



# ISOLATION TIMES

Issue Six: Nov 2020

## Message from the PGM



### Those Honourable Sentiments

At the beginning of Richard Burton's introduction to Jeff Wayne's version of H G Wells' "The War of the Worlds", he says in very sombre tones "No-one would have believed". Those 4 words could well act as the opening dialogue of many a discussion about the effect a respiratory virus has had across the globe.

What I can believe, however, is the way in which English Freemasonry has responded to the challenges created by the pandemic. Within our organisation, much of what has happened in terms of a prohibition on meetings has been driven by the controls imposed by Government to protect the NHS and the care sector and like the good and proper citizens we are, we have followed our instructions so as to benefit not just ourselves but others in our communities. United Grand Lodge has quite rightly taken the action it felt was necessary to ensure that no Brother was put at risk through attending a meeting. However, when we turn around and look at what Freemasonry has done for those not connected with our organisation, whose lives have been hugely disrupted by Covid-19, we see outstanding assistance being given to those far less fortunate than ourselves. For this Province, the focus has been on supporting the NHS and care homes through the provision of PPE at the time when it was in short supply, through to the funding of different types of assistance for the homeless and victims of domestic violence. The extent of the work by Freemasonry in this county is such that a booklet is to be distributed to each member outlining which organisations have been helped by the Brethren of Nottinghamshire and the Masonic Charitable Foundation.

When the time comes to reflect on how as a county we responded to the pandemic, the Freemasons of this Province can stand tall in the knowledge that we have done more than just our bit and there is no doubt that Nottinghamshire Freemasonry will continue to offer both financial and practical support to those many families and individuals who are struggling with getting their lives on an even keel because what was normal, has been blown apart by Covid-19.

Having spoken to many brethren about the inability to practice our Freemasonry, I am fully aware that many Brethren are not best pleased that they cannot take part in meetings and are missing that fellowship which underpins our organisation. Without question, it is a huge frustration, but we are a resilient bunch and like our organisation, we will adapt and, in some respects, we are likely to be stronger and wiser as we emerge from the pandemic.

A significant number of lodges across the Province have candidates to Initiate and quite rightly, they are keen to introduce good men to our brotherhood. The point that some of the prospective members are not getting any younger whilst they are waiting for Freemasonry to open up has not been lost on me and the statement that "I wish I had joined when I was younger" is often heard at our meetings. Notwithstanding the fact that the longer you are in Freemasonry the more you can learn about it and take from it, I take heed of the comment made by the Deputy Grand Master during a recent briefing to RCG6, which is the forum for East Midlands PGMs and Grand Superintendents, that Freemasonry offers a tremendous experience for those who live by its principles irrespective of where that individual is on his life's journey.

I have commented in earlier editions of this newsletter that the pandemic has robbed us of the opportunity to properly celebrate the life and times of Brethren who have passed to the Grand Lodge Above. We find ourselves continuing with that sad situation and it is a cause of major regret that we cannot show our full support for the families of V W Bro Reg Green, PGSwdB, OSNM and

a Past Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Province, W Bro The Reverend John Burgess PJGD and Provincial Grand Chaplain for many years and W Bro Stanley Harris PAGDC whose commitment to Freemasonry was reflected in the high ranks he held in a number of Orders. Each of these highly respected Brethren have recently answered the call of the Great Architect and their loss over such a short space of time is extremely sad and on behalf of the whole Province, I extend deepest condolences to their families.

At the time I was concluding these thoughts, I was delighted and relieved to hear that there was a distinct possibility that a vaccine had been developed which appeared to offer protection to a large percentage of the population. We can only hope that this is not a false dawn and that the light at the end of the tunnel is from the open door of a Lodge Room and not someone with a torch bringing the latest prohibition notice.

## Provincial News

### Annual Meeting

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October saw a unique event in the history of the province with the annual meeting held with minimum numbers present in line with 'Rule of 6' restrictions. The attendees are pictured below, spot the difference!



Members can access the meeting business papers in the document vault.

### Short Paper Competition

In the last edition, we reported this year's winning author W Bro Forbes Mutch PPrJGW of the Royal Sussex Lodge No 402.

Forbes was guest of honour following the annual meeting of PGL where he received his prize from the PGM.



Don't forget that the 2021 competition is now open and a reminder that entries should be sent to [provincialgrandorator@nottinghamshiremasons.org.uk](mailto:provincialgrandorator@nottinghamshiremasons.org.uk) before 26 March 2021.

## UGLE Update-Remembrance Day

The UGLE comms team have been busy marking Remembrance Day with some stunning and moving photos and videos



You can access the videos via this article; [UGLE Freemasons Hall Lit up](#)

Did your lodge lay a wreath? If so, please submit your photos and story to: [ecomms@nottinghamshiremasons.co.uk](mailto:ecomms@nottinghamshiremasons.co.uk)

## Learning & Development

Some interesting additions to Solomon relate to the Working Tools and whether operative masons associated moral values to them. Also, a look back at Mediaeval Masonry. These can be found using these links [One](#) [Two](#) [Three](#).

*Solomon is free, Solomon is interesting and Solomon is accessible via* <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/>



The Orations Team have converted some talks into "Zoom ready" presentations which can be used to enhance virtual and social meetings. These include: "The building of Kings Solomon's Temple", "The life & times of Ruspini", "Ladies who Festive Board", "Prince Hall Freemasonry" and "The old taverns of the original lodges". If you would like to know more then please email [provincialgrandorator@nottinghamshiremasons.org.uk](mailto:provincialgrandorator@nottinghamshiremasons.org.uk)

## Around our Halls

W.Bro. Barry Lord provides an update on developments at **Retford**



One of the effects of lockdown is that many of us have been carrying out those jobs which have needed to be done for a while. Retford Freemasons are no different and have been making changes at the Masonic Hall on Carolgate.

The outside of the building has been painted and the ongoing work to ensure better access for all has seen the addition of a ramp to the main doors. Inside the building, the cloakroom areas have been refurbished and accessible toilets fitted; stairlifts have been in place for some time to ensure that both the upper and basement floors are accessible to all. The function room has had a facelift in keeping with the Art Deco style of the whole building. As a result of the work, the resplendent looking Hall is now fully accessible and available, subject to Covid restrictions, for any functions or meetings that you require a venue for.

In addition, Bassetlaw Museum, as part of Retford Heritage week, has produced a video that can be found on the Bassetlaw Museum YouTube Channel. In the film, Barry gives a detailed tour of the Masonic Temple describing various artefacts on show and their associated symbolism.

At **West Bridgford**, the Meet, Greet and Eat team continue to use the facilities at the Masonic Hall to provide meals for the needy and were recently presented with a cheque for £500 from St Giles Lodge



Meanwhile, the car park and surrounds at **Mansfield** Masonic Hall are now looking in pristine condition thanks to the members of St Peters Lodge who formed a weekend working party-to do some tidying up. Well done brethren.



Over at **Worksop**, W.Bro. Mick Cox organised an impromptu food bank collection which raised approximately £850 worth of goods which was passed onto local charity Eudaimonia for onward distribution.

Mick is pictured here with just some of the food donated and is planning a further Christmas collection.



## Communications Update



## Digital Toolkit

A limited number of hard copies of the Digital Toolkit are now available and will be distributed in due course when lockdown restrictions are lifted.

## Stay informed

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