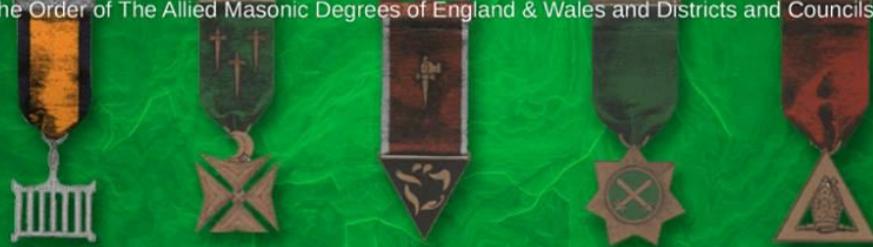




District Grand Council of London

The Order of The Allied Masonic Degrees of England & Wales and Districts and Councils Overseas



The Covid Times

Edition 5

Greetings everyone and welcome to Edition 5 of *The Covid Times*; despite lockdown, not being allowed to move around much and seeing almost no-one I seem to have managed to do an awful lot over the last few weeks.

By Colin Woodcock

I have said before that working from home is more difficult and more demanding than lolling around in the office where I can drift from one area to another, chatting to old friends, catching up with others and avoiding some. Now that I am firmly into a home-based routine I make myself have a break and either get into the garden or go for a walk locally – always maintaining social distancing, of course.

It has been really interesting watching the garden grow and the wildlife in the area change and thrive through the last few months. With few people to annoy them, the birds have built their nests and had their first clutch of young and their only problems come from the crows and the magpies.... and of course those cats I wrote about some weeks ago – I shall come back to those later.

In the last week I have had a family of Great Tits and a family of Blue Tits in my apple tree feeding their young; it was a marvellous sight, I sat on a chair and watched them for ages, the parents were finding the food and feeding the little ones with lots and lots of talking between them – over a dozen just above my head – wonderful.

(continues below)



Virtual Get-together

Why not join the District Grand Prefect and other members of the District at a virtual get-together - every Saturday at 8pm. Attendance is growing on a weekly basis! Keep an eye on your inbox for the invitation from Scott Cargill.

The weather has been glorious (I have just heard that it has been the sunniest May on record) and I have used my time in the garden to prune and clear the borders and replant some areas. I shocked myself at one point; it looked the US Air Force had napalmed it with large areas laid to wasteland and not the T. S Eliot sort either!! But it all turned out OK and by the Autumn and certainly by next Spring it will look really good – that's the plan anyway..... What I have noticed is that the more I look the more I see. This would not have happened without this crisis and it just shows that we can always make a success out of a disaster, there can always be a positive out of a negative – it changes the way I think about some things.

(continues below)

Mental Health

The NHS has some excellent advice on maintaining your mental well-being, which can be found [here](#).

Physical Health

Exercise continues to be very important at this time, so here are some useful videos for indoor exercise - [strenuous](#) or [not so strenuous](#).

Lockdown Recipes - Summer Pudding

With the glorious weather we are having, why not try this amazing recipe for a [Madeira summer pudding with warm chocolate sauce](#)? Perfect for eating in the garden at the end of a long day, or perhaps as a suitable reward for studying your ritual?!

GOOD DEED FEED

Many people are helping their local community or fellow Masons. If you are one of those superstars, why not click on the button above to let us know what you are doing and we can then share the stories with the District.

But what about the cats, I hear you ask?! Those darned felines who have decided my nicely dug-over vegetable patch is a 'purrfect' toilet and that chasing baby birds is such kittenish fun? Well, I deployed my new-found calm inner strength and thought 'out of the box'. I went on to the RSPB website and purchased a device which, when a cat passes by or is in the area, lets out some high-pitched short sharp shock of noise which only cats can hear and drives them away. It is now installed alongside a blanket of some strange pellets I got from the garden centre, which are also guaranteed to keep them away. We shall see, and I'll keep you updated with my progress. Any good ideas, short of capital (or should that be 'catipal'!) punishment, are welcome.

So, we are still in this pickle and can perhaps see some light at the end of the tunnel. As restrictions are loosened, please take care; the virus hasn't gone away and we must stay safe and look forward to when we meet again.

Daily Advancements in Masonic Knowledge

- The [fifth podcast](#), from Neil Thomas Allen of Londinium Council, is all about the role and importance of mentoring within Freemasonry, and also includes some ideas for the future.

- The Facebook group *Freemasons Without Borders* is hosting the latest of its weekly Zoom conferences on Tuesday 2 June and the guest speaker on this occasion will be Ian Currans (a member of Rose & Lily Council) who will be talking about the Ancient and Masonic Order of the Scarlet Cord, of which he is the Grand Summus. The details on how to join the Zoom conference are below:

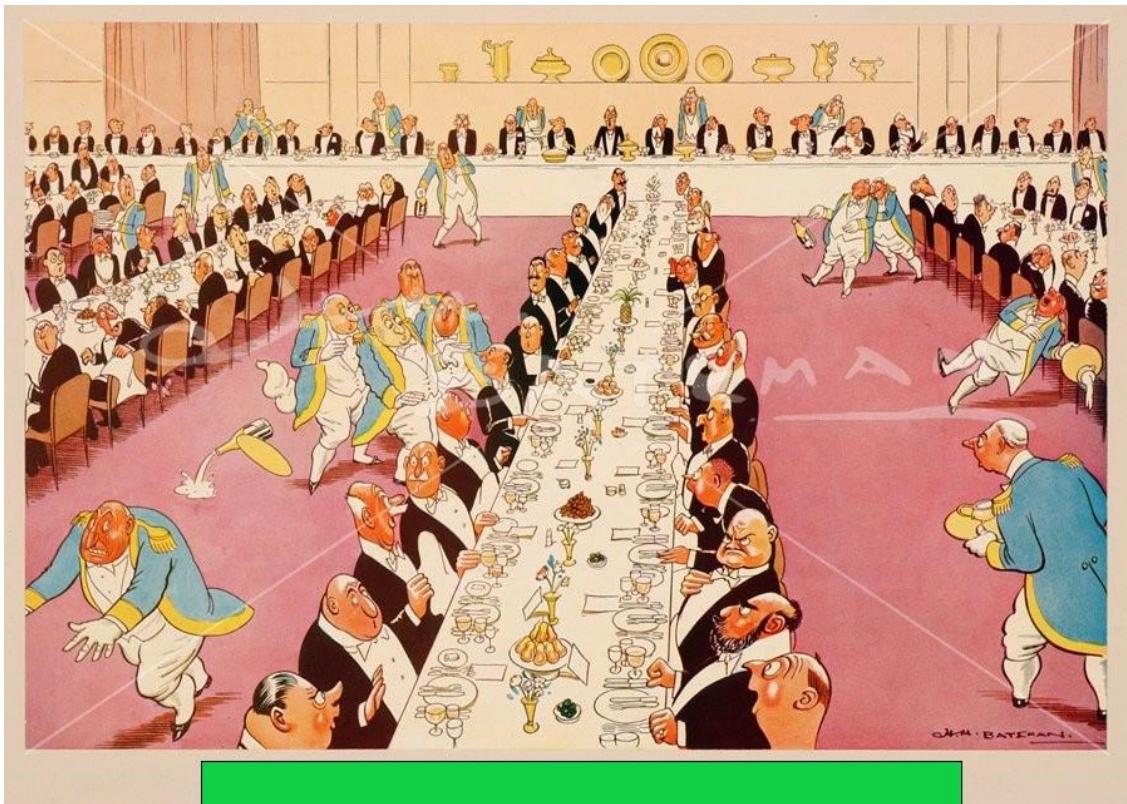
Date: 2 June

Start time: 17:00

Link to join: <https://zoom.us/join>

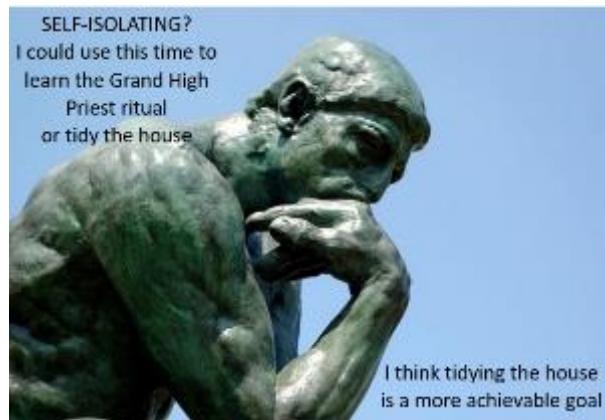
Meeting ID: 986-118-5386

Password: 19842001



Cartoon Caption Competition

Based on H M Bateman's famous cartoon series, "The Man Who...", can you come up with an appropriate caption for this cartoon? Suggestions can be emailed to Richard Criddle (details at the end of the newsletter) and we'll publish them in the next edition of *The Covid Times*.



Although we are not holding any Council meetings, the District photo competition is still very much running. Why not send us pictures of how you are spending your time in lockdown? Contact details can be found below.

Freemasonry in Film and TV

Do you know of any instances of where Freemasonry has appeared in film or TV? Why not write in (contact details are at the bottom of *The Covid Times*) and let us know? Below are a few examples for your "televisual" delight:

[Ashes to Ashes](#) - in this episode Gene Hunt, one of the main characters, is initiated (with thanks to Terry Hall)

[Da Vinci Code Decoded](#) - available from Amazon Prime, it is the definitive documentary on the theories behind the novel

[The Adventures of Robin Hood](#) - well worth watching the entire episode

[The Secret World of Female Freemasons](#)

And for a bit of light relief: [Hale & Pace](#)

We'll add to this list with each edition of *The Covid Times*.



There's no need to be bored during the period of lockdown, especially with this list of activities on offer...

- In the last edition of *The Covid Times*, we published a Sudoku from Steve Roberts. The solution can be found [here](#).
- We have another AMD-themed wordsearch for you; click [here](#) to have a go.
- Join a five-minute meditation with the [National Gallery](#), based on artist Odilon Redon's painting *Ophelia Among the Flowers*.
- Ride the underground [Mail Rail](#), virtually, with The Postal Museum's narrated 10-minute video.
- Take a virtual tour of "Britain's Sistine Chapel" and marvel at the Baroque interiors of the [Painted Hall](#) at the Old Royal Naval College.
- Hear a global cast read complete Shakespearian works every Wednesday at 7pm. Click [here](#).
- Keep your green fingers active with top tips from Covent Garden's Head Gardener and horticulture expert Kenny Raybould. Click [here](#).
- Go behind the scenes of iconic Regent Street shops and restaurants, including tasty recipes from The Langham and Sakagura, and Untold Stories from retailers. Click [here](#).
- Sing along to some of Andrew Lloyd Webber's biggest West End musicals with [The Shows Must Go On](#), including *Cats* and *Phantom of the Opera*. Every Friday at 7pm.

- The likes of Jo Brand, Russell Kane and Professor Brian Cox are putting on live podcasts and comedy during [The Stay at Home Festival](#) – the shows are free but tips are welcome! Various dates.
- Discover the riches of the [British Library](#) – locate old maps, view virtual books and turn the pages, take a virtual highlights tour.
- The [National Theatre](#) is streaming some of its NT Live productions on Thursday evenings on You Tube, including Jane Eyre, Twelfth Night and Treasure Island.
- The [London Symphony Orchestra](#) will be streaming full length concerts on Thursday evenings – click on “Always playing”.
- Scrabble online - click [here](#).



The Covid Times is brought to you by Richard Criddle and Steve Roberts, and edited by Scott Cargill. All feedback and contributions are welcome and can be emailed to richard-criddle@rocketmail.com.

