



Friends of the Freemasons

Winter E-news Bulletin - Issue #2

I think we can safely say that 2020 will be a year that goes down in history; a year where a pandemic changed the world; a year where Richard House Children's Hospice should have celebrated 20 years of caring for life-limited children and supporting their families. Instead our 20th anniversary fundraising events were cancelled and many of our traditional fundraising sources dried up.

I'm pleased to reassure you that as the second lock-down started (and continued), Richard House care services have and will remain open despite much of society closing its doors. We are still open and still caring - and continue to be here, offering vital and essential care, during these challenging and unprecedented times.

I hope that you will find this months newsletter for our friends in the Masonic movement of interest. Support from the Freemasons has been invaluable in getting us through the last twelve months. If you ever find that what we offer is not for you, simply click '*unsubscribe*' at the bottom of any email.

As we move into a new year we as a charity know how important it is to hold on to our friendships. We'd like to extend our gratitude and thanks to the organisation and look forward to your continued support in 2021 and beyond.

Richard House In 2020

In view of the Government restrictions announced on 31 October 2020, we understand the MW The Grand Master, His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent, KG, directed that all Lodge meetings in England would be suspended with effect from 12.01 a.m. on Thursday 5 November until such time as those restrictions are lifted.

The Coronavirus outbreak provided society with its most testing time since World War 2; and yet the Masonic community was at our side. The amazing support shown by the Freemasons has ensured our vital work has continued throughout the ongoing crisis enabling us to achieve some incredible milestones.



The support from the Masonic community year on year helps to help our vital services running. I recently spoke to one of our parents about this and they said -

“People lean on Richard House for support, respite, social events, the list is endless, and it has all been missed during lockdown. It would be an absolute disaster if Richard House folded, it would have a much wider impact on the local area, vulnerable children and their families.”

– I couldn't agree more.

Holding Hands, Touching Hearts and Changing Lives



*Lucy Welford pictured centre left, with Mark Masons and members of Lifelites.
This picture was taken pre-23rd March and COVID-19 restrictions.*

Mark Masons' Hall, nestled in the bosom of the fashionable St James' area of the West end, is home to ten of the 'Progressive Orders' in Freemasonry as well as being one of the main masonic venues in the capital.

Each of the Orders has something different to offer the Brother seeking further enlightenment. Still, they all have one thing in common – a fundamental ethic of helping others by their charitable activities.

In March, Mark Masons from across the country celebrated The Mark Benevolent Fund's partnership with Lifelites which saw grants distributed to hospices caring for disabled children and those with life-limited conditions to purchase specialist assistive technology packages. Two London hospices benefitted from the partnership, one of which was Richard House Children's Hospice. The hospice was later fortunate to receive £6,875 towards PPE and equipment costs for Hospice at Home.

Lucy Welford, Trust & Foundations Manager, at Richard House said, ***"We are extremely grateful to have the support of the Mark Benevolent Fund through what has arguably been our toughest year yet. Their generosity has meant we can keep on providing the best possible care to life-limited children in the community and, with Lifelites, brightening their days with fantastic resources and technology. A huge thank you from us all!"***



A Lasting Lodge Legacy

How did a meeting with Anthea in the 1980s lead to legacy gifts 30 years later? In the 1980's Alan was a member of East Ham Round Table, when Founder & Life President, Anthea Hare, got in touch with a rather "exciting project"....

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A Christmas Wish

In April, when the impact of the pandemic was still emerging, we had already begun seeing a strain on our stretched resources. This Christmas seek support, so that Richard House can continue through the COVID-19 crisis to be here for our families.

[Read more...](#)

Thanks from our Trustees



"We are proud and grateful to count the Freemasons as friends of Richard House. The support of those who have partnered with Richard House over our 20-year history is more precious than ever in these uncertain times. We are facing more demand for our services, both at the hospice where we care for children who would otherwise be in hospital, and through Hospice at Home, where we give support to families at a time that has been horrendous for many. As I write our shops are closed again and we are unable to host events.

Thank you from the trustees for all your help: for the gift of vital PPE, for the wonderful initiatives of individuals and for ongoing donations that are crucial to keeping services open for our children and families."

Nicola Ukiah, Chair, Board of Trustees

To absent friends

What is so heart-warming is how London Masons have risen to such an enormous challenge in so many ways, but all with the same determined, resolute, and indomitable spirit.

Not only have key brethren continued to do their professional roles with unswerving resolve but to see so many volunteering to do roles outside of their normal day to day lives is just so pleasing. Many capable brethren have seen a job needing doing and have simply rolled their sleeves up and got on with it, whether it involved delivering equipment, food, or even patients - often spending long hours spread over weeks and now months. So many London Masons have risen to the challenge throughout 2020 with many supporting the vital work of Richard House.

2020 has been challenging. The Masonic community has lost many brethren.

Some have had to cope with the loss of loved ones, others have suffered the horrendous coronavirus. And all of us have had adjustments to make due to lockdown, from working from home, to looking after ourselves, our children, and our loved ones.

Our sincere thanks go to Brother Rodney Bass OBE, (Essex Provincial Grand Master), Alfred Rackliff (Beaconsfeild Lodge) and Christopher Healey (Newham Lodge) - You 'lived respectfully and died regretfully' - you truly were Richard House Heroes.

As we embark into a new year, I hope you and your lodge will keep Richard House in your minds, as it's essential we stay open to provide support to the families who rely on our services.

Support from our community has meant that families, who would have been even more isolated than usual, have been able to stay connected and have hope for the future.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and I look forward to speaking again in the new year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris". The letter "C" is large and loops around the word "Chris".

Chris Williams

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**Wishing you a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!**

Richard House Trust is a registered charity (1059029) and a company limited by guarantee (3232837- England & Wales). Its registered office is Richard House Children's Hospice, Richard House Drive, E16 3RG.

Fundraising@Richardhouse.org.uk | <https://richardhouse.org.uk/>

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