



Somerset Provincial Grand Lodge

News update 2 - November 2020

New Provincial Wardens



Brethren,

Welcome to the second edition of our news letter, it's our new way of trying to keep you up to date with what is happening in and around the Province in these very difficult times.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that at the next Provincial meeting in April 2021 \mathcal{E} I will appoint W.Bro Keith Baker of the Birnbeck Lodge No 7160 as my Senior Warden and W.Bro Andy Wade of the Tennyson Lodge No 4947 as my Junior Warden.

Both these brethren have given fantastic service to their respective Lodges and more widely to the Province. Keith has provided great support in organising our annual meeting and what has now developed into the Provincial Carol service, see separate item below. Andy is responsible for the team running the Provincial website and this newsletter. I hope that next year will see a return to 'normality' so that they and indeed all of us can get back to enjoying Freemasonry.

All other brethren who received a first appointment to active office this year will remain in office for a second year. This will give them the opportunity to be part of the Provincial Team, that opportunity having been denied them this year by the pandemic. This means that there will be no first appointments for those of you who were Master of your Lodge in 2016, I am sorry but you will have to wait until 2022. Six years rather than five for a Masters first appointment will be the norm going forward. In 2021 we will be promoting brethren who are already Provincial Officers. Brethren will be considered in accordance with appendix two of the Lodge Secretaries Handbook. Brethren chosen to be promoted will be informed early in the New Year.

Although we haven't been able to have meetings for many months there is still a lot going on. Lodges, Masonic centres and individuals throughout the Province are doing fantastic work helping those less fortunate than ourselves, as this news letter testifies! Read on Brethren and stay safe.

Yours Sincerely and Fraternally

David.

2020 Carol Service with a difference

For the past 7 years Keith Baker has organised a Candlelight Carol Service at All Saints Church in Weston-super-Mare. It started as a Rose Croix venture but now includes all the Masonic orders in the Town. It's not possible to hold the event this year so we are attempting a "virtual" service and extending it Province wide!

It will be a relaxed and reflective event for all Brethren with their families to enjoy and participate in from their own homes. There will be carols (words will appear on the screen) along with Readings (both biblical and Christmas Poems) from seven Heads of Order or their representative. The service will be led by The Reverend Stuart Boyd with a short Address by The Reverend Steven Hawkins.


*Silent
Night
Holy Night
All is Calm
All is Bright*

The service will start at 7 pm on Thursday 10th December 2020, signing in details will be included in the next news update, which will be with you a few days before. In the meantime you may wish to note your diaries. With the unique situation we find ourselves in this year, this will be a good opportunity to bring us all together. You can view the order of service on the [Somerset Rose Croix website](#).

Remembrance Sunday

Many Lodges were represented at Remembrance day ceremonies throughout the province. The Brethren of both the Craft and Mark Portcullis Lodges in Langport were among those who paid their respects to the Fallen. At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, we will remember them.



Fish and Chips +



Caterers at Clevedon Masonic Hall, Neil and Zena have been doing a sterling job during the pandemic providing lunches and dinners for members, family and friends since the end of the first lockdown. The 'Clevedon Hub' has been widely used by the members of the Clevedon Lodges. Brethren and widows living alone have been particularly grateful for the service Neil and Zena have provided. With a social distancing limiting numbers to a maximum of 30 it was sometimes difficult to fit everyone in! Since Lockdown 2 things have changed again, not to be defeated our intrepid duo have turned to take away



meals! Fish and chips on Fridays plus lots of alternatives. Take away lunches available 25th, 27th and Sunday 29th November. [For a full menu contact Neil.](#)

Your News letter editor can confirm the Fish and Chips were top notch!

Freemasons Care



For the last two years Keynsham Masonic Hall have supported the Salvation Army Christmas Present Appeal by encouraging brethren to sponsor a bauble or place a present under the Christmas tree in the hall dining room. The Salvation Army then distribute Christmas presents to under-privileged children in our area. In this pear shaped year the tree is now virtual 🎄 so far over £500 has been raised. You can help by making a [donation here.](#)



Bath Freemasons Square Meals project to help vulnerable people in NE Somerset continues the number of meals distributed is now more than 27,000 !!



Estunne Lodge are helping the Nailsea Support Group, a combination of support organisations in the Nailsea area who joined forces at the beginning of the pandemic to give the ever increasing number of people who need help a single point of call whatever their problems.

The Support Group have identified over 100 individuals who would benefit from a hot festive meal this Christmas. Using the facilities at the Nailsea Masonic Hall and engaging the services of Sam the resident chef, the members will be funding a two course Christmas meal for all those individuals identified.



Food banks have played an important role in helping those hit by economic problems caused by the pandemic. Taunton School Lodge have donated £250 to the local food bank to help with a surge in demand over the Christmas period. Similarly Lodge Uno Corde are making a donation of £200 to the Keynsham Food bank.



[Frome's Big Christmas Get - Together](#) is another event hit by Covid. Normally the event brings 120 lonely/isolated people together with a group of volunteers to enjoy Christmas lunch. This year the project will instead deliver hampers to about 150 recipients, volunteers dropping off the hampers hope to enjoy a 'socially distanced' door step chat with recipients. Normally money is raised for the venture at the Frome Fair but that hasn't been



possible this year. Royal Somerset Lodge have raised over £300 for the venture, Terry Hulbert the Charity Steward hopes that will increase to £500 plus £300 of match funding from the Province. [Contact Terry to donate.](#)



Richard Huish Lodge is supporting the [Huish Tigers Youth Programme](#). With some match funding from the Province, the lodge donated £445, which will help run sports sessions for 6 to 18 olds.

Solomon - The Preceptors Corner

As mentioned in the last news letter our Provincial Grand Mentor, Richard Parrish has been doing a sterling job producing a short weekly video of an item from Solomon. Now a [Preceptors Corner](#) has been created on the Provincial website containing all the Solomon recordings that Richard has made this year.

Why not start or renew your own Masonic researches by exploring the [Solomon web site](#) yourself?



The Somerset Military Lodge



The planning for founding a Military Lodge in Somerset is now well under way. There have been several meetings, pre lockdown and more recently by Zoom to discuss the project.

The Lodge will meet 4 times per year, one of which will be an Installation Meeting at Bridgwater Masonic Hall and the other 3 meetings will be in venues around and sometimes outside of the Province of Somerset. The current Covid crisis means a date can't be set for the consecration but we hope it will be late 2021.

If you have served in any branch of HM Forces, full time, part time or as an adult cadet volunteer, you can find out more about becoming a founder or joining member by contacting the Organising Secretary, [W Bro Scott Gibbons](#).

Provincial Almoner - Update

Your lodge almoner has been especially busy this year! In fact, a lot of you who are not almoners have assisted with the additional work caused by the Coronavirus. We have many elderly members and widows who are at risk and shielding themselves as much as possible. Those living alone, are more likely to be feeling anxious and lonely. 615 widows are part of the Somerset Masonic Friendship Association (SMFA) 273 have chosen to receive copies of the MCF's 'Better Lives' posted to their home address.



The publication of Better Lives always causes a spike in casework as the articles feature stories of members and widows receiving assistance from the MCF (Masonic Charitable Foundation) encouraging our members and widows to apply. Not all lodges have registered their widows or elderly members so unfortunately, they are missing out. The application form for the SMFA, usually referred to as the 'Somerset Friends', is now available on the [Provincial web site](#).

It would be impossible to include a list of all the issues we deal with during the course of a year, you can get some idea by visiting the [MCF web site](#) where there are many examples. Normally we have 89 lodge almoners and 8 highly trained Visiting Volunteers who would visit members and widows to assist with an application to the MCF for financial assistance. Everything now needs to be done on the telephone which is not always easy when talking to a 95 year old with impaired hearing!

We often receive used mobility equipment like electric pavement scooters, wheelchairs, electrically adjusted chairs and beds, etc. At present, we have one of the larger mobility vehicles with a roof intended for use on the road. It is in very good condition. The widow who owns it would simply require a donation made to the charity of her choice. If you know anyone who could make use of this vehicle, please contact W Bro Steve Defries on 01458 223770.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those who have worked so hard delivering food and medicines to those who require it. It has been very much appreciated. Finally, please remember the widows and those in your lodge living alone. Give them a ring for a friendly chat, it will make a huge difference.

W Bro Ian Walker PGA Tel 01308 861461

British Legion appeal

We have had a fantastic response to the Provincial Appeal to raise funds for the Royal British Legion, so far Lodges and individuals have donated over £10,000!

Many Craft Lodges along with individual members,



the Somerset Royal Arch Chapter, Somerset Mark Master Masons and individual Rose Croix Chapters have made generous donations. These have been enhanced by donations from the Somerset Masonic Charity and Masonic Charitable Foundation.

Individuals and Lodges can still make donations by contacting [Graham Puddy](#).

The money raised will go direct to [Dunkirk Memorial House](#). This is British Legion facility at Bishops Lydeard near Taunton that provides nursing and personal care as well as short term respite care for the Armed Forces community and their families. Further information is available on the [Provincial Web Site](#).

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Stay Safe, Stay Well.