# The Cheshire Mark Mason

Summer Edition June 2008

## Inaugural Cheshire Mark Masons' Gala Weekend

On the weekend of 4th to 6th April 2008, the historic Victorian town of Harrogate hosted the inaugural Gala Weekend of Cheshire Mark Masons. The venue was the Victorian splendour of the Cairn Hotel, a stone's throw from the town centre. A total of 50 brethren plus their partners and guests arrived throughout the Friday and the Gala Weekend commenced when the party of 100 congregated for a pre-dinner get together. All three of the Provincial rulers along with their wives were present to support the event.

The hotel's catering staff performed most creditably in providing a splendid buffet meal in a dining room which accommodated 250 diners. After the meal, the assembled Cheshire entourage occupied the bar area and old acquaintanceships were refreshed and new friendships established.

The Saturday was essentially a free day and the company dissipated to all points of Yorkshire.



The Assistant Provincial Grand Master W.Bro. David R Sellers, PGJD presents the cheque to the Provincial Grand Master and Mrs Margaret Ogden

Sunday morning came all too soon and after a prolonged breakfast, the 100 attendees exchanged fond farewells to one another.

This was a most enjoyable weekend and on behalf of all those who attended, the Cheshire Mark Mason would like to echo the Provincial Grand Master's words of thanks and congratulations to the organisers, W. Bro's David Sellers, Doug Watts, Paul Bullows and Bryan Mayoh, not forgetting Mrs. Maira Sellers whose table decorations were admired by everyone.

To all those who missed this weekend the consolation is that the event is to be repeated next year, 3rd—5th April 2009 - to avoid disappointment, book early!



RW.Bro. Bryan R Ogden, Provincial Grand Master with W.Bro Christopher J Macdonald, PGJD, PAPrGM and VW. Bro. Eric M Thomason, PGJO

One highlight of the weekend was the Gala Dinner and each guest had a personalised menu card which recorded their pre-selected meals. Directing the proceedings was W.Bro. Brian Mayoh. At the completion of the meal, the Provincial Grand Master extended a formal and cordial welcome to everyone. He praised the organising committee for their industry, as well as the staff of the hotel for providing such excellent service and hoped that this inaugural weekend would be the precursor to many more.

The post-prandial entertainment was provided by the hotel's resident DJ and a most enjoyable time was had by all present. One particularly joyous moment was the delivery of a cake to Margaret Roberts to celebrate her birthday and the assembled company sang in unison to congratulate her. A raffle was also held, which amassed the impressive sum of £430.00. Our Assistant PGM, W.Bro. David Sellers, presented a cheque to the PGM, the proceeds going to CPMBF (see photograph).



W.Bro. Ian M Brookes, GStwd with partner Susan, and W.Bro Paul Bullows, PGStwd, Mrs Susan and Mr William Bullows

## **Provincial Meeting Goes From Strength To Strength**

This year's Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Mark Lodge, held at Ellesmere Port Civic Centre in March, was a resounding success and a credit to the organising team. There was an excellent turn out of brethren with all Mark and RAM Lodges represented and over 190 dining at the festive board.

The meeting was opened in due form with the customary impressive parade of Distinguished Guests, followed by an equally impressive parade of our Mark Provincial Leaders, Leaders of other Masonic Orders and Acting Provincial Officers, who in turn preceded our RW Provincial Grand Master, Bryan Russell Ogden, accompanied by his Sword and Standard Bearers. Each Parade was greeted with much acclaim by the brethren, after which a delegation of Royal Ark Mariners was then received and welcomed.

The meeting was beautifully enhanced by the harmony of our relatively new Provincial Grand Organist W.Bro Keith Rogerson and this was duly noted by our Provincial Grand Master.

After completion of the business agenda, our Provincial Grand Master addressed the meeting by welcoming all present and thanking Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council for allowing the use of their magnificent hall, adding a special thank you to their staff for making us so welcome. He noted that the strength of our Cheshire Mark Province was down to the collective strength of our members, whose enthusiasm is the catalyst for our future success. He went on to thank all Mark Masons throughout the Province for their excellent work. He reiterated that we are all custodians of our Mark and RAM Lodges and that we must strive where possible to proactively seek out new and suitable candidates from amongst our Masonic friends to join us in our Friendly Degree.

Reference was then made to the Consecration of Tarporley RAM Lodge 532, now moored to Tarporley Mark Lodge No 1522, and the establishment of our first daylight Lodge, Wythenshawe No 532 which now meets at Christleton.

The PGM informed us that Namptwyche Mark lodge had passed its 50th milestone and Golden Jubilees were enjoyed by VW Bro's James McKeeman and William Hopwood and W.Bro John Thompson.

An important item was then mentioned referring to the elevated roles of The Almoner and Charity Steward in Mark Lodges as implemented by Grand Mark Lodge last year and which we have now adopted in Cheshire.

The Provincial Grand Master then offered hearty congratulations to those officers recently Promoted to Grand Rank by the Grand Master in London together with brethren who had received RAM Grand Rank. He then proceeded to appoint and invest acting officers for the ensuing year and to invest those brethren who were receiving their first appointment or promotion in Provincial Grand Mark Lodge.

A vote of thanks was then offered to all the staff at Provincial Office; to those who had assisted in organising social functions and events for the Mark Degree; and to the organising committee and brethren who had enabled such a successful Provincial meeting to take place.

The National Anthem was sung and Provincial Grand Lodge was closed in peace and harmony.

## **New Provincial Almoner Appointed**

At the AGM of Provincial Grand Mark Lodge, our RW Provincial Grand Master, referred to, "The creation and appointment of a Provincial Almoner".

WBro Kenneth Mayer of Eaton Mark Lodge No 1607 was duly appointed and his role will be 'to raise awareness of the welfare services available from the Grand Mark Benevolent Fund and the Cheshire Mark Benevolent Fund for Mark Masons of Cheshire and their dependants'.

One of his first duties is to organise and control a new initiative, which has been named, "The Medical Consultation Scheme".

Our Provincial Grand Master and his team have been concerned that some of our brethren are having to wait for quite some time from being initially referred to a Hospital Consultant and then actually seeing the Consultant.

Where this occurs, it can add to the stress, discomfort and uncertainty of the situation with often no alternative on offer but to sit it out and wait patiently for the appointment letter to drop on the mat.

With this in mind, the new scheme, which has worked well in a neighbouring Province, will enable those brethren experiencing such a delay and who are unable to fund a private consultation themselves, to be offered funding for their consultation to speed things up. This will enable qualifying brethren and / or their dependants requiring hospital treatment, to be admitted more speedily to an NHS Hospital.

Ongoing support may also be possible from the Masonic Samaritan Fund where applicable.

Details of the scheme are being sent to Lodge Almoners and Charity Stewards by W. Bro Mayer, and a separate article appears in this edition of the Cheshire Mark Mason.

Any brother who feels that they may qualify, or indeed knows of a brother and / or their dependants who may qualify, should approach their individual Lodge Almoner or Charity Steward for an application form or for additional information.

## **Mark Charities - 2008 Update**

The following extract from the Report of the Provincial Committee of Benevolence lists the grants and donations which the Cheshire Mark Benevolent Fund have made in the last twelve months.

Organisation	Amount (£)
Staffordshire & Shropshire Mark Benevolent Fund Festival	1,000.00
Leicestershire & Rutland Mark Benevolent Fund Festival	2,000.00
Cumberland & Westmorland Mark Benevolent Fund Festival	3,000.00
North Wales Mark Benevolent Fund Festival	5,000.00
Northamptonshire & Huntingdonshire Mark Benevolent Fund Festival	1,000.00
Chester Cathedral Song School	2,000.00
MRAS First Responders Merseyside	5.000.00
Park Lane School	2,000.00
Danny Griffiths Fund	319.00
Wirral PHAB	1,500.00
Masonic Trout & Salmon Fishing Club for the Disabled	364.95
The Wingate Centre	3,595.50
Friends of Mulberry School	1,000.00
Macmillan Cancer Support	5,250.00
Talking Newspapers Various Groups	1,946.19
Total	34,975.64

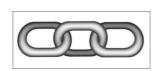
The Committee is due to meet during June 2008 to discuss the next series of projects and donations to be made. The Cheshire Mark Mason would be delighted to receive details of how our charitable donations are being used in and around the Province. Please do send in your stories and photos for inclusion in our next edition.

### An Indissoluble Attachment

As brethren who are members of our wonderful Mark Degree will know, there are many features of the Order which link it to the Craft and supply some further understanding towards that 'Daily Advancement in Masonic Knowledge' that we are all encouraged to seek.

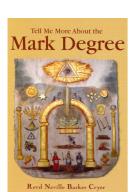
Before the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons came into being in 1856, the Mark had no central control. There were in existence at that time, a number of long established Mark Lodges meeting throughout England, using many variations of ritual, regalia and lodge furniture. Some Mark Lodges met exclusively to work the Mark Degree, but others, including our own Ashton District Lodge TI, met in Craft Lodges under a Craft Warrant, and minutes of these early Craft Lodges are a good source of information and evidence in some detail how some of the early Mark Lodges worked and their association with the Craft.







I am sure we would all agree with the distinguished Masonic Author, Lecturer and Historian, Revd. Neville Barker Cryer, when he states in his latest publication<sup>1</sup>, the Mark has an importance within the Masonic fraternity as a whole, which cannot be properly understood by brethren not taking the fourth regular step in Freemasonry and 'to be a Mark Member is in a most practical sense,



essential for sharing in most of present Masonry". He cites a number of examples of how the Mark Degree provides 'answers' to knowledge gaps, including the Cipher on the third degree tracing board; the keystone appearing on early Craft aprons; our reference to 'every brother having had his due' in the Craft closing ceremony and references in the Craft to 'Fifteen Fellowcrafts' etc. The answers of course can only be supplied by joining the Mark Degree, and Craft brethren wishing to further their knowledge and understanding, need only speak to any Mark Mason for assistance in taking that most regular of Masonic steps.

<sup>1</sup>: 'Tell Me More About The Mark Degree', by Revd Neville Barker Cryer. Published 2007 by Lewis Masonic, ISBN 978-085318278-8.

#### Meet the New Provincial Wardens

As one might expect, the present incumbents of the Wardens Chairs are both very busy men, committed Freemasons in both the Mark and other orders and both are well supported by their wives and families.

W.Bro. Rob Wilde, our Mark Provincial Grand Senior Warden, has recently taken up a new position with British Energy and is currently employed on settling in to that. He is a member of Tuscan Mark Master Masons Lodge No. 922 and Provincial Grand Senior Warden is his second Acting Rank in the Mark Province; his first being that of Provincial Grand Junior Overseer.

Rob is also a member of the Oakwood Craft Lodge No.1126, the Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge, Zerubbabel (for the third time) in Coronation Chapter No.2927, IPC in Wythenshawe RAM No.922 and the Faith Knight Templar/Knight of Malta Preceptory.

As well as achieving Provincial Ranks in all but the RAM so far, Rob and his wife Jackie have found time to make many new and dear friends during his Masonic life.



W.Bro. Rob Wilde - Provincial Grand Senior Warden



W.Bro Neville Wood Provincial Grand Junior Warden

W.Bro. Andrew Neville Wood (call me Neville), our Mark Provincial Grand Junior Warden and his wife of 43 years Sheila, ran their own Engineering Company until deciding to retire early in order to pursue their hobbies of globe-trotting and photography. Neville is also a JP of 25 years standing, and is currently the Chairman of his local court with responsibility for the Pastoral, Training and Disciplinary needs of some 180 magistrates.

Neville has also enjoyed a distinguished Masonic "career" having gained Provincial honours in most of the orders he is a member of; namely, the Lodge of Fortitude No. 461, the Fortitude Chapter No.461, the Ashton District of Time Immemorial Lodge of Mark Master Masons, the Hyde RAM Lodge No.868, the Dukinfield Knights Templar Preceptory No.308 and the St. Oswald's Preceptory of Knights Templar Priests.

Sheila and Neville have two children, Jeremy, a Squadron Leader with the RAF serving in Afghanistan and Alexandra, flying as a Purser for British Airways. They also have a grandson, Nathan, who is the pride and joy of his grandparents.

Clearly, both Rob and Neville have earned their laurels and we wish them well during their year as Grand Wardens in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Cheshire.

## A Tale of Three Lodges

The marriage between Wythenshawe Lodge of Mark Master Masons, (No. 532) and the Wythenshawe Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners (No.532) had been a long and fruitful one, however, after a happy union, Wythenshawe Lodge of MMM decided that it was time to retire from the Metropolitan area of Sale, to the leafy suburbs of Christleton. After lengthy discussions, Wythenshawe Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners decided to remain in Sale and agreed to a "separation".

In their new surroundings, Wythenshawe Lodge of MMM, decided to become a daylight Lodge, and it bloomed in the sunshine, attracting new members and it began to flourish.

Wythenshawe Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners, with a view to attracting a new Mark soul mate held discussions with Tuscan Lodge of Mark Master Masons (No. 922), and, in the fullness of time, Tuscan Lodge of Mark Master Masons and Wythenshawe Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners started a relationship which resulted in the marriage of the two Lodge on Thursday 21st February 2008.

At the marriage, the 'Bride and Groom' invited guests to see the happy occasion and 32 members and guests attended the ceremony. It was a joyous affair, with a lavish festive board, fine wine and good company, all of which bodes well for the future of the marriage.

In accordance with Grand Mark Regulations, Wythenshawe Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners 532 changed it name to Wythenshawe Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners 922. The "marriage certificate" is now anchored and moored at the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges overseas.

Wythenshawe Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners and Tuscan Lodge of Mark Master Masons meet at Sale Masonic Hall, on the Third Thursday in February, April and October and the couple invite all lonely hearts to join them, with a view to strengthening our relationships and your Lodges.

## **Cheshire Mark Masonry On The Web**

## "a further improvement in communications across the Province"

Since the possibility of producing a website for the Province was first mooted some two years ago, work has been going on in the background to achieve that aim. The project has been headed up and coordinated by our Deputy Provincial Grand Master, VW Bro. David Alldred, and the new website went live just a few weeks ago at;

### www.cheshiremarkmasons.co.uk

Speaking recently at both the Mark Master's dinner at Middlewich, and at the Grand Officers dinner at Christleton, David explained the purposes of the website as "a further improvement in communications across the Province and giving opportunities for brethren to contribute to the planned regular updates".

The site itself opens at the home page with a welcome from the Provincial Grand Master RW Bro Bryan Russell Ogden, along with a photograph, shown below. Along the top, links are provided to the ten pages which currently constitute the site as a whole. These begin with a brief history of Mark Masonry, taking in a little about the formation of the Province, and include a wonderful picture of the illuminated frontispiece of the Provincial Minute Book from 1873. Also provided are pages giving information about the High Rulers and Grand Mark Lodge; the Mark Province of Cheshire and its leaders; the Mark Charities; information on membership and contact details for the Provincial Office. Further page links give access to all the Provincial Mark Newsletters since its inception and there is also a page providing a link to the Cheshire Craft website—links to other orders will be added as the site is developed.

Most importantly, there are two pages provided, one exclusively for Mark Lodges and the other for Royal Ark Mariner Lodges within the Province. These pages list all the Lodges along with their current meeting places and it is hoped that each Lodge will provide enough information in order to either provide a link to a separate Lodge website or to provide for a Lodge webpage on this site.

Brethren are reminded that external websites must be approved via the Provincial Leaders before going live. Secretaries or brethren representing lodges on website matters should communicate with the Deputy Provincial Grand Master should they wish to develop their Lodge web page, via the link marked 'Contact the Webmaster'.

Of course, keeping the website fresh with regular updates is most important, and Brethren are encouraged to provide constructive feedback and/or new information to the Deputy Provincial Grand Master or any of the CMM Editorial team. We would particularly like to hear about notable events and achievements in lodges, the charities and within the Province itself.



# 50th Anniversary of Namptwyche Lodge of MMM No. 1206

Monday 4th February 2008 saw the Worshipful Master. Bro. A. Lindop MBE BEM and members of Namptwyche Lodge of Mark Master Masons No. 1206 entertain a good number of guests as they celebrated their fiftieth anniversary in style. The Provincial Grand Master, RW.Bro. Bryan Ogden accompanied by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. David Alldred PGSD and a number of Grand Officers all joined with the members to celebrate the milestone. The highlight of the evening included a reading of the history of the lodge, by W. Bro. Keith Wilford PAGDC, who has also played a significant part in the lodge's recent revival following challenging times.

For over half a Century, Namptwyche Lodge of Mark Master Masons No. 1206, has promoted and encouraged Mark Masonry in the Nantwich area of South Cheshire. The members have set and maintained high standards in their work and administration. The Lodge has flourished under the supervision and guidance of many distinguished Mark Masons and has always perpetuated the dignity and spirit of companionship associated with our Order. Its members have been and continue to be from many varied walks of life, but with a strong influence of the Farming and associated Agricultural businesses in the area.

The Lodge has long been a significant supporter of the Mark Charities. Indeed, during 1993, it had the signal honour of being the first Lodge in the Province to receive a Charity Maul from the then Provincial Grand Master, RWBro Benjamin Addy, marking the beginning of the Maul awards system as we know it today.



The PGM Deputy PGM and Members of Namptwyche Lodge

Today, Namptwyche Lodge is in good heart and its members, whilst reflecting on the foundations laid down by the achievements of the past half Century, look forward to maintaining the principles of Mark Masonry in this Province in the years to come.

#### WBro Sydney Jones Celebrates 50 years as a Mark Master Mason

W.Bro. Sydney Jones was advanced into the Earl of Chester Lodge of MMM No. 196 on the 16th April 1958 when the annual subscription was two guineas. He was appointed Provincial Grand Junior Warden in 1984 and currently holds the high rank of Past Grand Senior Deacon. He joined the Cestrian Lodge of MMM's No 953 in 1984. WBro Sydney was elevated in the Cestrian RAM Lodge No 196 in 1959 and joined the City of Chester RAM in 1988. He was appointed to RAMGR in 1990. Outside of Mark Masonry, the rest of his masonic career is equally distinguished: he was initiated into the Upton Weal Stone Lodge in 1953 and on its closure last year, joined the Wythenshawe Daylight Lodge, holding his current rank of PPrJGW. He was exalted into St. Mary's Chapter No. 8098 in 1985 but chose not to progress.

Bro. Sydney was born in Wolverhampton in 1914 and, consequently moved to Rhyl where he was educated. Times were not easy for the family and Sydney almost became a baker. As he appeared to be somewhat accident-prone in this occupation, he started work with the Motor Insurance Company in Liverpool, which set him upon what was to become a very distinguished career in finance. During WW2, Sydney served with the BEF in France and was evacuated from Dunkirk. Back in Great Britain he organised the invasion of the Channel Islands, ending up as a Major in what he himself described as "a very pleasant billet!". W.Bro. Sydney started North West Securities in a hotel room as its only salesman, rising to become the Managing Director of a company which had grown to become a £10 billion international giant and is now part of HBOS.

The City of Chester owes much of its present prosperity to Sydney and a couple of months ago he was awarded the prestigious Order of the Gates. Sydney's response to this honour was that he thought it was something "one had to be old to get" – typical of both his humour and his modesty.

W.Bro Sydney married his wife Bobbie in 1941 and they have two sons.



I to r W.Bro Christopher J Macdonald, PGJD, PAPrGM, W.Bro David R Sellers, PGJD, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, RW.Bro Bryan R Ogden, Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. Sydney Jones, PGSD, and VW.Bro. David Alldred, PGJO, Deputy Provincial Grand Master

### The Provincial Grand Almoner Writes ....

Following his recent appointment as Provincial Grand Almoner, W.Bro. Ken Mayer, PPrGSW has sent the following letter to all Mark and RAM Lodge Almoners and Charity Stewards:

Dear Sir and Brother

Would you please ensure that the following information is communicated to all members of your Lodge.

As Provincial Almoner one of my main duties is to call to your attention a new initiative by the RW Provincial Grand Master in the form of a medical consultation scheme aimed at those who have been referred by their GP to a Consultant and who face a long waiting period for an NHS consultation, but would suffer financial hardship in meeting the cost of a private consultation themselves.

It is hoped that by using this scheme it will be possible to alleviate some of the pain and distress caused by the often very long waiting periods between seeing a G P and being able to see the specialist consultant. This we trust will speed up the whole process for those who face this long wait and are not in a suitable financial position to be able to meet the cost of a private consultation out of their own pocket.

I must point out that the fund will not be able to pay for treatment required after the initial consultation when it is envisaged that this would be carried out by the NHS, though in some cases it may be possible to apply to the Masonic Samaritan Fund for assistance.

If any of your members or their dependants are in the unfortunate position of being on a long waiting list and feel that I may be able to help, then they (or you on their behalf) should please contact me so that we can discuss the requirements together, all in the strictest of confidence.

I cannot promise that it will always be possible to help but will give every application the careful and considerate attention that I know the R W Provincial Grand Master will expect.

Yours sincerely and fraternally

WBro. Ken Mayer, PPrGSW Provincial Grand Almoner

Ken can be contacted by telephone on

01625 432322 or on e-mail kenmayer@btinternet.com

## **Next Edition of CMM**

The Editorial Team of The Cheshire Mark Mason are hoping that the next issue will include a series of articles on the many diverse charities and projects which are being supported by the Cheshire Provincial Mark Benevolent Fund.

If you or your lodge have supported a recent successful application for funds, we'd welcome a contribution from you. All we need is a few details of the project, what the funds are being used for / who is benefiting from our support and ideally a photograph - we'll do the rest.

If you'd like one of the Editorial Team to come along to a presentation, please ask. Our contact details are on the back page of this newsletter

# **Notable Dates for Your Diary**

Date	Event	Venue
17/08/08	Salmon Lunch	Neston
04/09/08	Stayley Mark 597 Centenary	Hyde
16/10/08	Tuscan 922 Lodge 75th	Sale
25/03/09	Wallasey 600 Centenary	Wallasey

Peter James Dowell

## **Grand Mark Lodge Appointments and Promotions**

Congratulations to the following brethren who have received appointments and promotions in Grand Mark Lodge:

I CICI James Dowen	w	Deputy Grand Sword Bearer
James Ian Munro	to	Grand Steward
David Alldred	to	Past Grand Junior Overseer
Keith William Wilford	to	Past Grand Senior Deacon
Peter John Lorraine Chapman	to	Past Grand Senior Deacon
Keith Phillip Roberts	to	Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies
Richard Cresswell Sutton	to	Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies
Ronald Allan Jones	to	Past Assistant Grand Sword Bearer
Rex Marchington Ford	to	Past Assistant Grand Standard Bearer
John Anthony Kenyon	to	Past Assistant Grand Standard Bearer

Denuty Grand Sword Rearer

We wish them all well with their new ranks.

## **Distribution of the Newsletter**

All Brethren who are members of Mark Lodges in the Province of Cheshire should receive a copy of this newsletter. Where Provincial Office have on record a Brother's email address, then that Brother will receive an electronic copy. Where no email address is available, a paper copy will be printed and posted to that Brother.

In order to ensure that Brethren receive a regular copy, it is very important that the Provincial Office have correct email and home addresses on file. If you do not receive a copy, the most likely cause is that your details held are not up to date. Please communicate correct details to the Provincial Grand Secretary.

The newsletter is also available to download on the Mark Provincial Website at http://www.cheshiremarkmasons.co.uk/ or is available via email from any member of the Editorial Team.

## **Contributions**

The *Cheshire Mark Mason* team are always grateful to receive information and or photographs relating to Mark events in the Province. Please contact any member of the Editorial team, details below.

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R.W.Bro. Bryan Russell Ogden

#### **DEPUTY PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER**

VW.Bro. David Alldred PGJO RAMGR

#### ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

W.Bro. David Robinson Sellers PGJD RAMGR

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Cheshire consists of 44 Lodges of Mark Master Masons and 23 Lodges of Royal Ark Mariners



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