



WEST LANCS NUGGETS

“PROVINCIAL NEWS DIGEST”



Please note – this issue has an additional and separate supplement

Issue 13: 4 November 2020

Supporting the work of foodbanks

Across the Province over the last year there has been some fantastic work undertaken by individual brethren, lodges and our groups in order to support the work of local foodbanks.

There is no doubt that since the outbreak of the pandemic it has been a tough time for everyone, not least the homeless and vulnerable. As Christmas approaches the demand on the foodbanks will undoubtedly become immense.

In order to assist with their invaluable work, the Provincial Grand Master has authorised a Province-wide initiative to ensure that essential supplies are provided.

To explore how this might be achieved a Zoom meeting was held on 3 November – too late to for it to be reported in this issue of Nuggets. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that the brethren of the Province will respond in true West Lancashire fashion.



Still open all hours!

Over the last 12 months, 22 local charities have benefitted from donations made by the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) to the value of £122,000 in West Lancs.

In addition to this, 314 Freemasons or members of their family, have been helped with grants from the MCF totalling over £890,000. Please remember that when you are able to attend a lodge, on average you will be sitting in lodge with at least one claimant, who we will rightly never know who they are.

The West Lancs shop was launched at the start of the West Lancashire MCF 2021 Festival in 2017. All donations to the Festival go to the MCF which has given over £30,000,000 this year to international, national and local charities.

The shop is open all hours, morning, noon and night via the Provincial website. If you want to make a purchase visit the website, click on Membership at the top of the page, then click on Provincial shop. Alternatively, click on the link below.

<https://www.westlancsfreemasons.org.uk/provincial-shop/>

Over 750 web orders have been placed since the shop was launched and has contributed £101,000 worth of sales. The profits from those sales are to be given to the West Lancashire MCF 2021 Festival Appeal.

At the conclusion of the festival in May 2021 the stock will be transferred to the West Lancashire Freemasons Charity, they will then continue the running of the shop and promotion of the merchandise. All future profits will be for the benefit of our own Masonic Charity.



Malcolm Warren is responsible for running the Provincial Shop which is still open all hours.

Pastures new for a Past Provincial Grand Chaplain

I have recently shared the news that I will be leaving St Saviour Bamber Bridge after over 16 years. I have been invited by The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd. Justin Welby, to be the Rector of the Saxon Shoreline Benefice in the Diocese of Canterbury, in the southern part of Kent.



St Martin Aldington amid the old Archbishops' hunting lodges

The benefice consists of seven parishes and eight churches in villages and hamlets overlooking Romney Marsh, west of the M20 to Folkstone and Dover and is the eastern benefice of the Romney and Tenterden Deanery. The Deanery is very large and remote in certain areas, encompassing almost all of Romney Marsh as well as parishes in the High Weald, and 'pastoring' a good stretch of the 350 miles of the shoreline in the diocese. The benefice sits between the High Weald in the west and the Kent Downs in the east, very much in the 'garden of England', which hosts a lot of sheep, grows some 90% of the nation's cherries, plums, hops and figs, and is enjoying a growing industry cultivating vineyards in some of the western parishes of the benefice.

The churches and parishes are quite varied in kind. Whilst being very rural and ancient, the communities vary in size and yet are within easy reach of the large town of Ashford (with a direct line to London St Pancras and its international Eurostar stop), the port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel terminal at Folkstone. Other than the 'proper' village life of Hamstreet and Aldington, communities are a remote series of smaller villages and hamlets, some with only 50 to 100 dwellings, bordering and overlooking Romney Marsh to the English Channel, less than seven miles at its nearest point in the benefice.



St Mary Orlestone



St Mary Magdalene Ruckinge

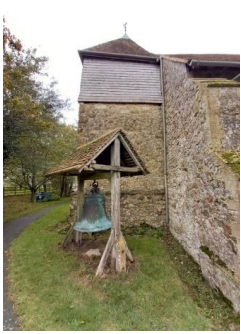
The villages are mostly strung out along the B2067 east-west, and parallel The Royal Military Canal, which, running for 28 miles between Rye (Folkstone) and Hastings, follows the old Saxon coastline bordering what became the reclaimed Romney Marsh, and was constructed as a defence against the possible invasion of England during the Napoleonic Wars in 1809. The benefice, very much the middle section of the Canal and old coastline, consists of: St Martin Aldington, St Peter & St Paul Bilsington, St Rumwold Bonnington, St Mary Kenardington, Church of the Good Shepherd Hamstreet, St Mary Orlestone, St Mary Magdalene Ruckinge and St Matthew Warehorn.

As for the parish churches, not every church has a weekly Sunday service and some services are frequently lay-led. The church in Hamstreet has enjoyed a Local Ecumenical Partnership with the Methodist circuit for over 40 years now, in which I will also be involved.

Some of the smaller churches are accessed via farmyards and have sheep to tend the churchyards! Some have entries in the Domesday Book (one dates back to 697), four of them are Grade 1 listed, the other three are Grade 2* listed. Not all of them have electricity, not all of them have heating, one has neither! A couple never get locked, and one even welcomes pilgrims on the 'Saxon Way' (a pilgrimage route from Winchester to Canterbury) to stay overnight in the church! Most of the current buildings were built by the Normans and significantly pre-date the Reformation, though some sit atop Saxon foundations, evidence of much earlier buildings, with the odd Victorian embellishment and extension. They all have bats and 'open' churchyards, with the exception of Hamstreet, where I will live in The Rectory. It would appear that a few well-known celebrities choose to live (and die) in the benefice villages and Marsh, and there is a Lord of the Manor still.



*St Matthew Warehorn
Lawn mowing day!*



Ss Peter & Paul
Bilington

I hope that this gives you a small flavour of what is to come. Leaving West Lancashire will be a wrench, though I propose to continue my current memberships and attendance when able to do so, as I expect to make the return journey fairly frequently.

Do keep me in your prayers during this uncertain time, in so many ways. My last service is likely to be around Christmas, after which I will be 'collated and inducted' as the Rector by the Bishop of Dover and Archdeacon of Ashford on Tuesday 19 January.

Leaving will be difficult, as it should be, and this is a very new work, in every way. And as people keep saying: 'It is a long,

long way-away!' In fact, it is significantly closer to Paris than it is to central Lancashire! Take care, of all. **The Revd. Graham Halsall**



St Rumwold Bonnington,

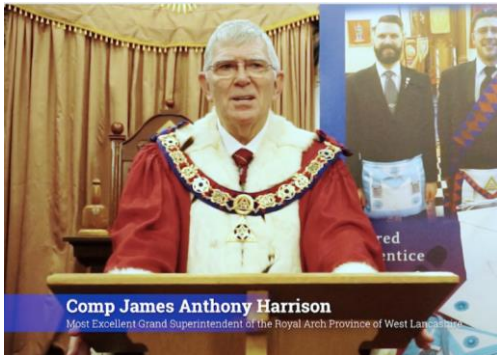


St Mary Kenardington

RA Recipients' Message

All those who were to have received an appointment to, or promotion in, Provincial Grand Chapter must have felt doubly disappointed - first, by not being able to actually attend the meeting and second, by receiving notice that the virtual meeting also had to be cancelled. Nevertheless, we trust that all enjoyed the video message from our Most Excellent Grand Superintendent - Nuggets too congratulates you all!

For a list of all appointments/promotions, click the following link: www.westlancsfreemasons.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/All-groups-West-Lancs-Nuggets-issue-13-supplement.pdf



Comp James Anthony Harrison
Most Excellent Grand Superintendent of the Royal Arch Province of West Lancashire

The Masons' Toast

Under the Time of the Pandemic

The lodges are closed, our labours are dark
No tyler by the entrance door we hark
The brethren are absent, some absent forever
Sorry to part and to meet them again never

Tis nine O'clock here or nine O'clock there
Wither them who aid, the poor and distressed
We wish them the best, in these times recessed

Until then, my brethren, your safety we entreat
Until then, my brethren, hoping again to meet

To all our absent brethren!

Do you know your Masonic halls?

Here are some features from three of our Masonic halls – do you recognise them?

A)



B)



C)



Answers in the next edition of Nuggets

Please keep your contributions coming via either **Stewart Cranage, Provincial Grand Mentor:** mentor@provinceofwestlancs.org or **Paul Renton, DepGSupt:** paul.renton21@btinternet.com