

# The Key NEWSLETTER

It is a curious Key, of what metal is it composed? No metal it is the tongue of good report.



## Noah and the Deacon's Wands

a Newsletter for  
Suffolk Freemasons

Studying the liberal  
Arts & Sciences

And to make a daily  
advancement in  
Masonic knowledge

**D**uring the opening of the Lodge the Worshipful Master enquires what are the positions of the officers and their duties. The Deacons duties are to carry messages and communications of the Master to the Senior & Junior Wardens.



Deacons Collar Jewel (Before 1813) (Mercury bearing a Caduceus) Worn in Lodges founded before 1813. Picture from the Museum of Freemasonry and the Jewel is on loan from the Lodge of Concord No 1250

The Deacons of the early Speculative Masons carried a wand with the emblem of Mercury holding a caduceus, not a dove

holding an olive leaf as now. Mercury (also called Hermes) had wings on his feet and on his hat. He is the Herald of the Gods and leader of souls along the road between "the Under and the Upper world". In some foreign Grand Lodges the insignia of Mercury with a caduceus is still carried by the Deacons.

The Deacon wands are a voice from the distant past to the ancient mythologies of Hermes of Greece and Mercury of Rome, both carried the messages and commands of the chief Deity to the four corners of the heavens. As an emblem of their office they carried a short rod or wand surmounted by a figure known as the caduceus -

two serpents intertwined represent equilibrium and peace. The wand also acted as a talisman having power to ward off all evil spirits from the pathway on their heavenly journeys to communicate his message. In alchemy, Mercury is also known as "quicksilver," a reference to its mobility and used as the physical symbol to represent the [Azoth](#) or fire-water.



Present day Deacons Jewel

Elias Ashmole, a prominent Freemason and Alchemist of the 17th century had the personal Motto of: "Ex Uno Omnia": From the One, All. This is the Hermetic principle of: that which is above is like that which is below. During that century, newspapers were published carrying banners with the title of 'Mercurius' in them - such as Mercurius Aulicus, published in 1643 and Mercurius Politicus 1650s. These two newspapers had a strong political bias, the first being a Royalist newspaper and the former a Parliamentary newspaper. It was not until the late eighteen century that the the pagan symbol of Mercury On the Deacons Wands began changing to a more appropriate and non-political symbol; the Biblical concept of the dove being the messenger carrier to Noah's Ark announcing the waters had subsided.

## Noah and the Deacons Wands continued...

In Masonic history you will find that nothing is the norm, for instance the ancients had Deacons, whilst the Moderns had Stewards. After the union of the two in 1813, it was recommended that Lodges appoint both Deacons and Stewards. The Deacons responsibility was similar to Mercury and Hermes, being to convey messages and to guide the candidates on their Masonic journey. The symbol of Mercury has become a figment of our Masonic past, now a Deacons jewel is a dove carrying an olive leaf representing the messenger, but it is also symbol of peace and harmony.

Noah sent a dove from the Ark three times and as we know three is an important number in Freemasonry. The first time Noah sent forth a dove to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the Earth, but the dove found no resting place and returned to the ark. After seven days (another important number in Freemasonry) he sent forth the dove out of the ark which returned back in the evening carrying a freshly plucked olive-leaf in its mouth, Noah now knew that the waters were abating. Again after seven days; he sent forth the dove but she did not return.

This was quite informative as Noah's dove gave him confidence that he and the animals could restart life on Earth after humanities failures of their sinful past. The ark symbolises humanity being carried over the rough sea in safety by having faith in the Creator.



Noah's Ark is often pictured along with an anchor which represents a well grounded and well spent life. On the Tracing Board featured you can just make out an anchor above Noah's Ark to the right. Interestingly the early Freemasons were often called Noachites This Tracing Board was produced by Jonas Prentiss 1818, five years after the formation of union between the Ancient and Moderns.

If you are interested in the history of the Tracing Boards and the many wonderful designs dating from the 1700s to modern times, then I can highly recommended Julian Rees book, 'Tracing Boards of the Three Degrees in Craft Freemasonry Explained' Also Enrico Marcia's book 'The Tracing Boards of the First Degree'.

## Tylers Corner

**The Tylers Corner is devoted to Brethren's questions and answers. Test your knowledge of our rituals.**

In the last key Newsletter we asked:-

Who are considered the patron saints of Freemasonry?



St John the Evangelist, "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1). Above the halo is his attribute, the eagle. Something for Royal Arch Masons to consider

**Answer** SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST and SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST

On 24th June 1717 The Grand Lodge of England was formed on a special saints day, who is the saint?

**Answer** SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

On 27th December 1813 the Grand Lodge of England and Antient Grand Lodge of England came together to form the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE). The joining of these Grand Lodges also took place on a special saints day, who is the saint?

**Answer** SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST

And Lastly - What does 'Time Immemorial' mean to a Freemason?

**Answer** In 1717, four London Lodges, which had existed for some time, came together at the Goose and Gridiron Tavern in St Paul's Churchyard, declared themselves a Grand Lodge.

Only three have survived and are now known as Lodge of Antiquity No 2, Fortitude and Old Cumberland Lodge No 12 (originally No 3) and Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge No IV. These are known as 'time immemorial lodges' the only Lodges within the English constitution, with this distinction. They, together with Grand Stewards' Lodge, have the ability to operate without a warrant.

## Questions to ponder on

**What does 'Just, Perfect and Regular' mean?**

**What do the Seven Stars seen clustered around the Moon represent on the 1st Degree Tracing Board?**

**Who or what is a 'Cowan'?**


**Where did the Globes found in many Lodge-rooms originate from?**





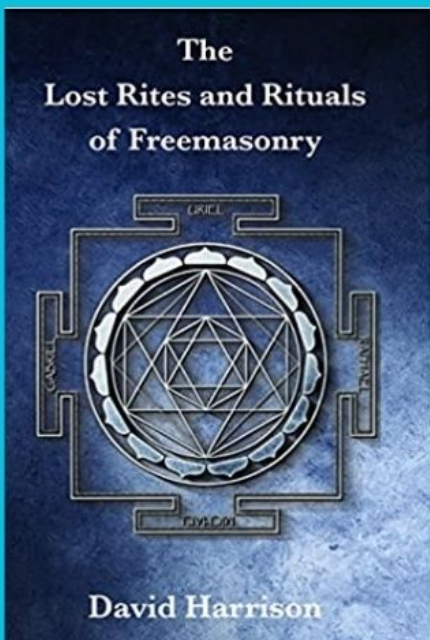
## Masonic Learning & Development

The Learning & Development Team are pleased to announce the first of a series of online lectures covering areas of Masonic interest. This particularly lecture, 'The Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry' is open to Master Mason. We are planning a number of presentations from a variety of scholars who will aid in increasing our Masonic knowledge. If you are interested in joining us for an evening of Masonic history which presents the lost rites and rituals of the past - book your place by emailing [suffolkpogllearningteam@gmail.com](mailto:suffolkpogllearningteam@gmail.com).



# Suffolk Freemasons

## Provincial Grand Lodge of Suffolk



# ONLINE PRESENTATION

## 29th March 7pm

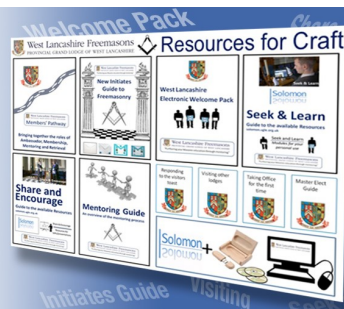
Presentation from renowned author  
**Dr David Harrison**

This is a truly fascinating look into the history of the  
Craft after the Master Mason degree, but from a  
different angle – reviewing rites and rituals no longer  
in use or in obscurity.

Dr David Harrison is a Masonic historian and leading academic expert on the study of Freemasonry.  
He has lectured at the University of Liverpool and Hope University, and has worked as an  
archaeologist, specializing in industrial archaeology in England.

[Please contact suffolkpogllearningteam@gmail.com for details](mailto:suffolkpogllearningteam@gmail.com)

### Masonic Education and Resources



Solomon is UGLE's online, searchable repository of nuggets, papers, presentations, demonstrations, Q&As and quizzes.

Besides the three Craft Degrees Solomon now has modules for the newly Exalted Masons to explore.

[To open Solomon click here](#)