



Week 19, 27th July 2020

Brethren, Week 19 brings with it memories of this time last year, when we were in the midst of the Festival Regatta. Times have changed of course, but we start to emerge out into what is probably the "new norm".

Whilst there are restrictions in various forms around the country, there is a certain easing of the rules which means our daily lives are starting to return in some shape back to the outside world.

We must take stock that there are some positives which will come out of this historic time, and our Provincial Membership Officer reflects on some Masonic changes.

Our podcast this week comes from one of our newest initiates and younger brethren – hear his perspective on his initiation, life and lockdown today.

Keep strong, keep positive and stay safe.

The Ed

Bro Edward Webber



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Pandemic positives, from the candidate's perspective

Brethren, with much trepidation we find ourselves once again able to meet and more importantly, bring new life into our lodges. As you'll no doubt have heard, there have been changes to the work we're allowed to do, especially that of the first degree ceremony.

I'd like to explore the positives in this unique situation with you all.

Firstly - we should hope this is a once in a lifetime event for Freemasonry. For those candidates joining during this time, there's some dark humour in being a "Covid Candidate" and something that makes their experience unique and a talking point for the future.

Secondly - with the restrictions to the candidate preparation and floor work, it's an opportunity to make an extra effort to explore and discuss the allegory and symbolic nature of the initiation with them. Give them more to reflect on than we usually give time for.

It's important we keep a sense of perspective too, remembering that our candidates know nothing of the "usual" manner of initiation, so will know no different. They will however feel disappointed, should we allow ourselves to project any negative views onto what should be a most memorable occasion for them.

Finally, the very fact we can find a means to initiate new members during a pandemic, popular or not, demonstrates the strength of the chain - we're being tried and tested, but not broken.

With Sincere & Fraternal Best Wishes,
Nick Thomas, PMO

Zooming ahead

Every Thursday for the past 15 weeks Severn Lodge No.5583 have held a zoom meeting and a quiz Members of the Lodge pay £3.00 each meeting. There is also a raffle which costs £1 a ticket. (Nearly every Brother has been paying £2 for tickets, making a weekly contribution of £5.) The Lodge currently attracts a visitor from Australia as well as members of other Lodges. There may also be other Masons from Australia joining on 30th July.



The total donations now stand at a wonderful £1,572.00 with the addition of the potential Gift Aid of £355.50 makes a total of £1,927.50

The Corvid-19 appeal is getting ever closer to the £1M target having raised £958,384.30 which is being matched funded by the MCF.

Lodge Secretary Bro Mark Luxton said *"It is intended W M Matt Davies will distribute prizes at the next 'Real' Lodge Meeting."*

Festival Grant Helps the 'Feed Birmingham' Project

A sizeable Festival Grant of £2000 which was suggested by Northfield Lodge No. 5056 was presented to the Feed Birmingham Project. This project supports food banks in Birmingham and hold regular collections at St Mary's and St Ambrose Edgbaston each and every Friday.



They have assembled over 140 Street Champions who collect food donations from their local neighbours and drop in to St Mary's and St Ambrose on a Friday. Volunteers within West Midlands Police also assist in this role.

All the donations are sorted at Edgbaston Cricket Club and are equally split between 22 local food distribution groups across Birmingham consisting of food banks and emergency providers. Feed Birmingham volunteers deliver these donations. Through their extensive efforts they collect around 1 tonne of food and other items per week which equates to a value of around £4000 per week.

The Feed Birmingham Project has received considerable publicity and has additionally received over £6500 in donations from individuals.

If you or your lodge are arranging or indeed have made a donation recently, could I ask you, or get your Charity Steward to contact Asst Prov Communication Officer John Fennell, at jjfennell01@icloud.com so that all brethren in the Province of Worcestershire can see who exactly is benefiting from their hard work and the difference the donations make locally.

Help wanted - join a busy team

The Provincial Communications Team are seeking additional members.

What does the Team role involve?

- Search for Worcestershire Freemasonry news
- Prepare items for Square News, the website and local press
- Push content via Social media inc Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Optimise charitable & benevolent fund-raising stories
- Stay on top and cover PGL meetings and social events
- Identify unique stories for Podcasts and interviews
- Keep a close eye out for landmark Lodge activities

HELP WANTED

If you would like to join us please contact the PCO Jonathan Swift at jonathanswift10@btinternet.com

What a difference a year makes! ...

Yesterday would have been the Regatta at Worcester Rowing club which unfortunately had to be cancelled.



WBro Paul Webber looks back at last year's event:

"It was a bright and sunny day in July 2019 on the banks of the River Severn at the Worcester Rowing Club. A large number of masons, their families and friends had a lovely day. There was a fun fair, face painting, burgers and all the fun of the fair was had by all who attended. A plastic duck race brought out the competitive side in most as they cheered on their duck.

The highlight of the day was the rowing regatta. An inter-Province competition ensued, which was won in the end by a boat crewed by a team of masons from the Province of Gloucestershire. All this was the warm up to the main event of the day which was a race between the Provincial Grand Master of Worcestershire and the Assistant Grand Master. A very close race which was edged by the AGM, who enjoyed the day so much he stayed longer than he intended as he was caught up in the great atmosphere of the day.

A day of great fun and a large sum raised for the festival 2022. Even though we are unable to hold the event this year due to Covid 19 we all have happy memories until new ones can be made in 2021."



This week's podcast is courtesy of **Bro Edward Webber**

A "Lewis", Ed talks about what he thought his Dad got up to with his black case! Initiated Friday 13th December 2019 into Page Lodge, Ed recalls his thoughts on that memorable night and what he has enjoyed so far in his short time on the square.



Ed, pictured right with his dad Paul Webber



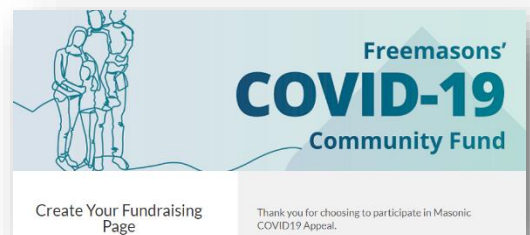
The Freemasons' COVID-19 Community Fund has reached £995,836!

With only £5,000 to go until it's hit £1 million of donations, we wanted to share the impact that Freemasonry has ALREADY had on communities throughout the pandemic. Click [HERE](#) to find out.

Can YOU help us reach £1 million and play your part in supporting individuals, families, children and local communities as they begin to recover from this crisis?

Over £227,000 has been donated by individuals, and over £676,000 by lodges.

Why not join several other lodges in Worcestershire and setup a dedicated lodge fundraising page on Everyday Hero - for your members to donate those missing meal costs / fuel costs / Alms, that would have been spent or donated over the last 5 months?



All the donations will be matched by the MCF and will also go to your Festival 2022 targets (both Lodge and individual). Its easy to do and will take no more than 5 minutes and in literally a few clicks – go to <https://covid-19.everydayhero.com/uk/get-started>

A recent study by the Mental Health Foundation showed that almost a **quarter of UK adults** living in lockdown felt lonely – raising concerns about the risk to our long-term mental health. The **MCF Counselling Service** offers mental health support to Freemasons and their family members over the age of 17 who are experiencing low mood, symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress or other conditions affecting their mental wellbeing.

Contact the MCF on
0800 035 6090
Or
Help@mcf.org.uk

Watch the video for more information, alternatively contact David Dey, Provincial Grand Charity Steward 01905 356890, or Email David [HERE](#)

