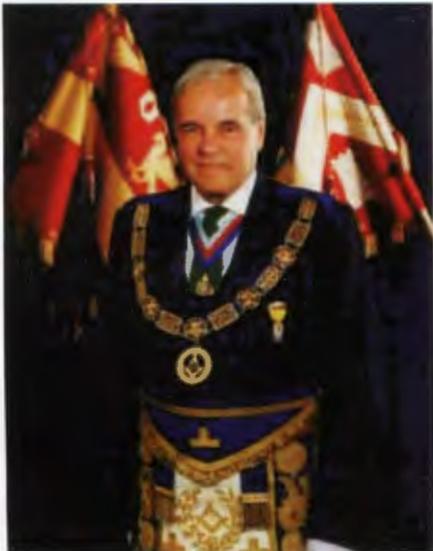


WORCESTERSHIRE NEWS



Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire

A MESSAGE FROM THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER



Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter, I hope you will find it both interesting and amusing. Some of you might say 'about time', but as with the Provincial ties, I like to survey the market place to see what is on offer before committing the Province to ongoing time and expense. I now have quite a collection ranging from the colour glossy to the solitary piece of A4. Some are compulsive reading, some plainly going through the motions and attempt communication, some plain dreary.

You will know where I want ours to be. The secret of course is being interactive and contemporary. We supply the format you supply part of the copy. It is your publication. The good newsletters are full of goings on, personalities, achievements,

Lodge meetings, charities, donations, Ladies Festivals - it will provide a forum for discussion without censorship - the list is endless.

More importantly we can transfer success. What is innovative and successful in one Lodge or Chapter will now be available for 129 Lodges and 49 Chapters to read about and try for themselves. It will bring our Province closer together.

What are we going to call it? 'Newsletter' is a bland and worn out title and sounds like something from the Inland Revenue. How about the 'Pear Tree'? I am sure that many of you will put your minds to suggesting an attractive title, and providing it reaches me before my retirement date of 1 January 2004, I will personally present a bottle of champagne to the winner.

My thanks to Bob Vaughan who is instrumental in pioneering this and encouragement to Keith Blizzard of Kings Heath Lodge who has volunteered to become the first editor. Quite a responsibility, yet when I eavesdrop around the festive board I hear enough gossip, some unprintable, to fill a weekly publication, and so I am only asking for a modest contribution from you all. I hope it will become a publication that you, your family and friends will all look forward to receiving and reading.

Barrie Cooper

No Fire

Have you ever wondered why there is no fire at the Craft Festive Board when we remember absent Brethren?

The reason is very simple, it is a petition to absent Brethren, it is not a toast to them

CONSTABLE BANNED

Peter C Band was invested as the new Assistant Provincial Grand Master for the Province of Worcestershire by the PGM at the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting on 21 June 2003.

Congratulations to Peter on his preferment and we look forward to seeing him out and about in the Province in his new role in the forthcoming season. We all hope he has a long and happy time as one of our Provincial AGMs.

The vacancy was created by the retirement of Tony Hawkard who himself was invested in 1996. After many years of faithful service contributing greatly to the life of the Province, Tony will be sadly missed. He has earned his retirement and he and Margaret are moving to Yorkshire and we wish them both a long, healthy and happy retirement. We do understand that Tony will be visiting the Province from time to time and we look forward to seeing him.

LADIES' GIFT FUND FOR MASONIC CHARITIES

2002 was the Golden Jubilee for this Charity and the magnificent sum of over £10,000 was raised to be shared between the three Provinces of Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire and the New Masonic Samaritan Fund.

Please support the Chairman, Val Edwards and her hard-working committee again this year as generously as the past and make a note to attend this year's Christmas Fayre.

Saturday 15th November

at Stirling Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

Tickets and details available from the Secretary of your Lodge.



NEW MASONIC SAMARITAN FUND

"I cannot thank you enough for restoring my mobility as I can now walk again. The fact that I can again be mobile and move about the house is wonderful".

"My quality of life has improved so much since the operation to a stage that it brings a smile every morning when I wake to find that I have another day of little pain compared to before. I now realise how poorly I was."

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"It is four weeks since my hip replacement operation - doesn't time fly when you're not in pain!"

The New Masonic Samaritan Fund provides support to those who are sick and in need. Last year it approved grants in support of 524 new applications six of which were from Worcestershire. The funds granted within the year totalled £3.1 million £55,000 of which was on behalf of applicants from Worcestershire. Could they have done more for the Brethren of Worcestershire and their families?

The Fund exists to relieve distress for:

- Freemasons
- The wives and dependants of Freemasons
- The widows and dependants of deceased Freemasons

Support is available to those who have an identified medical need and, faced with a long wait for the NHS, cannot afford to fund private medical treatment.

The Fund can only help when it knows help is needed. If you know someone who needs their help, make sure they know about the Fund and that the Fund knows about them. Please contact your Almoner, or approach the Fund direct, for further details.

New Masonic Samaritan Fund,
26 Great Queen Street, London,
WC2B 5BL

Tel: 020 7404 1550

Fax: 020 7404 1544

email: mail@masonicsamaritan.org.uk

ROYAL LUNCH

Bro. Ken Wilkinson of Frankley Beeches Lodge has been invited to lunch with Prince William on Sunday July 13 2003 as part of the Battle of Britain remembrance at Chapel le Ferne. The lunch follows the service to 'Friends of the Few' to mark the tenth anniversary of the dedication of the monument by the late Queen Mother.

ReMarkable News

Stuart Edwards has been appointed to the Grand Master of Mark Master Mason's Council. This is indeed a very rare honour.

Following this appointment Stuart has resigned as the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Mark Master Masons in Worcestershire and we congratulate his successor, Ron Gee, and wish him well with his new responsibilities.

HELP!



Season I am looking for unusual, interesting and meritorious information from you.

In this first Edition, I have gone for a newspaper style layout with a good mix of information, not only about the Craft, but also about the other Degrees. I would welcome any comments on this first issue and suggestions for future content, whether by way of areas that should be covered on a regular basis or specific items.

I am particularly looking for information from the WAML Groups and photographs will be most welcome to illustrate events.

My bid for the champagne is 'Wigorniensis'.

Keith Blizzard

To appreciate what I am going to say as Editor, it would be helpful if you have already read the message from the PGM.

I am trying to create a document that you will find easy to read, informative and entertaining. I want you to look forward to receiving the next Edition. It is your Newsletter, keeping everyone informed of what you are doing. With two Editions planned for each



FORTHCOMING PRESENTATIONS OF FIFTY YEAR CERTIFICATES



DATE	NAME	LODGE	NUMBER	LODGE ROOM
13/10/03	Dick King	St John in Bedwardine	7558	Worcester
20/10/03	William Bywater	Old Dudleian	6734	Dudley
27/10/03	Edwin Gwinnell	Teme	8491	Worcester
03/11/03	John Watson Kirkwood	Semper Fidelis	529	Worcester
13/12/03	Ray Hollins	Stechford	3185	Stechford
09/02/04	James Gerald Harding	Wyche	3638	Worcester

Congratulations to each of the above on this splendid achievement



REPORT ON THE FIVE SHIRES

On 9th June at the Hilton Hotel, Birmingham, nearly four hundred Freemasons and guests celebrated the 250th Anniversary of the appointment of Sir Robert de Cornwall of Berrington Manor, Leominster, as the first Provincial Grand Master in, and over, what were then known as the Western Shires.

The Guests of Honour at the Festival were M W Bro The Most Honourable The Marquis of Northampton, D.L., The Pro Grand Master and Lady Northampton, and the President for the evening was our own Provincial Grand Master together with the Provincial Grand Masters of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire and Shropshire.

This unique and splendid occasion was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended and grateful thanks are due to the organising committee and to all who assisted with the administration.



588 YEARS AFTER AGINCOURT - ENGLISH KNIGHTS RETURN TO PARIS!!

As members of the Grand Master's Bodyguard (KT) Bob Clarke [KT421] and John Vickers [KT68] were invited to go to Paris in June to assist at the Inauguration of the Great Priory of France.

We flew out from Birmingham early on that Wednesday morning and met up with the rest of the party from England at 1400 hours. Events moved at top speed with a rehearsal under the Great Marshal before a Master Ceremony to install the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master for France elect as a Knight of that Order.

The following day three new KT Preceptories were consecrated, two to be stationed in Paris and one in Toulouse. It was a long and exhausting day, but a well fortified lunch and supper raised the spirits in time for the events of the final day.

The Bodyguard played an important role as member of the three new Preceptories were installed as Knights of Malta in the morning. Then, after lunch, the Great Priory of France was inaugurated with considerable dignity. It was a truly great occasion and we were very honored to be taking part in a key moment of the history of Knights Templar masonry.

Great Priory Officers who conducted ceremonies were given honorary ranks in the new Grand Prieuré pour la France whilst the Bodyguard received many plaudits for its efforts.

NEW PROVINCIAL GRAND SECRETARY

Congratulations, to John McGann who has been appointed the new Provincial Grand Secretary and was invested by the PGM at the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting on 21 June 2003. John is currently Third Provincial Grand Principal.

We all wish him well with his new task of keeping us informed and up to date with our paperwork. No doubt, the correspondence and instructions will be emanating

from Bromsgrove with the traditional regularity!

John's appointment follows the resignation of Eric Bourne who had been Provincial Grand Secretary and Provincial Grand Scribe E for Worcestershire since 2000. Many Lodge Secretaries and Chapter Scribe Es owe a great deal to Eric for his unfaltering and kind assistance during his years in office.



THE WORCESTERSHIRE LIBRARY AND MUSEUM FOUNDATION



Our aim is to render the Library and Museum financially sound, independent, stable and able to grow and develop - to maintain its position as second only to Great Queen Street, to assist the Lodges of the Province in storing and preserving records and archives and to provide for future generations and historians a repository and storehouse of information - a living history and encyclopedia of what has gone before, in other words "giving our past a future" to use our Appeal slogan.

That is a mouthful - and what does it mean?

It means that we need money. Restoration is an expensive and delicate process. Storage cannot be done in a hot attic, a damp garage or a musty cellar. Archives, paper records, minute books require an environment which is controlled, with no extremes of humidity or temperature.

We have made a good start - the old coach house behind the PGL Offices has been converted into just that climate controlled facility which we require. It will shortly be available for all Lodges to deposit Minute Books, archives and paper records - for a small annual fee. These will thus be preserved and catalogued and will form an invaluable resource for future Masonic historians. Restoration work has started on several artefacts at the Museum and more is planned - so the money you have given already has been well applied and is now working for us all.

However, in order to ensure the future **security, stability and financial independence** of our Museum, we need your further help and financial support. The income from the Appeal will enable us to improve our display facilities, provide mountings for our collection of photographs, equip us with proper facilities to work on exhibits, get us an up-to-date computer and expert advice on programming for a new cataloguing of our exhibits.

Let's face it, a museum which cannot buy artefacts, a museum which does not improve its displays and its facilities, is no museum and a library without books is a nonsense. That is why the PGM launched the Appeal last year - a museum, you will appreciate is not a building anymore than a Lodge is a building. A Lodge is its members, a Museum is its collection. We are the envy of other Provinces, but if we stand still, if we do nothing, if we allow what we have to moulder and decay and if we look no more for those precious relics of our forbears - then our Museum will founder and fail.

What can you do? Well, if each Lodge could contribute at least £500 per annum we would raise nearly £200,000. Every individual Gift Aid donation will also attract an additional 28% from the Chancellor and the profit from the sale of ties, lapel badges, handkerchiefs and the new Worcestershire Braces all goes towards the Appeal. The Provincial Lottery is another way of making a valuable contribution with the added chance of winning a cash prize each month!

This is your Museum and Library, you can help make sure that for the foreseeable future it remains the premier Provincial Museum in the Country. Contact Howard Wilson (Appeal Chairman).

CHURCH BELL APPEAL

The Lodge of Hope and Charity presented St Mary and All Saints Church in Kidderminster with £6,000.00 for their Bell Appeal. The evensong arranged for Sunday 8 June 2003, was well attended by over 80 including Masons, Wives and Friends. The presentation was made by the R.W.P.G.M, who joined the congregation for refreshments after the service in the Chantry.

A report was placed in the local paper, The Kidderminster Shuttle and Times which read as follows:

Freemasons have handed over £6,000.00 to the appeal to replace the bells of Kidderminster's Parish Church. The donation presented by R.W.Bro Barrie Michael Cooper, Provincial Grand Master of Worcestershire has paid for a new bell for St Mary's Church, which is trying to raise £135,000 to fit 12 bells.

Kidderminster's Masonic Lodges combined to raise £1,000 while £5,000 of the money which was handed over on Sunday 8th June came from The

Freemasons Grand Charity organisation. W.Bro Cecil Cariss, Charity Steward for The Lodge of Hope & Charity, Kidderminster's oldest said: "They've had connections with St Mary's going back 120 years, they supplied the money to buy three bells originally. Subsequently, they have supported the church up to last year when we gave the £2,001 for the fabric of the church".

He added, "we petitioned The Grand Charity on behalf of the Province of Worcestershire and Kidderminster's Lodges for that £5,000".

Canon Owain Bell, of St Mary's, said £111,000 had already been raised for the new bells, which will be named after women in the Bible and will be inscribed with the donor's name.

The Freemasons bell is to be named DEBORAH and is guaranteed for a thousand years!

Province has new Spin Doctor

Following a re-shuffle amongst the Provincial AGMs, Robert Vaughan has already taken up his new responsibilities as the Provincial Information Officer. He will be pleased to receive any information regarding the life of the Province and depending upon its content it will either be posted on the Provincial website or included in a future edition of this newsletter. This is, of course, subject to the separate editorial control of each publication!

We congratulate Colin Brown on the work he did as Information Officer, particularly at the time of Freemasonry in the Community and admire his skill in spinning out of the job.

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