



# The Royal Arch

In East Lancashire

**Robert I Frankl**  
**Most Excellent Grand Superintendent**



**EComp Tony Freemont**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Provincial Grand Principal**



**EComp Jonathan Basger**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Provincial Grand Principal**



**EComp Andrew Procter**  
**Deputy Grand Superintendent**

## In this Issue

- Foreword from our newly appointed Deputy Grand Superintendent
- Most Excellent Grand Superintendent's address to Provincial Grand Chapter
- Acting Officers of the year 26/7
- Appointments to and Promotions in Provincial Grand Chapter and Supreme Grand Chapter and UGLE
- A review of Provincial Grand Chapter
- 2026 Festival
- Building Together
- The Origins and Meaning of the Royal Arch – The Indissoluble Link
- Jottings from members of the senior team
- Notable Anniversaries in the Royal Arch in 2025/26
- Some Masonic Building from around the world

PS. Keep your eyes  
out for some  
scattered Masonic  
Gravestones



## Foreword from Deputy Grand Superintendent

Dear Companions,

Could I begin this, my first foreword to The Royal Arch Newsletter, by congratulating those companions who received preferment at the Provincial Grand Chapter Meeting at Bolton on 19th February. Your appointment, reappointment or promotion is a well-deserved recognition for the service you have given to Freemasonry, the Province, and the community. Thank you all, for that service. It is an essential element of Freemasonry and helps define us as men and as masons.



The Royal Arch is also an essential element in Freemasonry. Recently, the indissoluble link between the Craft and the Royal Arch has been strengthened and their closeness further emphasised. This can be summarised by 4 words: One Journey, One Organisation! Simply put, when a man becomes a mason, he doesn't just join a Lodge, he joins Freemasonry and the Royal Arch is the ultimate step in pure and ancient Freemasonry. As Companions we all need to look for opportunities to encourage master masons to take the next step and be exalted into the Royal Arch, emphasising that it is the natural progression and without, their masonic journey is not complete.

Finally, could I finish by thanking my predecessor as Deputy Grand Superintendent, EComp Paul Bowen, on behalf of us all. Paul's service to Freemasonry in general and the Royal Arch in particular has been exemplary. He was the Provincial Grand Organist in both the Craft and Royal Arch and subsequently became the Grand Organist for both UGLE and SGC. In Province, he was appointed Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals, then Second Provincial Grand Principal and ultimately the Deputy Grand Superintendent. His contributions were recognised by Supreme Grand Chapter who promoted him Past Assistant Grand Sojourner and subsequently Past Grand Sword Bearer. He has held acting Provincial rank for the last 22 years and acting Grand rank for 6 of those years. Paul has stepped back from his masonic commitments to care for his wife. We wish them both the very best for the future.



# Most Excellent Grand Superintendent's Address to Provincial Grand Chapter



I would like to congratulate all Companions who are being appointed, re-appointed or promoted today.

Some of us have specific responsibilities attached to our rank, but all of us, as Provincial Grand Officers, should be a source of guidance and support in our Lodges and Chapters, to lead by example, and to ensure that we continue to have a thriving membership, and a thriving Province.

Thank you for all that you do and for that which you will do in the future.



Forty-six years ago, I joined a Lodge, I paid my subscription to my Lodge, pretty much all my communication, interaction, and masonic activity, were with my Lodge. Yes, I was aware there was a national organisation, but I didn't engage with it. I regarded it as some sort of umbrella organisation which was of little direct relevance to me. My membership was of my Lodge, and it was because of that membership that I considered myself a freemason.

As time passed, and I was encouraged to consider the Royal Arch, I was given a variety of reasons why I might join – 'completion of the third degree', 'finding the lost secrets', 'don't miss the last episode of the series'.

I have to tell you that none of these quite hit the spot with me, and it took me some years before I discovered this wonderful and beautiful Order.

How things have changed for the better!

Today, we all receive regular communication from United Grand Lodge/Supreme Grand Chapter, through First Rising and FMT.

We have the opportunity and encouragement to attend UGLE and SGC Meetings, and at Province level, we have our Universities Scheme Lodges and Chapters, the East Lancashire Level Club, and much more.

Most recently and significantly, particularly for the Royal Arch, is the 'Four Ceremony narrative', which explains that actually when you join, you are joining freemasonry,





and that journey consists of four ceremonies, three which take place in a Craft Lodge and the fourth in a Royal Arch Chapter at a time and a place that is right for the individual.

In the past I've expressed the hope that progressing from Master Mason to Royal Arch Exalte would become as natural as progressing through the three Craft degrees. I think this clear and simple four ceremony narrative, given from the very start to potential members will help make that hope a reality.

Finally on this topic, Companions, you don't need me to tell you, that the most important service we can all give to the Royal Arch is to ensure that our Lodges attract new members, and then retain them by providing an engaging and rewarding experience.

Our Festival will finish before our Provincial Grand Chapter meets again, so I would like to take a few moments of your time to reflect on that.

I am extremely proud of you and of all our members and families for the most generous way you have supported this Festival in such a collective manner, and with such sense of purpose.

When I addressed Provincial Grand Chapter last year, I spoke of being hopeful, but not complacent, that we would achieve our target of £2.4 million.

Today, our current total stands at over £2.1 million, and with eight months remaining for further donations, and interest to be credited to our fund, I am now confident that we will reach our target.

I hope that as many of you as possible will join in the well deserved celebration of our Festival on 28th November at the Lancashire Cricket Club.

Of course, it's not about the money, it's about what the money does – saving and improving lives.

Over the last four years, I've had the great privilege of visiting wide -ranging recipients of masonic grants. Often, on these occasions, I've thought I wish all our members could be with me and see for themselves the difference we make.



# Most Excellent Grand Superintendent's Address to Provincial Grand Chapter



You can't – so I will describe a couple of recent examples.

A few months ago, I visited Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, where we had funded a youth break out room, for children to play games, watch TV, and generally hang out away from their hospital beds.

I met 16-year-old Abe, a charming and intelligent young man.

Abe had been in hospital for the previous 15 months and was paralysed from the chest down.

In spite of his heartbreaking disabilities, you could not meet a better natured and positive person.

As we chatted, he told me he'd just finished his GCSEs and was looking forward to taking driving lessons in an adapted car.

He went on to say how much he, and others enjoyed the breakout room, and how he used it every day.

He challenged me to a car racing game, which, needless to say, he won hands down.

Later on, he asked me to explain what my role was as a PGM.

When I'd finished, if I'd expected him to be impressed, I was swiftly brought crashing to the ground when he looked me in the eye and responded, 'Well, I hope you're a better Provincial Grand Master than you are racing driver.'

Companions, I'd just had a valuable lesson in humility from a 16 year old!

Just a few weeks ago, I went to Francis House Children's Hospice to see a variety of electronic equipment and stimulants being installed, which we had funded.

I spent time with a young girl who was quadriplegic and was being shown how to control a computer with her eyes.

For most of the time, her face was set in deep concentration as she was receiving instruction.

Suddenly, her whole face transformed to a look of pure joy as she managed to carry out an action on the computer.

Companions, you gave that moment of joy – and it was priceless.

Companions, thank you for your kind attention.





**Congratulations to all the Acting Officers of the year**

<b>ProvGSE</b>	<b>Andrew Holland</b>	<b>Concord Deane</b>
<b>ProvGSN</b>	<b>John Gannon</b>	<b>St John's</b>
<b>ProvGTreas</b>	<b>David Joel Cowen</b>	<b>Good Companions of Commemoration</b>
<b>ProvGReg</b>	<b>Gordon McMillan</b>	<b>Bank Terrace with Leopold</b>
<b>ProvGDC</b>	<b>Lee James Gridley</b>	<b>Red Rose of Lancashire</b>
<b>ProvGSwdB</b>	<b>Paul Smillie</b>	<b>Limestone Rock</b>
<b>ProvDepGDC</b>	<b>Stephen Holcroft</b>	<b>Red Rose of Lancashire</b>
<b>ProvDepGDC</b>	<b>Richard MP Sagar</b>	<b>Chapter of the Nativity</b>
<b>ProvGAlm</b>	<b>Tony Stephenson</b>	<b>Vis Unita</b>
<b>ProvGChStwd</b>	<b>John Taylor</b>	<b>Naphtali</b>
<b>ProvGMO</b>	<b>William D Spiby</b>	<b>St John's</b>
<b>ProvGCO</b>	<b>Darren M Kennedy</b>	<b>Chapter of Fidelity</b>
<b>ProvGMent</b>	<b>Stuart Hughes</b>	<b>Aldwyn</b>
<b>ProvGSoj</b>	<b>Brian Davies</b>	<b>Pennine</b>
<b>Prov1stAGSoj</b>	<b>Raymond P Taylor</b>	<b>Prince Edwin's</b>
<b>Prov2ndAGSoj</b>	<b>Ronald Barham</b>	<b>Waverley</b>
<b>ProvAGSE</b>	<b>Clive Hartley</b>	<b>Limestone Rock</b>
<b>ProvGStB</b>	<b>Patrick C Farr</b>	<b>Blair</b>
<b>ProvGStB</b>	<b>David A Kyme</b>	<b>Prince Edwin's</b>
<b>ProvGStB</b>	<b>Gary A O'Neill</b>	<b>Chapter of the Nativity</b>
<b>ProvGOrg</b>	<b>Andrew J Booth</b>	<b>Concord Deane</b>
<b>ProvGStwd</b>	<b>Adam M Coates</b>	<b>Palatine</b>
<b>ProvGStwd</b>	<b>Harry SP Keable</b>	<b>Chapter of Friendship</b>
<b>ProvGStwd</b>	<b>Andrew SE Lane</b>	<b>Union</b>
<b>ProvGStwd</b>	<b>Ritesh Mehta</b>	<b>St John's</b>
<b>ProvGStwd</b>	<b>Russell M Perks</b>	<b>Chapter of Hope</b>
<b>ProvGStwd</b>	<b>Craig Sutton</b>	<b>Maritime</b>
<b>ProvGJan</b>	<b>Clive D Carroll</b>	<b>Bank Terrace with Leopold</b>





# Newly Appointed and Promoted Officers in Provincial Grand Chapter

**Congratulations to all newly appointed officers of Provincial Grand Chapter**

<b>PP2ndAGSoj</b>	<b>Ian M Johnson</b>	<b>Limestone Rock</b>
<b>PPGStB</b>	<b>Malcolm N Ashton</b>	<b>Prince Edwin's</b>
<b>PPGStB</b>	<b>Paul A Birchenough</b>	<b>Chapter of Remembrance</b>
<b>PPAGDC</b>	<b>Terry Bowdell</b>	<b>Naphtali</b>
<b>PPAGDC</b>	<b>Garry Bradbury</b>	<b>Prince Edwin's</b>

**Congratulations to all those promoted within Provincial Grand Chapter**

<b>PPGSN</b>	<b>John Curry</b>	<b>Werneth</b>
<b>PPGSN</b>	<b>David McGurty</b>	<b>Bank Terrace with Leopold</b>
<b>PPGSN</b>	<b>Philip G Myers</b>	<b>Chapter of the Nativity</b>
<b>PPGSN</b>	<b>Paul O'Carroll</b>	<b>Lord Stanley</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>Donald Bright</b>	<b>Abbey</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>Paul G Chadwick</b>	<b>Alexandra</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>George W Davis</b>	<b>Unanimity</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>Robert F Downes</b>	<b>Fairfield</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>John LB Harris</b>	<b>Lord Stanley</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>John Mason</b>	<b>Hollingworth</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>Graham Newton</b>	<b>Tonge Hall</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>Gerald S Pateman</b>	<b>Hutchinson</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>William J Ramm</b>	<b>Probity and Freedom</b>
<b>PPGReg</b>	<b>James J Wilkins</b>	<b>Chapter of Beauty</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>Garry J Errock</b>	<b>Chapter of Virtue</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>Andrew B Evans</b>	<b>Probity and Freedom</b>





# Newly Promoted Officers of Provincial Grand Chapter (Continued)

<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>Jolyon AH Nicholson</b>	<b>Concord Deane</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>John Radford</b>	<b>Unitas Fratrum</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>David J Rainsbury</b>	<b>Blair</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>Robert DJ Sharpe</b>	<b>Chapter of the Nativity</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>Terry M Smith</b>	<b>Ardwick</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>Michael D Stubbs</b>	<b>Cana</b>
<b>PPGSwdB</b>	<b>David Williams</b>	<b>Reddish</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Norman J Alexander</b>	<b>Robert Burns</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Colin Barton</b>	<b>Red Rose of Lancashire</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Richard M Bermitz</b>	<b>Ark and Menorah</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Neil Bostock</b>	<b>Tudor</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Alan J Butterworth</b>	<b>Chapter of Strength</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Ian R Caplan</b>	<b>St John's</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Ian A Dugdale</b>	<b>Chapter of Hope</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Andrew M Hindle</b>	<b>Cathedral</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Alan T Imm</b>	<b>Lord Stanley</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Richard Johnson</b>	<b>Chapter of Friendship</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Ian A Kenworthy</b>	<b>Three Shires</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>Mervyn J Symonds</b>	<b>St John's</b>
<b>PPDepGDC</b>	<b>David J Taylor</b>	<b>Chapter of Fidelity</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Peter Banks</b>	<b>Social</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Andrew Denton</b>	<b>Red Rose of Lancashire</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Michael J Goodman</b>	<b>St John's</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Geoffrey HT Guy</b>	<b>Chapter of Remembrance</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Harvey S Kaye</b>	<b>St John's</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Alan C Towers</b>	<b>Abbey</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Ian G Wilson</b>	<b>Imperial George</b>
<b>PPGSoj</b>	<b>Ian Woods</b>	<b>Unanimity</b>
<b>PP1stAGSoj</b>	<b>Antony Hindle</b>	<b>Cana</b>
<b>PP1stAGSoj</b>	<b>John C Wilkinson</b>	<b>Ardwick</b>





*Every year we also see exceptional contribution to the work of Provincial Grand Chapter recognised by appointment to, and promotion within, Supreme Grand Chapter. The following Companions have been so recognised this year:*

***New Appointments***

*EComp Stephen J Holland - Past Grand Standard Bearer*

*EComp Douglas O Smith - Past Grand Standard Bearer*

*EComp Ian S Sterling - Past Grand Standard Bearer*

***Promotions***

*EComp Prof Anthony J Freemont – Past Assistant Grand Sojourner*

*We congratulate all these Companions and also those Companions who are being appointed to and promoted within the United Grand Lodge of England*

***New Appointments***

*WBro. David J Cowen – Past Assistant Grand of Ceremonies*

*WBro. Paul R Crudge - Past Assistant Grand of Ceremonies*

*WBro. Sylvester During - Past Assistant Grand of Ceremonies*

*WBro. Patrick C Farr - Past Assistant Grand of Ceremonies*

*WBro. Martin DE Horan - Past Assistant Grand of Ceremonies*

*WBro. Christopher I Armstrong - Past Assistant Grand Standard Bearer*

*WBro. Brian H Derbyshire - Past Assistant Grand Standard Bearer*

***Promotions***

*WBro. Lt Cdr Kai Hughes RN – Deputy Grand Sword Bearer*

*WBro. Dr Mohamad Afsa - Senior Grand Deacon*

*WBro. Andrew Holland - Past Junior Grand Deacon*





## Some thoughts on Provincial Grand Chapter

*Every now and then I come across a piece of writing that makes me rethink my perspective.*

*There are two in this edition of the Newsletter. This is the first. It comes from EComp Darren Kennedy, Provincial Grand Communications Officer.*

*I include this because there are times when we take things going on around us for granted. Darren's piece has made me think more deeply about the importance of Provincial Grand Chapter to us as a group of Companions and to us as members of an ancient institution. **Ed***

### **Report on Provincial Grand Chapter 2026: A Day of Ceremony, Reflection, and Progress:**

On Thursday 19 March 2026, the Provincial Grand Chapter of East Lancashire convened at the Toughsheet Stadium in Bolton for its annual meeting - an occasion marked by rich tradition, meaningful reflection, and future direction.

The meeting opened with the usual ceremonial procession, in a manner that both set the tone for the afternoon's ceremonial and reflected the high standards that typify the East Lancashire Director of Ceremony's Team. The Provincial Grand Principals entered accompanied by their officers. Through the traditional use of prayer, movements, and symbolism, the Chapter reaffirmed its foundational principles of peace, love, and unity, the timeless values that in the same moment refer back to our Royal Arch heritage and, particularly in troubled times, highlight its enduring relevance in modern Freemasonry.

The Most Excellent Grand Superintendent extended a heartfelt welcome to Companions and distinguished guests from neighbouring Provinces. Representatives from across the country—including Yorkshire, North Wales, Cumberland & Westmorland, and beyond—highlighted the strong bonds shared across the wider Masonic community.

Special recognition was also given to first-time attendees, reinforcing the importance of inclusion and continuity within the Order.

A solemn moment of reflection was observed in memory of Companions who had passed since the previous meeting, allowing the convocation to consider the enduring legacy of those who have contributed to the province and the values they upheld.

One of the central highlights of the meeting was the appointment and reappointment of senior officers.

Companion Andrew Procter was installed as Deputy Grand Superintendent, recognised for his extensive service and leadership.

Professor Anthony John Freemont was reappointed as Second Provincial Grand Principal.

Companion Jonathan Basger was appointed Third Provincial Grand Principal.

These appointments reflect both continuity and renewal - ensuring strong leadership for the Province moving forward.





## Some thoughts on Provincial Grand Chapter

In addition, a wide range of Companions received promotions reappointments and first appointments at Provincial level, in recognition of their dedication, service, and ongoing contribution to Freemasonry in general and the Masonic Province of East Lancashire in particular. A complete list of these appointments and promotions is made available via the Royal Arch page.

The Province's charitable efforts remain a cornerstone of its work. With the 2026 Festival approaching its conclusion, over £2.1 million has already been raised toward a £2.4 million target.

The Grand Superintendent shared evocative examples of how these funds are making a real difference—from supporting young patients at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital to funding life-enhancing equipment at Francis House Children's Hospice.

These stories served as a poignant reminder that the true value of Freemasonry lies not in ceremony alone, but in all the lives it touches.

In his closing address, the Grand Superintendent reflected on the evolution of Freemasonry and the growing clarity of its journey through the "four ceremony narrative." This approach helps new members better understand their path—from Craft Masonry through to the Royal Arch.

He emphasised the responsibility of all members to lead by example, support their Chapters, and ensure a thriving future for the province.

The meeting concluded with thanks to all who contributed—from organisers and officers, to stewards and volunteers—followed by the formal closing ceremony and the singing of the national anthem.

As ever, we should consider the Provincial Grand Chapter meeting as more than a formal gathering—it is a celebration of tradition, service, and progress. It demonstrates how a historic institution continues to adapt, inspire, and make a meaningful impact in the modern world.

Here is a link to pictures of the day <https://photos.app.goo.gl/vTwNsZW5UETszyGP6>





# 2026 Festival – Latest news

As the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent said in his address to Provincial Grand Chapter, the Festival is rushing towards its goal of raising £2.4m.

There is still a lot happening before the **Festival Celebratory Banquet on November 28<sup>th</sup>**.

Here are some highlights, but there is much more going on besides.

If you haven't been to the PGLEL 2026 Festival Appeal web site recently, you've got to visit. There is so much happening, and it's all fun in a serious cause. The link:

<https://eastlancashirefreemasons.org/festival-2026-events/>

**GRAND RAFFLE**  
£5 EACH

**EXCELLENT PRIZES TO WIN!**

- £500 CASH
- Valentine's Dinner 2027 for 2 and overnight stay at Northcote Manor
- 4 tickets to any production at the Lowry in 26/27
- Bottle of Vintage Port worth over £400
- Dinner for 4 with the PGM
- Round of Golf for 4 (with handicaps) at Haydock Park Golf Course
- 65" Screen Television AND MORE....

TICKETS ON SALE ACROSS THE PROVINCE!  
CLOSING DATE - 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026 at 5pm  
TO BE DRAWN AT THE ELMC AGM 2026

**Final Festival FUN WALK & FETE**  
SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2026

REGISTRATION OPEN!

Join us for a fun-filled day at our Annual Walk plus activities, refreshments, and exciting events waiting for you at the finish line including special guests from supported charities!  
You won't want to miss it!  
**WALK TO COMMENCE - 11AM**  
**CELEBRATIONS FROM 12:30PM**  
**FAMILY TICKET - £25 (2 ADULTS 2 CHILDREN)**  
**ADULT TICKET - £10 CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE**



YOU ARE INVITED TO THE  
**FESTIVAL FINALE**

SATURDAY | 28 | NOVEMBER

**CELEBRATORY BANQUET  
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT  
ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINAL FUNDRAISING  
TOTAL!**

The Point, at the prestigious Lancashire Cricket Club

Booking details to follow!



## Building Together – a very old concept repurposed to our benefit

Building Together is an initiative that develops the concept of the continuity between the Craft and the Royal Arch as the natural route taken by new masons entering Freemasonry. It was alluded to by the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent in his address in Provincial Grand Chapter and has been at the heart of the development of Freemasonry for several years now.

The strapline of “One journey, One organisation” developing into “Building Together” places Royal Arch Freemasonry at a key point in the masonic journey. It could be seen as a completion of a process started at a new mason’s initiation, or the Craft could be seen as the preparation for exaltation into Royal Arch.

Either way, the link between the Craft and Royal Arch is an old concept going back to before the Union of the 2 Grand Lodges in 1813. It is however at the time of the Union that the Royal Arch was officially recognized and affirmed as an integral part of "Pure Antient Freemasonry" in England, but practiced in a different type of structure to Craft Lodges.

We might consider Building Together as re-establishing the extremely close links between Craft and Royal Arch, thereby taking us back to our roots.

The Province has embraced “Building Together”. We are very fortunate to see it introduced under the guidance of Dave McGurty and driven by the enthusiasm of Pip Titterton.

Building Together has a new web presence on our website:

<https://eastlancashirefreemasons.org/building-together/>

I will let the website speak for itself **(Ed)**:

### ***A Shared Path for our Future***

*Dear Brethren and Companions,*

*Many of you may have already heard whispers of Building Together. If it's new to you, I'm delighted to introduce it as a supportive hand to help our Lodges and Chapters truly flourish.*

*Over the past few months, we've worked carefully to bring the best of the Craft's Members' Pathway and the Royal Arch's Archway into one harmonious space.*





## Building Together – the web resources

*The result is a single, clear collection of guidance designed to benefit us all, regardless of the apron we wear.*

***By the Members, For the Members:** It is important to share that Building Together isn't a set of rules being handed down to you, nor is it a requirement being imposed. Instead, think of it as a community treasure chest of practical ideas. These insights are drawn directly from the real-life successes of our fellow members—simple ways to boost engagement, make our meetings more enjoyable, and ensure our growth is both steady and meaningful.*

***Moving Forward Together:** The entire East Lancashire Senior Team is wholeheartedly behind this initiative. That said, if your Lodge or Chapter is already finding success with the current Pathway or Archway materials, please don't feel you need to rush or change what is working today.*

*We simply invite you to explore the new Building Together resources over the coming year. You'll find much of it feels like a reassuringly familiar friend, just refined to better serve our shared future.*

I can recommend the website. Its two main “resources” are the YouTube video and the flower.

The YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAXCsoXgWlc&t=28s> is our own and indicates how Building Together could be used to bring greater interest, deeper knowledge, and increased understanding into the lives of our Lodges and Chapters.

The flower has 5 differently coloured petals, each of which leads you into not “a world of your imagination” (Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory" (1971), but a world of visual assets currently on Solomon that will blow your mind. It is so addictive, I understand UGLE is starting a number of regional support group called SA (standing for Solomon Anonymous), for inveterate “Solomonites” who not leave their virtual environment, even for meals.

Please visit our website, it is a fantastic entry route into a Masonic ecosphere that at the worst will keep your interest and at the best could change your lives.





## Building Together – the core values

Being a member of a University Lodge and 2 University Chapters brings real rewards. I have met young (I'm 73 so young is less than 60!) men from all walks of life and different nationalities who bring their innate interest and enthusiasm into their Freemasonry.

Some of their life stories are truly remarkable. Hardly unexpectedly, their life flavours their view of themselves, the future and Freemasonry.

I would like to share one of their stories with you.

It was given at a white table event by a recently raised Master Mason. At one level it has little to do with the Royal Arch, but at another has everything to do with Building Together and that in turn has everything to do with the Royal Arch

The author is Brother Bassel Ounah of University of Manchester Lodge No 5683

*Good evening, everyone.*

*Standing with you tonight at this White Table event is a privilege. For those I haven't met yet, my name is Bassel Ounah.*

*My path in life seems unusual. It began deep underwater in the world of freediving and has recently led me to something very different, yet just as meaningful.*

*As a freediving instructor and underwater explorer, I've spent years helping others find peace, courage, and focus beneath the waves. When you're deep in the sea with only your breath, you learn to quiet your fears, trust yourself, and stay calm under pressure. But over time, I realised that the biggest journeys-the ones that truly shape us, often happen above the surface, inside our hearts and minds.*

*I stepped into a new world built on tradition, personal growth, and deep values a few months ago. Just a few weeks ago, I had the honour of being raised to Master Mason. That moment wasn't the end but the beginning of a new chapter.*

*This journey has already taught me a great deal. It reminded me that real strength isn't just physical. It's about the strength to be kind, the discipline to grow, and the courage to reflect on who we are and want to become. I used to think success was about breaking records. Now, I see that building character matters even more.*





## Building Together – the core values

*The brotherhood, the true sense of unity in this room, has moved me the most. In my work, I've been part of many teams in harsh underwater conditions. But here, I've found something different, genuine fellowship. People from various backgrounds joined by respect, purpose, and shared values. That kind of connection is rare, something the world needs more of.*

*In just a few months, I've found direction and inspiration. I feel more driven than ever to protect the oceans, which have always been close to my heart, and to be more present, helpful, and giving to the people and causes around me.*

*So tonight, I don't speak as an explorer or entrepreneur. I say simply as someone grateful to be here, learning, and part of something greater than myself. This is just the beginning.*

*The tools I've gained, focus, humility, and connection, will guide me to become a better version of myself and, hopefully, a small force for good in my community.*

*Thank you for welcoming me, listening, and being part of this journey.*

*I'll leave you with a quote that means a lot to me:*

*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. Winston Churchill*



You'll never get to wear a Provincial wetsuit if you keep leaving the Volume of the Sacred Law in the boat!!



William T. Westlake, a Bazaar Sergeant in Delhi who was buried at John Nicholson Cemetery 1880 in Delhi.





## Building Together – The Origins – a valuable perspective

This talk last appeared in the Spring 2020 Newsletter, but the Building Together Initiative makes its message worth reviewing.

### The Indissoluble Link



By W.Bro. Christopher Powell, PM, PZ

The subject of my talk 'The Indissoluble Link' refers to the relationship between the Craft and the Royal Arch and my talk is a thinly veiled appeal to all Freemasons to join the Royal Arch and moreover to go through the three Chairs in that Order.

You will all be familiar with the famous sentence that occurs on page one of the Book of Constitutions - the Blue Book - which states that 'pure Antient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch'. This was a compromise statement which enabled the two Grand Lodges, the Antients and the Moderns, to come together to form the United Grand Lodge of England in December 1813. It implies very clearly that the Royal Arch is not a wholly independent degree but the completion of the degree of Master Mason. We still debate whether the Royal Arch is a separate, fourth degree as the Antients' maintained or the completion of the Third Degree as the Book of Constitutions states it is.

Well Brethren, I can assure you the Book of Constitutions is correct and the Royal Arch is part of the Third Degree, historically, ritually and structurally.

When the Premier Grand Lodge was founded in 1717 there were just two degrees in Masonry: the Entered Apprentice and the Fellow Craft. Masters of lodges were, in Masonic rank, Fellow Crafts. This is why even today much of the Installation ceremony is conducted in the Second Degree. That pattern of two degrees still exists today in our professional bodies.

I am certain in this hall there are many Brethren who are Fellows of their professional institution: Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, Fellows of the Royal Institute of British Architects etc. And in each case there is a junior degree: Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects etc.





## Building Together – The Origins – a valuable perspective

Two degrees of which the more senior is always denominated 'Fellow' and, as with Masonry being a Fellow permits one to teach others, to have apprentices.

A sea change occurred in English Freemasonry shortly after the formation of the Grand Lodge in 1717. Instead of meeting occasionally in order to make and pass Masons, lodges began meeting frequently and regularly, usually once a month as we do now, at fixed times and in fixed places. Masons began carrying engraved lists of lodges like this, which enabled them to visit other lodge meetings. Very few of the new Masons were builders and sculptors, they were gentlemen Masons who came from all walks of life. Consequently, they needed much more Masonic work to do and this was provided in the form of lectures and of two new Masonic degrees.

Around 1720, our third Grand Master, Dr Desaguliers came across a 4th-century Greek legend in a book he possessed entitled *Orbis miraculum*, or, *The temple of Solomon portrayed by Scripture-light* which told of a discovery in a cave under the ruins of the Temple at Jerusalem. Dr Desaguliers saw how this could form the basis of a new Masonic degree. It was originally called the degree of Scots Master and was an early version of the Royal Arch. The story is almost word-for-word that told by the Principal Sojourner in the ceremony of exaltation. But in order to rediscover something you first have to lose it and Dr Desaguliers then created what we know as the Hiram legend which lies at the heart of the Third Degree. So historically the Third Degree and the Royal Arch were created at the same time by the same person: the one describing the loss of the Word and the other of how it was found.

At the end of the Third Degree the candidate is left with substituted secrets and in the Royal Arch he receives the genuine secrets of a Master Mason – note Brethren 'of a Master Mason', not of the Royal Arch. So ritually too the Third Degree and the Royal Arch are one thing: the one completing the story told in the other. But there is more to it than that. As we progress along the path of our Masonic journey, as we climb the ladder a step or degree at a time, we do not receive more and more Masonic secrets, but rather explanations of things that we have already seen and heard about in an earlier degree, indeed, mostly in the First Degree, that of Entered Apprentice. As you know, the candidate enters the lodge room 'divested of all metals', he is also 'slipshod'.





## Building Together – The Origins – a valuable perspective

Why he is 'divested of all metals' is partly explained in the First Degree in the passage in the North-East Corner, but a fuller explanation occurs in the Third Degree in which he comes across Tubal Cain, and having been divested of all metals before his initiation he is invested with metals on his Master Mason's apron, with a symbol of wisdom. But why is he slipshod?

The answer to that question is not revealed until the Installation of a Third Principal in the Royal Arch. So in order to explain to a keen Entered Apprentice why he is slipshod one has to go through the chairs in the Royal Arch. I could give you many, many more examples but you get my point.

At the bottom of the Royal Arch jewel is the phrase in Latin: 'Nil nisi clavis deest' [only the key remains] reminding the new Companion that there is still more to learn. Obviously, the only ceremonies left in which he can gain the key referred to on the jewel are the Installation ceremonies of the three Royal Arch Principals. The three Principals represent among other things the three keystones of the Royal Arch, keystones which when removed reveal the cave in which is found the true secret of Freemasonry, a secret that is finally revealed to an Installed First Principal at his Installation. Armed with that knowledge, an Installed First Principal can now teach Entered Apprentices about Freemasonry. Only by joining the Royal Arch and going through the three chairs can you make sense of Craft Freemasonry as a coherent whole.

And so Brethren, joining the Royal Arch and going through the three chairs is not just a matter of another Masonic degree, it is the completion of pure, Antient Masonry and it is the key to understanding what the whole Craft of Freemasonry is about, even things that occur in the very first degree.

In 2011, our Pro-Grand Master, Peter Lowndes said: 'what is the point of watching the first three episodes [of a drama] and then ignoring the fourth when all is revealed?'. Note his final phrase Brethren: 'when all is revealed'. To that I would add, why would one not want to learn the genuine secrets of the Master Mason that have been passed down from generation to generation for well over 600 years? Why would one not want to understand Freemasonry better? And surely all of us want to be in a position to help a keen Entered Apprentice understand what our ancient and glorious order is all about.





For this Newsletter I have set the 3<sup>rd</sup>PGP and APGPs a test to produce anything they want. I asked they gave - ENJOY

### **From the 3<sup>rd</sup> Provincial Grand Principal (when) designate**

Companions,

It is with a profound sense of humility and excitement that I look forward to taking up my new role as Third Provincial Grand Principal.

To say this appointment came out of "left field" would be an understatement. While we all strive to serve our Province to the best of our abilities, receiving the call to join the Provincial Grand Executive was as unexpected as it was an immense honour. It is a privilege I never anticipated, and I am deeply grateful for the trust placed in me.



As I prepare to take on these new responsibilities, I am acutely aware of the high expectations that come with the office. I may not have all the answers yet, but I can promise you this: I will do my very best to meet those expectations with dedication, integrity, and a genuine commitment to the Royal Arch in East Lancashire.

I look forward to visiting many of you in your Chapters soon and to working alongside the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent and the executive team to ensure the Province continues to thrive.

With my best fraternal wishes."

*Here is the oldest gravestone with masonic images in North America. "Here lies ye body of Sargent Richard Kettell Age 71 yrs. Died June 29, 1680"*





It has been really quite sad that almost every day (especially over the recent five or six months) an email is put out telling us that W/Bro, EComp so and so has passed to the Grand lodge above.

We may not know him personally, or indeed he may have been a long-standing friend. Each email though, does, tug at the heart strings, it can feel like a personal loss and in some way, it is; he was a brother and companion. Someone who shared the same values, who was striving for the same things. We would come together for a brief moment to practice our rituals and for a brief time escape the madness of the outside world. Our Lodges and Chapters became a form of refuge where we could meet up with like minded men and enjoy each other's company. As we look around our meeting places, we notice the absence of former friends and fellows with a tinge of sadness.

There is a proverb from an old army song (later which General McArthur used) 'Old soldiers never die; they simply fade away'.

What is the legacy of those that have faded away? Perhaps it is the encouragement given to us when we started on this path. Helping us to reach and maintain certain standards which we use not only within our Lodges and Chapters, but also in everyday life. When they were sitting in the North East and tutting every so often, we knew we would get it right next time.

I think that their legacy is all around us when we enter our meeting places. I suppose that it could be seen that they have ensured that we conduct our ceremonies in the way they were meant to be done. Our Chapters/Lodges continue to flourish, and that they have done their bit in making good men better.



*On Saturday 2nd November,  
the Inaugural National  
Freemasons Service of  
Remembrance took place at  
the National Memorial  
Arboretum.*



# Greetings from Doug Smith, APGP Eastern Area – Musings on why we should have a Newsletter



Newsletters are an effective way to ensure everyone remains informed, particularly when information seems to slip away. They help us communicate clearly, stay consistent, and aligned by sharing our goals, current updates, and expectations all at once.



Secondly, by consistently sharing updates on our actions, decisions, and progress, we demonstrate responsibility and foster trust within the community. Effective communication prevents misunderstandings and boosts confidence about our direction.

Thirdly, it brings people together. When friends are in the loop about the chances, events and successes, they are more likely to jump in. Seeing what is happening makes things exciting and keeps everyone moving forward. Celebrating our wins also shows that we value everyone’s contributions and keep everyone motivated.

The newsletter lets us send messages that are not just a blur of generalities but something that really matters to them.

It's a smart and budget-friendly way to stay connected! By investing a little, we can make sure everyone stays in the loop, have open chats, and genuinely check how they're doing. It really helps us keep close without overspending.

The RA Newsletter is a wonderful way to keep everyone informed, build stronger community connections, invite more participation, and highlight our values. It’s more than just sharing updates; it’s about working together effectively to shape a bright future. I hope this explains the need for a newsletter.

In his book "Freemasonry in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight", F.D. Laugharne refers to this memorial in Kingston Cemetery calling it 'Possibly the only Masonic War Memorial'.





Firstly, to Excellent Companion Trevor Howarth who has joined the Western Area team as a Royal Arch Area Officer (RAAO). Trevor brings with him a wealth of experience in both the Craft and the Royal Arch and has quickly established himself as a valuable part of the Western Area team and to the Royal Arch, working alongside our other RAAO, EComp Ray Taylor.



Secondly to the Chapter of Hope No 54. Although Chapter of Hope held its first meeting in the Western Area at Bolton Masonic Hall back in June 2025, it has only just been officially transferred from the Eastern to the Western Area. The Chapter has also become part of the University scheme and already has a number of Exaltees in the pipeline for their next Convocation on the first Thursday in October. Visitors are always warmly welcomed.

Whilst on the subject, The RA continues to grow in membership as several Chapters have exalted new Companions in the opening half of this Masonic year and there are several others due to be exalted in the coming months. Welcome to you all and I hope that you enjoy your Royal Arch Masonry as much as I do.

We have had two very special celebrations in the last year: EComps John Whitfield of St John's Chapter at Bolton and EComp Peter Seddon of Prince Edwin's Chapter both celebrated 50 years in Royal Arch Masonry. I am sure that you all join me in wishing hearty congratulations to them both. The annual meeting of Provincial Grand Chapter saw our own, Excellent Companion John Gannon, receive the high Honour of being made the Provincial Grand Scribe Nehemiah for the forthcoming year – many congratulations John.

*One feature that is truly unique is the Masonic grave of Thomas Brierley, the eccentric printer from Brookbottom, near Strines. A very enthusiastic, though somewhat eccentric, mason, he arranged for a gravestone to be prepared for him in anticipation of his death. Parts of the inscription were written in cipher and other parts left blank because information of the date of his death were not known when the memorial was made.*





Freemasonry is often compared to a tree. To keep a tree healthy, the gardener must sometimes be brave enough to prune it. Dead branches are removed, and occasionally a plant needs lifting from stubborn soil and re-planted somewhere sunnier where it can flourish. Recently, something very much like that happened to Reddish Chapter No. 3615, formerly meeting at Audenshaw in East Lancashire.



Instead of simply pruning the branches, however, this particular plant has been transplanted almost 6,000 miles away — from the drizzle of Lancashire to the sunshine of Asunción, Paraguay, where it now works under the South America (Southern Division) District of the United Grand Lodge of England.



*The Masonic Temple in Asunción,  
Paraguay*

Remarkably, the entire operation took only a few months. Thanks must go to the hardworking East Lancashire team — the Chapter members themselves, the APGPs, the Provincial Office staff, and of course the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent whose recommendation ultimately secured approval from Supreme Grand Chapter. Moving house is usually stressful; moving a Chapter across continents is apparently slightly easier!

But why Paraguay? Freemasonry in South America has been enjoying something of a renaissance, with several new Lodges and Chapters appearing in recent years. Paraguay presented an especially interesting opportunity.

Although the country has its own Grand Lodge — the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Paraguay — it does not practise the Royal Arch. Paraguayan Freemasons wishing to complete their Masonic journey have therefore been travelling to neighbouring Uruguay to attend Royal Arch meetings. What initially looked like a complication quickly became an opportunity





With UGLE having already consecrated **Asunción Lodge No. 10006** in 2021, the foundations were in place. Even better, the Grand Master of Paraguay supported the initiative and became a joining member at the Chapter's first meeting in Asunción on 5 March.

So how did East Lancashire become involved in all this South American sunshine? The answer lies with the newly appointed APGP,

*Members of the Chapter in Asunción*

Ex.Comp. Kai Hughes, who has maintained Masonic connections in the region for more than 30 years and is a member of Silver River Lodge No. 879 in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Thanks to that long-standing connection — and the generosity of the Companions of Reddish Chapter — a Chapter has been given a new life in fertile Masonic soil. Eight Reddish members can now proudly describe themselves **as honorary members of a Chapter that now meets in Paraguay**. Not many Chapters can claim such an impressive change of address!



*Reddish Chapter Members in Audenshaw*  
Front row (L–R): Roger Paul, Kai Hughes  
APGP, Aiden Foynes, Nigel Johnson.  
Back row (L–R): David Williams, Norman  
Jackson, Luke Griffiths, Barry Leech.



*Hails family grave*  
*Right hand side*  
*Enlarged image of George William Hails*  
*Heaton Cemetery*





Those exalted 50, 40, 30, 20 and 10 years ago.

Congratulations to all those celebrating 50, 40, 30, 20 and 10 years continuously in the Royal Arch between 20/3/2025 and 20/3/2026. The Chapters are the chapters into which the celebrant was Exalted and may not be their current main Chapter

### 50 Years

John M Scott	Chapter of Harmony	C4390
David H Thompson	Architect	C1375
Peter Seddon	Goulburn with Turton	C3478
John Mason	Peace	C3792
James Sutcliffe	Abbey	C2529

### 40 Years

Richard Bell	Alexandra	C993
Michael A Bernstein	Ark and Menorah	C6594
Ian R Bronks	St John's	C325
Norman Cope	Chapter of the Nativity	C126
John S Ellis	Chapter of Stregth	C286
Keith S Mayne	Unitas Fratrum	C7598
Anthony Nuttall	Hartshead	C7402
Christopher J Ogden	Loyal Todmorden	C219
Keith Taylor	Papyrean	C5771
David J Taylor	Cribden	C7285
Colin Whitaker	Cana	C116





Those exalted 50, 40, 30, 20 and 10 years ago.

### 30 Years

Keith M Williams	Lancastrians	C3853
Geoffrey W Worsley	St John's	C348
John Gannon	St John's	C348
Harry K Stephenson	Concord Deane	C37
Geoffrey Riley	Cana	C116
Paul Aspinall	Hutchinson	C381
William A Catlow	Hutchinson	C381
Glynn J Hughes	Abbey	C2529
David Anderson	Chapter of	C3787
Stephen W Lister	Ark and Menorah	C6594
Roger Bower	Ark and Menorah	C6594
David Dunn	Werneth	C6163
Martin Gilbert	Portland	C6575
Nigel P Bird	Mossley	C6577
John W Taylor	Mossley	C6577
Ian David Malloch	Cathedral	C7814

### 20 Years

Paul Cartwright	Fraternity	C1697
Heathcliffe DP Christian	Deane	C6521
Damian J Clegg	Thursby	C3855
Gordon L Cox	Imperial George	C78
Robert B Crowther	Chapter of Meribah	C350
David Dredge	Chapter of Virtue	C152
John E Green	St George's	C1723
Steven F Holmes	Chapter of Fidelity	C274





Those exalted 50, 40, 30, 20 and 10 years ago.

### 20 Years (Continued)

Andrew P Jenkins	Social	C62
Norman Johnstone	Fidelity	C269
John J O'Brien	Derby	C1055
Harry ZA Orenstein	Menorah	C4849
Soshil K Rawal	Chapter	C44
Bryan W Ross	Red	C1504
Andrew P Thornton	Abbey	C2529

### 10 years

Edward W Beaman	Derby	C1055
Robert S Cohen	Ark and Menorah	C6594
Andrew C Deas	Chapter of Unanimity	C42
Jan CBB Eriksson	Chapter of Friendship	C44
John M Gee	St John's	C348
George A Gibson	Robert Burns	C999
Alan P Holderness	Hutchinson	C381
Martin F Holland	Loyal Todmorden	C219
Alan Ikin	Derby	C1055
John A Ling	Probity and Freedom	C367
John J McHugh	Werneth	C6163
Russell M Perks	Chapter of Hope	C54
Raymond V Tammam	Ark and Menorah	C6594
Raymond P Taylor	Imperial George	C78
Andrew K Taylor	Lord Stanley	C2891
Kim Villacampa	Concord Deane	C37
Patrick D Wynne	Ardwick	C2185



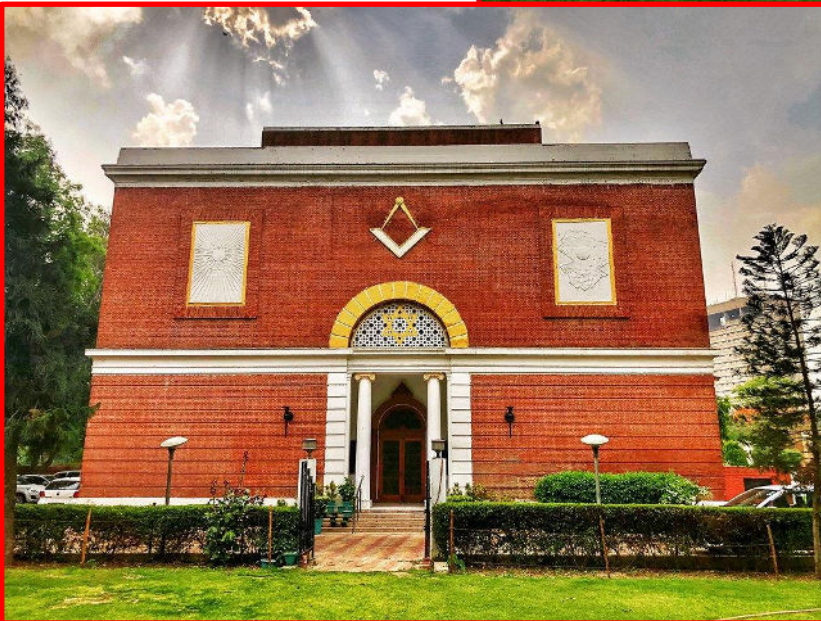


# Masonic Buildings



No prizes for this one, but who would imagine the scale of the entirety of Great Queen St.

George Washington Memorial started in 1922, finished in 1970



Masonic Centre of India  
– New Delhi. The  
Headquarters of the  
Grand Lodge of India