

2012 Gala Weekend - A Great Success

THE fourth Provincial Gala Weekend proved another great success. The decision to move the event to the Lake District after three good years at Harrogate proved extremely popular with the biggest gathering yet at the event.

The new venue was the Hydro Hotel at Bowness on Windermere and it was completely taken over by the Mark Masons of Cheshire and their families and friends, with 167 in attendance.

They enjoyed the beautiful surroundings of the Lakes, many taking the boat trip to Ambleside and some just ambling around taking in the wonderful scenery.

An informal buffet meal set the tone on the Friday night with many old friendships being cemented and new ones formed. The highlight was a six-course gala dinner on the Saturday, followed by a disco, which went on into the wee small hours.

A super raffle was held in aid of the Cheshire Mark Benevolent Fund, with 58 prizes weighing down the table and there were one or two surprises amidst the usual bottles of alcohol and boxes of chocolates as Stephen Flood of Benevolent TI found out when he unwrapped a snorkelling outfit complete with flippers!

It was a proud David Sellers who announced that the raffle had made a magnificent £1,066 for the Fund. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master then handed a cheque for that amount over to the Provincial Grand Master Bryan Ogden, who thanked him and everyone in attendance for their generosity.

The PGM praised the organising committee, led by David Sellers and his wife, Maira, and Bob McMillan, for the tremendous work that they had put in to make the weekend such a success



David Sellers and his wife Maira



Bob McMillan and his wife Elaine sit back and enjoy the fun at the Gala Dinner.



The Provincial Grand Master and his wife Margaret take delight in the success of a Gala Weekend to remember in the Lake District



Austin and Gillian Bamber reflect the amicable atmosphere at the Gala Dinner

150th Anniversary Keystone Fund

When the original Keystone Fund was established on the 3rd June 1930, it was on the basis that it would only apply to the Mark degree. Such was the enthusiasm of other Orders being administered by Mark Masons' Hall that in 1933 it was extended initially to the Knights Templar and it was agreed that a special ribbon could be worn by "Keystone Preceptories". Eventually this arrangement was extended to all the other Orders. The primary purpose of the Fund was to help finance major capital projects to improve the fabric, facilities and quality of Mark Masons' Hall.

At the celebratory meeting of the 150th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons' held on Thursday 26th October 2006, the Grand Master; M.W.Bro., H.R.H. Prince Michael of Kent, announced the establishment of the 150th Anniversary Keystone Fund. The new 150th Anniversary Jewel was to compliment, not supplant the current Keystone Jewel which is worn with great pride by many Members of the Mark degree.

The 150th Anniversary Keystone Jewel is identical to the existing Keystone Jewel save that the ribbon is embellished with the addition of an enamelled 150th Anniversary button of the same design as the 150th Anniversary logo. Newly qualified Members, Lodges, Provinces, Districts and Inspectorates receive an entirely new Jewel of the prescribed design, whilst current holders of the original Keystone Jewel may retain their Jewel and add the 150th Anniversary button on the ribbon/collarette. Qualified Lodges, Provinces, Districts and Inspectorates are encouraged to display on their respective circulars, both of the honorifics, e.g. Keystone Lodge and 150th Anniversary Keystone Jewel.

The current levels of qualifying contribution are:	Individual Members:	£100.00
	Lodges:	£25.00 per subscribing Member
	Provinces:	£10.00 per subscribing Membership
	Districts & Inspectorates:	£5.00 per subscribing Membership

Members wear a small breast jewel suspended from a ribbon. Lodges, and Inspectorates have a larger jewel suspended from a collarette which is worn by the Master of the Lodge, Province, District or Inspectorate. The levels of contributions and the Jewels are the same for all Orders, the only difference being the colour of the ribbon/collarette from which the Jewel is suspended.

The Fund, as well as financing major capital projects and enhancing the value of the building, is also a long term, tangible commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Founding of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons'.

This Province is a very proud Keystone Province in that all our Mark Lodges currently possess the original one. The Province and nearly 50% of our Mark Lodges now also wear the 150th stud to their original collar which is a very fine achievement to date but one which our Provincial Grand Master hopes can be built upon in the coming year. He writes "It would be a wonderful accomplishment if all the Lodges of the Province could meet our objective of emulating our contribution to the original keystone appeal and also become fully paid up members of the 150th Keystone fund."

Grand Mark Lodge Annual Investiture

A large number of Cheshire Mark Masons again made the trip down to London this year for the annual investiture meeting of Grand Mark Lodge. We were all very pleased to see a large number of our colleagues appointed to, or promoted in, Mark Grand Rank.

At the beginning of the meeting our Provincial Grand Master was elected to serve on the Mark Executive Committee, which is responsible for the management of the degree. This also means he is now a member of the Grand Master's Royal Ark Council.

Congratulations are due to all of the following brethren: WBro's Geoffrey Alexander of St Hillary No 1081 and Thomas Broster Lewis of Earl of Chester 196, who received first appointments to PAGDC. WBro. Michael Anthony Whitlock of Birkenhead 1072 received PAGSwdB, WBro's. Brian William Mayoh of Stamford 148 and Michael John Shaw of Doric 792 received PGStdB and WBro. Robert Alexander McMillan of Benevolent TI received his first appointment to GStwd. Also, two further brethren of Cheshire Lodges received first appointment to the Rank of PAGDC through the Province of North Wales, namely WBro's. Michael Arthur Watkin and Gerald John Charles Edwards of Ashlar 1090. WBro. Bruce David Harry of West Cheshire 1497 was promoted to DGChap and WBro. Lesley Sydney Morgan of Ashton and District TI was promoted to PGJD. Finally, WBro. Cyril Acton of East Cheshire 1468 was promoted to the very high rank of PGJO, and now becomes a Very Worshipful Brother.

We should also offer our congratulations to the four Cheshire Brethren who received Royal Ark Mariner Grand Rank at the RAM Investiture on 13th December 2011; Robert John Ellershaw of Rivacre 1016, Rex Marchington Ford of De Tabley 396, William Edward Caren of Joppa 11 and Kenneth James Saxon of Altrincham 1024.

The investiture took quite some time with more than 400 Brethren being invested and in the absence of the Grand Master, The Pro Grand Master MWBro. Benjamin Addy addressed the assembled brethren, congratulating all those who had been invested.

During his address he made reference to the mention the year before about the age profile of the Leaders of the Degree which had led to the departure of his predecessor and intimated that there would be further announcements before the next investiture. We can only guess what these might be but let us hope that he is not alluding to his own position!

The banquet afterwards was held in the Grand Connaught Rooms on Great Queen Street, after which the Cheshire Brethren repaired to the Bedford Hotel to change and then enjoyed a welcome drink in each other's company for the rest of the evening. Later a small but dedicated bunch carried on to the Imperial eventually getting to bed at 3am. Later that morning after the 'optional' Breakfast most brethren made the short walk to Great Queen Street for the quarterly communication of UGLE and then took the train home.

The Grand Lodge Investiture experience is most definitely one to be recommended. Every Brother is welcome irrespective of Rank!

Hyde RAM 40th Anniversary

Hyde Royal Ark Mariners seemed to be taking their association with the Ark a bit too seriously as they celebrated the Lodge's 40th anniversary in April. It was their Installation meeting but it wasn't just the Wardens and Deacons that were going in two by two ... it was the cakes as well!

Graham Huyton, who had been installed as Commander for the current year, produced an excellent cake baked by his wife Eileen for the Brethren to enjoy at the social board, and it turned out to be double helpings as the Lodge Charity Steward, Alan Massey presented another mouth-watering culinary delight, prepared by his wife Irene.



50 Years for David Kinsey

David Kinsey's tremendous 50-year contribution to Mark Masonry in Cheshire was celebrated in style at Tarporley Lodge in April. Just a couple of months after the Provincial Meeting at Ellesmere Port, our PGM led almost all of his new team of officers to the celebrations, which were honoured by the presence of the Pro Grand Master, MWBro Benjamin Addy.



David Kinsey pictured with John Totty WM of Tarporley Lodge of MMMs, flanked by the Pro Grand Master and the rulers of the Mark Province of Cheshire.

A packed Lodge room listened intently as the PGM paid tribute to the man whose Masonic career started way back in 1958 when he was initiated into Avondale Lodge. Commenting on David's dedication to Mark Masonry, he commented: "Bro. David was advanced on the 27th November 1961 in Middlewich Lodge. Master of this Lodge on two occasions in 1972 and 1976. On the second occasion, and to David's great delight, he subsequently installed his old school teacher, Harold Wilkinson into the chair; as his successor."

He continued, "Bro. David's Mark career has been somewhat peripatetic in that he resigned from Middlewich Lodge and became a Founding member of this Lodge in 1979 and in which he enjoyed Mastership in 2009. He also became a Founding member of Sandbach Mark Lodge in 1984 from which he subsequently resigned when it became established.

David's career in the Mark has been recognised on numerous occasions, commencing with a first Provincial appointment of PrGJD in 1975 through many subsequent promotions to his current Very Worshipful rank of PGSOv.

David is also a member of the Royal Ark Mariner degree, being elevated in Ashlar Lodge of RAM Lodge in 1972. In the RAM, his career has been equally peripatetic. In 1973 he became a Founder member of Four Cardinal Virtues RAM No.793 and Worshipful Commander in 1978. In 1991 he joined Warren de Tabley RAM No.622 and finally became a founder member and primus Commander of Tarporley RAM in 2007. He received RAM Grand Rank in 1994.

The PGM concluded his address by saying, "My predecessor RWBro. Frederick John Lees was PGM on the day of Bro. David's Advancement which means that he has served six Provincial Grand Masters. I was once told that there are now very few characters in Mark masonry. In VWBro. David Kinsey we have one of the best known and highly respected ones. He is a man of firm opinion which he is not afraid to share and a man and a mason of strong principle. His support of the Mark, both the Order and its Charities, is exemplary as it is of the membership of his Lodges. He has been described to me as a well of information and an inspiration to any brother who would seek his advice. Who am I to disagree for I believe that he has always sought to contribute his utmost to the welfare of his Lodges and this wonderful Order; he has succeeded on all counts."

A Tale of Two Pinnies

David Smith found himself in the unusual position earlier this year of holding the rank of Provincial Grand Senior Deacon in Cheshire and West Yorkshire.

Working and living in Sheffield in 1997, he began his career in the Mark Degree in the Steel City by being advanced into Vulcan Lodge No.1191. Six years later, he crossed The Pennines, where he furthered his interest by becoming a joining member of Stayley Mark No.597.

In May 2006 he took the Chair of Stayley and eleven months later he also became Master of Vulcan under a dispensation that allowed him to occupy both Chairs for a short overlap period. West Yorkshire presented him with his first Provincial appointment in the Mark Degree in April of last year when he was invested as an acting Senior Deacon in that Province and he still held that rank when he attended Ellesmere Port in March this year to receive a similar appointment in the Cheshire Provincial team.

David still has business interests in Sheffield and remains an active member of Vulcan Lodge, of which he is now Secretary, an office that he also holds at Stayley Mark.



Notable Dates for Your Diary

Date	Event	Venue
10th January 2013	RAM Provincial Assembly	Christleton
5th February 2013	Cheshire Provincial Stewards Lodge (Team Visit)	Willaston
16th March 2013	Cheshire Provincial Mark Meeting	Ellesmere Port

Visit to Staffordshire Knot Lodge of Mark Master Masons No 541

On the 27th March 2012, the Worshipful Master, Brother Paul Rushton, and 15 members of the Four Cardinal Virtues Lodge of Mark Master Masons accompanied by our Provincial Grand Master, paid visit to the Staffordshire Knot lodge of MMM, meeting at the Masonic Hall Stafford. The PGM was also accompanied by his Senior Warden and Junior Warden as well as the Assistant PGM, the Provincial Secretary and the Provincial Deputy Grand DC.

The Provincial Grand Master for Staffordshire and Shropshire with his entire Provincial team were also in attendance for what proved to be a most enjoyable and entertaining evening. The WM, Brother Darryl Davies, of The Staffordshire Knot Lodge performed an advancement ceremony and the candidate was excellent and not at all overawed by the presence of so many dignitaries.

This visit reciprocated a visit to FCV in February 2002 and re-affirmed the relationship and friendship that exists between FCV No723 and Staffordshire Knot No541. This relationship started in 1919 when the brethren of 541 resolved to support a petition to found a Mark Lodge in Crewe and in 1920 held a ceremony of advancement for the founding members of the Four Cardinal Virtues Mark Lodge, in addition a large number of brethren from 541 attended the Consecration of FCV on Saturday 27th November 1920. Long may this relationship prosper.



WBro Stephen Waring PrGJW (Staffs & Shrops), WBro Colin Albrow PrGSW (Staffs & Shrops), WBro Ian Smith PGSD, Asst PGM (Staffs & Shrops), WBro Michael Heenan PGSD, Dep PGM (Staffs & Shrops), RWBro David Edwards PGM (Staffs & Shrops), Thomas Harris (Newly advanced brother), WBro Darryl Davies WM of Staffordshire Knot Lodge, RWBro Bryan Ogden, WBro Austin Bamber, WBro John Forbes PrGSW and WBro Ronald Davies PrGJW

(Photo taken by W Bro Mike Sharples)

W Bro Philip Broadhurst, PrGInspWks

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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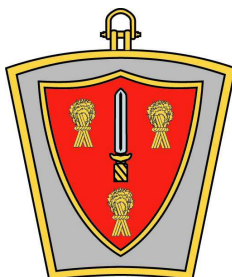
DEPUTY PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

WBro. David Robinson Sellers PGSD RAMGR

ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

WBro. Austin Westbury Bamber PDGSwdBr RAMGR

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Cheshire consists of 43 Lodges of Mark Master Masons and 24 Lodges of Royal Ark Mariners



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