



# WEST LANC'S NUGGETS

"PROVINCIAL NEWS DIGEST"



**Issue 21: 19 May 2021**

## Resumption of meetings



Since the issue of the First Rising document on Monday 10 May regarding the resumption of meetings, the Provincial Office has received numerous calls regarding the issuing of a lodge or chapter summons. The Provincial Grand Secretary has therefore issued the following advice to all lodge secretaries and scribes Ezra:

"For the avoidance of any doubt, the suspension of all meetings imposed by the Provincial Grand Master/Grand Superintendent remains in place and a summons should not be issued.

The Provincial Grand Master/Grand Superintendent has reiterated his instruction, that unless there are exceptional circumstances, or matters affecting the well-running and governing of a lodge or chapter, meetings shall not take place until Stage Four of the Government's 'Roadmap' has been reached. i.e., no earlier than 21 June 2021.

Any lodge or chapter wishing to meet prior to Stage Four, must contact the Provincial Office for approval before circulating a summons. However, a summons may be issued during the suspension period for meetings taking place after Stage Four has been reached. I trust this clears up any confusion and let's hope we can all start meeting again after 21 June."

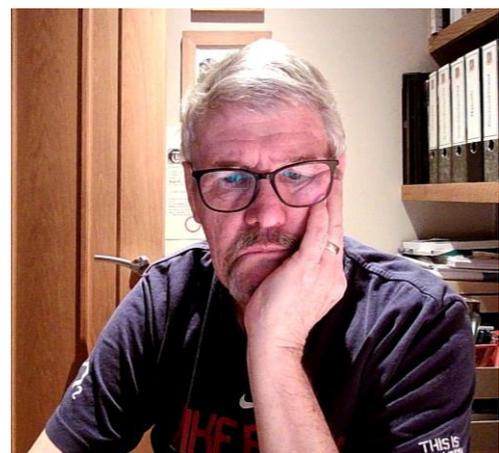
[Editor: Hear, hear to 21 June Peter!]

## DepGSupt on the new MCWP!

A new working party under the auspice of the Committee of General Purposes (CGP) of Supreme Grand Chapter has recently been formed with the title Membership and Communications Working Party (MCWP). This is the first time in recent years that such a group has been established. Its Chairman, Patrick Penny, PGStB, 2nd Metropolitan Grand Principal, hopes it will help the CGP to take a more active role in contributing to the leadership of the Royal Arch nationally together with the Rulers, and to give support to the Metropolitan and Grand Superintendents.

The terms of reference for its first year of operation are; to report on the differing use of current Royal Arch 'narrative' across the country; to produce a report showing the current membership situation; and to assist in the development of structures for the closer interaction with the central communications team on all Royal Arch related matters.

Nuggets is pleased to report that our own Deputy Grand Superintendent, Paul Renton, has been invite to be a member of the MCWP alongside five other colleagues from across the Provinces. These include a Grand Superintendent, another Deputy and another 2<sup>nd</sup> GP and a Royal Arch Communications Officer.



*Deputy struggling on a recent Zoom call hoping that work on the MCWP will be easier!*

## A year that wasn't! Mike Pinckard, PProvSGW



The telephone rang one cold and damp October Tuesday in 2019 and the conversation went something like this:

“Good afternoon worshipful brother Pinckard. Would you be free to come to the Provincial Office tomorrow at 9:30 am to see the Provincial Grand Secretary please?” I was, at the time, the Group Vice Chairman of the Leyland and District Group of Lodges and Chapters. This was prior to its merger with The Chorley and District Group and we were going through quite a difficult period having recently sold Wellington Park. I quickly scoured my memory for any small thing I may have done wrong, because, having never before been summoned to ‘The Office’, I must admit to fearing I had a telling off coming for something, although I couldn’t think what!

I duly attended on time the following morning and was pleased to receive a very warm welcome - and coffee. ‘Well, this isn’t looking too bad’, I assured myself. Our Provincial Grand Secretary, Peter Taylor invited me into his office and I sat with him at the huge boardroom table, still full of trepidation.

“How is the family Mike? Are you busy work-wise? How much free time are you likely to have during the next Masonic year .....?” I began to understand where this might be leading.

That is pretty much how the conversation started and it concluded with me being informed that I may be considered for a senior active role in the Provincial Grand Master’s team. In truth, the interview was in much more depth and covered my willingness to undertake the role if offered it and also my questions about what is involved and expected of me were answered.

“There are several candidates to be interviewed Mike and there are no promises. When a decision has been made by the Provincial Grand Master we will be in touch. Best put this to the back of your mind for the time being.”

Put it to the back of my mind; Really? I couldn’t think of anything else for days!

I was a fairly experienced Mason of 30 years; I had been honoured with the active rank of Provincial Grand Sword Bearer in 2018 and had enjoyed a fantastic year with the Provincial team; and as group vice chairman I had accompanied principal guests at installations. All that led me to believe I knew roughly what the Provincial Grand Wardens’ duties entailed. That said, the thought of carrying out the role myself was both exciting and nerve-wracking in equal measures.

In early January 2020, the postman dropped a letter onto our door mat. The Provincial Grand Master was offering me the Senior Warden’s position for 2020-21 and he invited me to attend Provincial Grand Lodge in April for the investiture. Needless to say, I was elated.

Once I had accepted the offer, messages of congratulation came from all directions along with tips and advice on everything from regalia to speeches.

I was introduced to the Provincial Junior Grand Warden, Liam Mawdsley from the Southport Group and we quickly became firm friends – attending some lodge meetings together and sharing our thoughts and ideas (and a few rounds of beer in the process).

The wardens in post, David Edwards and Paul Storrar, were among the first to bring help and support and they began by offering advice and arranging practice sessions for representations and team visits and briefing us on general protocols.

It quickly became clear that being a Provincial Grand Warden involves more than I thought. For instance, I wasn’t aware that there is a Warden’s Club, to which all previous acting Provincial Grand Wardens may be invited, nominated and voted to join. Neither was I aware of the camaraderie which exists among that element of our fraternity and the fantastic welcome, encouragement and wealth of support that awaited me there.

I was issued with a manual of do’s and don’ts, copies of the ritual I needed to learn and a pack of general advice. Then a meeting with the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies was arranged, so he could brief Liam and me on how to conduct ourselves when accompanying the ProvGM around the province during the forthcoming year.

So, ritual all learnt and practiced, regalia and new tailcoat suit purchased - Liam and I were ready to go.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic struck!

All of us know what happened for the rest of our year; The Provincial Grand Master and his team – and therefore Liam and I - were thwarted by the COVID safety restrictions, which meant we didn’t have a chance to carry out any of our duties at all.

*(Continued on page 3)*

Along with all our colleague acting officers and those of other Masonic Orders, together with everyone in UK communities including those with a special celebration, couples hoping to marry, Town Criers, Glastonbury attendees, holiday makers, pub landlords, restaurateurs and so many others, we were confined to our homes and unable to fulfil our roles in the way we had expected to.

Zoom came to the rescue and I was invited to join some virtual meetings of the lodges' where I was due to have been the principal guest, which were very enjoyable and made up in a big way for the dearth of face to face meetings.

So, on 20 April 2021 was the Virtual Provincial Grand Lodge business meeting on Zoom, where mine and Liam's special year came to an end without either of us, or our acting colleagues, troubling our new suits!

The new Provincial Grand Wardens, Daniel Crossley and Ben Gorry were appointed to succeed us. We wish them and all the newly appointed acting officers, the very best of luck for their forthcoming year in office and hope they enjoy their duties to the full.



The most important lesson from the past year is that the general suspension of Masonic activities has helped to keep our brethren as safe as possible. That said, we have sadly lost brethren and our brethren have lost friends and family, so we must keep this all in clear perspective. Whilst we are bound to look back on some missed opportunities and experiences, we must look to the future with a positive and steadfast resolve to continue to enjoy our Masonry and ensure that the lessons from the pandemic spur us on to better appreciate and further develop our wonderful association, and..... *'To please!'*

## Sam's picture quiz

In this edition of Nuggets, Sam's Quiz isn't a quiz! Instead, here are some pictures from inside a fantastic building in Dublin. The Grand Lodge of Ireland is the second most senior Grand Lodge in the world and the oldest in continuous existence. Built between 1866 and 1869 it is situated on Molesworth Street in the heart of the City.

If the pictures of some of the rooms in the building whet your appetite you can view a full virtual tour at <https://freemason.ie/> Better still, take a trip to Dublin!



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