



ISOLATION TIMES

Issue Four: July 2020

Message from the PGM



Those of us who remember the time prior to the suspension of Freemasonry and the lockdown, which allowed handshakes and full social engagement, will no doubt recall the absence of the ubiquitous plea to keep safe. Those 2 words have featured in many forms of communication over the past few months and it is essential that their huge importance relating to the welfare of brethren is not diluted by their regular use. The lifting of the general suspension from 17 July 2020 actually reinforces the message and whilst efforts are on-going to assess the appetite of the Province's members to return to masonic practices, each brother must take stock of his own position and judge how he can remain safe and well until time or circumstances can return us to a situation of normality. It is fully appreciated that it is not just about the member, there is also his family and other close contacts to consider.

The Province's masonic centres cannot offer facilities to the lodges or other units unless the appropriate level of protection and safe guarding is in place. Detailed guidance has been issued to the centres by the Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works and this advice has been informed by the comprehensive detail on the safe management of halls which has been produced by UGLE.

It is evident that for practical reasons, centres will probably return to their operation on a staged basis and by way of example, it is pleasing to know that the Corinthian Restaurant in Goldsmith Street is hoping to re-open from 17 August 2020 and bookings can be made by telephoning 0115 9853992. Also

please note that the Public Bar at West Bridgford Masonic Hall has now reopened, and I am sure they would welcome your support.

As has been said on numerous occasions, Freemasonry has not experienced times such as these and the desire of members to once again, enjoy the fellowship which our organisation offers is palpable. It is essential however, that when we return to our centres for meetings, it is in an environment which is safe, and which accommodates the true experience of Freemasonry with its fine traditions and principles.

The Nottinghamshire masonic family has an enviable reputation as a very cohesive entity and this position is in no small part due to the fellowship of the brethren and the teamwork of Heads of Orders who have created a solid platform for mutual support. It is therefore with huge sadness that we acknowledge the recent loss of two of those outstanding leaders in the persons of, W Bro Peter Ball PAGDC, Past Provincial Grand Master for the Degree of Mark Master Masons and W Bro Mike Page PJGD and the Past Inspector General for the Nottinghamshire District of the Ancient and Accepted Rite. Nottinghamshire Freemasonry was fortunate to have men of their calibre.

Provincial Programmes

345 Club



An update By Craig Wrenn – Chairman. The Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on our plans for the first year, however, by way of an update, I shall say where the current committee and myself see the group going in the future, and where we are at the moment.

I shall start with the jewel in the crown (in my opinion) the Provincial Passport Scheme, the demand for passports has been incredible, so much so that it has been necessary to request a second printing in order to fulfil demand. As Lodge Secretary of two Lodges and from visiting several other Lodges, I am aware that Secretaries are being approached to sign passports. It is necessary to point out the importance for a passport to be completed well. Ideally this would mean a note in the back of the passport for many of the visits to say what was gained from the visit; this could be something unique about the workings of that Lodge. As an example my Mother Lodge, Excalibur, will have a member of the Lodge vouch for each visitor present at the opening, it could be a small note about an oration, or any other item of interest, in short, something to let the judging panel know that a daily advancement of Masonic knowledge was gained from the visit.

The committee had hoped to hold a couple of summer get togethers, sadly this has not been possible and current restrictions still prohibit such gatherings. However, when restrictions are relaxed further, we would hope to hold some form of social event. Also, from requests received from Freemasons around the Province, some form of seminar (but keeping it a social event) hopefully with a chance to listen to a talk or presentation and to learn about one or more of the other progressive orders under the umbrella of Freemasonry.

We hope in the future to be able to provide a diary of events that members of the 345 Group can attend, both Masonic and Social, and hope that friendships and inter-visiting between Lodges would be the result of such events.

ITF

With the end of the suspension of Masonic activities imminent, we can see a light at the end of the tunnel.

As we progress, that light will become stronger and brighter and we are on our

journey to that glorious day, the opening of our centres and recommencement of lodge meetings.

During the suspension many of us have no doubt strengthened our friendships with others, become proficient at online meetings such as “zoom” and thereby maintained contact and enjoyed a limited social interaction. We have also to been able to demonstrate the warm-hearted charity that lies at the centre of Freemasonry. Something that most masons do not even think twice about and yet it is much admired by others that are not in the craft.

We are expecting significant and increased interest in joining the Craft. So be ready to invite prospective members. Plans are being made for recruitment events to take place when we can do so. These will be publicised in due course, probably under the title of Introduction to Freemasonry (ITF) which we have previously used to align to a UGLE national recruitment campaign.

We want to be on the front foot, so ask your friends, family, others that have impressed you and those that have shown caring qualities to us all as human beings. They may well enjoy being welcomed as a Freemason.

Please forward details of prospective members to Ian Wilson, ITF Lead: events@nottinghamshiremasons.co.uk

Charity Update and Donations

During the period of suspension, the Provincial Charity Trustees have approved donations and grants totalling almost £33000. Full details and stories associated with the donations and charities will shortly be posted on the website.

MCF -Matched Funding Process

Most of us will be aware that the Province has recently been taking advantage of the MCF special Covid-19 Relief Fund of £10,000 per Province. This has allowed us to support nine local charities and community groups who have been responding, and continue to respond, to the Covid-19 pandemic supporting those most vulnerable in our society.

This fund is managed by the Trustees of the Provincial Charity Committee, and there is now another fund available to us

from MCF in the form of a matching grant scheme. This is a general scheme although ongoing Covid-19 requests can be included. The matching grant scheme allows the Province to claim up to £10,000 so giving us the benefit of £20,000 towards local charities. Bear in mind that we have to put up our half before applying for the matching grant on a case by case basis.

The Trustees of the PCC have decided that the matching grant scheme should be open to all Lodges in the Province. Lodges are encouraged to put forward applications. These will also require MCF approval.

Applications should be sent to the PCC Finance Committee team and they will forward applications to the Trustees. Further details on the scheme and process can be found on the Provincial Vault here: [Charity Docs](#)

We hope many Lodges will take advantage of the MCF Matching Grant. Please note application to them must be received by 31 January 2021, the Province may apply an earlier date to allow for local processing.

Around the Lodges

Bramcote Lodge

John East and Will Johnson of Bramcote Lodge No 8750 have been delivering PPE, including scrubs, face masks and face shields to the NHS and to the homes of NHS workers with Bike Shed, a fully supported Motorcycle Courier Service

Bike Shed is a national organisation, formed from, and mostly represented by, keen Bikers. It is operated and funded through a courier company called Gophr. They log the pick-ups on their system and the volunteer riders make the deliveries throughout Britain. Well done John and Will! For more information on Bike Shed, visit. <https://bikeshed>

Mansfield Lodge

Members of Mansfield Lodge have raised approximately £400 for Age UK (Notts) by contributing their normal lodge night spend. This donation has been match funded by the province. The province does have a small allocation of funds to match lodge initiatives of this nature. If your lodge has made donations and would like to

be considered for match funding, please contact the PrGSec.

secretary@nottinghamshiremasons.co.uk

Saint Peters Mark lodge have also made a significant donation to this worthy cause and member Tony Greasley a volunteer with the charity provided a brief update

When Lockdown was announced on 23rd March 2020, local charity Age UK Nottingham & Nottinghamshire, realised that there would be an immediate need to offer help to older people throughout the County.

On 25th March they launched their Welfare Service. Tony was one of those who stepped up for the task and commented on the donations received “The Charity’s income streams are under strain. Donations like these have enabled the Charity to carry on with welfare work, as well as maintaining other services throughout the County. Age UK Notts is extremely grateful for the financial support”.

For further information about Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, please contact Tony on 07979 751118

West Bridgford Opens its Doors

As well as reopening the Public Bar, thanks to the support of the hall company, the community charity, Meet, Greet and Eat are using the kitchen facilities at West Bridgford to provide meals to the vulnerable twice weekly. Full story to appear in the next edition.

Communications Update



Bro. Justin Donne, Round Table of Nottingham Lodge No 8604, has been appointed Provincial Communications Officer, reporting to David Wall, APMG. Justin will be developing the comms team and working on a long term provincial communications strategy over the coming weeks. Also, the comms team will distribute a Digital Toolkit to assist those who are less tech-savvy in keeping up to date.

Stay informed

Keep visiting our [Website](#) our [YouTube](#) our [Facebook](#) our [Twitter](#) and our [Instagram](#). If you have any stories please [email](#) us.