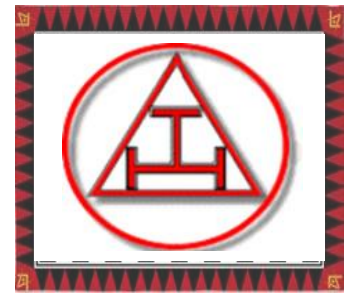




# West Lancs Nuggets

## "PROVINCIAL NEWS DIGEST"



**Welcome to the third edition of the Provincial News Digest. If anyone has any suggestions for items to be covered in future issues, please email *Stewart Cranage, Provincial Grand Mentor*: [mentor@provinceofwestlancs.org](mailto:mentor@provinceofwestlancs.org)**

**Issue 3: 29 April 2020**

### **BUT FOR COVID-19! Phil Gunning, DepProvGM**

Much has already been said about the shocking effects of the COVID-19 virus, so I thought I would change the theme somewhat.

At the time this issue goes to press I, together with the Provincial Grand Master Tony Harrison and many of the AProvGMs, would normally be in London attending the annual investiture, one of the most eagerly awaited events in the calendar. Arrangements begin some three months before when the advanced rail fares come out and there is a scramble to get things booked. Arriving in London at lunchtime the day before, we say goodbye to Tony who has meetings to attend, while we have other matters of similar importance. Travel is thirsty work, so once checked in at our hotel, usually the President, it is a quick trip out of the front door, to the next alleyway, turn left to The Swan, where, if you look closely you will generally find some familiar faces from Ormskirk!

After four or so hours of 'discussion', the evening is spent at a bistro pub, the Bountiful Cow, a short distance away on Eagle Street. After dinner we get back to the hotel where we are joined by Tony who has been dining with the Pro Grand Master and the other high rulers. There is generally a round of war stories from the previous Provincial year and tomorrow's recipients are made aware of what is required of them once at the Grand Temple - not that anyone remembers.

The day of the investiture calls for a good lunch which with the other AProvGMs has for a number of years been taken at Middle Temple Hall, normally reserved for members of the Bar. Having been in meetings all morning we are joined for lunch by Tony who usually brings with him Sir David Trippier, ProvGM of East Lancashire. Lunch is not the 'booze fest' of the previous day because of the Grand Investiture. Once in the Grand Temple, it is very difficult to get out, so discretion calls for a certain amount of personal restraint to remain comfortable! The investiture is an all-ticket affair, but quite how so many West Lancashire brethren get in never cease to amaze. Prior to the meeting the Grand DC addresses all concerned on what is going to happen. Oliver Lodge, the Immediate Past GDC, could be very amusing re his threats regarding mobile phones and his manner of pointing out the correct steps for recipients prior to being presented to the Grand Master. For those who have never heard the Salutation, here it is in full:



*"Brethren, His Royal Highness Prince Edward George Nicholas Paul Patrick; Duke of Kent; Earl of St Andrews; Baron Downpatrick; of Wren House in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea; Knight Companion of the Most Noble Order of the Garter; Grand Master of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George; Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order; A Personal Aide-de-Camp to Her Majesty The Queen; Knight Commander of the Royal Order of King Carl XIII of Sweden; Visitor of Cranfield University; Chancellor of the University of Surrey; Royal Bencher of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn; Fellow of the Royal Society; Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England; Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine; Honorary Doctor of Civil Law of the University of Durham; Honorary Doctor of Laws of the University of Leeds; Honorary Doctor of Civil Law of the University of York; Honorary Doctor of Science of the University of Kent at Canterbury; Honorary Doctor of Science of Cranfield University; Honorary Doctor of Philosophy of the London Metropolitan University; Field Marshal in Her Majesty's Army; Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers; Royal Colonel, First Battalion, The Rifles; Colonel-in-Chief, The Lorne Scots (Peel, Dufferin and Halton Regiment); Deputy Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers and Greys); Colonel, Scots Guards; Honorary Air Chief Marshal in the Royal Air Force; Right Worshipful Past Senior Grand Warden of the United Grand Lodge of England; etc., etc., etc., etc., has been re-elected as Most Worshipful The Grand Master of the United Fraternity of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of England for the ensuing year; whom may the Great Architect long preserve.*

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Now for all you budding DC's, how do you fancy doing that in front of 2,200 brethren. I have never heard the slightest hitch or hesitation and it's always followed by an audible gasp. Not only that, the Grand DC then does the Pro Grand Master and the Assistant Grand Master, all with their styles and titles. Anyone who can do that can be forgiven for confusing the Isle of Wight with the Isle of Man!

The Grand Investiture is of course the central piece, with recipients from around the world. We obviously reserve the loudest clap for our brethren of West Lancashire. Among the noted recipients of recent years has been HRH the King of KwaZulu-Natal, complete with enormous Rolls Royce parked on Great Queens Street, with jackstaff on front wing and six of the biggest Zulu Protection Officers you have ever seen. Also, the Crown Prince of Benin, who was warmly welcomed by myself and Tony Bent.

Immediately after the meeting comes the scramble to get to wherever the dinner is to be held. Again, an all-ticket affair. The event kicks off with as much champagne as you can get down, trays of canapés to relieve the hunger and soak up the fluid and, if it is at the Guildhall, a very agreeable meal, with as much wine as you can manage (with dignity). All in all, a very splendid occasion, but if you are eagerly looking forward to the Grand Master being on his feet for any length of time, you will be disappointed. HRH does not do long!

Dinner over, it is back to the President, quick change and down for more. The hotel is full of brethren from all over the country and beyond, so it is good to catch up with everyone. For what happens later, my lips are sealed. To find out, you will have to be there.

The following day it all begins again for the Royal Arch, but I am sure at some stage someone will tell you about that! Keep safe and well.

Phil

## Two poems of interest during these days of lockdown

And when this ends, we will emerge, shyly and then all at once, dazed, longhaired as we embrace loved ones the shadow spared, and weep for those it gathered in its shroud.

A kind of rapture, this longed-for laying on of hands, high cries as we nuzzle, leaning in to kiss, and whisper that now things will be different, although a time will come when we'll forget the curve's approaching wave, the hiss and sigh of ventilators, the crowded, makeshift morgues; a time when we may even miss the old-world arm's-length courtesy, small kindnesses left on doorsteps, the drifting, idle days, and nights when we flung open all



'When' by John O'Donnell, Irish poet

the windows to arias in the darkness, our voices reaching out, holding each other till this passes.

I now present to you the working tools of a virtual, electronic online Freemason.

They are the mouse, the keyboard and the router.

The mouse is to move around the desktop within the bounds of the mouse mat, the keyboard to input data to represent the meaning behind our ritual and the router to share our brotherly love amongst our fellow brethren via the internet.

But as we are not all operative masons, but rather virtual or electronic Masons, we apply these tools to our current quarantined lives.

In this sense, the mouse teaches us to stay within the bounds of our homes for the safety and welfare of all mankind, the square represented by the mouse mat representing the bounds of which we all must virtually meet.

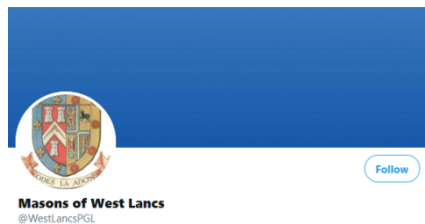
The keyboard reminds us that communication will enable us to support each other and our community through very difficult times and to ensure we better understand each other and enable us to continue to support our fellow creatures.

The router teaches us that even if we are alone in the most remote part of the globe, that although our lodges or chapters may be suspended, Freemasonry will never desert us. The router reminds us that we will, one day soon, resume labour and meet again in a regular meeting by which means alone we will be one day once again rendered fit members of regularly organised society.



## A tip from the Deputy Grand Superintendent!

Accepting the invitation to join our Provincial Grand Master Tony Harrison in UGLE's **#TimeToToast** on Twitter, don't do what I did by trying to involve the dog (Reggie)!



See Tony's video at [Tony's TimeToToast](#)



## Jim carries on the great work



Renowned for raising funds for charity by getting his hands-on signed Liverpool FC merchandise, this lockdown simply hasn't restricted Jim's activities. He was approached by a group of ladies who he had supported previously but this time they'd turned their hands to producing scrubs for the local hospital and were desperate for materials. The cancelled Masonic Charitable Foundation charity fundraising dinner at Liverpool Football Club due to the pandemic left him with an array of signed shirts and footballs on his hands. Jim being the grand chap that he is put, two and two together and set about raffling one for the shirts to support the ladies.

The photos show Jim holding a framed Steven Gerrard shirt which raised the magnificent sum of £720 and one of the set of scrubs that the ladies have made for Warrington and Whiston Hospitals.

Well done Jim Corcoran of Lodge of Harmony No 220.



**Stay safe  
brethren and  
companions**

