

Dementia, the forget-me-not flower and Freemasonry



Dementia

Dementia is an umbrella term for a range of progressive conditions that affect the brain. It can affect a person at any age but is more commonly diagnosed in people over 65. Dementia can also affect younger people.

Over 70,000 people in the UK live with young onset dementia, being any form of dementia that develops before the age of 65, Alzheimer's disease being the most common.

Many symptoms are associated with Dementia, but every sufferer will experience it in their own way. The main symptoms are:

- Memory problems
- Cognitive ability
- Communication
- Mood and behavior changes

There is currently no known way to prevent Dementia. Support and treatment options can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life.

As Dementia progresses, individual needs will increase requiring more support.

Dementia UK is a registered charity and helps families face the many issues associated with the disease. Their nurses, known as Admiral Nurses, provide free expert advice, specialist support and understanding for families affected by all forms of dementia to help care for their loved ones

Forget-me-not flower in Dementia

Forget-me-not flowers are a powerful symbol in the context of Dementia in remembrance and support for individuals and families affected by this dreadful illness, representing the enduring bonds and importance of memory. The delicate blue flower serves as a reminder of our understanding and compassion towards those affected.

It is used to raise awareness and support for individuals affected by Dementia and the ongoing efforts to foster connections among those affected by this challenging condition. In the context of Dementia and Alzheimer's it symbolizes memory, love and the enduring connection between individuals even as cognitive abilities decline. The flower is a poignant reminder of the importance of cherishing moments and maintaining relationships despite the challenges posed by memory loss.



The Forget-me-not flower in Masonry

From its beginning in 1933, Nazi Germany placed several legal, political and civic restrictions against many institutions they saw as hostile. Along with Jews and other communities, Freemasons were targeted for criminal prosecution and exclusion from society.

The "SS" dedicated two separate offices towards pursuing Masonic organisations and Freemasons. This was to continue into the war and into other countries under German control such as France and Italy.

In 1934 one of Germany's pre-war Grand Lodges began wearing the blue forget-me-not instead of the square and compasses on their lapels as a secret mark of identity.

Throughout this whole era these flowers appeared on lapels across cities and even in concentration camps, worn by brothers whose love for Freemasonry remained strong even during the worst times. In 1947 when the Grand Lodge was reopened a pin in the shape of the forget-me-not was adopted as an official Masonic emblem.

The masonic meaning of the flower is one deeply rooted in symbolism. It has been used by Masons to represent faithfulness and remembrance and as a reminder of the importance of loyalty to our brothers and sisters.

It should also serve as a reminder to all Freemasons to strive to uphold their oaths and obligations while providing support and friendship in time of need.

Whilst understanding its significance Masons can strive to live up to its meaning on a daily basis.

What we can do?

By participating in awareness initiatives and fund-raising, individuals can honour the memories of loved ones and contribute to the fight against Dementia.

As Freemasons we are reminded of the importance not only of brotherhood but of our principles in helping those in need. By doing so Freemasons can ensure that they are respected by those both within the organization and those outside it, by making positive contributions towards Masonic charities and society as a whole.

What are we doing in Somerset

It is intended to raise funds within the Mark Province by selling **Forget-me-not pin badges**, at a cost of £5. All monies raised will be donated to Dementia UK, a registered Charity in England & Wales (1039404) and Scotland (SC 047429).

Thank you on behalf of Dementia UK



Wear your flower with pride.