

Ross Masonic Club



Supporting Local Freemasons

The Craftsmen

Week Commencing 12th October 2020

Issue Number Twenty Eight

Welcome to the twenty eighth edition of the Ross Masonic Club Weekly Round-Up.

A great big thank you to all of our contributors to this issue. I am sure we all appreciate your efforts each week. This week we have:

- Patrick and Harry continue the story of their varied careers
- Dennis provides an answer and fresh question in 'Would I know, did I know'
- Two new regular features;
 1. 'When I were a lad' - do you know who is in the picture?
 2. How I became a Mason, where Andrew tells his story
- An article on the dedication of Booth Porch at Hereford Cathedral by Mark Bennett
- Meeting under Covid Rules by Martin Thorne
- A fun wordsearch and Paul's curiosities with answers published next week

All thoughts and suggestions for future articles welcomed. Please keep your input coming with, once again, a special thank you to all those that contributed.

Keep safe Brethren and keep in contact.



Keeping in Contact and Staying Sharp

Facebook



We have set up a Facebook Group for Ross Masonic Club. We currently have 28 members across the Lodges and Chapter. Any members of Lodges or Chapter that meet at Ross Masonic Hall are welcome to join in.

A focus on social media in and around the Province

Here is a link to the 'members online communications toolkit' to help you gain an understanding of social media. Also the Twitter and Facebook pages for Craft, Chapter and Mark.

Members' Online Communications Toolkit

The past six months have seen considerable challenges for all of us, and not least in how we communicate with each other. Below is the Online Communications Toolkit from UGLE which has some great practical tips and advice for both newcomers to online communications and experienced old hats. Despite the general suspension of Freemasonry being lifted in July this year by UGLE, many of us are unable to resume what we would recognise as our normal masonic activity, and for us keeping in touch with our family, friends, and our fellow brethren is absolutely vital. The ability to be able to do this online makes it simpler and quicker, but also keeps us safe. The goal is for this "Online Toolkit" to assist and help those who are not conversant in the "new world" methods of communication, to stay in touch and know that they are not on their own, or alone. UGLE inform us that this will be available in a booklet which will be sent to all Provinces very soon to help those who are not yet online. The toolkit can also be downloaded [here](#)

The Province also has a facebook page [here](#)

Also the Chapter [here](#)



The Province of Herefordshire has a number of 'Official' Twitter Accounts with the following #

PGL Herefordshire [@PGLHerefords](#)

PGM and MEGS Michael Holland [@DGLBMason](#)

Dep PGM Graham King [@GrahamCKing1](#)

Caeruleum Club [@hfdslightblues](#)

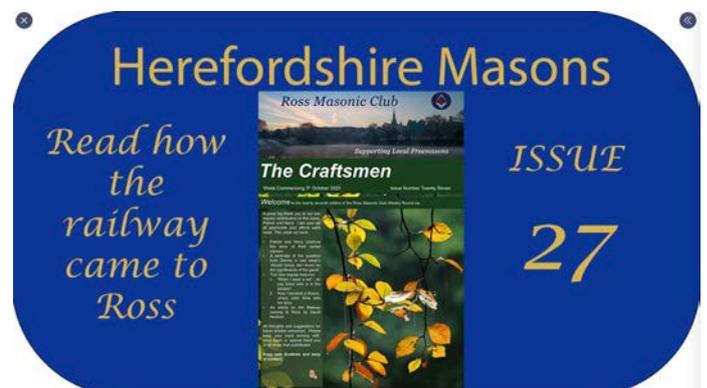


Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Royal Arch [@GlosandHereRA](#)

Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Mark Province [@PGMMarkGandH](#)

If you use Twitter why not give them a follow and like their tweets?

They regularly promote our newsletter which is also available on the Provincial website [here](#)



Would I know the answer? Did I know the answer?

By *W.Bro. Dennis W. Roberts, PAGDC Group Leader Information and Guidance Group*

You can always check your thoughts by visiting 'Solomon' of course! <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

Dennis Roberts - Group Leader Information and Guidance Group e-mail: roberts.greeba@btinternet.com

Last time I asked *What is the significance of the Gavel?*

"I now place in your hand this Gavel which is an emblem of power and will enable you to preserve order in the Lodge, especially in the East".

These words are spoken to the new Master and the gavel is a symbol of labour and of power.

The gavel was probably the oldest working tool. Once an iron axe or pick, it had a steel edge or point with which the quarrymen would roughly trim a stone. An Operative Mason would use it to break off the rough and superfluous parts of the stone or ashlar, so as to make them a perfect fit. In modern usage the Gavel has become a symbol of authority, in the form of a small ceremonial hammer used to strike a wooden block; customarily struck to signal the opening, calling to order, closing or adjournment of proceedings.

The use of the Gavel, and its big brother, the Maul are often confused. The Maul is much bigger and heavier, used by an Operative Mason to drive his chisel, whilst to a Speculative Mason it is an emblem of assassination and violent death. In contrast, the Gavel represents the voice of conscience. Both Gavel and Maul are commonly known as a 'Hiram'.

While the Square, Level and Plumb Rule each have only one operative use, and symbolise only one Masonic Office, the Gavel is used in many ways, either by itself or with other tools for cutting, chipping, driving and setting. It is always busy and always close to the hands of a Mason. The Worshipful Master uses it to open and close the Lodge, and claim the attention of the Brethren; it is the symbol of his power and an emblem of his authority. Interesting that the humblest tool, a rough instrument

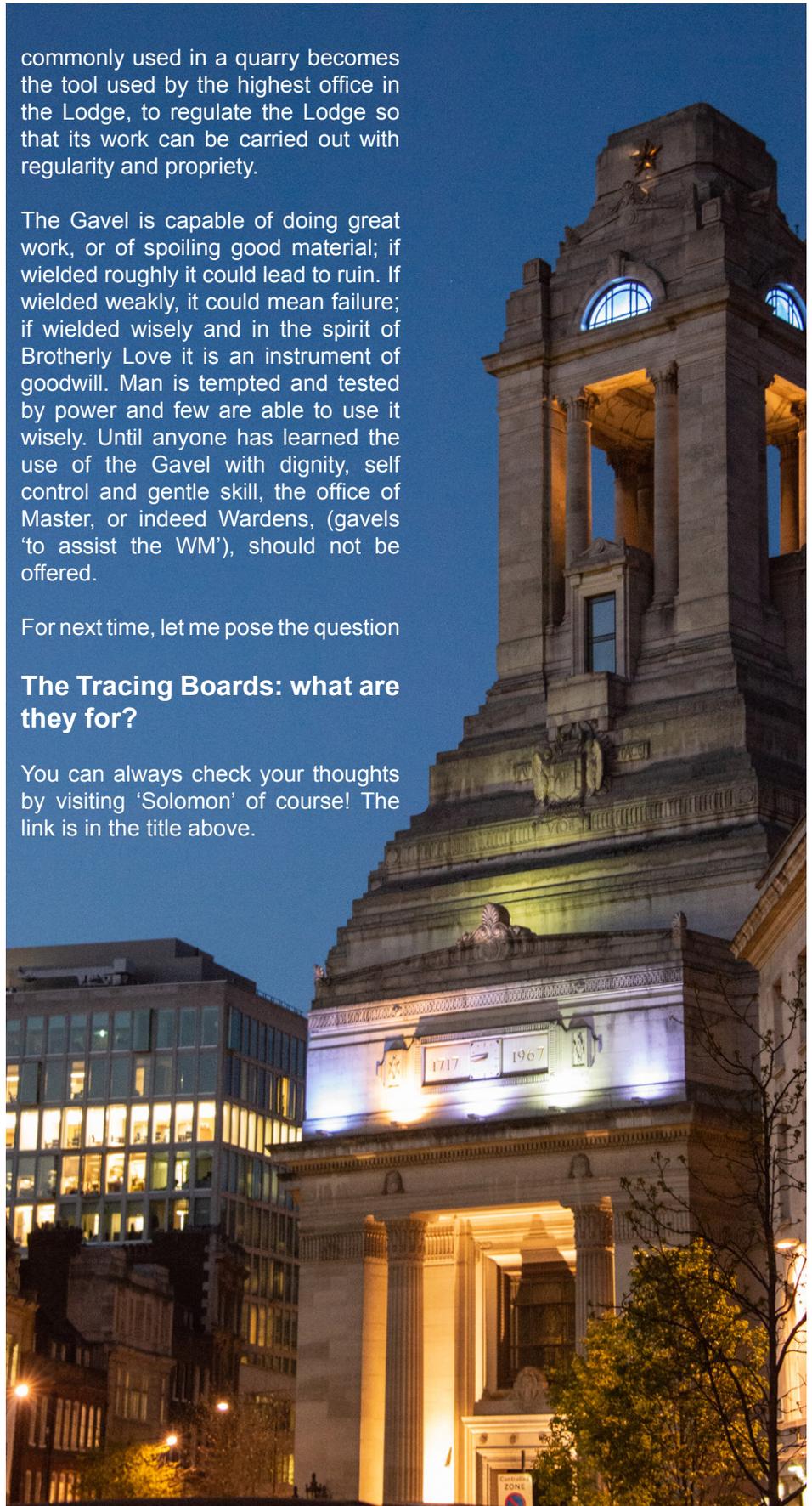
commonly used in a quarry becomes the tool used by the highest office in the Lodge, to regulate the Lodge so that its work can be carried out with regularity and propriety.

The Gavel is capable of doing great work, or of spoiling good material; if wielded roughly it could lead to ruin. If wielded weakly, it could mean failure; if wielded wisely and in the spirit of Brotherly Love it is an instrument of goodwill. Man is tempted and tested by power and few are able to use it wisely. Until anyone has learned the use of the Gavel with dignity, self control and gentle skill, the office of Master, or indeed Wardens, (gavels 'to assist the WM'), should not be offered.

For next time, let me pose the question

The Tracing Boards: what are they for?

You can always check your thoughts by visiting 'Solomon' of course! The link is in the title above.



How it All Began - From One Brotherhood to Another

Andrew Moore describes his route Into Masonry.

From the age of 8 I joined cubs and from then on progressed through Scouts and on to Venture Scouts. During this time I made some lifelong friends, indeed my best friend with whom I am still in contact today and who is also coincidentally a Freemason. (Although he entered through a completely different route to me).

Scouting gave me many opportunities to develop as a human being and provided some lifelong skills. Map reading, camp cooking, first aid etc. I attended a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and was in the Queen's Guard of Honour at the Cenotaph Remembrance Parade. In fact we had a crash course in marching at RAF Northolt, eyes left! so we could march past the Royal family at Windsor Castle when I picked up my Queen's Scout Award. Strangely I undertook my Queen's Scout Award hike along a section of the Offa's Dyke path, not knowing that many years later I would end up living in the area.



My parents were very supportive and also became deeply involved in scouting. My Mum was a cub scout leader and also instrumental in setting up Beavers and Dad was chairman of the Scout Group and also the District. I also became the District Public Relations Officer and eventually Assistant District Commissioner General Duties. It was a good job they were so supportive as I also obtained my canopy wings through scouting which no doubt gave them some sleepless nights.

Due to the nature of our activities and I also at the time had a mountain



leaders certificate, I became a Red Cross Demonstrator and two other leaders and I ran many different types of first aid courses from basic first aid to more adventure and expedition first



aid. They would do the instructing and I would do the actions! We became very close and often went hillwalking and caving together. One of them was a Freemason and the other was not. He often joked about the other's 'bricklaying' pastime. Inevitably we got chatting and together with another close friend who was a leader in scouting they became my proposer and seconder at the age of twenty four.

On the night of my Initiation I was 'held' in an anti room before the meeting and so did not see the other members arriving. After I was 'restored to light' I suddenly saw a sea of faces I knew very well from far and wide in the scouting movement and immediately felt right at home. Although it did not cure the shaky legs at the time!

Another Scout leader had donated his father's apron for me so when I

took my Third Degree they attempted to put it on. We had not tried it on previously as it was supposed to be a surprise. Indeed it was, the belt ripped in several places and I spent the rest of the ceremony holding the apron in place while attempting to also give the relevant signs.

I have an immense debt of gratitude to Scouting as it gave me many life skills that I still use today. I continued in both organisations for many years but after marriage and moving to Ross I have not had the time to be involved. I have tried to pass on some of those life skills to my own children.

What an amazing transformation Scouting has had in terms of preserving its core values while also being 'cool' to be a member – Bear Grylls as the Chief Scout and many amazing explorers and adventures as its' ambassadors – maybe many organisations could learn from this ground up re-think?

The parallels between Scouting and Freemasonry cannot better be seen than by our own HRH The Duke of Kent being Joint President and there being a number of 'Kindred Lodges' made up of masons with an affiliation to Scouting.

I would also recommend the Prestonian Lecture from 2012 by W. Bro. Tony Harvey PAGDC. <https://prestonian2012.org.uk>

'When I Were A Lad'

A new feature which we hope we can run over a few weeks

Please send in your pictures of you as a child and a short clue. We will publish the photo one week so people can guess who you are and publish the results the following week. Either a scanned image or take a picture of the photo with your phone and send it in with a few words of description. Just for a laugh - nothing too serious!



Did you Guess? This is Pip Thomas of Ariconium, Kyrle Mark and Vitruvian Chapter and a Zoom attendee.



Here is Pip with one of his model ships.



Any idea who this young chap flexing his muscles?



Paul's Curiosities

Any idea what this curious object is?

Answer in next week's issue



Harry's in Hot Water! (Part IX)

The further adventures of Harry Holwell

Chippenham CID

I am now a Detective Sergeant in Chippenham. I am one of two sergeants and we each have four constables on the shift, which is dependent on the night coverage we have to supply. We police a large area covering Calne, Corsham and Malmesbury. One of the detectives on the shift would be allocated one of these towns and be responsible for the crime in that area. He wouldn't necessarily deal with it all. He would monitor trends and advise local officers how to approach, combat and deal with all aspects of crime. Being a Sergeant I would also carry a caseload around every six weeks I would have to be on night call out. This would be for serious crime such as rapes, murders or other very serious

offences which the D.C. couldn't deal with. It would also cover sudden unexplained deaths or suicides. I would deal with the more serious of the crimes. This would include serious assaults, rapes and other sexual offences involving children. I would also monitor the work of DC's and assist them in investigations and interviews.

One of the first cases I dealt with was a murder of a woman. It came to light when neighbours reported to the police a horrendous smell coming from an address. We had to force an entry and soon found the deceased woman dead in her bed having been shot in the head. Her dog had also been shot and was at the foot of

Harry's in Hot Water! (Part IX) Contd....

The further adventures of Harry Holwell

Chippenham CID

the bed. Within a short time we had put out an all ports warning for the husband. We also contacted credit card companies from documents found in the house. At about 3.30pm that day Gloucester police attended a pub restaurant that same afternoon where a male person had attempted to use a credit card with the suspects name. Two officers went to the pub and whilst one of them went into the pub the other approached a male sat in a car close by. As he first spoke to this man the individual drew a small handgun from his side and then raised it to his own head and shot himself. Death was instantaneous. The pistol used was a small .22.

As I was the officer in the case the next couple of days were very busy. I had to attend two post-mortems. I recovered the gun used plus the bullets from both bodies. I liaised with the Gloucester Police and agreed that I would deal with the overall case and they would provide all the evidence relating to the Gloucester side of the enquiry. I gathered the Wiltshire side of it. You may think that because all parties in the case are deceased it may cut down on the paperwork. No it doesn't. It still requires the same level of evidence for the coroner as it would for a case at the Crown Court.

I had to get all forensics from both scenes, cross match them and tie them all in to attempt to find the motive. In the end it was down to finance. The case went before the coroner and he found one case of murder and one of suicide.

One of the side effects of this case was I lost one of my suits. On the day of the shootings I attended both post mortems and on the second one at Swindon the smell was so bad that it got into the fibres of my suit and me. When I got home in the early hours I stripped naked as I went in the door and bagged up my suit. Sue came down and she was appalled by the smell. Even after a shower I could still smell me!!!! Even after cleaning I couldn't get the smell out of the suit. It went in the bin. The smell was not only

of the body but also the formaldehyde they use in the mortuary.

Chippenham police station was an old building full of small offices which were dated and had long narrow corridors. It was a 1950s built old forces NAFFI building. I spent some 2 1/2yrs there before getting a call from the Chief Constable's office to tell me I was on my way to the Regional Crime Squad in Bristol. I had enjoyed my spell there and had made a lot of new friends and colleagues.

Back on the crime squad was a shock to the system again. Almost from the start I was back into long hours and time away from home. We started working on a large scale Conspiracy to defraud case. The suspect was an ex Australian Detective Sergeant who had been sent to prison in Australia for five years for Drug Importation. On his release he started travelling the world looking for backers in criminal enterprises. He came to London and we became aware he had the backing of a well known London crime family where some of the family were already serving long prison sentences. To keep the story short this target had an insider in British Aerospace finance department. The scam was to work invoices into the company for some 40 million pounds. The invoices were for payment to be made to bank accounts in Germany. Once the money was into the accounts it would be moved and broken down into small sums all around the world. We arrested a number of people and one of the remarks made was, "You are two weeks early!" The main man received five years at Her Majesty's pleasure. He was then supposed to be deported back to Australia but on the last part of his sentence he absconded.

After about nine months I moved from Swindon to the drugs wing of the Squad in Bristol. This was a complete change of work for me. I had dealt with drugs offences and offenders in the past but these were in the main a by-product of dealing with crime. The regional drugs wing dealt with the top tier of drugs offenders and the supply

routes including importation. The importation part of the job would also bring another part of policing into the equation. The H.M.R.C. . In general the relationship between the two is often strained. The reason for this is generally that the police have worked on a target for a considerable time and have established where, when and by whom the drugs are coming into country with. We were bound to inform Customs of all importations when suspected to be happening. They would then often step in and take the credit. This was only part of the problem. Customs run their own squads to combat both drugs and other high value tax avoidance. We would often supply information to them but it always appeared they did not reciprocate and kept information to themselves. It was often a bone of contention. The drugs wing of the squad carried out the same duties as the crime wings. We would use the same methods of surveillance etc and occasionally would call for their assistance with manpower if we were stretched on investigations.

After around 9 months on this squad I was visited in Bristol one day by two senior officers from Wiltshire. It was a surprise to me. They wanted to talk to me about a file I had submitted concerning a woman who had gone missing some 20 years ago. They informed me that the woman I had taken a statement from some years before had now died suddenly due to her alcoholism. At the time she had a boyfriend whom she had confided in. He came to the police with the same allegations she had made to myself previously. They had the file with them including all the statements. I went through the file with them in detail. At this time they had different senior officers in the force CID and they had reviewed the gathered evidence and decided the only way to deal with it was to dig up the garden. The cost now was going to be £25 to £30,000. I worked with the officers for several days and then reverted to the drugs squad.

I will cover the conclusion to this case in the next edition.

Dedication of Booth Porch

By Mark Bennett

THE DEDICATION OF THE BOOTH PORCH

Introduction

The outer north porch of Hereford Cathedral was begun by Bishop Richard Mayew (1504–16) and completed by Bishop Charles Booth (1516–35). The porch has an upper room, which appears to have been part of the 'pilgrimage experience' of those visiting the shrine of St Thomas of Hereford, then situated in the Lady Chapel. Access to the upper chapel is via two staircases, within turrets, and inside the chapel can be seen the remains of niches in which, it is believed, were placed images of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary. It appears that pilgrims may have entered the chapel via one staircase, said their prayers at the images and descended via the other turret, before proceeding to the cathedral itself for their devotions at the shrine. Whatever liturgical use the chapel had, it was short lived. If it was indeed completed by 1519 (the date inscribed on an adjacent arch at ground level), all such devotions were outlawed by the late 1530s. The upper room continued to be used as a storeroom and has now been restored as a chapel where services may take place.



You will recall that the province donated £7800 (including Ross Lodges £475) to Hereford Cathedral for the purchase of an altar and benches for the Booth Porch in memory of David Bowen). This furniture was part of a refurbishment of an old chapel within the cathedral. I had no idea how special this chapel was.

The chapel is now finished and is available for cathedral use after being dedicated on Friday 2nd October at a ceremony that I was lucky enough to attend as the representative of Vitruvian, David's mother lodge. The pandemic meant that we could only have 6 people to represent the Province to include the master of Vitruvian.

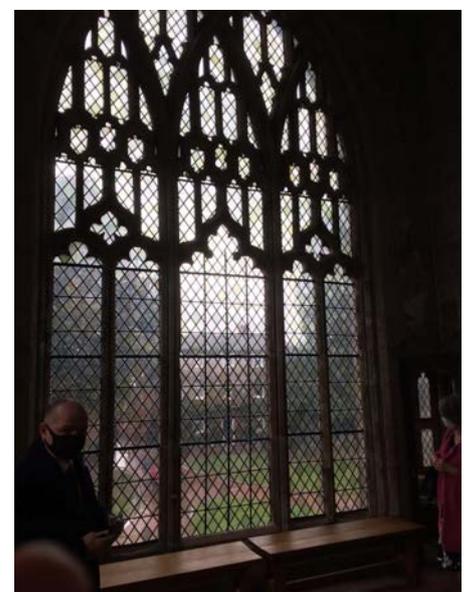
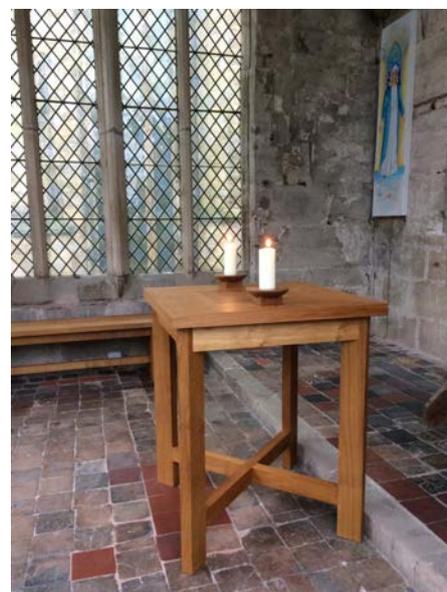
As Nigel is still shielding and avoiding public engagements a senior past master needed to take his place.

I was the first going down the list who was available. (Since the passing of Dennis Footitt I have crept up to 4th in line!). I was very fortunate as it was a privilege to see this extraordinary part of the cathedral which I did not even know existed.

The chapel is in fact the second storey of the cathedral porch and is accessible by a winding stone staircase inside the column supporting the porch and there is a similar winding staircase in the other column to allow for exit, effectively a one way system as the staircases are only one person wide.

The dedication was part of the Eucharist ceremony during which the bishop, the Dean, the PGM, Mike Hopkins and David's two daughters processed up to the chapel to take part in the dedication. Only 6 were allowed due to Covid and the fact that the chapel is very small. After the service the Dean very kindly offered to take members of the congregation up to see the chapel, which is when I went up.

It is a remarkable place and very bright as you might imagine from the huge ornate windows which form three sides of the upper storey of the porch. The altar and benches were very much in keeping with the size and feel of the place. This was a real bright spot in a horrible wet morning!



Meeting Under Covid Rules

A personal reaction by Martin Thorne

Vitruvian Lodge held its first limited meeting under the current Covid rules on Monday 5th October.

Prior to this meeting, most members of the Lodge had indicated that they either couldn't or didn't want to be present because of the continuing risk of Covid infection, which is completely understandable, but eight had said that they were willing to attend, including our newest members: Johnny James and Scott McHattie. However, as current rules dictate that only six may be present in the Temple, they were unable to attend, in the event, Billy Russell and Paul Smith occupied their proper chairs as SW and JD, respectively, while Mark Bennett acted as WM, Peter Dunn as JW, Nigel Gibbs as SD and Chris Calvert as IG (with me outside the Temple as Tyler) and thanks are due to these Brethren for continuing the life of the Lodge, even in this very truncated form.

In fact, the meeting lasted less than half an hour but included a much overdue eulogy to WBro Dennis Footitt who had died back in April, aged 96, after 74 years as a Mason,

plus proposals for one candidate for initiation and one joining member and a donation to charity. So, was it worth it? Most definitely yes, in my opinion, as it enabled significant business to progress and, in some small way, perhaps helped go avoid the stagnation that the ProGM referred to in his recent newsletter.

It is also worth recording that every conceivable measure appeared to have been taken to make the Masonic Hall as Covid-secure as possible (and thanks are due to those responsible for this: Emyr Jones, Chris Calvert and maybe others that I don't know of), while those present wore face masks throughout, had their temperatures recorded on entering the building, made copious use of the hand sterilisers available and duly observed the required 2m social distance.

I guess, in the end, each of us has to find his or her own way through this present Covid induced crisis, which is

obviously most difficult for those who have been shielding. For myself, after Mowie and I have been effectively isolating ourselves for well over six months, I feel the need to try and find a way back to some semblance of normality, while keeping my guard well up, obeying Government guidelines, maintaining social distance from others, washing my hands frequently and, above all, using plain common sense. In line with this thinking, I have been involved with limited bell ringing at our local church to coincide with its resumption of services and think that participation in carefully controlled and limited Masonic meetings comes very much under the same heading. In this sense, and to prevent absolute stagnation of Lodge activities, I do think that tonight's limited Masonic meeting was well worth the effort of all involved, despite the absence of the socialising inherent in having access to the bar and enjoying a Festive Board. One could add, if not this way, then what is the alternative, as long as the Covid threat remains with us?



Lodge Officers Word Search

With thanks to Paul Sabel

S K G P R S B T S N C H T X W T N Q C V H S P T
S C Q X Q W O R S H I P F U L M A S T E R S K P
K V H F C J H T G U Q V P Z N R I P W Q T D Q C
G L U A O H U J Y Y A Z V Y R A T E R C E S B N
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Almoner Chaplain Charity Steward Director of Ceremonies
Immediate Past Master Inner Guard Junior Deacon Junior Warden
Mentor Secretary Senior Deacon Senior Warden Steward
Treasurer Tyler Worshipful Master

There's more than one way to earn a living Part 11

Patrick Eyre continues to recount his career moves.

During our travels around the UK with the demonstrator, we had attended a County show in Exeter, and a gentleman in the ready mixed business attended a demonstration. He was most impressed and saw it as an opportunity on larger concrete pours to use it as a pump type operation, by mounting the Conveyor on a flatbed truck.

I had my doubts as to the wisdom of what he proposed, but could see no reason why we couldn't adapt a vehicle to do what he wanted. Whichever vehicle he decided on, it would need to have the type of gearbox designed to take a PTO to drive the hydraulics, and I would need sight of the truck before making the decision to carry out the work

Previously I had mentioned that we had purchased a detached house in

Maidenhead suitable for adapting as a guest house, and this was being progressed in stages. The house was situated on the A4 trunk road. The main tourist route from London, going west to Bath and Bristol, and very close to Maidenhead bridge over the Thames, aptly named Bridge Cottage. It had a large front garden which could be adapted for car parking, a wide side opening giving access to the rear of the property and a very large rear garden which could be

There's more than one way to earn a living Part 11

Patrick Eyre continues to recount his career moves.



accessed from a private rear entrance road, which also gave access to the property's garage. In the back garden stood a very old coach house. The house was built in 1903, and the land was formally part of a large estate, the main entrance would have been through the two large brick pillars at the front of the property giving access to the coach house and the original manor house.

From the outset we were being hassled by the County Council. If you look closely at the photograph you may see a sign advertising Bed & Breakfast on one of the entrance pillars. Within two days we received a letter from the Council instructing us to remove it as we were breaching planning laws. I knew we were not, as I knew that any private property owner would be allowed to take in paying guests up to a total of 6 people without planning consent. It was known as the "six heads on beds rule", and when a planning officer called at the house my wife reminded him of this, and we heard no more from them for some years. I believe the same rules apply today.

Although the A4 road had been replaced by the M4 the A4 was still on the tourist route from Heathrow so we had more than our share of overnight

guests from all over the world. We also had airline crew from the airport, one or two of the pilots became regulars, and one in particular, became a good friend who I would go to the pub with, if at home. I was still travelling extensively with my job.

Ian Underwood was a pilot with British Midland Airways, and one of the nicest guys I ever knew, and over Xmas and the New Year of 1987 he was on a flight training course at East Midlands airport, and was seriously injured losing part of his leg when the Fokker Friendship he was piloting crashed. He had been a 747 co-pilot with Midland, and to become the captain as such one had to pass out on a different plane to earn the promotion.

The plane iced up on its landing approach, and crash-landed short of the runway on the motor racing circuit. Bizarrely my wife and I were watching the evening news at home and there was a shot of the plane's tailplane with Midland's logo on it, and I knew immediately it was Ian as I'd had a drink with him a few days before, and he had told me what he was doing over the new year.

A few months later he booked in at Bridge Cottage with his replacement

leg below the knee and was still flying!!! He told me the only problem he had when landing the 747 was the very heavy brake pedal, but he got over that too. What a man!! He told me the whole story leading up to the accident, how he felt the plane getting heavier and less responsive and asked the instructor if he should de-ice, but by then it was too late. How he got it down and landed on the field in the middle of the road racing circuit was a tribute to his skills, but he couldn't stop the plane before it hit a brick wall, crushing the cockpit, and trapping him by his leg.

Donington Park is the race circuit I knew it well from when I lived in Derbyshire, and often attended Motor cycling events, particularly if Barry Sheene was riding. What I didn't know at the time is that it was also an international medical training school for treating crash victims.

Unbelievably there was a class of students attending a lecture a short distance from the plane's crash site, and they were at the scene in minutes. At any time the plane could have burst into flames, but these very brave men forced open the tail door and managed to get to the three trapped air crew. I think he told me that the instructor was already dead, but those medical trainees got life saving drips and morphine into him. They couldn't free his leg so it was left on the plane.

He re-counted this to me over a couple of pints at our favourite pub in Bray. After breakfast he nearly always left with a bag of home made cakes. My wife thought the world of him, he was such a nice guy, and we always looked forward to his visits. His real ambition in life was to own his own plane, open a flying school, and teach other people to fly, and I think he achieved that. We met all sorts of interesting people in our guest house, but I guess Ian Underwood was the favourite.