

Notable Dates for Your Diary

Date Event	Venue	
16th November 2019	Hawaiian Night	Middlewich
18th October 2019	Neston RAM No.1445 — team visit	Neston
20th November 2019	Ken Thompson 50th Earl of Chester No.196	Christleton
9th January 2020	RAM Assembly	Christleton
7th March 2020	Burns Supper	Christleton
16th March 2020	Claughton Mark No.705 Centenary	Birkenhead
21st March 2020	Cheshire Mark Provincial Meeting	Ellesmere Port
17th—19th April, 2020	Mark weekend away	Cumbria Grand Hotel, Grange-over-Sands
23rd April 2020	Bernard Rourke 60th Installed Commanders RAM No1468	Hyde

YOUR EDITOR NEEDS YOU!

THE Cheshire Mark Newsletter depends on the membership for information, stories and pictures about what is happening within the various areas of the Province. I have been editing the Newsletter for six years and am grateful to the editorial team that supported me during that time. However, some have had to leave because of other commitments, while others have felt the time was right to step down, leaving us short-handed.

I would, therefore be grateful to any brethren from the Wirral, mid Cheshire, Sale and Stockport who could step up to join the team and ensure that the publication is as broad as we can make it, featuring news from way out west to back in the east and all places in between.

With just two editions a year it won't take up a lot of your time and your assistance would be most welcome. Anyone interested contact me by phone or email, details below.

MARK PROVINCE OF CHESHIRE

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

Telephone: 01477 537399

E-mail:

secretariat@cheshiremarkmasons.co.uk

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

V. W. Bro. Ronald Glyn Hewitt P.G.J.O. 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 or 07973 208360

j.forbes6@yahoo.co.uk

Bob McMillan 01539 530034

r.a.mcmillan@btinternet.com

Keith Wilford 01270 665974

knmwilford@btinternet.com



Mark Province of Cheshire

The Cheshire Mark Mason

Autumn Edition

October 2019

CONGRATULATIONS!



M. W. Bro. Ben Addy P.Pro.G.M., Bro. Michael Baxter Worshipful Master of Hyde Mark Lodge, R. W. Bro. David Sellers P.G.M. and R. W. Bro. Albert Spencer at the meeting which celebrated Albert's 50 years in Mark Masonry—happy birthdays on page two

PARTY TIME FOR BIRTHDAY BOYS

RECENT weeks have been party time for brethren in the Province of Cheshire with three much-valued Mark Masons celebrating very special birthdays.

Leading the way was Bernard Rourke, who was the celebrant at Stockport when Benevolent TI hosted the 60th anniversary of his advancement into the Degree.

I doubt there are many in Freemasonry who can boast that they started their working life in the saddle racing against the legend that is 11-time champion jockey Lester Piggott, but Bernard Rourke is such a man and a legend in his own right having completed six decades of service to the Mark Degree.

When he left school aged 15, he combined the life of an apprentice jockey and part time butcher, learning the meat trade by spending his Saturdays working in the local abattoir, a skill which was to stand him in good stead when he realised that, having finished behind the great Piggott in his first race, he was never likely to catch him!

After National Service, he obtained a Masters Degree in Meat Inspection, the youngest to hold that qualification at that time, and became a Member of the Institute of Meat.

He was initiated into Masonry in 1959 in the Edinburgh Defence Badge Lodge by his father, alongside two of his brothers, Andrew and Stanley, and was advanced into the Mark Degree in the same year, in the Edinburgh Defence Band Royal Arch Chapter No 278.

He was also elevated into the Royal Ark Mariner Degree in the December of 1959.

Bernard moved to Stockport in 1971, starting work as an assistant production manager at former Manchester United Chairman Louis Edwards' meat factory in Manchester and three years later opened his own butcher's shop on Great Moor.

He became a member of BEN TI in 1982 and was Master in 1986/88 and again in 2008/2009, when he celebrated his 50th anniversary in Mark Masonry, while he also joined East Cheshire Lodge No.1468 in 2013.

A tireless worker for charity, he was honoured by the Province with the rank of ProvGSD in 1990 and currently holds the rank of PProvGSW.

The Provincial Grand Master recognised Bernard's contribution to the degree and presented him with certificates from Grand

Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Scotland, adding a gold-plated Mark token to the list, while Lodge members handed over a bottle of malt whisky at the social board.

Albert flies in to mark a fine half-century

ALBERT SPENCER flew into the country just hours ahead of his 50th celebration at Hyde Mark Lodge No.868 at Oaklands Masonic Hall.

He became a member of the Lodge in April 1969, but within a couple of months he was on his way to a new life in South Africa to start a division of the industrial gas company Air Products and remains a resident there to this day.

However, he's very much a local lad and has never forgotten his roots, visiting brethren and friends in the Hyde area whenever possible and always trying to combine a visit with a Lodge meeting.

One of his favourite sayings is: "If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing right," and he certainly lived up to that in The Transvaal, joining United Mark Lodge and going on to help the founding others and eventually rising to the rank of District Grand Master with the rank of Right Worshipful Brother.

There were 43 in attendance to see Albert presented with his Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge certificates and a gold-plated Mark token by RW Bro. David Sellers, while the Lodge marked the occasion with a set of engraved glass tankards.

Hobbs hits 50

ANOTHER Cheshire Mark Mason who passed a major milestone was Derek Hobbs. Initiated into Conway Lodge No.4881 in 1963, he was Advanced into Egerton Lodge of Mark Master Masons No.165 on the 19th of September, 1969 and went on to become its Worshipful Master in 1977. His work within the lodge was recognised by the Province and he holds the rank of PProvGD. A former member of the Mersey Tunnel Police, he retired with the rank of Inspector. Unfortunately he was unable to attend the lodge to celebrate his 50th, but he will be receiving a private visit at his home from one of the leaders to present him with his certificate.

A Grand return for big weekend

THE Mark Weekend Away has become a highly popular regular feature of the Cheshire calendar and last year's visit to Grange over Sands proved a great success.

The Cumbria Grand Hotel (pictured right) in the Lake District National Park was a big hit with the visiting Mark Masons and their families and friends. So much so that we will be returning to the venue for the 2020 getaway.

Organiser Steve Flood says: "It proved to be an excellent choice of venue with everyone expressing great satisfaction with the hotel, location, food and entertainment. In fact it was so successful that the hotel has offered exclusivity for next year if we want it."

The weekend will start on Friday, April 17 and for the two night stay, including a buffet dinner of the first night and a gala dinner on the Saturday and breakfast on the Saturday and Sunday mornings, the cost is just £167.50 per person.

For those, however, who want to extend their stay a deal has been negotiated with the hotel management of £212.50 with an extra night's B & B, or £252.50 for a four-night break.

The hotel boasts an outdoor garden area, putting green, tennis courts, children's play area and a woodland fitness walk, while those who prefer their sports indoors you can choose from a full size snooker table, table tennis and a dartboard, while free wifi is also available.

Overlooking Morecambe Bay and only a short drive from Lake Windermere, there is no



shortage of local amenities and places of interest for visitors to explore.

For the more adventurous, there is the Brockhole Visitor Centre, featuring the Brave The Cave attraction where completing the course will earn you earn a badge stating you have done just that, but, beware, it's not one for the claustrophobic or those with a waistline exceeding 40 inches, which should rule out one or two of the brethren who attend too many social boards, while there are guided walks to the high fell summits.

However, you could limit your exercise to something a bit less strenuous by joining one of the rambling groups.

There are plenty of opportunities for those who like to take to the water, with boat hire available on the lake as

well as boat trips, plus, swimming and fishing, while local bike hire caters for those who enjoy a leisurely cycle in the countryside.

Some people, of course, just enjoy a nice drive out to take in the scenery and do a bit of shopping in the delightful local towns which offer something a bit different and there are few finer places in the country than the Lake District for that.

It's anticipated that the demand for places will be very high again for the Weekend Away and all those who want to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to enjoy some fun in a very relaxed atmosphere at a particularly attractive price, make sure you get your booking forms back to the organisers as early as you can

SHOP SUCCESS MEANS IT'S TIME TO POP UP AGAIN

THE Pop-up Shop set up in Ellesmere Port in June was such a success that it is popping up again in October. The brainchild of Gillian Bamber, pictured below, wife of DPGM Austin, raised a total of £1171.20 towards the Cheshire Mark 2024 Festival by selling just about everything that wasn't nailed down and the team will return to 29 Seaview Rd., Liscard, Wallasey from the afternoon of Thursday, October 24 until the morning of Thursday, October 31. "The June event was a sterling effort by

Mark Festival 2024 merchandise is now available on line



Front and back view of bespoke Mark Penny



Masonic Tie with Matching Pin Badges & Cufflinks



GO to the Links page on the Mark Cheshire Website <http://www.cheshiremarkmasons.co.uk> and you will see Festival logo, to access the site click on the image and it will take you to the Merchandise page where you can purchase the items

Commented Austin, "and I must particularly mention my wife Gill, who worked every day including the Sunday, Edna Hill, who worked five days and the other ladies, wives and partners of Mark Masons - Ann Balgobin, Debra Conroy, Lillian Dearden, Fran Fynn, Sue Hind, Lynn Lloyd & last but by no means least Janet Waddell.

"There were Mark Masons who also generously gave of their time, Kishore Balgobin, Sam Conroy, Harry Fynn, Mike G Jones, Graham Kyffin, Colin Lewis, Geoff Lloyd, Malcolm Orr, Graham Sambrook, Paul Saunders, Howard Waddell, Derek Walsh & Bill Wylie, while another brother, a serving policeman, Julian Hill, who is not yet a Mark Mason, helped out on his day off.

"It encouraged us to open up again in October and we'd like to hear from anyone with bits of bric-a-brac or the likes they could contribute, and, also, of course, those who can help out. We have to get everything set out for opening on the 24th and, on the 31st, we have to clear the shop before somebody from the Council inspects the premises & we hand back the keys."



Put best foot forward

By Bob McMillan

I SUPPOSE the big question is why do we have festivals? Well let's explore those reasons.

As Masons, and particularly as Mark Master Masons, we are people who at our core believe in the bonds of our community. We are people who care, not only for ourselves but also for the communities we live in. We are the type of people who want to be productive members of society for our friends and neighbours, to improve our communities rather than be a draw on our community resources.

Our history shows we have always supported those groups that have become the safety net of our communities, supporting those less fortunate or less able to help themselves.

One of our earliest affiliations was and still is with the Royal Lifeboat Institution. In 1871 we financed the deployment "the Freemason" Life Boat in North Berwick and as recently as 2009 we donated £1.6 million to buy and deploy the "Mark Mason" Life Boat on the Pembrokeshire Coast.

The MBF has also supported Many Cheshire based Community safeguarding projects, such as to the three Cheshire Hospitals which have benefitted from the Mark Benevolent Fund targeting resources at helping in reducing Prostate Cancer – North Cheshire Hospital with £44,607; £107,000 for an ultrasound scanner to be installed in the Clatterbridge Hospital; £75,000 to facilitate the installation of a Voice Activated Robotic Arm to assist in urological surgery at the Leighton Hospital, Crewe.

Put with these, Donations to the "Hope for Tomorrow" project which deploys mobile chemotherapy units in more convenient and accessible locations to enable ease of treatment and screening for cancer; the "Blood Bikes" and the purchase 52 St John Ambulances all fully equipped with the most up to date life saving equipment. Which have been set up throughout the UK at a cost of £3.3m.

By looking at these statistics we can begin to see why as Mark Master Masons we are so very proud of our traditions, especially when these

traditions empower us to support our communities in time of need.

Mark Master Masons are determined to uphold these traditions and emulate our forefathers by continuing to enhance those who give, and support those who need, assistance at the time of that need.

This is why I believe we have Festivals and is why we actually enjoy thinking of ways to torture ourselves so that we can relieve the sufferings of others. So two and a half years ago the Province of Cheshire accepted the challenge of upholding the proud tradition of the fraternity and rolled out the Cheshire Festival 2024.

We now need to put our best foot forward and come up with ideas to boost funds for the Mark Benevolent Fund, such as "Fat Bob Slim" which raised well over £2,000, and John Cavanagh

walking the Berlin Wall raising in excess of £2,000; Mike & Diane Jones along with Howard Waddell organised an Elton John Tribute Night raising over £700, plus Austin & Gill Bamber's Pop-Up-Shop that raised £1,181

All this has given us a fantastic start, with David Sellers RWPGM able to announce at the Almoners & Charity Stewards Dinner that we have raised £271,300 with a BIG thank you to you all. But Brethren we have only just begun; there is still a lot of work to be done. After such an impressive start we need to start building momentum.

We need ideas on how to raise money for the benefit of our communities, big or small. Can your Lodge hold a fund raiser? Can your hall host an event bringing together Mark and RAM degrees for a fun night out? What do you think? If you have any ideas that you think might work, then let us know (floodno4@yahoo.com).

If you or your Lodge would like to receive a Cheshire Festival 2024 presentation to better understand what we are doing and why, send your request to the festival team via the above email address. Thank you for your time.

Date for your diary— Hawaiian Night at Middlewich Masonic Hall on 16th November, 2019.

Burns Night at Christleton on 7th March 2020



BIG APPETITE FOR THE LUNCHES

THE Salmon Lunches, which have combined fun Sunday gatherings with fund-raising for the charities for many years now, proved just as fashionable as ever in 2019.

West and East the families and friends of Cheshire Mark Masons turned out in good numbers to support the 2024 Festival and the Province is grateful for their continued backing.

The Glenwood Suite at Oaklands Hall in Hyde was the chosen venue in the East for the second year running and the success of the June event at this location has organiser Keith Goulden and his team forming ambitious plans for the 2020 renewal. The capacity of the Oaklands Suite has recently been expanded to cater for 160 diners and that option has the team contemplating a major push in the New Year to take it up.



Keith says: "We've made a couple of venue moves in recent years, but Hyde is proving an excellent spot for the Lunch. They look after us so well and the food is first class.

"The Glenwood Suite caters for 120 and we had 104 there this year, which allowed for a little bit more comfort. However, we would like to think that we could attract even more support with a move to the recently improved Oaklands Suite.

"We raised £1,000 for the 2024 Festival at the lunch for which we are grateful to everyone who attended and supported the raffle, but obviously a higher attendance would give us the opportunity to increase that. The date for next year's lunch is June 14."

Keith did stress to the editor that June 14 was his birthday, but the response from "on high" was, "If he thinks I'm buying him beer all day, he better think again!"



And it was a similar story over in the West of the Province in September at Ellesmere Port where 85 feasted and made a significant contribution to the race to boost the funds of the Cheshire 2024 Festival.

The picture above shows Kevin Atherton and Provincial Grand Master David Sellers at the event (with Graham Kyffin in the background) as Kevin handed over a cheque for the Festival for £1,800, raised from the Masters & Commanders and Charity Stewards & Almoners dinners.

Graham says: "Jen & Mark Gill the caterers put a wonderful spread on for us as always and everyone was suitably provided for with a choice of chicken, salmon and rice, spring rolls, ham, new potatoes, and a wide variety of sandwiches, followed by a selection of sweets.

"The atmosphere was extremely happy and jovial and everyone present was very pleased with the meal and were very generous when buying both raffle tickets and Irish bingo tickets.

"The raffle table was very well stocked thanks to the generous support of the members, also we received substantial support in the form of donations from brethren who could not attend the event and even some from who did, and we are extremely grateful to them and, of course, everyone else who backed us.

"The result was that we were absolutely delighted to be able to present the Provincial Grand Master with £1,200 to go towards the Festival. We will be holding the event again in September 2020.

CHARITY REMAINS AT TOP OF THE MENU

By Mark Keyworth

THE Charity Stewards and Almoners Annual Dinner at Middlewich brought together over 71 members from across Cheshire.

The evening allowed the attendees to discuss various charity opportunities and the progress that Mark Masons have made in this area over the last twelve months.

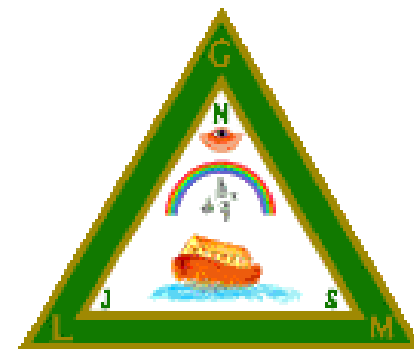
The RW Provincial Grand Master David Sellers was accompanied by the APMG VW Bro Glyn Hewitt and welcomed all, encouraging them to take back to the Lodges the message around regular giving and supporting the local events. He mentioned that Almoners should continue to keep in touch with members who are ill and to suggest that other Lodge members support this where feasible.

The PGM thanked all present, reporting the raffle raised the sum of £765.

Provincial Grand Charity Steward Nick Wilde provided details on how we can back the cause by 'one-off giving', 'regular donations', support of events and the offer of assistance of time. He iterated the advantage of the Gift Aid as it raised the amount by 25%, while Nick Hampson talked about the 1000+ club and hoped all Mark Lodges and RAM would support the initiative.



The Provincial leaders and W. Bros. Alan Smith and Colin Hambleton oversaw the official handover of the new minibus to the Stockport young carers, the vehicle, which now proudly sports the Provincial logo.



THE Royal Ark Mariner Degree continues to prosper and there are some important dates coming up for members in the coming months.

The R.W.P.G.M David Sellers introduced the Provincial Team Visit to the degree last year, promising at least one annually and there will be just such an occasion at Neston RAM No.1445 later this month. Acting Provincial Officers will be making their way to Bushell Road On Friday, October 17 and a good attendance is in prospect.

Tuesday December 10 is the date of the RAM Annual Assembly at Freemason's Hall in London, a special day when recipients of Grand Rank are invested and we wish the Cheshire brethren travelling south all the very best.

The most important date of the RAM Calendar locally, however, is the Annual Assembly.

Christleton, will, once again, play host for the gathering on January 9, 2020.

It's always one of the most pleasurable meetings, without too much formality, when the Provincial Grand Master invests those brethren rewarded with promotions to Provincial Grand Rank, and it is followed by a first class social board that is held in the true spirit of Mark Masonry.

On Thursday, April 23 the Cheshire Installed Commanders Lodge No.1468 will be welcoming the Provincial Team for a very special occasion.

Bernard Rourke, who celebrated 60 years in Mark Masonry in September (see story on page 2) will mark the same birthday in the Royal Ark Mariner Degree.

The Lodge, which meets twice a year and is open to all Past Commanders, is a peripatetic lodge, which holds its Installation meeting in Sandbach and takes to the road for its other gathering, which, on this occasion, will be Hyde.