

MONMOUTHSHIRE FREEMASONS

SEIRI RHYDDION SIR FYNWY

THE BELL

Y GLOCH



A Message from the Deputy Provincial Grand Master

Brethren, welcome to the latest edition of our Provincial newsletter. I hope you find its contents informative. It only feels like weeks that I was invested as Deputy Provincial Grand Master, but in fact, six months have passed since our R.W. Provincial Grand Master was installed as Provincial Grand Master of this Province. It has been a very busy and rewarding period, attending a number of Installation meetings and being supported by Grand Officers and the Provincial team in large numbers. My thanks are extended to all for their support and to the various Lodges for the welcome and hospitality extended to us.

During visits to Lodges, the message of enjoying Masonry has been communicated, Brethren are encouraged to enjoy their Lodges, taking Office and working with their colleagues and getting to know them socially, either over a drink at the bar following the after proceedings, at Lodges of Instruction or attending other events like the recently formed 'curry club' meetings. Families are also encouraged to become involved.

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MAY / MAI
2025



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The Hogs Head annual event is the next major event in the Provincial diary. Brethren are encouraged to attend this annual social event together with their families and friends, whether Masonic or non-Masonic. The day starts with a classic car show with side stalls and other attractions, food available throughout the day, followed by an evening of entertainment with a buffet, all for £20 per head. The proceeds of the day are in support of Masonic Charities.

On 12th March, the Light Blues Club were invited to attend the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge. It was a marvellous day out for the brethren who had not had the opportunity to attend a meeting of Grand Lodge. We travelled to London by chartered coach, and attended the Quarterly Communication at which HRH The Duke of Kent was re-elected as MW Grand Master for the ensuing year. Following the meeting, we dined at a nearby Italian Restaurant before resorting to a local hostelry before our return journey. All Light Blue members enjoyed the experience, most of whom expressed interest in attending another occasion.

Brethren, enjoy your Masonry.

Best regards,

Bob

R.M. Jones,
Deputy Provincial Grand Master



Don't forget you can follow the Province online, where you'll find all the latest information on what's happening.

Facebook: @monmasons
X (Twitter): @monmasons
Instagram: @monfreemasons
Threads: @monfreemasons

FROM THE DESK OF OUR PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

Brethren, I hope this message finds you all in good health and good spirits. It has certainly been an enjoyable and busy time since Provincial Grand Lodge last October, and I am delighted to have had the opportunity to see so many of you in person while attending meetings and social occasions across the Province.

Summer Break

No doubt you will be looking forward to our annual Summer break, but I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our annual Hogs Head event on June 14th and at the numerous other social events planned over the Summer period. Certainly, my wife, Jill, and I consider it a great privilege to be invited to Ladies Festivals across the Province and are always disappointed if other masonic or family commitments prevent us from attending. It's great to see the photographs from these happy events on our social media channels and to hear the wonderful amounts raised for such a variety of worthwhile charities.

Support from Charles Lyne Lodge

What a delight it was recently at Charles Lyne Lodge to be able to make a £4,000 donation in support of those across our community who have suffered a stroke. The size of the donation was made possible by combined contributions from the Light Blues, the Province and Charles Lyne Lodge. This worthwhile cause was brought to our attention by WBro Peter Duke, who kindly liaised with staff from the Stroke Unit in Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr, who were pleased to attend to tell us more about their important work and to receive the cheque in person.

Great Support for New Curry Club

Grateful thanks to WBro Mo Iqbal for organising the inaugural meeting of the Provincial Curry Club. Thank you to those who could join us for a fabulous evening of food, fun and friendship. I look forward to seeing as many as possible at our next Curry Club meeting in the Autumn.

A Change for Prince of Wales Chapter

Good news for the Prince of Wales Chapter, which has made the decision to change to a daytime meeting. This change provides an excellent opportunity for those who prefer not to drive at night or to eat too late in the evening to still attend a Chapter meeting. It would be a great encouragement to see as many of us there as possible on Wednesday June 18th, to wish them well for this important transition in the history of the Chapter. Please book in with the ScribeE. The Chapter opens at 10.00 with visitors at 10.30. Lunch to follow.

Congratulations – We Are Proud of You

Finally, I do not want the moment to pass without offering personal congratulations to all those who have recently received well-deserved honours and promotions within the Craft and Chapter. It was a privilege to attend Grand Lodge to see them



Thank you

Thank you for all that you do to support your Lodges and Chapters. You make Monmouthshire a Province to be proud of - long may this continue.

Best wishes, Chris
Provincial Grand Master

Welcome to the latest edition of The Bell or Y Gloch in Welsh, the newsletter of the Province of Monmouthshire.

There is lots of great information in this newsletter for your enjoyment. A reminder that we are always looking for good stories to include in the newsletter and social media. Communication plays a vital role within Freemasonry. Regular and consistent messaging allows us to maintain our traditions, educate our members, and attract new ones, a key focus for us all.



This edition includes a story on the new innovative UGLE Portal, putting members in control of their data. There are stories about our members' charitable efforts and the usual features from the Learning and Development Team that help us with our daily advancement. There are two important stories on prostate cancer, so please take time to make yourself aware of the signs. Finally, remember to check your social event dates to avoid clashes!

I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and all feedback is gratefully received. Please send any comments to communications@monmouthshirefreemasons.org

WBro. Stuart John, Provincial Communications Officer



A SPECIAL DELIVERY FROM MONMOUTHSHIRE FREEMASONS TO AUSTRALIA

Graeme Parry, an Australian Freemason with family ties to Monmouthshire, recently received a copy of WBro Graham Murphy's new book – 'The Buildings and Temples associated with Freemasonry in Monmouthshire since 1764.'

But what made the delivery special is that the book was hand-delivered by our very own WBro Mike Thompson during his visit to Australia, making for a remarkable journey spanning thousands of miles.

Having spent much of his youth in Monmouth and maintaining family connections in the area, Graeme joined the Monmouthshire Freemasons Facebook page. He discovered that WBro Graham had published a book documenting Masonic Buildings and Temples in Monmouthshire. Eager to secure a copy, Graeme contacted Graham to arrange a purchase. However, the logistics and costs of shipping the book to Australia proved challenging.

Enter WBro Mike Thompson. Knowing that he and his wife, Heather, would be visiting Australia to see family, he offered to deliver the book to Graeme personally.

The special handover took place at Rye Beach on the picturesque Mornington Peninsula in Victoria. To Graeme's delight, the book was not only delivered in person but also signed by its author.





Check your social event date with our Provincial calendar to avoid unnecessary clashes.

You can find the Calendar for the Province under the 'EVENTS' tab on the Provincial website. Please take the opportunity to highlight your events to a wider audience.

Send details of the event, contacts and details such as costs, times, etc. to info@monmouthshirefreemasons.org



Masonic Gin

High 12



A bespoke gin for Monmouthshire Freemasons in partnership with the award-winning Spirit of Wales Distillery in Newport.

The gin is distilled using a blend of botanicals. Its vibrant flavours include elderflower, elderberry, and sloe berry, all found in Gwent.

Enquiries: Stuart John 07890 363346
communications@monmouthshirefreemasons.org

Congratulations to the Monmouthshire Freemasons who have received an appointment or promotion in Grand Rank.

Appointments Craft:

- Malcolm Fairie PAGDC
- Julian Tod PGStB
- Graham Murphy PAGStB

Promotions:

- Robert Jones PGSwdB
- John Child PJGD
- Alan Richard Smith PJGD

Appointments Royal Arch

- E Comp Robert Luis Watts - Past Grand Standard Bearer.
- E Comp Andrew Peter Murphy - Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies.

Promotions:

- E Comp John Judd PGStB - Past Grand Sword Bearer.

CHEPSTOW MASONIC HALL

Chepstow Freemasons recently celebrated 50 years in their current Masonic Temple on School Hill, Chepstow and also the opening of the new Henderson Lounge, named after local businessman and long-serving freemason Ian Henderson. An old office space was converted into a well-appointed lounge and bar.

The guests enjoyed drinks on arrival and a delicious dinner. They were entertained by Tom Jones tribute act, Dean Jones, and backed by the Tena Ladies. A raffle and game of 'Heads and Tails' and other donations raised a wonderful sum of £1,000 donated to St. David's Hospice Care.

Photograph (left to right) WBro Chris Rann, VWBro Ian Henderson, WBro Jeff Smith, WBro Adrian Cullimore.



AGE CONNECTS TORFAEN

Monmouthshire Freemasons and the MCF has provided a £60,000 grant to support the Age Connects Torfaen 'Dementia Buddy' project.

Nearly 500 local people living with dementia and their carers will be getting help and support from a volunteer 'dementia buddy'.

The project will support people living with dementia to overcome loneliness in the local community. The programme will focus on pairing people with dementia to a volunteer dementia buddy who shares their interests, such as music or sport.



TENET

MISPRONOUNCIATION & LINGUISTIC DECAY

One of the most frequently asked questions of the Learning and Development team is how certain words or phrases are pronounced. The question about pronunciations can often lead to misconceptions for brethren, who are often given a response that, 'we have always done or said it this way'.

Let us look at the word 'TENET.' It is made up of two syllables, i.e., 'TEN + ET.' Some brethren pronounce the first part as 'TEEN', which does not conform to any variation of standard English even after allowing for colloquial dialect, pronunciation and historical factors.

The Cambridge, Oxford, Collins, Britannica, Merriman-Webster and other dictionaries explain how the word tenet should sound. Indeed, there are numerous YouTube examples of how the word is pronounced. Just type in a search engine; 'how to pronounce tenet' and the very first article you are likely to come across is a British pronunciation.

Technically, the words in our language consist of three elements or building blocks:

- Phonemes – a simple, basic, and distinct unit of sound
- Morphemes – the smallest meaningful constituent within a linguistic expression within a word
- Graphemes – a letter or group of letters that represent a sound, e.g., 'et'

You also have to consider that tenet is a palindrome word in its written form and pronunciation, i.e., it reads the same back to front. Note that the 'e' sound remains the same.

Words beginning with 'tene'. At least 53 words in the English language begin with 'tene', e.g., tenement, temerity, tenex, telex etc. They are all pronounced 'ten' and NOT 'teen'. If you also apply this language convention to using the other vowels after the root word 'ten', you will find the same result, e.g., tenacity, tenifugal, tenon, tenure.

Historical reference- the word 'tenet' is borrowed from Latin. There are many examples of the use of the word in the early 16th century, e.g., in the writing of Martin Fothersby, Bishop of Salisbury devoted much time to articulating accuracy. The PIE root pronunciation of the word 'tenet' from then to this day remains 'ten' with no variation. This can also be identified through the Latin term 'ten', which means to 'stretch' or 'hold.'

And so, brethren, 'TEN' not 'TEEN.' A daily advancement in Masonic knowledge! Or is that a stretch too far?

GOOGLE CALENDARS

You can now subscribe digitally to Monmouthshire Freemasons calendars.

To add a calendar:

- Log in to Google Calendar (account needed)
- Add a calendar by clicking '+' next to 'Other Calendars' on the left toolbar
- Choose 'From URL'
- Paste URL links that can be found on the Provincial website: <https://monmouthshire-freemasons.org/google-calendar/>

Please refer to the Monmouthshire Directory (Blue Book), Summons or Provincial Communications for timings. Contacts are also listed in the Directory.

For those brethren using Apple devices, you can link Google Calendars in your Apple Calendar settings.

You can also view the full calendar on our webpage: <https://monmouthshirefreemasons.org/events/>.

ST DAVID'S DAY AT NEWPORT MASONIC HALL



INVITATION TO REGISTER

Your Gateway to Freemasonry in the Digital Age

Brethren,

You are cordially invited to sign up to the brand-new membership platform designed to enhance your Masonic experience.

When you register for the first time, please remember these important points:

- 1 Use your email address, which is the one that UGLE, your Province and your Lodge/Chapter use to communicate with you.
- 2 Wait to receive a 6-digit verification code, which will be emailed to you. Check your spam folder.
- 3 Type or Paste the code into the box and press **next**
- 4 Enter the following information in full:
 - Your first name and middle name(s) in full
 - Your surname in full
 - Date of birth
 - Select a Lodge or Chapter in our Province that you are a member of (start typing the name or number and select from the list, be careful to choose the right one)
- 5 Press the **next** button.
- 6 If your answers do not match our records, you may be asked additional questions.
- 7 You will then be invited to set a password. Passwords need to be at least 12 characters; there is no requirement for different cases, numbers or special characters; we recommend selecting three short, memorable words.

If you have completed the process correctly, you should now have access to Portal. To help you explore its functionality, we have created helpful guides for you.

Frequently Asked Questions: <https://monmouthshirefreemasons.org/portal>

Desktop User Guide Print: <https://monmouthshirefreemasons.org/portal>

Desktop User Guide Video: <https://vimeo.com/1047180449/06d0990761>

Join Portal: <https://desktop.portal.ugle.org.uk/>

Should you need further support, our team in Monmouthshire can be contacted here:

info@monmouthshirefreemasons.org

Sincerely and Fraternally,

WBro Keith Evans, Provincial Grand Secretary

INTERESTED IN JOINING A PROVINCIAL BOWLS CLUB?

We are seeking expressions of interest in forming a Provincial Bowls Team. If you want to get involved, register your interest using this link.

<https://forms.gle/okMEiyPWSMYvAhUBA>

60-YEAR IN ROYAL ARCH CERTIFICATE

Companions witnessed a momentous occasion at the Homfray Chapter 1562 recently as EComp Byron Thomas received his 60-year in Royal Arch certificate from the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent.

Whilst this achievement is remarkable, some members may not know that Byron will also celebrate 60 years in Mark Masonry this year.

More to follow in future editions, but well done to EComp Byron for reaching this milestone.



PROVINCIAL MEMBERSHIP ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

 **Monmouthshire Freemasons** ...
Posted by Stuart John
1d · 🌐

Want to develop confidence?... See more



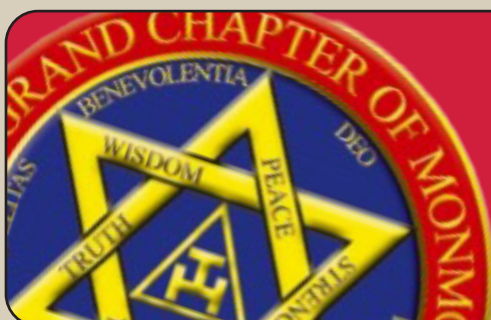
monmouthshirefreemasons.org
Discover Freemasonry [Learn more](#)

Did you catch our Provincial advertising campaign on social media recently?

Along with other provinces, Monmouthshire is trialling new ways of reaching potential members.

We placed our adverts on Facebook and Instagram, and initial feedback has been positive, with a number of enquiries received from potential members.

The Provincial Membership Team is working through the expressions of interest before we launch phase two of the campaign later in the year.



Royal Arch is considered the completion of a Freemason's journey in pure antient masonry.

Speak to your Lodge Chapter rep for more information.



UNITED GRAND LODGE
OF ENGLAND



SUPREME GRAND CHAPTER
OF ROYAL ARCH MASONS
OF ENGLAND



One Organisation



You can follow Monmouthshire Royal Arch online, where you'll find all the latest information on what's happening.

Facebook: @MonRoyalArch
X (Twitter): @MonRoyalArch
Instagram: @MonRoyalArch
Threads: @MonRoyalArch

DAILY ADVANCEMENT FURNISHINGS FOR THE TEMPLE

On occasions, Members ask for clarification on certain aspects of ritual or the language used in Freemasonry. The following clarification has been requested: "Why do we not find a network over the pillars in our Masonic Temples?"

In the first instance, there are practical reasons why this would prove difficult. Also, when considering the carvings that are described in our ritual books, it would make sense that the decoration of the canopy or ceiling inside the porch of King Solomon's Temple would be of intricate design. The pillars, in effect, were located at the entrance and not within the Temple itself but formed part of a porch or Ulam. The pillars were free-standing rather than used for structural support. It must also be remembered that our rituals and associated Masonic stories are often based on legend. In the first book of King's, we find reference to the pillars, which can be summarised as follows.

King Solomon asked for a man named Hiram to come from Tyre. Hiram was half Israelite since his mother was a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a craftsman in bronze from Tyre. Hiram was extremely skilful and talented in any work in bronze, and he came to do all the metal work for King Solomon. Hiram cast two bronze pillars, each 27 feet tall and 18 feet in circumference. He cast bronze capitals for the tops of the pillars, each 7.5 feet tall. Each capital was decorated with seven sets of latticework and interwoven chains. He also encircled the latticework with two rows of pomegranates to decorate the capitals over the pillars. The capitals on the columns inside the entry room were shaped like water lilies and were six feet tall. The capitals on the two pillars had 200 pomegranates in two rows around them, beside the rounded surface next to the latticework. Hiram set the pillars at the entrance of the Temple, one toward the south and one toward the north. He named the one on the south Jachin and the one on the north Boaz. The capitals on the pillars were shaped like water lilies, these being a symbol of love.

In our ritual we are informed that at the top of the pillars are representations of the Terrestrial and Celestial Globes. This is reflected in the Solomon repository of learning resources. Indeed, a pair of globes, each surmounting a column, are a central part of the symbolism Masons use to decorate their Lodges. The celestial globe is symbolically seen as the spiritual part of human nature, and the terrestrial globe is the material side. In the past, a Lodge usually had two six-foot columns with nine or twelve-inch diameter globes, with smaller versions on the Wardens' columns.

Usually, one column will have a simple Ionic or Doric capital and another a Corinthian one. Such globes, either in miniature or full size, were sometimes painted, showing the continents on the terrestrial world globe and the stars on the celestial globe.



Contemplating these bodies, we are inspired with due reverence for the Great Architect and his works and are induced to encourage the study of Astronomy, Geography, and Navigation and their associated arts. They also denote the universality of Masonry, teaching us that a Mason's charity should be equally as extensive.

The terrestrial globe displays the entire surface of the earth. All nations being represented, with none given any unnatural emphasis, unlike some other globes. Thus, symbolically, the entire population of the earth is on the same level. Combine this symbol with that of the Plumb Rule, one of the working tools of the Fellow Craft degree and no matter where one stands upon the surface of the earth, if a plumb line is held at that point, it naturally points to the earth's centre. Two plumb lines held at different points on the surface will always point, however slightly, in two different directions, but both point to the centre.

The celestial globe displays numerous stars in the heavens. Every person possesses a unique combination of religious, social, political and racial characteristics, and such individuals are as numerous as the stars that one can see. Contrary to popular belief, the celestial and terrestrial globes were not present on the two columns which adorned the porchway to King Solomon's Temple; how could they be, given that, at that time, people believed the earth to be flat? Likely, they were originally 'bowl-shaped' as the Hebrew word 'Goolot' (plural), or 'Goolah' (singular) means globes, bowls or vessels, and were confused in translation. The suggestion is that what we see now is 'artistic license'.

Written by Graham Murphy, Provincial Grand Learning & Development Officer

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

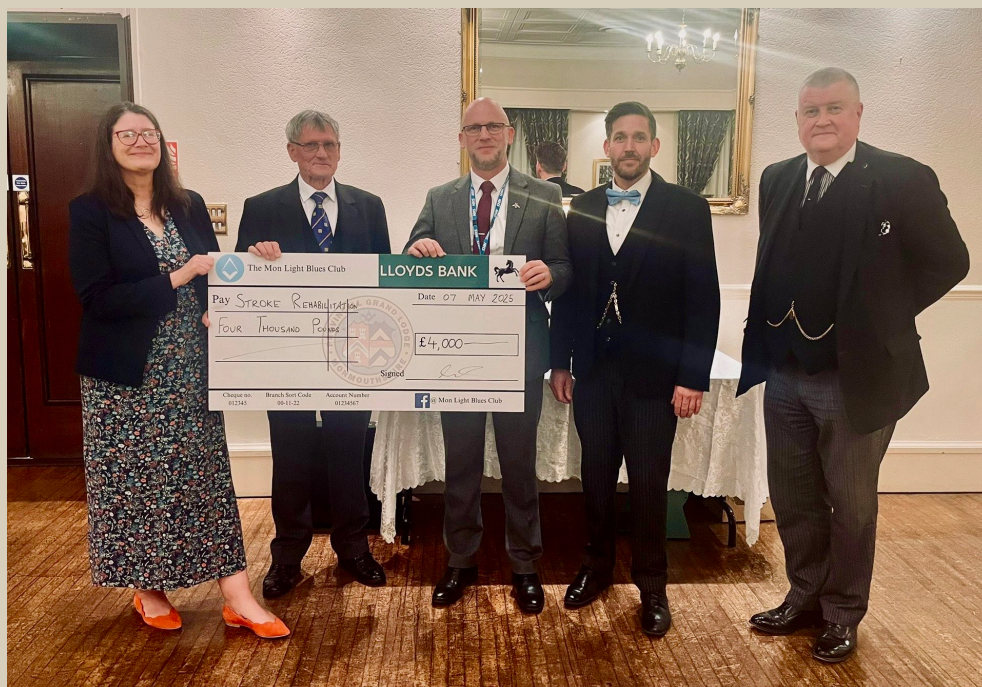
Saturday 31st May - Llantarnam Lodge Horse Racing Night
Saturday 31st May - Abergavenny Elvis Concert
Sunday 1st June - Silurian Lodge Sunday Lunch
Saturday 14th June - Hogs Head Car Show and Evening Entertainment
Saturday 19th July - Family Fun Day, Fundraising for SANDS charity
Saturday 9th August - Henllys Barn Dance
Saturday 25th October - Silurian Ladies Night
Saturday 1st November - Trevethin Lodge Ladies Night

FIRST PROVINCIAL CURRY NIGHT



CHARLES LYNE DONATE TO STROKE CHARITY

Charles Lyne Lodge recently made a £4,000 donation in support of those who have suffered a stroke. The donation was made possible by combined contributions from the Mon Light Blues, Province and Charles Lyne Lodge.



LOYAL MONMOUTH LODGE UNVEILS NEW BANNER

Loyal Monmouth Lodge No. 457 has proudly unveiled its newly dedicated banner, replacing the previous one, which had fallen into disrepair.

The new banner retains the timeless design of the former, featuring the distinguished Coat of Arms of Lord Llangattock along with the motto 'Celeritas et Veritas' meaning 'Promptness and Truth.' It stands as a tribute to the past and future of the Lodge, symbolising the enduring principles of Freemasonry.



The new banner's commissioning was made possible by the generosity of WBro. Dr. Nick Wilkinson, who donated it as a legacy of his year as Worshipful Master. His contribution was met with great appreciation, and the banner will be proudly displayed at future events as well as within the temple itself.

During the dedication ceremony, Provincial Learning and Development Officer Graham Murphy emphasised the deep historical and symbolic significance of banners within Freemasonry. Graham commented: "Brethren, there are few symbols in use in the present day which are of such antiquity of origin as a banner."

"Banners have been a part of Masonic tradition since the early 18th century, following the principles of Arms and Heraldry seen in nobility and Medieval Guilds."

Founded on December 21, 1838, Loyal Monmouth Lodge is the most senior Lodge in its Province, and the newly dedicated banner will serve as a powerful reminder of its rich heritage and ongoing commitment to making better men who strive to create a better society.

BOOK YOUR FUNCTION

*at Newport
Masonic Hall*

There are two dining rooms, the main dining room can cater for up to 120 people and a smaller dining room for up to 50 people.
The premises are licensed and there is a large lounge bar and a small snug bar, both of which are also suitable for meetings.

Weddings
Engagement's
Birthday's
Corporate Events
Proms

Enquire within for further details or contact via:
Telephone- 07757996450
Email- info@newportmasonichall.co.uk

Monmouthshire Freemasons

10th Annual Classic & Vintage Vehicle Show

Saturday 14th June 2025
Hogs Head, Llantilio Crossenny,
Abergavenny, NP7 8TA
Gates Open at 10AM

- Sweet Stall
- Licensed Bar
- Ice Cream van
- Bouncy Castle
- Amusements and stalls for all the family
- Free entry for exhibitors
- Local Crafts and Autojumble
- On-site caterers serving freshly cooked Rolls, Burgers and Hot Dogs

Entry Form available @ www.moncarshow.com

MonmouthshireClassicandVintageVehicleShow

For enquiries please contact Adrian Martin at moncarshow@hotmail.com

Our impact 2023/24 In Monmouthshire

Local community

13

Monmouthshire
charities supported

£22,000

given to charities
in Monmouthshire

Support for individuals and families



43

grants awarded



32

individuals and families helped



£121,272

given to individuals
and families



£63,847

given to support with daily
living costs



£57,424

given to support healthcare
and wellbeing



9

people accessed mental
health support



Masonic
Charitable Foundation



“

Without the support and generosity of the MCF, I truly believe our small, single-parent family would not have survived the challenges we faced, especially during the intensity of the pandemic and the ongoing economic crisis.”

And beyond...

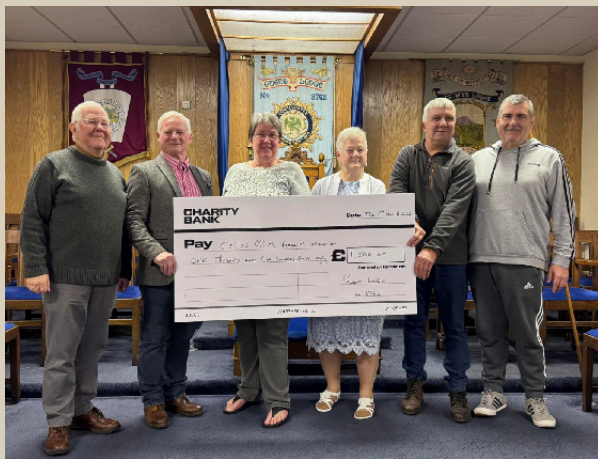
This year we supported more than 330 charities in England, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and internationally and helped more than 3,000 individuals and families in need.

Read our full Impact Report!

Scan the QR code using your phone camera
or visit mcf.org.uk/impact-report



CHARITY AROUND THE PROVINCE



KNOW YOUR PSA - WRITTEN IN THE WORDS OF WBRO HOWARD HARRIS

So, you're approaching fifty years of age or, more probably, past it by some margin. Over the last few years, how much consideration have you given to your Prostate Gland? It's a potential ticking time bomb sitting quite undisturbed behind your 'Bits and Pieces'. It came in handy when you were having a family. Maybe not so important now.



Why should you have given it any consideration at all? After all you are probably feeling fit and well for whatever age you are. Before you get any feelings of smugness, give the following points a bit of thought:

- One in eight men will develop Prostate Cancer in their lifetime. If you are of Afro-Caribbean descent, the odds change to one in three. How do you feel about these odds?

The symptoms of Prostate Cancer are varied. Do you have difficulty in urinating? Do you feel that even after finishing, there is some urine still left in your bladder? Do you have pain in your nether regions? Do you need to pee much more often than you used to, and the need to pee is very urgent, much more so than in the past?

But like most men who have been diagnosed with Prostate Cancer, you have experienced none of the above symptoms at all. Waiting until you do could be the costliest decision of your life!

So, what should you do to determine if you are suffering from this disease?

- Go to your GP and request a PSA (Positive Specific Antigen) test. Your doctor may tell you that as you have experienced no symptoms, then there is no need for the test. If you are over fifty, you are ENTITLED to such a test – INSIST upon having one. If you are having an annual blood test, ensure that the PSA box is ticked for testing.
- A PSA test is only a possible indicator that all is not well and not a definite link to Prostate Cancer, but it may well indicate that all is not as it should be.
- If the symptoms or the PSA test point in the general direction of a problem, the next test should be a physical examination by the doctor. A digital rectal examination (you all know what I mean). Not an enjoyable experience for you or the doctor. But it will tell the doctor whether you need to move on to further examination, or not, as the case may be.

Should further examination be needed, you will probably be sent for a biopsy. Again, this is not an enjoyable experience, and you may find it embarrassing, but refusing to have one because of the embarrassment factor is foolish in the extreme! A biopsy will give you a definite answer, one way or the other!

What if the outcome is positive?

Well, you have now entered the realm of discussing the next move with a consultant. What are your options?

- You can turn yourself into an ostrich! Bury your head in the sand and hope it will go away! Best of luck with that one!
- Have regular tests to see if it is progressing or is stable.
- Undergo a round of radiotherapy. This entails going to the hospital, probably Velindre, every weekday for anything between twenty days and thirty-seven days. At the end of this, you will be exhausted but hopefully cured.
- Receive brachytherapy – this entails planting tiny radioactive pellets in the prostate, which hopefully will kill the cancerous cells. This procedure is not particularly invasive.
- Undergo a Radical Prostatectomy – basically, have it surgically removed. This can be done robotically. However, there may be side effects, or there may not be.

Remember when you are deciding on your course of action that you have family, friends and colleagues, and you would like to be part of their lives. Doing nothing allows the cancer to have free rein inside your body, and you will probably be saying goodbye to the above-mentioned sooner rather than later.

Perhaps the first move on your part would be to go online to the Prostate Cancer UK website, where you will find a Risk Checker that may put your mind at rest and guide you toward the next step. This check will only take a few minutes.

From personal experience of having experienced no symptoms, the thought of having Prostate Cancer never crossed my mind. I was lucky enough to be picked up as a sufferer after having had a routine blood test at my annual check-up. This was thirteen years ago. I am one of the lucky ones –other brethren have not been so lucky.

If you want to chat privately please contact me. If you feel it needs to reach a wider audience, then I would be happy to attend a lodge meeting and give a talk to the members.

Finally – don't fool yourself into thinking this is a disease for old men. None of you reading this article will have ever been as fit as 48-year-old Sir Chris Hoy. He has been diagnosed with terminal Prostate Cancer and has between two and four years to live. This should make you think long and hard about your health, no matter what age you are.

This article was not written to frighten anyone; it is only to provide information about what could be a devastating problem for you and your family.

REMEMBER – being embarrassed is temporary; dying is PERMANENT

PETER DILLEY'S PROSTATE CANCER STORY AS TOLD BY HIS WIFE SHARON

Many of you know Peter, he was a regular visitor to many of the Lodge's around the Province from 1997 until 2019. He was Master twice in St John's Lodge 818, the second time in 2014 and up to this time had been busy running his business, attending degrees of Freemasonry, and supporting St John's Lodge in many ways. He was an immensely proud Freemason. Peter was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer in December 2014 and bravely fought



Prostate Cancer until he died in November 2019. Julian Tod asked him when he was fighting his cancer, "Is there anything you wished you had done differently?" Peter replied, "I wish I had been tested sooner". In the men's toilets at St John's Lodge, there is a list above the urinals asking if you have any of the following symptoms. After his diagnosis, he read them, realising he had them all and had seen the notice many, many times.

- Difficulty or pain in passing urine.
- Having to rush to the toilet to pass urine.
- Frequent visits to the toilet, especially at night.
- Starting or stopping while urinating.
- Dribbling urine.
- A feeling of not having emptied the bladder fully.

Of course, you may have none of these symptoms, look at Chris Hoy! Another high-profile celebrity going through Prostate Cancer. At the same time that Pete was going through treatment for Prostate Cancer, so was Bill Turnbull, the BBC presenter, he also said he wished he had been treated sooner, but still GPs turn men away who just want a simple PSA test. The next test is not pleasant for men, but it could save your life. Women must undergo Cervical and Breast Screenings to catch the signs of Cancer.

He had been diagnosed with an enlarged prostate which he put the pain in his groin down to, especially after a long journey driving a car. One morning, he went to the loo, and after a lot of pain, he was able to pass water. He went to the GP, and they diagnosed "Prostatitis" and prescribed antibiotics putting the symptoms down to his enlarged Prostate. At this time, they did not do a PSA test. This was in August 2014, he had a further two courses of antibiotics, but with the pain not going away, he had also been referred for a scan and was told there was a 6-9 month waiting list. Being in a bad mood, he replied, "I could be dead by then!". In desperation, one morning after this, he rang the GP Surgery asking again to see a doctor, only on checking in at the surgery did he realise he was seeing a female GP!! The GP looked up all the things they had done and, because she did not usually see men with problems with their prostate, consulted the advice available to her. Taking into account Pete's age, the symptoms and the long wait on the NHS, she said, "If you were my husband, I would pay to see a Consultant" We paid the sum of £167, and Peter duly had all the tests over a four week period including the scan!!

During this time, Peter and I held our 2nd Ladies night at St John's, and he had his biopsy on my Birthday!! Paying to see the consultant, they did all the tests, and in December, he went to Neville Hall for what he thought was his final test. How wrong he was. He was told that he had Aggressive Gleason 8 Prostate Cancer. I was not with him; he had no warning of what the appointment was about. I rang him from work to see what the final test was, and Peter said it wasn't that and that he would talk to me later. I could tell from his voice that something was seriously wrong. I was allowed to leave work, and when I saw him, he said the dreaded words "I have aggressive Prostate Cancer."

As you can imagine, no time is good to hear you have cancer, but cancer never cares what time of year it may be. We continued as normal, telling only a few of our close family, no need to spoil everyone's Christmas/New Year.

From the time of the diagnosis, things moved much more quickly, and he had an operation to remove his Prostate in February 2015. The Consultant was pleased with the operation. However, the cancer had already started breaking out from his Prostate, so yes, it would spread through his body. It is common for Prostate Cancer to spread to the bones, and two years later, even though Pete had undergone two lots of Chemotherapy and a course of Radiotherapy, they discovered tumours on his spine, again in December!

When Pete went for his first chemotherapy at Velindre there was another man there having his first treatment. They had only given him two years to live, he had gone to the GP complaining of back pain, the cancer had already spread to his bones. As I said, Pete fought his cancer for five years. If he had waited for the NHS Scan, he might have only had two years too.

It was not easy seeing my husband deal with the many side effects of cancer. We continued to travel when we could, I remember saying to the Oncologist one time, what do we do about holidays? He replied go on them, he knew what was coming. Peter bravely fought the disease and, as many of you know, was still active in the Province, only finally having to stop going to work in the summer of 2019 because of the excruciating pain he was in. I would also add that I am indebted to the fantastic help and care we had from St David's Hospice in Newport, bittersweet that Monmouthshire Freemasons sponsored one of the rooms there. You may remember Peter was very open about his illness, encouraging anyone with symptoms to get tested. We fought his illness together, there were tears as well as laughter, but I am immensely proud to have been his wife.

Peter and Howard Harris became great friends when they were both going around the Monmouthshire Province as Junior Deacons in the late 1990s and were Millenium Masters together. Howard is a Freemason living with Prostate Cancer, Peter was a Freemason who died from Prostate Cancer.

To quote Howard's true words, "Being embarrassed is temporary, dying is Permanent!"

