



Week 50, 8th March 2021

Brethren, Square News turns 50!! (weeks anyway :). Who would have thought that 50 editions ago, we would still be producing a weekly newsletter after all this time, as a way of keeping in touch? There are of course, reminders over that period just how life can be so cruel, and we remember solemnly in this past week, just one of those occasions; but also, there is time for celebration when appropriate. We highlight a new national initiative that has been launched, supported by UGLE, to pay tribute to those people whose served on the frontline of the pandemic, and to raise funds for two very worthy causes.

Talking of charity - we highlight a unique fundraising activity from one of our brethren; and also feature how one Charity Steward copes with his duties during the pandemic. In our regular article in the "View from the East", read some refreshing advice in how one WM, thought about those people that perhaps we have a tendency to take for granted, in their support on his own journey.

Keep strong, keep positive, take the vaccine and stay safe.

The Editor

WBro Chris Firminger PAGDC



WBro Chris started his long and very distinguished Masonic journey on 18th April 1997, along with his brother Patrick - in a joint initiation into the Old Bromsgrovian Lodge No. 5743, at which the charge was delivered by their father in a flawless manner from the WM's pedestal. The Lodge meets in the Old Chapel of the school he attended for many years and Chris threw himself fully into Freemasonry, and became Worshipful Master in 2007.

This was a great foundation for the future, as he supported the Lodge of the Round Table No. 7961, and helped rebuild the lodge back to strength, becoming WM in 2011 until 2013.

Both Chris and Patrick had the honour of being appointed as joint Festival Chairman for Festival 2022.

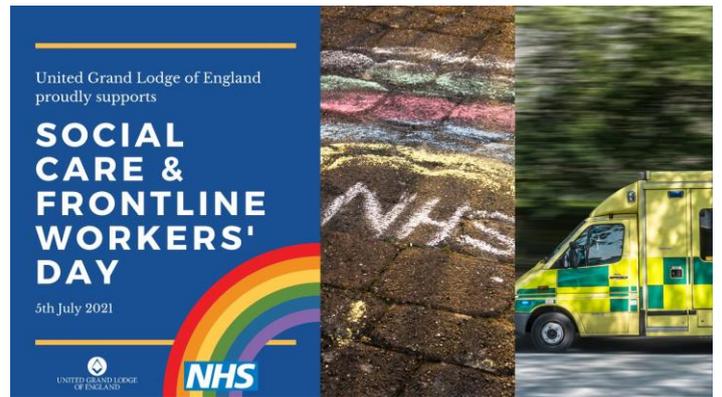
He was rewarded for all his hard work by being appointed a Provincial Grand Steward in 2010. As was typical of Chris, he became one of the hardest working members of Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge No. 9142, becoming the Lodge Secretary and then through the offices of JW, SW and then Worshipful Master in 2017, and during this time he was also involved in the Lodge's Presentation team. He then received the greatest honour of becoming Provincial Junior Grand Warden in 2012, working with his beloved brother Patrick, who was Provincial Senior Grand Warden in the same year, forming a brilliant partnership for the Province. It was the first time in 150 years, two brothers had been appointed in the same year. In 2016 he was appointed Provincial Grand Charity Steward, supporting and assisting Patrick, who is the current Festival 2022 chairman. In 2019, Chris was honoured by UGLE and appointed to the rank of PAGDC.

Chris became a Royal Arch Companion, being exalted into Page Chapter No. 3378 in 2001, becoming MEZ in 2017. He also became a founder of Old Bromsgrovian Chapter No. 5743, becoming MEZ in 2013. The Province rewarded his commitment to the order by appointing him to the rank of Provincial Grand Sojourner in 2016.

Chris was also a Mark Master Mason and a Royal Ark Mariner, becoming Worshipful Master of the Centenary Lodge MMM No. 1623 in 2018/19. He would have received his first Provincial appointment of PProvSGD at this year's Provincial Mark Master Masons meeting.

Chris was a very busy man, a committed family man, a Financial Advisor and a great freemason. Chris gave his full commitment to everything he did. A true example for junior brethren to aspire to, and a great friend to many.

WBro Chris Firminger lived, respected and died very much regretted.



UGLE are delighted to announce the support for NHS Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day, on the 5th July 2021!

We will use this day to pay tribute to the brave staff on the frontline of the pandemic.

The 5th July, 1948, was an historic moment in our country's history. It was the day our pioneering National Health Service (NHS) was born, bringing free healthcare to everyone. We have treasured it ever since, but never more so since March 2020, when the Coronavirus pandemic gripped the UK and utterly changed all our lives.

Now we have the chance to show our gratitude to all NHS and front line staff, with an annual day of thanks, and remembrance of those who lost their lives because of this dreadful disease. The first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day takes place on Monday, 5th July 2021, with a series of events involving every aspect of society - and raising money for two excellent causes - NHS Charities Together, which supports 250 hospitals and their charitable trusts, and the National Care Association, representing 1.6 million workers, caring for some of society's frailest citizens.

With flags, banners, tea parties, street parties and a whole host of other national events being planned, why not organise your own local celebrations!

You can find out more about the events that are being planned [here](#)

More announcements and Social Media coverage will be taking place from UGLE as the events start to ramp up.



PGL of
Worcestershire
2022 Festival
(E2022) donation

<https://gtap.uk/e2022>



A View from the East....

This week, we speak with **WBro Allan Bretherton**, an experienced PM, twice WM for Chaddesley Corbett 8942 and second-time WM of Hope & Charity 377. Allan is 68, and a retired European Sales Manager in the power generation industry.

Tell us about your journey to The Chair?

My journey started with IG, which is the first time many of us take-the-floor. It was an opportunity to watch, observe and add my personality to the role. I enjoyed the Deacon's Offices, but the JW chair was when the work really started. SW however gave me time to breathe and prepare for The Chair.

What do you recall about your first installation?

We conducted the extended workings throughout. I wore my late-father's apron and afterwards my guest, a friend I hadn't seen for a while and whose father was a contemporary of my late-father's, approached me, shook my hand and said "Your father would have been so proud".



Famous Freemasons?

March 3, 1753,
George Washington was passed to the degree of Fellowcraft at Fredericksburg Lodge, Virginia



[Sketch courtesy of the collection at George Washington Masonic National Memorial]

How did your year progress?

It was non-stop. We had two 1sts, two 2nds and a 3rd. I planned a good social calendar - a Ladies Sunday Lunch at Hogarth Manor, a Harvest Supper and 100+ guests for our "Ladies Night".

If you could emphasise one thing, what would that be?

The success of your year will depend largely on the support of your wife/partner. We expect so much, but sometimes neglect to prepare them for their role as the ostensible "first lady" of the lodge. It is often the first time they've been in that position, and if you think you are nervous about conducting your first ceremony, imagine how they must feel, having to stand up in front of a large number of people and give what is often their first formal speech. It's very daunting.

Invite the IPM, his wife/partner round for drinks, it's an opportunity to chat, ask questions and prepare for the year. Supporting the wives and partners of your officers as they progress is vital.

Any final advice?

Learn the office either side of your current position, importantly, don't forget to learn the "red" bits. Look directly at your officers when addressing them, give them time to stand and come to order before continuing. Make everybody comfortable, be clear and measured in your speech, particularly when addressing a candidate. Don't neglect the social calendar, functions are a source of new members. The ME will follow you next year, don't go over the top with ladies' gifts or set any difficult precedents.

A hair raising fundraiser....?

Arrangements are now in place for Bro Hereward Davies, Worshipful Master of Moseley Lodge No. 5224, who will be sponsored to have his head shaved live on 31st March 2021.



Hereward has not had a brilliant time as WM so far. He was installed in January 2020, attended the February meeting, but then had a heart attack, missing the March meeting - and all subsequent meetings could not take place due to Covid restrictions! He remains WM for 2021 and wishes to continue his support for the Festival.

Anyone wishing to help Hereward lose the locks, can sponsor him at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/HettyHeadShave> with all proceeds going to the 2022 Festival.

A Daily Advancement....

Lodge Music?

Or "I played all the right notes, not necessarily in the right order" :)



Read more on this topic [HERE](#).

[Ed's competition – can anyone identify the organ the Ed is playing here?]

Square News Ambassadors...

We recognise that many brethren do not have the technology, or skills, to be able to electronically receive, download or print their copy of SN.

Why not become a SN Ambassador and do it for them? and keep in touch every week, by hand delivering (safely) a copy for them to read.

The Covid challenge for Charity Stewards

The recent 'An Audience With...', saw a sell-out audience enjoy a lively presentation from David Dey, on 'Charity Money – Where does it go?' David explained how the MCF and the Relief Chest Scheme work, which has of course taken a real punch below the belt by the current pandemic. So, spare a thought for our hard-pressed Charity Stewards, who have found that their usual channels for fundraising have in large part, been cut off.

Peter Ross, the indefatigable Charity Steward of Elmley Castle Lodge No. 6247 at Evesham commented: "As the seriousness of the pandemic became clear, all our plans effectively went out of the window and our lively programme of events had to be cancelled". Peter had to think of new ideas and has been successful in raising funds, to the extent that the Lodge's Alms Account is in an extremely healthy situation.



"One Brother came up with the idea of selling Masonic Twitter pin badges – which not only raised money but raised awareness of the presence of Freemasonry on this social platform. We organised a sale of some wonderful cuts of veal, which also proved a popular fund raiser, as did sales of Masonic branded masks – now that really is a sign of the times!" A very successful raffle was also organised, drawn during a Zoom meeting with some top quality prizes on offer, all donated by Brethren.

And Peter's message to Brethren? "Please think about your Charity Steward doing his best against all the odds. If you have a fund-raising idea, tell your Steward. I remember some sage advice from the late John Icke who said: 'When people are really enjoying themselves, they give freely' and that has certainly proved to be so".

Article by Ian Crowder