

Worcestershire "Square News"



A message from the Provincial Grand Master

Over the challenging past months, the 65 editions of "Square News" have played a vital role in describing the life of the Province and beyond in lockdown, and in keeping us all in contact with each other.

It was an inspired initiative on the part of the Communications Team and I am extremely grateful for their considerable efforts.



Week 65, 21st June 2021

The attached photos remind us, better than words can, of just a small selection of some of the stories told and of some amazing achievements during that period. For many, it has been an extremely difficult time and the consequences will be long lasting, but in other ways, unexpected opportunities have arisen. In particular, many of our meeting places have been engaged in alterations and improvements which will make our return to normality in the next few weeks so much more enjoyable. As our meetings resume, do grab the opportunity of being with friends again and seeing what has been achieved.

Personally, I can't wait to be with you again, all being well at Worcester Cathedral on September 12th, for our Annual Service and back at the Great Hall on October 2nd for Provincial Grand Lodge. In the meantime, a huge thank you to our brilliant and hard working Comms Team, and I look forward to the return of "Worcestershire Source" on August 2nd.



Images L-R: Launch of TimeToToast (W2), Covid aid to India (W62), Tablets to Hospitals (W8), Super Hero Martin Carver (W9), Steve Holmes home (W17), Launch of "An audience with..." (W20), We are all Almoners (W43), Launch of "I'm a Freemason..." (W33), D of E Grant (W54), Prov Grand Lodge covid meet (W34), Freemasons covid fund tops £1M (W19), first lodge meet back, Hope and Charity (W63)



Latest update from the Provincial Grand Secretary



Further to the Prime Minister's announcement, we understand that in England the Stage 3 restrictions will broadly speaking continue to apply after 21 June. As a reminder, in The Province of Worcestershire, this means that **Masonic meetings of up to 6 people are permitted**. However, if a Masonic Centre has conducted a risk assessment, taken into account government guidance and taken all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of transmission of Covid, then it may host Covid-Secure Masonic meetings of more than 6 people, up to the lower of

- the maximum capacity identified in the Centre risk assessment; or
- 30 attendees maximum.

Dining is restricted to groups of up to 6 people.

If you are planning meetings and you have any concerns, please contact in the first instance on email, outlining your request to constitutions@WorcestershireFreemasons.com and WBro Ian Fothergill, and the team will guide you as best as we can on your individual circumstances.

Can I also remind secretaries that you are required to send a summons to your members for all of your meetings hereon, as we are not in suspension. The exception is those lodges who have opted for a three month suspension. Please also send a copy in pdf or word to provincial@WorcestershireFreemasons.com

Provincial Communications Officer: Brody Swain (PCO@Worcestershirepgl.org.uk)

Editor: Andy Philpott (ajp@philpott-online.co.uk)

Click the icons to connect to our social media platforms →



Page 1 of 4



Sunday 11 th July	Regatta and Vehicle display ** POSTPONED **
Sunday 12 th September	Annual Cathedral and Memorial Service, Worcester Cathedral
Saturday 2 nd October	PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE, Birmingham University
Sunday 5 th December	Christmas Carol Service, Pershore Abbey

Mark(ing) Time?

Paul Webber speaks to WBro Richard Green, the Prov DC of Mark Master Masons for the Province of Worcestershire.



"Over the past twenty years I have been very fortunate and privileged to have been a Provincial Director of Ceremonies in three Orders. These days, my focus is in the Mark Degree, which includes the Royal Ark Mariners. I was appointed the Mark Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies in 2010, and Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies in 2015.

The Mark Degree stands alongside the Craft and Royal Arch, embracing many aspects of the Hiram Legend - and is the passport to other degrees in Freemasonry. Sometimes called 'the Friendly Degree', but I prefer 'the Magic of the Mark', as it brings its own unique atmosphere, embracing colourful and dramatic ceremonies.

So what does a Provincial DC in the Mark actually do? With over forty Lodges in the Province, including the Royal Ark Mariner Degree, Installation Ceremonies account for a high proportion of visits made by the team - which is made up of myself, a Deputy and an Assistant Director of Ceremonies. During my time as a Director of Ceremonies, there have been Consecrations of new lodges in both Mark and Royal Ark Mariner, 50 year certificate presentations, banner and honours board dedications. Following the opening of the new Masonic Centre in Kidderminster, a keystone was consecrated by a former Provincial DC and Provincial Grand Master, who is now the Grand Director of Ceremonies in the Mark Degree.

Lodges celebrating special birthdays, are very special occasions - and will often include a visit by either the Assistant Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, and on some occasions the Pro Grand Master - so liaison with the Grand Director of Ceremonies is paramount!

The highlight of the year is of course, the annual meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge, which is where we are on show not only in our own Province but to the many visitors we have - particularly visiting Provincial Grand Masters and other members of their respective Provinces, and to have in excess of twenty RW Brethren visiting is quite common place.

Provincial Grand Lodge in Mark is very much a team activity, and without the Provincial Grand Secretary and his team, no meeting would take place. This team approach enables us to plan a meeting which runs smoothly and on time. Seating plans, processions, appointment and investiture officers, rehearsals, the Festive Board etc, all of which have to be addressed, to ensure the meeting is a success.

When we begin to start operating in what may become a normal environment, a Provincial DC is a very active Mason. I could have joined many other Orders and have been out less, but seriously there is no better job in Freemasonry than being a Provincial Director of Ceremonies!

Worcestershire
2022
Festival
(E2022) donation



<https://gtap.uk/e/2022>



Join the Provincial Grand Master as he hosts a virtual zoom social meeting at 12:45pm, culminating in the National Toast at 1pm.

Anyone can register to join and all we ask is that they each pledge at least £5 to the NHS charities.



Monday 5th July
12:45pm



Login HERE

Or copy this URL to your browser

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81471428072?pwd=WWMwM1NkU1VjU3hnQ3lTl0laVjZQT09>

Dofra awarded Charter Mark!

Fantastic congratulations to the website for Dofra lodge No. 5775, which has been awarded the Charter Mark.



Hop on over to <https://www.dofralodge.org.uk/>



Famous Freemasons (and congrats!)

Congratulations to Freemason Rick Wakeman, CBE on being made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, for his services to music and broadcasting! Rick is a Past Master of Chelsea Lodge, No. 3098 in London.

Provincial Communications Officer: Brody Swain (PCO@Worcestershirepgl.org.uk)

Editor: Andy Philpott (ajp@philpott-online.co.uk)

Click the icons to connect to our social media platforms



Page 2 of 4



Vehicle Display, Duck Race and Regatta

Due to the latest Covid restriction announcement, we have unfortunately been required to postpone both the Masonic Vehicle Display and Duck Race/Regatta, originally scheduled for the 11th July.

Once a new date has been secured, we will announce the new arrangements.

All tickets sold to date will of course be transferable.

The Development of Freemasonry in Worcestershire Part 6 - "The Final Countdown"

The Final Countdown seems a very apt title to conclude my articles on The Development of Freemasonry in Worcestershire, as this is the final edition of Square News. The song, "The Final Countdown", has lyrics which describe a trip into space, travelling towards Venus, leaving Earth behind. Perhaps we can now assume we are heading for better times and leaving the pandemic and Covid behind.

Space and time have not permitted me to name all Lodges, Chapter or Order, nor even to catalogue all the rulers of the various degrees over the last, so successful a century. Worcestershire can justly be proud of many fine Masonic institutions and of many outstanding Freemasons.

If, from this last century, I had to pick just three of the latter, these would be William Thomas Page, General Sir Francis Davies and Frederick Hickton Griffiths.

WBro Page never became Provincial Grand Master, but he faithfully served three successive PGMs as Deputy PGM for no less than thirty-four years, from 1899 to his death in 1933. In addition to this, he was ME Grand Superintendent of the Royal Arch during 1919 to 1933, PGM of the Mark Master Masons for a similar period, having previously been DPGM since 1911, and the first Provincial Prior from 1924 of the reconstituted Knights Templar Province of Worcestershire - as well as having served for nine years as Secretary of the Provincial Charity Organisation. At a time of great social change, Freemasonry in Worcestershire flourished under his guidance.

General Sir Francis Davies (pictured right), holds the distinction of having been the most senior a Freemason to have come from this Province, having held the post of Deputy Grand Master from 1935 to 1947. During his long tenure of office as PGM from 1919 to 1948, (only exceeded by the absentee Prov Mastership of John Dent 1792-1826), Craft Masonry increased in the province, from twenty four lodges to seventy two - and he personally consecrated all but seven of these. He presided at both a Boys' and a Girls' Festival, and three times headed delegations of Grand Lodge abroad; his advice was much sought and equally respected throughout the world of Freemasonry.



Finally Frederick Hickton Griffiths (pictured left) ; His service to Freemasonry in this Province in so many orders and Degrees ranks alongside that of William Page, and is well known to those Freemasons in the Province with long service.

I began this series of articles with two acknowledgements, and I would like to end, if I may, with the following observation.

We are extremely fortunate in having in this Province what is generally regarded as the finest Masonic Museum outside London. The writing of these articles could not have been carried out without the resources, which are available to all Worcestershire Freemasons, which are held at The Worcestershire Masonic Library and Museum, at Rainbow Hill, Worcester. If you, like me, are interested in the

Development of Freemasonry in Worcestershire, pay it a visit, and gaze in wonder upon the many artefacts on display and the myriad of books, papers and lectures available to us all.

ED – My sincere thanks, to **WBro Bill Mason** for his words (and lyrics) in his series over the past few months, and I'm sure we've all learnt a great deal!

Round table round the Province

On 5th September, WBro Steve Thomas is attempting to cycle to all Worcestershire lodge rooms, (which is approx. 130 miles or so), in a single day - he says rain or shine doesn't matter! Steve will be raising funds for the Festival 2022.

He is planning to start and finish at Northfield Masonic Hall, travelling in an anti clockwise direction. He will be joined on various stages by other members of Round Table No. 7961. Members of other lodges are welcome to join - Route details to be published shortly - if you would like to participate, please contact Steve Thomas at steve.thomas@nrgltd.co.uk

To check out further details and/or donate click [HERE](#)

Who ate all the cake?



Robert Vaughan, Martyn Hardeman and Brian Egerton, visited Jim Johnstone at home to help him celebrate the great occasion of his 100th birthday, with a special certificate to mark the day.


Greetings from Her Majesty the Queen were, of course, very much in pride of place.

Jim is a Past Master of Lodge of St George No. 5691 and a great supporter of the Royal Arch and Rose Croix masonry over many years.

He joined the Royal Air Force as a teenager, served in southern Africa, and flew Short Stirling bombers throughout World War 2.

The birthday cake, (courtesy of Felicity Hill) went down so well that there was nothing left to photograph!

As a reminder, all 64 Copies produced during Lockdown! If you wish to view a particular issue, just click on the image.

							
1 - 23 rd March 2020	2 - 30 th March	3 - 6 th April	4 - 13 th April	5 - 20 th April	6 - 27 th April	7 - 4 th May	8 - 11 th May
							
9 - 18 th May 2020	10 - 25 th May	11 - 3 rd June	12 - 8 th June	13 - 15 th June	14 - 22 nd June	15 - 29 th June	16 - 6 th July
							
17 - 13 th July 2020	18 - 20 th July	19 - 27 th July	20 - 3 rd August	21 - 10 th August	22 - 17 th August	23 - 24 th August	24 - 31 st August
							
25 - 7 th Sept 2020	26 - 14 th Sept	27 - 21 st Sept	28 - 28 th Sept	29 - 5 th Oct	30 - 12 th Oct	31 - 19 th Oct	32 - 26 th Oct
							
33 - 2 nd Nov 2020	34 - 9 th Nov	35 - 16 th Nov	36 - 23 rd Nov	37 - 30 th Nov	38 - 7 th Dec	39 - 14 th Dec	40 - 21 st Dec
							
VIDEO EDITION Masonic Province of Worcestershire Video - Square News January 2021	41 - 4 th Jan 2021	42 - 11 th Jan	43 - 18 th Jan	44 - 25 th Jan	45 - 1 st Feb	46 - 8 th Feb	47 - 15 th Feb
							
49 - 1 st March 2021	50 - 8 th March	51 - 15 th March	52 - 22 nd March	53 - 29 th March	54 - 5 th April	55 - 12 th April	56 - 19 th April
							
57 - 26 th April 2021	58 - 3 rd May	59 - 10 th May	60 - 17 th May	61 - 24 th May	62 - 31 st May	63 - 7 th June	64 - 14 th June



Final thoughts from the Editor

Brethren, as we come to a close on one chapter in the life of Worcestershire communications, we will see the opening of another very soon – which is very much similar to us all looking forward to our return to the “new normal”, as lockdown restrictions ease. With the 65 editions issues, it has been a privilege to be part of the recording of that extraordinary and hopefully unique period in history; some sad – with the passing of many, such as Roy Padden, Michael Cole and Chris Firminger, amongst 63 during that period – but shortly we should be able to celebrate and remember them at the forthcoming Cathedral service. Some that show the perseverance of both individuals and Freemasons in general with their tremendous fundraising efforts. And still, my favourite piece written by our former PCO, Jonathan Swift, back in [edition 21](#) in August 2020, “*there are always positives, even during a pandemic*”; and maybe we return in a better place, stronger, more engaging, and taking stock – in fact, becoming better men.

To the future - The new monthly source is going to be in a different, more exciting format with much more content, ably designed by our new Deputy Editor, Adam Lewis; and as ever, I am eternally grateful for all of you that contributed to the articles we have featured in the past, especially to the comms team who came up with all the ideas of the new series featured throughout, and of course, to all those yet to come!

For the final time - keep strong, keep positive, take the vaccine, and stay safe.

The Editor, Andy Philpott

Provincial Communications Officer: Brody Swain (PCO@Worcestershirepgl.org.uk)

Editor: Andy Philpott (ajp@philpott-online.co.uk)

Click the icons to connect to our social media platforms



Page 4 of 4