



Week 28, 28th September 2020

Brethren, Week 28, and the new season of course has started very differently to what has gone before.

Lodges are starting to meet (as reporting here in SN), albeit socially distanced, and whilst we recognise that there are differing opinions, we must not forget that it is important to maintain our regular contact with meetings wherever possible. Of course they have to be strictly within guidance of the law, and UGLE advice, but we must respect the individual circumstances of each brethren. At no time should people be made to feel uncomfortable or pressured to attend, but if brethren do wish to meet up in Covid secure lodges then this should be allowed and encouraged – especially for our younger brethren who as we know are the lifeline of the order – as long as they feel safe, and are not in danger of onward transmission to other, more vulnerable contacts.

Keep strong, keep positive and stay safe.

The Ed

WBro Paul Wong



Click here to LISTEN

Starting University?

Are you, or someone you know about to start university, or are returning after the summer break? Then check out the **Masonic Universities Scheme** which provides opportunities for students to discover and enjoy Freemasonry. Click on the video to hear all about it.



How much do you know about the scheme?

Tradition and continuity are two of the values which characterise the relationship between Freemasonry and universities. It was nearly 200 years ago that the first university Lodge,

Apollo University Lodge, was founded at Oxford, with Isaac Newton University Lodge following soon afterwards at Cambridge. Since then many thousands of young men have been introduced to Freemasonry through these two Lodges, and they provided the inspiration for the Universities Scheme. This was set up at the beginning of 2005 with the objective: 'To establish and/or enhance arrangements and opportunities for undergraduates and other university members to enjoy Freemasonry'.

Following the Universities Scheme will allow a person who wouldn't usually be able to join until they were 21 to join when they are just 18 which opens the gates to allow more keen individuals to join us in our fantastic world. It can give them a new area of social interaction especially if studying away from friends and family.

Click for more information:

[UGLE Universities Scheme](#)

Brother John Humphreys retires after 10 years as Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary.

Iain Sharrett – Provincial Grand secretary writes "Bro. John (or known to many as 'JohnH') has decided to retire after 10 years as an Assistant Secretary to the late Michael Cole, Julian Ridgers and myself. After a lot of deliberation he has decided that now is the time to spend little more time with his Grand Children and with his very supportive wife Judith. I have worked with John for the last 4 years and can say it has been a pleasure to have worked with him and he has been very supportive in my early days as secretary. I am sure you will all join me in wishing him well in his retirement. "



Lodge gains a "first" for Stourbridge

The Lodge of Stability No. 564 had the privilege on 22nd September of holding the first Masonic meeting in the new **James S Webb Freemasonry Centre** in Stourbridge.

The socially distanced meeting was a business meeting with 5 members of Stability attending and abiding by the "rule of Six".



The James S Webb Freemasonry Centre (formerly known as The Carlisle Hall) was the temporary meeting place for the Lodge of Stability back in 1924 & 1925 while the lodge rooms were built at the Talbot Hotel, Stourbridge.

A fitting return to a past meeting place almost 100 years on.

Plans to officially open and consecrate the Hall have been postponed because of the current Covid situation. It is hoped that all other units can enjoy the new home for Stourbridge Freemasonry in the very near future.

....and another "first" for Worcester

Billingsgate Lodge No. 3443, who normally meet at Great Queen Street in London, applied for a dispensation to meet at Worcester for its first post lockdown meeting - due to the fact that most of its members and attendees would be from Worcestershire.

After managing to obtain and bring the warrant up from the depth of UGLE vaults, in the first lodge meeting for Worcester Masonic Hall the Billingsgate Six held a socially distanced meeting to carry out urgent Lodge business.



As we start the new season it's going to be so different to what's gone before, although I still like to remember the great pieces of ritual that we learn and use as we go through our Masonic life.

One that immediately comes to mind is the walking charge which never fails to get the hairs on the back of your neck up "On yonder book that oath you took and you should break it never" - So get out the ritual books, keep up our traditions and stay in touch with all of your lodge members "But stand by this forever and forever"

Chris Overall, Provincial Mentor

The PGL offices will be closed from 2pm today until the end of October or until it is safe to do so. The secretariat will all be remotely working on a rota basis and phones will be answered from 9am to 1pm approximately. Emails will be answered but please be patient.

WBro. Iain Sharratt, Provincial Grand Secretary

The Rule of Six - Not a number we normally associate with Masonry - although three rule a lodge and five hold a lodge, to start working a degree you would need five and a Tyler, plus the candidate and of course seven to make it perfect. We also have three moral virtues Faith, Hope and Charity, four cardinal virtues, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice. Five orders of architecture and seven liberal arts and sciences. Seventy two is used in Royal Arch and is the number of rungs in Jacobs ladder. So many different numbers but the one we need to remember at present is Six.

Stay safe – Chris Overall, Provincial Mentor

Life of a volunteer! - We spoke to WBro Mark Ford, who is a PM of the Lodge of St. George No. 5691 and Chair of the Kings Heath Masonic User Group.

At the start of the Corona virus outbreak he volunteered as a 'Responder' for the NHS as, he quotes, they were under the cosh! He answered a call for part time porters to help with the high workload of cases being admitted to hospital. After two weeks of gruelling training he is now a 'Bank' Porter at University Hospitals Trust based at Heartlands Hospital.

Doing two eight hour shifts per week he can be helping out with anything from replenishing oxygen cylinders, delivering blood samples, to moving Covid infected patients. For this he of course has to fully comply with PPE and a picture of Mark right in this gear.



Mark quotes "I really enjoy the job, although in my late 50's the physical side can be a challenge but thankfully it's only two shifts per week! It's a sure fire cure for insomnia!"

Lodge volunteers also needed....


The Province have been asked by the Masonic Charitable Foundation to take part in a "Digital Alms" collecting trial. The idea is individuals can make a donation easily and directly to the Festival 2022 appeal using a smart phone or computer/Ipad, by the use of a QR code.

We urgently need 6 to 10 Lodges to take part as the first feedbacks from the trial are required by the end of October. This trial supplements existing donation methods which will still be available.




If your Lodge is interested in participating please contact David Rice, the Festival Treasurer at david.rice5224@talktalk.net

[ED – Try it out using the code above, by pointing your smartphone camera at it]



This week listen to **WBro Paul Wong.**

Hear his story into Freemasonry and what makes him proud, both outside and within the Order.



Provincial Yearbooks can be ordered online from www.worcspgl.com/shop plus carriage.

Books **will not be** sent to the Halls nor will they be available to collect from the office for the foreseeable future due to the epidemic.

Progress on two wheels

Our latest in the series of special interest Lodges takes a ride with our 'Brothers on Bikes'



What is it about motorcycling and Freemasonry? Does one attract the other? A rhetorical question perhaps but in fact there are several motorcycling Lodges up and down the country as well as informal associations of motorcycling Lodges, such as the 'Brothers on Bikes'.

There's certainly no doubting the enthusiasm of Worcestershire's own Brothers on Bikes and among them is Andy Philpott, the Harley-owning Master and one of the original riders of the Province's very own biking Lodge, the Lodge of Progress No. 9893.

The Lodge was consecrated at Kings Heath in 2014 and is a joining Lodge, as Andy explains. "Our ethos is that the Lodge will not seek to initiate new members of the Craft; rather we will encourage any people wishing to be initiated to join a Lodge that meets on a more frequent basis, in order to more fully make a daily advancement in Freemasonry, leaving the Lodge to remain focused as a special interest Lodge". Progression is only from Junior Warden to Master – and the name of the next Junior Warden and other officers are drawn out of a helmet!"

"The Lodge came about when four biking Freemasons in Worcestershire saw a 'gap in the market' and decided to form a motorcycling Lodge in the province. It was started from scratch and the name 'Progress' agreed as it seemed appropriate both in motorcycling and Masonic terms," says Andy.

"Our aim is to bring the motorcycling fraternity together and broaden awareness of Freemasonry and all that it does. We're a peripatetic Lodge. Although our base now is at Northfield (where the Installation takes place in September) we meet all over the country. We'll take a ride out to somewhere that our partners can enjoy too, and also meet up with other biking lodges or associations such as the Widows Sons Riders, to broaden the range of ride-outs available. Our motto is "Festina Lente – more haste, less speed"

"It's a real shame that our programme has been disrupted but I know we aren't alone," Andy adds. "but we know at some point we will be able to resume, and some trips that have previously been put off can be held, such as one planned this year to the Isle of Wight, while next year we're looking forward to a trip to Scotland, including Rosslyn Chapel."

One event supported by bikers globally including biking Freemasons, is the annual October '[Ride to the Wall](#)' at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. "This is a highlight in the calendar of biking Freemasons and, indeed anyone on two wheels. Sadly it's not happening this year, but last year, it attracted over 16,000 bikers who took part in a memorial service in support of the Armed Services. The objective is to raise funds for the development and maintenance of this important national memorial, and, to date, it has almost topped £1million," says Andy.

Andy says that motorcycling Freemasons are welcome to join events as guests or indeed join the Lodge. "The majority of members have bikes – whether a 50cc scooter or a four-cylinder Kawasaki Ninja (and one Brother has 14 bikes!), those without bikes ("Not on Bikes" or "Nobs" are of course welcome) but just an interest in motorcycling is qualification enough.. Our pace is sedate to suit all riders and the fellowship and camaraderie is hard to beat."

Got a bike? Want to find out more? Progress Lodge has a [Facebook](#) page, or get in touch with the Secretary, WBro Kevin Bryant (who rides a Pan-European ST1300, just for the record) at progress9893@gmail.com.

If you'd like your Lodge covered in this series, contact W Bro Ian Crowder, ian.crowder@icloud.com or 07775 566555