



# WEST KENT NEWS

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## SUMMER 2022 EDITION



## A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Brethren All,

Welcome to the latest edition of West Kent News. You will find some exciting articles in this publication from leading members of our Province, as well as a couple from Lodges telling us about their experiences and hopes for the future. We would very much like to hear from more lodges as time progresses.

We hope as we get used to returning to a level of normality, our magazine will increasingly, reflect the activities in our Province.

Please let us know about any special celebratory events your lodge plans to hold. This will be a good way to increase support for you. Tell us about fundraising events, ladies' nights and any other exciting undertakings you have. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Please contact your Provincial Communications Team at:  
[communications@westkentmasons.org.uk](mailto:communications@westkentmasons.org.uk)

Fraternal regards,

Adrian Grant



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PROVINCIAL  
GRANDMASTER AND **GRAND**  
**SUPERINTENDENT:**  
MARK DOUGLAS ESTAUGH

## MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REMAINS OUR SINGULAR OVER-RIDING PROVINCIAL PRIORITY

**B**rethren and Companions,  
I am pleased that we have now been able to resume our Masonic activities in earnest and despite the fluctuating numbers, I remain ever optimistic that many of you are returning to your Lodge or Chapter meetings.

Sadly, another tragic and unexpected loss has befallen our Province with the untimely passing to the Grand Lodge above of WBro Daniel John Spencer PSGD APGM on 16th April, at the tender age of 48. This news has come as a devastating and unexpected blow to us all and his absence from our Provincial affairs has still not yet fully registered with me. Daniel's funeral was attended by some 450 Brethren, family and friends on 23rd May which was an indication of the affection and high regard in which he was held.

Daniel was an inspirational individual who was truly blessed with "the common touch" and he proved to be a captivating and hugely effective member of our Provincial Executive. He will be forever remembered by us all as a Mason

whose light shone brightly. May he rest in everlasting peace.

Our Provincial Annual Investiture on Friday 27 May, which was open to members, families, friends and most importantly, those who had an interest in joining us, was a successful event, bringing so many of us together for a well needed celebration following the hiatus since we were last at Freemasons' Hall in 2019.

Our Provincial spectacular consisted of the Royal Arch investiture in the morning and, following lunch, the Craft investiture. Every Craft member – whether in the Royal Arch or otherwise was encouraged to attend the morning and afternoon sessions, and by the afternoon, it was heart-warming to see around 900 people in the Grand Temple.

At our investiture meetings, we bade farewell to two Provincial stalwarts in the Craft and Royal Arch. Firstly, Alan Cope, who has served the Royal Arch Executive with distinction since 2013 stood down as 2nd Provincial Grand Principal.

Secondly, Mark Eyles-Thomas, who has served the Craft Executive in various roles since 2012, stood down as DPGM. The huge progress we have made has been due to their dedicated contribution to date, and I want to place on record my heartfelt thanks to both for their commitment, enthusiasm and the support they have given me during my term of office.

Membership Development remains our singular overriding Provincial priority, and our close working relationship with our Lodges and Chapters is helping to achieve excellent results in this important area. I'm absolutely delighted to see that almost every summons reports new Initiates and Exaltees, more joining and re-joining members, which evidences that our membership attraction measures are working. Coupled with the ever decreasing number of resignations we are seeing year-on-year, I am very confident that we will see a return to positive membership growth for our

Province in the immediate future.

Our West Kent 2026 Festival total continues to grow and I can now confirm the objectives our Lodge and Chapters should aspire to, with Roll of Honour levels being published. There are five awards to aspire to, namely Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and the Special PGM-GSupt Award.

These are based on a "per-capita" contribution and given how generous some of our Lodges and Chapters have already been, I was greatly honoured to present the first batch of Awards on 27 May.

One of the challenges we have historically faced is operating two Masonic Orders – Craft and Royal Arch – as separate entities, which causes a considerable burden to our resources, which mainly consist of volunteers. To resolve this issue, I have been working closely behind the scenes with our Executive team to align the operation of both our Orders together into

one organisation.

We have introduced the Visiting Officer scheme in the Craft and we will do the same in the Royal Arch, bringing the Province and our Chapters ever closer together. Additionally, we have many other innovative steps which will be introduced in the Royal Arch and other enhancements to introduce in the Craft, and which will be announced shortly – these will be essential ingredients to bring the four-step journey for every Mason into much clearer focus, and not only help reinforce the robustness of our Lodges, but ensure that a much higher proportion of our Craft members complete their understanding of pure and ancient Freemasonry in the Royal Arch.

As always, my very best wishes to each and every one of you – and your loved ones – for continued success during the rest of the Masonic season. Keep well and keep enjoying your Masonry in West Kent



*In loving memory...*

**DANIEL J  
SPENCER**



ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL  
GRAND MASTER: ANDREW  
WADDINGTON

## WE HAVE A WEALTH OF EXPERTISE WITH THE PROVINCIAL MEMBERSHIP TEAM AND THEY ARE ONLY TOO WILLING TO HELP

**F**reemasonry in Group 2 has had a return to meetings and there have been numerous Initiations, Passings and Raisings. This is all excellent news. I urge you to keep up the excellent work that you are doing as individuals and Lodges with regards Membership.

Numbers are still not high at attendance at meetings but as we return as a Country to a version of normality, I expect the numbers at our meetings to rise as well. Some trepidation and uncertainty is more than understandable but, as long as we keep following the advice regarding hygiene and self-testing etc., we should be relatively safe.

I have been lucky enough to attend many meetings recently and it is absolutely fantastic to be amongst the Brethren in the Group 2 Lodges at Welling and Wrotham, to see the great work being done.

We have had some celebratory meetings where I have been fortunate to present 50th Long Service Citations to very worthy and well respected Brethren. They may have been a bit later than originally planned but the sense of occasion and achievement has not been lost.

Sadly, I have also attended closure meetings where Lodges have taken the extremely tough decision to return their warrants. These are sad affairs and are a last resort. I would urge any Lodge struggling with Membership to really look at The Members' Pathway. Follow the steps in that and you will surely find success. West Kent is a Members' Pathway Province and are proud of the fact that those Lodges fully engaged with it are starting to see the green shoots of growth. We have a wealth of expertise with the Provincial Membership Team and they are only too willing to help and advise Lodges in attracting new members, retain and motivate existing members and in some cases retrieve past members. Lodges should by now have a Lodge Membership Officer and they, in conjunction with the Lodge Almoner and Mentor have vital roles in ensuring the success of any Lodge. I would also encourage Lodge Royal Arch Representatives to look at their fellow members who are eligible but not yet in the Royal Arch. It has been proven that members of both are more likely to retain membership.

For my part, I am always available to offer advice and support where needed. To listen to any concerns or praise or to intervene with The Province at large or your Masonic Centre should it be needed. If I cannot supply the answer, I know a man who can.

I am currently working with the Group 2 Centres to ensure best practice and a secure future for all of you as we move forward. To these ends, if you have any questions, comments (good or bad) that you would like me to discuss with the management at Welling or Wrotham please do not hesitate to let me know. It is only by good communications and transparency that we can all get the most out of what we love and where we do it.

My son James, a fellow West Kent Mason, and I, have just undertaken the Pilgrims' Way from

Winchester Cathedral to Canterbury Cathedral. We started on Tuesday 19th July, taking us six days. This was in aid of the 2026 Festival, and donations have been most welcome. Some Lodges, Chapters and individuals have been extremely generous. All donations are credited to the Units or Individuals making the donation. It has been a huge pleasure walking 139 miles in six days with my son.

Finally, can I take this opportunity of thanking everyone involved in the great work around COVID, vaccinations and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. Also to all those involved in supporting Brethren and local charities and good causes during some very difficult times. You are all amazing and I applaud you!







ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL GRAND  
MASTER: PETER BROOKER

## SPRING TO NOW

**W**hat a relief it is to get back to some sort of normality and be able to attend Lodge meetings again. It's amazing to see all the new candidates being Initiated and many of our Lodges are very busy. It has also been my great pleasure to present many Long Service Citation awards to members throughout the Province. I know many of the recipients of these awards never imagined they would spend 50 or 60 years in Freemasonry.

The truly terrible events taking place in Eastern Europe places the Province's primary focus even more on Charity: because sanctions will inevitably bring about significant increases in the cost of living and will affect many people in our

communities, creating the need for more charity. Recruitment; because if every man (and woman) in the world lived their lives by the principles of Freemasonry, the world would be a much kinder, friendlier and caring place to live. The 2026 Festival and Recruitment of new Lodge members is perfectly aligned with the current situation.

Now is a time to look forward and make plans for the future. Just as the earth bursts back into life following the regeneration period of Winter, so must we look forward and strive to ensure we take care of each other and extend an invitation to more people to join Freemasonry.

We have such a good message to share and we just need to spread the word about the great

work undertaken by our wonderful Order and the friendship and camaraderie it has to offer.

I strongly believe Freemasonry has as much to offer today and is perhaps even more relevant than at any time in its past. A safe haven among friendly and caring people is the wish of many today.

I look forward to continuing to fulfil my role as Assistant Provincial Grand Master in our truly inspiring Province and getting to know more of our dedicated members.



## THE DEPUTY GRAND SUPERINTENDENT: JAMES MARSH

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE OFFER SOMETHING SPECIAL AT ALL OUR MEETINGS TO GIVE OUR COMPANIONS A REASON TO ATTEND.

**C**ompanions, Firstly, I want to thank you all for the support you have given me since my appointment to Deputy Grand Superintendent - I have received many supportive letters, emails and comments.

As expected, I and the rest of the Royal Arch team have been very busy, but we are thoroughly enjoying visiting our chapters and the other Provinces.

The Grand Superintendent has set out what he expects from the Royal Arch team in West Kent, with his main objective being to ensure that as many Craft members as possible get to enjoy the beauty of the Royal Arch - he has set challenging membership targets for the Royal Arch team to achieve. However, we will not be able to meet the Grand Superintendent's targets without the support of every West Kent companion. I therefore urge you all to assist by approaching those members of your Lodges who are not yet Royal Arch companions, and talk to them about the Royal Arch and how enjoyable our chapter

meetings can be.

To those members of the Craft who are not yet Royal Arch members, do not be afraid to approach those members of your Lodges who are in the Royal Arch and ask them about it – you will recognise them by the white, red or tri-colour ribbon on the jewel they wear in Lodge. I would also be very happy to speak with you about the Royal Arch; please do not hesitate to contact me - I would be pleased to assist you to join the Royal Arch chapter that will best suit you.

As I write this, the country is getting back to some sort of normality and I have noticed that our members are becoming more confident and are returning in greater numbers to our meetings – I am pleased by the number of exaltations being carried out.

However, I am still attending some meetings where a significant number of the members are not attending - we therefore need to ask why this is – 'What are we doing – or perhaps what are we not doing at our meetings that stops companions from wanting to attend?'



The Deputy Grand Superintendent receiving a gift from the West Kent Light Blues Club

With members having so many varied interests nowadays, it is important that we offer something special at all our meetings to give our companions a reason to attend: we need to look at this critically and carefully, and where appropriate we should challenge traditional thinking, for instance: are our meetings too long - do we need to give all the lectures at every exaltation; are we performing our ritual to the best of our abilities; are our start and finish times appropriate for the members; and, are we sharing the work appropriately to keep the interest of our past Principals. It is most important that we ensure there is something of interest for our members at every meeting.

I'm pleased to say that overall, the Royal Arch in West Kent is vibrant; but we should not rest on our laurels – we should all make membership attraction and retention our number one priority in support of our Grand Superintendent's vision of being the Province that has the highest percentage of its Craft masons who are members of the Royal Arch.





ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL GRAND  
MASTER: GRAHAM RAVEN

## ENJOYMENT OF MEMBERSHIP IS THE BEST WAY FOR US TO GROW,

**A**s the “new” APGM on the block it has been an eventful first six months as Group One APGM. Taking over from James Marsh was a daunting task, with very big shoes to fill.

The task started with an informal meeting with the group’s Visiting Officers to ensure that we were all ready to support the group’s lodges to return to the new normal after some 20 months without meetings, and to make sure that we were ready to start again and encourage their members to return to labour should they feel safe to do so. If they weren’t ready that members were kept informed of what the lodge’s activities and that they were missed.

That support seems to have worked that the attendance is now increasing to pre lockdown levels and the enthusiasm to return to normal meetings has led to large numbers of new members wishing to join as well as joining members who are new to the Province now increasing. The support from me and the Visiting Officers seems to have the desired effect of more members, more community engagement, and the added benefit of increased support for our 2026

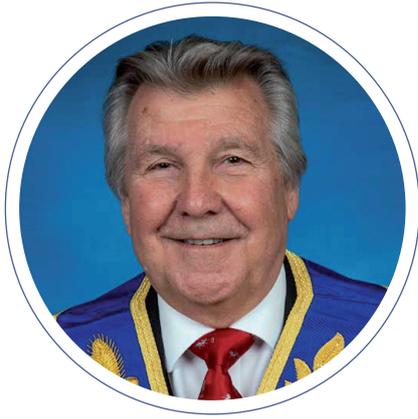
Festival and local charities.

I have been overwhelmed by the reception I have received on my official, and non-official visits, thoroughly enjoying my time at those meetings. I have been party to some superb ceremonial work and of course had the pleasure of presenting five fifty year and two sixty year long service awards.

2021 ended with some members receiving appointment and promotion in Provincial Ranks and I congratulate them all on their well-deserved preferment. Of course, I look forward to congratulating them all at the Investiture celebration on the 27th May.

Looking to the future, I along with the Group Visiting Officers are here to support all the lodges, assisted by the support of the Membership Team, Provincial Almoner and Mentor; to help you grow your enjoyment of being a member. Enjoyment of membership is the best way for us to grow, achieve greater community engagement and support the charities we all wish.

I look forward to meeting even more of you in the future.



THE PROVINCIAL GRAND  
TREASURER: PETER SAWYER

## WEST KENT EMERGENCY FUND (WKEF) CLOSURE

**D**uring the COVID-19 period the Fund provided considerable financial support to many West Kent charities and Brethren who were seriously financially affected, due to the pandemic. All West Kent Masons can be proud that a total of over £74,000 has been donated to appropriate causes.

In this respect over 40 charities were given donations to provide support, for example; the purchase of PPE, in the form of Face Masks, Shields and Scrubs, funds to assist numerous food banks across the Province, together with monies given to hospices who faced a variety of COVID-19 related issues, enabling them to operate and continue to provide the essential care to all those people for whom they are responsible.

Children were also seriously affected, both educationally, socially and mentally. To assist in addressing these concerns, particularly in relation to communication, funding was provided for the purchase of Laptops and Tablets. A related factor of communication was the provision of learning aids to vulnerable children, particularly those in

hospices.

In addition, many West Kent Brethren soon felt the financial effects, either due to being forced to isolate, being made redundant, or not qualifying for support under the furlough scheme. Apart from modest financial support, financial guidance was given to ensure Brethren were fully aware of support available from governmental, or industry sources.

After due consideration, following the easing and in many cases the total withdrawal of COVID-19 restrictions, it has been decided to provisionally suspend the activities of the WKEF. The Provincial Charity Committee will continue in its role of considering application for donations that meet their criteria and every Lodge and Chapter is encouraged to seek their support for appropriate worthy causes.

The Province also recognises the plight of many brethren who due to COVID-19, or other unrelated reasons face serious financial difficulties and therefore the Provincial Almoner will still consider appropriate applications for modest financial support, as well as continuing to offer guidance on governmental assistance.

In this regard an appropriate application form can be found on the Provincial website.

The WKEF, initiated by the PGM and actioned by the committee members, consisting of myself, Binoy Karia, Peter Brooker, Neil Moakes, Roland Stokes and Bob Order, received from the charities and brethren who benefited, overwhelming appreciation for the generosity of West Kent Masons, as well as being most grateful for the speed in which all applications were dealt with.

This initiative has been another example of the excellent charitable and beneficial support that West Kent Masonry provides in the local community, especially in response to the extreme challenges that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**PROVINCIAL GRAND ALMONER:  
GRAHAM TARRAN**

**IN THE LAST YEAR, WEST KENT MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES  
HAVE RECEIVED OVER £185,000 FROM MCF GRANTS.**

**S**ince the last news article, all the Group Almoners have completed their training, and have been working tirelessly in supporting lodge Almoners with member engagement, retention, and retrieval.

With the lifting of COVID-19 related restrictions, we have all enjoyed the return of masonic activity, and a semblance of normality. The generosity and support shown by freemasons to each other and to the wider community during the pandemic has been remarkable.

It is now up to each and every one of us now that restrictions are lifted, to continue showing that care and compassion. We have,

of course, still experienced fallout from the effects of the pandemic, and the provincial Almoner team have been offering help and advice to members and lodges as well as liaising directly with the MCF when required.

In the last year, West Kent members and their families have received over £185,000 from MCF grants. At provincial level, we continue to provide mobility aids on loan to members who require them, as well as ensuring we have wheelchairs available at each of the masonic centres in the province. We have more in stock to meet future demand.

The West Kent Emergency Fund (WKEF) which was set up to receive applications for small grants for any

brother in distressed financial circumstances due to the pandemic, as well as providing assistance from non-masonic requests, has been very successful as you will have seen from the Provincial Treasurer's report. Following the easing and in many cases the withdrawal of COVID-19 restrictions, it has been decided to provisionally suspend the WKEF activities.

The Province recognises the plight of many brethren who due to COVID-19, or other unrelated reasons, face serious financial difficulties. I, as the Provincial Almoner, will consider appropriate applications for modest financial support, as well as continuing to offer guidance on other assistance which may be available.

The appropriate application form for this financial support can be found on the provincial website.

During this year, the Almoner team shall be joining the Provincial Mentor and Membership team on workshops at various locations around the province, and we look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at these events. Details of the workshops will be communicated in the coming months.

I still have a vacancy for a Group Almoner, so I welcome any expressions of interest. Candidates will need to be committed to supporting the Members' Pathway and be able to work as part of the team. They should have excellent communication skills

and an ability to work alone and ensure accurate records are maintained and stored correctly. This is an exciting opportunity to be part of a dynamic team that is working at the core of provincial strategy. Full training will be provided. If you wish to be considered for this role, then please register your interest by contacting me on the details below.

Please remember that the Provincial Almoner team is here to support you, and to offer help, guidance and advice should you require it. All our contact details are on the Provincial website.



## AN OVERVIEW FROM THE HEAD OF MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: IAN GALLEHAWK

### AN UPDATE FROM THE PROVINCIAL MEMBERSHIP TEAM

**A**t long last, attendance at meetings is increasing and many of us now feel able to return to the core activities of our Lodges. That said, there is no rush.

We want everyone to return when he feels comfortable to do so. In the meantime, let's all continue the great effort we have made so far to stay engaged with our members and ensure that, if one of our members needs help, we are on hand to provide whatever masonic assistance we can. Turning to member numbers, the Province is certainly seeing something of a return to labour "bounce". Secretaries will recall the enquiries made at the start of the pandemic to ascertain the number of potential candidates in waiting. The reported numbers seemed too good to be true but anyone following our social media channels will have seen the regular reports of initiations taking place. For the first time in a long while we have seen a month on month increase in member numbers. While this is excellent news, we must remain alert to the reality that member numbers have been in decline for many years. The primary provincial objective continues to be "more members".

The current initiations are most welcome and are a visible indication of the tremendous work that is being undertaken by so many to return

our Province to a sustained period of growth. As we welcome so many new members, we must ensure that we maintain an environment that will encourage them to stay. West Kent is a Members' Pathway Province. This is critical to our ongoing success and I thank every Lodge that is working with us to embrace the Members' Pathway and make it business as usual. Always remember, it isn't just about numbers, it's about attracting the right people. At the moment, given the quality of newly initiated Brethren, you are clearly rising to that challenge.

As a final piece of good news, resignations continue to decline in number month on month. Every West Kent Mason is a valued member of our Province and again I cannot stress enough the importance of engaging fully with all of our members. Thank you all for your support, which is taking shape in our now ever improving retention figures. Of course, the task will never be complete. Please maintain and improve our current focus on membership so that we grow our Lodges and Province into the future.

I will end my final report as Head of Membership by again thanking every member, who is working to attract quality members and grow our Lodges. The Province is now poised to move forward and embrace the future. I look forward to being part of that with you all.



## CAPTAIN GEORGE SMITH: ALAN WONDZINSKI

**O**ur third Provincial Grand Master was Captain George Smith. Little is known of his early life other than he spent some time in Germany where he served in the Prussian army under Frederick the Great, reaching the rank of Captain. He was probably also initiated into Freemasonry in Germany, although the time and place are not known.

On his return to England he was appointed, in 1772, Inspector of the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, a post he held until 1783. The academy had been established in 1741 to prepare young men for careers as Officers in artillery and engineering. By the 1760s discipline at the Academy had grown lax amongst the Officer cadets

and their instructors. Smith was charged with enforcing the rules of the academy, with supervising all instruction, including accompanying the cadets when they left the academy for field exercises, and with maintaining a military library for the use of the cadets.

He took to his role with enthusiasm introducing examinations for cadets by which their progress through the academy was measured and regulated. In 1779 he published *An Universal Military Dictionary*, an authoritative work encompassing all aspects of military tactics and warfare which, he believed, was essential reading for all artillerymen and engineers; he followed this in 1783 with *Bibliotheca Militaris*.

Although army records reveal

a number of Captains George Smith, none of them can be positively identified as our third Provincial Grand Master and it can be confidently concluded that he didn't serve in the British Army, and that his military rank was of Prussian origin.

During his time at the Military Academy, he rekindled his interest in Freemasonry attending several local lodges. In 1774 he petitioned Grand Lodge for the formation of a new lodge at Woolwich to be named the Royal Military Lodge. The lodge was constituted on 19 March 1774 and met at the Crown and Anchor, High Street, Woolwich.

He was appointed a Grand Steward in 1775 and served on the same Board of Grand Stewards as his predecessor in Kent, Captain Charles Frederick.

He regularly attended meetings of Grand Lodge and in 1777 was appointed Provincial Grand Master for Kent by Lord Petre, Grand Master. He was installed in Lodge No 10 which met at the Post Office, High Street, Chatham on 7 July 1777. That lodge continues to flourish in the province of East Kent and is now The Royal Kent Lodge of Antiquity No 20 meeting at the Masonic Hall, Manor Road, Chatham.

The following year he was appointed the first Grand Superintendent of Kent despite the fact that the Royal Arch was only practised in itinerant Military Lodges temporarily stationed in the County. His remit was to promote, encourage and organise Royal Arch Masonry in preparation for the later formation of a Provincial Grand Chapter.

His record of achievement

in the Royal Arch was truly impressive: he was appointed Grand Scribe N in 1773, Grand Sojourner the following year, Third Grand Principal, also known as Grand Master J, in 1775, Second Grand Principal, or Grand Master H in 1776 and was First Grand Principal, or Grand Master Z from 1777 to 1779.

Smith was a close friend of the new Grand Master, the Duke of Manchester, who in 1780 appointed him Junior Grand Warden. But the appointment was opposed by James Heseltine, Grand Secretary, who claimed that Captain Smith was already a Provincial Grand Master and it was incompatible with the laws of Freemasonry for one person to hold two Offices in Grand Lodge. Heseltine and Smith had been at loggerheads for some time following an earlier dispute, and this was patently an act of retaliation on behalf of Heseltine as no such law

existed at that time. Smith offered to resign his post as Provincial Grand Master if the two appointments proved to be contrary to Grand Lodge regulations but the Grand Master ignored Heseltine's protests and proceeded to appoint him Junior Grand Warden. At the next meeting of Grand Lodge, a letter from Captain Smith was read to the lodge in which he resigned the Office of Junior Grand Warden on the grounds of ill-health. Subsequently, a law was introduced that no person should hold two Offices simultaneously in Grand Lodge.

In 1783 Smith wrote a book entitled *The Use and Abuse of Freemasonry; A work of the Greatest Utility to the Brethren of the Society, to Mankind in General and to the Ladies in Particular*. He applied to Grand Lodge for an official sanction of his work but Heseltine argued the book was unnecessary:

a Mason could learn all he needs to know from his fellow lodge members, and after considerable debate in Grand Lodge, Heseltine got his way and Grand Lodge refused to sanction Smith's book. Nevertheless, he published it without sanction.

The book presented a history of Freemasonry from early times and throughout the world with sections dedicated to the philosophy and symbolism of Freemasonry. Published at a time when there was a dearth of masonic literature available, the book would have proved very necessary and it's interesting to note that it rapidly went out of print.

Indeed, the renowned masonic historian, William Preston, who was a good friend of Smith and held him in high esteem for his knowledge of Freemasonry, thanked him in the preface to his 1772 edition of

Illustrations of Masonry, for his useful contributions to that work. Smith also participated in Preston's Grand Gala in 1772 assisting in the performance of one of Preston's Lectures.

Later in 1783, Smith was serving his fourth year as Worshipful Master of the Royal Military Lodge when he, with a fellow lodge member, held a meeting of the lodge in the Kings Bench Prison where they raised an inmate Mason to the third degree. News travelled back to Grand Lodge and the Grand Secretary was ordered to write to Smith to ascertain the truth of the allegations. Smith's response was that there were several Masons in the prison, and as a Military Lodge, it was an itinerant lodge that moves with the regiment and he, as Worshipful Master, had the right to form a lodge wherever he might think fit and make masons. Grand

Lodge resolved 'That it is inconsistent with the principles of masonry for any freemasons' lodge to be held for the purposes of making, passing or raising masons in any prison or place of confinement'. A further resolution of Grand Lodge, dated February 1784, read: 'This lodge, (the Royal Military Lodge) being found not to have met for some years was erased from the list of lodges by order of Grand Lodge'.

But it is as our third Provincial Grand Master that Captain Smith should best be remembered. His achievements as Provincial Grand Master are remarkable. He revolutionised the organisation of the Province introducing many practises that have since become the norm in Provincial Masonry.

Prior to his appointment it was the usual practise for a Provincial Grand Lodge,

if it met at all, to open in a private lodge, conduct the business of what became known as a 'Pocket' Provincial Grand Lodge and then close, whereupon the host lodge would carry out its own work. The only Minutes of the Provincial meeting being those within the host lodge Minutes.

Under Captain Smith's leadership, Provincial Grand Lodge met once and sometimes twice per year at different towns throughout the Province, inviting all other lodges within the Province to attend. From when he was first appointed in 1777 until 1883, he held eleven Provincial Grand Lodges at towns as distant as Deal and Dover to Woolwich and Blackheath. He instituted the first Provincial Minute Book, introduced Provincial By-Laws and appointed Provincial Officers, including red aproned Provincial Grand Stewards; sometimes adding

creations of his own such as Provincial Orator and Seal Keeper. He instigated annual processions to church with the delivery of a sermon followed by a dinner, and distributed money to the poor of the parish where the sermon was read. He ordered the 'General Laws for Good Government of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Kent' to be printed every two years and circulated to all lodges in the Province. In short, he created the modern province.

And it wasn't only in Kent that Captain Smith displayed his forward thinking: in 1776 he wrote to the Grand Secretary posing the possibility of a union between the two rival Grand Lodges, and whether women would ever be allowed to become Freemasons, even if they met in lodges of their own sex.

But sadly, for all his innovative ideas, he came to an ignominious end. In 1785 he was 'expelled from the Society for uttering an instrument purporting to be a certificate of the Grand Lodge recommending two distressed brethren'. Unfortunately, nothing further is known of Captain Smith, the online catalogue of the Library & Museum at Great Queen Street states his birth and death as 1722 and 1785 respectively, but it has not been possible to corroborate those dates from other sources.



## ASSOCIATION OF PATRONS OF THE KENT MUSEUM OF FREEMASONRY: BY PHIL MOORE

### SEARCHING FOR THE NEW DEPUTY CHAIR.

It was such a pleasure to resume masonic business in person and indeed much has happened over the last 24 months since the first restrictions were put into effect. That said, modern technology has allowed that “contact” many of us rely upon and the social interaction was maintained especially with those that either had to or chose to isolate. To that end, my own Lodge continued with our weekly LOI through the medium of Zoom and it gave a vital connection between members.

The work of the Association of Patrons (AoP), in its vital role supporting the Kent Museum of Freemasonry, continued throughout, adding new individuals, Lodges and Chapters as Patrons. A big thank you to all those in West Kent that are now proud holders of the Patronage certificate. No doubt the front of your summons will reflect this, along with adding the name of your Lodge/Chapter Kent Masonic Museum and Library Ambassador to the list of officers? Secretaries, please do not forget to add their details to the West Kent Installation form. The latest version appears on the downloadable section of our website. For

those that deferred the decision of seeking approval for your lodge/chapter to become a Patron – as you return to face to face meetings please have this discussion sooner rather than later, the Museum really needs your support.

Many members will be aware that over the last 8 years, me and Graham Stanford have been busy visiting Lodges and Chapters across Kent, delivering an illustrated lecture covering the Past, Present and Future of the Kent Museum of Freemasonry. There is no fee for this but, clearly, it would be most welcome to see that units subsequently sign up to become a Patron. If any unit wishes to have this informative lecture delivered at one of their regular meetings, I will be only too pleased to oblige.

It is 4 years since I was appointed as the Deputy Chairman of the AoP and lot has been achieved. Starting from a handful of Lodge/individual patrons to a figure now in excess of 36. This has been enhanced by the number of Museum & Library Representatives (now called Ambassadors) growing to over 50 names that have been reported to Province.

Once again, thank you for engaging with this initiative, kindly promoted by the West Kent Provincial Executive. Many of you will know Clive Moore who joined the AoP team last year and there are now further opportunities for members from West Kent to become involved with the work of AoP. The team is spread across West and East Kent to ensure our wider coverage, engagement and success.

As Deputy Chairman of the AoP I am conscious that 5 years is often the optimum duration for any role of this nature and as such my time comes to an end in Spring 2023. After speaking to our Provincial Grand Master Mark Estaugh, he has asked me to pen this article with a view to identifying and appointing a replacement in the near future so that we can work together over the coming months and enjoy a smooth hand over. I expect to be staying on the AoP team to assist going forward, not least with outreach initiatives and lectures.

The role, should you accept the challenge, will be as the AoP Deputy Chairman and being the primary contact for West Kent. You will lead on the promotion and development of the AoP within West Kent, working alongside the rest of the team in ensuring the future success of the AoP across both Provinces. The team is

a dedicated and friendly bunch – are you up for joining us in this high-profile and rewarding role ?

If you feel this is something you can offer then please contact me to discuss the role in further detail. My details are below.

If you require any further information on the Kent Museum of Freemasonry or indeed the Association of Patrons, please get in touch - I will be more than happy to deliver an illustrated presentation on the Masonic Museum at Canterbury at one of your regular meetings – “If you want one - You only need to ask”?

Please contact me - Phil Moore on 07584 178840 or Email to moorehousehold@btinternet.com

\*Lodge units achieve Patronage for £75 per year. The lodge will receive a certificate. They can also show the patronage on their summons. Chapter units achieve Patronage for £50 per year.

\*\*Individual Patronages can be secured for £25 per year. They also receive a certificate along with a lapel pin which can be worn with pride.

## DOUBLE JUBILEE FOR ROOKSELEY LODGE AND A COUPLE OF CEREMONIES FOR GOOD MEASURE: DAVID HEDGES

### ALL OF THE BRETHREN PRESENT WERE PRESENTED WITH A SOUVENIR WHISKY GLASS TO MARK THE OCCASION

**T**here was a double celebration at Rookesley Lodge No.8398 back in December when the Lodge commemorated its 50th anniversary and the First Initiate, Barry Davis, received his 50 year Citation.

Barry's Citation was presented a couple of months early at the dispensation of the Provincial Grand Master (ProvGM), who had originally intended to attend the meeting. In his absence the presentation was made by Phil May 'in an excellent manner' with the Lodge's Rep, Roger Mallett, reading the Citation. Obviously, it was an emotional evening for Barry, not only for the recognition of his long service but also as he marked the occasion by Initiating his son, Martin, into the Craft. Another emotional moment came as he read the names of the Founders whilst the

Brethren stood in honour of departed merit, at the exact time that 50 years earlier, the then ProvGM, Lord Cornwallis handed the Lodge its Warrant.

What made it especially poignant was that the list included both his father and father-in-law who had been his proposers into the Craft.

During the presentation Phil gave a resume of both Barry's Masonic and personal careers whilst reminding the Brethren of times in which the Lodge was founded.

Recession and labour disputes were hitting the headlines just about every day but on the positive side, petrol was still under four 'bob' (20p) a gallon and a four bedroomed house could still be found for little more than five grand!

At the Festive Board the Lodge Secretary, David Hedges, paid tribute to Barry who, he pointed out, had served in every office except

Treasurer and attended every meeting with the exception of a couple of bouts of illness... despite the 280 mile round-trip from the Lincolnshire home that he shares with his wife Cheryl.

In his Toast to the Founders, David paid high tribute to the 15 Brethren who, 50 years before, had come together at the Cromwell Avenue Masonic Hall in Bromley to witness the creation of the new Lodge into the then, Province of Kent. Their foresight had cemented the foundations of the successful and popular Lodge of today.

All of the Brethren present were presented with a souvenir whisky glass to mark the occasion, with Barry receiving two, especially engraved to mark his 50th year and his position as first Initiate, it was suggested that, if he returns to celebrate the Centenary, the Lodge will complete the set!



The Secretary presented the Lodge with a pair of celebratory firing glasses

With a lot of catching up to be done following lockdown the memorable meeting also extended to a further ceremony, with the

Passing of Bro. Gavin Shearing, who had been waiting patiently to progress since December 2019. An extraordinary meeting on St George's Day, will see Bro. Gavin Raised to the Third Degree and another Candidate Initiated into the Rookesley 'Team'.

A sound intake of enthusiastic new members and the strong existing team of experienced Craftsmen give the Lodge a enviable foundation as it starts on the way to its second half-century.





## LIFE AFTER THE CHAIR - 16 YEARS LATER, I FIND MYSELF BACK IN THE CHAIR JUST WHERE DID THAT TIME GO: PHIL MOORE

**F**ebbruary 2006 saw me installed into the chair at Prudence and Concord Lodge No. 7887, in a manner which can only be described as excellent by the late W Bro Michael Symonds, something and someone I will never forget.

The year passed so quickly, it was soon my turn to hand the lodge over to my successor, which if I can say so myself, was done in an enjoyable and informative way, as is 7887's way of doing things. I remember thinking at the festive board, I wonder if I will ever retake the Chair, as it was a most enjoyable year.

So, what has happened to me over those 16 years and what does the future hold for Prudence and Concord Lodge No. 7887 and the question specifically to me, what does the second time of Master mean, or indeed what should it mean?

It was during the time in the Chair (2006-07) that I was welcomed onto a Provincial working group, by the then APGM Charles Marchant,

which was the Recruitment & Retention group. This group worked tirelessly to establish a data set as to who, what why and when people left Freemasonry and from that, various training and recruitment packages were developed.

After a few years, Charles handed the role over to Mark Eyles-Thomas who took the reins and the birth of the "Mentoring Scheme" and the Mentoring Officers role dawned. By this time I had been appointed the Group Mentor for Welling and asked to establish a team at Welling. I wish to go on record that the team we developed at Welling was second to none and I took great pride, in the way that team (you and the Province know who you are) bonded and delivered on every level and aspect of the mentoring programme.

I always had an interest in the Kent Masonic Library and Museum at Canterbury, I guess a thirst for masonic research and history and I soon became a Patron and lodge representative (now called an Ambassador), which continues to this day.



Over 4 years ago, I was asked via the then APGM of East Kent (I'm sure after seeking clearance from Mark Estaugh / Roland Wade) to take a more active role in

1. **Delivering a lecture to units in West Kent on the Museum and**
2. **To sit on the Association of Patrons (See elsewhere in this WK newsletter for latest update on these points) as the Deputy Chairman of the Association**

During the intervening years, appointment and subsequent promotions soon followed with active positions as Provincial Grand Steward, then Provincial Senior Grand Deacon, with a Past Rank of Provincial Grand Sword Bearer, some 18 months ago along with taking a range of offices within Prudence and Concord Lodge 7887, such as Mentor, Secretary and latterly Charity Steward, a position I still hold.

Not wishing to get bored

and armed with a lot of information from my reading, enjoyment was also gained from a number of "Progressive Degrees" Beyond the Craft, not least in Holy Royal Arch, Mark, RAM, Athelstan, Rose Croix, "The Corks" and a shortish sojourn into KT and Malta and a recent venture into the Royal & Select Masters.

Mark Master Masons (London), took a goodly amount of my spare time, in so far as I was involved with the development of the Mark Awareness Evenings, that are now so familiar across London and elsewhere, which I still take great pride in, not least in the timely introduction of that in my own Mark Lodge (Piscator 1363) that proved essential in its survival and now flourishing position as a "Most Enjoyable Degree".

This led onto taking over the treasurers role in both my Mark and RAM units and now involved in a "back room" administrative role in the Province of London,

performing a valuable role that assists the executive in some of their decision making roles – clearly if I told you what I was doing - I would have to "Kill you".

For the Mark members reading this, "Richly rewarded" will be term you will be most familiar with, and I was richly rewarded for industry, both for what I had achieved and that which I'm still working on, when I was appointed and then promoted to three active roles followed by Grand Rank (Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies) and then received an "in the field" promotion in 2019 to PPrjGW.

Through my research, which I touched on earlier, I was very tempted to look into The order of Athelstan and after making a number of enquiries, with colleagues who were in the order, they advised me, they were about to form a Province of Kent, suggesting I make contact with the founding secretary – cutting a very interesting

but long story short, I was a founding Candidate on the day that the Kent Province of Athelstan was formed and St Justus Court No 13 was consecrated, again something that I am very proud of. I took to this order, much the same as Mark, like a duck to water, as I do believe both Mark and Athelstan answer so many questions that neither the craft nor HRA answer, in relation to the pure essence of Freemasonry. So why does nothing happen in the 3rd degree of craft at an Installation meeting, obligation in the 2nd degree and then the installation within a board of installed master.....I often wondered why!

After going through the chair in St Justus Court, I took over the Secretary's role and subsequently became and still hold the office of the founding Secretary for a further Court in Kent, that being King Stephens Court No 140, meeting at Faversham. Appointment and promotion

was soon to follow with 2 active appointments (ProvGBannerB – ProvJGW) and as a reward for "patient industry", was appointed to Knight of The Masonic Order of Alfred the Great, in 2019.

Rose Croix (London) opened my eyes to the spender of this area of masonry, not only through the ceremony, but also within the grand setting that Landale Johnston No 234 hold their meetings, which is at Duke Street London.

Progression in this Chapter was quick, some 4 years after being "perfected" I was installed as the Most Wise Sovereign. Following a sad loss in the Chapter, during the year after my "enthronement", I volunteered to take on the role of Recorder, to which I still hold and I'm currently making the arrangements for our Centenary Anniversary meeting in April 2022. Perhaps more on that in a future article.

Coming full circle, on Saturday 26th February

2022 (16 years after the first time), I was installed back into the Chair of Prudence and Concord, on this occasion by W Bro Gary Avis, in a much abridged ceremony, but equally enjoyable. I had often thought would I ever get back to the masters role, strangely with mixed feelings, as if I did it would imply that P+C was not as strong as it deserves to be, not having a master mason going into the chair, but equally wishing I could hold that office again, if only as a stop gap, where continuous progression in the offices can't always be filled by light blues, as is the case we are experiencing at the moment.

So going back to the start, where has the time gone, well it's not been wasted through idol hands, as for most of the above I was holding down a very politically sensitive and demanding job in the public sector, so early retirement a few years back was most welcome and enjoyable, but a shock non the less.

Covid, I just cannot overlook the devastating effect this has had on life generally as well as for Masonry. Following Prudence's last meeting in February 2020, when we were subjected to "The Lockdown" it became clear very quickly that for young and old, the lack of interaction was causing both physical and mental issues and as such, we instigated a weekly, LOI via Zoom, on the same day and times as we enjoyed pre Covid, namely, Thursday evenings starting at 7.00pm.

This enabled all members to drop in as and when they needed, clearly there was a core attendance, just like the real thing, but we even facilitated non computer users to attend, not least for one member at the Duke of Kent Court, who the staff provided

an iPad and linked into our meetings weekly, thank you Peter.

The benefit this provided members was clear, so I managed to set up 3 further zoom meetings for the two Athelstan Courts and one Rose Croix Chapter I look after, but not on such a regular basis. With hind-sight was that the correct thing to do, you bet it was, I would hate to think where I and others would have been without that contact....

Looking forward, Prudence had an initiation back in November, Welcome Nigel. We have benefitted from a young joining member at the installation meeting in February, who is taking on the role of Inner Guard, welcome Paul.



So, what is my role as Master for the second time? I think it's much the same as any Master to act as a custodian of the lodge, manage its affairs and hand it over to the next master, in as good a condition as I received it and if I've done a really, really good job, it may be in a slightly better condition, only time will tell.

On a personal basis, as I write, it looks like I will be in the Chair for 2 years allowing younger members to progress through the offices without missing out on any role, so in February 2024, I should have much pleasure in installing Alistair Symonds into the chair of King Solomon, in a manner befitting the son of the man who installed me those many years ago.....

So, was it time well spent in the intervening 16 years, I believe so, Masonry had a huge impact on me and I hope that in some small way, I've contributed to the organisation and offered what skills I gained in my working environment to those groups and organisations I've served, with what little guidance I could to those who I've worked with, either within or outside of the various lodges and units that I belong and just as importantly, visited, and to those that I've yet to be introduced to.



## WEST KENT CHOIR

West Kent choir is open to anyone who enjoys singing. Come and try it out. We're planning and preparing for a concert in the Spring / Summer of 2022.

Our rehearsals are usually held on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 – 9.30pm at Bromley. However, for the last 15 months we have been meeting on Zoom as a virtual choir.

It is hoped that as Lockdown eases, we will be able to meet and sing together again.

We sing a variety of popular songs, popular classics and showtunes in 4-part harmony: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass (SATB).

If you would like to join us, please email us with your name and contact details to [westkentchoirsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:westkentchoirsecretary@gmail.com) or call us on 07596 342 526 and speak to Linda, our Secretary.



