

TO achieve 50 years in any society is an accomplishment and our congratulations go out to V. W. Bro. Thomas Brian Wood-Griffiths P.G.J.O. (known as Brian) who celebrated that special landmark at the November meeting of Claughton Mark Lodge 705 held at Clifton Road, Birkenhead.

The meeting, with 55 brethren present, was attended by the R. W. P.G.M., David Sellers and V. W. Bro Austin Bamber Dep. PG.M., along with a deputation of acting Provincial Officers.

On accepting the gavel of the lodge the Provincial Grand Master outlined the background of V. W. Bro. Brian's journey in Mark Masonry. He was advanced into Claughton on 20th November 1967 and was installed into the chair of the Lodge for the first time in 1975, a position he has held on three further occasions.

Brian received his first Provincial appointment in 1979 and was promoted to Grand Rank in 1992.

Notable Dates for Your Diary

Date	Event	Venue
21st May 2018	Masters' and Commanders' Dinner	Middlewich
6th June 2018	Grand Lodge Officers' Dinner	Christleton
12th June 2018	Grand Lodge (Investiture Meeting)	Freemasons' Hall, London
14th September 2018	Charity Reps' and Almoners' Dinner	Middlewich
10th January 2019	Cheshire Royal Ark Mariner Assembly	Christleton
16th March 2019	Cheshire Mark Provincial Meeting	Ellesmere Port

Contributions

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

MARK PROVINCE OF CHESHIRE

The Masonic Hall,
141 Chester Rd.,
Whitby,
Ellesmere Port,
Cheshire
CH65 6SD

Telephone: 01477 537399

E-mail: secretari-at@cheshiremarkmasons.co.uk

Web site: www.cheshiremarkmasons.org

PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

R. W. Bro. David Robinson Sellers

DEPUTY PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

V. W. Bro. Austin Westbury Bamber P.G.J.O..
R.A.M.G.R.

ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

W. Bro. Ronald Glyn Hewitt P.G.J.D. R.A.M.G.R.

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Cheshire consists of 41 Lodges of Mark Master Masons and 24 Lodges of Royal Ark Mariners



CMMM EDITORIAL TEAM

John Forbes 0161 330 7997
j.forbes6@yahoo.co.uk

Adrian Davies 0151 625 1438
adrian.davies3@btinternet.com

Bob McMillan 01539 530034
r.a.mcmillan@btinternet.com

Keith Wilford 01270 665974
knmwilford@btinternet.com



Mark Province of Cheshire

The Cheshire Mark Mason

Spring Edition April 2018

The centre of attention



THE occasion of the Provincial Meeting at Ellesmere Port Civic Hall proved ideal for Mark brethren to celebrate the achievements of the Mark Benevolent Fund when the local St John Ambulance team brought along the mobile treatment which was presented to them by the Fund last year. Our picture shows the leaders of the Province, (l-t-r) A.P.G.M. Glyn Hewitt, D.P.G.M. Austin Bamber and P.G.M. David Sellers flanked (left) by Advanced First Aider Graham Anderton and Chair of the Cheshire Priory Group Barrie Davies and (right) by Chester Unit Cadet Ben Hopkin and John Smith the Cheshire and Mersey Event Lead.

"Thanks for your generous support"

THE members of the Mark Province of Cheshire could take a minute or two on arrival at Ellesmere Port Civic Hall for this year's Provincial Meeting to appreciate one of the areas where the charitable contributions have gone.

The mobile treatment room presented to the local St John Ambulance team last year was on display on the forecourt of the hall, proudly showing the logo "Donated by the Mark Benevolent Fund for the Province of Cheshire" for all to see.

And our picture shows the Cheshire Provincial Mark Benevolent Fund Grants Co-ordinator, Alan Smith, was on hand to be given a guided tour of the interior of this impressive and vital addition to the St John fleet of vehicles by Matthew Bousfield, St John Ambulance National Cadet of the Year and fellow cadet Ben Hopkin.

Barrie Davies, Chair of the Cheshire County Priory Group commented: "For the last few years St John in Cheshire has



been split between Merseyside and Greater Manchester. We have now got back together as a separate county area and the vehicle, based at Winsford, will be put to good use in Cheshire and will also be available at big events in Wirral and the old Cheshire bits of Greater Manchester.

"The vehicle will be a symbol to help to improve the morale of the Cheshire volunteers

as they work more closely together.

"The MTC is a vehicle type much appreciated by our volunteers as it provides them with a bit of creature comfort at events in inclement weather as well as the important excellent and private facilities for the treatment of sick or injured.

"Many thanks to you and your colleagues for their generous support."

THE "Feast in the East" is moving to another new venue this year. Formerly held at Manchester Rugby Club, The East Salmon Lunch moved to The Guildhall at Stockport last year and now the 2018 renewal will be held at Oaklands Masonic Hall in Hyde.

The date for the lunch is Sunday, June 10, with tickets priced at £15 for lunch and a glass of wine, and the organisers expect this popular event will be even more attractive as it is being held at one of the premier venues in the Province and early booking is advised. The lunch will be between 12 and 2pm. Tickets and information are available from Keith Goulden (0161 449 9555, gouldek@ntlworld.com); Howard Waddell



(0161 612 5130); John Goldsmith (0161 456 5086) or Barry Goulden (0161 483 0449) and the organisers would be grateful for contributions for the raffle, which will be raising money for the Cheshire 2024 Festival.

The Orchard Suite at Ellesmere Port Masonic Hall will again be the venue for the Salmon Lunch in the West of the Province on Sunday, September 16, with a noon start, and tickets are £12 (children £6). Event chairman Graham Kyffin can be contacted by email at graham.kyffin@yahoo.com, and he would also be appreciative of prizes for their raffle, which will also be in aid of the 2024 Festival.

PGM'S address to our 12th RAM Assembly

"IT gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this Royal Ark Mariner Assembly at the start of another New Year. I trust you have all enjoyed a happy Christmas and I wish you and your families a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

"I thank you for your attendance this evening in such good numbers and I hope you are looking forward to returning to your masonic activities in this New Year particularly in the Royal Ark Mariner Degree.

"We meet today to review the past year, look forward to the coming year and support and congratulate those who are to receive Provincial rank.

Whilst this Assembly is held without the visitors we receive at our Mark meeting in March we do have the support of leaders of other degrees in the Province of Cheshire who are kind enough to give up their time to join us on this occasion, we are also very pleased to welcome our Past Provincial Grand Master in the Mark and RAM in Cheshire R. W. Bro. Bryan R. Ogden, Bryan it always a pleasure to have your support on this evening and I extend a warm welcome to you on behalf of us all.

"I am now pleased to introduce to you the leaders of those other orders who have joined us



this evening but in the interest of brevity I ask you to reserve your appreciation of them until I have named them all. Craft W. Bro. Adrian Davies APGM; Knights Templar Dr. Tony Mathie Provincial Grand Prior, W. Bro. Alan Pierce Provincial Sub Prior; Order of the Secret Monitor W. Bro. Tony Stringer Dept. Provincial Supreme Ruler; R. W. Bro. Bryan Ogden Provincial Grand Master Order of Athelston; R. W. Bro. Graham Kyffin Provincial Grand Master Royal Order of Scotland North Wales, brethren please welcome the leaders of other Orders.

"The Royal Ark Mariner Investiture meeting took place in London in December at Great Queen Street and was conducted by the Pro Grand Master M.W. Bro. Raymond Smith the first occasion on which he had acted at an Inves-

titure since his appointment in June.

"Though winter weather prevented some from attending it was a most enjoyable occasion where three Cheshire brethren received RAM Grand Rank, W. Bro. Michael Whitlock Birkenhead Lodge No.1072, W. Bro. Michael Shaw Hyde Lodge No.868, W. Bro. Clifford Jewell Wythenshawe Lodge No.922.

"They have all served their Lodges and this Province well and their promotion to Grand Rank is well deserved. We congratulate them on their pre-ferment.

"In a few moments I shall have the pleasure of Investing those who I have appointed to Provincial Grand Rank this year. I congratulate them all and offer them my thanks for the service they have given to the RAM degree in their lodges and in the Province of Cheshire.

"You are all experienced enough to know this award is not an invitation to rest on your laurels but an encouragement to even greater commitment in the years to come.

"Finally I thank you all once again for your attendance today and your continued commitment to this Royal Ark Mariner degree in Cheshire."

Mark Grand Rank honours are to be split

THERE are important changes being made to the honours system by Grand Mark Lodge. In the past first appointments and promotions were made together and all the brethren were invested at the June meeting of Grand Lodge. But it was announced in the quarterly communications in April that in future they would be split.

Brethren receiving a first appointment

and those being given promotions will still be announced at the same time but those brethren being raised to a higher rank will be invested at the September meeting. This will ease pressure on space inside Grand Lodge in June meeting, when the main temple fills quickly and many brethren have to watch proceedings on a television link to other rooms.

Provincial Team earn high praise for their hard work

ONCE again the brethren of the Mark Degree in Cheshire turned out in good numbers to support the Provincial Grand Master, R. W. Bro. David Sellers, at the Annual Meeting at Ellesmere Port Civic Hall in March.

The attendance of 259 included representatives from all of the Mark and R.A.M. Lodges in the Province, while the leaders of twelve orders in Cheshire were present, plus 43 distinguished guests from other provinces.

The P.G.M. opened the proceedings with a warm greeting to all, saying: "Brethren it is once more my pleasure to welcome you all to this our Provincial annual meeting here at Ellesmere Port Civic Hall. You have again attended in good numbers and I thank you for your enthusiasm in joining me again on this occasion.

"We have become used to excellent facilities here and I am sure you would wish me to express my thanks to the staff of this hall for the attention they give to us.

True spirit of friendship

"I have already introduced our many visitors from other Provinces who have supported us today we very much appreciate their friendship and support both at this our Annual Meeting and throughout the year.

"The spirit of friendship which exists within this province and across provinces is a defining feature of the Mark Degree and long may it continue to be so.

"I am pleased to have the support of our Past Provincial Grand Master R. W. Bro. Bryan Ogden and our Past Deputy P.G.M. David Alldred and Past Assistant P.G.M. Chris McDonald I thank them for their continued support for the Mark Degree in Cheshire.

"Once again the Provincial Team carried out four full team visits in the year to Wallasey, Dukinfield, and Joppa Mark Lodges and Ashlar Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Lodges. All these visits were very well supported by the acting officers of the year who were led very enthusiastically by W. Bro. Steven Simpson S.W. and W. Bro. Derek Walsh J.W.

"Each of these meetings was also well sup-

ported by a good number of Grand and Provincial Officers which made for a special evening for the lodges and all who attended.

"Besides these Team Visits it has been our pleasure to celebrate the notable anniversaries of 60 years membership of the Mark for V. W. Bro. Jim McKeeman in Wythenshawe Lodge one of our two daylight lodges and this was an experience for many who attended a daytime lodge for the first time. A 50th Anniversary was celebrated for V W Bro. Brian Wood Griffiths in Cloughton Mark Lodge and this was also well attended and celebrated in style by his many friends.

Congratulations to a grand set of Masons

"IT was not possible last year for me to announce the names of those who had been appointed or promoted in Grand Rank at the meeting of Grand Mark Lodge in June and it seems this will now always be the case due to the reorganization of timing of their publication from Mark Masons Hall.

"It is only right that we name the recipients of June last year at this meeting and offer them our congratulations as the whole Province.

"First Appointments were W. Bro. Harry Crook, W. Bro. Gary Horstman as Grand Stewards; W. Bro. Graham Monaghan and W. Bro. Peter Sandland as Past Ass. Grand D.C's and W. Bro. Brian Williams as Past Grand Standard Br.

"V. W. Bro. Rev. Bruce Harry was reappointed to the office of Grand Chaplain and the promotions were led by V. W. Bro. Austin Bamber to P.G.J.O.; W. Bro. David Bradbury, W. Bro. Paul Crudge, W. Bro. Brian Mayoh, W. Bro. Geoff Roberts and W. Bro. Nicholas Wild, all of whom received the rank of P.G.J.D.

"We offer them our congratulations and hope they are enjoying their new ranks.

Working party set up to tackle falling numbers

"IT is of some regret that I have to announce the loss of forty Mark memberships in the year to the end of August 2017 but this is explained in part by the 19 members deaths who had 31 memberships between them.

An aging membership makes this inevitable but it does mean we have to work all the harder to recruit new members. This is a problem which affects all Provinces and to this end the Grand Secretary has set a working party to look into best practice in this area.

The working party has asked all P.G.M.'s to submit ideas and indicate what is done in each Province. I was able to furnish the group with a copy of our Friendship Pack and feed back some idea of what we have found most useful.

It is with sadness that I have to announce that Haven Lodge No.1543 surrendered their warrant due to falling membership last month but there is a strong hope that the remaining members will join other Mark lodges in the Province.

Please do not delay in asking for advice and help if you suspect your lodge may be failing, the Leaders and Secretariat are happy to advise and assist you in organizing a Friendship meeting.

The finances of the Province remain very healthy and I thank the treasurer and the Provincial secretary and his team for the way they manage our affairs and there is to be no increase in Provincial fees this year.

Retiring after many years of service to this Province is W. Bro. Barry Travers who has held the roll of Provincial Grand Registrar with distinction I thank him for his work and commitment in that office.

I will shortly appoint W Bro. Keith Gray who has been a

member of the secretariat to the role of Provincial Grand Registrar.

He will be responsible for all membership record keeping thus reducing the load which falls on our Provincial Secretary.



IN the days when they successfully led the Cheshire Mark Province, Bryan Ogden (above left), as R. W. Provincial Grand Master, and V. W. David Alldred (above right) as his Deputy P. G. M., made a very good team. and they bonded beautifully again at the Mark Provincial meeting at Ellesmere Port in March when the event ran into musical mishap.

The organising committee were greeted on their arrival at the Civic Hall with the news that the Provincial Organist David Mairs would be unable to attend the meeting because his house was flooded and they were left with the prospect of an assembly lacking the pomp that music provides.

However, the two former leaders, both of whom are organists immediately came up with a plan that saved the day.

David volunteered to exchange his place with the hierarchy on the stage for the organist's stool and the pair dashed off to Bryan's home in Mickle Trafford near Chester to pick up the music.

The result was just a few minutes delay to the start of the proceedings, with David proving a more than capable substitute as he delivered the required harmony to the event.

Coffers swell as Bob slims

THE Cheshire MBF 2024 Festival fund raising effort has now passed the £168,000 mark, however we must not be complacent as this actually means that the flow of incoming funds has slowed considerably since our dinner in October 2017.

This is of course understandable as funds which lodges had



and the initial burst of interest from the brethren has subsided slightly in the run up to Christmas when minds are quite rightly on family and other things.

Brethren please consider either regular giving or one off donations to the MBF in London using the forms available on the Website under Festival Documents, the earlier you make your commitment the more the fund will make.

Bob McMillan, our festival chairman, has been making donations to the MBF since 2008 and was presented with the new Diamond honorific (pictured above) by the Provincial Grand Master at Ellesmere Port, he has not achieved this mark overnight and similarly we will not achieve the total the Province and the fund deserves if we leave it to the last minute.

Bob reports his weigh in on Wednesday 21st March he had lost the remarkable sum of 3st 7lbs, or for those of you paying at £1.00 per lb 49 lbs, he will reach his stated target by losing just one more stone. Bob has received donations of £211.00 on line £532.50 offline and has been pledged a further £494.00 to be paid at the end date in September a grand total of £1,237.50.

Please keep supporting his efforts either online at <http://mydonate.bt.com/events/bigbob/450106> or by downloading the form from the website under Festival Documents, please fill it in and send it to R A McMillan, Oakbank Barn, Newton in Cartmel, Grange over Sands, Cumbria, LA11 6JP. Please make cheques payable to the CPMBF. The money will go to the Festival.

John Cavanagh's walk around the entire route of the Berlin Wall is approaching the starting line and he is looking for sponsorship from Mark and RAM Lodges

Please ask your Treasurer or Charity Steward to send a Cheque made payable to The MBF and endorsed on the back Cheshire 2024 either to John Cavanagh at 15 Wolverton Drive, The "Villas", Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 2GD or Alternatively to The Provincial Grand Charity Steward Nick Wild at 31 Fairfield Ave, Bollington, Macclesfield, SK10 5LZ. Please enclose a compliment slip telling the recipient that it is for the Berlin Wall Walk.

Daytime "sailings" could boost Arks

"OF some concern must be our fall in membership of the RAM degree during this year, after a number of years of slow growth.

"The number of brethren called to higher service has been significant and we mourn their loss, but we are also sad that the number of those who have resigned from the degree this year has risen to 37.

"They are a great loss to our Order and it is an area I ask all lodges to look at and attempt to address brethren let us take care of our fellows and assist in whatever way we can to keep them in the safe haven of the Ark.

"I know that as many members get older and less able to drive at night they sometimes feel that they should resign from their lodge.

"The Mark Degree in Cheshire has been able to assist in helping some of these members to remain in the order by moving Wythenshawe Lodge and The Doric Lodge to daylight working with one at each end of the Province.

"It may be that there are sufficient members to whom this would appeal in this RAM Degree and by this means be saved from giving up the order.

"I would be pleased to see the idea of a daylight RAM Lodge progress if sufficient members would be interested in such a venture and it may help those who are unable to continue with evening meetings.

Rocking and joking round Cheshire

OUR new Senior Warden, Graeme Sambrook, is a man of the Wirral, having lived in the area all of his life.

He married his wife Jane 32 years ago on the day of the Live Aid concert, so perhaps he'll rock the Province! The couple have a boy and a girl.

Graeme trained as an instrument technician in the 70's, switching to teaching a decade later and has spent a rewarding and demanding 30-year career working in primary schools.

His introduction into Freemasonry came in October 1988 when he was initiated into Cloughton Lodge, which subsequently closed, and he's now a member of Buckingham & Chandos Lodge No.2667, which meets in Birkenhead.

He is a member of St Hilary Mark Lodge of MMM No.1081, where he recently stood down from a nine-year stint as secretary to go back into progressive office as Senior Warden ... so there could be yet another chair awaiting him next year!

This year is definitely going to be one he will remember for a long time as, not only has he become the Senior Warden of the Mark Provincial team, but he is the Worshipful Master elect of the Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge of MMM No.1825 and will be installed at their May meeting.

He is also a Past Commander of the City of Chester RAM. No.953 and the holder of RAM Provincial Grand Rank and is active in the Royal Arch and Rose Croix.

Away from Freemasonry Graeme enjoys a number of hobbies – "including reading, going to the gym, cycling and



GRAEME SAMBROOK



STEVE FLOOD

hill walking, which he says "sounds better than rambling-, something that I have also been accused of!"

There is no denying his delight at his appointment, saying: "Becoming the Senior Warden of this friendly degree is the pinnacle of my Masonic career and I am very much looking forward to my year in office."

OUR new Junior Warden, Steve Flood, is something of the joker in the Cheshire pack. Having initiated into Freemasonry in the Lodge of St George in Stockport in May 1999 on family advice, he commented: "I joined Freemasonry after my brother convinced me I'd get a good meal once a month ... I think I was conned!"

On the closure of the Lodge of St George, Steve retained his connection with Stockport by

joining Meridian Lodge No.5060.

Born in Stockport in 1956, he was one of a family of five with two sisters and two brothers, both of whom became Freemasons, and they lived with their parents in a council house in Heaton Chapel. He married his wife Sue in 1976 and they have a son Christopher who delights in the nickname of "the weather warning," as he is in the army and has holds the rank of Major.

Steve was exalted into the Royal Arch in 2001 and he took his first steps in Mark Masonry two years later, becoming a member of Doric Lodge No.792. He was invested as the Master Overseer at his second meeting and went on to become the Worshipful Master in 2008 and its secretary a year later.

The lodge ran into numerical difficulties, however, and he was one of the driving forces behind moving it from Stockport to Hyde and relaunching it as a daylight lodge, despite the fact that it meant he had to resign because his job with Manchester City Council as a Parks Manager meant that he would be unable to attend.

Steve then became a member of Ben Tl, Staley Mark No.597 and East Cheshire No.1468 and is a member of Cornwall Legh RAM No.839 in which he is currently the Junior Deacon.

He has taken over organisation of the Mark Weekend Away with his usual enthusiasm and is working hard within the Cheshire Festival team and, as always, I leave the last words to him – "If you would like a Festival tie, token, cufflinks or postcards, I'm your man." Don't say you haven't been warned.