

SOURCE



Issue 48
September 2021

The newsletter of Worcestershire Freemasons

Faith and Hope
In times of adversity

UGLE 2021 University Challenge

9/11 - 20 years on
A brothers story

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Tip of the day:

It is recommended that if you are printing this newsletter off, print at 2 pages per sheet as the content has been modified to suit this format.



EDITORIAL

Twenty years ago, to the week, who would have known that in 5 days' time my world, and the world in general would change forever - with the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers, where I would be on that day. Recent overseas events make it an even more pertinent reminder of how much has changed, and why we must not allow people to revert back. From that day onwards, it made me realise that life is about what you make of it - and I reflect that this is true in Freemasonry too. The more you, as Brethren, put in the more you get out of it. It's not just about turning up once a month for a meeting, look to all the other activities, events, social gatherings that are starting to get up and running again now lockdown is over, or that long awaited call to a Brother you've not met for a while. Do it now while you can!

As a reminder, we have the Provincial Cathedral and Remembrance Service on the 12th September, where The Revd Dr Simon Thorn, The Grand Chaplain will be presenting the sermon at Worcester Cathedral. This will be an opportunity to remember those where we were unable to do so formally, during the previous 18 months - and will be a fitting event to support our Province, your own Lodge and those that have gone before.

Remember - Get involved, don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today - you never know what is coming around the corner. I didn't.

WBro A. J. Philpott



On the 30th July WBro Michael Dykes attended his first meeting for 18 months and what a spectacular venue, The Grand Temple in Gt Queen Street, Covent Garden, London. Michael was appointed Junior Grand Deacon of the United Grand Lodge of England in 2020 and should have been invested by the Grand Master himself, His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent.

What a spectacular place to start

Sadly, that ceremony never took place due to the COVID-19 crisis, although Michael now holds that rank, he and many others took their place in Freemasons' Hall at the Quarterly Communication meeting in July.

An 'acting rank' means that Michael took part in the ceremonies of opening and closing of United Grand Lodge, an experiences which made him very proud. On this occasion the number of attendees was restricted to 300 but still very special and extremely poignant.



"This was my first masonic meeting of any kind for more than a year"

Sadly, more than 4,500 lodges had lost one or more of their members to COVID-19 and Michael admitted to being "very moved when the names of all the Lodges who had died were projected onto the walls of the temple with the accompaniment of a solo violinist".

Mike now looks forward to another year in post, during which he hopes that restrictions will be lifted to allow the normal attendance of more than 1,500 brethren.

Sadly, more than 4,500 lodges had lost one or more of their members to COVID-19



The Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire

invite all Lodges, Brethren and Families
to the Annual

Cathedral Service

including an Act of Remembrance

Sunday 12th September 2021

at

Worcester Cathedral

2.15 to 3.15pm

Organ Recital from 1.45pm.



Please make every effort to attend.

This is a Superb Provincial Event for you, your family and your Lodge.

Local Charity Support



Dear Brethren, following on from the extensive support given to local Charities and Organisations in need during the pandemic, we are continuing our support for our local community. We have formed a small committee to examine all requests for help. Stephen Wyer, Bill Tucker, Derek Phillips and I are here to do our very best with the resources we have from the Province and the additional funds provided by the MCF to boost the help we are able to give within Worcestershire.

We are keen to give support to those who may not be “high profile” and for whom a relatively small donation would be very meaningful, and assist the work they do to comfort and support those in need.

We have already been able to make several donations, including the replacement of a playing surface for youngsters, football kit for a new project to bring sport to young children in Dudley and a number of Bleed Kits, two of which will be at Kings Heath. But we cannot do this on our own, we need your help—please keep your eyes and ears open for any deserving organisations who would benefit from some extra funding, in particular if they are a registered Charity we are able to double our donation by approaching the MCF to “Match Fund” the amount we are able to give.

Please contact anyone of us or send an email to me at PGCStwd@worcestershirepgl.org.uk.

Finally, each year we join in the “Festival of Christmas Trees” at Worcester Cathedral, if you have any ideas to make our tree stand out please let me know.

We look forward to the opportunity to help you to support your local community.

David Dey
Provincial Grand Charity Steward

UGLE Universities Scheme

2021 CHALLENGE

Province of Worcestershire

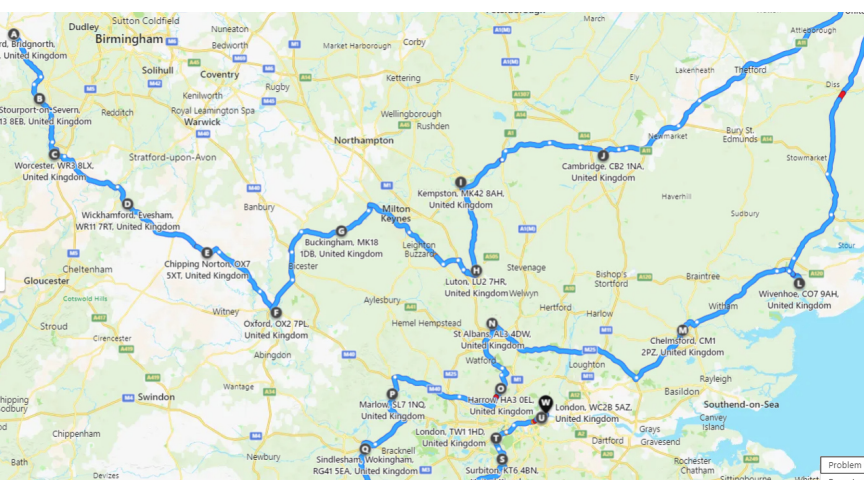


Starting on the 9th June at UGLE in London, members of United Grand Lodge of England, The Order of Women's Freemasons, and The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons laid down a challenge and helped to transport the DKW Cup across England and Wales on foot, with a route taking 2021 miles - finishing on September 8th back at Grand Lodge, and visiting each UniScheme Lodge along the way.

The Travelling Loving Cup, the "DKW Cup", was presented to the Scheme by RW Bro David Kenneth Williamson PAGM, Founder President of the Universities Scheme, on his retirement as President. The aim of the DKW Cup is to encourage inter-visiting between Universities Scheme Lodges and further our goals of fraternity and togetherness. Worcester Lodge No.280, as a University Lodge duly volunteered. Our role was to walk from Stourport to Worcester on Monday 16th August and Worcester to Evesham on Tuesday.

Roger Pemberton, Shropshire PGM who had walked all 30 miles, delivered the trophy to 280's WM Bill Ballard and Robert Vaughan PAGM at Stourport Masonic Lodge on Sunday 15th. Stourport were very hospitable, and we enjoyed a tour around the lodge room

Our UGLE suggested route along the A449 was quickly ditched! Instead Bill Ballard led us on a quiet footpath bordering the East side of the River Severn to Holt Fleet Pub.





The walkers were Stephen Wyer, DPGM, and his wife Helen, Julian Ridgers, Brody Swain Provincial Communications Officer and his wife Steph, Adam Lewis—recording the event for the Province, Ken Hunt from 280 and his wife Lynn, Bill and I.

After a bite to eat, Bill, Adam and myself were joined by Patrick Firminger and his wife Jan along the West side of the Severn crossing at Sabrina Bridge where we were joined by Philip Serrell.

On Tuesday Gerald Harris cycled to Pershore Abbey and passed the trophy to Bill, Duncan Sutcliffe, Tony Blake, Mike Dykes APGM, myself and Adam who enjoyed Monday so much that he came for a second day. We walked through Wick,

very attractive and were then joined by Stephenie Vaughan, the PGM's wife. Through Crothorne, and by footpaths to Evesham using the chain ferry to cross the Avon, we arrived at the Masonic Hall at 1.15 for a wonderful array of refreshments.

We passed the trophy over to Ron Bridger and Matt Blacker of Chipping Campden lodge after a good look around the lodge room. Despite misgivings all enjoyed the walk, not just for the excellent scenery but also for the chat. There was tremendous support from the Provincial team which was much appreciated. So enjoyable that there are thoughts of organising more Masonic walks or other social activities!

WBro Douglas Dale





Festival 2022

Update as at 31st July 2021

£1,407,112

THE PANDEMIC HAS INTERFERED WITH SO MANY EVENTS AND DRAMATICALLY COMPROMISED OUR FUNDRAISING ABILITY. NEVERTHELESS, THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT OUR FESTIVAL TOTAL CONTINUES TO RISE SLOWLY



It's not too late, now is the time! **Can you help us?**

If you haven't made a regular giving pledge already, and its within your means, make one now until April 2025.

If you already have a regular giving pledge that finishes before the end of 2022 or if it has already come to an end, and its within your means, consider another until April 2025

UMBRELLAS ARE UP

**PUT YOUR CHARITY MONEY TO GOOD USE
IT'S TIME TO EMPTY THOSE RELIEF CHESTS**

AND CHARITY ACCOUNTS

Many Lodges have significant sums tied up in their accounts with no plans for its use. It will make such a difference so please consider emptying your relief chests and accounts in favour of the 2022 Festival **NOW**.

**"WHEN IT COMES TO SAVING FOR A RAINY DAY, THE
UMBRELLAS ARE UP AND**

ITS RAINING NOW"



List of Provincial Social Events **COMING SOON**

YOUR FESTIVAL TEAM ARE WORKING HARD AND PREPARING A LIST OF FUN EVENTS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES. WHETHER IT IS A WALK ON HOT COALS OR A ZIP WIRE WEEKEND AWAY IN NORTH WALES, THEY WILL BE EVENTS TO RUN BETWEEN NOW AND FESTIVAL END AND WILL CREATE SOME FANTASTIC MEMORIES.

PGL of Worcestershire 2022
Festival (E2022)

To make a donation
scan with phone camera
to open or visit URL

<https://gtap.uk/e2022>



FESTIVAL 2022 URL & QR CODE

Use it any way you wish,
tick the gift aid box and
save your charity steward
hours of administration.

It will be credited to
yourself, your Lodge and
the Festival



20 years on from 9/11

Current world events will put the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre, 20 years ago on 11th September, into sharp focus. Especially for survivors such as Andy Philpott.

Ian Crowder interviewed him

As with President Kennedy's assassination and the first Moon landing, those of a certain age remember where they were on 9th September 2001 when two airliners, hijacked by terrorists, struck the Twin Towers of New York's World Trade Centre. For millions around the world, the unfolding horror – captured in harrowing TV images and sounds as 2,977 people lost their lives and another 6,000 were injured – will forever be etched on their memories.

Andy Philpott, the Editor of this magazine, certainly remembers where he was that day. He was having breakfast at 8.46 in the glass-ceilinged atrium of the Marriott Hotel which linked the two towers of the World Trade Centre. He was with colleagues who were also staying in the hotel, anticipating the launch of a new insurance company with all the razz-matazz that would go with it, New York being the perfect venue for such an event.

And, at a time when the Taliban has swept to power in Afghanistan and suicide bombers destroyed the lives of people trying to escape the chaos at Kabul airport, that anniversary – and the continuing risk of terrorist attack – is brought into sharp focus as the 20th Anniversary of 9/11 approaches.

"I look back on that day with very mixed feelings," says Andy. "The memory is painful and the scenes remain embedded in my consciousness. For a long time, those visions kept recurring but as I have learned to live with them, they became more bearable."

Events unfolded very quickly for Andy but he recalls that it took a while for the reality of what was happening to register.

"The first thing we knew was a loud explosion. I remember phoning Karen, my wife, to say that we thought a bomb had exploded but that everyone was alright. She of course was seeing the news unfold in England and realised that a plane had struck the building. We thought that perhaps it was a light aircraft out of

control. Then debris began to rain down on the glass roof and it shattered into a million pieces, as we took cover under tables. We checked that everyone was OK, but one of my colleagues had injured his leg and was subsequently taken to hospital."

"We went into the plaza where people were gathering as they evacuated the building – but security staff were telling people that it was safe to go back in. Thanks to live news coverage, the whole world was better informed than those who were directly affected."

Fifteen minutes later, Andy and his colleagues saw the second hijacked airliner strike the North Tower bringing yet more debris raining to the ground.

"We decided to head away from the scene to our offices on Wall Street, only a few blocks away. One of the memories that will not fade was when we realised that the sounds of things crashing to earth were not just debris. There were people. As a last resort, they jumped to their deaths. The sound of those who minutes before were getting into their daily routine, was something I will never forget."



From Wall Street, Andy and his colleagues witnessed the North tower collapse at about 10.00, sending a tsunami of dust billowing through the streets.

"Day turned into night as the cloud of dust engulfed everything. Then half an hour later, the second tower collapsed. It's strange how certain bizarre sights remain – I remember looking outside on a scene that could have been from Mars with dust everywhere. There was a hot dog stand nearby and it, and everything else, had a covering of a good six inches of dust.

"Of course, both land lines and mobile communications had been outed while the rumour mill started in full with the belief that more planes were coming in. People thousands of miles away knew much better what was happening than we did.

"So, we decided to head away to our Corporate HQ at Bluebell and after walking several miles north through New York Island, somehow we managed to hire a car. My luggage and passport were in the hotel so I only had the suit I was standing up in. I had lost my wallet [which oddly, was returned to him four years later by the FBI] so no cash or ID. Long story short, but it took fifteen days to get a duplicate passport and managed to get a plane home when flights resumed after the US airspace shutdown."

Andy suggests that the events of 9/11 have changed him as a person: and for the better and that, indirectly, it led him to become a Freemason.



"It made me realise how fortunate I was to escape with my life. We don't know what life is going to throw at us so it is really important never to put off what you can do today. Stay in touch with family and friends. Live your life to the full, treat others as you wish they would treat you, and stay on good terms with everyone you love or care for.

There are those whose lives have been destroyed and those left behind will perhaps never come to terms with their loss. We owe it to them and everyone who is struggling in any sphere of life to do what we can to support them and that is what Freemasonry does."

By coincidence, Andy was initiated into The Sabrina Lodge No. 6595 almost exactly on the 10th anniversary of 9/11.

"The world has changed as have attitudes to life. We can no longer travel or go about our daily lives without security checks which many think are inconvenient or intrusive. But they give me comfort that we are the safer for it. At the same time the forces for good have developed and Freemasonry is one of them."

Is talking about 9/11 difficult?

"No, not any longer. However, I couldn't have done an interview like this just a year afterwards. I have been back to Ground Zero, the site of the Towers, many times. You cannot let those atrocities beat you. Today the names of the victims are etched in the memorial for ever. You do see people there today, weeping, leaving flowers, or just lost in contemplative thought. For some the reality is as raw now as the day it happened."

Andy stays in touch with his then colleagues and is a member of a survivors' organisation.

"9/11 has shaped me. It is what I am today. It's not something I hide, nor consciously promote, but sometimes, if it comes up in conversation, I will say 'I was there...'. While many want to know more, others don't know quite what to say."

"Memory fades with the generations as has, say, the memories of the second World War. The sad thing is that there are youngsters today who may know about 9/11 but it means very little to them – it's part of history. My children were small at the time but they are well aware of what happened on the 11th of September 2001 and I suspect my experience has helped to shape them too. We need to keep that memory alive and ensure that our world stays as safe as we can possibly make it."

In memory of the 2,977 who never made it home

Priory Lodge No. 5545 Rise to the challenge

In April, Worcestershire lodges were encouraged to hold events and initiatives to raise funds specifically in support of F2022 which, due to the effects of the pandemic and brethren unable to meet, has suffered a significant fall in donations. Brethren of Priory Lodge 5545: who now meet at Halesowen following the closure of Dudley Masonic Hall, rose to the challenge with fantastic results.

Lodge Secretary WBro Les Charters explained :

"We met in October with only six brethren in attendance. It felt very strange not to have a Festive Board and the usual raffle and I realised that as a consequence our charitable giving had reduced, in particular to F2022.

I therefore sent a message out to all Brethren requesting that they make a donation towards the Festival 2022, as by not having meetings we had all saved a significant amount of money. The aim was to raise £1,000 but happily the brethren dug deep, and with an additional donation from lodge funds, we achieved £1,200.

We have also increased awareness of regular giving which is vital to the success of F2022."



F2022 Chairman WBro Patrick Firminger AsstPGM said "Without the kind of commitment and effort shown by Priory Lodge, the MCF would not be able to continue its excellent work in Worcestershire. From the local charities, our members, their families and dependents that this donation will help, an enormous thank you".

Pictured are WBro Les Charters and WBro Colin Cutler PPrAGDC (Treasurer) both of Priory Lodge, proudly presenting a cheque for £1200 to The RW PGM Robert Vaughan and WBro Patrick Firminger Asst PGM and F2022 Chairman.

WBro Les Charters
Lodge Secretary



Installation Meeting



Lodge of St Michael No.1097

After nearly two years and a lot of planning, on Thursday 29th July the Lodge of St Michael 1097 at Tenbury Wells finally managed to install WBro Jay da Costa into the chair of King Solomon as their new Worshipful Master. In preparation, the Lodge had fitted new window for ventilation, had covid busting air conditioning installed, completed risk assessments, put in place a social distancing plan; they were ready for their post lockdown installation.

As one of the first Lodges to conduct an installation after the ease of lockdown, I am sure that all who attended will agree that it was nice to get back to almost normal and to again socialise with the brethren. The Evening was a great success—with visitors from as far away as London attending and in the absence of a Provincial Team, the addresses to the Worshipful Master, Wardens and Brethren were ably delivered by the lodge D.C. WBro Martyn Wilcox.

After the officers of the Lodge were appointed and the Lodge placed into the control of the new Worshipful Master, the brethren could feel the sense of relief from the installing master WBro Mansel Leake, who's ritual work was outstanding and a credit to him. The evening was finished off with the festive board that was served by WBro Phil Gibbs and lived up to his usual very high standards of quality and quantity. Having now conducted the first meeting at the Lodge premises after lockdown, the brethren of the Lodge of St Michael are now all looking forward to their meetings. The attached Photographs show Brethren from the Lodge and the new Worshipful Master and his Wardens.





Super Social Sunday

Sunday 15th August saw some 80 Brethren, Partners and Friends gather to enjoy a Pig Roast at the excellent new facility provided by Bro. Chris Mason and his wife Sandra, at their premises near Ombersley.

This was the first occasion for the Lodge to meet socially in person, since the Sunday Lunch held on 16th March 2020.

Despite this however, the Lodge held three On-Line Virtual Events to celebrate Trafalgar Night, Burns Night and the Triple Celebration of St. George's Day, Shakespeare's Birthday and the Launch of the Asparagus season.

The Worshipful Master, WBro. Ian Fothergill, in welcoming everybody, remarked on the exceptional achievement made by the Lodge in their Charity giving during the lockdown at these events—not forgetting firstly Bro. Martin Carver's excellent efforts in raising £3,500 for the NHS, with his half marathons around the Worcestershire and Birmingham NHS Trust Hospitals; for which he received a Certificate of Appreciation from the MW The Grand Master, HRH The Duke of Kent; the £3,250 raised in support of Military Veterans and Reservists donated to PTSD Resolution UK, and of course the £2,500 raised towards our 2022 Festival target. A total sum of £10,000.

He then stated that the proceeds of today's magnificent Raffle, organised by WBro. Ian and Vikki Hart, would be our final donation to PTSD Resolution. It resulted in obtaining a further £775. This meaning that the Lodge has been able to support 6+ individuals from within North Worcestershire to obtain the necessary treatment, which costs £650 per course.

It really was a splendid day and we now look forward to our next Social Event, Sunday Lunch at Alderson House Warwick on Sunday 17th October and our first Regular Lodge Meeting, Trafalgar Night, on Friday 29th October.



White Ensign Lodge No.9169

Back on the Square

Abbott Lichfield No. 3308 held their first Lodge of Instruction which was the first time they have been able to meet in person since the outbreak of the pandemic. It was held in the newly refurbished lodge which is fully Covid compliant and benefits from a new air ventilation system (which meant nobody was able to doze off). It was a most enjoyable evening and allowed them to blow some off the cobwebs in their ritual..

They all very much welcomed the opportunity to meet and are looking forward to their first regular meeting in September.

Bro John Fennell



Abbot Lichfield Lodge No.3308



On the 18th September 2021, Bro Mark Barber from the Lodge of Hospitality is undertaking with his friend, Chris Roberts, TrekFest, a 50km walk across the Brecon Beacons.

They are walking in support of Festival 2022 and have set up a just giving page where donations can be made, all donations will go directly to the Festival, as Mark and Chris have fully funded their entry themselves.

Mark and Chris recently completed the Extended 3 Peaks challenge raising over £4000 for the University Hospitals Birmingham

Charity in memory of Mark's Grandfather, WBro David Rodgers SGW (Obit), so they certainly have the legs for this new challenge.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mark-barber17>

WBro Mike Adams
Charity Steward

Lodge of Hospitality Lodge No. 8325

Faith and Hope

In times of adversity



Richard Gwatkin and his wife Kelly decided to make a personal donation. As Richard says – “**I had a crazy idea** that sick children might be able to utilise this when in hospital to give them some positive distraction from the events they are going through. Imagine as a child driving a Tesla to your surgery? Would certainly help with anxiety and take your mind off the impending situation.

Given my commitment to Quarry Lodge No. 7543 and ‘our’ commitment to charity I felt this was a much better use to donate (on behalf of Freemasonry) rather than sell it.

Excuse the pun but I felt this charity could give faith and hope to others in times of adversity.”



Facebook post - University Hospitals Birmingham Charity

A huge thank you to the kind donation of this incredible Tesla car for Heartlands children’s ward! This amazing gift was dropped off by Richard and Kelly on behalf of the Worcester Freemasons. They were chuffed it went to this hospital since Kelly works in A&E at Heartlands; they hope it’ll bring a little bit of a positive distraction to the children being treated there.

As you can see our **first drivers** were loving it, and we’re sure it’ll bring joy to countless other children on the ward.

We are always to appreciative of donations like this as they truly make such a positive difference to patients!

There are plenty of ways you can make a difference. Find out more here - hospitalcharity.org



Worcestershire Masonic Golfing Society 58th Annual Event



The Provincial Golfing Society held its 58th Annual Event and AGM at Bromsgrove Golf Centre on 27th July, with a great feeling of relief after the restrictions of the pandemic had cancelled the 2020 playing schedule.

For most of the days play, the weather was perfect for the 38 brethren competing for the highly valued silverware prestige to the winners.

Bromsgrove Golf Centre proved to be a great venue—we were made most welcome by the club members and a wonderful experience was enjoyed by all, whether one had a good or bad day's golf.

The Provincial champion winning the 'Fellows Cup', was declared as WBro Phil Goalby, Lickey Hills Lodge No. 5947 with a score of 42 pts, with WBro Paul Battle, The Permanent Way



Phil Goalby receiving the 'Fellows Cup'



Presentation of the 'Weatheroak Bowl' to David Rushforth and David Hughes of Fairways Lodge MMM No. 1638

Lodge No. 9951 runner up with 38pts. The 'Weatheroak Bowl', a pairs competition with brethren from the same Lodge, was won by Fairways Lodge MMM No. 1638 by WBro David Rushforth (32 pts) and David Hughes (37 pts) with the winning score of 69 pts. WBro Peter Cartwright, Old Edwardian Lodge of Stourbridge No. 6141, retained the Veterans Cup (over 70 yrs.) with 37 pts.

Back in the club house, the event continued with the AGM, Festive Board and Presentations.

The AGM as always, was presided over by RWBro R. C. Vaughan, ProvGM but sadly commenced with remembering two very active and esteemed members who passed to the GLA during the pandemic. Two wonderful and heartfelt eulogies were presented. Firstly of VWBro Michael H R Cole PGSwdB, PastDepPGM by the PGM and secondly of WBro Christopher V Firminger, PAGDC by WBro Nigel C Wainwright (Brother-in Law).

*WBro Patrick V. Firminger APMG
presents the new 'C V Firminger
Memorial Trophy' to the Chairman
- WBro Andy Hill*



During the presentations, WBro Patrick V. Firminger, PJGD, AsstPGM presented to the Chairman, WBro Andy Hill, on behalf of the family, the 'C V Firminger Memorial Trophy'.

This new trophy was determined by the WMGS committee, to be competed for by members with the highest stableford score of a handicap over 20. WBro Patrick then presented the new trophy to the first winner, WBro. Paul Battle, secretary.

The main item on the agenda was the election of the captain elect with the nominee of the committee being WBro Paul Battle. With a unanimous and enthusiastic vote in favour, the outgoing captain WBro D L Smith, Abbot Lichfield Lodge No. 3308 formally invested WBro T P Battle, The Permanent Way Lodge No. 9951 as captain of the Worcestershire Masonic Golfing Society, presenting him with the 'Captain's Putter'.

Following the completion of the presentations and an excellent meal the meeting closed with everybody agreeing that we all had an enthralling, exciting and successful day.

A MESSAGE TO ALL WORCESTERSHIRE MASONIC GOLFERS

If you are a member of a Lodge in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire, (in any order) you are entitled to join the **WORCESTERSHIRE MASONIC GOLFING SOCIETY**.

To compliment the Annual Event, there are annual matches against all our surrounding provinces of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Warwickshire.

If you would wish to enjoy friendly competitive golf with golfers of like minds at some of the finest courses in the Midlands, the contact the Secretary today for an application form or visit www.wmgs.fmweb.org.uk. The life subscription to the Society is only £20 and includes your WMGS tie.

Full details of the playing schedule for 2021 may be seen on the WMGS website or contact WBro David Hughes Assistant Secretary at elvis103@sky.com

Brief details of the Society may be found on Page 107 of the 2019-2020 Provincial Handbook

The kindness of strangers

THE BIGGER BROTHER PROVINCIAL COLUMN

The events of the last eighteen months have brought about a realisation that things will not go back to as they were. Everywhere, there is a pervading sense of fundamental change to everything. Creating an emerging feeling of being "...at end of part one and now moving into part two!"

In the last months, bereavement, financial loss, and anxiety due to the exile from the traditional workplace are typical of the many experiences suffered. All done so in a vacuum without the comforting outlet that is Freemasonry. For Masonry itself it's not been quite so traumatic. As our distinct three-hundred-year history is characterised by the ability to respond to change.

Though, collectively with Covid19, this could still be seen as a minor mid-life crisis for masonry. Many of the brethren are already familiar or recognize this distressing mid-life feeling. Though they may lack the wish, opportunity, or ability to openly express it.

Writers like Dante were fortunate in possessing boundless creative skills to do so. However, he did enjoy a distinct advantage of being assisted by the eminent poet Virgil to guide him through his personal underworld.

'The Bigger Brother' column attempts in a remarkably modest way to facilitate the Virgil role for all the brethren in Worcestershire. Thus armed, together as a Province we can then confront this challenge head on. Comfortably responding and strong in our ability to move forward together with straightforward solutions for masonry during these challenging times.

This column offers an authorised point of view (PoV). As it's an insight to where the Provincial lens is focused for our future initiatives and activities. In this month's PoV Province recognises that Worcestershire can no longer solely operate exactly as we once did. In a post Covid world and to achieve Part Two for Masonry we need to rally together around some small changes.

The first initiative is to continue to build upon one of our biggest Covid successes, the masonic principal of 'the kindness of strangers'. As we have seen it's by bringing out the best of those brethren around us towards others, that emphasises the great work we do.

The new Provincial web site has countless examples of this fantastic work carried out by so many of the brethren. All of which made a marked difference to people's lives, offered genuine comfort, and assisted so many at such a challenging moment. Significantly, there isn't a single lodge in the province that didn't do something. A quite remarkable feat. Something that every brother in the province should take real pride in.

The Provincial Almoner W.Bro Charles Gwynn remarked “..the last eighteen months have seen the very best of masonry in our support for local communities during perhaps some of its most heart-breaking of times”.

Thanks, was also expressed by so many outside Freemasonry too. Just look at the comments on the Charity page to see the wonderful gratitude recorded towards us as Worcestershire masons.

Perhaps the next small change brought about by Covid that everyone will notice is the desire to continue the focus of mutual support, mental health awareness and outreach to every brother in the province by all lodges.

Conceivably the most striking illustration of this is the “We are all Almoner’s Day” (WAD) initiative that was the idea of the Provincial Grand Master RW.Bro Robert Vaughan. Being almoner in his mother lodge he immediately saw its relevance and value during these ‘Covid days’. All good leaders recognise when there is a need to pivot either focus, effort, or direction of travel. This was one of those moments.

The WAD initiative proved highly successful when it first ran during April, hence the call for a second in August. It’s by reaching out to brethren that we may not have seen or spoken to for a while, that not only reaffirms our bonds of friendship, but genuinely shows our brotherly love for one another. As masons we all know how meaningful this is, but it’s simply vital right now.

Significantly, this small initiative, together with others like it, reopens the door for the successful return to the lodge room and ultimately the wonderful work on the square.

Many brethren have privately confessed that due to the changes wrought by Covid that they are “..moving forward haunted by the guilt of becoming more of a part-time mason”. This is an inevitable concern and a core challenge to Masonry: Part Two. It’s part of the mid-life crisis, genuinely understood and easily addressed over the coming months.

In the 1970’s attending lodge was like meeting

the cast of an Evelyn Waugh novel. Everyone looked elegant, talked nicely, played golf or bridge together and frequently were related to the brethren in attendance. Today, that convivial atmosphere, commitment to charity, and genuine pleasure in brethren progressing in the lodge room, nevertheless still exists. This desire together with the excellent tenet of to “make good men better” pervades the thinking and actions of every Worcestershire lodge.

Post Covid it is these factors that form the cornerstone for our reconnection with everyone. Which, when carefully rekindled, via the “..with the we are all almoners” philosophy will step us easily into Masonry: Part Two.

Given this belief, it will ensure that moving forward our gatherings and meetings will acquire an even more contemporary meaning. This was articulated and illustrated so well in last month’s Source by WBro Karl Haines. But perhaps the essential element of our Part Two thinking is that we must all start to act more like Almoners.

WBro Mark Keepax

“The last eighteen months have seen the very best of masonry...”

Zip Wire Challenge

Unity Lodge
raise money for
charity

For some time, several of the members of Unity Lodge have nursed a desire to do something that was both exciting and adventurous for the participants—and which could ultimately raise some money for local charities.

Consequently, a ride on a mile-long zip wire at a disused quarry in Snowdonia, N. Wales, was chosen and has been booked for Thursday 30 September 2021.

The brave Brethren who have agreed to take part in this challenge are Paul Sampson, Mike Best, John Rawson and Patrick Lee—and the charities that will benefit from this endeavour are Prostate Cancer in Worcester and Festival 2022.

It was important for the Lodge to support the Festival but there is a very special reason indeed why Prostate Cancer was chosen as the local charity. Two members, Paul and John, have recovered from the disease and other members of the lodge are living with prostate cancer and receiving treatment.

For some time, several members of Unity Lodge have nursed a desire to do something that was both exciting and adventurous

PROSTATE
CANCER UK

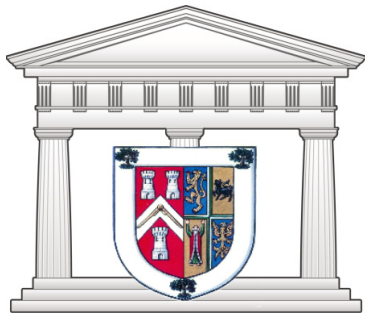
1 in 8 men will get
prostate cancer



Anyone wishing to support the Lodge in this challenge, that certainly isn't for the faint hearted, is asked to send their donations either in the form of cash or a cheque (made payable to **UNITY LODGE CHARITY ACCOUNT** – with your Lodge name and number kindly written on the rear, together with an indication as to whether you are willing to partake in Gift Aid) to:

Brother Mike Best at 33 Woodland Piece, Evesham, Worcester WR11 1BJ (mobile 07887 508900).

Please note that any money raised will be collected as one and then divided equally at the end.



Worcestershire Masonic Library and Museum

The year is 1886. Queen Victoria is on the throne, and Freemasonry is in its ascendancy. The Union of the Grand Lodges has been in existence for over 70 years.

At this time W. Bro. George Taylor, a prominent and prolific Kidderminster Mason was on a mission – a mission to educate the brethren. Bro. George is said to have quoted “It is most remarkable how few brethren there are who comprehend the extent of Masonic literature and its attendant objects”. Brother George had staged a “Great Masonic Soiree and Exhibition” in the Guildhall in Worcester two years earlier in 1884, after which he generously offered the whole of his collection to the Province. In 1886 he held another exhibition, this time in Kidderminster, after which all 12 Lodges of the Province made contributions towards the purchase of his collection.

In 1887, the Worcestershire Provincial Library and Museum opened at the Masonic Hall, 95 High Street Worcester and has moved only twice since then. To St Nicholas Street, and thence to Rainbow Hill. Until recent times, the L&M had only ever occupied one room. Those of you who visited the Provincial Museum years ago, will remember that the place resembled an Aladdin's cave. It was in one room, densely packed, with the library shelves covering one wall, thereby encroaching into the display space. You could not see across the room because display cases had a superstructure carrying a collection of jewels, which made giving talks to visitors a bit of a challenge. But things were about to change.



Two things are burnt into the consciousness of every museum curator: first, that the contents of a museum have a tendency to increase; secondly, that museums do not have elastic walls. As has been mentioned, it was in the one room and with all adjacent rooms in use, and there seemed no possibility of enlargement as the Museum had already encroached onto the landing. On one side of the Museum was the rehearsal room, on the other was a small lavatory adjacent to the Lodge room itself making any hope of expansion impossible.

But out of the blue, fate played a major part in an unexpected way. On the remaining side was the resident Tyler's flat. Many of you may have fond memories of the last of its occupants, the late Bro. John Davies. Upon his death in the 1990s, the Buildings Company took a decision not to engage another, and let the flat to a tenant for a modest rent in return for some light duties - checking the lights, locking up, mowing the grass etc. This worked well enough, but when he moved away, the incoming tenant neither did his jobs nor paid his rent, and so notice was served on him to quit. In December 2004 he did. He went to the kitchen, gave his keys to the caterer and stated he was leaving. The Buildings Co. was immediately alerted. Almost immediately the locks had been changed in case there should be any change of mind!

Knowing that the flat and the Museum had one wall in common, when the museum team became aware of the situation, overtures were made to the Buildings Co. to see whether there was any possibility of expansion, subject to satisfactory terms being agreed. A meeting was arranged and after some discussion it was suggested that an examination of the Tyler's flat might be worthwhile. The Flat had a very odd design feature in that the resident Tyler did not have direct access into the main building. He had to go outdoors, down a flight of steps, to the main front door and enter the building that way.

The representatives of the Library and Museum had never seen the inside of the Flat before. . When the Flat was opened for viewing, they were, to say the least, completely dumbfounded. The filth and stench were unspeakable. The windows had doubtless never been opened for months. A strange wet looking patch in the corner of one of the bedrooms didn't appear to have come from outside. The appalling state of the Flat meant that the examination was a cursory one, but – it had possibilities.

Terms were agreed with the Buildings Company quite quickly, but lay in the Solicitors "In tray" for most of 2005. During this time, designs for the extra space were produced, specifying which walls were to be removed, and other details.

It was at this time, that two unexpected discoveries were made. - Firstly, and most unwanted, was that the wall between the Museum and the flat, through which a doorway would have to be cut, was no less than 38cm thick; and secondly, equally unwelcome was that the floor of the flat was 46cm lower than that of the Museum.

Next article ...

The development of the Library and Museum begins

**DATES
FOR YOUR
DIARY**

Sunday 12th September

Annual Cathedral and Memorial Service, Worcester Cathedral

Sunday 19th September

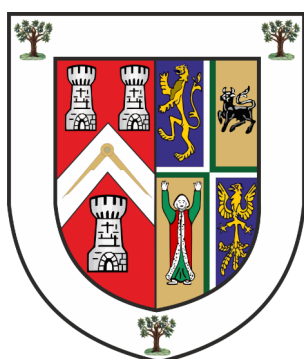
Cubit Club Family Party

Saturday 2nd October

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE, Birmingham University

Sunday 5th December

Christmas Carol Service, Pershore Abbey





PCO Story

Bro John Fennell — Cubit Club Committee Member

Many of you may know Brody Swain as the Worshipful Master of Royal Standard Lodge No. 498 and as our Provincial Communications Officer (PCO), however you may be unaware that he is also the current Chairman of the Cubit Club.

Following last month's story in which I told you that there was a lot of hard work being done behind the scenes by the Committee, I thought I would speak to Brody to gain his thoughts on the Cubit Club and how he intends to drive the club forward.

After serving the club as its Deputy, Brody became Chairman of the Cubit Club in January of this year at the online AGM.

It was important to Brody to continue the great work that had already been done by the Committee, but also to bring in a number of new ideas to take the club to the next level. Not an enviable task during a pandemic, but Brody was certainly up for the challenge.

I asked Brody for his thoughts on what the Cubit Club means to him. "For me, the Cubit Club is a place to welcome and embrace young and new members by giving them many opportunities to spend time with other men who are at a similar stage to themselves in Freemasonry. Most importantly, it's about having a lot of fun.

Often when someone joins a Lodge, they don't know many other members and learning and practising ritual can be quite daunting. That's why I believe our Class of Instruction (COI) events are the most important thing we do.



Before COVID-19 reared its ugly head, our COI events were very well received and that's why we are intending to host these on a regular basis in a relaxed environment around the Province. Worcestershire is a big place, so it's very important that we take the classes to our members.

A big part of the Cubit Club is to inject even more fun into Freemasonry by holding all different kind of social events. We intend to put on exclusive trips for our members such as a behind the scenes visit to Grand Lodge in London, which will include bits that others do not get to see. There are many other exciting events to come and lots to look forward to.

We also intend to set up a network of Cubit Club Ambassadors in each Hall across the Province, giving the Club an 'on the ground' presence and a direct link between the Committee and our members. Who knows they could also go on to be part of our Committee in the future.

With the help of our Ambassadors, we will arrange Cubit Club visits to support different lodges in Worcestershire and see how different lodges interpret their ritual. It's also another opportunity to get those Cubit Club ties in one place and spend time with our mates."

I also asked Brody, now that we are moving back to normality in regards to Freemasonry, what are his immediate concerns moving forward.

"Like Freemasonry as a whole, we need to really engage with our members after not seeing anyone for such a long time and remind them that we are very much still in business. There are exciting times ahead because we are expecting a large amount of initiations over the next few months.

It is mine and the Committee's intention to welcome each and every one of these initiates and make them feel part of the Club from the very beginning. The most important thing we need to do as a Committee, is to listen to what our members have to say. After all, they are the Cubit Club."

If you are interested in becoming a Cubit Club Hall Ambassador, or if you have any questions relating to the Club, please do not hesitate to get in contact with [me](#). I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brody for his time and insight into the Cubit Club and I am sure you will join me in wishing him every success in the future.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

St. Mary's Hospice Quiz Night — Friday 10th September

This will be an online quiz and a cost of £5 per team. Start time 19:30. All monies raised will go directly to the hospice.

Cubit Club Family Party — Sunday 19th September 2PM

At Kidderminster Rugby Club. Come and have a drink with the Cubit Club' and celebrate our return. Everyone is welcome. We will have BBQ, live singer, face painting to name a few.

Now at this point I need to tell you, you do not need to be a young or new Mason to attend any of our events, to the contrary, all are welcome. For further information click [here](#)...

Lodge Membership Officers Jewel

Available for purchase

The new Membership Officers jewel is now available to purchase. This beautiful Jewel is a physical representation of a Lewis.

It reinforces the importance of the Membership Officer within his lodge, his call to explore and promote the tools within the Pathway and to ultimately deliver the lodges membership plan and initiatives; with the goal of growing the membership and paving the way for new brethren to join and grow within our fraternity.

Ensure your lodge orders the new Membership Officers Jewel ASAP and wear it with pride.

Available to purchase via this [link](#) or other Masonic regalia suppliers.



Worcestershire Masonic LOTTERY

Last month's winners

Clive Haywood of Wenceslas Lodge, No. 9836

Paul Parkes of Forge Mill Lodge, No. 9658

All profit from the lottery goes to the West Midlands Air Ambulance, Acorns Childrens Hospice, and to the 2022 Charity supporting many different worthy causes across Worcestershire. Download an application form [here](#).



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