



## NEWSLETTER

### FOR THE BRETHREN, COMPANIONS AND KNIGHTS OF FREEMASONS' HALL ABERDEEN

**5 weeks ago** We received a report that a granite block from a chimney stack had fallen onto the roof.

**2 weeks ago** A survey of the roof showed its dangerous condition.

**10 days ago** The Board of Management were informed and permission was given for a "Save and Preserve Freemasons' Hall Aberdeen" Crowdfunding site.

<https://www.JustGiving.com/crowdfunding/harry-petrie-2>

**7 days ago** The *JustGiving* site was launched and the first donation received.

Today, including donations sent to the Brother Treasurer, the amount raised, in those seven days, stands at just under £ 15,000, approximately 20% of the target. Believe me, *despite the postings of doubting Thomas's on some social media platforms*, every, **every**, single penny will be used to save, support and preserve the fabric, *both inside and out*, of Freemasons' Hall. Much of the donations are from many of **YOU**, but donations have also been received from Brethren, and well-wishers; from the Northern Isles to South Wales to the south of England; from Harris in the Outer Hebrides, to the North-east corner of Scotland and many, many places in between. Even from Texas USA, where Aberdeen Granite Masons had a hand in erecting the State Capitol Building. In all nearly 160 people have generously donated to the fund. Each has received an email thanking them, on your behalf, for their generous gifts.

Once again [\*\*THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT.\*\*](#)

#### **What's happening now.**

Because of the donations received, an immediate start has been made to remedy the most dangerous and most immediate problem. The central **LUM**. We have all seen the photographs! To secure it several lairs of granite ashlar will have to be removed and then re-laid using the correct mortar (*ordinary cement from B & Q can't be used*). For access, once the necessary permits have been obtained, scaffolding will be erected on St Johns Place. *This should commence next week*. Offers of help for this repair, and others, have been received and passed on to Harry Ord, our very own Granite Mason, who is supervising this urgent work. Harry has been in contact with most of these volunteers, discussed the project and the possible help they could give. Unfortunately due to working at the extreme height (*we simply do not have the insurance cover for accidents or health and safety etc. for working on the roof of a 3 story building!!!*) and covid building site regulations, the amount of "bodies" has to be curtailed. However a "nipper" has been brought on board "tae get the rowies in, an' mak i' tea". Once the roof is accessible a closer examination of the damage and of previously inaccessible parts can be made. Where possible updates on this will be posted on the *JustGiving* page.

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The press have been informed of the plight of Freemasons' Hall and of the *JustGiving* site. *We await their interest.*

### *What's going to happen.*

With the addition of Roger Legge and Mike Zanre (*both very experienced professionals, one an architect and the other a C. A.*) the Fabric Committee has been charged with producing a schedule for the various repairs, overseeing those repairs and the very important job of scrutinizing quotes for the work.

A deluge of emails, with lists of links to various sites for repair grants to historic buildings, has been received and we thank those who took the time to do this research. Most of the links are already on record, attempts having been made for grants when the lift etc was installed 3 years ago. We are constantly reviewing them and seeking out new ones. Grant assistance will definitely be sought once quotes for the major repairs are received. You should be aware that most grants are only for *up to* 60% of the costs. **WE WILL STILL NEED TO FIND THE OTHER 40%.** Freemasons' Hall is a "B" listed building in the centre of one of Aberdeen's main Preservation areas, so any grant from Aberdeen City or other Heritage source will be accompanied by a City Planning and Preservation Officer, who can bring extra problems *and costs*.

Thanks to all those who sent in suggestions for fund raising. A special sub-Committee is to be formed to review these and other suggestions. It is hoped to have this sub-Committee in action early next year with a view to commence fundraising when we re-open. At present we have the *JustGiving* site, which will be live for at least 3 months, and the "*Friends of Freemasons Hall*" regular donation scheme, which is recommend to all, can be joined at any time. A form can be obtained by emailing:

[abcfh85@gmail.com](mailto:abcfh85@gmail.com)

Permission was granted at the Board of Management Annual Meeting to proceed with an application for OSCR registration (charity registration). Because of complications resulting in the way in which Freemasons' Hall Trusteeship was set up 110 year ago, a solicitor, specialising in this type of registration, is to be engaged.

*Thanks to all of you, for spreading the news to your friends and family, to your social media friends and on your websites. It is because of you that we have received all of these generous donations.*

As we approach 2021 and the very real probability of Freemasons' Hall being re-opened for meetings after the summer (*and dare I say a Live Management Board AGM,* on behalf of The Executive Committee, may I

