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September 2022



The PGM Writes...

Brethren, I am writing this particular piece on the eve of the Queen's funeral. Like many of you I am sure that you have been glued to your televisions for the past 11 days or so, since the sad news of Her Majesty's passing was announced on 8 September. I was attending the Annual Meeting of the Mark Province of Berkshire when the news broke and naturally it cast a sombre tone over what had been an enjoyable gathering. Over the succeeding days we have all had the opportunity to reflect on Queen Elizabeth II's wonderfully long reign and to consider the stabilising influence she has generated within this country and throughout the world – something which has beneficially impacted all our lives. As Freemasons we have an inherent loyalty to the Crown and we must all now look towards our new King for leadership and offer him the trust and loyalty we have demonstrated to the Queen for what, for most of us, has been the whole of our adult lives so far.

Change is the only constant in this evermoving world and we have certainly seen changes in the top echelons of both our Craft and Mark Orders of Freemasonry. Last week at Mark Grand Lodge I had the honour to witness the Investiture of our three new Rulers: M.W. Bro. John Prizeman as Pro Grand Master, and R.W. Bros. Francis Spencer and Denovan Wilson as Deputy and Assistant Grand Masters respectively. I hope it will not be too long before we can persuade these new Rulers to come to our Province to meet you, the London Brethren. And don't be surprised to see our Past Pro Grand Master, M.W. Bro. Ray Smith, popping up at our Annual Meeting as London's (now) senior Past PGM!

Also at Grand Lodge, it was my great pleasure to witness the Grand Rank Promotions which London has enjoyed this year. Amongst the foremost of these were the appointment to P.G.J.O. of Tim, Wes and Howard. So you will see a huge change in your Festive Board toast lists from now on. As well as drinking a toast to the King, you will note that nearly all of my Executive are now V.W. Brethren. Congratulations to them all!

I am also delighted to report that one of our London Brethren is now (as of 17 September), the R.W. District Grand Master for Italy. Bro. Andrea Bonechi of Ethical Lodge was invested by our new Pro Grand Master in Rome last weekend and I was delighted to appoint W. Bro. Colin Miller P.Asst.G.Swd.B. and P.Prov.G.S.W. as the London representative for that Installation Meeting.

Lodge Secretaries will shortly be receiving Provincial Grand Secretary's request to submit nominations for next year's Provincial and Grand Ranks – so your Executive will be busy in the run-up to the year-end sifting through the names submitted.

Turning to charity now, [here](#) is a report from Marie Curie on its work – I'm sure many of you will be interested in this, as last year's distributions under the Mark Benevolent Fund's Duke of Edinburgh donations carried a great number of nominations from London Lodges to that worthy cause. The sale of this year's MBF Festival lapel badges (£10 each) will continue, as usual, throughout this coming Masonic season and for those of you who would like to add a little extra to your London charitable donations, the 50-50 Club has been revived again now that we have Covid and lockdown firmly behind us. Please do try to support this, Brethren - £12 a year will buy every Brother a number in the annual draw, with the opportunity of cash prizes and the satisfaction of supporting a worthy cause (click [here](#) to read the rules and to access the signing-up form). Last year's donations enabled us to donate £1,250 to LONSAR, a London charity which works with the Met Police to repatriate vulnerable missing persons (you can read more about this [here](#)).

The flip side of charitable collections is of course the ability of Grand Lodge's Mark Benevolent Fund and, to some extent our own London Mark Benevolent Fund, to assist Brethren in distressed circumstances. We have been reading so much lately about the rise in the cost of living and the high fuel bills we are all anticipating this winter. Please remember your Lodge widows, those on fixed incomes and members who live on their own. The Mark is the friendly degree, so in these difficult times it is more important than ever to put a friendly arm around any vulnerable shoulders and remind them that they are not alone. Lodge Almoners have a more important role than ever to keep in contact with all their members, who need to be reminded that they should not suffer in silence. If you or someone in your Lodge requires assistance then ask your Lodge Almoner or Secretary to get in touch with the Provincial Almoner David Nunn (davidnunnfrcs@aol.com). We will do all we can to help.

Standing down this year are two Officers who have worked diligently for the good of the Province over a number of years. W. Bro. Phil Moore has provided vital administration to the Chains in collating reports of the Executive visits to your Lodges. A revised and streamlined process is now in place so Phil has been released from that job, with my grateful thanks for his help. And I'm sure you will be aware by now that we have a new Communications Manager in Richard Criddle. Richard takes over from W. Bro. Chris James who has held that job for nearly a decade. Chris now lives in Lincolnshire and he steps down from the role of Comms Manager and Year Book Editor, with our grateful thanks for his past services and the substantial contribution he has made to our Province. Richard Criddle has a team of willing helpers around him – but there is always the need for more assistance, Brethren, so if anyone out there has marketing, publishing and editing experience please get in touch with me.

And to end on an entirely Masonic note, I am pleased to report that V. W. Bro. John Ellis APGM has now finished building the Ark! Well, a model of it anyway and it will shortly be sailing into one of our Royal Ark Mariner Lodges and susceptible to a raiding party from another R.A.M. Lodge which might like to have it moored to its Unit for a short time. Watch this space for more news.



I hope you are all enjoying the start of Masonic activities since the end of the glorious summer we have just experienced and I look forward to seeing you on the London circuit.

Mark Well, Brethren all.

Tan



Mark Awareness Evening - 29 November, 2022

The Executive will be running another Awareness Evening in Mark Masons' Hall on 29 November. This time it will be an in-person event, and will be held in conjunction with the Kent Club for London Freemasons and the Connaught Club. There is a free buffet for prospective candidates (£10 per head for existing Mark Master Masons).

Please invite your friends from Craft and Royal Arch to come along - they'll need to register [here](#).

And in the meantime, have you watched the video (click [here](#)) recently released by Grand Lodge regarding the Mark Degree?



New Provincial Website

Following the membership engagement survey last year, there was a clear call for the look and feel of the Provincial website to be refreshed. We last did this 5 years ago, and it was certainly now looking somewhat dated.

So the Comms team has been working with our partner Go-Live over the summer and we are happy to announce that the new-look website is now live! The address remains the same - www.markprovinceoflondon.com

Apart from a refreshed and more vibrant feel, the other major change is the creation of a secure Members' Area that requires a log-in for you to access. For those of you who had a log-in for the old website, your details have been transferred to the new one. In this Members' Area is a myriad of information for Secretaries, Treasurers and members alike. Hopefully it will be very intuitive, but if you do need any assistance or would like to submit any feedback please get in touch with either Richard Criddle or Symeon Ververidis via editors@markprovinceoflondon.com.



Provincial Grand Officers' Mess Annual Luncheon

This year the Mess Committee has arranged for the Curator of the Museum of Freemasonry at Great Queen Street to tell us the story of the museum, as well as anecdotes and discoveries made in the collections. Most of us will have seen the museum at some point - now hear the story behind it!

The event is primarily for Provincial Grand Officers past and present, but if you would like to attend then please approach one of the Provincial Officers in your Lodge and ask them to invite you along. The date is Wednesday 19 October, the venue is the superb Union Jack Club (near Waterloo station) and the start time is 11:45 for 12:15.



W. Bro. Peter Mearns recently presented a cheque for £250 on behalf of the Provincial Grand Master to Kirsten Dillon, who is the Chair of the Assistance Dog Assessment Association (Charity No 1191180).

There is a large number of dogs who are assisting their owners who receive no current recognition. The dogs look after people with physical disabilities as well as the hidden ones, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The Association assesses the dogs to ensure they meet a standard, and are in communication with service providers to ensure they accept assistance dogs into their premises (for example, an ex-soldier with PTSD often cannot cope with being refused entry to retail premises).

The donation is to enable the Association to complete the training programme of five dogs. They cover the whole of the UK and are currently adding airlines to their portfolio so that people with hidden illnesses can travel.

With the recent focus of the news understandably being away from Ukraine, we must not forget the ongoing humanitarian crisis there, and so the Mark Benevolent Fund's Relief Chest for both Lodges and members to use for donations is still available. Please consider giving generously to this appeal and check with your Lodge Secretary / Treasurer / Charity Steward that they also have seen the detailed arrangements for donating on behalf of the Lodge (this will count towards your Lodge's MBF Patronage Level too). Click [here](#) if you would like to make a contribution.



How would you like to be able to donate money to charity without it costing you anything? Well, there is a way to do just that. many people purchase small to medium capital goods (and even foodstuffs) through Amazon, where the prices are generally good and the delivery service is market-leading

Amazon has set up AmazonSmile which, if you purchase items (at the same cost as standard Amazon) they will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price to nominated charities. At London Mark we identified this opportunity and we are now delighted to say that the system is fully up and running. It really is quite a simple process inasmuch as simply go to smile.amazon.co.uk on your web browser or activate AmazonSmile in the Amazon Shopping app on your iOS or Android phone within the Settings or Programmes & Features menu. You will be asked for the name of the charity and it is the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of London Benevolent Fund. Once you have entered the info you need to, you are sorted out, and AmazonSmile will direct monies to that charitable account automatically.

We do hope that you will be generous enough to support this endeavour and to see if, in a year's time, we can show a small donation to the worthwhile causes we support.



Grand Master's Lodges of Instruction

The GMLoI is *the* place to practise your ritual in a safe environment, surrounded by knowledgeable and supportive brethren.

The new meeting schedule for the Grand Master's Lodges of Instruction - culminating in the Annual Festival hosted by the Mark Province of Hampshire and Isle of Wight - can be found on the Provincial website [here](#).



Provincial End of Year Party

To celebrate the end of a successful London Mark 2022, the Provincial Grand Master will host our traditional biennial end-of-year extravaganza at the Holiday Inn in Bloomsbury.

We will be entertained by the Hendo Washboard Kings - an excellent Dixieland jazz band led by Stephen Henderson, one of our own London Mark Masons - as well as an opportunity to win a chance to sabrage a bottle of Champagne.

The big event is happening on Saturday 10 December, from 6.30pm for a 7.15pm start.

Tickets are just £60 per person, which includes a 3 course dinner and 1/2 bottle of wine.

This event is open to family and friends.

You can view the menu and book your place at this terrific event by clicking the button below.

[Book here](#)



Provincial Golf Day

On 20 September, the Province held its annual golf day. This year it was organised by Simon McCarthy at Leatherhead Golf Club, where he had arranged perfect golfing weather for us! There were over 50 players and an array of prizes to be won. The individual game was won by Bernie Greenwood, with the team prize going to David Ashbolt's team.

The day raised over £2,000 for charity - with half going to the MBF and half to Cancer Detection Dogs.

Many thanks to Simon for organising such a fabulous day and also for putting his holiday home in Tenerife up for auction.

Roll on our 2023 game!

[photo and words by Tim MacAndrews]

Dates for your Diary

19 October, 2022 - Provincial Grand Officers' Mess Annual Luncheon

12 November, 2022 - Consecration of the RAF Mark Lodge

10 December, 2022 - Provincial End of Year Party

You can keep up to date with all the News and Events from across the Province (including galleries containing pictures of all the Executive visits to our Lodges, and useful information) by visiting the Provincial website - <http://www.markprovinceoflondon.com/>

Regular updates from Mark Masons' Hall on all the Progressive Orders can be found [here](#).

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