



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of London.  
Held at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, London  
on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Processions**

The meeting commenced at approximately 13.45 with the first Procession formed of Deputy Provincial Grand Masters, Assistant Provincial Grand Masters and other Distinguished Brethren.

The second procession entered Provincial Grand Lodge formed of Right Worshipful Brethren and Past Senior Members of the Province.

The third procession consisted of the Past Provincial Grand Master, accompanied by the banners of the Time Immemorial Lodges of the Province.

The fourth Procession consisted of the Provincial Officers for 2020-2021. After they had turned inwards the Provincial Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Thomas Quinn entered Provincial Grand Lodge to the music of the Pipes & Drums and took his seat on the dais. After which the Provincial Grand Officers took their seats.

**Delegations**

The Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master then acknowledged the Nonagenarian members of the Province accompanied by suitable music.

The fifth Procession was a delegation of Worshipful Masters of the Province.

The sixth Procession was a delegation of Worshipful Commanders of the Province.

The seventh Procession was a delegation of newly Advanced Brethren of the Province.

**To Open Provincial Grand Lodge**

Provincial Grand Lodge was opened in due form at 14.14

**To salute the Provincial Grand Master**

The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies called the Brethren to order to salute the Provincial Grand Master with Seven.

**Welcome Distinguished Guests**

The Provincial Grand Master introduced all the Distinguished Brethren attending the meeting which was followed by the Brethren of the Province of London giving them all a warm welcome.

**To salute the Right Worshipful Brethren**

The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies called the Brethren to order to salute the Right Worshipful Brethren with Seven. R.W. Bro Ian Clark PGM of Surrey responded on behalf of all the guests.

### **In Memoriam**

The names of all those Brethren of the Province who had passed away in the preceding year were printed in the Order of Proceedings, which was also cascaded via email. The Provincial Grand Chaplain mentioned the Senior Brethren who had passed, followed by prayers offered by the Provincial Grand Chaplain. The assembled brethren then sung "Abide with me" after which Bro. Andrew Tovey played the Last Post.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Virtual Business Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020, previously circulated by email, were taken as read and confirmed as a true record of the proceedings.

### **Roll of Provincial Grand Officers and Roll of Lodges**

The Provincial Grand Secretary confirmed that all the Provincial Grand Officers were present with the exception of those unavoidably absent by reason of sickness or other pressing emergencies. Also, that all of the 105 Mark Lodges and 83 Lodges of Royal Ark Mariner within the Province were represented. The Provincial Grand Secretary reported that over 300 apologies had been received via the online booking platform and that from these apologies an additional £1,325 had been donated to the Alms collection.

### **Report of the Provincial Treasurer and Accounts**

The Provincial Grand Treasurer's report and the audited accounts for the year ended 31st August 2020 being included in the Order of Proceedings, the Provincial Grand Treasurer then went on to say "R W Provincial Grand Master, I have nothing to add to my report".

A proposition by V.W. Bro. Gavin O'Sullivan, Provincial Grand Senior Warden, seconded by W. Bro. Raymond Johnson, Provincial Grand Junior Warden, to approve and adopt the Accounts was passed by the Brethren.

### **Report of the Provincial Grand Secretary, Almoner & Charity Steward**

The Provincial Grand Master advised the Brethren that he had it on the highest authority, that these Reports as contained in the Order of Proceedings, had nothing further to be added to them. He also thanked these Provincial Officers for their Reports and their hard work throughout the year.

### **Elections**

A proposition by W. Bro. Peter Brindle, Provincial, Grand Master Overseer, seconded by W. Bro. Edoardo El-Attrache, Provincial Grand Senior Overseer, to re-elect V.W. Bro. Stephen Fenton as Provincial Grand Treasurer was passed by the Brethren.

The Provincial Grand Master thanked V.W. Bro. Stephen for his valuable husbandry of the Province's funds.

A proposition by W. Bro. Robert Anderson, Provincial Grand Secretary, seconded by W. Bro. Wesley Hollands, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, to elect Worshipful Brothers- Michael Shenker & Champak Mistri as Account Examiners, and Worshipful Brothers- Hemant Vyas, Brian Calcutt & Harvey Roland as Trustees of the Provincial Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund was passed by the Brethren.

A Proposition by W. Bro. Wesley Hollands, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, seconded by W. Bro. Peter Brindle, Provincial, Grand Master Overseer, that Sterlings Ltd. be re-appointed as Account Examiners to the Provincial Benevolent Fund was passed by the Brethren.

## **Donations**

V.W. Bro Stephen Fenton, Provincial Grand Treasurer, proposed and W. Bro. Wesley Hollands, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, seconded that the sum of £5,000 be donated to the personal list of the Provincial Grand Master for Surrey in support of the 2022 Mark Benevolent Fund Festival; the proposition was carried. The Provincial Grand Master then presented a cheque to R.W. Bro. Ian Clark who gave a suitable reply.

## **Appointment and Investiture of a Deputy Provincial Grand Master**

The Provincial Grand Master informed the Brethren that it was his intention to re-appoint W. Bro. Tim MacAndrews as his Deputy Provincial Grand Master.

W. Bro. Tim MacAndrews was saluted with five & gave a suitable reply.

The Provincial Grand Master informed the Brethren that it was his intention to re-appoint V.W. Bro David Lucas, W. Bro. Wesley Hollands and V.W. Bro. John Ellis as Assistant Provincial Grand Masters. The Provincial Grand Master announced that W. Bro Cliff Sturt had stood down as Assistant Provincial Grand Master in 2020 after four years sterling service. The Provincial Grand Master then stated that W. Bro Howard Markham had accepted the Office and has been acting in the capacity of Assistant Provincial Grand Master since July 2020, and that his was intention to "Chain him".

The Escort was formed & retired then re-entered with the Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

The Provincial Grand Secretary then read the Patent of Appointment.

The Provincial Grand Master having formally introduced the Assistant Provincial Grand Master, the Chaplain gave the benefit of prayer.

The Assistant Provincial Grand Master then took the Solemn Obligation of an Assistant Provincial Grand Master, was Invested & given the Patent & Constitutions and Regulations.

Having taken his seat, the Assistant Provincial Grand Masters were saluted with five, W. Bro Howard Markham then thanked the Brethren for their salutation on behalf of all the Assistant Provincial Grand Masters.

## **Appointment & Investiture of Provincial Grand Officers**

The Provincial Grand Master appointed and invested his Officers for the year, after which he gave promotions and first appointments to Past Rank to a further 144 Brethren. The Provincial Grand Master was also pleased to present 40 year service certificates to W. Bro. Derek Blumsom and V.W. Bro. Peter Cornish.

## **Provincial Grand Master's Address**

Brethren all, I now have the opportunity to Address you for the first time, face to face, since my Installation in July 2019. I will begin by thanking you all for your attendance today at this unusual point in London's diary of events. Normally July is the occasion to report on the previous year's activities and to reflect on our successes; and yet here we are at a September Annual Meeting, driven by circumstances beyond our control, already well into our 2022 programme of events. Rest assured that next year we will revert to our usual date – 14<sup>th</sup> July.

I don't want this Address to be overly focussed on the difficulties of the past 18 months, but feel that it is important to reflect proudly on all the great things achieved during lockdown and suspension; especially the Charitable works undertaken by many of you – so many good deeds carried out, often quietly and modestly, which have demonstrated the generosity of spirit which characterises Freemasons and which has turned what might have been a catastrophe for our Institution, into a triumph of community involvement and support for those less fortunate than ourselves.

At this early stage in my "brief" Address, I bring you all the best wishes of the MW Pro Grand Master, who had intended to honour us with his presence today but perhaps scared off by the presence of the massed pipes and drums, he has decided to take a day off from his own extremely busy agenda of Meetings and Installations of new PGMs!

I have already welcomed the Province's Official Guests. I would reiterate that welcome and this time include all Visitors to this our Annual Meeting, in this magnificent building – the very heart of English Masonry.

As a starting point for what I wanted to say today, I of course read over the Address I gave at our Virtual Annual Meeting in July 2020 – that memorable Zoom session when out of the 762 registered attendees, over 400 Tom Quinns were logged on! At that time there was a quiet optimism that the country would be emerging soon from lockdown and that Freemasonry would be starting up again in the autumn. How wrong we were. Nevertheless, for a further year, Mark Masonry continued on an electronic basis and you, the Brethren of London kept up the momentum of Virtual Business and Social gatherings. On the Social Front there were many initiatives, like Quizzes, Tea-at-Three, our 3 day VE Celebrations and of course who could forget our Virtual Burns Supper with 350 brethren and families on line and the fantastic performance of our heavily disguised Deputy Grand Master!

On the Business front you kept the Secretariat busy by applying for over 400 Provincial Dispensations and Letters of Permission to enable important items of business and elections of Masters and Treasurers to take place by Zoom – the new Patron Saint of Masonry. All that hard work in a virtual environment has brought us to a good place for the start of our 2021/22 Session and already underway are the 65 Official Visits by the Chains and 30 Full Team Visits,

where I will be heading up Delegations. That's 95 of our 105 Lodges due an Official Visitor during the current season.

That leads me neatly to say to all those who I have had the pleasure of appointing and investing today, well done and congratulations! Your appointment is genuinely intended as a reward for past services to your lodges and the Province; and also as an exhortation to further service – and one of the ways you can demonstrate this is by attending those Official Visits not only in support of the Chain heading up the delegation but by contributing to the atmosphere and enjoyment of the Lodge Meetings themselves.

Suspension and Lockdown may have been a period of reduced travel and reduced Masonic Ceremonial, but it was no holiday for the Secretariat Team who continued to support the business of your Lodges in many different ways. W. Bro. Robert Anderson and Team – thank you so much for all your hard work for today's arrangements and throughout the year. The innovations you have been making regarding the efficient administration of the Province are proving a very positive experience and you are indeed building on the great work of your predecessors, on which point I am delighted to have had the opportunity to promote your immediate predecessor to P.Prov.G.S.W. this afternoon. W. Bro. Alan White, I know that you have faced your own challenges on the health front these past 2 years but we are so happy that you are on the road to recovery and are able to be with us today.

To my Executive Team and the Chains in particular, please accept my most sincere thanks for your significant input to so many aspects of Provincial life and work.

Thanks for your attendance at our innumerable Zoom sessions. For your creativity and support of our Lodge Membership Co-ordinator project, our impressive PowerPoint Awareness Presentation, and hosting and attending countless individual Lodge Virtual sessions. Thank you also for your friendship. As a reward I have been delighted to re-appoint you all today and I look forward to continuing to work with you over the coming year.

At last year's Virtual Annual Meeting I was obliged to acknowledge by Zoom, the past services of our retiring APGM, W. Bro. Cliff Sturt. However now that we are gathered together in the flesh, I have the opportunity to do it properly. Bro. Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, would you please present W. Bro. Clifford Sturt so that I may invest him with his Past APGM's collarette.

Continuing the theme of service to the Province, it would be appropriate at this point again to acknowledge the attendance today of our Nonagenarians and also those brethren who have received

40 Year Certificates. On behalf of everyone, please accept my thanks for your many years of service and, circumstances permitting, I hope that my successor, in due time, will be able to attend your Lodges to present your 50 year citation and certificate.

At the other end of the Membership scale, we have today welcomed over 20 newly Advanced Brethren into our Provincial Meeting. This number is inevitably reduced this year due to a number of factors but Brethren, once again, welcome to you all. Everyone present wishes you an exciting and rewarding career in the Mark Degree.

Wear your special lapel pin at your Craft and Chapter meetings too and help spread the gospel of this special, friendly degree in Freemasonry.

Through my involvement with the Grand Master's Lodges of Instruction, you will be aware of my fondness for the Ritual in both our Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Ceremonies. That love of the ceremonial aspect of our degrees is happily shared by a number of you and this Province has, for many years, recognised this through the award of a Silver Pin for an excellent Advancement Ceremony and, starting this year, an Olive Branch Pin for those who achieve excellence in the Elevation Ceremony. I am therefore delighted this afternoon to be able to present Silver Pins to :- Meharban Jutlla (The Macdonald); Henry Hobson (Onslow); Steve Roberts, (Hibernia); Paul Burgess (Mapesbury) Greg Brennan (Lodge of Clemency);

and Olive Branch Pins to Nick Dodds (B.A.T.I.); Chris Stewart (Onslow); Graham Tarran (Guild of Freemen); Jeffrey Reese (Euclid)

Bro. Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, would you please assemble these brethren.

For many years, music has been an intrinsic part of the ceremonial at this meeting and the more observant of you may have noticed a few changes today! Sadly, Bro. Eddie Thomson who gathered together his brass ensemble and arranged the music to enhance each Annual Meeting, passed away during the year - so it has been necessary to fill that void.

The members of my Executive insisted, yes Brethren, insisted that we have the stirring music of the Celtic London Pipes and Drums. There will be more of them later whilst we take up the Alms Collection. My thanks to Pipe Major W. Bro. David Morris and his team, to whom I'm sure you will show your appreciation when they next play.

Another change this year, although not quite so visible, is that we have the services this afternoon of Grand Organist, V.W. Bro. Mario Rizzardi, as W.Bro. David Cresswell is unable to be with us. V.W. Bro. Mario thank you so much for your wonderful music. You really make that Grand Organ – sing!!

Our In Memoriam and Prayer for departed Brethren, beautifully crafted & delivered by our Provincial Grand Chaplain, was again enhanced by the sounding of the Last Post, played so evocatively by Brother Andrew Tovey. Thank you Chris and Andrew.

This new broom has not only been sweeping clean on the music front but I have taken the opportunity to review the activities of our Provincial Care Committee. Their duties would have been particularly onerous during the dark days at the height of the Pandemic but the Lodge Almoners and Lodge Secretaries too have proven to be very diligent in maintaining contact with the vulnerable members of their Lodges. As a consequence I have stood down that Care Committee with my grateful thanks for their past services and to make sure that Lodge Almoners have all the assistance they need in terms of resources and back-up, the Provincial Almoner, W. Bro. David Nunn has increased the support he provides through the circulation of additional literature

and a series of Presentations. These are continuing, so, Brother Almoners, please do try to attend and where necessary seek guidance from David, who has a wealth of experience in this area and excellent

contacts within the MBF and also the MCF. Thank you David for the work you have undertaken so far with the Provinces' Almoners and on behalf of the individual Members, who have required your services.

It is always traditional to mention Charity during these Addresses. You, the Brethren of London continue to display that attribute both at Lodge level and as individual members. At the recent London Installed Masters' Lodge Meeting, 20 Brethren received their Collarettes at the hands of the President of the MBF, their personal donations representing some £33,000 to that Fund. Our London Lodges responded well to the MBF request for Hospice nominations in memory of the Late Duke of Edinburgh, and the Chains and I have been busy attending at various establishments around the M25 to present the cheques on your behalf. The recipient of the largest number of London Lodge nominations was Richard House Children's Hospice and at our banquet later there will be two representatives from that wonderful organisation to receive its cheque.

I would also like to announce that we have carried out an exercise, during Suspension, to calculate the MBF Level of Patronage for every London Mark Lodge and thereby arrive at a figure which, if achieved, would take your lodge to the next Patronage level. Your OV has all the information and will be in touch with Lodge Secretaries throughout the year to share this data with you.

Given the historical levels of generosity displayed by London Brethren I am confident that this will be a truly worthwhile exercise and should enhance donations to the MBF, which, as has been seen from the recent Hospices exercise, continues to do such excellent work.

From the reports I receive from many sources, the future of Mark Masonry is bright and no more so than in this Province. Since our last Meeting, despite suspension we have still been able to Advance and Elevate a number of Brethren. Losses through resignations and those passed to Higher Service inevitably continue to impact on our overall memberships of 2,231 in Mark and 1,521 in Royal Ark Mariner but on the recruitment front there remains a large number of candidates in the pipeline and arrangements are at an advanced stage for the consecration of a new Mark Lodge – the RAF Lodge of MMM. Over the next few months too, we will be busy consecrating 3 new Royal Ark Mariner Lodges. Details of these events and their dates are all available on our Website or from the Provincial Secretariat. Get involved Brethren and come along to support these ceremonies if you want to derive maximum satisfaction from your membership.

Much of the information you will need to keep you abreast of the Province's activities can be gleaned from our Website and the frequent publication of our Magazine – the London Mallet. Therein you will obtain all the information you need about our past activities and forthcoming events. The Website and Magazine have continued to benefit from the excellent supervision of our Communications Manager, Chris James.

Chris and his Team of volunteers are also responsible for the production of our Year Book, which itself will see some changes and improvements this coming November.

Brethren to thank each and every Brother who contributes to the well-being of this large Province, would take much longer than the time available for our Annual Meeting. To all of you who have helped in whatever great or small way, I offer you my heartfelt thanks. You know who you are. There are inevitably some whose services go above and beyond the normal call and, having been denied the opportunity last year due to Covid, I would like to recognise two of them this year through the Provincial Grand Masters Award of Merit. This year's recipients are brethren who work largely on secretariat type functions and whose activities are largely unseen by the majority of you but whose contribution to the well-running of many aspects of the administration of the Province, is immense and highly appreciated by those they assist. Bro. Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies would you please present to me W. Bros. Gurdeep Virdee and Richard Criddle.

Bro. Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, you will no doubt be pleased to hear that this now concludes the presentations I require during this Address but Jon I would take this opportunity to thank and complement you and your Team of Deputies, Assistants and Stewards for your work in the run up

to this meeting, for the very effective rehearsal which started early this morning and for your slick direction so far of today's proceedings. The Chains and I are all looking forward to being directed by you and your Team as we make our way through the programme of visits during the forthcoming season.

And now, lastly, I have some good news from a financial perspective. The Provincial Grand Treasurer and I have been considering how best to reward Lodges for their continuing support of the Province over these past difficult months – especially in the continued quest to sustain & improve membership numbers. So, for the financial year to 31 August 2022, the Province of London will reimburse all Advancement, Elevation and Joining Grand Lodge Registration Fees. Lodge Secretaries and Scribes should therefore continue to pay these Grand Lodge Fees at the time of registering new Members, but without charging Candidates and Joiners; and then claim back the monies from the Province. This arrangement will be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> August this year to reflect the number of Candidates Advanced and Elevated over this extraordinary summer period. Provincial Grand Secretary will issue detailed written guidance in the next few days. Brethren, I hope this will be seen as a significant advantage in your various Lodge Recruitment initiatives in this post pandemic age. On top of the Grand Lodge rebate of £10 per membership, there never has been a more advantageous time to become a member of a Mark or Royal Ark Mariner Lodge in this Province of London, within which you have given me the great honour and privilege to serve as its Head!

Brethren all, thank you so much for your attendance and the attention you have given to today's delayed but nevertheless special Annual Meeting. When the history of the Province is written, to cover this strange episode in all our lives, I hope that the author will be able to capture that sense of London Pride and loyalty which resides in you all and which I trust will continue to inspire you in your support of this wonderful Province of London.

May the Great Overseer of the Universe bless and protect us all.

### **To Collect Alms**

Alms were collected and raised £2,378 (plus Gift Aid where appropriate), this will be added to the further £3,595 which had already been donated via the online booking platform. These will be deposited in the Provincial Benevolent Fund.

### **To consider any other business**

The Provincial Grand Secretary reported that he had received apologies from a number of Provincial Grand Masters, Brethren from other Provinces and Brethren of this Province, all of whose names have been duly recorded. All have sent their best wishes to you and all present.

It had been agreed with UGLE that we may leave our Regalia etc in the Robing Rooms, these items must be collected by 8.30 this evening

There being no further business to be brought before Provincial Grand Lodge, it was closed in due form at 16.15. All present then joined in singing the National Anthem followed by Jerusalem as the closing Hymn, after which the Provincial Grand Master retired in Procession.

After the Receptions were finished more than 420 Brethren dined together in the New Connaught Rooms, where the customary toasts were honoured.

Robert M Anderson, G.Stwd,  
Provincial Grand Secretary  
October 2021