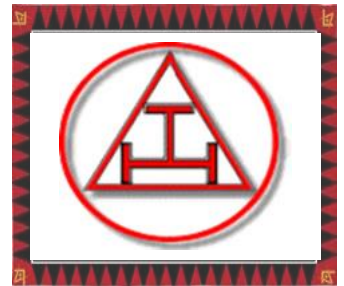




WEST LANCS NUGGETS

“PROVINCIAL NEWS DIGEST”



Nuggets returns after a Christmas break, its aim being the same as when it was launched at the beginning of the pandemic – a supplementary sources of information to the Provincial website thereby keep everyone in touch with news from around the Province. UGLE's First Rising newsletter being normally published every three weeks on a Monday, Nuggets endeavours to come out on the following Wednesday week. **Please do let us know whether you value its publication. Is so, please make suggestions for future content – better still provide some articles!** (Email Stewart Cranage at mentor@provinceofwestlancs.org or Paul Renton at paul.renton21@btinternet.com)

Issue 16: 3 February 2021

A message from the Provincial Grand Master

Greetings and good wishes to you and all your loved ones. On behalf of Maureen and I, may I extend to you all a very happy and healthy New Year - may it be safer and so much better than the last. Indeed, the year 2020 is best forgotten, but nevertheless, we should remember our departed friends and colleagues.

Much has happened during the year despite the lockdowns and the suspension of our Masonic activities. The year came to a close with the tremendous success of the Provincial Food Bank Appeal, which has resulted in us donating £40,540 in cash and 82,653 food items to food banks across our Province and was acclaimed by the MCF for all the work that the brethren had put into the appeal. The Province was awarded the accolade of 'Province of the Week' to start the New Year off in fine style. Thank you, brethren and companions, for your incredible support of this most worthwhile project.



I trust that I may count on your continued patronage of the 2021 MCF Festival which is now coming into its last few months. The launching of the new digital online 'QR' code shortly, will make giving donations to charities so much easier as we are unable to attend our lodges and chapters.

I hope that you will avail yourselves of this new facility, support the Festival and like me, look forward to many fund-raising events and the Festival Finale Dinner on Saturday 18 September at the Blackpool Winter Gardens. Maureen and I hope to see you there.

Much work is going on behind the scenes to ensure that the new Membership Pathway initiative is also being launched to our lodges, through our groups this year. Currently many gentlemen are waiting to join our fraternity so I believe we will all be very busy in the months ahead. I am sure that as we see the light towards the end of the tunnel and have all received our vaccinations against COVID-19, our Masonic centres may reopen and we will see a return to enjoying our Freemasonry once again.

Do keep in touch with your brethren and companion colleagues, together we will get through this awful situation.



You can make a donation to the Festival via: <https://gtap.uk/fest2021> or download the Festival Dinner application form via: <https://www.westlancsfreemasons.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/MCF-2021-Festival-Banquet-Booking-Form.pdf>

West Lancashire beats all records

Tony Harvey



W Bro. Tony Harvey, PAGDC
E Comp. Tony Harvey, PAGDC
The Prestonian Lecturer for 2012

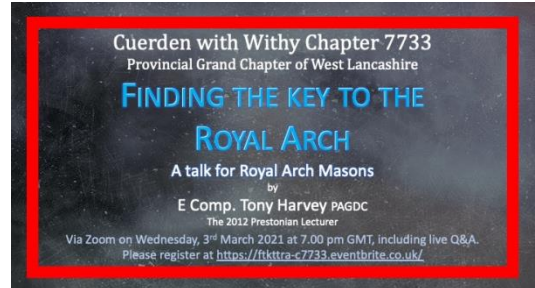
On 14 January Tony Harvey, the Prestonian Lecturer for 2012, gave a Zoom presentation for Royal Arch Masons entitled 'What is Freemasonry's fascination with completion'. There were over 130 companions in attendance. As well as enjoying Tony's input, companions gave very generously to charity. Tony has recently told us that his talk has beaten all previous records with

donations coming to £695, with gift-aid adding a further £152.50. He will be donating this to the MCF via the West Lancashire 2021 Festival.

The four events Tony has given in the Province have raised £1,215.00 in donations and a further £277.50 expected in gift-aid, resulting in £1,492.50 for the Festival.

Tony's next talk will be given under the banner of Cuerden with Withy Chapter No 7733 on Wednesday, 3 March 2021. Its title is 'Finding the Key to the Royal Arch' and is intended for recently exalted companions of the Royal Arch, although it has also been appreciated by those who want a better understanding of the Royal Arch, by those who have ceased attending their chapter and by more experienced Royal Arch Masons. It is not appropriate for anyone who has not been exalted.

Please register for the talk via Eventbrite at: <https://ftktra-c7733.eventbrite.co.uk/>



So, you want to write a newsletter? Brian Lawrence, Chapter of Hope No 2679

I started this seemingly simple task back in April 2020 after exchanging a number of emails and WhatsApps from companions of my chapter. The idea came to me that rather than just sending out replies and forwarding some of them, that I could incorporate them into a few pages and send to all when I had enough messages.

The first couple of issues were therefore quite thin and not overly interesting, until one or two companions started to send topical cartoons and jokes. After some heavy censorship, I endeavoured to add them. Just dropping in a joke from my smart phone was not as simple as it sounds, not to a horse drawn man like me. I was swiftly dragged into the 21st century as I learned how to import messages, convert pictures and edit the same. There are number of online tutorials on virtually all the subjects that one needs. The more down to earth and more understandable ones are on YouTube.

I then realised that the 'lockdown' would be going on for some time and started to take things a bit more seriously. So, I made a list of the thing I should include. News about the companions was the main reason I had started. Communications sent from the group secretary and chairman was next. Then I added information from Province. Finally, I added information from Supreme Grand Chapter. A list of contact details as on the summons should companions need to get hold of the treasurer or almoner etc. Plus website addresses that I thought would be interesting or useful.

Things started to go quite well, I added another group to my email address book called Newsletter and off I went, until about newsletter number five when I had trouble sending it. I was using Microsoft Word and sending it out as a .docx. The file was too big and my first plan was to shrink the size of the few pictures in it or take them out altogether. I had a bit of a think about it and you have to remember, those of you who are supremely computer literate, that I was a technology specialist but in metal, wood, clay and artistic materials, not information technology. Anyway, the solution did, after a day or two, come to me in the form of PDF files.

My wife, 'M', then took an interest and said it was all a bit dry, "Put a quiz in it" was the suggestion, so that was added to the list of contents. 'M' was also the reason that I was keen to censor some of the 'input' from some companions. Besides, the criteria I was working to was, if it was something that would be suitable to be said at the social board, then, it was fit for the newsletter. Am I stuck for words? I type things out as I would speak, I am not a touch typist but with a couple of fingers I can get up to a reasonable speed. Then after a furious bit of typing I go back and see if it makes any sense and alter/correct all the words with red or blue lines under them. I did make the mistake one week by not checking that the language set was English (United Kingdom) and ended up with a number of American versions of words.

I then started to add simple articles, for instance one was when masks were made compulsory in certain places, I wrote about that, with genuine web addresses for real help, and a bit of it tongue-in-cheek with me wearing various homemade masks supposed to have been made for me by 'M' out of socks and bras etc. This encouraged some responses from companions and by the time we were celebrating VE Day I was receiving photos of companions and their better halves dressed up for the event. By this time my phone was filling up with so many

comments and jokes that as I imported them on to my computer, I had to create two files to keep them in. One file has suitable things for adding to the newsletter and one for things already used in it. I do not delete them once used so that I can check that if it is repeated by another companion later and I do not repeat it in the newsletter.

After a number of weeks, I found inspiration sometimes deserted me and would turn to things that happened to me. For instance, when out with 'M' on a 'fitness walk' walking on the South Downs we met a lady taking her cockatoo for a walk with it on her arm, because it couldn't fly. Or meeting the echelon of cyclists with no concept of social distancing, I managed to rant about that for a couple of paragraphs just like Victor Meldrew. Another inspiration was the newspaper. We would get The Times on Saturday, not because we are posh, but because it would last us all week and the Sunday Times was a bit too heavy for 'M' to carry back from the newsagents. The letters page would often give me an idea to write about. Also, about this time the wife of one of the companions asked if she could put in a quiz. So, I added a corner for her which she has filled ever since, sending me the answers to the previous week's questions on Saturday and the next quiz on the Sunday. Initially on the odd occasion that I had prepared everything early, this was a problem but now I only finalise the newsletter on Tuesday evening for circulation Wednesday morning.

I now have a regular group of companions who send me regular pictures and topical jokes, some of them however not always suitable, but with a bit of rewriting I can usually put them in. The saddest week was when I had to report the loss of one companion and I changed the top of the newsletter to black as we would have done with the summons.

If I was starting again what would I change? I would make it fortnightly and not weekly. It would enable to make it a bit more polished and have more content. The companions have not complained much and I have even had the odd compliment. When I started this, I had no idea I would still be doing it 8 months later and the way things are going a month or two more. Will I keep it up? I may do, but with some changes. My chapter meets four times a year with a long break between the March and October meetings so maybe a monthly newsletter, trimmed down to the basics just to keep companions interested and in the picture. At the end of the day, it is up to them if they want it to continue then it will and if any of them want to hold the reins for a bit then they will be always welcome.

Sam's picture quiz



The answer to Sam's picture quiz in the last edition was that it was the Honolulu Masonic Temple on 1227 Makiki Street, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Sam writes: "As we know on 7 December 1941 and with complete surprise, Pearl Harbour was attacked by Japanese aircraft which destroyed several ships including the Battleship USS Arizona and resulted in a loss of over 900 of the ship's crew of 1177, they remain entombed in the ship's hull, the ship sank in nine minutes.

A memorial was built in 1962 which is tethered and floats over the sunken hull, it can only be reached by boat. The original budget was \$500,000 and private donations included \$64,000 from Elvis Presley's last live concert in 1968. Moored close by is the Battleship USS Missouri on which the Japanese surrendered in Tokyo Bay September 2nd 1945.

When you visit the memorial there was a tradition to throw the lays flowers into the water in the centre of the memorial which is over the forward gun turret, this has now ceased due to the string being harmful to the environment.

It is said the oil that still emits from the hull and floats to the surface is the black tears of the sailors entombed there. Very moving."



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