

Vivary News

No 17

May 2020

Lockdown Special

Welcome to this Lockdown Special of the Vivary News, a unique edition that as well as bringing news from the Lodge includes real life stories plus jokes and puzzles submitted by the Brethren to take our minds off the current constraints brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic.



A message from our Worshipful Master W Bro. John Rudge

Could I first of all draw your attention to the Pro Grand Master's message dated May 2020 in which he refers to the great efforts being made by Freemasons throughout England and Wales and to the fact that the standards of morality and service which are being demonstrated by so many brethren should serve to enhance the reputation of the Craft and its principles.

At this stage it is impossible to gauge when we are likely to be able to meet again but whenever that may be measures will be necessary to ensure the safety of the Brethren. The CoVid 19 virus is likely to be with us indefinitely, to some degree, however small. We shall almost certainly have to change many of the ways that we do things thanks to an enemy that we cannot see, however that entered on to the world stage. Whilst we must take reasonable precautions according to circumstances, I feel that we should not allow it to ruin our commercial, social and spiritual way of life but endeavour to uphold those principles in which we believe and have held so dear from time immemorial by whatever means are at our disposal. Britain is known for its inventiveness so we must all put our minds to the problem, and solve it.

I hope you and your families are keeping safe – and alert – and enjoying the marvellous weather for which we must be grateful. Just imagine how we would feel if this disaster (and I use that term advisedly) had occurred in the middle of winter with its dark nights and uncertain weather. We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when, but I know we'll meet again some sunny day.

Lockdown - Signs of the times

- The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house, and their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors!
- Do not call the police on suspicious people in your neighbourhood! Those are your neighbours without makeup and with natural colour hair!
- Day 49 at home and the dog is looking at me like, "See? This is why I chew the furniture!"
- Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands??



Bro. Mike Marshall – First Class delivery?

I spent my working life managing Builders' Merchant branches in Somerset, Devon and Dorset where a lot of my time was spent in making sure that customers received an efficient delivery service. Although we employed a large number of fully trained lorry drivers there were times when, due to holidays, sickness or increases in demand, temporary hire drivers were used which sometimes proved counterproductive.

I recall back in the mid 90's a particular occasion one such temporary driver who was given specific instructions regarding delivery do's and don'ts, all seemed to go well. But the next morning my transport supervisor, Charlie, came to see me and the conversation went something like this;

Charlie: "We've got a problem on a delivery we've made."

Me: "What's the problem Charlie?"

Charlie: "Well the hire driver yesterday had to deliver a couple of bundles of 4.8metre batten."

Me: "Yes?"

Charlie: "There was no-one at home when he called, so not wanting to bring the stuff back he used his initiative."

Me: "Good, what's the problem?"

Charlie: "He posted the lengths of batten through the letterbox."

Me: "Oh my God!"

Charlie: "But that's not all."

Me: "No?"

Charlie: "When the chap came home he couldn't open his front door because the batten was jammed between the end of the hallway and the door – he's not happy!"

Me: "So we've now got an upset customer?"

Charlie: "Oh no! The customer's not upset, he doesn't know anything about it – we delivered the stuff to the wrong address by mistake!!"

I don't recall if we recovered the lengths of batten, I suspect we let the unintended recipient of the delivery keep it!

Ever wonder what the Tyler is thinking about as he stands outside of the door for sometimes hours on end well here are what Vivary Tyler, Bro. Mike Salway thinks about!

As I was sitting outside the door, pondering the problems of the world, I realised that at my age I don't really give a damn anymore. If walking is good for your health, the postman would be immortal.

A whale swims all day, only eats fish, drinks water, but is still fat.

A rabbit runs and hops and only lives 15 years, while a tortoise doesn't run and does mostly nothing, yet it lives for 150 years!

And you tell me to exercise?? I don't think so.

Now that I'm older here's what I've discovered:

- ❖ My wild oats are mostly enjoyed with prunes and all-bran.
- ❖ Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
- ❖ I finally got my head together, and now my body is falling apart.
- ❖ It was a whole lot easier to get older, than to get wiser.
- ❖ 18. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm "here after".
- ❖ Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.

Almoner's Report - Bro. Bob Town



First of all I want to mention our brother in Vivary Lodge W Bro Peter Reginald Light who sadly passed away on 6 May after a fairly short illness aged 82. Peter had been my friend for nearly 40 years. We shared interests in amateur winemaking, watching cricket and rugby and, later on, freemasonry. I think Peter's most notable characteristic was his enthusiasm. Every endeavour he approached with positive attitude and will to succeed. He introduced me and many others into

freemasonry and was a distinguished member of Vivary Lodge, being Master in 2008-2009, receiving provincial honours and was encouraging the junior brethren as Lodge Mentor at the time of his death. Sadly his passing prevented him from completing his year in office as First Principal of the Holy Royal Arch Chapter of St George No 3158.

Peter was a dedicated family man, being devoted to his dear wife June and his daughter Sally, twin sons Paul and Nigel and four grandchildren. There is no doubt that Peter will be sorely missed by his loved ones, many friends, brethren and companions. *(W Bro Peter Light's full obituary will be published in the next edition of the Vivary News - LCO)*

As regards welfare matters it is gratifying in to report that the brethren of Vivary Lodge all seem to be in reasonable health and spirits bearing these currently very trying times. The Lodge's and my thanks must go to Lodge secretary W Bro Alan Clayton, Bros Matt Landy, Mike Marshall, Ed Richings, Mike Salway and Richard Wilson who have routinely made phone calls to all the brethren individually enquiring as to their welfare. I can also report that our 13 Lodge widows all appear to be coping reasonably well bearing in mind the present restrictions.

W Bro. Alan Clayton – Nos amis français



It is amazing how, sometimes, mistakes we make can have such a significant effect on our lives. When I was about to retire from work, Lyn and I decided we would buy a holiday apartment, so that we could spend more time in the sun, or at least in the not so cold and wet.

We had decided that we wanted a ground floor apartment on the Mediterranean coast of Spain, but one day I clicked the wrong tab on an estate agent's website and found myself looking at houses in France.

There followed a period of investigation including a week touring around France and we eventually decided to put in an offer for the house that we now own. That was accepted quite quickly, which made me wonder if I'd offered too much, but we had agreed to buy it and were on our way.

The house needed an enormous amount of TLC and included a field, which would enable us to ensure that no one was going to build an estate of houses next door. Most of all, we both felt "cuddled" when we were inside, so we were convinced that the house wanted us. Now, six and a half years later, we are prevented from going there and are missing it in much the same way as we miss being able to be with our friends and family.



The house has a large garden and a lot of quite big outbuildings. It is now fully occupiable, having been rewired and redecorated and, until recently, had a well stocked larder, including several freezers, containing things that we can't easily get in France. I'll come back to that later.

Immediately next door, we have a French couple, Michel and Samira, with three children. They don't speak English at all, but have been very patient with me as I have learnt sufficient words to make myself understood. When I had my heart attack, in 2016, Michel took on the role of protecting that idiot Englishman from doing more than he was capable of doing.



At that time, we had realised that we needed to replace the floor in our main living room, because the original was riddled with dry rot. When I got home from hospital, Michel, came round to check that I was OK and was concerned that I was planning the floor project so soon after leaving the hospital. He told me that we should hire a tipper truck to fetch the materials and that he would help by coming with me to drive the truck. Our daughter, son in law, granddaughter and grandson took two days out from their holiday with us to remove the old, wooden floor. Which they took up in small pieces and put out through the window. I was intent on shovelling it into bags to take it up to our field, but I wasn't allowed to do even that!

Once the floor was out, I went with Michel, to collect the tipper, then on to a builder's merchant for half of the sand, gravel and cement. He made sure the men in the yard loaded the bags of cement into the back of my car, so that all I had to do was stand ready and pay, then drive home. Once we had unloaded which, again was done by my family, he suggested

that we load the bags of dead floor into the tipper, so that we could take it to a tip on the way back to the supermarket where we had hired it, which saved me needing to do that another day. The local macon, having heard about my heart attack, brought his son along to be his labourer and he had the new floor down in two days, including screeding it level.



On one side of our field is a house, owned by an English couple, Mark and Jilly. They don't speak French, but get by using a mobile 'phone app. Mark is a former police pursuit driver and has many tales of his exploits as a copper. He has been looking after our garden, which is large and laid mainly to lawn. Without his help, the garden would have been a jungle by the time we could get back there.

The lockdown has been imposed rather more rigorously in France than it has been here, with Gendarmes patrolling specifically to catch those who were out without a good reason and they had swingeing fines to impose on anyone who transgressed. As a result, with shopping only allowed by one person per household, once each week and with the supermarkets struggling to maintain availability of French staples, life was becoming difficult for Mark and Jilly, because they were craving the sort of food that we take for granted. So, with our full permission, they have raided our larder, which has allowed them to have traditional English breakfast, breakfast cereal and high tea, including salmon sandwiches. They've also taken some of our rhubarb, so that they could have a pie, along with custard, using custard powder from our store. Thus, the depleted larder, but we were so pleased to be able to help someone else, after all that they, and so many others, have done for us.

Mark was concerned that the rhubarb looked a bit sparse, but then Michel sent me an email to tell me that they'd cropped it and had made a load of rhubarb jam for us. I think that they meant that they'd stewed the rhubarb but, whatever, it will grow back in no time and they'll have to do it all again.

It is so good to know that we have such good neighbours. Unfortunately, I'll not be able to persuade either of them to join Vivary!

Essential information from Bro. Mike Marshall for new Masons!

- Roast potatoes are a Mason's staple food.
- Masons have their own brand of aerobics – consists of standing up and sitting down for the numerous festive board toasts, (the newer you are the more toasts you will have to stand up for!)
- Sip your wine when drinking a toast - Don't drink the whole glass because with each festive board having toasts going into double figures you will be unable to fully take part in the Masonic aerobics – the standing up part!



Bro. Ed Richings

- Nautical Phrases in common use today

Great Britain has been a sea-faring island nation for many centuries and there remain a number of old nautical phrases in everyday common use. The Vivary brethren may be interested to know how some of the following phrases came into being and their original meaning:

On the Fiddle - Plates were generally carved out of wood by a sailor to a regulation size and had a raised edge or 'Fiddle' around the edge, to allow them to be stacked securely within the mess-deck. If a sailor took more than his allocated food allowance his plate would likely overflow and he could therefore be accused to be On the Fiddle or being dishonest.

Between the devil and the deep blue sea – is to be faced with two dangerous alternatives. The most likely meaning is that the “Devil” is the seam between the deck planking and the top plank of the ship’s side. It would have to be watertight and would need filling or caulking regularly, which would require a sailor to stand on the very edge of the deck or even be suspended over the side. Therefore, a dangerous place to be.

Hard and fast – rigidly adhered to – without doubt. A ship that was “hard and fast” was beached firmly on land. Land was known as “The hard” as in Buckler’s Hard.

Cut and run– run away. It is likely that it derives from ships making a hasty departure by cutting the anchor rope and running with the wind (aft of the ship).

Keel over – to fall over - also a sailor’s term for dying. When the boat’s keel comes out of the water it is very likely to capsize. To be on an even keel – calm and steady. The boat would float upright without listing.

Three sheets to the wind – very drunk. In sailors’ language, a sheet is a rope. If three sheets are not attached to the sails as they ought to be, the sail will flap and the boat will lurch around in a drunken fashion. Sailors had a sliding scale of drunkenness. Topsy was “one sheet”, whereas falling over was “three sheets”.

Let the cat out of the bag – to disclose a secret. This refers to the cat o’ nine tails, a whip made of rope with nine un-braided strands at the end, used to flog sailors as a punishment. The “cat” refers to the scratches and wounds the sailors would incur from the flogging. The “cat” was kept in a bag and when it was brought out there was obviously going to be trouble ahead

No room to swing a cat – a very confined space. When a sailor was punished by flogging with the “cat o’ nine tails”, the whole ship’s company was required to witness it. The deck became very crowded and there was sometimes “no room to swing a cat”.



Bro. Mike Salway - A Child of the 50's.

I was a child born in the 50's. 1950 to be exact. I had a normal life in a small village about three miles outside of a town. The village was typical at the time; it had a Church, Chapel, pub, post office (which also sold a very limited range of sweets), a blacksmiths, a Manor house (the court), a row of council houses and a few dozen private houses. There was a small farm adjoining the village and common/woodland.

In the village there were only two cars at that time, the local farmer had an early jag (plus a grey tractor) and a little old lady who had an A40. I lived in a large semi (fairly modern at the time). This was in post war Britain, the war had only ended five years previously and civilization was still getting back to normal. We still kept a pig in a pigsty constructed down the garden, this we fed on vegetable peelings and other scraps. Every once in a while the local butcher would kill it for us. We made brawn out of the head and the rest was preserved in salt (cured). We ate mainly our own home grown veg. The runner bean harvest was salted. Father would shoot pigeons and rabbits at the local farm or take the ferret out to catch rabbits.

There were no freezers or refrigeration easily available at that time, but we had a larder in the house with a marble slab shelf and a zinc fly screen over the window, this helped keep food fresh/cool. Food had no sell by dates, but you could see/ smell when food had gone off. There were no plastic wrappings and most fresh veg either came from our garden or direct from the local farms. We just used greaseproof paper, paper bags and newspaper. Milk (in the early 50's) was delivered by our local milk lady straight into your jug at your doorstep from her trolley with churns on that she pushed around. Doorstep bottle delivery for us came in about the mid-fifties.

We had no TV until I was about eight years old and then it was a small black and white set with BBC only. Mother never did a weekly shop, but occasionally would take the bus into the local town for necessities. In the late fifties, we had a mobile shop come around every couple of weeks. We had no phone, but there was a phone box beside the village church, there were no computers, except perhaps for scientific/military and the internet etc. hadn't been invented.

As children, our days, when not at the local primary school were mainly spent on the common or in the woods, climbing trees, making 'dens' in the ferns or spears and bows and arrows. It was also very interesting to watch the local blacksmith shoeing horses or doing general metalwork. There was about four of us of a similar age, so outside of school, we didn't have a very wide circle of friends. We had a trip to the seaside once a year (the local Sunday school outing) and a Christmas party (with the local chapel). We would all go to Sunday school for a few weeks (to get stamps on our card) when the outing was coming up to qualify us to go and the same applied for the chapel party.

Things were totally different than they are today and some things were better, but not everything.

Charity Steward's Report - W Bro. Henry Besley



At this exceptionally difficult time the Lodge has received requests for financial help from several local charities and after consulting some of our senior members and of course our Worshipful Master we have with the authorisation of the Worshipful Master given donations to the following local charities whose needs have greatly increased during the recent past and continue to do so.

Love Musgrove - £400, Taunton Food Bank - £425 which is £250 from Vivary plus Matched Funding from Province of 70%, Taunton Women's Refuge - £250 which will be added to donations from other local Lodges and given to the Refuge whose help for distressed women and children has unfortunately risen greatly recently. The donations will hopefully be Matched Funded.

If any Brother is aware of charitable causes that at this difficult time are in need I would be pleased to see if we could be of help

Quiz Corner!

School Stuff That I Forgot!

1. A painter was asked to paint the numbers on the doors of a terrace of 50 houses. How many noughts did he have to paint, how many ones and how many figure fives?

ANSWER:noughts,ones,fives

2. A contractor agrees to complete a house in 250 days, and to do this he engages 60 men. After 200 days no work is done for 10 days. How many extra men must he engage to finish the house in time?

A)extra men

3. Four boys, each having the same number of marbles, started playing games. At the end of all the games, Albert had 22 marbles, Bob had 33, Charles had 20 and Dan had 41. How many marbles had each won or lost?

A)Albert,Bob,Charles,Dan

4. What two numbers should come next on the lines shown below?

a) 3, 9, 27, 81, 243,,,

b) 12, 9, 13, 8, 14, 7,,,

5. I am told to multiply a certain number by 2 and subtract 50 from the answer. Instead, I divide by 2 and add 50 to the answer, and get 260 which is incorrect. What is the correct answer?

A)

The Only "Wordplay" in the (Somerset) Village?

Find the village from each Cryptic clue

1. A holy man's precious metal
2. A prickly bird of prey.....
3. Desert royalty.....
4. Doubting this sport is played here.....
5. Concealed, then laden with traffic.....

Missing links – each set of three words

have a fourth word in common - find the word.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Shear – Sea – Ice | LINK WORD = |
| 2. Running – Shadow – Cross | LINK WORD = |
| 3. Struck - Waiter – Bell | LINK WORD = |
| 4. Boots - Island – Rats | LINK WORD = |
| 5. Agent - Chin – Bass | LINK WORD = |

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.

