

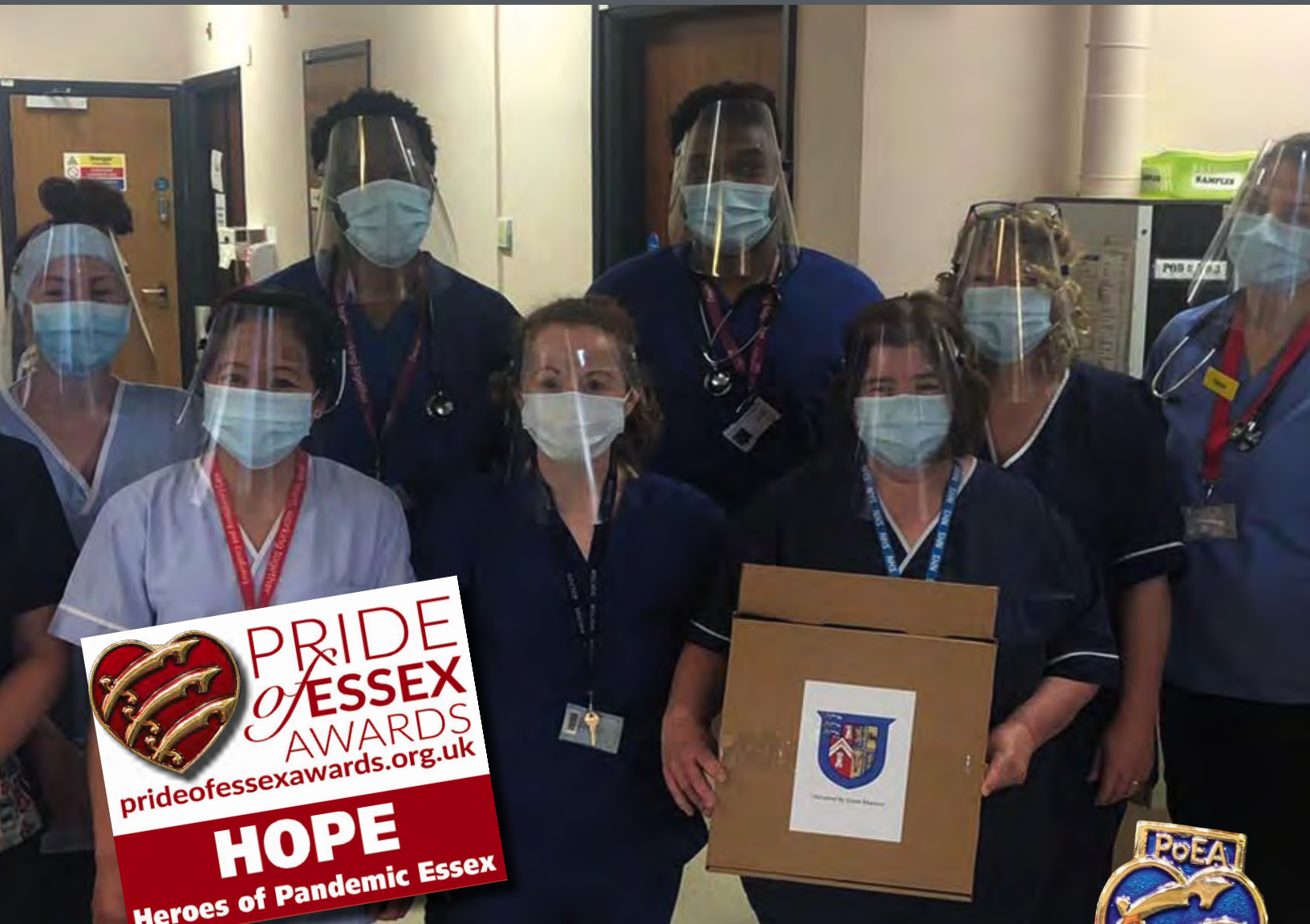
the essex mason



The Official Journal of the Masonic Province of Essex

Issue 90 February 2020 £3

#essexfreemasonscare



Essex Freemasons

Winner of the Pride of Essex

See full story
on Page 4



Welcome home



Prince Edward
Duke of Kent Court
rated 'Good'
by CQC

April 2020



At RMBI Care Co. Home Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court, we provide residential care and residential dementia support for older Freemasons, their families and people in the wider community.

"We're passionate about caring for older people and helping our residents to live well," says Home Manager, Aggie McDonald.

"We provide personalised care, along with unique activities to support our residents' health and wellbeing."

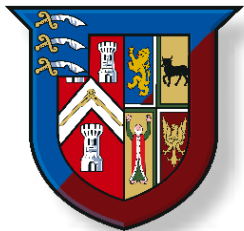
From cocktail evenings in the Home's bar, to cinema nights and visiting the surrounding woodlands in the safari cart, there's something to support residents' different needs.

For more information or to arrange a tour, please contact us:
T: 01376 345 534 | E: stistedhall@rmbi.org.uk
Stisted Hall, Kings Lane, Stisted, Braintree Essex, CM77 8AG

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Brethren, 2020 was a year we will be happy to see behind us and the roll-out of the vaccine 2021 offers light at the end of the tunnel and the promise of a safe return to our meetings later in the year. The joy of returning to our meetings will be tempered though by the number of fellow masons we lost to the virus.

I imagine that HM Government will phase a return to normality so while the number of brethren who can attend a meeting might initially be limited I am optimistic of a full return to normal meetings in September.

Rosslin Lodge, supported by the Province, have organised an Essex Freemasons Festival of Racing at Chelmsford City Racecourse on 3rd July, with every race named and sponsored by masons and Lodges. The late RW Provincial Grand Master's wife, Margaret Bass, will be presenting a silver trophy to the winner of what will become an annual Rodney Lister Bass Novice Chase on the day. Bring your friends and families for a great fun day out to celebrate the re-opening of our Lodges & Chapters, safe in the knowledge that if the event has to be cancelled you will receive a 100% refund.

By the time we meet again many Lodges & Chapters will have a backlog of Candidates to Initiate/Exalt and Second and Third Degree Ceremonies to perform. In recognition of the support you continued to give to your masonic centres many of them have already agreed to open during the summer to and I would ask you to consider holding extra meetings to start to clear any backlog you have because Grand Lodge will be starting a national attraction campaign in July which could lead to a rise in potential Candidates later this year.

The other 'big thing' of 2021 will be the roll-out by Grand Lodge of the Hermes electronic system that will replace all paper application forms and returns. W.Bro Neil Beverley, APGM, is running the Implementation Team in Essex and will ensure that every Secretary and Scribe E has been trained in plenty of time before the system goes live. I have seen the system and wish it had been available to me when I was a Lodge Secretary. If you have ever ordered shopping online you will have all the skills you need to be able to use it but W.Bro Neil has formed a large team of IT Support volunteers who will happily work with you if you need help getting online or using the system.

Finally brethren, the pandemic has had a significant effect on the funds being raised for Festival 2022 but our Lodges & Chapters have millions of pounds in their Relief Chests that was collected for charity but is not being used. If your Lodge or Chapter was able to release just some of those funds we would be able to fulfil our promise to provide the MCF with the £6m we agreed to provide for them during the period of the Festival, to enable them to support our brethren and their families in need and deserving charities in our Province. Please see Colin Felton's appeal on page 14.

Brethren, we may be approaching the final hurdle of the pandemic but please continue to stay safe until we can meet again.

Paul G. Reeves, DepPGM



Dear Readers,

Welcome to issue 90 of Essex Mason, the Official Magazine for the Province of Essex.

It is difficult to comprehend that this is the third issue of the Essex Mason Magazine since the implementation of the Covid restrictions, but with the use of Zoom video conferencing we are delighted to be able to continue with the compilation and production of the magazine for the Essex Brethren.

Congratulations to all of the Brethren who have received preferment with Provincial Honours and even though our shop is currently closed due to the government restrictions our online shop is open for business so please have a look at the Essex Mason website www.essexmason.co.uk for purchase of your regalia requirements.

Since the last issue we have launched two new Rodney Lister Bass Commemorative items, a lapel pin badge and a black Provincial Tie which are also available on the website, with all proceeds going to the 2022 Festival. This issue has a wide variety of interesting articles and considering that our Masonic meetings have virtually been on hold from March 2019 it demonstrates that the Corona Virus hasn't curtailed our Charitable activities.

The next regular issue of Essex Mason will be circulated in August 2021 so please submit articles to be considered for inclusion in this issue of magazine@essexmason.co.uk with a copy deadline of the 31st July 2021.

Stay Safe Brethren,
Essex Mason Editorial Team

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W.Bro Lee Taylor - Assistant Provincial Grand Master (who led the PPE Initiative (which won us the HOPE Award)).
W.Bro Colin Felton - Chairman of the Essex Freemasons Community Fund - W.Bro Ian Watson - Watson Accounting and
VW.Bro Paul Reeves – Deputy Provincial Grand Master

Judges Reveal Secrets of Essex Freemasons

At the Pride of Essex Awards 2020 Presentation Ceremony on 24th November 2020 streamed by Anglia Ruskin University, the Judges gave the Essex Freemasons Community Fund (EFCF) a 'First' with the ultimate 'Community Top Team Award'.

Chaired by Deputy Lieutenant Dave Dennison BEM, these annual Awards are

for those who have shown exceptional courage, inspiration or community service in Essex. The top ten in each category were invited to the virtual presentation with the results kept a closely guarded secret.

The Freemasons were nominated for a new Award, 'Heroes of Pandemic Essex', set up for 2020 at the request of the Lord Lieutenant, Jennifer Tolhurst, and received a special mention for the thousands of visors, hand sanitiser and PPE they supplied to Care Homes, NHS Community Staff, Essex and Herts Air Ambulance and some East of England Ambulance Stations.

The Judges delved more deeply into the work of the Freemasons and found a number of other significant Community initiatives including six £10,000 grants to good causes and £20,000 towards boosting antibody testing. Totally unexpected, it came as a complete surprise when the Pride of Essex Awards 2020 Presenters detailed the finding of the Judges and announced the 'Community Top Team in Essex' was the Essex Freemasons Community Fund.

WINNER



PRIDE of ESSEX AWARDS
prideofessexawards.org.uk

HOPE
Heroes of Pandemic Essex






Essex Freemasons Community Fund
"Every care home given PPE supplies"
Nominator – Ian Watson

The Pride of Essex Award presenters explained that

- The EFCF was set up in 2019 with money from the charitable donations of Essex Freemasons to award grants to registered charities and organisations supporting communities. Six £10,000 grants were made this year
- The Fund executive were also tasked with responding to PPE needs of groups across Essex (which received additional recognition in the new category of HOPE - 'Heroes of Pandemic Essex - Team Award')
- Some of the initiatives and grants include £20,000 towards boosting antibody testing with a further £100,000 pledged to fight the virus in the East of England
- 50 litres of hand sanitiser was given to the Essex Search and Rescue Team of 63 volunteers who find and help missing and vulnerable people in Essex
- 50 litres of clinical grade sanitiser was donated to each of the seven hospices in Essex
- A £10,000 grant was given to the Essex Child Death Review Team at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow to fill funding gap due to the COVID-19 outbreak
- Hand sanitiser and face shields were provided to Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Service, face shields were supplied to all nurses in the Community Mental Health Teams in mid and south Essex and to District Nurses in the south of Essex
- All 506 Registered Care Homes in Essex were offered face shields for all their staff. More than 320 care homes requested support and £10,000 worth of face shields has been supplied
- Personal bottles of hand sanitiser were given to all Ambulance crews across Essex as a 'Thank You' from Essex Freemasons and that Freemason volunteers delivered all these items personally

In these unsettling and challenging times, this Award for the EFCF as the Community Top Team in Essex is also a first-class honour which further enhances the charitable reputation of Freemasonry in all the Provinces and Districts in UGLE. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master, VW.Bro Paul Reeves, acknowledged this recognition by the Community for the good work of all the 9,000 Freemasons in Essex who donated money as well as those who volunteered to deliver the items across the County.

One of the unfortunate consequences of the lockdown was that the PoE Awards could not be presented as usual, so the various sponsors of the awards were asked to present them following the online presentation ceremony. Mr. Ian Watson of Watson & Co Accountants, the category sponsor, who has been a long-term sponsor of the PoE Awards, presented the award to W.Bro Colin Felton, the Chairman of the Essex Freemasons Community Fund and VW.Bro Paul Reeves.

VW.Bro Paul Reeves said "each one deserved a handshake as personal recognition and that it was also a tribute to the late Rodney Bass OBE, the Provincial Grand Master of Essex who died in July 2020, under whose leadership the EFCF was set up, together with many of the initiatives which had impressed the Judges."

Assistant Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro Tony White, emphasised the true depth and continuity of support for the Community in Essex, in that the Judges had awarded the Freemasons the 'Team of Pride' Community Award, after learning about their ongoing support of local charities across Essex in 2014.

In these unsettling and challenging times, this Pride of Essex 2020 Award for the EFCF as the Community Top Team in Essex is well deserved and helps enhance the reputation of Freemasonry for charitable giving, not just in Essex but throughout the UK and overseas.





Young Freemasons Youth Programme benefits Essex Charities



Cornerstone, a Lodge formed by young Essex Freemasons, continues to lead the way, supporting a growing range of good causes across the county with a Youth Programme focussed on local charities dedicated to helping young men and women in need.

The latest to benefit as part of this growing programme is The Rob George Foundation. The RGF is a Colchester based charity, supporting young people all over the UK. Launched in January 2014, it has so far helped nearly 1,000 young people making grants totalling £591,000.

The Foundation has received a £1,000 grant from the Lodge and the Essex Freemasons Community Fund, which will be used to financially and/or practically support young people facing life threatening or terminal illnesses, or by providing financial help to those young people who demonstrate exceptional commitment or ability in the worlds of sport or the performing arts but are held back from fulfilling their full potential due to a lack of funds.

"This money will help to make a huge difference to the lives of young people," said Lorraine George, who formed the charity with her husband Philip following the tragic death of their son Rob from Leukaemia, aged just 21. "Our aims were set by Rob himself and we pride ourselves on trying to fulfil his wish that the foundation should 'Make a Difference – One Individual at a Time.' Rob was himself a very talented sportsman and the aims reflect that, and his personal experiences and the financial hardships he faced during his illness. We are also very proud of the fact that we have next to no overheads, so the Freemason's can relax in the knowledge that just about every single penny of their donation will reach the young people – just as you would want and hope."

"We are helping many talented individuals, some of whom are on the cusp of Olympic selection, and one of whom has recently been selected to represent team GB at the Paralympics. These youngsters, through illness or disability, have no way of covering all their costs and need help. The current pandemic has brought many huge challenges to charities, and in common with so many, the Rob George Foundation's fundraising programme for 2020 was wiped out overnight. So, understandably we are more grateful than ever (if that's possible) for this grant from Essex Freemasons. Our current average grant is running at £633.00, so your grant will help make nearly two whole grants – that's two real young people who will hopefully feel we have together 'Made a Difference' to their lives."

The £1,000 was presented to the Foundation by Jack Gilliland from the Cornerstone Lodge, at a short ceremony at Essex County Cricket Ground. He commented: "Our Lodge is formed of members aged up to 37 so it is understandable that we wish to support charities that help other young people. The Rob George Foundation does just that, an incredible job, which is why we were pleased to help.

Present at the ceremony was Assistant Provincial Grand Master Peter Hollingsworth who praised the work of the charity and Cornerstone Lodge for their ongoing Youth Programme which is seeing more and more Essex charities benefit. Also pictured are Paul Palmer and John Glynn from Cornerstone and Lorraine and Philip George from the Foundation.

Essex Provincial Grand Stewards, still finding a way during lockdown.



Covid-19 and the subsequent protective measures have not deterred our 2020 Provincial Grand Stewards from continuing with various charitable initiatives across the province, initiatives that have so far seen over £6,000 generated for the 2022 Festival and Provincial Almoners Fund.

The Stewards started their year with a simple product offering that was expected to be a winner across our Masonic fraternity, the Jewel Holder in Embossed Case got off to a great start in February and was expected to do really well, along with the usual events across the Essex Masonic calendar, but Covid-19 set to completely derail their plans.

Undeterred they continued to look for ways to make a difference, and in anticipation of the likely additional demand upon the Provincial Almoners funds, a number of the Stewards led by W.Bro's Jeff Palmer and Christian Webb, combined forces with W.Bro's Dave Hawtin and Chris Lee to develop and launch the Forget-Me-Not Initiative. Another simple idea, they offered packs of forget me not seeds at £2 per pack by post to Masons across the province. A small production team was established by Stewards Daniel Gearing, Darren Elsey, Mark Jones, Gary Soars and Dan Broyd, supported by their families to fill and post the orders. This was supported by brethren across the Province, who really got behind this as way to celebrate and remember absent Brethren, an initiative made even more poignant following the sad loss of our PGM. This raised £1,400 for the Almoners fund.



It is intended to relaunch the Forget-Me-Not initiative in the spring of 2021 alongside what they hope will be a popular photographic tribute feature on the Essex Provincial Grand Stewards website, where those supporters of the initiative earlier this year, can post pictures of their new forget me not blooms in remembrance of another.

No Masonic calendar would have been complete without a Provincial Golf Day, but this was going to have to be very different to ensure the safety of all and adherence to the Covid safety measures in place at the time. Weeks of planning and rewrites of that plan later, in conjunction with the amazing folk at the South Essex Golf Club, plus an excellent response from many of our Golf playing membership, led to this event being a sell out. Along with the usual raffle and a Memorabilia Auction, the event raised close To £3,000 for the 2022 festival.

The current Initiative from our Stewards 'Help in the Province' is directed more at helping a Brother in real need, connecting those brethren with one of the Stewards local to their area, helping with things like odd jobs, general maintenance or just a bit of shopping or telephone contact, for those brothers in real need. Darren Elsey is the point of contact for this, and can be reached on 07729 688513. If this initiative sees the uptake expected, the Stewards will be looking for additional volunteers to join their effort.

Please keep an eye out for the Masonic design face masks coming soon. Currently in production complete with Essex Provincial Grand Lodge Crest, W.Bro Paul Bates and his fellow Stewards will be making these available for purchase, and look forward to these proving really popular upon resumption of meetings, or before.

Anyone interested or wanting to further support any of the 2020 Stewards Initiatives, can email Christian Webb or Jeff Palmer on info@essexpgs.co.uk, or reach them through their website

Jewel Case holders are also available online through the Essex Mason shop at <https://www.essexmason.co.uk>



Book Now!!

Essex Freemasons Festival of Racing

Chelmsford Racecourse

Organised by Rosslyn Lodge

Join us for what will be one of the biggest events in the history of Essex Freemasonry.

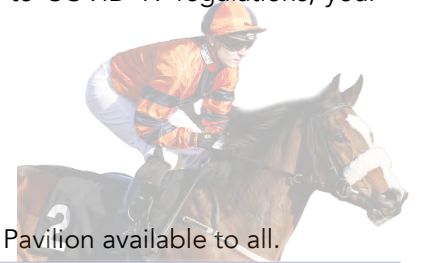
Saturday 3rd July at the Chelmsford City Racecourse marks a celebration of the reopening of our Lodges after the pandemic, giving Freemasonry across Essex an opportunity to honour the memory of our late Provincial Grand Master, RW.Bro. Rodney Lister Bass OBE.

Book with complete confidence In the event that the event is unable to proceed due to COVID-19 regulations, your money will be refunded in full.

TICKETS ON OFFER

- £25 - Ground Entry Tickets -Enjoy the Racing and all the Track facilities
- £50 Family Package - includes Two adults and up to three children under 16.
- £95 - VIP Full Dining Package including Prosecco Reception

The Racecourse offers a selection of Gourmet and 'Street' Food Stalls and Champagne Pavilion available to all.



STOP PRESS

VIP dining Packages are limited. More than 400 seats were sold before publication – Now strictly on a first come, first served basis – Don't be disappointed!!

Summer Marquee - Bookings now being accepted for VIP Dining Package, adjacent to the main track.

ATTRACTIONS ON THE DAY

- Seven live horse races televised on Sky TV. Place your bets on the Tote or with bookmakers on the ground.
- All the attractions usually seen at Stisted Garden Party will be there in the Grounds.
- Possible featured 'Arabian Horse Race' rarely seen in the UK

A CELEBRATION OF FREEMASONRY & MEMBERSHIP ATTRACTION EVENT

After almost 12 months of restrictions our 'Festival of Racing' meets several key objectives:

- Meet and Greet, Deputy Provincial Grand Master in Charge and members of the Provincial Executive.
- Opportunity to get together as Freemasons in a large group for the first time in over a year.
- Members of the public will also be able to attend, we will be able to showcase Freemasonry and the benefits it offers to the wider community
- To honour the memory of Rodney Lister Bass OBE. One of the major races, sponsored by the Province, will carry his name. His wife Margaret and other members of the Bass family are expected to attend.
- The event will raise funds for the Festival 2022 as well as 'Friends of Stisted Hall'. Part of the ticket money will be donated to these charities.

GET THE BEST FROM THE DAY

To get the very best from the day please consider booking as a Lodge or Chapter group, especially attractive for the VIP dining seated together.

Arrange a coach or mini bus from your centre so that you can fully enjoy the hospitality on offer.

Remember to ask friends, family and neighbours so that we can make our 'Festival of Racing' into a successful fund raising and membership attraction event.

HOW TO BOOK

Book online with the Chelmsford City Racecourse.

If you are dining please be sure to add as much information as possible about your party/s to ensure you are seated together.

TICKET ENQUIRIES

- Phone 07568 336412
- Email raceday@essexfreemasons.org.uk
- Online <http://tinyurl.com/y5e5pmtk>

Use QR Code





The Provincial Grand Lodge of Essex

ESSEX FREEMASONS *Presents*

FESTIVAL OF RACING

Organised by Rosslyn Lodge

Tickets :
VIP Dining £95.
Ground Tickets £25
Family Tickets £50
Includes 2 Adults and upto 3
kids under 16.
Bookings Online:
<http://tinyurl.com/y5e5pmtk>



Check out these attractions:

SATURDAY JULY 3RD, 2021
AT THE CHELMSFORD CITY
RACECOURSE, GREAT LEAS

- Seven live horse races televised on Sky TV. Place your bets on the Tote or with bookmakers in the ground.
- All the attractions usually seen at Stisted Hall Garden Party. Please support the stallholders.
- Champagne Bar for non-dining visitors.
- £25 ticket holders will have full access to gourmet food selection and bar facilities.
- Arabian Horse Race, rarely seen in the UK (to be confirmed)
- Opportunity to get together as Freemasons in a large group for the first time in over a year.
- Honour the memory of Rodney Lister Bass. One of the races, sponsored by the Province, will carry his name.
- The event is a potential fundraiser for the Festival 2022 and for the Friends of Stisted. Part of the ticket money will be donated to these charities.

All profits go to Stisted and Essex Festival 2022.



Royal College of Surgeons

ADVANCING SURGICAL CARE

The Square and The Scalpel Working Together

by W Bro Tony Hales



The Rt.Hon. Lord Ribeiro CBE FRCS

Just a few minutes' walk from Freemasons Hall in Great Queen Street is Lincoln's Inn Fields where the Royal College of Surgeons (RCS) and its predecessors has been based since 1796. Renowned throughout the world for its prestigious qualification of FRCS (Fellow of the RCS) there are many famous Surgeons who have 'exchanged the Scalpel for the Square' and joined their Masonic Brethren in raising money for others and doing good works in the Community.

The Livery Company of Barber-Surgeons was established in 1540 but an Act of Parliament in 1745 split the two and by a subsequent Royal Charter 'The Royal College of Surgeons in London' was formed in 1800. With a new Charter in 1843 and a name change to 'The Royal College of Surgeons of England', the RCS has become renowned for maintaining the highest standards of Professional Membership, Training, and Research.

Facilitating cutting-edge research for surgery is expensive and like any other registered charity the RCS relies heavily on donations, so to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of Grand Lodge in 1967, every Freemason in England and Wales was invited to donate £1. More than £580,000 was raised for the first Masonic charity with non-masonic objectives 'to further, in conjunction with the Royal College of Surgeons, research in the science of surgery' and an annual research fellowship scheme was established.

Applications come from qualified doctors, who are members of the RCS by examination (which has only a 30% to 40% pass rate) and hope to become Consultants. Fellowships are particularly helpful for those who want to be Academic Surgeons i.e. Professors or Senior Lecturers in medical schools attached to the NHS, operating and running clinics whilst teaching and continuing their research.

A major initiative taken by VW.Bro Paul Reeves, our Dep ProvGM in Charge, has been to highlight the support of Freemasonry for the RCS. In November 2020 the Province of Essex arranged a joint online event hosted by the RCS entitled 'The Science behind the Scalpel' with five short informative talks but a technical glitch on the night reduced the impact. The RCS has now produced a video with a playlist and each talk can be viewed individually.

Professor Peter Hutchinson, Director of Clinical Research at the RCS introduces the event and then describes some of the research work currently being undertaken including Covid-19 specific projects and the importance of the financial support of Freemasonry.

St Luke in Essex No 8714 Lodge member, RW.Bro the Rt. Hon Lord Ribeiro, Kt CBE FRCS, Senior Grand Warden "until Covid-19 brought proceedings to a close rather abruptly" explains more about the selection of Research Fellows for Fellowships of the Freemason's Fund for Surgical research.

VW.Bro Paul Reeves gives Brethren the background and the numbers behind the donations from both Craft and Holy Royal Arch Freemasons since the original research fund was established in 1967 and the future commitment of Essex Freemasons to surgical research.

Two former Freemason Research Fellows, Robert Tyler and Tom Jovic, share their cutting- edge research in genetic mutations to improve abdominal cancer outcomes and 3D printing in plastic surgery and they each describe the beneficial impacts, as well as their appreciation to Freemasonry, in facilitating these research projects.

The new RCS produced video with a playlist for the five short presentations can be viewed by scanning this QR code with your mobile device





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https://www.stgilescentre.org.uk/semwt.php

Solomon and the Lodge Officers' Jewels



A number of Brethren in Essex are part of the Solomon User Group (SUG) which is a module on Solomon where new items designed by the Learning and Development Team are tried by 'lead users' who give feedback before the material goes live for all users. The current item being reviewed is all about the Lodge Officers' Jewels.

Imagine a busy Installation Meeting where the collars have got mixed up and as you are sitting the closest to them the Worshipful Master looks at you and asks you to put them in order so he can invest his Officers.

Three well designed introductory quizzes cover matching the officer to the jewel, the jewel to the officer and a timed quiz to identify the jewels for all the officers of a lodge. Then comes the fourth quiz called 'Precedence of Officers' which is described as fiendishly difficult with only two minutes to sort all the collars. This quiz has only one question but if you get it wrong a brother may be invested with the wrong collar and jewel.

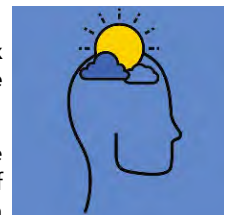


The concept of the tests is first class and practising this way will help any brother make a useful contribution to the smooth running of proceedings at a busy Installation meeting with the added bonus of becoming more familiar with the Book of Constitutions Rule 104(d). Do look out for this and other new modules as they are a good way of "fostering curiosity and developing understanding.



Mental Health Matters

With the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic taking a huge toll on people's mental wellbeing, the Essex Cornerstone Club felt it would be a good time to provide a talk on the issue for our members and provide advice on how to seek help.



2020 was a year that most people would care to forget. Lives and jobs were lost, businesses crumbled and the nation's mood, was, and continues to be, filled with trepidation. As we approached the end of 2020, instead of families gathering round a fireplace to share stories and gifts, they were bound by further restrictions which in turn created a more sombre atmosphere for most. In times like these, we should take a moment to stop and have an introspective look at the needs of ourselves and others.

Tragically suicide rates in the UK are still too high. In 2019 for example 5,691 died of suicide. Of that number 4,303 were men. These numbers of course reflect a time before the global pandemic which has devastated families across the world.

The Essex Cornerstone Club, recognise that Masons across the province have diligently supported and cared for the most vulnerable in our society throughout the lockdown period. So, in order to support our own heroes, the Cornerstone Club hosted a free event on the 20th December 2020 which was designed to create an awareness of mental health issues and ways in which to create mental resilience in these difficult times.

The event was hosted by:

- *Hannilee Fish, a Lawyer, Mental Health Practitioner and founder of iKan Health. Hannilee's book, One Minute Miracles has led her to deliver mindfulness training to individuals and companies all over the globe;*
- *Dr Kelly Jones, a Clinical Psychologist who works with the NHS supporting people with dementia, anxiety, trauma and bereavement and has worked in forensic services across the UK and America; and*
- *Steve Stanley; a leadership and management facilitator and trainer. Steve is also a personal and executive coach with years of experience in Neuro Linguistic Programming.*

During the event we covered the basics of mental health and the issues most frequently associated with the term. Dr Jones identified the signs and symptoms which are often found with the most common mental health issues. We also heard several real-life stories where individuals had overcome adversity and learnt to deal with their own mental health problems. Finally, we looked at the ways and means by which everyone can take small steps to overcome a period of anxiety or stress.

Crucially, the event was designed to encourage everyone to seek help if they have any concerns regarding their own health or that of another person. There are lots of organisations that offer free and confidential helplines and guidance on how to overcome negative thoughts or feelings.

The event was a great success with club members joined by members of the Essex Almoners team and many other Essex Freemasons, with lots of positive feedback from our attendees. The Essex Cornerstone will be hosting a second talk later in the year to supplement this important topic.

PATHWAY

Provincial Mentor
W.Bro. Pierre Waddoups



I was delighted to have received a letter a few weeks ago from the Deputy Provincial Grand Master in Charge, V.W.Bro. Paul Reeves, in which it stated that 'he wished to re-appoint me to the Office of Provincial Grand Mentor'. I was and indeed still am, absolutely delighted with this and I accepted that offer without a moment's hesitation and for which I thank him.

There are a few initiatives that I would like to implement once Freemasonry returns to a new normality and one of these is to have a Mentors' Association. Briefly it could be run on the following lines; it will be informal, meeting three times per year, at lunch time at a weekend, with wives and partners invited to the lunch. After the meal there will be a Guest Speaker for the wives and partners entertainment, while we members retire to another room and discuss any issues or topics relating to mentoring, including the occasional Key Note Speaker. We could have a President, Secretary and a Treasurer, with an open invitation to the Provincial Executive to attend as our guest. It is work in progress, but this is the synopsis and you will be pleased to hear, that it will be as cheap as we can make it. I will be pleased to receive your feedback and comments.

In July of last year, Solomon launched Share and Encourage: Mentor's Corner, a module that has been providing Lodges and Chapters with material for on-line gatherings and methods on how best to present that material and I must remark on the way in Lodges and Lodge mentors have embraced this new approach. They have also included prospective members, keeping them updated and maintaining their interest and ready to join us when the time is right.

We now have a Facebook Group for mentors; I have made it a closed group and it just needs a request from mentors to join. If you are not a Facebook user, then please consider becoming one and you can do what I do with Facebook, restricting it solely for my Freemasonry.

I would like to expand the existing Mentoring Team and ask if you would consider becoming a Group Mentor, or Deputy Group Mentor. The role is simply to look after a number of Lodges at any one of the centres and making sure that the Lodge and personal mentors have all that they need in terms of information and help, so that they can continue with the sterling work that they are doing currently. Group Mentors and their Deputies will work closely with the Assistant Provincial Grand Master who has been appointed to look after those Lodges in the centres and feeding back to the Provincial Deputy Mentor and ultimately to me.

If you have any comments about the Mentors' Association, the Facebook Group, joining the existing Mentors Team or any other matter concerning The Members' Pathway or Solomon, please do get in touch, my details are below.



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St. Katharine's Lodge No.5376 Another Pathway "Success"



St. Katharine's Lodge No.5376 met for their installation meeting on Saturday 3rd October at Saxon Hall Masonic Centre, Aviation Way, Southend due to the temporary closure of their normal home Rochford Masonic Hall due to ongoing issues of the Covid19 pandemic. A dispensation was applied for from the Provincial Grand Secretary.

As the current government guidance restricts meetings to 6 persons the choosing of officers was a difficult choice but it was agreed that the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Secretary, Director of Ceremonies and Assistant Director of Ceremonies would attend on this occasion.



However, to ensure that every member could participate in some way, after the Lodge was closed a special Zoom Meeting was to take place with a paper from Solomon was to be delivered - "A walk around your Lodge Room" as well as a Virtual Raffle and Virtual Charity Collection.

After opening the Lodge at 3.00pm and dealing with the administrative parts of the meeting. W.Bro Richard Dyer was proclaimed Worshipful Master for a second year becoming the 88th WM, with all progressive officers remaining in situ.

After some considerable time as an Assistant Almoner and then as Almoner, Bro Bill Blissett wished to relinquish the position and W.Bro Phil Jones was appointed. W.Bro Greg Barsby having served as Charity Steward for 5 years was replaced with Bro. Neil Beckwith. The WM wished to record his thanks to both Brothers for their input over the past few years. W.Bro John Heffernan delivered the address to the Brethren with everyone agreeing that he had surpassed his usual first class delivery and what a shame that there was no other brethren there, to hear it.

A notice of Motion was put forward by the Secretary for Bro. Bernie Gill to be made an honorary member for his services to the Lodge over the past decades. This will be voted on in December.

Once the Lodge was closed. A Zoom Meeting was opened and we welcomed our Assistant Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro Lee Taylor to the meeting as well as 14 other Brethren. The Brethren stood for a minutes silence after the sad demise of our Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro Rodney Lister Bass OBE.

A paper on "A Walk around your Lodge Room" was then delivered by the Secretary. The Solomon project really is a way to make that daily advancement in Masonic Knowledge with several new facts being discovered about why we do the things we do.

The Secretary updated the Brethren on the St. Katharine's Lodge September Cycle 300 ride which was undertaken by the DC and himself which at the time of writing this had raised £2,628.75 including Gift Aid for Cancer Research UK. He thanked the DC for forcing him into this and that this was a precursor to undertake London to Paris between the 14th to 18th July 2021 in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital with so far 5 members of the Lodge undertaking the challenge with 6 "potential" new recruits to Freemasonry also joining the "Are we there yet" Team.

The Virtual Lodge Raffle was then held with various bottles being won, by the following brethren W.Bro Keith Frost, Phil Jones and appropriately the last prize of a Bottle of Gentleman Jack Whisky was won by our APGM.... Which honestly was not a fix.... Who graciously donated it back to the Lodge. A total of £120 was raised for the Festival 2022. W.Bro Lee Taylor then updated the Brethren on the Provincial Matters especially regarding the process of the appointment of the new Provincial Grand Master.



From left to right- W.Bro Bob Johnson – Mentor, W.Bro Lee Taylor – APGM, W.Bro John Heffernan – ADC, W.Bro Keith Frost – Asst Secretary, W.Bro Phil Jones – Almoner, Bro Joe Dobson – SW, W.Bro Steve Durrant – DC, W.Bro Gordon Goodall – Secretary, W.Bro Richard Dyer – WM, W.Bro Mark Sales – Treasurer, Bro Chris Dyer – JW, Bro Neil Beckwith – Charity Steward. Others who joined W.Bro Greg Barsby, Bro Jamie Brigstock during the afternoon.

An urgent appeal to every Essex Freemason

By Colin Felton, ProvGChStwd



Brethren – This is an urgent appeal to every single Essex Freemason – help us to save Festival2022. It is possible, it can happen now and here is the best news of all – it will not cost you as individuals a single penny more – because you have already given the money – so what’s the catch.

Talk to your Charity Stewards, Treasurers or anyone else responsible for your Lodge or Chapter Relief Chest and you might well be amazed about just how much money you have set aside – cash designated for charities that is doing absolutely nothing right now.

We believe that when you add up all that money, there are enough funds for us to comfortably reach our target of £6 million and a lot more besides. It just needs your Lodge or Chapter to make that decision to give it to the Festival – and we need you to make that decision now.

That Rainy Day

This is money that all of you have already given to charity so I am not asking for a penny more. In many, many cases funds are sitting in Relief Chests waiting for that proverbial rainy day. Well Brethren and Companions – I need to tell you – it absolutely pouring down as far as our Festival is concerned.

The MCF is a living charity. As money is donated, it is withdrawn just as quickly and used for charitable purposes. In Festival or not, nearly half a million pounds alone comes back every year in Essex to help distressed Freemasons and their families.

Millions of pounds more come back in donations to local Essex Charities via the Masonic Charitable Foundation. They have not stopped giving to us but in the COVID pandemic we have stopped giving to them and it is time to redress the balance.

Supporting Local Charities

During Covid the Essex Freemason Community Fund has given to local charities, we have match funded Lodges and Chapters with additional support, but it is now time for us to look after our own. By transferring as much money as possible from your Relief Chest now you are helping us to meet our obligations.

When this happens, your money will immediately attract 2% interest – that’s not happening while it is doing nothing in your Relief Chest. Your Lodge will be honoured with your donation because it will help you reach your Festival target and more.

When our meetings return to normal there will be plenty of time for individual Lodges and Chapters to replenish funds – but time would have run out for the Festival which officially ends at the end of March 2022.

So, Brethren and Companions – it really is decision time – and we need that money now. Will you be able to help?

CHRISTMAS IN A BAG

Dozens of young people across Essex with social and emotional health issues enjoyed a better Christmas thanks to a pioneering initiative by a Billericay school and last-minute help from Essex Freemasons.

“Christmas in a bag,” essential basic items such as toothbrushes and clothing, can now be given to students at Ramsden Hall Academy, thanks to a £3,300 grant from the Essex Freemasons Community Fund supported from Masons who are members of Southend-on-Sea Lodge.



The initiative had been in doubt following the loss of sponsorship from local businesses affected by COVID-19. That would have meant that some students, many from families on the edge of poverty, would have had nothing for Christmas.

As well as suffering from social and emotional health issues some of these young people have very little. Some arrive at our school from families that are really struggling in the current pandemic – so we are trying to provide more than just basics and some goodies for them to enjoy at Christmas. I am extremely grateful to Essex Masons for providing such generous funds.”

Ramsden Hall Academy is a residential special school for boys aged 10 to 16 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan for Social, Emotional and Mental Health. It admits up to 100 boys from across the whole county.

Provincial Grand Charity Steward
 W.Bro Colin Felton PADGC colin.felton@essexpgl.org



150th Anniversary of The Lodge of Saint Mary No 1312

Planning and early discussion for The Lodge's 150th anniversary on 13th October started about five years ago. One of the ideas that emerged was for the Lodge to put on an exhibition at Braintree Museum showing how the Lodge has engaged with the local community over the last 150 years.

This project was moved forward and indeed put together by the IPM of the Lodge and museum Volunteer John Adlam and his wife Sandra. The exhibition was to have taken place before the anniversary meeting and to be open to the public with Lodge members taking in turns to be on duty to answer questions and to generally promote Freemasonry within the community.

The project was very warmly received by our late Provincial Grand Master Rodney Bass who gave his complete support and had agreed to officially open the exhibition with a Civic Dignitary. He would then visit the Lodge with a Provincial Team on its anniversary in order to re enact its Consecration. Sadly, because of you-know-what, non of these things was able to take place, though it is hoped that they will be held next year.

As a thank you to the Friends of Braintree Museum for allowing us to use part of their building we agreed to donate £500 to them and on application, this proposal was match funded by the Province of Essex with a total of £1000 available. Three members from the Lodge, W.Bro Andrew McLeod the current Master, W.Bro John Adlam and W.Bro Nigel Oldacre met with Museum Manager Robert Rose, Treasurer David Watson and Vice Chair of The Friends Sandra Adlam. Whilst Province was Represented by our APGM W.Bro Lee Taylor.

The Lodge also commissioned W.Bro Gerald Reilly, a prize winning Masonic author to elaborate and to investigate in greater detail the history of the lodge over 150 years and it was his hard work, enthusiasm and dedication which enhanced the Museum project. His beautifully produced book indeed highlights this through its title "Engaging with the Community: The Lodge of Saint Mary 1870 - 2020".

In the afternoon a lodge meeting was held to commemorate the occasion with the master his two wardens and three others present; all wearing masks (except briefly for the photo) and very well distanced.

At this meeting Andrew McLeod was presented with a beautifully crafted gavel and base made from the oak from part of the original front doors to the Howard Hall and with an inscription commemorating the 150 years. It was the idea and creation of W Bro Fred Bowler a member of the Lodge.

Lastly in the evening there was a Zoom meeting with members. There was some 25 people who logged on and there were invited guests too, including VW.Bro Paul Reeves Deputy Provincial Grand Master in charge, W.Bro Lee Taylor APGM and representatives from local Lodges.

A brief outline of his newly published book was given by W.Bro Gerald Reilly and a response and toast to the Lodge given by Paul Reeves. There was great interaction and chat later on and it was agreed to hold a Lodge Golf Day at Braintree Golf Club as soon as possible.



"all is not lost we hope to celebrate in the same way as originally planned exactly 1 year on. Assuming we can!!"



£20,000 lifeline from Essex Freemasons following the "perfect storm"

A leading Colchester charity, dedicated to helping the homeless back into the community, has been given a £20,000 lifeline by Essex Freemasons, following what could only be described as a perfect storm.

Emmaus, which has been helping the homeless across north Essex for more than 20 years, had been hit by a 'triple whammy' of events over the last nine months following the Covid-19 pandemic which saw funding dry up, borrowings increase and reserves seriously diminished.

The situation was made even more difficult by the closure of other charities operating in the Colchester area because of Covid, resulting in a massive increase in workload for Emmaus as the only organisation in the area able to still provide a service for the growing number of homeless.

"It would not be wrong to describe this as a perfect storm," said Denise King, Chief Executive of Emmaus. "Under normal circumstances we would have received funding via our own charity shops, but these have also had to close during the pandemic and like all charities, we have also been affected by a drop in donations during this difficult period. We literally only had enough funds to stay open for 3 more months, so this donation has provided an amazing lifeline"

"I cannot say how welcome this money is, which will be used to pay for specialist staff. We are not simply a charity that provides people with a bed for the night. We work hard to bring the socially excluded back into the community and off the streets permanently."

The £20,000 was donated via the Masonic Charitable Foundation, the Freemasons own Charity and was part of a £1 million grant awarded nationally to combat homelessness and rough sleeping.

VW.Bro. Paul Reeves, Deputy Provincial Grand Master in Charge, commented:

"As part of the local community we always strive to ensure that charitable money is given where it is needed most. Emmaus do some unbelievable work to get people off the streets and eventually into their homes. They literally change lives and I am pleased we have been able to help."

Such is the need to help the homeless, Essex Freemasons are now looking at ways to help similar charities in other parts of the county. An announcement offering further support is expected in the New Year.





Essex Freemasons donate £10,000 to support bereaved children and their families

Esex Freemasons have donated £10,000 to help fund the work of the Essex Child Death Review Team, a group of dedicated professionals who work as part of the NHS to offer support to families in every part of the county, following the tragic death of a child.

The money will be used to purchase visual aids, leaflets and books which help to explain to young children what has happened following the passing of a sibling or other close relative. There are about 100 such cases every year in Essex. The team, who are part of The Princess Alexandra NHS, also work closely with all of the main hospitals in Essex – Broomfield, Basildon, Harlow, Southend and Colchester – and are involved with families when a child (up to the age of 18 years) dies.

Team Leader Andrea Brewis, explained: "Around 50% of our cases are unexpected and when a member of our team arrives, usually in an A&E Department, parents and children are obviously distressed and in many cases have no idea what they should do next."

"We assist with practical advice and information (for example information about other professional's roles and funeral planning) and we offer advice and support to families individual to their needs. A large part of our work is to help other young children in the family understand and cope with what has happened. We use leaflets, toys and books to help us do this and the money will help to fund this vital part of our service which is why I want to thank Essex Masons for this very generous donation."

The £10,000 was given via the Essex Provincial Charity Fund, which was set up by local Freemasons in the 1930's to support worthy causes such as the Essex Child Death Review Team. Their work came to the attention of the Fund Trustees, who immediately agreed the grant, following a recommendation from members of The Lodge of Borrowed Light which meets in Harlow.

VW.Bro Paul Reeves, Deputy Provincial Grand Master. *"The work undertaken by the team each year under the most difficult of circumstances is absolutely incredible and we are delighted that we have been able to help."*

W.Bro Rob Whittingham, Chairman of the Teddies for Loving Care Appeal in Essex said, "I am also delighted to say that the support will not stop there. We have been supplying TLC Teddies to A&E Departments and walk-in centres in every Essex Hospital as well as Whipps Cross Hospital and the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, which are given to child patients suffering trauma & distress. When we learnt this team were also using Teddies to help children suffering the trauma of a death close to them we were only too happy to include them in the TLC family and have today supplied them with their first batch of Teddies.

This was a charity initiative which started in Essex 20 years and which is now supported by Masons worldwide with 3 million having been supplied to date and almost ½ million in Essex alone."

The TLC Teddies will now be used by the Essex Child Death Review Team alongside the books, leaflets and other visual aids, to help young children cope through difficult times.

Cross Keys Masonic Centre Thurrock Women's Refuge

Over the past five years all of the lodges from the Cross Keys Masonic Centre have made generous donations towards the local Women's Refuge for Christmas. These funds have enabled the Masonic Centre to throw the children from the refuge a special Christmas party as well as supplying selection boxes and gift tokens. The province kindly match funded our donation this year and gave us an extra £500 which was a great help.

We would like to highlight in particular the generosity of Bro Dave Barton of Henry De Gray Lodge 6627 who for the past two years has personally donated a huge bundle of toys as presents for the children, what a lovely gesture.

This year's plans to hold a Christmas panto at the Masonic Centre have been cancelled due to the covid pandemic but has been rearranged for next year, the selection boxes and tokens will still be provided for the children. We are hoping to arrange an event for the children in the spring instead.

We would like to say a special thank you to Linda Mills for helping with the arrangements.



W.Bro Roy Mills (St Johns Lodge) - W.Bro Clive Cheeseman (Henry De Gray Lodge) and W.Bro Chris Bushell (Thurrock Lodge)

Gold Geese ready to take flight into Basildon

Leigh-on-Sea charity The Gold Geese, set up in 2014 to help families with young children suffering with rare blood cancers, has received a cash boost from Southend Freemasons, money that will help the organisation expand its services across south Essex into Basildon.

A £1,000 grant donated by members of Sweyn Lodge, which meets at Saxon hall in Aviation Way, supported by the Essex Freemasons Community Fund, will enable Gold Geese to work more closely with Basildon Hospital.



The charity already provides extensive support in the Southend area offering a wide range of services such as bereavement counselling, help for families as well as direct support for children suffering from Childhood cancers.

Katie Southgate from Gold Geese commented: "The charity was formed after my daughter Hattie was diagnosed with Leukaemia. She received two years of treatment with more than 40 blood transfusions."

"She thankfully made a full recovery and we wanted to put something back into to the community to help other families going through the same thing as us and to thank all those who had given blood and registered as stem cell donors to make it all possible."

As well as encouraging people to give blood the charity supports families with advice and arranges events and outings for those suffering with cancers. Siblings are also included to ensure that they do not feel left out.

As it has grown the charity now intends to expand its services into the Basildon area and the long-term aim is to eventually work across all of Essex in conjunction with all of the main hospitals in the county.

"This is a local charity and it does so much good work in the community that our members wanted to do something in support," said Ian Krise, Charity Steward for Sweyn Lodge. "We are especially pleased that this money will help the charity expand to help so many others."

In tribute to Gold Geese and their 'V' shaped logo showing the birds in flight, Essex Masons staged a similar socially distanced shaped picture when the money was handed over. Pictured from left to right is Lee Taylor, Assistant Provincial Grand Master for Essex; Ian Krise, Charity Steward from Sweyn; Katie Southgate from Gold Geese; Bob Milne and David Wilson from Sweyn Lodge.

Lee Taylor commented afterwards: "The Gold Geese represent everything that is special about community charities which is why we as Freemasons wanted to offer our support. It does some wonderful work and it is good to see that they have plans to expand their services into Basildon and hopefully in time across all of Essex.

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Holy Royal Arch

Combined Chapters of Central Essex



E.Comp Nick Franklin (Deputy Grand Superintendent (in charge) was presented with a cheque for £1000 on behalf of the Combined Chapters of Central Essex for the Festival 2022 Appeal by E. Comp. Trevor Lucky of the Thomas Paycocke Chapter No 8200.

The presentation took place on Friday 2nd October at the Howard Hall in Braintree under socially distanced conditions. E.Comp. Barry Broyd who is Scribe E of the Combined Chapters of Central Essex was also present.



Why the Holy Royal Arch?

The preliminary Declaration in the Book of Constitutions states that:

"Pure Ancient Masonry consists of Three Degrees and no more, viz; those of The Entered Apprentice, The Fellow Craft and The Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch."

Not joining would be like watching a 4 part play and leaving after act 3, you wouldn't find out what happens at the end....

Interested? email Bruce Mapson - Bruce.Mapson@EssexPGL.org.uk



Hermes and Essex Province

New web-based application for Secretaries and Scribe E's.

UGLE has wanted for some time to move away from paper-based systems and this will happen with the launch of Hermes which is currently planned for the second half of 2021.



Paul Harris, head of Hermes deployment in Essex answers your questions.

Q. I thought Hermes delivered parcels, what's that got to do with our Province?

A. Yes, they do deliver parcels and no doubt will continue to do so. But the Hermes I am referring to is the new system which has been developed by Grand Lodge for use by Lodge Secretaries and Scribes E.

Q. What was wrong with the old paper system?

A. There was nothing wrong with it, indeed it has worked perfectly well for many years. However, as we all know, especially over the last year, many of the tasks we all did in person or on paper have been moved to online systems. I am thinking here of Banking, shopping, buying goods and even meeting up with friends and Brethren during Lockdown. So rather than paper forms and returns, Grand Lodge are moving to doing these online.

Q. OK so how will it work?

A. Each Secretary and Scribe E. will have access to their Lodge or Chapter details online. If a Brother changes address or phone number for instance, this can be done immediately and the details held by Grand Lodge and Province will also be updated. All those details will be saved and can be accessed anywhere and at any time, via desktop, laptop, iPad or smartphone.

Q. Does this mean that everything will be online?

A. No, there is still the requirement to write minutes and produce summonses which are still an important and a great part of our Freemasonry however the majority of these are now also prepared and distributed electronically.

Q. Sounds as if it maybe complicated.

A. It really is not, I am confident that every Secretary and Scribe E. will be able to continue in their Office and use the new system. To help in that regard Neil Beverley, APGM, and I have formed a Steering Group whose first task was to put together a team of trainers. This has been done and these trainers will be available on a group or one-one basis as needed by each individual. A support line will also be set up in due course for those urgent enquiries.

Q. Sounds interesting, when will we get to see it?

A. We hope that Essex will go live on this in the last quarter of 2021. Prior to that training programmes will be rolled out. There are other time saving features of Hermes which I shall lay out another time. However, this really is an exciting development for Grand Lodge and Essex. We are moving to the paperless office.




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The Almoners Corner



This time last year I opened up with a few words from the book of Hebrews:

“Let brotherly love continue, do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, remember those who are in dark places as though you were there yourself, remember those who are being mistreated as if you were also being mistreated, give to others what you can afford and be content with what you have”

I was not to know at that time just how relevant these words were to be in the last year and I make no apology for reminding you of the words again.

I do hope that you will find this Almoners Corner useful with a compilation of what we have worked at doing last year, as well as a bit about the future.

The Future with a new PGA

Over the holiday period I have informed the Dep. Prov. Grand Master in Charge, Paul Reeves, that I will not be accepting his kind invitation to me to remain in office for the next 12 months.

The role as I have carried it out, has been full time, it has been immensely satisfying and rewarding and all made possible by the friendship and support generated with Lodge Almoners and in particular with the Provincial Almoners team. I thank you all for this and for all the great work you are doing.

Social Welfare Work – Our New Approach

I reported last year that we were working on trying to improve the interaction that our widows without a lodge have with the masonic community. Loneliness is one of the terrors of our modern life and as we live longer so the problems worsen. Social Isolation usually affects the elderly but not always and many young and middle-aged people can be affected.



Loneliness often leads to other illnesses, bad lifestyles, poor eating and little or no exercise. As a result, serious ill health is often the outcome and so we have been, and continue to be, very keen to make a difference in this work.

To continue our efforts in tackling this, Gary Neilson, Social Welfare Officer, has been helping our widows who are not attached to a lodge and who live in or outside the Province, to try and become formally adopted with a lodge that is near to where they live; this way they will be able to integrate more with lodge social activities.

The outcome has been that out of 98 unattached widows who live in the Province 47 have been adopted with 23 not wanting to move, leaving 28 widows for us to look after. My thanks to all the lodges who have supported this scheme and who have adopted a widow.

Out of the 25 widows who live out of the Province, we have got 23 adopted and 2 have sadly passed away. I am very grateful to the other Provinces involved for their support of the scheme.

Gary Neilson can be contacted on 07786 151587 if you have ideas to help him and he will be continuing with this work in 2021.

An Update on the Role of the Lodge Almoner

Over the past year I produced a paper about the current role of the lodge almoner; it was then distributed to all almoners and secretaries in the autumn from the Provincial Office.

The paper received a lot of positive feedback and especially because it gives advice to lodges about succession planning in this role. If anybody requires further copies please contact me: nick@nickclarke.f9.co.uk

In 2021 it is hoped that the MCF in conjunction with UGLE will be reissuing an updated National Almoners Guide and this will be distributed via UGLE.



Provincial Grand Almoner
W.Bro Nick Clarke PAGDC nick@nickclarke.f9.co.uk

New Almoners

When I am notified that a unit has appointed a new almoner, the relevant Almoner Liaison Officer assigned to that lodge will make contact with the new almoner. They receive a welcome letter, copy of the Lodge Almoners Role, a 'Z Card' containing a whole range of useful contact information and contact details of the Provincial Almoner Team.

If you have recently changed lodge almoner on a temporary or permanent basis, please contact the appropriate Almoner Liaison Officer (ALO) so he can update his records and provide the necessary support.



The Almoners 'Z Card'

These expandable credit card sized leaflets are invaluable for an almoner, indeed any mason and they easily fit into a pocket and it explains the core role of the Almoner and gives all the basic contact details that are needed to give help. We have distributed them to every Almoner and have more stock if you need a fresh supply. Please contact your ALO if you need more stock, their details are below.

Financial Help Guide

Gary Hostler and I distributed a paper to all masons in December which gave advice about the various avenues to explore when financial help is needed; we have been told it was very useful and if more copies are needed please contact garyhostler@ntlworld.com

Lodge Donations – An Appeal to support the Almoners Charity

Last year I made an appeal for each unit to try and contribute £100 to the Essex Provincial Almoners Fund (EPAF), if this were to happen then this charity fund would become self sufficient and it would enable the almoners to do all they have to do in caring for those in need. Progress is being made and more lodges and chapters have donated for the first time, but we still have a long way to go before all units contribute. If your lodge or chapter has yet to make a contribution please consider doing so and my thanks in advance.

Keeping in touch

One of the most powerful acts that an almoner can undertake is to keep in touch with their widows and members, including the country members and those who are unable to visit their lodge regularly. A quick telephone call can make somebody's day. The most popular message we receive is:
"Thank you for getting in touch with me, it has made my day"

Lodge Almoners Conference 2021 – Update

It was regrettable that we had to cancel the conference last year due to COVID and we have had for some time a new date planned for the 6th May 2021 at Saxon Hall in Southend. The speakers were booked but my team and I have now decided that with the current COVID-19 issues, this conference must be cancelled. It is irresponsible to encourage almoners and speakers to travel to attend such an event and meet in a crowded room for 5 hours, and I am also aware that not everybody will have been vaccinated by then.

We are very keen to share news with Lodge Almoners other than by sending written communications and so as a fall-back position we plan to hold a much shorter event on Zoom on the 6th May and a communication will go out to all Almoners to advise them of the details.

Men's Health Day News – Update

The reschedule men's health day set for the 22nd April 2021 is now cancelled for similar reasons to the conference and also because many of the NHS staff will be engaged on vaccination and COVID-19 hospital work. We will send out information to you all as soon as we know that a rearranged event is possible for the Autumn of 2021.

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Masonic Funeral Plans, Funeral Wishes and Price Guarantee

Many Masons across the country rightfully believe that their secrets and ceremonies are the foundations of Masonic Life. Over the years, Secure Haven Funeral Directors have had the privilege to arrange and assist the funerals of many local Freemasons. Co-founder Paul Yarwood is a Mason himself and he strives to help those who wish to plan their own final goodbye.

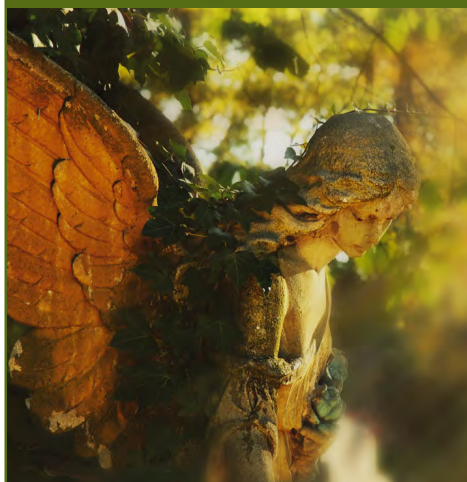
We understand that talking about your Funeral Wishes with the people you love is difficult, but even a straightforward conversation about your Funeral Wishes can make all the difference for your family when the time comes. By planning ahead and using Secure Haven's Guaranteed Masonic Funeral Wish, not only will you save your next-of-kin the stress of trying to second-guess what you would have wanted, but you will also be putting a stamp on your last celebration to ensure it reflects what is most important to you.

You probably already know whether you want to be buried or cremated, but what about the finer details? Where should it be held? Do you want certain readings or poems and, if so, which ones and read by whom? Is there certain music you want played? Perhaps there is even a specific route you would like your hearse to take. You may even have written your own eulogy or 'farewell letter' that you want someone to read. Family members of Masons are often confused as to what can be done to help Masons make that final journey and our expertise in arranging this service together with suitable dressing, if required, in your Masonic attire can be arranged with the dignity and respect we all deserve. Despite the fact that many people write their Funeral Wishes down in their will, these are more often than not left unread until after the funeral, so the best way to ensure you get the funeral you want is to make your wishes known to your loved ones for when the time comes.

Secure Haven can bespoke the funeral plans for Masons either in a pre-paid plan together with our plan providers, Golden Charter, or we can hold your Funeral Wishes, costed by you, and price guaranteed for 24 months so you can manage your finances. We will contact you every two years to see if there are any changes to be made or any price changes to account for should your wishes change. For a special Masonic funeral we can provide the following: Personalised dressing and preparation in Masonic attire - Bespoke Masonic cushion to be placed on the coffin - Masonic themed floral tributes - Organisation of opening and closing hymns - Masonic pallbearers wearing regalia - Communication with lodge almoners and secretaries during arrangement - Personalised eulogy and complimentary obituary - Donation of £100.00 to be given to the Lodge or charity of choice.

To arrange an appointment to discuss Funeral Wishes please contact Secure Haven on 01245 377077.

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ESSEX CORNERSTONE



FOR YOUNG & NEW FREEMASONS
40 AND UNDER

Despite a very difficult year with Freemasonry meetings and group gatherings being suspended the Essex Cornerstone Club have found new ways to ensure Freemasonry in Essex has continued for our members.

Our Club has remained very active throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, hosting regular events, supporting local charities, and supporting our members wellbeing.

2020 also saw the Club continue to grow, with an increase in membership, more Lodges being represented than ever before, and a massive increase in social media engagement. We also introduced a new team of Centre Representatives and launched our own Podcast – Talking Freemasonry.



SUPPORTING SCHOOLS DURING LOCKDOWN

Last year the Essex Cornerstone started a scheme to supply NHS hospital wards with iPad/tablet devices to allow patients to communicate with their relatives whilst patient visiting has been restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The success of this scheme led many other Provinces to take up the challenge as well.

Following this success, at the start of the second COVID-19 peak, with schools closing, we were approached by W.Bro Henry Bass to see if we could help support his local school, Templars Academy in Witham, to provide computer equipment to help support home learning.

The Essex Cornerstone rose to the challenge and quickly provided the school with 7 laptops.

Club Chairman Jack Gilliland commented “we are pleased to be able to support local schools in this time of need, which fits in with the ethos of the Essex Cornerstone supporting young people”.

Faye Welsher, MAT Safeguarding Lead and Family Liaison Officer for Templars Academy, “I just wanted to put in writing a huge thank you for the generous gift of the laptops. We have identified specific children that will hugely benefit from this. The families are completely overwhelmed and grateful”.

Jane Bass, “Can I also, as CEO of Connected Learning MAT, the Academy Trust, of which Templars is a member school, say a big thank you for your generous gift of laptops. For pupils of the school, who do not access to IT devices whilst trying to learn at home, these will make such a difference to their learning”



VIRTUAL EVENTS

Throughout the year we have held a number of online events for our members, to allow us all to stay connected. From fun social events to educational talks, we have continued to support our members throughout the pandemic.

- Comedy Night
- Charity Poker Tournament
- 'Who Wants to be a Zillionaire' Quizzes
- Mark Awareness talk



ESSEX CORNERSTONE CHAPTER

Following the success of the Essex Cornerstone Lodge, we are pleased to announce plans for the consecration of our own Holy Royal Arch Chapter – the Essex Cornerstone Chapter!

Continuing our desire to create the most dynamic new and young masons' club in England, we feel that having our own Chapter will be the next step in our evolution.

If you are interested in becoming a Founder, Joining Member, or if you are not yet a member of the Holy Royal Arch and interested in joining please contact Club Secretary Jon Glyn jon@essexcornerstone.com



JOIN US TODAY

You can join the Essex Cornerstone from 18 years up to 41 years. Membership is only £10 and includes a welcome pack including our Club Provincial tie which can be worn at all craft and Royal Arch meetings within Essex, lapel pin, masonic passport and access to all Essex Cornerstone resources, but more importantly you will be joining the best New & Young Masons Club in the Country.

Follow us on Twitter @YoungMasonsClub
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View our Instagram feed @EssexCornerstoneClub

Installation of DPGM and APMG

Essex Enthroned Commanders and Essex Installed Mark Masters Lodges, No.1044.



W. Bro. John Finlay DPGM



W. Bro. Richard Goodwin APMG

Both the Essex Enthroned Commanders and Installed Mark Masters Lodges are Always well attended with most of their 255 Members in attendance at the September meetings. On this occasion, however, they were both reduced to 30 members that could attend either meeting. This caused a few sleepless nights for both the Secretarial and Ceremonial teams in trying to juggle those who were needed as well as how the Ceremonies needed to be adapted and where officers could be seated.

Following the Enthroned Commanders meeting, the Temple received its cleansing "fogging" and, with the Lodge opened and furniture moved to accommodate the Provincial Grand Master and his escort, the ProvGDC announced the presence of the PGM. A full procession of Acting Officers entered and the Provincial Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Terence D. Sheern, was received to acclaim. The PGM took the Chair of the Lodge and requested his Officers to assist him in the two Installation Ceremonies. The PGM addressed the Lodge on the purpose of the meeting as well as giving thanks to V.W. Bro. Richard Bowyer, PGJO, the outgoing DPGM for all his years of support.

The ProvGDC, having ascertained that W. Bro. John Finlay, PAGDC and DPGM Designate, was in attendance, he was escorted into the meeting, Obligated, Invested, Installed, Proclaimed and Saluted as Deputy Provincial Grand Master.

The ProvDepGDC then proceeded to escort W. Bro. Richard Goodwin, PGJD and Assistant Provincial Grand Master Designate into the meeting, where he was Obligated, Invested, Installed, Proclaimed and Saluted as Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

Both Ceremonies were discharged in superb fashion and credit goes to the Ceremonial Team for producing the Ceremony in "interesting" times.

A most excellent time was had by all who attended this "historic" meeting, it will be remembered by all who attended.

The PGM thanked V.W. Bro. Richard Bowyer for his service as Deputy Provincial Grand Master and hoped that he would continue to support the Province.

Once the meeting was finished, the Brethren retired for some socially distanced refreshments.

John Finlay and Richard Goodwin are both well known in Craft and Holy Royal Arch, both having held Active Rank and were involved in Stisted annual Fete.





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ESSEX MARK to hold MBF Festival 2030

RW.Bro. Terence D. Sheern, Provincial Grand Master of Essex Mark Master Masons spoke about the 2030 Festival during this year's Provincial meeting address, and we are now pleased to announce the launch of the scheme which will be known as the 'MBF Festival Essex 2030'.

Every so often a province will be given the opportunity to host the Mark Benevolent Fund Festival and this is the 5th time that Essex has been given this honour, having hosted it in 1899, 1932, 1957 and 1992.

Leading up to the MBF Festival celebrations, the Province will look to raise a sum of money that goes towards the MBF, which is then used for distribution to charitable causes.

A Festival committee has been formed and plans are underway for a series of fundraising events, including family fun days and repeat of the magnificent auction that was held in 2017

Fantastic NEW Fundraising opportunity

Please help us to raise funds for our charity! Free of cost! During these difficult times we are all looking for easy ways to obtain our shopping and many of us have already turned to Amazon to help us. AmazonSmile provides a simple way for us to donate to good causes, at no cost to us. Every time we use AmazonSmile the Essex Mark Province Charity can receive 0.5% of all eligible purchases, including Amazon Prime. Since its launch in November 2017, UK charities have received over £4.6 million in donations.

All you need to do to ensure that your donation reaches the Essex Mark Benevolent fund is to switch to the AmazonSmile website and chose us as your favoured charity. Simple!

You can either log on using this link:
<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1135170-0>



Aim your smart phone camera at the QR Code and follow the link.

Or simply open Amazon and search for AmazonSmile. When prompted you can locate our charity to support by searching for Essex Mark - and then selecting the charity.

Then all you need to do is to use the SmileAmazon site for all of your Amazon purchases and we will benefit!

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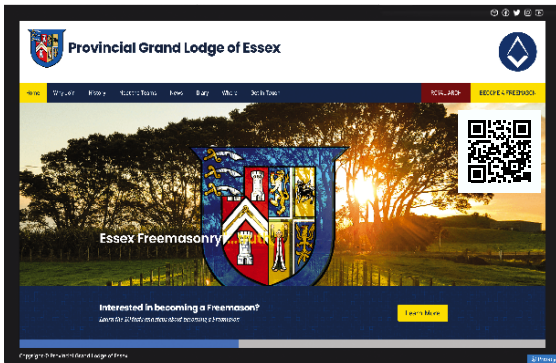
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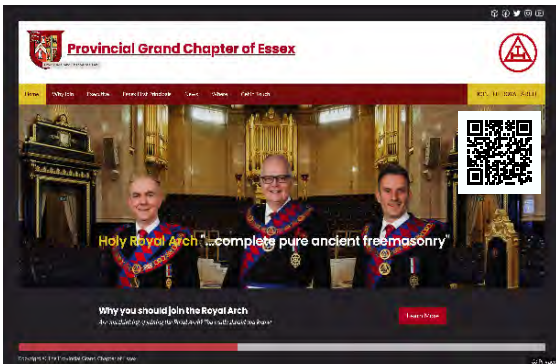




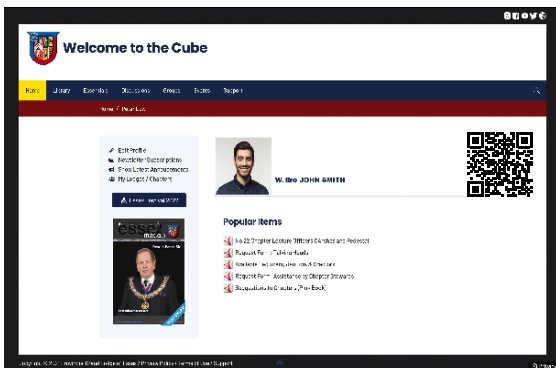
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<https://essexroyalarch.org.uk>



Provincial Websites

The Provincial websites for both Craft and the Holy Royal Arch has had a facelift. Check out the new fresh look.

There is a continuous look and feel from the public facing website to the members only area (the Cube).

Our external websites are designed to be a central repository for anyone wishing to join our fantastic organisation, but equally for visiting Brethren from other Provinces who would like to attend an Essex Meeting.

There is also a new Provincial Executive area that gives an insight to their background and journey in Freemasonry, as well as a clear view of the Lodges or Chapters they are responsible for.

- View Members Pathway.
- View Provincial, Lodge and Chapter meeting dates and contact the Secretary or Scribe Ezra to book your self in.
- Calendar events for Additional Orders.

Membership Area

The Cube is a central location for Essex Masons only. Where all public enquires are directed to the website, whereas, every piece of information an Essex Freemason needs, is all in a secure members area.

- **Profile** location where you can update your information.
- A **Library** where every available document is located
- Online Blue Book - the Provincial Lodge and Chapter oracle.
- Leave personal obituary comments in the new **Departed Brethren**.
- A **Discussion** area where we can ask questions and debate sensitive subjects, all in a secure and safe space.
- Check out the all new **Groups** area, where you can create a secure and private area for members of your Lodge or Chapter, as well as specialised groups.

Provincial News Letters

After many years, the Team Brief and Team Brief Plus have been replaced with;

The **Second Rising** - Delivering a full range of Provincial News.

Unlike the Team Brief, the **Second Rising** is more interactive and sent to ALL Essex Freemasons (who have an email address). These emails link to the full story which are located on the Cube, Website or other central locations.

The **Second Rising** is sent on the 2nd Monday in every month.

The **Provincial Download** is a newsletter that covers mid-month Provincial update, as well as other news from around the province, such as Charity and Almoner updates, Events and much more.

Contact the communications team story@essexfreemasons.org.uk



Social Media

Did you know we have a dedicated Facebook Group for Provincial Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Chapter?

Essex Freemasons area is a members only area with regular and instant up to date information. You will not see holiday snaps, or pictures of food, it is used by Essex Freemasons, for Essex Freemasons.

Anyone interested in joining the Provincial Communications team, please email PCO@essexpgl.org.uk

Seven Kings Boars Head

Our Boars Head this year has been made as special as always by the amazing generosity of all our supporters. This year was going to be our 25th Anniversary made very special by a visit by from our dearly departed Provincial Grand Master Rodney Lister Bass who was going to conduct the ceremony as a surprise.

We were unsure during the current pandemic if we would get the same support bearing in mind the difficulties of not only acquiring the toys but also collecting them and then getting them into the hospitals.

Our appeal was sent to all the usual suspects and the toys started to arrive. Many offered to be central collection points whilst others ordered online and sent them direct to their hosts for onward transmission.

We had toys coming from the far corners of Essex, other counties and even as far as Cyprus.

Unbelievably this year's collection has set a record of 575 magnificent presents the quality of which surpasses all previous years.



As always, they were given to the MCA Trust, who had also collected many toys that are included in the above, for distribution to the Hospitals. This again proved to be a problem with regards to quarantine rules and regulations.

The MCA sleigh then finally managed to get through to three of our recipient hospitals and deliver our eagerly awaited presents. Basildon, Princess Alexandra and Southend had all totally run out of toys and welcomed Santa where the toys will be put to good use during the coming year.

Our thanks go to everyone as always for your amazing generosity and to the MCA trust for ensuring their safe delivery.

We look forward to 2021 when hopefully we get back to singing the twelve days of Christmas and once again start the festivities with a masonic bang.



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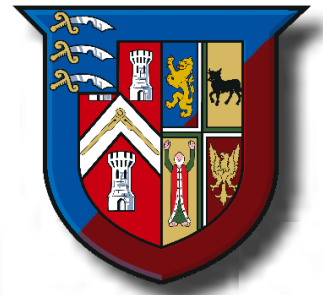
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the essex mason extra



The Online supplement with additional stories

A photograph of a restaurant dining room. In the foreground, a table is set with a white tablecloth, a white cup and saucer, a fork, a spoon, and a red packet of Wagon Wheel candy. In the background, several other tables are set with white tablecloths and yellow napkins. The room has large windows and a modern interior.

Welcome to Essex Mason online supplement where additional pages capture articles that missed the cut off which are time-bound events, or we simply ran out of room.

please keep your stories coming
magazine@essexmason.co.uk



Logo of the Lodge.

The conception of a Lodge in Thundersley can almost certainly be attributed to Lt. Col Richard Mark Lockwood (later Lord Lambourne) the Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Essex 1901-1928 on an official visit to the Thundersley Parish Council in 1913. However, the First World War intervened and prevented the formation of the new Lodge. There was however renewed interest after the War by three very keen local Masons. With sponsorship from the Lodge of True Friendship No. 160 (warranted 4th December 1766), a Charter was granted and Thundersley Lodge was consecrated at the Masonic Hall, The Broadway, Southend-on-Sea on Michaelmas Day, 29th September 1930. The Consecrating Officers were made Honorary Members of the Lodge and after the consecration, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W. Bro Dr. J. H. Salter installed W. Bro E. Kilburn as the first Master of Thundersley Lodge.

The first Regular meeting of Thundersley Lodge was held at the Weir Hotel in Rayleigh in 1930. However, as the premises proved difficult to Tyle, future meetings thereafter were held, by dispensation, at several local locations until 1957 when finally, the Memorial Temple in Woodgrange Drive was established, of which Thundersley Lodge was a Founder Member. The innovation of stained glass windows prompted the first Initiate to donate such a window adorned with the

The Lodge is of the second generation of Lodges and its history can be traced back to the Strongman Lodge No. 45 (consecrated in 1733) which now meets at Great Queen's Street, and which sponsored the Lodge of True Friendship. This Lodge now meets at the Old Court House, Rochford and was a founding Lodge of Rochford Masonic Hall in 1981.

The Lodge is also a Hall Stone Lodge, having subscribed to the Masonic Million Memorial Fund. The Hall Stone Jewel and the Collarette to which is attached was presented to the Lodge in June 1933 by the MW Grand Master, the Duke of Connaught. Additionally, the Collar of the Worshipful Master is adorned with the Commemorative Jewel to acknowledge the funds contributed by members towards a Fund that commemorates the preservation of Freemasonry through two and a half centuries.

There is an historical connection between the Lodge and the Church of St Michael and St Peter in Thundersley. Its Rector became the first Lodge Chaplain and to celebrate the consecration, a weather vane depicting the St Michael and St Peter was presented to the Church. Thundersley Lodge has also been referred to as a "Teachers Lodge" taken from the fact that in the Lodge's early history, there have been eight Head Teachers from the District and a further five from within the Teaching profession. Although the close connection with the Church of St Peter is now less strong, the model of the Church is always displayed at the Secretary's Table at all Installation meetings in memory of the first Lodge Chaplain.

A Lodge Masonic Charities Association was formed in 1931 and the Lodge has been a keen supporter of charities ever since. The Lodge is a Patron of the Royal Masonic Hospital, the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution and the Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys and is also a Founder Lodge for the Southend Masonic Centre.

The Lodge is also proud that one Past Master, W. Bro A J Fowles FRIBA PPGSuptWks, was the Honorary Architect to the Masonic Temple during its conversion from the original Church premises. He also donated towards the cost of installing twelve illuminated stained glass windows depicting the crests of 44 Lodges that met at the Southend Memorial Temple. These were transferred later to Saxon Hall.

In May 1939, a Notice of Motion was accepted that Thundersley Lodge support the foundation of a Royal Arch Chapter, but the start of World War II caused a delay of 12 years. Thundersley Chapter was eventually consecrated on 25th October 1951.

The Golden Jubilee was celebrated on 22nd January 1981 at the Memorial Temple Southend, attended by the PGM RW Bro F W R Leistikow and the Provincial Grand Chaplin who carried out the re-dedication of the Lodge Banner. In May 1981, W. Bro Harold Abraham gifted the Lodge a beautiful olive wood gavel from the Holy Land to commemorate the milestone, which is still used by the Worshipful Master today.

The Diamond Jubilee was similarly celebrated with splendid lunch at the Southend Memorial Temple Woodgrange Drive. This was followed by a Thanksgiving church service and Re-dedication, conducted by the Assistant Provincial Grand Master, Reverend Stanley Conway-Lee on 30th September 1990 at the Westcliff United Reform Church. Forty nine years later, due to deterioration and escalating maintenance costs, it was decided a new Masonic Centre was needed. Southend Masonic Centre was opened on 4th January 2006 and Thundersley Lodge held their first meeting here, at Saxon Hall, on 26th January 2006, to this day.

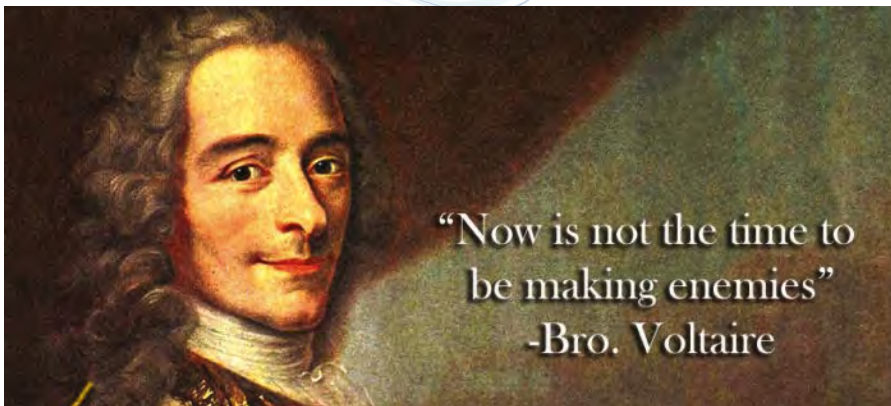
The Lodge takes great pride in its' Ritual, which is Taylors Workings. There have been numerous memorable meetings and achievements. The Lodge achieved Grand Patron Status for Festival 2011 and has Vice Patron status for Festival 2022. Thundersley Lodge is proud to have 9 members who have achieved 50 years' service to Masonry, of which three have been in recent years. Our Late Deputy PGM, VW Bro Peter Holland presented W. Bro Ray Fretten his Certificate on 24th November 2011. Our Late W. Bro Henry Stennett was presented with his on 28th May 2015. The Brethren were pleased to receive a large contingent from the Grand Lodge of Ireland in private capacity, including their Grand Master MW Bro Douglas T Grey when W.Bro Mel Goodchild was presented with his Certificate on 24th May 2018.

The Lodge has been fortunate to have witnessed four Lewis ceremonies in recent years. Our Late W. Bro David Clement's son, Stephen was initiated on 10th April 2008, W.Bro David Fairney's son James was initiated on 22nd January 2009 and Larry Hocking initiated his adopted son Daniel Ward on 23rd November 2017. Bro Steve Hodder proudly presented the tools of an Entered apprentice after his son Joseph was initiated on 22nd November 2018. Another notable ceremony was that of Bro Robert Huntley when his twin Brother W.Bro David Huntley delivered the charge after initiation, witnessed by several Grand Officers from the Province of West Kent, including their PGM, MW Bro Mark E Staugh. Finally, several brethren have had Grand Rank bestowed upon them over the years gone by, including our own venerable W. Bro Raymond Fretten, who was promoted to PGStB on 30th April 2003.

Sadly, due to the restrictions placed on large gathering due to the coronavirus pandemic, it is unclear when Thundersley Lodge may be in a position to truly celebrate the wonderful achievement of 90 years after receiving its warrant. The Lodge has truly flourished, and with the assistance of the Great Architect of the Universe, will continue to uphold the principles and tenets of the Craft.



Never Too Late To Become a Freemason



In his 84th year, Bro Voltaire proved it is never too late to become a Freemason by being Initiated and made an Entered Apprentice of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters in Paris. Among the distinguished visitors was Benjamin Franklin who later became Master. Born in 1694 and famous for his travels, wit and irrepressible grin seen on hundreds of paintings, sketches, caricatures, statues and busts, Voltaire once wrote "Let us always march forward along the highway of Truth, my brothers, grinning decisively".

Philosopher, historian, and writer who also led many campaigns against injustice, inequality and tyranny and who introduced the term "Human Rights", Bro Voltaire is described on his tombstone monument in Paris as the 'Immortal symbol of the Age of Enlightenment'.

Learning to be a successful investor whilst living in London in the late 1720s Voltaire never had to rely on book sales or aristocratic patronage for the rest of his life. He loved England, especially the coffee houses and the London Exchange, writing that "There the Jew, the Mahometan and the Christian deal with each other as though they were all of the same religion".

Having lived a long, full and eventful life, it appears that one of the World's greatest ever Philosophers found in Freemasonry the same 'Brotherly Love' and tolerance for all religions and denominations to work together, similar to that which had impressed him so much in the London Exchange where "the Presbyterian trusts the Anabaptist and the Anglican accepts the Quaker's bond"

Voltaire's grin and wit stayed with him all his life, even during his dying hours when a Jesuit priest, who had been sent for, urged him to renounce the devil to which Voltaire softly replied "Now is not the time to be making enemies". Fortunately for the Age of Enlightenment, which greatly influenced the development of Freemasonry, Bro Voltaire also refused to renounce any of his works before his 'passing' to the Grand Lodge Above on 30th May 1778.

Charity



Dozens of young people across Essex with social and emotional health issues enjoyed a better Christmas thanks to a pioneering initiative by a Billericay school and last-minute help from Essex Freemasons.

"Christmas in a bag," essential basic items such as toothbrushes and clothing, can now be given to students at Ramsden Hall Academy, thanks to a £3,300 grant from the Essex Freemasons Community Fund supported from Masons who are members of Southend-on-Sea Lodge.

The initiative had been in doubt following the loss of sponsorship from local businesses affected by Covid-19. That would have meant that some students, many from families on the edge of poverty, would have had nothing for Christmas.

"It is literally Christmas was a bag for these young people," said Emma Baker, head teacher at Ramsden Hall Academy. "As well as suffering from social and emotional health issues some of these young people have very little. Some arrive at our school from families that are really struggling in the current pandemic – so we are trying to provide more than just basics and some goodies for them to enjoy at Christmas. I am extremely grateful to Essex Masons for providing such generous funds."

Ramsden Hall Academy is a residential special school for boys aged 10 to 16 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan for Social, Emotional and Mental Health. It admits up to 100 boys from across the whole county.

The Academy has a remarkable record of success working with students who have mostly been excluded for various reasons, which means that Ramsden Hall is frequently the only place left for boys who have struggled with mainstream education.

Tony Hodgson, Charity Steward for Southend-on-Sea Lodge, commented: "Our Lodge was approached by the Academy for help via my son Ryan who is a teacher at Ramsden Hall. There was apparently no funding available to pay for Christmas in a bag."

"We as a Lodge could only provide £500 so we asked for further help from the Essex Freemasons Community Fund to make up the difference and they immediately agreed to find the balance needed." The money was handed over in earlier in the month so that the initiative could go ahead and on Friday December 11th Head Teacher Emma Baker invited Masons from Southend-on-Sea Lodge together with Assistant Provincial Grand Master Charles Elliott, to see how the money had been spent.

"This is an incredible project that will help so many young people," said Charles Elliott. "I am delighted that Essex Freemasons have been able to make a difference and is another good example of what we do to help the community."



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Bro. Jas Bassan St Laurence Lodge 5511

I have always been a person who loved mystery and magic, and Freemasonry I found that.

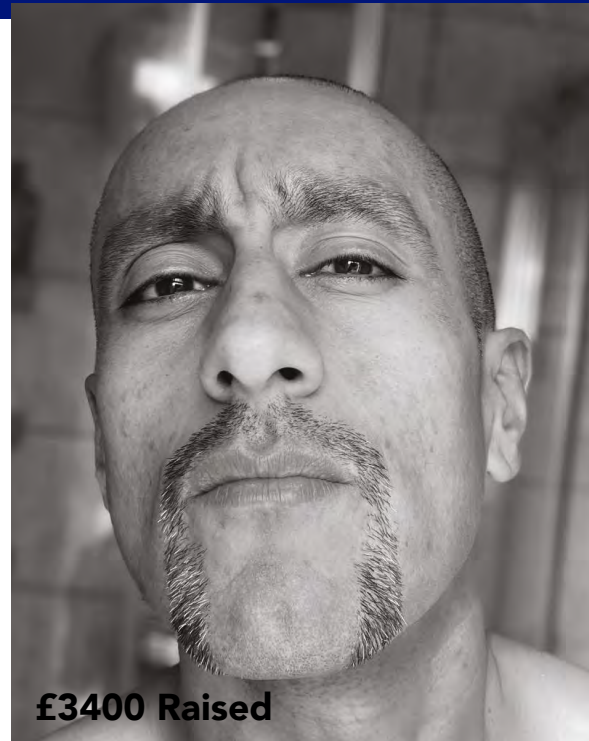
I knew of it and I used to see men in suits with Briefcases walking through the station and always found them to be polite decent men.

Then one day I was asked by a friend if I'd like to meet for a few drinks with others. And next thing I new I was asked to join Shepard's Bush Lodge 1828. And my eyes were opened to some of the amazing work we do and the friendships that were to be made.

Along the route my work life balance over took for a while and I wanted a Lodge which was close r to home, and St Laurence 5511 stood out with their wonderful website. And the rest was history. I completed my Second and Masters Degree with men who would gladly call Brothers. I made some amazing friends at this Lodge and St Laurence really opened my eyes about what Freemasonry is all about.

During this journey, someone very close to me is battling Cancer. Every year for nearly 5 years I have every November participated in MOVEMBER- growing a Moustache over the November month and to raise money for charity. Being a Mason I would always contribute towards a charity, but because this was personal I thought I would try to raise a few quid.

I had thought a hundred pounds raised for Cancer would have been amazing, but this figure so far within a week has been smashed! Within 5 days I managed to raise over £2500!!! And this was all donated by friends, Brothers and family!!! But I want to smash this figure further!! Cancer is a horrible nasty disease and can effect anyone. Not only the sufferer but their loved ones. And hand on heart my loved ones battle is my battle. And this is why I have pushed for a massive raise!



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12 Million Steps For Muscular Dystrophy

Written by Tony Hales
Provincial Communications Team



One Hundred and Twelve Essex Freemasons stepped up to the plate for the Provincial '500 Step Challenge'. In the eight days from 23rd to 30th December 2020, the Brethren recorded a total of 12,378,321 steps, the equivalent of walking 6,189 miles. St Philip Lodge No 4221 whose four team members, Alan Keith, Andy Cross, Joe Wiggins and Paul Leacock marched into first place with an average of 20,478 steps each day and gave their prize-winning charitable donation to Muscular Dystrophy UK, in memory of the late Spencer Walsh, the brother-in-law of Andy Cross, who sadly passed away on 7th December 2020.

For Andy Cross, the sexagenarian Treasurer of St Philip Lodge, every step was a challenge, suffering with heel pain in his right foot from a ligament inflammation (plantar fasciitis) he still managed to complete 242,926 steps. Exactly 100 years ago, the Founders of St Philip Lodge were also taking challenging steps. The Warrant of the Lodge was granted on 13th December 1920 and arrangements for the Consecration were well under way. As the Founders look down from Grand Lodge above, they must be feeling very proud of the current St Philip Lodge members as they begin their Centennial year.



The leading individual was Clive Cheeseman with a total of 275,784 steps from second placed Henry de Gray Lodge No 6627. His team was followed in order by Cornerstone, St Kath's Turkey Trotters, Spero Lodge, Orsett Lodge, The Beeleigh Abbey Lodge, Round Table Lodge of Essex, Old Parkonians Lodge, The Dragon of St George, Albert Lucking Chubbsters, Sons of Benfleet, Old Easthameian, Essex Quadrant Lodge, Team Wakering, Haven Step Brothers, Prittlewell 3 Amigos, Shenfield Lodge, Saint Cedd, Paul Geadey Gaggle, Alan Keith Quadrant, Lodge of Amity No 5753, Team Higgins and The Dragon of St George.

The widow of Spencer, Mrs Jill Welsh has written "I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Province of Essex Freemasons for the '500 Step Challenge' donation. This been donated to Muscular Dystrophy UK, a cause very close to our hearts having lost our son to this cruel disease at the age of 17. With tributes also from family and friends we have been able to send in excess of £2,000 to this worthy charity. With my deepest gratitude".

The motto of St Phillip Lodge is 'Amicitia Caritas et Veritas' which means 'Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth'. It is in that spirit the Lodge thanks every brother who took part in the 500 Step Challenge and to everyone who has donated to the Essex Freemasons Community Fund to make this possible. 'Thank you, Brethren,'.

A banner for a Zoom meeting. On the left is a circular logo with a crest and the text "Provincial Speaker Series". Below the logo, it says "The Holy Royal Arch in America. A California Perspective" and "Hosted by E.Comp Michael Ramos". On the right, there is a photo of a man in a suit with a Zoom logo and the text "Sun 21st Feb 5:30pm". The background of the banner shows the Golden Gate Bridge.

**Find how
to register
by logging
on to the
Provincial
Cube**

Essex Cornerstone Top of the class for Templars

The Essex Cornerstone continues to support a growing range of good causes across the county, with a youth programme focused on local charities dedicated to helping young people and children in need.

Last year, the Essex Cornerstone, a club for younger Freemasons, started a scheme to supply NHS hospital wards with iPad/tablet devices to allow patients to communicate with relatives while visiting is restricted due to Covid-19 pandemic. The success of the scheme led many other masonic provinces taking up the challenge.

Ten months after the first national lockdown, with schools across England again closed due to the pandemic, it is clear that many students still do not have access to a computer, laptop or the internet. So, following a request by W.Bro Henry Bass to help support his local school, Witham's Templars Academy, with computers to help support home learning, the Essex Cornerstone rose to the challenge and quickly provided the school with 10 laptops, supported by £500 of matched funding from the Essex Freemasons Community Fund. said:

"We are delighted to have been able to provide support to Templars Academy, and know that the laptops will help schoolchildren access online learning. Being able to provide this support at a time of need harmonises with the ethos of the Essex Cornerstone supporting young people".

Victoria Gooding, Head of School, said: "The laptops that were very generously donated to Templars Academy will without doubt support our families to access online learning.

"Families are struggling at the moment; without adequate or sufficient access to technology, some have either no way of accessing live or recorded lessons and the learning that is set on a daily basis. Some of our families are working from printed copies of work because of this, but the laptops being given to them will enable them to easily log-on and use Microsoft Teams or access the school website. The laptops also support our families who have many siblings.

"We are very grateful for how this provides learning opportunities for our students who are most disadvantaged." Faye Welsher, MAT Safeguarding Lead and Family Liaison Officer at Templars Academy added: "I just wanted to put in writing a huge thank you for the generous gift of the laptops. We have identified specific children that will hugely benefit from this. The families are completely overwhelmed and grateful."

Jane Bass said: "Can I also, as CEO of Connected Learning MAT, the academy trust of which Templars is a member school, say a big thank you for the generous gift of laptops. For pupils of the school, who do not access to IT devices whilst trying to learn at home, these will make such a difference to their learning".



Provincial Grand Lodge of Essex

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"O WONDERFUL MASONS!"

Written by Tony Hales
Provincial Communications Team



Following a presentation about the rebuilding of 'The Square' at Upminster, the late Rodney Lister Bass OBE, as Provincial Grand Master and Grand Superintendent of Essex, declared "O Wonderful Masons!". The captivating story of this magnificent achievement by a number of inspirational brethren and skilled craftsmen and the challenges they overcame which led to the PGM's exclamation can now be viewed in a new video.

Entitled 'Rebuilding The Square', the well-narrated video holds the viewers' attention with many examples to show how inspired business acumen, resourceful planning, quality workmanship, efficient energy saving applications and creative interior designs all contributed to the successful rebuild of the property whilst saving well in excess of £100,000 without compromising the quality and splendour which can be seen today.

The original Upminster Masonic Hall on the site was built in 1955/56 for £8,200 but had fallen into a state of disrepair. Resourceful planning was needed to work around the meeting and dining needs of over 2,000 members of 55 Lodges, 23 Chapters and 32 additional Masonic orders.

Very professionally produced with computer animations and actual photographs the video story begins on 13th December 2013 explaining how a new board of directors dramatically took control, assessed the situation and unknowingly began a programme of rebuilding lasting seven years. The main video can be viewed in six nuggets starting with the Beginning and followed by The Large Temple, The Small Temple, The Exterior, The Entrance Doors and Commendations.

The first five nuggets explain the major developments including how the ceiling of the new Constellation Temple was created together with the innovative improvements to the heating, lighting and flooring and how some work was carried out at night to keep on schedule because of a heatwave. Viewers can also see how many of the features of the Great Eastern Hotel's Grecian Temple, built in 1912, gave inspiration for the new Grecian Temple using authentic materials for the intricate work.

The new bar which had been installed at the Masonic Centre in Clerkenwell for over £100,000 in 2014 was acquired by the directors at Upminster for £6,000 just one year later when that centre closed. The video explains how additional business acumen resulted in the bar being completed at zero cost and describes how that acumen was used to make other significant cost savings throughout the whole project including the exterior with its historical entrance doors from Jodhpur in India.

Everyone who views the new video will not only find it a pleasure to watch, being both entertaining and informative, but will also be as impressed as the late Provincial Grand Master of Essex, Rodney Lister Bass, when he exclaimed "O Wonderful Masons!".

Watch the video at <https://thesquareatupminster.co.uk/rebuilding-the-square/>



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Police swoop on 'lockdown rave' at Saxon Hall

Written by David Badger
Provincial Communications Team

... to find 80 year old's queueing for their COVID jobs

Southend's freemasonry centre, Saxon Hall, in Aviation Way, opened its doors last week to NHS front line staff, offering the building for use as a vaccination centre in the battle against Covid19.

On the chilly opening day, the first 80yearoldplus invitees for a jab turned up for their 8am appointments almost an hour early, and kept coming.

Helping the queues grow even longer was the late arrival of the actual vaccines – and then there wasn't enough supply to meet demand, which led to further delays, and lengthening queues, while fresh supplies were sourced.

And then police arrived. Chairman of Saxon Hall Dennis Baum, pressed into willing duty as a car park attendant, said: "They had been notified that there was a rave taking place at Saxon Hall – only to find 80and 90yearolds with wheelchairs, zimmer frames and walking sticks patiently queueing for their vaccinations."

Dennis added that although the earlier queues had resulted in a few grumpy old men and women, "as a balancing act, many more very appreciative people couldn't have been more grateful to receive the vaccine, and thanked Saxon Hall and Essex freemasons for providing the venue".

In the days following, local voluntary organisations, including the Leigh Lions, Community Police and OneLove Soup Kitchen Southend, made queueing a lot more comfortable for those awaiting the vaccine by providing gazebo shelters, hot drinks, blankets and wheelchairs, as well as helping with steward duties and providing refreshments for the hardworking NHS staff.

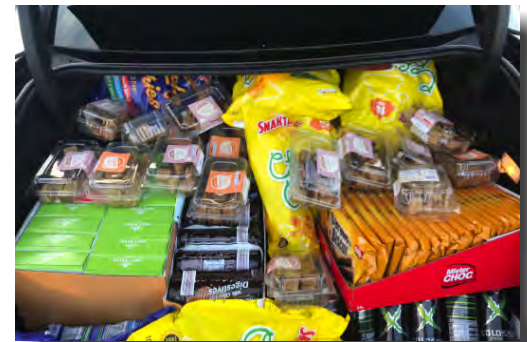


A SNACK IN TIME HELPS COVID WARD FRONT LINE



Essex Freemason, David Wiles, was at the till paying for petrol, when the cashier asked if he would like to buy a snack bar for the nursing staff who were not even getting to eat on the Covid wards at Broomfield Hospital, near Chelmsford, just a few miles away. A paramedic in the queue behind David confirmed this was indeed the case. So, David bought 10 snack bars there and then.

Being the Charity Steward for Rosslyn Lodge No 1543, which meets in Braintree, David immediately posted what had happened on his Lodge's WhatsApp page. The story was picked up by all the Lodge members and within a week they had chipped-in £25 each, raised £500 and bought 240 snack bars and 120 cans of energy drinks which David delivered to Broomfield Hospital on Friday 8th January 2021.



Received by Nurse Lauren Dicker and her colleagues on Heybridge Covid Ward, David and his fellow Essex Freemasons from Rosslyn Lodge were thanked by Lauren for all their efforts and support.

Just 22 years old, Nurse Lauren, who has had Covid herself and returned to the front line, completes 12 to 14 hour shifts and had worked every day for the last seven consecutive days. After her shifts she distributes food and helps raise charitable donations online for PPE and other equipment and so does not get a lot of sleep before going back onto the Ward.

"An absolute superstar" were the words used by Stewart Nardi of Rosslyn Lodge when he told BBC Essex about Lauren and continued "We will be doing this again very soon". Lodge Secretary, Mike Hall, is proud of the support of the Lodge members saying that they were all 'chuffed to bits' especially when Lauren said "We thought we had been forgotten!"



NHS Donation by Orsett Lodge

The members of Orsett Lodge have raised funds to purchase goods for the NHS nurses, who are currently working with PPE during this pandemic. We were able to supply energy drinks and energy bars for nurses on Covid wards as they are suffering from fatigue due to the long hours.

Along with hand cream, moisturizer, and lip balm due to the cracking of hands and lips due to the constant use of sanitizer, and the wearing of gloves and mask.

Along with a £100 donation from Costco West Thurrock we were able to supply 280 care packages to nurses and staff at our local hospitals, with 2 wards at Orsett, all wards at Basildon and 2 wards at Brentwood hospital.

I have attached a couple of photos should you wish to include them. W.Bro Chris Colbert kindly delivered them and obviously, the other one is me collecting the items from Costco.





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Ken Headworth celebrates 50 years during Rule of 6

W.Bro. Ken Headworth, PSGD, was Advanced into Aurelius Mark Master Masons Lodge on the 9th of October 1970, and it was a fitting tribute to Ken should be Worshipful Master during his 50th year.



Unbeknown to Ken, the Lodge members had made arrangements to honour him, but unfortunately Covid-19 having put the plans on hold, the Lodge were determined to honour him in some way.

They were due to receive an official visit from the Provincial Grand Master Right Worshipful Brother Terence D. Sheern, accompanied by his Executive and Active Officers but this has had to be postponed.

This, however, did not prevent the PGM from writing to Ken to congratulate him on his achievement in the Mark Degree, and saying that he hoped to be able to visit Ken and present him with his 50-year certificate in the near future.

AS the Lodge were not able to hold a proper celebration for Ken, he was presented with a 50-year celebration cake to mark the occasion. The letter from the PGM was read to Ken in open Lodge, and the Brethren joined in expressing their best wishes to Ken.

As a further mark of respect to Ken, the PGM promoted him to Past Provincial Grand Senior Warden.

Although Ken is a Grand Officer the PGM wanted the records to show that the Province had bestowed the highest rank possible on one of its members and went onto wish Ken all the very best and hoped he enjoyed his cake.

Ken thanked the Lodge members present and informed them that he had also received a personal letter from the PGM as well as the one read out in Lodge and was a loss for words at the honour bestowed on him.

He thanked everyone for the cake, which he offered to share with everyone after the meeting.

Ken has been Worshipful Master on three occasions, served as Treasurer, Secretary and Director of Ceremonies and continues to perform ceremonies to a first-class level.

Ken is a member of Colvin Lodge No.5374 where he celebrated 50 years as a Craft Mason in 2018.

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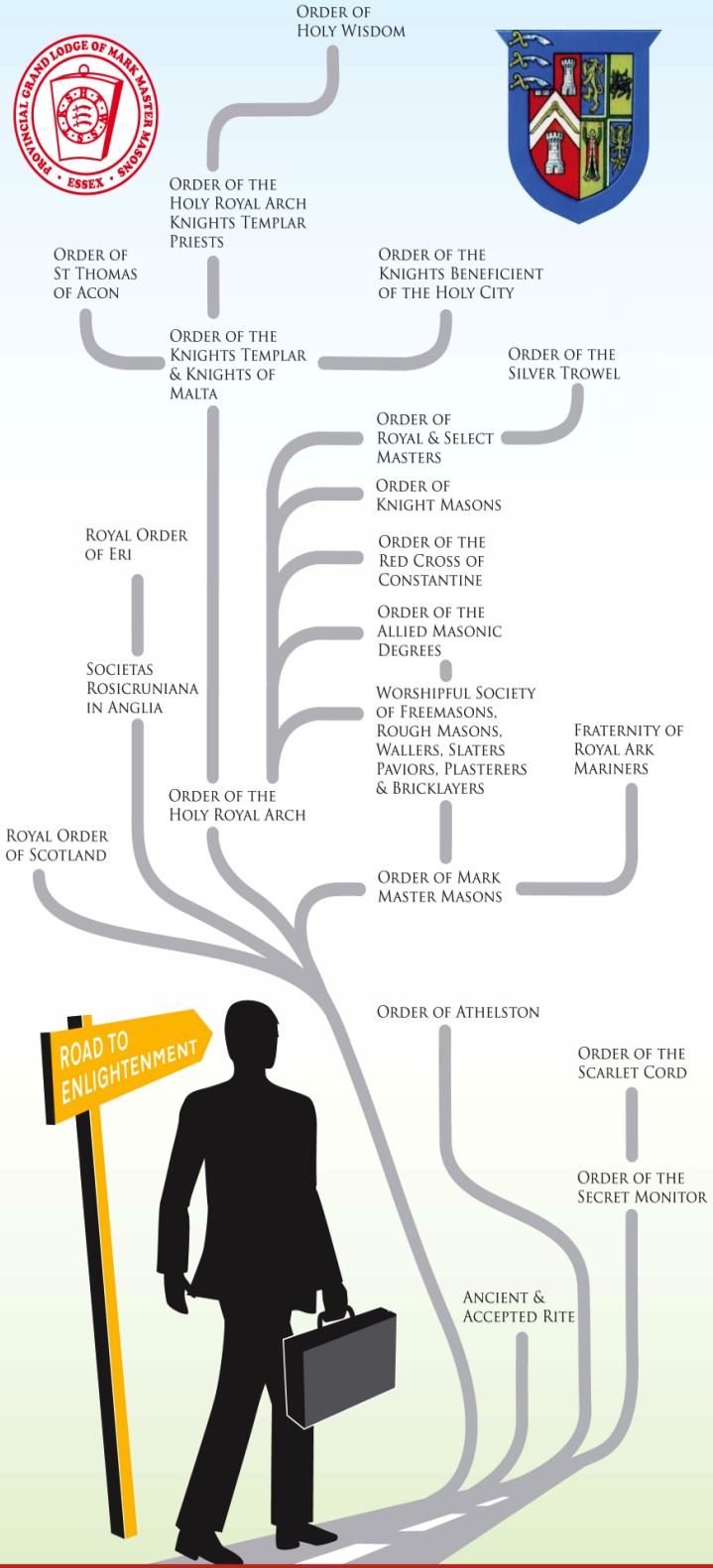
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