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Issue 30
January 2011
Welcome

A warm welcome to the latest edition of the Masonic Samaritan Fund’s newsletter. Within this edition you will find details of our continuing work and news of the busiest year since the Fund was established in 1990.

The Fund has a hardworking and dedicated team of staff who have faced a busy yet productive year. The tasks of recording donations, paying the bills and supporting individuals through the application process are all equally important. Yet without the generous and enthusiastic support of so many volunteers the team would be unable to achieve anything.

Our ability to continue to meet the needs of eligible beneficiaries depends on the active participation of Lodge Almoners, Visiting Brothers and the Metropolitan and Provincial Grand Almoners as well as Lodge Charity Stewards, Festival Stewards and Metropolitan and Provincial Grand Charity Stewards. On behalf of everyone at the Fund I offer my sincere thanks for all your help, long may it continue. It is your energy and enthusiasm that drives the charity at a local level.

John Williams – Editor

Email Scam

We have been made aware of an email scam claiming to come from the United Grand Lodge of England seeking to raise funds on behalf of the Masonic Samaritan Fund. This is a scam. The MSF has not, and will not, undertake any fundraising by email. Please ignore any email donation request that appears to come from the MSF. If you have any questions, or have received an email claiming to be on behalf of the MSF, please contact the Fund.

General Meeting 2011

The PGM for Warwickshire, RWBro David Macey, has kindly agreed to host the next General Meeting of the MSF. It will be held at the Provincial Headquarters in Edgbaston on Wednesday 30 March 2011.

The meeting will combine an opportunity to report on the ongoing work of the Fund whilst thanking the members of Warwickshire for their generous support through the 2012 Festival Appeal.

The meeting is open to all those who are interested in the work of the MSF, including the wives and partners of Masons. If you would like more details, including timings, please email the Fund at mail@msfund.org.uk

As it enters its 21st year the Masonic Samaritan Fund continues to support the health and care needs of Freemasons and their dependants.

Support is available to:

- Freemasons
- The wives, partners and dependants of Freemasons
- The widows, surviving partners and dependants of deceased Freemasons

Who have an identified health or care need and, faced with a long wait for treatment or care, cannot afford their own private provision without incurring financial hardship.

Medical

The Fund will consider applications for a wide variety of medical treatments from hip replacement to cardiac surgery, from digital hearing aids to drug treatment for cancer or degenerative diseases, from stomach banding to macular degeneration.

Dental

Applications are welcome where NHS treatment is unavailable or where costs are in excess of NHS charging rates. Financial help is provided in support of dental treatment that is clinically necessary, in the most cost-effective and efficient manner. Grants are not available where the proposed treatment is purely cosmetic or where an applicant simply prefers to receive private treatment.

Respite

If you look after someone who needs support because of a physical or learning disability, mental illness or whose health is impaired by sickness or old age, and who, without help, would not be able to cope with the demands of basic living, then you are a carer. It is important that, as a carer, you take time off for yourself. Grants are available from the MSF to support carers. Funding is available towards the cost of short periods of residential care or to provide regular short breaks at home.

Mobility

The Fund is also able to provide grants for the supply and maintenance of mobility equipment, specialist equipment or home adaptations in response to a specific medical need.

For further information about any of the above please contact the Fund or your Lodge, Metropolitan or Provincial Grand Almoner.

Masonic Samaritan Fund

Health and Care Support

Masonic Samaritan Fund
60 Great Queen Street
London WC2B 5AZ

Registered Charity No. 1130424
Registered Company No. 6876310

Email: mail@msfund.org.uk
Website: www.msfund.org.uk
Telephone: 020 7404 1550
Fax: 020 7404 1544

MEDICAL
DENTAL
RESPITE

www.msfund.org.uk
RMBI and MSF Working Together

The Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution (RMBI) has a team of six Care Advice Visitors who are knowledgeable and experienced in the care sector and know a great deal about health and welfare rights and benefits. The MSF often makes use of this expertise when supporting applicants in need of respite care.

Speaking to one of the Teams’ newest members, Terry Ryan, we asked him just what is involved in his day as a Care Advice Visitor.

Which geographical areas do you cover?
“I cover the South East of England which includes London, East and West Kent, Sussex, Middlesex, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Provinces. I work to build and maintain a good working relationship with the Province so that I can work with them to support Freemasons and their dependants. My colleagues cover the other Provinces within England and Wales.”

What was your previous experience?
“I have a background in supported housing for older people (“sheltered housing”). I have worked for various local councils and housing associations, and prior to becoming a Care Advice Visitor worked for the Church of England Pensions Board. My previous experience has given me good insights into care and benefits available to older people (“sheltered housing”).”

Describe an average working day?
“There is no such thing as an average working day. I may be visiting Brethren and/or dependants, or I could be in the office catching up on paperwork. I may be on the phone booking future visits or giving advice, or delivering a talk to a widows group. Effective time management is essential in this job.”

Who do you advise and how?
“When working on behalf of the MSF I offer advice on the Funds services generally and, in particular, on any issues surrounding respite care. Often, I am the first point of contact for people considering an application for respite care.

so I talk to them about the process and how they can be assessed by the Local Authority. I also talk about the other Masonic charities as well as statutory and voluntary agencies. Sometimes it’s just advice that I give, but there are occasions when the support I give is ongoing for several months. I also work closely with Provincial and Lodge Almoners. We treat everybody as an individual and the support I offer is tailored to their specific needs.”

What do you enjoy most about your job?
“The variety. You never know what the next day will hold, what challenges you will face, or what the outcome will be. I don’t like too much routine and this job means that I get more than my fair share of variety.”

Terry Ryan’s story courtesy of the RMBI

Masonry does what it says on the tin!

At my initiation, as well as being taught to be cautious I was taught that charity blesses he who gives as well as he who receives but, being the sort of Mason who worked hard at raising charity, I believed it was delivered to someone else’s door rather than my own.

Two years ago my Almoner questioned my increasing immobility which, with no known cause, had vastly reduced my capacity to exercise. Weight had piled on (diets didn’t work without accompanying exercise) and I was on the road to increasing ill health and low esteem. The weight gain had exacerbated sleep apnoea (I need to wear a mask to breathe at night), hypertension, pressure on my joints and the real possibility of developing Type II Diabetes. The vision I had for my life was falling apart. I was not the husband, father or Mason that I had planned and still yearned to be.

Although eligible for surgery my health authority rejected my consultant’s recommendation. Against this background I approached the MSF and, with my Almoner, completed a simple application form. Let me assure those who are concerned about this issue, and reluctant to seek help, this did not mean I had to be destitute, out of work and with mounting debts. I did need to show that I had sought, and been refused, NHS treatment, and that I was unable to afford private surgery. I am in full time work and am not as poor as the proverbial church mouse. In truth I am able to live an ordinary life but unable to finance expensive surgery without my family suffering.

Bariatric Surgery is not a quick fix. My surgeon recommended a Gastric Bypass rather than the simpler Gastric Band. It has an 80% success rate but a higher risk profile and requires vitamin and mineral supplements to be taken for life, not such a big ask for a possibly life saving procedure.

Within three weeks of my application being approved I was in hospital and telling anyone who would listen about the Masons and the Samaritan Fund.

Through your generous fraternal giving, the love and support of my Lodge, the assistance of the MSF and the expert medical care, my life has changed. My wife recognises the man she married and my boys the dad they thought they would never see again.

If you have been recommended treatment by a specialist, your local services are not forthcoming and your circumstances preclude you from paying for private treatment, speak to your Almoner or the MSF. I cannot guarantee success but I can guarantee your case will be handled confidentially and professionally.

I am living proof that Masonry does what it says on the tin! Thank you for this life changing opportunity.

Bro Chris Cowley, Upper Thames Lodge 8696

Medical Care

Some statistics
• Weight loss after 6 weeks just over 28Kg (4stones 5.5 lbs)
• Waist size down by 5 inches
• Chest size by 7 inches
• Neck by 1.5 inches
• Weight loss will continue for up to 18 months

Before
After

MEDICAL

Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution
60 Great Queen Street
London WC2B 5AZ
Tel: 020 7596 2400
www.rmbi.org.uk
Caring for older Freemasons and their dependants for over 160 years.
The Application Process

Need identified by appropriate Dental, Medical or Care professional

CONTACT THE FUND
020 7404 1550

Initial contact is encouraged from Applicants or Almoners

APPLICATION FORM ISSUED

Form sent the same day to Almoner. If applicant prefers not to involve his Lodge Almoner a Visiting Brother will be appointed from another Lodge or Province

Part 1 completed by Applicant & Almoner
Part 2 completed by the appropriate Medical, Dental or Care professional

APPLICATION CONSIDERED

Applications are usually considered within one month of receipt of the completed application form

DECEASED NEED?

Applicant and Almoner informed if support has been approved

DENTAL    MEDICAL    RESPITE

TREATMENT OR CARE IS ARRANGED

MSF PAYS THE BILL!

THE APPLICATION PROCESS IS ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL

How can we thank you?

I am pleased to report that the Annual and Extraordinary General meetings of the Masonic Samaritan Fund took place in York on 16 September at which time the resolutions required to complete the process of incorporation were passed unanimously. I am very grateful to those who travelled from far and wide to attend and to the Provincial Grand Master and members of Yorkshire North and East Ridings who made us so welcome in their Province.

Those who attended the event in York were invited to consider how past, present and future supporters of the Fund who, through their generous donations, are eligible for MSF honours, wish to be involved in, and informed of, the ongoing work of the charity. I would now like to invite all readers to consider the same question.

The Trustees of the MSF wish to continue to benefit from the involvement of individual Masons and their families in raising awareness of and support for the Fund. This newsletter will continue to be produced twice each year and distributed as widely as possible. It remains the intention to continue to host a variety of meetings at locations around the country to publicise the work of the Fund. These will be advertised in advance and remain open to all. Individuals who donate to the MSF will continue to be eligible to receive an honorific jewel with additional bars available in recognition of higher levels of donation.

What else would you like to suggest as being a cost-effective and appropriate way of benefitting from the collective enthusiasm and experience of all our supporters? Please forward any constructive comments or suggestions to the Fund by post or email.

Audio copies of this newsletter are available on CD for the blind and partially sighted. Please telephone the Fund for further details.

President’s Review

It is pleasing to report that charitable expenditure shows an increase of more than £1 million compared with the previous year. This has arisen mainly as a result of new activities: some £450,000 was spent on funding mobility aids, responsibility for which was taken over from the Grand Charity on 1 January 2010; £183,000 was spent on patient hostels for RMBI homes; and a grant of £80,000 was made towards prostate cancer research (in conjunction with the Province of Yorkshire North & East Ridings). The number of respite and dental cases has also increased greatly, though because of the relatively small unit cost of these grants, the effect on the total figure has been modest.

Expenditure on the “traditional” areas (such as hip and knee replacements and treatment for cardiac problems) has remained roughly static. The current squeeze on public expenditure will inevitably affect the provision of NHS and Local Authority services, and it seems very likely that demand for the Charity’s assistance, particularly in the “traditional” areas, will increase in the coming year.

I am very grateful to all those who continue to make donations and work to raise money for the Charity. Their support is vital if we are to continue to meet the demand for help from those who in need. Their gratitude is beyond words. I am also most grateful to the members of the Board of Trustees who give so freely of their time and to our dedicated and hardworking staff for all they do to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

H. W. J. Stubbs
President
InNeed Issue 30 January 2011

2011 Oxfordshire
Oxfordshire names the Day

Sunday the 10th July 2011 has been announced as the day of the 2011 Festival Final Event and Gala Luncheon and is to be held in the Grand Marquee Cokethorpe School, Witney.

New 2012 Festival Director for Warwickshire

Having been appointed Provincial Grand Master for Warwickshire, RWBro Steven James Dunning, Festival President and Provincial Grand Master and his officers, together with guests from Grand Lodge, other Provinces and the MSF, will gather in celebration with Oxfordshire Brethren, their wives and partners, to announce the total amount raised. At the end of a long and rewarding six year journey this event will truly be a day of great happiness, pride and satisfaction for everyone.

Bicester’s Final Charity Fun Drive gets results

Nineteen cars participated in the 5th and final Fun Drive organised by WBro Pete Linfield and wife El. Although supporting several charities each year, they have raised £3,500 over the 5 year period specifically for the 2011 Festival. They were later joined for food and wine by 100 guests in a large marquee on the green outside their house. The Fun Drive winners were Chris Knowles and his fiancée Shirley Timms. Chris’s father WBro Alan ‘Rambo’ Knowles, won the quiz and Alfred Lodge’s Steve Vipond was able to hop in at the last minute and be successful in the ‘Name the Rabbit’ competition. Isn’t it amazing to what lengths Masons will go, using every excuse to have fun and raise cash for charity at the same time!

2012 Warwickshire
New 2012 Festival Director for Warwickshire

Trevor has been a mainstay of the Director’s Working Group since its formation and has plenty of great ideas to ensure that the targets are met and indeed hopefully exceeded.

In particular, Trevor would like the two years run into the 2013 Festival as a beautifully designed retractable ball point pen. Coloured in Craft blue with bright chrome fittings, it shows the coat of arms of Provincial Grand Lodge and is proving a firm favourite amongst Brethren, their families and friends. Friendly competition continues amongst Lodges to qualify for the coveted donation certificates. Amongst the latest of many was Greystone Border Lodge No. 9449 in Launceston who have been awarded a Platinum certificate to show that each of its 40 members has donated on average the magnificent sum of £500.

Keeping up the pace St. Martin’s Lodge No. 510 in Liskeard donated a cheque for £3,000 and Colville Smith Lodge No. 5738 in Falmouth received a Silver certificate for donating £250 per capita.

2013 Cornwall
Another innovation to promote the 2013 Festival is a beautifully designed retractable ball point pen. Coloured in Craft blue with bright chrome fittings, it shows the coat of arms of Provincial Grand Lodge and is proving a firm favourite amongst Brethren, their families and friends.

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2014 Derbyshire

Just over two and a half years into the 2014 Festival and the Province has already raised £3.2% of its target of £2,000,000.

In Derbyshire, once a Lodge achieves its target, based on a per capita donation, the Provincial Grand Master, RWBro Graham Rudd, DL, (pictured) visits the Lodge to present a specially commissioned Festival Maul.

Six Lodges have already passed their target!

Novel ways to raise money

Two members of Lutudarum Lodge, Bro Matt Hewitson and WBro Chris Sellars, have come up with some novel fundraising schemes.

Bro Hewitson’s “Festival Fone Fund” has already raised over £500 simply by asking brethren to drop their old mobile phones into specially labelled buckets to be found in each meeting place in the Province. WBro Sellars is launching “Poker Face” in which members of the Province pay to have their face, or rather their caricature, on a playing card. All 52 cards (and four jokers) are for sale individually and the packs of cards will be sold to raise even more money for the Festival.

Not to be outdone, WBro Trevor Breslay of Pioneer Lodge is asking for donations in return for Masonic quiz questions.

Derbyshire Masons have fun with friends

Derbyshire doesn’t just ask people to donate money. It offers fun too. Once again the Provincial Grand Charity Steward, RW Bro David Macey W Bro Trevor Sturt, re-ran the quiz at the last Warwickshire Installed Masters’ meeting. When Lodges do achieve their target, they become entitled to purchase matching mauls, all proceeds going to the Festival.

Warwickshire will be hosting the MSF Annual Meeting on Wednesday 30th March 2011 at their flagship headquarters building in Edgbaston, Birmingham.

2015 West Kent
Will it Win the Grand National?

This hand made Rocking Horse has been donated to the Province of West Kent by WBro Barry Gifford, a member of Crofton Oak with Shooters Hill Lodge 4277. Barry spent many hours of his spare time producing this fine piece of craftsmanship which anyone can easily organise with a bit of guidance from those who have been there before. One of Trevor’s first happy duties was presenting Lodges which have already achieved their target with their maul (nee gavel, but to present a 60 year certificate for services to Freemasonry to WBro Bill Pike, a ‘veteran’ of many Festivals, who recounted stories of Festival fund raising during the past.

2016 Cheshire
Cheshire Masons inaugurate The 2016 Festival for the Masonic Samaritan Fund

On Wednesday 6th October at The Floral Pavilion, New Brighton, The Provincial Grand Master of Cheshire, RWBro Steven Adcott, called off the Provincial Grand Lodge AGM in order to present Mr Richard Douglas CEO Masonic Samaritan Fund who addressed the nearly 800 Cheshire Masons on the Launch of the 2016 Festival. WBro Paul Richards, Chairman of the 2016 Festival Committee thanked Mr. Douglas for his most interesting and informative address and presented him with a cheque for £50,000 as the first donation. Pictured L to R; Richard Douglas, WBro Bill Pike, PGM and WBro Tony Evans, Provincial Grand Charity Steward.

Around the Provinces
Life Changing IVF

Extracted from letters received:

Firstly we would like to thank the Samaritan Fund for this generous grant, and secondly in the way this sensitive issue was handled.

Thank the committee for us they have changed our life so much.

We are so grateful for all your help in bringing Darcy in to our world. She is 13 weeks & growing so fast. She is sleeping well - down at 10 till 6 so I’m feeling better with real sleep’.

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Mrs Brenda Southward, c/o Travellers Lodge 2609 down the road and spent so much time talking I caught the sun!!

I want to thank you so much for my mobility scooter which was delivered to me recently, I’ve only been out on it once due to the awful weather but I am sure as the weather improves I shall make use of it.

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Three Across and Four Down (7,8,7)!

No prize for this answer but before getting your teeth into the crossword below spare a thought for WBro John Holt L5337. The photo on the left shows the three teeth that were attempting to meet the duties of a full set. The treatment needed was not available as a National Health patient so John approached the MSF. With four ‘studs’ in place in his lower jaw he now has an implant retained denture (7,8,7).

Not only has this made a considerable difference to his quality of life but it has also made his other health-related issues easier to bear.

Spinal Decompression

It’s just 4 months since my operation and I’m pleased to tell you things are going well, of course I have a bit of back ache etc. but I am OK with that, I am involved with a lot of gardening, we have a very long back garden, so there is plenty to do, and I am enjoying it. Once again thank you, for all your support and help during my difficult time.

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Danny Hitchcock, Yarborough Lodge No. 551

Dental Treatment in South Africa

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Alex Botham, Orkshedon and Charles Warren Lodge No. 1417 District Grand Lodge of South Africa, Central Division

Regained Mobility!

I want to thank you so much for my mobility scooter which was delivered to me recently. I’ve only been out on it once due to the awful weather but I am sure as the weather improves I shall make good use of it. On my first outing I was able to visit a neighbour down the road and spent so much time talking I caught the sun!! Once again I can’t thank you enough.

Mrs Brenda Southward, c/o Travellers Lodge 2609

Three in One!

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to all concerned with facilitating my recent operation. It was a gastric bypass, gall bladder removal and hernia repair, the whole being done as one, carried out on 25th May.

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On 30th July 2010 Christopher was assessed at home to his requires. The new scooter was delivered on 18th August less than one month since submitting the original request. Chris has now regained much of his independence and mobility. For more information about support for mobility aids, or if you have any other questions, please contact the staff at the Fund.

Begin enquires are welcome from potential applicants.

Christopher Plender-Leith, stands 6’9” and weighs 20 stone. It was obvious that a normal scooter would not stand the test of time.

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Christopher had purchased a second hand scooter that kept breaking down and it was not substantial enough to take a person of his stature.

Christopher suffers many medical problems which includes throat cancer resulting in a tracheotomy and heart problems restricting his mobility. He is a proud man and he felt that he had lost his independence and had to rely on his wife more than ever. This in itself was not so much of a problem until she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

No prize for this answer but before getting your teeth into the crossword below spare a thought for WBro John Holt L5337. The photo on the left shows the three teeth that were attempting to meet the duties of a full set. The treatment needed was not available as a National Health patient so John approached the MSF. With four ‘studs’ in place in his lower jaw he now has an implant retained denture (7,8,7).

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As usual some misteaks were not deliberate but as we would not wish to deter future input from any individuals I must limit the number. Who ever said proof-reading was easy?

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Mrs Brenda Southward, c/o Travellers Lodge 2609
Chief Executive’s Report

Following a busy year in 2010 early indications are that 2011 will be even busier for the MSF. This increase does not come as a surprise as most commentators continue to predict that the NHS will struggle to keep pace with the increasing cost of new drugs, an ageing population and looming lifestyle challenges such as the growing incidence of obesity. (Obesity has been identified as a strategic issue for Government for at least ten years).

The reminder (page 3) of the support available from the MSF is therefore both timely and appropriate. In the 21 years since the Fund was established over 8,500 grants have been made in support of the health and care needs of Freemasons and their dependants. Thanks to the very generous support of so many the Fund is well placed to meet the continuing and evolving needs of eligible beneficiaries.

As the uncertain economic situation continues to affect us all, Chris Cowley, a recent and very grateful beneficiary, offers a reminder (at page 5) that applicants to the MSF do not need to be destitute and that the application process is both straightforward and confidential.

Having read this newsletter please consider if you know of someone who, unable to get the treatment or care they need through the NHS or their local authority and unable to afford to fund their own private provision, would benefit from our help. If you do know someone, please tell them about the Fund and tell the Fund about them.

If you would like further copies of this newsletter, or copies of other publicity material, please contact the Fund. If you would like to arrange for a speaker to address a Lodge meeting, or any other function or event, please contact WBro John Williams (john@msfund.org.uk or 07931 533648) or WBro Mike Thurman (mike@msfund.org.uk or 07540 899815).

Please help us to help all those who need our help.

Richard Douglas