

1. We begin here at the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell and wend our way to the home of Norfolk Freemasonry at 47 St. Giles' Street Norwich. As we go we shall pass some of the locations where freemasons once met in the City. In earlier days most Lodges met at Public Houses or similar premises.

2. Our first port of call is the Wild Man in Bedford Street. This has an interesting history connected with the Bridewell, something for those with an enquiring mind to investigate further. The Lodge of Patience had its home here from 1803 to 1814 although this Lodge ceased to exist in 1845. The Lodge of Perseverance, which remains in existence today, met here from 1808 till 1812.

3. We pass down St. Andrew's Hill to St. Andrew's and Blackfriars' Halls where a number of notable meetings have been held, particularly the Annual Meetings of Provincial Grand Lodge from 1977.

4. Perseverance met at the Turkey Cock at the corner of Elm Hill and Wensum Street from its foundation in 1795 until 1801.

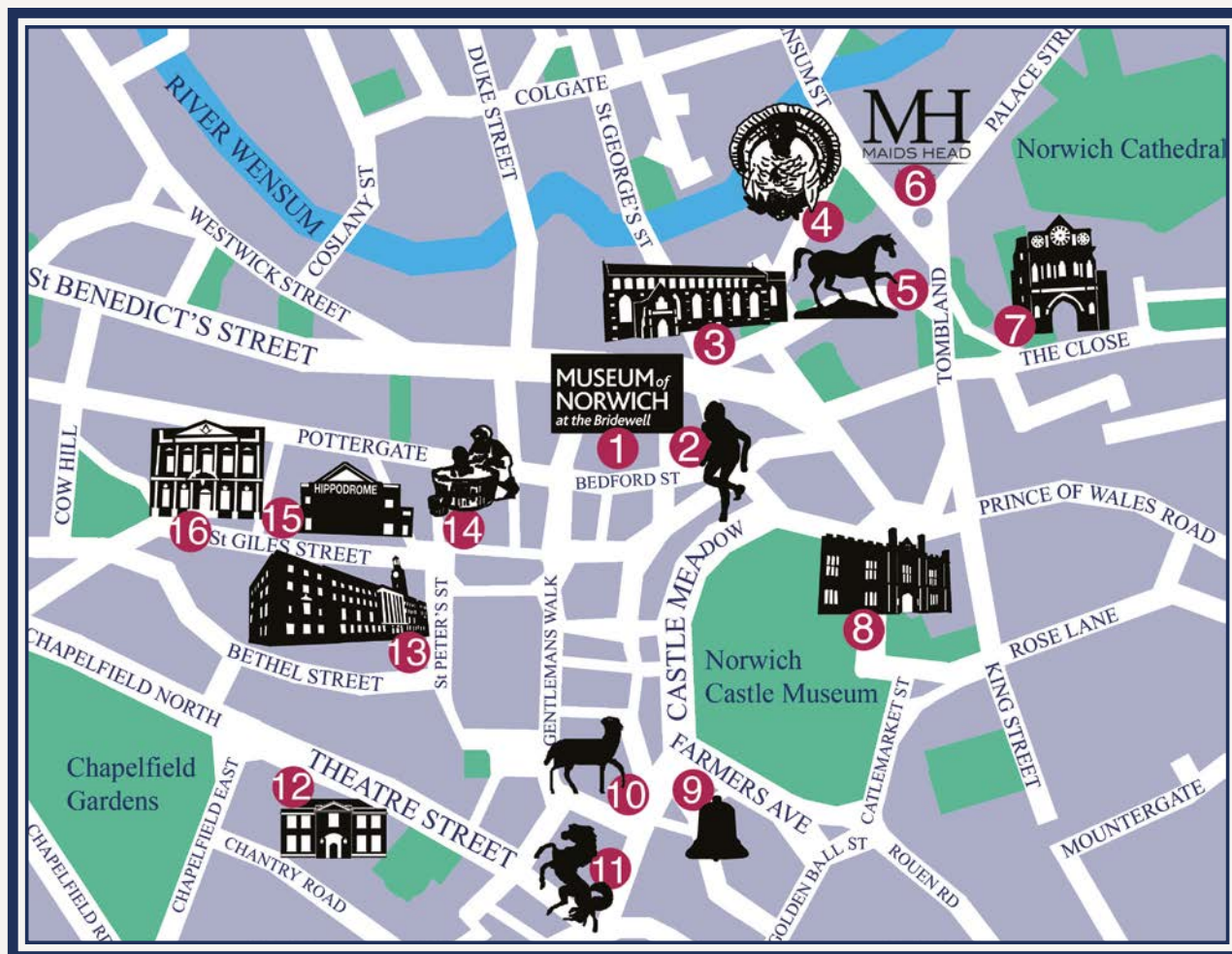
5. Passing the former Black Horse on Wensum Street where the Blue Boar Lodge (now Union Lodge the Premier Lodge in the Province) met from 1788 to 1799 we come to the former Waggon and Horses (later the Louis Marchesi and now Take 5) where the Hole-in-the-Wall Lodge had its meetings in 1773 and 1774, Norwich Theatrical Lodge in 1797 and Patience Lodge from 1816 to 1829.

6. Across the road at the Maid's Head Hotel a number of Lodges had their home. First and foremost was the original Maid's Head Lodge, one of the first outside London, constituted in 1724 and lasting until 1809. It met here until 1736 to be followed by Union Coffee House Lodge from 1750 to 1796 and Unanimity Lodge from 1787 to 1894.

7. At the Ethelbert Gate to the Close the Gatehouse Lodge met from 1799 to 1817 although by amalgamation it changed its name to Union Lodge in 1817.

8. Before we get to Castle Meadow on the left is the Shirehall and it is worth noting that in 1822 there was a Special Meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge held at the Judges Lodgings for the purpose of laying the foundation stone.

9. A long stretch of the legs takes us to the far end of Castle Meadow and to the Bell Hotel. This provided a home for Social, Sincerity, Cabbell and Walpole Lodges from 1876 to 1879.



10. Across the road the Lamb also hosted three Lodges, Social from 1835 to 1856, Perseverance various years between 1856 and 1877 and Cabbell Lodge in 1876 and 1877.

11. On the corner of Red Lion Street and Rampant Horse Street, the site now occupied by Debenhams, stood the Rampant Horse Coaching Inn where Perseverance had many but not all of its meetings between 1859 and 1879 and Cabbell from 1879 to the latter year.

12. Further up Theatre Street we arrive at the Assembly House which was home to many of the Norwich Lodges during the years 1861 to 1876 and to Union Lodge from 1818 to 1831. These premises belonged to Benjamin Bond Cabbell, Provincial Grand Master, until his death in 1875. It is a thought that Freemasonry might still have been utilising these prestigious premises had his heirs not sold them elsewhere!

13. Passing in front of the Forum we enter St. Peter's Street, a veritable home to a number of Lodges in the various hostelries that existed prior to the building of the City Hall. The Old Church Stile, White Hart, White Swan, Wounded Hart (Heart) and Pope's Head have all disappeared in the march of time. Lodges that met in one or more at varying times were Social, Unanimity, Three Tuns, Shakespeare, Maid's Head and Friendship.

14. Beyond the Guildhall at the top of Lower Goat Lane is Labour in Vain Yard. Labour in Vain - the well-known sign of two women attempting to scrub a black boy white was painted by John Crome (Old Crome - Founder of the Norwich School of Painters) and a member of Union Lodge). The Lodge of Eleusinian Mysteries came here between 1797 and 1800.

15. On the last leg of our journey we pass St. Giles' multi-storey car park and adjoining shops, previously the Hippodrome Theatre and earlier still the Norfolk Hotel, one of the City's old coaching inns. Union Lodge made this its home from 1840 to 1887 and some others in between also patronised the premises.

16. At the end of the journey we arrive at 47 St. Giles' Street where there is always a welcome but whenever possible a tour of the building and another exhibition.

OPENING TIMES

Tuesday's and Thursday's -10am until 1pm
or by appointment.

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