



WYP Monthly Newsletter

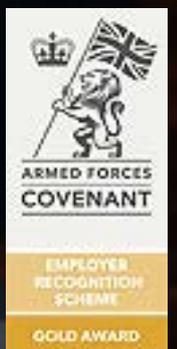
Staffordshire Freemasons Digital News



Issue 32



**Page 2 - The Great Tommy
Sleepout - 28th March 2026**





The Great Tommy Sleep Out 2026 Campaign by Royal British Veterans Enterprise

The incredible **Great Tommy Sleep Out** community are sleeping out for one night, or more to raise vital funds and awareness, helping to provide safe shelter and mental health support to homeless veterans.



This March, **14 Members of the Province** including a Chained Officer, are taking part in The Great Tommy Sleep Out. Every night, thousands of veterans right here in the UK are facing the harsh reality of sleeping rough. **Together, we can change it.**

We'll be swapping the comfort of our beds for one night, or more, under the stars. No frills. No luxury. Just us, our sleeping bags and the cold.

Every pound you donate will go directly to Royal British Veterans Enterprise (RBVE), helping

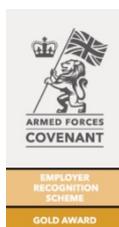


provide safe homes, mental health support, employment opportunities, and a community of veterans who support each other. Our target is £5000 - can we smash that with your help?!

This isn't just a fundraiser - it's a statement: we don't leave our veterans behind.



You can use this QR code to easily scan your donation pledge



Long Service at Noah's Ark Lodge No.347

W. Bro. Dr. Matthew Gibbons, the Assistant Provincial Grand Master was the presiding officer at the January Installation meeting of Noah's Ark Lodge No. 347 in West Bromwich. He was supported by the Provincial Grand Master R.W. Bro John Lockley and several Provincial officers. The meeting however, was not only the Lodge Installation but also an opportunity for the Lodge and invited guests to celebrate with W. Bro Anthony Edward Hignett his 60 years in Freemasonry.

Tony had previously been presented with a set of miniature working tools by the Lodge to commemorate his service. But at the meeting the Provincial Grand Master invited Tony to join him, and they sat in front of the Lodge members and

guests, to discuss Tony's family life and his long masonic history.

Tony was born in Coventry in 1931, educated at schools in Coventry and Lichfield before joining the Midland Bank to work as a clerk. However, after a few months he was called up for National service, joined the RAF and was posted within UK. At the time Tony played Rugby at a good level, against some formidable opposition and played at Twickenham. He was asked to play for the RAF team but sadly his 2 years were up, and he left.

In 1952 Tony went into teaching and after completing 2 years further training, he started work back in Coventry where he met and married his wife, Jeanne. They had a daughter, and now have a granddaughter and great grandsons.

Tony and Jeanne moved to Coseley where he became a Deputy Head and subsequently Headmaster of several schools in Wolverhampton. Tony now enjoys his retirement with his family, having given up rugby some years ago.

Tony started his masonic journey in Wolverhampton and joined Prince of Wales Lodge No. 4021, he served as W. Master and was a founding member of Oak Lodge. Tony became a good friend of W. Bro. Bill Todd, a member of Noah's Ark Lodge and he later joined the Lodge, He performed all of the offices within the Lodge and became W. Master in 1991. Tony also joined Dormston Chapter No. 7821 in Wolverhampton.

The PGM congratulated Tony on his long service to Freemasonry and presented him with a certificate to commemorate this. Tony thanked the PGM, and all the brethren present. A most enjoyable festive board followed.

W. Bro Patrick Hall 347 Almoner



A Memorable Visit to Guildhall Lodge No. 3116

The Assistant Provincial Grand Master W. Bro. Jeremy Francis Roberts, PSGD, accompanied by W. Bro. Kevin Lee Gibbons, the Assistant Provincial Director of Ceremonies, recently visited Guildhall Lodge No. 3116 in the City of London, on Tuesday 3rd March.

What began as a simple visit soon became a memorable occasion.

The meeting itself was notable as it marked the first ever Masonic meeting to be held at Ironmongers' Hall, one of the City of London's most historic and prestigious livery company halls. Guildhall Lodge, which normally meets at Mansion House or the Guildhall, has a rich history and a distinguished membership, with many of its Worshipful Masters going on to become the Lord Mayor of London.



The Installing Master was RW Bro. Gareth Jones OBE, PAGM, who delivered an outstanding and word-perfect ceremony using the Oxford workings. The address to the Wardens was delivered by RW Bro. Alderman Sir David Hugh Wootton, PDepGM, in equally impressive fashion.



The meeting was extremely well attended, with so many Right Worshipful and Very Worshipful Brethren present, that even some Grand Officers began the evening seated

within the Lodge rather than forming part of the procession. Guildhall Lodge boasts many distinguished Past Masters, including RW Bro. Sir Michael Snyder, DepGM.

During the visit Kevin found himself unexpectedly called into action at short notice, and was asked if he would assist with the ceremonial duties for the evening. Kevin was invited to join the rehearsal with the Grand Director of Ceremonies team and was then asked to assist with escorting Brethren in and out of the Lodge, forming the procession of the Rulers and Past Rulers of the Craft, and then to act as Senior Deacon for the evening.

Kevin commented that it was a proud moment to represent Staffordshire and a great honour to be asked to assist during such a prestigious meeting. He also noted how welcoming the Brethren of Guildhall Lodge were, and he has since remained in contact with several new friends made during the evening. Indeed, he has already been invited to return to a future meeting and attend another rehearsal with the team.

Kevin described the experience as both a privilege and an honour, particularly as it gave him the opportunity to work alongside the Grand DC team and learn some of the ceremonial techniques they employ. Among these was the impressive cross-step marching, a movement used in processions to allow officers to change sides and direction smoothly while maintaining formation. The ceremony itself was conducted to the highest standard.

The evening concluded with a festive board held in the magnificent surroundings of Ironmongers' Hall. Kevin remarked that it was the first time he had ever enjoyed caviar at a festive board, adding a memorable touch to an already remarkable experience in one of London's most iconic buildings.

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St Peter's Lodge No. 419

The 1727th Meeting of St Peter's Lodge was held on Thursday 5th March 2026 and what a wonderful evening it was for Brethren of the Lodge and their initiate, Mr Mark Andrew Birchill. The brother of Lodge Secretary and the Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro John M. Birchill.

The Provincial Grand Master RW Brother John Lockley was present, he was supported by many Provincial officers and invited guests. They all witnessed a truly excellent ceremony by the Worshipful Master W. Bro. L. A. Henry. Whilst W. Bro John M. Birchill, who not only escorted the Provincial Grand Master, acted as Secretary, but also presented a most sincere and word-perfect Charge after Initiation to his Brother.



The impressive ceremony concluded just how it had started, and the celebration continued into the Festive board, which was enjoyed by all in welcoming St Peter's Lodge new member.



Tamworth Tap Makes History with Third National Triumph

The Tamworth Tap has once again raised the bar for British pubs, securing CAMRA's National Pub of the Year 2025 and becoming the first establishment in the competition's 37 year history to win the coveted title three times. This remarkable achievement places the Tap firmly at the pinnacle of the UK's pub landscape and shines a spotlight on the dedication of its owners, George and Louise Greenaway (Right of photo), with George proudly counted among the brethren of Ethelfleda Lodge No. 6600.

Nestled in a beautifully preserved Tudor building overlooking Tamworth's Norman castle, the Tap is home to the Tamworth Brewing Company and offers an impressive eight cask ales alongside a wide range of ciders, gins, wines and bottled beers. Its characterful interior, complete with a CAMRA themed staircase styled as a tower of Good Beer Guides, reflects the pub's deep connection to the Campaign and to the wider real ale community.

But it is the Tap's role as a true community hub that sets it apart. From craft clubs and painting evenings to faith gatherings and sell out tasting sessions, the pub has become a welcoming space for all. George and Louise's commitment extends far beyond hospitality: they support local charities, champion the Royal British Legion's Tamworth branch, and prepare Christmas hampers for St Editha's Parish Church. Their service to the town was recognised with the award of Freedom of the Borough, a rare honour and richly deserved.

Reflecting on their historic third win, George and Louise admitted to being unusually lost for words. They described the achievement as "beyond our wildest dreams," emphasising that the heart of the Tap lies not only in its beer but in its people, the loyal "Tappers" including many Freemasons & Lodges from the area, and the dedicated Team Tap whose passion and warmth define the pub's atmosphere.

The spotlight rightly shines on George, Louise and their exceptional team. Their achievement is not only a triumph for Tamworth but a point of pride for all who know them, including the brethren of Ethelfleda Lodge No. 6600, who will no doubt join the chorus of congratulations.

A hat trick for the history books – and a toast to community, craft, and unwavering dedication.



Full Provincial Visit To Earl Shrewsbury Chapter No 1520

An Exaltation and 50 Year Certificate

What a truly special Convocation took place on Wednesday 11th February 2026 — a double celebration accompanied by a full Provincial visit. The Chapter was filled to capacity, with Companions travelling from near and far to mark these memorable occasions.



We have long known Bro Ashley Smith, and now we proudly greet him as Companion Ashley, following his important discovery and the completion of his Craft journey in the pursuit of truth. Companion Ashley was exalted into this Chapter and remarked that this has been the finest ceremony he has experienced so far. He wholeheartedly recommends the Royal Arch to any Mason wishing to advance and complete their Craft Masonry.

The evening was further distinguished as we celebrated E.Comp. J.A.E. Winter, Past Grand Superintendent, marking his remarkable 50 years of service to the Royal Arch.



Initiated in 1967 and exalted into this Chapter on 9 February 1976, he went on to serve the Province as Grand Superintendent in 2011.

Alongside his many duties, E.Comp. John was instrumental in the development of the current red ritual book used in Chapter.

What a fabulous achievement. We warmly applauded him for his unwavering service and dedication. In E.Comp. John's own words: "I have enjoyed my Royal Arch Masonry" — and his advice to us all — "Enjoy your Royal Arch Masonry."

Courtesy of Comp Harkesh Ram



Staffordshire Masonic Golf Society – Welcoming the 2026 Season

As we look forward to another exciting year on the fairways, the Staffordshire Masonic Golf Society is delighted to announce the fixtures for the 2026 season. With a strong and healthy membership base, the Society continues to thrive, yet we remain warmly open to welcoming new brethren who enjoy the camaraderie, competition, and fellowship that our golfing calendar offers.

This year's programme promises a full and vibrant schedule, featuring long standing competitions, inter provincial fixtures, and our popular social events. The season's highlights include:

2026 Fixtures

Spring and Wardens Trophies

Bloxwich Golf Club – Date TBA

Three Counties Match vs. Worcestershire & Warwickshire

Vale Golf Club – 3rd June

Three Way Match vs. Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire & Rutland

Lichfield Golf & Country Club – 22nd June

Midland Regional Competition

Glen Gorse Golf Club – 28th July

Valon & Denne Event

Stafford Castle Golf Club – Date TBA

Staffordshire vs. Shropshire

Hawkstone Park Golf Club – 26th August

Six Counties Competition

Northampton Golf Club – 27th August

PGM's Trophy

Newcastle Golf Club – Date TBA

Captain's Day

The Shropshire Golf Course – 18th September

Membership and Looking Ahead

Our membership numbers remain strong, reflecting the enthusiasm and fellowship that define our Society. Nonetheless, we continue to actively encourage new members to join us, whether seasoned golfers or enthusiastic beginners. All that's needed is a love of the game and a willingness to enjoy the company of like minded brethren.



Staffordshire Masonic Golf Society

The Return of the Festival "Golf Cards"

We are also pleased to announce the resurrection of the popular "Golf Cards" initiative, raising funds for the next Festival. These will run throughout the season and will be drawn at the PGM's Trophy event in September, a familiar and enjoyable tradition making a very welcome return.



If you are interested in joining the Staffordshire Masonic Golf Society, or would simply like more information, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact by e-mail paul_smgs@icloud.com or call 07891 651168. New members will be greeted with a warm welcome and an enjoyable season of golf and fellowship.

Old Wulfrunians' Lodge No. 7411 Marks a Golden Milestone

Old Wulfrunians' Lodge No. 7411 enjoyed a memorable and historic meeting on Wednesday 28th January 2026 at the Rugeley and District Masonic Centre, Pottal Pool, Penkridge, combining the celebration of a remarkable personal milestone with the beginning of a new Masonic journey.

The Brethren gathered to celebrate 50 years in Freemasonry for W Bro Michael John Hughes, who was initiated on 21st January 1976. Reaching half a century of dedicated service to the Craft is a rare and notable achievement, and the Lodge was delighted to recognise W Bro Hughes' remarkable contribution to Freemasonry over five decades.

The Lodge was honoured by the attendance of the Provincial Grand Master, who added considerable distinction to an already special occasion by promoting W Bro Mike, in the field, to Past Provincial Senior Grand Warden.

The meeting also witnessed the initiation of Bro Joe Stepien, providing a fitting contrast between long service and new beginnings. The ceremony was conducted with great care and dignity by W Bro Tim Lawrence acting as Worshipful Master for the evening, and particular credit is due to the Lodge's 'Light

Blues', who delivered the Charge, the Working Tools, the presentation of the Masonic Slipper, and the Address in the North East Corner in an exemplary manner. Their confident and accomplished performances were widely praised by the senior brethren present and reflected the strength and future promise of the Lodge.

The presence of both a Brother celebrating fifty years in the Craft and a newly-initiated Brother taking his first steps served as a powerful reminder of the continuity and enduring values of Freemasonry. It was an evening that will long be remembered by all who attended and one that reflected great credit on Old Wulfrunians' Lodge No. 7411 and the spirit of Freemasonry it proudly upholds.

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Staffordshire extends its sincere congratulations to W Bro Mike Hughes on achieving his Golden Jubilee in Freemasonry and offers a warm and fraternal welcome to Bro Joe Stepien as he begins his Masonic journey.

W. Bro Nigel Thomas

Old Wulfrunians' Lodge No. 7411



Izaak Walton Chapter No 4281 celebrate E. Comp. Andrew Beckingsale's 50th year

At a recent meeting in Stafford of Izaak Walton Chapter No 4281 there was a celebration for Andrew Beckingsale, who had completed 50 years as a Royal Arch Mason.

The Deputy Head of the Royal Arch E. Comp Ralph Howarth and the Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro and E. Comp John Lockley were present together with officers of Supreme Grand Chapter and Provincial Grand Chapter, plus members of the Chapter.

During the meeting Ralph Howarth sat down with Andrew and they chatted about Andrew's life and Masonic career. A Masonic career that has seen him reach high rank in many orders, including Assistant Provincial Grand Master in the Mark Master Masons (Staffs and Shrops).

A most interesting and enjoyable evening was had by all, with the Companions getting to know a stalwart of Staffordshire Freemasonry.



“HMS Conqueror and the ARA Belgrano sinking”

Join the members of Menturia 418 – Armed Services Lodge, for a fascinating insight into a remarkable story of this historic event, presented by W Bro Cdr Jonty Powis **PSGD**, SLGR a senior member of the crew of HMS Conqueror.

THURSDAY 26TH MARCH 2026
Hanley Masonic Hall, Shelton,
Stoke-on-Trent ST1 4NA.
Followed by a Regimental Dinner.

TO BOOK

Email:
menturia418@gmail.com



A Memorable Royal Arch Exaltation

Etruscan Chapter No. 546 recently hosted a most uplifting and memorable Convocation, as Companions and visitors gathered to celebrate the Exaltation of W Bro Sam Proctor, the newly installed Worshipful Master of the Universities Lodge of Staffordshire No. 9907.

The Chapter was delighted to welcome an exceptionally strong turnout of visitors, creating a warm and supportive atmosphere for this important milestone in Bro Sam's Masonic journey. Completing his Third Degree by being Exalted into the Royal Arch, Comp Sam was treated to an exemplary Ceremony that reflected both the skill and dedication of the Companions involved.

The Ceremony was led with distinction by Excellent Companion Brian Sergeant, acting as First Principal, ably assisted by Excellent Companion Ian Bennett as Principal Sojourner. Their ritual delivery was of the highest standard, ensuring a meaningful and dignified experience throughout. Particular care was taken to ensure the Ceremony was fully inclusive for Comp Sam, who is visually challenged and was accompanied by his loyal Labrador, Reece.

In a thoughtful and commendable contribution, Excellent Companion David Robinson, Director of Ceremonies, provided a clear and vivid description of the Chapter Room at the appropriate point in the Ceremony. This enabled Comp Sam to fully appreciate the setting and symbolism of the moment, enhancing the depth and personal significance of his Exaltation.

The inclusive nature of the Ceremony was evident from the moment Comp Sam arrived. He was warmly welcomed and guided

through each stage with care, compassion, and brotherly support, reflecting great credit on the Chapter and all involved.

The occasion was further honoured by the presence of the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent for Staffordshire, E Comp Michele Santopietro, accompanied by the Deputy Grand Superintendent, E Comp Ralph Howarth, along with several Provincial and Supreme Grand Chapter Officers, including Excellent Companion Arthur Steven Varley, the Assistant Grand Master who had been present when Comp Sam was installed into the Chair of his Lodge. Their attendance, alongside many visiting Companions, added to the celebratory spirit of the day.

Following the Ceremony, Companions and guests enjoyed a convivial period of refreshment, providing an opportunity to continue the celebrations and share fellowship in true Royal Arch tradition.

Etruscan Chapter No. 546 now extends its sincere good wishes to Comp Sam Proctor for every success as he continues his journey in Pure and Ancient Freemasonry and looks forward to the day when he may take his place among the Principals of this excellent Chapter.



Royal Arch Masonry Celebrates 50 Years

Queeselet Chapter No. 6887 marked a significant milestone on 23 February 2026, celebrating its 50th anniversary during a full Provincial visit by the Provincial Grand Chapter of Staffordshire, combined with the Installation of the Three Principals.

The evening was exceptionally well supported, with several Grand Superintendents from neighbouring and more distant Provinces in attendance, along with Past Grand Superintendents and a large delegation of Provincial Chapter Officers.

Excellent Companion Matthew Shaw, outgoing First Principal, had the pleasure of welcoming the Provincial Grand Master, together with his Deputy, an Assistant Provincial Grand Master, and members of the Provincial team, reflecting the shared one journey, one organisation ethos of Craft and Chapter.

Head of the Royal Arch in Staffordshire, Excellent Companion Michele Santopietro, remarked on the significance of the occasion, noting how pleasing it was to see the Chapter so well attended and full of smiling Companions as it marked this important anniversary.

The celebrations included a short history of the Chapter delivered by Excellent Companion David Hampson, Past Grand Superintendent, followed by the Installation of the Three Principals. Leadership of the Chapter has now passed to Excellent Companion John Phenix, Past Grand Superintendent of Worcestershire, who is already looking ahead to a busy year, with an Exaltation scheduled for May.



Around 80 Companions dined together afterwards, enjoying an evening of warm fellowship and celebration. During the festivities, the Grand Superintendent formally presented the Chapter with its 50th Year Certificate, recognising five decades of service and commitment to Royal Arch Masonry.

Consecrated on 17 February 1976, Queeselet Chapter originally met at Wretham Road before moving to the Yenton Masonic Centre. It holds the unique distinction of being the only Staffordshire Chapter that meets within the Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire.

The Chapter extends its thanks to all Companions who attended to help celebrate this landmark anniversary, with Excellent Companion Phenix offering a warm invitation to share in the Chapter's next 50 years of success.

Acknowledgement: Comp Harkesh Ram



Provincial Prior and Sub Prior present a Pupilometer Device

On Thursday 12th February 2026, the Provincial Prior and Sub Prior of Staffordshire and Shropshire Knights Templar attended the University Hospital North Midlands, Royal Stoke Hospital to present a Pupilometer Device to their Critical Illness Team.

A Pupilometer is a specialized, handheld, non-invasive device used to accurately measure pupil size, symmetry, and reactivity to light. It is essential in clinical settings for checking cranial nerve function and monitor brain injury or herniation.

The device will enable the Critical Care Teams to ascertain the most minute changes in movement in the pupil of the eye, so that staff can assess if a patient has suffered brain death or whether there is still the hope of life. It provides accurate reliable measurements and makes patient examination far quicker and easier, when compared to manual assessment.

The appeal for funding this device, which is quite small but very expensive, had been promoted throughout the Province with many Preceptories and Knights contributing towards its purchase. The Critical Care Team staff were delighted and most appreciative of the donation.

The photograph shows E.Kt Ralph Ritchey, Dr Prab Kler, Lead Consultant for Critical Care and Transplant Coordinator, Senior Critical Illness Nurse Claire Gidley, R. E.Kt David Philips and Matron Sandra Barrington.



Fast Lane Indoor
Karting

151 King Street
Stoke-On-Trent
ST4 3ER

Inter County Trophy

Staffordshire, Derbyshire (Title Holders),
Shropshire & Warwickshire.
Go Karting Race

Sunday 14th June 2026
Gates open at 11.30am
Race start 1pm



Masonic
Charitable Foundation



*WELCOME TO THE 2026 FUNDRAISING,
COUNTY TROPHY & FAMILY FUN DAY 30 MINS
PRACTICE AND QUALIFYING FOLLOWED BY 2
HRS GO-KARTING RACE. WHERE TEAMS OF
DRIVERS WILL BATTLE FOR A PODIUM
POSITION & COVETED MASONIC COUNTY
RACE TROPHY*

All Proceeds Raised by each County to go to
Charity of their choice.

All you Need are 2 teams of 3 of 4 Drivers per
Team per Province, Contact Mark for
Bookings
ch.steward@staffordshirefreemasons.org

This event is for all the family to
enjoy. Full training will be provided
to all competitors, Race Clothing &
helmet Supplied.

Entry Fee Can be paid Via Bank
transfer on the booking form
attached

Price £50 per driver if 4 in the team,
£62 per driver if 3 in the team.

Acc Castellum Lodge 6710

Sort Code 30-95-91

Acc 00770146

Ref Kart & your name

A Story of Two Worshipful Masters

On Monday 2nd February 2026 Brother Geoff Parkes was installed as Worshipful Master of Wulfrun Lodge No. 4602. Only twelve days later on Valentines Day, Saturday 14th February 2026, his wife Yolanda who is also a Freemason in the Order of Women freemasons was installed as the Worshipful Master of her lodge, - Lodge of Staffordshire Knot No.81.

A marriage made in heaven



Send your articles to: editor@staffordshirefreemasons.org.uk



ARE YOU CONSIDERING SHELTERED HOUSING?

WILSON KEYS COURT is a Masonic built and run Scheme situated in Deanery Close, Rugeley only a few yards from Rugeley town centre.

This attractive building, set in mature landscaped gardens, provides 34 one-bedroom flats for applicants over the age of 60, who want to live independently with some support. Applicants over 55 and registered disabled would be considered if our scheme would enable continued independence. Flats have alarm pull cords, providing assistance in an emergency, which are linked to the on-site Manager Monday to Friday 9am to 5 pm and connected to an emergency control centre out of hours. Giving residents and families peace of mind. Our indoor and outdoor social spaces provide opportunities for varied social activities.

For further information please contact:

Tracy Slater - Scheme
Manager on 01889

576544 wilsonkeyswarden@btconnect.com

