

At last Spring has sprung!

Spring is here and we can look forward to being able to meet up again after a long winter made longer by the restrictions caused by the Covid 19 pandemic.

This edition brings news from the Lodge officers, the increasing use of the internet in maintaining contacts and we catch up with news of the Junior Warden's Land Rover restoration

Four Vivary News have been issued during a period when our Lodge has been unable to meet and hopefully the next edition will bring reports of the resumption of normal service.

Bro. Mike Marshall Lodge Communications Officer

From the East W Bro John Rudge Worshipful Master



Well at long last there is light at the end of the tunnel. The Masonic Hall is due to re-open on 21st June (subject to any change in Government regulations), Ann and I have both had our second vaccinations and summer is just round the corner. All being well we are going on a week's holiday to Bude at the beginning of July to which we are looking forward immensely after (hopefully) having moved to Wembdon just outside Bridgwater. We have been living in "box city" for weeks while various technicalities are sorted out by solicitors higher up the ladder and so the actual move cannot come soon enough.

The Lodge will hopefully be able to hold two Extraordinary Meetings probably to perform Second Degree ceremonies on 6th and 20th August and to deal with various formalities that have built up during the closure period before our season commences on Friday 15th October with the Installation. At all our meetings suitable precautions will be taken for the safety of the brethren so I very much anticipate that we shall be able to meet together once again safely. During the closure period our Charity Steward, W Bro Henry Besley has been beavering away in support of worthy causes details of which will be reported at our meeting.

During the closure period a number of us have been meeting on Zoom and honouring the 9 o'clock toast. Others have done so using Vivary What's App all of which has enabled us to keep in contact with one another. It's still not too late to join us. It's not complicated and there is plenty of help available – just ask. You will notice that I have not used "lockdown" but rather referred to "closure". Let's hope that the former is in the past and we can look forward to the resumption of our Masonic activities with renewed vigour.

Zooming Around! – Bro Mike Marshall

I feel really bad for the class of 2020. They say the year really flies by - I just didn't realize it would Zoom!



A year ago if someone had said to me do you want a Zoom I would have thought that I was being offered a rocket shaped ice lolly! But over the last 12 months Zoom meetings have become a part of normal life. For those who had to self-quarantine or were otherwise isolated due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Internet has been transformed from a simple source of entertainment to a vital lifeline almost overnight. And Zoom has become one of the most fundamental tools for group gatherings and not only are businesses using it, but families, schools, and groups of friends as well.

Vivary Lodge has used Zoom for weekly social get togethers which have been held each Friday evening since the start of the first lockdown back in April 2020. It is a chance to see familiar faces and catch up with all the news and helps to mitigate the feeling of isolation brought about by the Lockdown over the dark days of winter. If you haven't yet tried it the Zoom now begins at 8.15pm every Friday, if you have email you can access the Vivary Zoom at a click of the Mouse on the link that our Secretary, W Bro Alan Clayton, sends out to all Lodge members and even if you do not have access to a computer you can access by phone. It would be great to see you on Fridays.



Charity Steward's Report W Bro Henry Besley, Charity Steward

During the last year 2020 we have given £2500 to charities most of whom were and are concerned with the Covid 19 Pandemic. Over £2000 was given to local charities and the rest to Somerset charities that Province asked us to support which were The Wells Cathedral 'Bounce Back' appeal and The Somerset Branch of the Royal British Legion.

The following is a list of our donations during 2020;

Taunton Food Bank £250 with matched funding £175

Taunton Food Bank £200 part of a donation from Taunton Lodges of £1000

Taunton Women's Refuge £250 part of a donation of £7000 from Taunton which attracted very substantial matched funding

Taunton Salvation Army £500 with matched funding of £250

Taunton Association for the Homeless or ARC £500 with matched funding £250

Love Musgrove £400

Wells Cathedral Bounce Back £200

Somerset Branch British Legion £200

We have been able to discuss these donations at our excellent weekly zoom meetings thanks to Bro Ed Richings who has organised the technology for it all to happen. Our Worshipful Master has kindly given his support and agreement to our charitable giving.

So far this year we have given £500 to Love Musgrove Emergency Appeal and £200 to Langport and £200 to Curry Rivel's Food Banks. We were amazed recently to be told by Bro Matt Potter that he will be jumping from a plane at 15000 ft in aid of The Brain Tumour Charity having just lost a good friend who had a brain tumour, we will be supporting him and the charity with a donation of £500.

Fortunately we have reasonable funds in our Vivary Relief Chest which allows us to give to charitable causes and I am grateful to those Brethren who make regular or single donations to our Relief Chest. Additional funds would be very welcome; gifting can be done digitally or by filling out a form. I would be delighted to help with either, just let me know.

Almoner's Report *Bro. Bob Town, Almoner*

My first report relates to our Director of Ceremonies W Bro Barry Woodside, who has important responsibilities as the Provincial Grand Superintendent of the Holy Royal Arch Chapter in Somerset. Barry was taken ill in March and spent 8 days in hospital being treated, with antibiotics which had an adverse effect leading to the need for weekly blood tests. We wish Barry well for his ongoing treatment.

I have not received word of any other brother with health or welfare problems. This last week I have however telephoned our more elderly brethren. Except for the normal aches and pains all of them seem to be in reasonable health and spirits.

Last but not least I refer to our lodge widows. I have been in telephone contact with all of them this past week. All are cheerful and say that they are coping well in the trying circumstances of the Covid-19 lockdown. Our departed W Bro Peter Light's widow June has now moved house from Trull to Nailsea in order to be closer to her family. June's good company and humour will be missed by several of the brethren and their wives.

From the South – *Bro Richard Wilson Junior Warden*



Back in 2004 I was on my way to work on a construction site in Williton, West Somerset; I spotted an ex-military Land Rover parked on the forecourt of a garage advertised 'for sale'. I have always had an interest in military Land Rovers and hoped one day of owning one. Without hesitation I dropped into the garage to take a closer look, after a keen bout of negotiation I purchased a 1978 series III lightweight Land Rover. The garage said 'it would need some work' and my intention at this time was to embark on a new hobby.

A year flew by and I became a frequent sight in my much loved Series III, both of my girls, Emma & Katie loved going out in the Land Rover often bringing friends along for the ride. The picture on the right is me with both of my girls sitting proudly on the bonnet after Brownies. Time flew past and every year it became a bigger challenge to get an MOT, my beloved Series III turned into a 'money pit' with more and more money being paid to others to carry out work on it and I was not getting the opportunity to work on it myself!



Me and my girls 2006

With the demands of a young family and career I just could not find the time to fix all the things needed to keep the Land Rover roadworthy and so the difficult decision was made to take it off the road.

In 2010 I started to remove the bodywork, each time I tried to remove something the bolts would snap, and I would find more and more rust. Opportunity knocked and by chance a second-hand chassis became available, Sarah and I took a road trip to Norfolk where I picked up the parts I need from a fellow enthusiasts failed project, this would be enough to put mine back on the road.

The work ahead of me was mountainous - the old chassis would have to be removed, the bulkhead repaired and a complete rewire of the electrics, sadly again it got pushed back into the garage and became a nagging memory. Many times, in the pub my mates would ask me what was happening with the Land Rover and if it was ever going to be back on the road? Bearing in mind it had been in storage for some years by now.

Fast forward to October 2020 and a chance conversation with our Directors PA about the impact of Covid which had resulted in her partner Ted being made redundant. Ted is an ex-military engineer who loved anything mechanical, he had just finished a restoration project of his own and had been lucky enough to land a new job, but he wasn't starting for a few months.....do you see where this is going?

This was my opportunity, a meeting with Ted was arranged and following a visit to check out my Land Rover he agreed to restore it. At this point I'm not sure who was more excited me or Ted as a REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) veteran who'd cut his teeth on Land Rovers identical to mine whilst serving.



Plans were made with my builder friend Chris to use his Land Rover and car trailer to liberate my Landy from its very long storage and deliver it to Ted's workshop in Wellington.

As you can see there really wasn't much left on the Land Rover but I did have all the bits!

October 2020

Over the following weeks, I couldn't believe what was happening – Ted stripped every nut and bolt from my Land Rover and in less than 14-days it was just a massive pile of parts! Starting from the chassis upwards he repaired, replaced, welded and painted every component.



For the first time in over a decade my Land Rover achieved a MOT and started on the turn of a key, it was music to my ears – by 25th November I was picking it up!



Everything stripped, cleaned, repaired

Every nut and bolt cleaned/replaced

The story doesn't end there though – you remember my builder mate Chris, well his dad is a fanatical collector of Land Rovers and currently has an impressive collection of around 45 unique and often one-off Land Rovers. The dream is that these iconic vehicles will be presented to the public in a museum so that everyone with a passion can have the opportunity to enjoy these wonderful vehicles from old to new – you can currently view some of these vehicles on their website - <https://www.lrheritagecollection.org.uk/the-collection>

When Chris saw the quality of workmanship that Ted had put into my Land Rover he wasted no time in talking to his dad. Before we knew it Ted was offered a contract to with the Land Rover Heritage Collection consulting, restoring, repairing, and making the collection road worthy.

To sum up, I got my Land Rover back on the road after 12 years, Ted now has a job he loves working with Land Rovers and LHRC have an engineer with the knowledge and mechanical skills to maintain their historic collection.

So here are some **not** so great bits when owning an old Land Rover:-
No electric windows, central locking, heated seats, cup holders, radio, seat belts, Bluetooth, power steering, a heater that barely works, drum brakes which do stop eventually, 2 fuel tanks which you have to remove the seats to fill, 1 speed windscreen wipers, no door locks and the key that starts it also opens my shed. On a good day it will probably do 55mph downhill, and a fuel consumption of around 18mpg.

But the one thing it does do is makes me **smile** whilst I am driving it. And as you can see above my girls still love it.



25th November – Collection Day of my fully restored much loved Series III Land Rover



Me and my girls 2021

A virtual Christmas

The pandemic prevented the holding of Vivary's traditional Vivary Christmas Festive Board but the use of Zoom allowed the Brethren and their wives and partners celebrate Christmas at a virtual get together which managed to replicate the customary fun.

Bro Mike Marshall entertained with poems and monologues and W Bro Adrian Halliwell led the singing with W Bro Alwyn and Jan Clegg on piano. The rendition of “The Twelve Days of Christmas” has become a tradition at Vivary Lodge’s Christmas Festive board and is always fun, but this year the attempt of the Brethren and their guests to uphold this custom produced hilarious results due to time lags over the internet. As in the immortal words of Eric Morecombe we “sang all the right words but not necessarily in the right order”!



All Quizzed out – Bro Mike Marshall

The first Vivary quiz went out on Sunday 22nd March at the beginning of the first Coronavirus Lockdown, I based it on statues of famous people and it was followed by a further 38 quizzes totalling 468 tricky and downright cunning questions of my own devising. With subjects ranging from Old Taunton Pubs and streets, to chocolate and drink TV adverts, cars, music, wildlife and even rhyming slang.

I promised to keep a running score and announce the top three at our first Festive Board at the end of the crisis, little did I realise that the crisis would still be with us so many months down the line. Therefore I decided that I would bring the weekly quizzes to a close at the end of 2020 and announced the results at our first virtual Christmas Festive Board held on the 18th December.

A hardy number of Brethren worked their way through all 468 questions and besides showing excellent knowledge have also capable of providing some very inventive answers. W Bro John Rudge kindly agreed to donating bottles of wine to the top three quizzers. In the final analysis the outright winner was W Bro Alan Clayton who averaged over 11 out of 12 per Round.

Here are the results for Brethren who completed more that 30 of the 39 Rounds

| | <u>Name</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>No. Quizzes</u> | <u>Average pts per Round</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 st | W. Bro A .Clayton | 443 | 39 | 11.36 |
| 2 nd | Bro R. Wilson | 427 | 39 | 10.95 |
| 3 rd | W. Bro A. Halliwell | 417 | 39 | 10.69 |
| 4 th | W. Bro M. Crawley | 406 | 38 | 10.68 |
| 5 th | W. Bro B. Woodside | 395 | 39 | 10.13 |
| 6 th | Bro N. Hitchcott | 380 | 36 | 10.56 |
| 7 th | Bro P. Garvey | 259 | 32 | 8.09 |
| 8 th | Bro E. Richings | 246 | 39 | 6.31 |

And finally!

Remember the weekly Zoom meetings instigated by WM W Bro John Rudge and facilitated by Bro Ed Richings are continuing every Friday evenings, 8.15pm start – see you there!

Contributions for future editions will be welcome by the Lodge Communication Officer – Bro Mike Marshall mikejohnmarshall@btinternet.com . Back numbers of Vivary News can be viewed on Vivary Lodge web page on the Provincial web site www.pglsom.org. If any recipient does not wish to be included in the emailing list for Vivary News then please contact the LCO.