

Notable Dates for Your Diary

Date	Event	Venue
14th December 2010	RAM Grand Lodge	London
14th January 2011	RAM Annual Assembly	Christleton
28th January 2011	Warren De Tabley 622 Centenary – Team Visit	Knutsford
11th March 2011	Cestrian 953 – Team Visit	Christleton
19th March 2011	Cheshire Mark Annual Meeting	Ellesmere Port

What's Happening in Your Lodge?

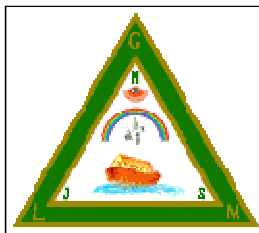
Is there something special happening in your Mark or RAM Lodge over the coming months or year ahead that you would like to share with the Province? Maybe a celebration, a social event, a donation to a favourite local charity, or a notable ceremony.

Please do let one of the Editorial Team know, and we will do our best to include it in the next edition, which we would like to contain a number of local lodge items. A photograph and a few words is all we need—we will do the rest.

The Team are also happy to attend events around the Province. Our contact details are below.

New RAM Ritual Book

The Grand Master's Royal Ark Council has recently approved a significant change to the RAM ritual, and a new book (dated 2010) has been produced. Details of the change are being circulated to RAM lodges in the Province. The new books are available to purchase from the usual sources.



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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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Mark Province of Cheshire

The Cheshire Mark Mason

Autumn Edition

November 2010

Grand Mark Benevolent Fund Supports Warrington Scanner Unit



Bryan Ogden cuts the ribbon to open the scanner, watched by Chris Kenyon (Hospital Governor), Peter Connelly (PGM West Lancashire Mark), Mark Caplan (Consultant Radiologist), Alan Massey (Chairman), and Donald Miller (Hospital Governor)

Following the pledge of £3 million made to the National Osteoporosis Society at the 150th Celebrations of Mark Grand Lodge in 2007, bids were sought from NHS Trusts around the country for scanning machines and associated equipment. The North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust was among the recipients and a new mobile scanner was recently opened, providing greatly improved access to scans for people in the Halton and Warrington areas.

The DEXA (Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry) scanner is used to detect osteoporosis accurately. It is a quick, painless procedure for measuring bone loss. It is most often used to diagnose osteoporosis, with bone density measurements of the lower back and hips being taken.

At the opening ceremony, our Provincial Grand Master, Bryan Ogden, said:

"The Mark Benevolent Fund made a donation to the National Osteoporosis Society to enable the society to fund a national scanning service that will provide over 30,000 bone density scans every year. The service will provide a local osteoporosis scanning provision which will operate in areas where NHS patients have to travel long distances or wait months for scans and hence greatly improve the quality of life for those who suffer from this condition.

We are particularly delighted that a substantial portion of this funding has been given to Halton and Warrington Hospitals and we sincerely hope that it will make a significant impact on the quality of life of the people throughout the area."

Dr Mark Caplan, consultant radiologist said: "In the past patients have had to travel in excess of 20 miles to other hospitals to be screened, often with long waiting lists. We are now able to screen them within seven days of referral which significantly improves their health through the early diagnosis of osteoporosis, targeting treatment most appropriately, reducing the risk of fractures and future fractures."



The commemorative plaque which the Unit bears

Grand Master's Lodge of Instruction Demonstration Team Visit Knutsford

THE Cheshire Installed Commanders Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners 1468 hosted a special group of visitors to their September meeting when the Grand Master's Lodge of Instruction Demonstration Team came to Knutsford.

W. Bro. Julian Greenwell took the Commanders chair, with WBro Bryan Humphries as Senior Warden, WBro Hansraj Gudka Junior Warden, WBro Charles Whorne Senior Deacon, WBro David Pascho (Preceptor) Junior Deacon and WBro Geoffrey Hawkins as Guardian. Together they delivered a top class demonstration of the Ceremony of Elevation.

The highlight of the evening came when WBros Pascho and Hawkins combined their ritual skills to deliver an excellent explanation of the Tracing Board to the 54 Brethren who attended the meeting, which was supported by our Provincial Grand Master RWBro Bryan Ogden, Deputy Provincial Grand Master VWBro David Alldred and Assistant Provincial Grand Master WBro David Sellers.

The team's work was highly praised by both the Worshipful Commander of the Lodge, Bro Richard Sutton, and the Provincial Grand Master, who thanked W. Bro. Pascho for bringing his colleagues to the Province.

The Provincial Grand Master said that he also wanted to congratulate the Installed Commanders Lodge for hosting the event as he believed that it showed that the Lodge was fulfilling the criteria laid down at its consecration in 2006, which was to further the Degree, its ritual and workings. He said that he was pleased to see that the Lodge was going from strength to strength, with four new Brethren proposed for membership at the meeting, commenting too that the membership of the Degree as a whole was holding up very well in Cheshire.

Addressing the social board, he added: "Everybody on the demonstration team worked very hard tonight and the explanation of the Tracing Board was a highlight. It was an absolute delight to hear it."

The Demonstration Team travelled to Knutsford at their own expense, however requested that if the Lodge saw fit they would be pleased if it made a contribution to charity to mark the evening. In consequence, a cheque for £200 for the Cheshire Provincial Mark Benevolent Fund was presented to the Provincial Grand Master, who thanked the Team and the Lodge membership for their generosity.



(l-r) W. Bro. Julian Greenwell, WBro Bryan Humphries, WBro Richard Sutton (Commander of Installed Commanders Lodge), VWBro David Alldred (Deputy PGM), RWBro Bryan Ogden (PGM), WBro David Sellers (Assistant PGM), WBro Hansraj Gudka, WBro Charles Whorne and WBro Geoffrey Hawkins.

Benevolent Lodge of Mark Masters Constituted Time Immemorial (formally No.67)

That much loved and sadly missed Brother, Mike Stratton, often argued that 'Ben TI', as it is affectionately called by its members, was the oldest Lodge in our Mark Province. Sadly that may never be proved, as the minute books of this old and distinguished Lodge are now missing.

The Lodge was formally Constituted on July 2nd, 1864; its Founders, as in the case of Fidelity No.31 having been advanced in the Travelling Mark Lodge. Despite the date being after the Constitution of both Joppa 11 and Fidelity 31, Mike Stratton suggested that all three Lodges (including Ben TI) were working along the lines of the Travelling Mark before their respective formal recognition. He also strongly debated his view that Ben TI was the oldest.

From the work of Armstrong, "A History of Freemasonry in Cheshire", we find that the Lodge had several prominent and leading lights; Bro's James Cookson, J Fred May, and H G Small to name but a few. Armstrong also records that at the time (1900) Ben TI was "one of the most successful Lodges in the Province".

Handfield-Jones as Grand Librarian in 1969, listed the names of the early Mark Lodges, with 15 being listed as having been warranted prior to 1858. Neither Joppa nor Fidelity are mentioned in the list. It should be noted that at the time, Lodges after No.7 in the roll, were only given uneven numbers; the even were to be allotted to those "old and Independent Lodges which later came to pay obedience". Ben TI was one of those Lodges.

Originally 67 on the roll, the Lodge was formally recognised with TI status on the 2nd of July 1964, when it achieved its Centenary.

The Provincial minutes of the time offer an insight to this remarkable achievement by Ben TI. In his address to the Brethren at the Town Hall Sale in 1964, RWBro Frederick John Lees, is recorded as saying: "One hundred years ago on the 2nd July 1864 Benevolent TI was consecrated, so that this year having met regularly for one hundred years, the Lodge celebrates its Centenary. I am told that these celebrations are to be held on the 29th of September, at Stockport, and I hope to be present on that occasion and join with the Brethren of the Lodge in their Celebrations".

The Provincial Grand Master spoke of the Lodge again in 1965 in the following terms; "In September last one of our Lodges, Benevolent TI, celebrated its hundredth year. It had been consecrated in 1864. It gave me great pleasure to attend the celebrations with my Officer and to present the Lodge with its centenary Warrant for the Most Worshipful the Grand Master, and also present the members of the Lodge with a centenary jewel. As an Honorary Member of the Lodge I also received a centenary Jewel which I greatly value".

Shown here are the few Jewels which remain showing the celebrations, in 1914 the Jubilee Jewel and in 1964 the Centenary Jewel.



Our thanks to W.Bro.D.J.Heathcote PPGMOv, Benevolent Lodge of MMM TI, for this article.

CPMBF Supports Children's Hospices

Over the last two years, the Cheshire Provincial Mark Benevolent Fund has taken the needs of the two local Children's Hospices very much to heart. During that time, the fund has made significant donations to both Claire House on the Wirral, and Francis House in South Manchester. To date the fund has given £19000 to Claire House and £10500 to Francis House - a total of £29,500.

The two hospices need to raise over £360,000 per month to continue to provide the present level of care to their patients. The efforts of Cheshire Mark Masons have therefore made a major impact on the tremendous work these two hospices undertake for our region.



Our PGM, Bryan Ogden, Alan Smith, and Doug Watts (Provincial Charity Steward) Pictured here presenting a cheque to Pam Daley (Area Fund Raiser for Francis House)

The Claire House Team holding a cheque from CPMBF:

Kirsty Wright (Wirral Fundraiser) Laura Breen (Cheshire Fundraiser) Chris Meaden (Appeals Team) Anne Maria Picanello (Volunteer Manager) Jane Collingwood (Volunteer Co-ordinator)

Electric Wheelchair provided by the CPMBF

This year, in addition to the usual disbursements, the CPMBF has provided an electric wheelchair to six year old Ben Cary of Davenham, severely disabled by Cerebral Palsy.

Our Provincial Grand Master, Bryan Ogden was hugely delighted to make the presentation directly on our behalf to Ben, who later careered around an "obstacle course" set up by Alan Smith in the Stanley Walker Suite at Cheshire View, enjoying himself hugely and entertaining everyone present. It quickly became apparent from the joy on his face that young Ben recognised that his chair will give him a measure of independence and freedom so far denied to him by his condition.

(Picture courtesy of Keith Parry)



Harrogate Weekend Details Announced



Following the very successful events held in previous years, our Provincial Grand Master RWBro Bryan Ogden, again invites you and your partner to join him and other Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Masons of the Province for a Gala Weekend for two nights commencing Friday 6th May 2011 at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate. As in previous years, we expect that there will be significant and early support. Rooms are limited and your early response therefore, would be highly advisable and appreciated.

The Cairn Hotel is 3 Star RAC and is located 5 minutes walk from the centre of Harrogate. Set in 4 acres of private gardens, the hotel has ample car parking space. Arrangements have been made to make 65 bedrooms available to us for the weekend, either double, twin or single with check in from 2pm on the Friday and departure on the Sunday morning.

The weekend will consist of an informal carvery meal at 7.30 pm on the Friday evening, followed by a full English breakfast on Saturday. Daytime is free to explore the town and surrounding attractions. In the evening there will be a six course Gala Dinner and Dance - Lounge suits, at 7.00 for 7.30 pm. Breakfast will be served on the Sunday morning prior to departure.

On the Saturday evening there will be a raffle, the proceeds of which will go to the Cheshire Provincial Mark Benevolent Fund. Prizes for the raffle will be gratefully received.

For those of you who are golf enthusiasts Ken Davies is organising a mixed golf event at one of the local courses on the Saturday morning. For tee off times and further information please contact Ken on 01606 832793 or daviestropicals@btconnect.com

There are splendid facilities in the town of Harrogate and an excellent shopping centre. Within easy reach of the hotel are Leeds, York, Knaresborough and Ripon. Other local attractions include Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal Water Gardens, Harewood House, Castle Howard, Beningbrough Hall, Markenfield Hall and Sutton Park, or maybe just enjoy afternoon tea at the renowned Betty's tea room.

The total cost of the weekend will be £140 per person. A non-returnable deposit of £50 per person is required at the time of booking. The balance is payable by 28th February 2011. It is anticipated that this will be a very popular event and bookings will be taken strictly in order of receipt.

Those of you wishing to make bookings should contact Bob McMillan, Oakbank Barn, Newton in Cartmel, Grange over Sands, Cumbria. LA11 6JP; on 015395 30034 or 0771 990 2289 or r.a.mcmillan@btinternet.com for a booking form

Further information can be obtained from any of the Events Committee members;

David Sellers on 0161 962 7609 or DAVIDSELLERS57@aol.com
Doug Watts on 01270 760236 or dougiewatts@elworth.wanadoo.co.uk
Bryan Mayoh on 0161 945 4680 or candbmayoh@btinternet.com
Bob McMillan on 015395 30034 or 0771 990 2289 or r.a.mcmillan@btinternet.com

Charity Begins at Home

Some of our readers may not know that the original Mark Province of Cheshire was in fact linked to North Wales and the original Province was known as the Province of Cheshire and North Wales. As the Mark Degree grew and the number of Lodges increased, it was decided to split the Province in two and so the separate Provinces of Cheshire and North Wales were born. A close bond has existed between the two ever since.

In 1868, the Mark Benevolent Fund came into existence on the suggestion of the Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Reverend George Raymond Portal who later became Canon Portal. Since that time, each Province has taken it in turn to host a festival to raise funds to enable our great order to dispense charity to the less fortunate. The last two festivals were held in the Mark Provinces of Cumberland and Westmorland and Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, raising the phenomenal amounts of £788,892 and £561,127 respectively

Since 1868 the fund has distributed over £20 million in grants. The most recent examples of which were £3 million to the National Osteoporosis Society, £1.4 million to Barts Cancer Hospital to fund a new radiotherapy suite, and £1.6 million to the RNLI for the now famous lifeboat 'Mark Master Mason'.

Every year the leaders of the Province of Cheshire, accompanied by their wives and a small band of followers, represent the Province and attend the climax of the event, the festival dinner, at which the results of their seven year fund raising efforts are announced. These dinners are attended by hundreds of Mark Masons from all over the Country and are in themselves wonderful fund raising events. At the last event, 711 Masons, mostly from neighbouring Provinces, dined.

Next year it is the turn of the Mark Province of North Wales to celebrate their achievement and £25,000 of our money has already been sent from Cheshire to assist our neighbour's efforts and so strengthen our Mark fraternal bond.

Our Provincial Grand Master is looking for us to further cement this unique relationship by turning out in strength to support the 143rd festival dinner to be held under the Chairmanship of RWBro T Gareth Williams, Provincial Grand Master, in Llandudno on Saturday 2nd July 2011 at Venue Cymru, Llandudno LL30 1BB. Tickets cost £50.00 per person and are available from the Provincial Grand Secretary WBro G. R. Bradshaw, Hillberry, 25 Maelgwyn Drive, Deganwy, Conwy LL31 9UY. When making application please advise them that you are a member of The Province of Cheshire so that we can all be seated together.

Doric Mark Lodge - New Year, New Start

Doric Mark Lodge no. 792 is about to start a new lease of life at Hyde. As reported in the last Newsletter, the Lodge, which had been faltering due to lack of numbers, had proposed switching to daytime meetings at the Tameside venue and their appeal to Mark Masons in the area to come and join them has had a positive effect.

Consequently, at Doric's final meeting at the Guildhall in Stockport in November, ten joining Brethren (including our Deputy PGM, David Alldred) will be welcomed, and the Bye-Laws will be amended allowing them to confirm the move to Hyde for future gatherings, and giving the Lodge a firm base to start afresh in the New Year. Also at the November meeting, a candidate is to be proposed, who will be advanced at the meeting following the Installation in January 2011.

Secretary Stephen Flood says: "The November meeting allows us to finalise all the arrangements for the move. We expect to be in good shape for the changeover."

New Members of the Editorial Team

As mentioned in the last issue, two new members have joined the Editorial Team of the Cheshire Mark Mason, and are already making significant contributions to the newsletter.

Bob McMillan is 52 and lives in the Lake District. He is married to Elaine, and they have three children, the youngest of whom Scott, was advanced into Benevolent Lodge of Mark Masters TI in February by his father.



Bob was initiated into The Lodge of Harmony 220, which meets in Garston Liverpool on 22 March 1989 and was installed into the chair of that Lodge on 23rd October 1996. He is currently a member of Six Craft Lodges and is Senior Warden of the Lodge of Concord in the Craft Province of Cheshire.

Bob joined Benevolent Lodge of Mark Masters TI on 27th April 1993 and was installed into the Chair on 25th November 2003, and again on 24th November 2009. He was elevated into the Royal Ark Mariners on 8th January 2001 and is currently Commander of Bentinck Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners No 726 in the Province of Cumberland and Westmorland.

He was appointed Provincial Grand Steward in the Craft Province of West Lancashire in May 2000 and promoted to the rank of PPrDGSuptWks. He was appointed to the acting rank of Provincial Grand Senior Deacon in the Mark Province of Cheshire in March 2009.

Bob is a member of many other Orders, however, he says that the Mark Degree and indeed the Royal Ark Mariner degree are his favourites. On finishing his year as acting Senior Deacon in Cheshire he asserts Mark is the friendliest of all the degrees that he belongs to and having visited far and wide he can honestly say that Cheshire is a wonderful Province in which to be a member.



John Forbes was Initiated into Freemasonry as a Lewis, aged 19, in Lodge Blantyre Kilwinning No.557 (Scottish Constitution) on September 9, 1965 and was Advanced into the Mark Degree a year later. He subsequently joined the Lodge of Integrity in Dukinfield in March 1981 and was the WM in 1990 and 2000.

He became a joining member of the Ashton District Lodge of Mark Master Masons TI in January 1986 and was Installed as WM of that Lodge in 1994. In 1995 he was Elevated into Hyde RAM No. 868, of which he was WCN in 2001. He is also a member of the Cheshire Installed Commanders Lodge No.1468 and is active in both the Royal Arch and the Order of the Secret Monitor.

A Freelance sports journalist, John was the first Press Officer appointed by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Cheshire, holding the post from 1999 to 2004.