

Worcestershire "Square News"



Week 1, 23rd March 2020

Top Tips

Petrol stations are a place to be wary of - always wear gloves or use a paper towel when filling your car; the pump handles are a place for easy contagion.



Brethren, None of us is properly prepared for what we are all now dealing with, but the Pro Grand Master's recent letter reflects how many of us feel and how we can confront this and look forward to a better future.

On your behalf I thank Iain Sharratt and his team, and Charles Gwynn for the hours they are spending dealing with the many queries. Please do give them some breathing space. Also many thanks to the Cubit Club volunteers for offering to help with essential shopping.

Please follow the advice, keep in contact with brethren, widows and all who need help.

Jonathan Swift and the Comms Team will be using this format regularly to enable us to keep in touch, so please contribute to it. I'm sure that it will make a difference. Please keep well.

Yours,

Robert Vaughan, Provincial Grand Master

An extract from the official communication from the Pro Grand Master

Dear Brethren and Companions,

These are difficult and testing times for us all. First, I wanted to thank each and every one of you for your patience and understanding during this challenging and worrying period.

Coronavirus is going to be with us for some considerable time, and I am certain you are as disappointed as I am that we have, reluctantly, suspended all Masonic activity. I trust that you will agree that it was the right course of action at the right time.

I appreciate the enormous disruption that this will cause all of us, and also the hole left in our lives by the withdrawal of something we hold enormously dear.

For the next few months we may not see as much of each other as we have recently; we may be spread throughout the country, or indeed the world and we may have things asked of us which sit outside the ordinary compass of our experience. From a personal point of view, being over 70 and diabetic I am taking the "lock down" seriously, as I am sure all brethren in the same situation will. There are, of course, a great many in this position and it is not easy with no, even vague, end date in sight.

Over the last few years we have been trying to stress that Freemasonry must remain relevant to society and I have never been in doubt that this has been the case in many ways. However, it has never been more relevant than it is right now. What we do in the next few months, will be written into our Lodge and Chapter histories and will test us, as an organisation and as people perhaps more than anything in our lifetimes. I think it is fair to say that I cannot remember a more testing time for the organisation, for society and for the country. We need to step up and do our part, as we have in difficult times past, to help those, our less fortunate Brethren, their families and the communities from which we are drawn.

We will need your dedication, flexibility and patience over the coming weeks and months to help each other through these turbulent times. Freemasonry has weathered many storms in its centuries-long history. It will weather this one too, and we will emerge ready for the challenges of, I suspect, a very different world.

Look after yourselves, brethren, and I trust we can get back to normality in the not too distant future. I wish you and your families good health and happiness, and more than your fair share of luck.

Peter Lowndes
Pro Grand Master



UNITED GRAND LODGE
OF ENGLAND

UPDATE FROM PROVINCIAL MCF REP.

As well as being, with WBro Bill Tucker, your MCF rep. I am also a Visiting Volunteer for the Charity. I know the support they already give to many within our Province however this need is likely to increase due to the adverse effects of the Coronavirus. For example, this week I have been made aware of two cancellations by the NHS for long-awaited hip operations.

Hopefully the MCF may be able to find the funds for these operations to bring months of pain to an end. Although personal visits have been suspended, we are still here to support any Bro. or his family in need.

David Dey



Many Lodges have now created WhatsApp Groups to keep members in touch with the latest news (and humour!)

It is quite straightforward and is free to do but if you have a problem please email the Editor

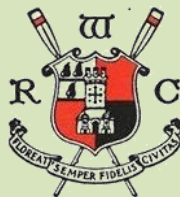
A positive note!

You've had a lot of information thrown at you in the last few days: Grand Lodge have said to be vigilant; the government have said to be sensible but reminded us that this is beatable; and asking you to remain positive.

We've seen the guidelines and the preventative measures many of us will have to go through. If you do show symptoms or if you are in the higher risk category, try and see your period at home not as 'self-isolation' but more of a 'staycation'.

- Get around to all those jobs you've been putting off
- Have a clear out, either bottom drawer style or a digital one maybe with pictures on your phone
- Read that book you've always been meaning to
- Complete an online Sudoku or quiz <https://www.mindgames.com/>
- Call relatives for that chat you've wanted for a long time
- Reconnect with old friends and write letters or emails to them
- Make your own cinema night and put on a favourite film
- Start a new hobby: cooking, painting, stretching, drawing
- Spend time in your own garden and appreciate what's around you
- Have a shop around for better insurance/energy deals
- Get into a routine ASAP, get up and dressed, eat at regular mealtimes
- Find one productive thing to do each day

With acknowledgement to
Anna Singleton, WRC Captain



#TimeToToast

@UGLE_GrandLodge have started trending on Twitter for the 9 o'clock toast with the hashtag #TimeToToast. Let's get as many people tweeting as possible. Did you see the special guest star that kick-started us off on the 21st March? ... see you at 9pm



Post and tweet your photos!



Our very best wishes to you all, from everyone at Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire. Please keep safe, stay indoors and save a life.

Until we meet again!



YOUR PROVINCE NEEDS
YOU

If you have an interesting short article on how you are coping without formal Masonry, or dealing with self-isolation, or if you have any tips or amusing anecdotes from this crisis let the PCO or Editor know by email