at the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting at Marlow, a Provincial Benevolent Fund was founded. In 1905 the Provincial Directory was revived and has appeared annually ever since. Moreover, 1905 was also the last occasion - except 1941 - in which Provincial Grand Lodge met in the province, its annual meeting since 1906 being held at Freemasons' Hall, London.



At the 1920 meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge, mention is made of the Masonic Million Memorial, to which every Lodge in Buckinghamshire subscribed. In total 1,321 Lodges were thus qualified, and their names and numbers are inscribed at Freemasons' Hall in London. In addition, the Province of Buckinghamshire, and the Districts of Japan (now defunct) and Burma (in abeyance) had the distinction that every one of their Lodges, 40 in Buckinghamshire, contributed an average of more than five hundred guineas (£525). In recognition of this achievement, a third jewel, a

gold and coloured enamel jewel on a dark blue collarette, was presented to be worn by successive Provincial and District Grand Masters.



As every Lodge in the province raised the qualifying amounts, they were each entitled to be known as a Hall Stone Lodge. This gave Buckinghamshire the very great distinction of being the only Hall Stone Province within the United Grand Lodge, and for this reason there is a Lodge room in Freemasons' Hall, London, named after Buckinghamshire.

The 1939 and 1940 meetings of Provincial Grand Lodge were cancelled because of the war, and in 1941 it was held at Wycombe Abbey School. The 1942 meeting was abandoned, and in 1943 was back at Great Queen Street. Its Annual General Meeting has been held there ever since.

Following the end of the Second World War, the Province expanded rapidly. In 1980, the Prebendal Close sheltered housing scheme, a Buckinghamshire project, but largely financed by the Masonic Housing Association topped up by Buckinghamshire Masons, was officially opened.

In 2022 there are 117 Lodges in the Province and nearly 3000 subscribing members.



BLETCHLEY MASONIC CENTRE

Ladies Luncheon Club



A friendly social gathering to meet other ladies, have lunch and enjoy some entertainment...



Did you know that the Ladies Luncheon Club, which meets at the Bletchley Masonic Centre, re-started their meetings in March following the pandemic? We'd like you to be aware that, as usual, new Members would be very welcome. Our Constitution advises that Members need to have a 'close family Masonic connection'.

WOULD YOU LIKE: to contact the people below to hear a little more about us, ask any questions you may have and arrange to come along - maybe as one of our member's guests if you know someone who is already a member, and see what we all enjoy? We sincerely hope that you will enjoy your visit. We look forward to seeing you and hope you will wish to join us as a Member.

WE MEET FROM: January to May, have a Summer break and resume meetings for September to December. The Centre has a seated Reception area with Bar, a large Dining Room, and ladies' and gentlemen's cloakroom facilities. There is a free car park. We are able to meet up and have a chat and refreshment before our Luncheon. The Chair gives us a report of what is happening. This is followed by a Raffle. Books and Magazines are sometimes for sale and the proceeds go to charity. In the past year we have supported the charities Willen Hospice, Medical Detection Dogs, Marie Curie and The MK Food Cupboard.

In March we enjoyed a delicious Afternoon Tea at the Centre. In April we gathered together for a lovely two-course Luncheon and afterwards, ladies had an opportunity to chat together, take part in an interesting Easter themed Quiz and admire some of the Members' hobby work. For our May meeting, a gentleman from a local Garden Centre visited us, advised us on how to care for indoor and outdoor plants, and demonstrated how to plant up a large outdoor pot. He kindly brought along wonderful plants for sale.

A Social and Quiz on Milton Keynes was enjoyed in October. We had an interesting speaker in November on Ceramics.

In December the ladies and guests enjoyed a combined Christmas and Club's 15th birthday celebration. We were entertained by a well-known Soprano Sri Lankan singer Gayathrie Pieris, who was accompanied by Adrian Boynton, Director of Music at the City Church of Milton Keynes. It was a lovely occasion.



Gayathrie Pieris, accompanied by Adrian Boynton

The elected Committee usually meet after each meeting and once during the break. We presently have a Chair, a Treasurer, a Secretary and two Committee Members and we share what needs to be attended to. Work on the entertainment programme for 2023 is underway. New ideas are always welcome.

PLEASE CONTACT: Celia Boyer, Secretary, on 01908 605100 or Denny Dorrell, Chair, on 01908 107735



WILLEN HOSPICE

On the 10th of November 2022, 43 people from our Province arrived at Willen Hospice for a truly enlightening and informative open evening, 24 of our Lodges were represented by an equal number of Worshipful Masters and Charity Stewards, that's virtually a quarter of the Lodges within our Province.

It was a truly enjoyable experience, and I am sure that all who attended came away much better informed than upon arrival. The impact of where our money goes and what it is used for is something we seldom get to experience, and to have a better understanding of that aspect is truly enlightening and educational.

The astounded looks on the faces of the organisers as we announced that we were donating £20,000 to the Hospice was worth giving our time up for, seldom do any Lodge members get to see the grateful, emotional, and stunned looks, as generally cheques, awards or donations are given on their behalf and mostly in their absence.

The money came from 9 Lodges, who gave £1,000 each which was match funded by the MCF to £20,000, the RW Provincial Grand Master donated the final £1,000 from his discretionary fund.

During my tenure as ProvGChStwd I will be organising a lot of events and would like to get involved with as many of our Lodge functions as possible, please lend me your support when requested as I will to you. I would like any Mason in our province to feel free to call or email me at any time, as my position exists almost entirely to assist and further develop charity and fund raising within our lodges/province.

Mark Duncan

Provincial Grand Charity Steward

provgchstwd@buckspgl.org

07395 031277 *Always available*

Midnight Walk

Lee Buckingham of Haddenham Lodge put out a request to all Aylesbury Vale based Lodge secretaries calling for volunteers to support the Midnight Walk; it was going to be a long night!

69 marshals were assembled in total, of which 48 were either Masons or connected to freemasonry, representing 11 different Lodges. Promptly arriving for registration at 10:15pm, Lee began the safety & event briefing to all the volunteers at 11pm. By 11:45 the early point marshals set off to their allocated point wearing hi-vis. Through the night the marshals once given the 'clear' by a back marker, then moved on to their 2nd allocated control point. The two "Tail End Charlies" for the night were Tom Crowford for the 5 mile walkers and Guy Farrow for the 10 mile walkers, both members of Buckingham 591 Lodge. The last walker crossed the line at 05:01

The event, since it began in 2010, including this final walk, has raised approximately £1,000,000 for the charity and we, Buckinghamshire Freemasons, can proudly say we have been there for the whole journey. A huge thank you to all the volunteers, without them the event could not happen.

What's next? Well, the Florence Nightingale "Santa Dash" where Bucks Masons will answer the call again.



Servata Fides Cineri

Claydon Lodge No. 9178 meets at the Eliot Hall Winslow, and its motto is Servata Fides Cineri which, loosely translated, is honour your ancestors. But what if the line is broken and there is no one left to honour those who have gone before?

Bro. Damian Leaver, one of the Big 100 candidates has an answer to this question. Damian is a member of Claydon Lodge and a Veteran and, by a simple act, demonstrated Freemasonry and Freemasonry in the community, at its best.

This is his story:

"On the day of my 2nd Degree, I arrived early and decided to take the opportunity to run through my words. I found a bench 200m from the Eliot Hall, in Winslow Churchyard.

As I sat on the bench, I noticed that the grave directly in front of me was very overgrown and neglected. I thought what a shame as anyone coming to sit there would also feel the same, and, as there were no family mentioned on the gravestone perhaps there was no one left to care for the grave. On my next visit to Winslow, I took shears, snips and a garden fork. I set to work and cleared the grave and found an old plant identification label. I duly went off to the Garden centre and found an identical plant to replace the one that would have been there originally. Every time I attend a Lodge meeting, I visit and water the plant"

A simple act of thought and compassion that demonstrates that Freemasonry is so much more than just giving money to good causes. It is especially pleasing that a member of Claydon Lodge should unconsciously demonstrate the motto of the Lodge in such a splendid manner.



Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2022



Bro Mick Firth, Mrs Jane Firth and W Bro Dan Goodman of Manor of Swanburn Lodge on the stall at Morrisons Westcroft, Milton Keynes

For the second year W Bro Malcolm Wheeler of Manor of Swanburn Lodge, No 8647, the Royal British Legion (RBL) Bletchley Poppy Appeal Organiser, enlisted the support of Bletchley Freemasons to help in this year's appeal. Over 300 poppy tins were delivered to schools, shops, offices, pubs and hotels.

A joint RBL/ Freemasons in the Community stall was also erected at the Armed Forces day held at the MK Dons stadium MK on the

12th November to promote the RBL Poppy Appeal & Buckinghamshire Freemasonry.

Bletchley freemasons, along with their wives and families, helped with manning stalls in local supermarkets and shopping malls and importantly with counting all the money collected. With a few more donations still to be collected the total so far is a fantastic £52,650; over £11,000 more than last year's appeal.



If you would like to volunteer to help with next year's appeal, please email malwhe49@gmail.com

Teddies For Loving Care (TLC) Bucks has a new Team!

We would like to thank **W. Bro. Lou Amey** for his hard work with TLC over the last 5 years. TLC Stands For “Teddies For Loving Care” and is an exclusive Masonic initiative.

It was started 21 years ago and is now supported by all 48 provinces. Over 3.5 million teddies have so far been distributed.

Bucks TLC aim is to deliver teddy bears to Children’s A&E Departments across Buckinghamshire whose hospitals include, Milton Keynes University Hospital, Stoke Mandeville and Wexham Park Hospitals, we also respond to requests from children hospices. The aim of the teddy is to help reduce the shock, horror and distress of children in an unfamiliar environment. Once discharged the children take the teddy home with them.

Bucks have a new team in place who will be championing TLC. They are W Bro Paul Halfhide, W Bro Andrew Mais, W Bro Peter Carter, W Bro Phil Drye, W Bro John Waller and Bro Danny Peacock who are all eager to raise the profile and fund raise for the Bucks TLC.

Danny and Andrew, who are both members of Cestreham Lodge, have a twin bungee jump lined up for early 2023, so please sponsor them for their brave endeavours on behalf of the TLC. We are looking forward to running many other fund raising events throughout the year so please look to support us whenever possible.



W Bro Lou Amey (Right) handing over the reigns to W Bro Paul Halfhide (Left)

You may have seen some of our fund raising Teddies being auctioned at your Festive Boards, if you have yet to see them then please be generous as £50 will buy 23 teddies. We have also sent an appeal letter to all 117 Lodges asking for a consideration towards donating a regular amount to TLC.



Front - W Bro Peter Carter, W Bro Lou Amey, W Bro Mark Duncan & W Bro John Walker. Back - W Bro Paul Halfhide, Bro Danny Peacock, W Bro Andy Mais & W Bro Phil Drye.

Brother Charity Stewards please discuss this with your Lodge committee as an ongoing yearly donation would greatly assist in the overall annual target required to continue to supply Teddies to children. Lodge or personal donations can be paid via our Relief Chest which is called Buckinghamshire TLC Appeal and the number is E0189.

W Bro Paul Halfhide
Buckinghamshire TLC - Chairman



Scan here to visit the TLC Appeal's just giving page



W Bro Paul Halfhide delivering to Milton Keynes hospital.



W Bro Phil Drye delivering to Stoke Mandeville hospital.





The Slyvka family at home with the Noonans.

When the Russian invasion of Ukraine started, my wife and I, as well as most other people were shocked by the situation. Shortly afterwards, UGLE launched their Ukraine appeal. St George's Lodge had a committee meeting on Wednesday 9th March and the committee voted to donate £1000 to the appeal. The week before, the government launched the Home for Ukraine appeal. My wife and I talked about it, and decided that it would be a good idea to apply. After registering on the system, and not having much luck, my wife started looking at other ways to find a family. After a few false starts, we were messaged by Andrii who explained their situation. Being a family of 5, it took some thought where everyone would go. Some neighbours kindly donated a double bed frame, which took the place of the sofa in the lounge. We had a camp bed and mattress that we moved into our room for our daughter.

During a Lodge rehearsal I mentioned, in passing, to W Bro Dachtler that we were supporting the appeal and he suggested that St George's Lodge might be able to support in some way. Speaking to my wife, although we would be covering living costs, the main things we required were a double and single mattress and bedding. I emailed the Lodge

members asking if they would be willing to support and, graciously, they all replied back positively. Shortly afterwards, St. George's Lodge kindly donated £1000 to cover the costs of the mattresses, bedding and other bits that could come up during the first few days of the family staying.

The Slyvka's arrived from Drohobych safely in early hours of 29th April and settled in really quickly. Andrii and Mariia were very keen to get settled and to start work. Their bank account was set up in a couple of days, national insurance number applied for and biometric residential permit completed. Within 2 weeks, the children, Veronika and Andrii had started school and after 4 weeks the youngest Petro, started preschool. Mariia started work in the local pub and Andrii completed his CSCS card and has also started work. The children have got on like a house on fire and should have friendships lasting a lifetime.

In August the Slyvka's moved out from our home to a flat around the corner. They have settled well into their new home and are positively looking forward to happy times. We're still in regular contact as you can imagine and still have frequent visits. Another plus is there is a masonic hall in Drohobych so one day we may visit!



Bro Keith Noonan and Andrii Slyvka.



Mariia Slyvka and children with Mrs Noonan..

MAKING MAGIC MOMENTS LAST A LIFETIME



At the start of 2022, the Bucks Masonic Centenary Fund donated over £12,500 to local organisations and individuals.

The Getaway Foundation was one organisation that benefited from the grant. The donation enabled them to assist in transportation costs for families that do not have access to a car to take life-changing holidays by the sea.

The Trustees and founders set up the charity in January 2020 to relieve the needs of economically and socially disadvantaged families. They provide grants of financial assistance to enable them to experience family holidays and other shared recreational activities,

that they could not otherwise afford, in the interests of social welfare and to improve their conditions of life. In the last twelve months, with the help of the Buckinghamshire Freemasons, they have provided over 40 coastal holidays for families referred to the charity by social services. 25% of these families had never visited the seaside before and enjoyed swimming in the sea, and discovering rock pools for the first time through the work of this charity.

Peter Tebbutt, CEO of the charity, explained that 9 out of 10 people that went on the holidays were still seeing the benefits twelve months later. Their family relationships were better, and day-to-day conversations had improved also.

We will leave the last words to these happy families:

“Spending time together and the added benefit of being able to let my daughters do activities on site that otherwise might not have been financially possible.”

“We had so much fun. My best memory was building a moat in the sand with my son to stop the water from escaping, finding fish with the children and just having fun on the beach.”

You can find out more about this fantastic charity here:

www.thegetawayfoundation.com/

Support for Bourne End Sports Club



Back in June, Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro John Clark completed a Kayakathon with the proceeds going towards the Buckinghamshire Festival in aid of the Masonic Charitable Foundation.

He was ably assisted on the 8-hour 26-mile trip down the river Thames by his son Jack Clark and accompanied by Mathew Eaton and Simon Williams in another kayak.

After the completion of this herculean effort, all four of them went with the two kayakers and donated them to Bourne End Junior Sports Club, whose aim is to provide the opportunity for children and young people to participate in sport and recreation and also develop social and leadership skills within the community.

The chairman, Matthew Todd expressed the club's extreme gratitude for the generous donation of the two kayakers as their current stock are quite old and in need of replacement.

This donation is just one of the many ways that Buckinghamshire Freemasons support our local community so why not join us and find out how you can help.



The two intrepid teams.

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At the start of 2022, the Bucks Masonic Centenary Fund donated over £12,500 to local organisations and individuals.

The Buckinghamshire Masonic Centenary Fund was established in 1991 to aid non-Masonic charitable causes with strong Buckinghamshire connections. The Fund makes donations to these causes on behalf of the 3000 Buckinghamshire Freemasons, who are the sole source of its financial support.

Buckingham Judo Club was one organisation that benefited from the grant. The donation enabled them to provide 80 sq metres of new matting for use by the community in Buckingham.

Chairman of the club, Vance Godfrey, explained how important these mats were to young people. "The mats have enhanced the dojo that we have, it has provided a safe space for young people to exercise, socialise and gain a sense of belonging. We are very grateful to Buckinghamshire Freemasons for the donation of £2,000, which, along with our own funds raised through sponsorship from local businesses and charity events, allowed us to purchase these specialist mats. In 2023 we will build on this by reaching out with our fund raising to provide specialist one on one trainers for neurodiverse children."

The dojo is now in full use and many more people can enjoy the space. Ewan Gordon, member of Verney Lodge based in Buckingham, visited the dojo with

Phil Blacklaw, a member of Buckinghamshire Freemasons' Executive team, and both were impressed with what they saw. Ewan said, "It is wonderful to visit the club and see their new dojo mats in use. I was particularly impressed how the club encourages children with learning difficulties and disabilities to take part in their sessions." Phil added, "With our help, these young people of all capabilities can now learn about the principles of the club and gain the necessary skills of working together, respecting authority, patience, dedication, self-reliance, controlling emotions and personal fitness."

Buckinghamshire Freemasons wish the young people of Buckingham many years of enjoyment in their club activities.





A lifelong Appreciation of Music Starts Here

The Green Ridge Primary Academy was an organisation that has benefited from a BMCF grant. The donation enabled them to provide free instruments and sheet music for pupils to use in class and at home.

Vice Chair of the Board of Governors, Laura Nunn, explained how important music is to young people "The participation in music lessons is essential for young people. Using guitars and other large instruments improves their motor skills, the playing of recorders and strings on guitars improves their fine motor skills, and the reading of music improves the student's memory and retention as well as maximising learning capabilities."

Like many schools and academies in the UK, budgets are tight, and this donation allowed the school to invest in enough recorders, and other wind instruments for every pupil in year seven to have their own instrument, along with sheet music and a year of teaching by a qualified music teacher.

The donation also provided a lending bank of guitars and cases for pupils to take home. Laura Nunn explained that not all students can buy their own instruments; "Families are affected by the cost of living in many ways, often music lessons and instruments are seen as a luxury. With the amazing help from Buckinghamshire Freemasons, they now have another option to explore the world of music."



Buckinghamshire Freemasons wish the students well in their learning journey, and hope that their appreciation of music in class and at home, will linger long after the last note has been played in their early educational years.

Remembrance Lunch



Guests seated at the Veterans Lunch,

On Sunday 13th November the Buckinghamshire Freemasons played host to 100 veterans for a 3-course Sunday Lunch.

Guests at the 14th Veterans Lunch at the Bell Hotel in Winslow enjoyed food, refreshments, a raffle, and entertainment by the Thomas Freemantle School Players. This lunch was fully funded by local Freemasons for local people in thanks for their service.

Well done to the team who worked behind the scenes, and all the volunteers who gave their time on the day, to make the lunch a huge success for those who served their country.

Buckinghamshire Freemasons look forward to serving those who served their country at the same time next year.

If you would like to make a difference in your community in Buckinghamshire, don't wait to be asked, just follow this link:
<https://buckspgl.org/info>

#BucksMasons #Freemasons
#buckinghamshirevolunteering



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FREEMASONS SAVING LIVES WITH THE BLOOD BIKE VOLUNTEERS.



From the left rear row: Wayne Bentley, Bob Bucknell, Andre Hodgson, Alan Gale, Paul David Gausden, Tony Robinson, (AsstProvGM) John King, Gary Brodie (AsstProvGM) Peter Marks, Brian Bruton, Stephen Smith, Martin Birkett, Paul Lear, Tony Duggan, Front Row: Kamran Irani and Guy - Both Blood Bike Volunteers.

On Wednesday the 31st of August 15 Buckinghamshire Freemasons visited the internationally acclaimed Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Aylesbury to hand over cheques to the Blood Bike Charity, (SERV OBN) to the value of £4,100.

I am very proud to announce that 19 Buckinghamshire Lodges, 7 individual Freemasons and the Bucks Province rallied to the support of the Blood Bikes in their urgent appeal for assistance, as they were starting to feel the severe pinch of the astronomical hike in fuel costs. The CEO of the blood bikes charity Brother Kamran Irani (a member of the Buckinghamshire Motorcycle Lodge No 9926) sent me an email appealing for urgent assistance, not to put some more money in the bank but instead to put fuel

in the tanks of their 18 motorbikes and 2 cars. I put the story on our Concord Facebook page and within 12 days we managed to raise £4,100, which will allow them to travel 20,842 miles and more importantly potentially saving 333 lives in the process. It's not often we

are told how our money is applied to the expansive list of charities that we all support, but when you hear that story the stark reality kicks in and we can proudly focus on the realisation that this time we have actually had an active role in saving many lives.



Wolverton Blind Club

W Bro Malcolm Aspinal, WM of St Georges lodge, and his wife Susan presenting a cheque for 500 pounds to Marianne Harding, chairman of Wolverton Club for the Blind. The Wolverton Club is the oldest blind club in Buckinghamshire. Susan and Malcolm have recently retired as volunteers of the Club. Susan was chairman for 15 years and a volunteer over 30 years.

Experiencing Homelessness to help end it

As Winter begins and the days get shorter we often think of the excitement of Christmas and the sadness that the long hot days of Summer are behind us for another year. If you're anything like me you'd also occasionally think of the homeless and how tough it must be for them outside living on the streets at this time, who, instead of lamenting the passing of Summer, have to now endure the harshest of UK weather sleeping rough, not knowing whether they are safe or where the next meal will be coming from. For many of our homeless people it is not drugs or alcohol addictions that have forced them onto the streets. In fact, it is a combination of everyday occurrences that lead them slowly from being housed and secure, to sleeping at a friend's, to sleeping in their car and finally sleeping rough. This year however, instead of it simply being a passing thought before I settled back down in front of the TV with the central heating on, myself and my partner Gemma chose to spend a night sleeping rough outside at Adams Park Stadium home of Wycombe Wanderers to help raise money for Wycombe Homeless Connection.

Wycombe Homeless Connection are a charity based in High Wycombe whose vision it is 'That Southern Buckinghamshire is transformed into a place where there is suitable housing and housing security for all – because we believe in what God wants for the world. We believe we are called to serve God to bring this about.' Their mission is to help people who are homeless or facing homelessness by: preventing homelessness before it starts, reducing harm for people who



Bro Sean Summerell outside Adams Park.

are homeless, helping house people who are homeless and defending the rights of people who are homeless or facing homelessness.

After weeks of collecting cardboard boxes from local supermarkets, digging an old tarpaulin out of the garage, gathering our sleeping bags and numerous layers of clothing we arrived at Adams Park Stadium at 19:00 on Saturday 26th November ready to experience for just one night in the safety of the well-marshalled football stadium what homelessness could be like. After setting up camp between the rows of seating within the stands we settled in for a chilly and uncomfortable night that really moved me into thinking just how tough these conditions must be to endure night after night and how worthwhile and life changing the work of Wycombe Homeless Connection is.

Being new to Freemasonry, having only had my initiation in June and my passing in November, I reached out to W Bro Mark Harry, the Charity Steward of my Lodge which is Burke 6154, to see if I could mention

what I was doing to the brethren to see if I could gather any support. Mark was incredibly supportive of this and was the first to donate personally and on behalf of the Lodge's charity fund. Once my message went out to the brethren I was inundated with sponsorship and had messages of support from across the Lodge, many of which came from Brothers I'd not yet had the pleasure of meeting in person. With support from the Lodge we raised £250 inclusive of gift aid. The overall amount raised was £515. This was an incredible show of support from the Lodge which I was truly humbled to receive.

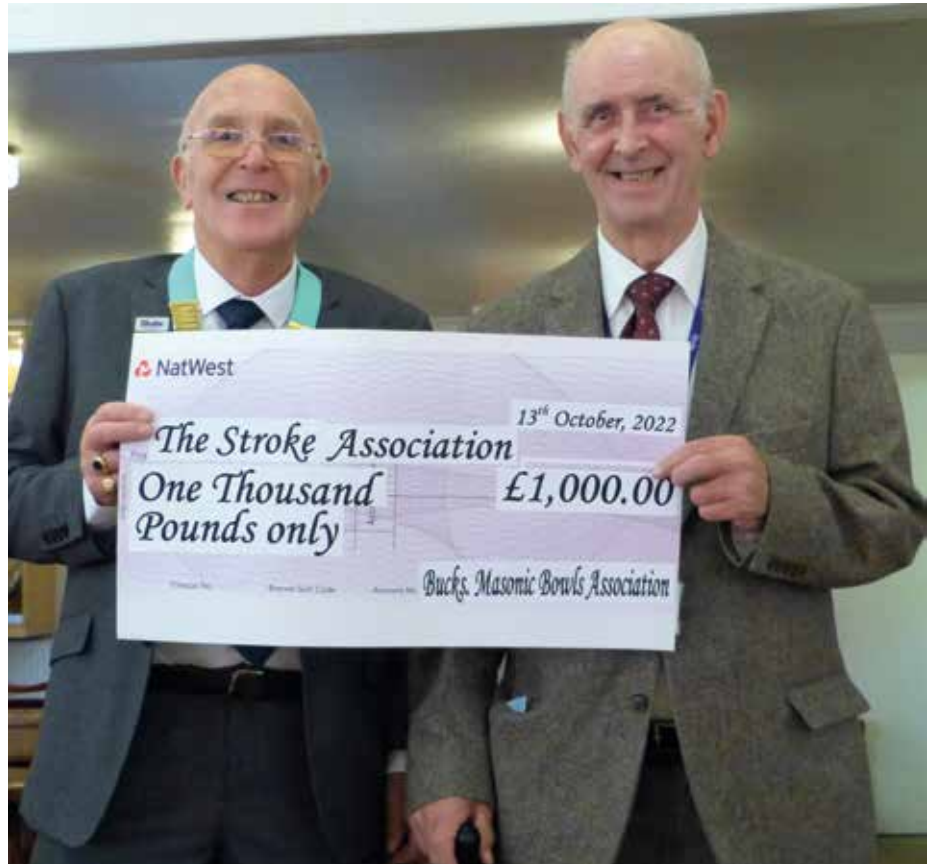
I know that the money raised will go on to do great things for the less fortunate of our local area and I am incredibly proud that in doing something so simple in sleeping outside I was able to help support charity and raise vital funds, deepen my understanding and compassion for the homeless and build stronger lasting friendships and deepen my bond to my Lodge, my fellow brethren and Freemasonry.



BMBA LUNCHEON AND PRESENTATION

The Annual Luncheon and Presentation of the Bucks Masonic Bowling Association was held at Chesham Bowls Club on Thursday 13 October 2022 when 38 members, wives and guests were welcomed by Association President, Roger Tyerman.

A four-course lunch was served followed by the presentation of a cheque for £1000 to William Hall from the Buckingham & District Stroke Support Group. One of the Association's objectives, apart from the promotion of the game of bowls between other Masonic Provinces, Private Clubs and Associations, is to raise money for deserving causes. This year the President nominated the Buckinghamshire & District Stroke support Group charity and the Masonic Charity Fund to be the recipient of donations from the money raised. This year the sum of £1500 was raised and a cheque for £1000 was presented to William Hall from the Buckinghamshire Stroke Association Group. A second donation of £500 will be sent to the Buckinghamshire Masonic Centenary Fund.



Cheque presentation to the Buckinghamshire Stroke Association

The President presented trophies to the winners of the 2022/2023 Association competitions.



Above: Pairs Winners 2022 – John Smith & Alan Cohn.



Left: American Tournament winners – Stuart Hall & Jim Lumsden.





Indoor Tournament Winners – David Lord & Alan Cohn.



Vice President Derek Storey presents flowers to The President's wife Fay.



Pairs Runners-up – Stuart Hall & Roger Tyerman.



American Tournament Runners-up – David Lord plus Terry Bennett (not pictured).



Past President and Luncheon organiser Colin Ware presents flowers to Margaret Hearn in thanks for her cakes that were auctioned for charity during the season.

Buckinghamshire Masonic Golf Society

The Buckinghamshire Masonic Golfing Society is a Society of like minded golfers of all abilities who get together for a good day out with Good Company. As with the Olympics its not the winning it's the taking part. Following the Golf, the brethren share a social meal, and a drink or two, at the 19th Hole. Generally the cost for coffee and a bacon roll, 18 holes of Golf, and a meal to follow is kept to a maximum of £60.

The Secretary's prayers for good weather are normally answered.

The new Masonic Golf season will start in April 2023, with the Winter Cup, at a venue and date yet to be decided.

Golf days are held at various golf clubs both North and South of the County of Bucks, and occasionally in a neighbouring county. So distance is no excuse.

Our Club Captain for 2023, Bro Paul Smith would be very pleased to see you at one of our Golf Days. If you do not wish to join the Society you are very welcome to attend as a guest.

If any Buckinghamshire Masons would wish to join this happy band of very mixed standard golfers then please contact Tony Martin at ama15346@aol.com, and a very friendly welcome will be extended.



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