

Notable Dates for Your Diary

Date Event	Venue
21st September 2020	Commemoration RAM No. 964 Centenary Macclesfield
14th December 2020	Four Cardinal Virtues Lodge of MMM No.723 Centenary Willaston, Nantwich

Cheshire Mark's new face

CHESHIRE Mark Masonry has launched itself into the world of social media. The Province has appointed W. Bro. Peter Langley the External Relations Officer and he already has a page up and running on Facebook.

The page can be reached by putting Cheshire Mark Masons into the search box on Facebook, which will bring up the current standing and news.

Assistant Provincial Grand Master Bob McMillan says: "We now need our Mark brethren to go online, take a look round, and "like" it to get it established with our members and the general public.

"I'm very impressed with the work that Peter has done thus far and would encourage anyone in the Province, who has information of interest to send it to him at masonic@independentregeneration.com for inclusion on the page."

Currently a member of Mersey Mark No. 824, which will be handing in its warrant when Freemasonry kick starts again later in the year (see page two), Peter will be looking for a new "home" and is expected to apply to Wythenshawe No.532 for membership.

MARK PROVINCE OF CHESHIRE

Provincial Office
C. Hambleton
5 Lingmell Gardens
Holmes Chapel
Crewe
Cheshire
CW4 7LH

E-mail:

secretariat@cheshiremarkmasons.co.uk

Web site: www.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

W. Bro. Robert Alexander McMillan P.G.J.D.
R.A.M.Prov.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

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 2020

TILL WE MEET AGAIN



THE final Mark meeting to be held in our Province before the cancellation of all Masonic gathering due to the coronavirus was a very special occasion that did our degree and Cheshire proud. Held at Clifton Road Masonic Hall in Birkenhead it marked not only the centenary of Cloughton Lodge of Mark Master Masons No.705, but it also saw the investiture of our new Assistant Provincial Grand Master W. Bro. Bob McMillan P.G.J.D.

Proceedings were carried out in the presence of the Assistant Grand Master R. W. Bro. Stephen Davison, pictured above with (l-to-r) Deputy Provincial Grand Master, V. W. Bro. Austin Bamber, W. Bro. Bob McMillan and R. W. Provincial Grand Master David Sellers.

COLIN'S ON HUNT FOR HISTORY

THE Provincial Grand Secretary, W. Bro. Colin Hambleton, is urgently looking for a copy of the "History of the Province," which was published in 1973 as part of Cheshire's centenary celebrations.

He says: "We really need one for inclusion in the Provincial archive and it would also be a great help to us in the preparations for the 150th Anniversary, which will be taking place in 2022/23.

"If anyone does have a copy, or knows of someone who has one, I would be very grateful if they would please get in touch with me at the Provincial Office."



CLAUGHTON Lodge of Mark Master Masons No.705 celebrated their centenary in style and marked the occasion with a cheque for an amount reflecting their number - £705 – towards the Cheshire 2024 Festival. Our picture shows W. Bro. Dodd, the Worshipful Master, presenting the cheque to the Provincial Grand Master with the Assistant Grand Master R. W. Bro. Stephen Davison looking on.

MEMBERS of Mersey Mark Lodge No 824, together with 21 visitors, had an evening of mixed emotions at their January meeting.

Firstly, the evening was a celebration of W. Bro. Tony Stringer, P.G.J.D. being Installed as Master of the Lodge for a third time.

Secondly it celebrated the Lodge's 94 years since its consecration, a summary of which was presented by W. Bro. Stringer, who explained how the Lodge formed an integral part of his Masonic and personal life, having been a member for 42 years, with his father a member for 37 years before him.

But thirdly, a sad occasion as the meeting was the final formal gathering before the Lodge surrenders its warrant.

Guests from all across the Province of Cheshire, including

Night of mixed emotions at Mersey



W. Bro. David Wilson, the Worshipful Master of the Earl of Chester Lodge No 196, Mersey Mark's mother lodge, shared the evening with the remaining five members, one member being unavoidably absent due to work commitments.

W. M. Tony Stringer with the other members of Mersey Mark Lodge No.824 (l-to-r) Treasurer Walter Yule, Junior Warden Terry Oke, Secretary Peter Langley and S.W. Trevor Simcock, with the insert of Master Overseer Glyn Jones, (apparently "working in the quarries!")

Standing room only on Provincial Ark!

THE annual assembly of the members of the Province's Royal Ark Mariner Lodges at Christleton in January proved as popular as ever.

The attendance in the packed lodge room, which included the Provincial Grand Master in the Craft R. W. Bro. Stephen Blank the Commander of The Stamford Lodge No.148, was 142, which meant a quick shuffling of the furniture as they ran out of seats!

The Provincial Grand Master, David Sellers led the congratulations to the three brethren, who had been promoted to R.A.M. Grand Rank in December - W. Bro. Peter Edward Carroll of Wythenshawe RAM Lodge No.922, W. Bro. Basil Henry Keys of Neston RAM Lodge No.1445 and W. Bro. Trevor Charles John Simcock of Weaver RAM Lodge No.82

In his address to the gathering he commented: "As last year I have included visits to RAM Lodges as well as Mark Lodges so we point out to Team members who are not in the RAM Degree that to play a full part as an acting officer you need to be in the RAM degree.

"Visits were made to Neston RAM, a double Elevation, Stamford RAM to witness

our Craft P.G.M. being installed as Commander and to Cestrian RAM, which was intended to include the Mark 50th for Ken Thompson. Unfortunately poor Ken was to be called to higher service only a few days before the appointed meeting but we remembered a fine Mason.

"We saw our numbers fall by just over 3.5% in the RAM whilst the Mark had a fall of 1.5% and we hope that this Mark figure is a sign that we are controlling our losses and I thank Keith Gray our Registry of Marks for the very close eye he is keeping on our numbers.

"The strength of this order depends on the strength of the Mark and the Strength of the Mark depends on the strength of the Craft. It is therefore essential that we all acknowledge this and work tirelessly to make sure that we have strength in these other degrees.

"For a little while we have been looking into the possibility of a daylight RAM Lodge and having assessed that there was interest in this we hope it will all be finalized shortly."

A collection taken at the meeting, boosted the Cheshire 2024 Festival by £693.65

Sandbach tribute to two members with donation

THE Sandbach Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners No.1609 paid a special tribute to two of their former members with a donation to the Hope For Tomorrow charity.

Hope For Tomorrow, which was set up 13 years ago to specialise in bringing cancer care closer to the patients' own homes via their mobile units and cutting back on stressful travelling time for those who live some distance away from hospitals which would normally supply that treatment, were very grateful for the £400 cheque that they received from the Sandbach members.

John Goodrum, the Lodge Scribe, commented: "As a lodge we are always looking at ways of supporting local charities and when we lost a couple of our members to cancer recently we thought the local branch of Hope For Tomorrow was a perfect way to mark the contribution they had both made to Sandbach RAM and the order in general."

Freemasonry Today Spotlights RAM

THE Spring Edition of Freemasonry Today includes a very interesting two-page spread (pages 44-45) on the Royal Ark Mariner Degree, which should be of interest to all members.

Written by Dan Heath, the Assistant Grand Secretary of Mark Masons' Hall, it covers a wide range of topics, including a new tracing board commissioned by the Grand Master's Royal Ark Council, which was researched and hand-painted by Freemason Paul Swinge.

The board, which was unveiled at last year's Annual Assembly in December, is being digitally photographed in order that it can be reproduced for use in all Royal Ark Mariner Lodges.

It also includes some informative facts about Royal Ark Masonry and its connection with the Mark Degree and the mystery of how the link between the two forms of Freemasonry was forged.

Promotion time for 'Bob the builder'

BOB McMillan has become a well-known and equally well-liked member of the Mark Province of Cheshire as he has progressed through the ranks of the order, building a reputation as someone who gets things done, and he was an ideal candidate to join the leadership team.

His natural drive and enthusiasm has seen him take on numerous difficult roles, particularly in his work as the chairman of the Cheshire 2024 Festival, and he will doubtless mark well in his new role.

Robert Alexander McMillan was born in Malaysia in June 1957 His father being a serving Soldier in Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers had met his mother while she was serving as a member of the Women's Royal Army Corps.

After living in various countries such as Aden and Germany and many different locations in England Bob was finally sent to a boarding school in Surrey to complete his secondary education along with his two younger sisters.

Bobs Father left the army as he was leaving school and they settled in Stockport in Cheshire where he started work as an apprentice motor mechanic at Gordon Ford on Heaton Lane.

He was paired up with his mechanic and teacher Terry Hadfield, who would eventually introduce him to Benevolent TI.

His technical education started at Macclesfield before moving on to Stockport Tech

and later Bolton Institute of Technology, before his first management position in truck rental at the age of 21 for British Road Services in Manchester.



GLYN HEWITT, who had held the post of Assistant Provincial Grand Master since 2014 before standing down in March, deserves the praise of all the membership for the manner in which he conducted himself in that important role.

The Provincial Grand Master, R. W. Bro. David Sellers said: "Glyn has been a superb assistant and this is no criticism of him or his work which has been exemplary, it is simply to give others experience."

After brief spells with Brook Hire in Liverpool (where he met and married Elaine) and Suttons of St Helens he started work for Tilly Trucks in

Liverpool. During this period Elaine gave birth to Helen and James.

In 1985 they moved to the Lake District to run caravan parks and their third child Scott was born in 1986. Bob and Elaine have three children and seven grandchildren

Bob was initiated into Freemasonry in March 1989 in Liverpool, Advanced into Mark Masonry in Stockport in April 1993 and exalted into the Chapter in Liverpool in April 1994

He is a member of Benevolent TI, Stayley Mark, Stayley RAM, Cheshire Installed Commanders and East Cheshire Mark in Cheshire, Bentinck RAM in Cumberland and Westmorland and Grand Stewards Mark Lodge in London

He was appointed Provincial Senior Deacon in the Province of Cheshire March 2009, Grand Steward in June 2012, Grand Junior Deacon in June 2015 and has held R.A.M.Prov.G.R. in Cumberland and Westmorland since April 2017. He was appointed Chairman of the MBF 2024 Festival for Cheshire in 2015, prior to the launch in October 2016.

Bob feels very honoured indeed to have been asked to be the Assistant Provincial Grand Master of Cheshire and he is looking forward to advancing the interests of the Province in general and serving all the brethren as well as furthering the charitable work of the MBF and CPMBF.

The Wardens in waiting

WE are all looking forward to the resumption of Freemasonry but surely none more so than W. Bros Stuart Jones and Walter Grundy, who were appointed the Senior and Junior Wardens respectively for 2020/21 and are keen to get started in their offices.

**Senior
Warden
Elect —
Stuart Jones**



**Junior
Warden
Elect —
Walter Grundy**



OCCUPYING Provincial Grand Senior Warden's chair will be Stuart Jones, who recently stood down from the posts of Deputy Grand Provincial DC in Craft and Chapter, and he's absolutely delighted with the honour.

He says: "This totally unexpected promotion couldn't have come at a better time and I'm over the moon that it gives me the opportunity to further enjoy an acting office in Mark Masonry."

He has lived in Bebington on the Wirral all his life while, in contrast, his only child, Isobel, left for Goldsmiths University in London in 2014 and apart from visits "won't be coming back" ... nothing personal she says! He is getting married this year to his long-time partner Vivienne, who has been a great supporter of his Masonic activities.

After leaving school he joined the Manchester Ship Canal Company but at the time office life was not for him, so following short periods at Vauxhall Motors and British Aerospace, he joined Unilever where he stayed for 38 years, finally retiring in September 2015 from the office of North West Development Coach.

His introduction to Masonry was relatively late in life at the age of 40. His father passed when he was 13 and he had no idea he was a Freemason, although a person whom he later found to be the Almoner used to visit and indeed offered him an opportunity to attend a Riversdale Technical college with a view to becoming a marine engineer, like his father.

Later he found out that three of his father's four brothers were also Freemasons. Having made this discovery and the opportunities offered to him he determined to join and try and put something back.

His hobbies are gardening, DIY, walking and bowls (relatively new and useless).

OUR new Junior Warden is Walter Grundy, a retired research scientist born in 1951 in Stockport where he still lives.

He has been married to Janet for 43 years has two sons, one daughter and three young granddaughters.

He was initiated into Lodge of Peace No.322 in Stockport in 1988 and was Master in 1995 and 2010 and was exalted into the Chapter of Hope No.322 in 1992 where he was First Principal in 1998 and 2013. He is also a member of Good Neighbour Lodge No.8378 in West Kent, this being the Lodge that holds its meetings in the RMBI Care Homes, and the Chapter of Good Companions of Commemoration No.6005 in East Lancs.

He was promoted to the Grand Rank of PAGDC in 2019 and at present holds the acting office of Provincial Grand Almoner in both Craft and Royal Arch in Cheshire.

He took his first steps in Mark Masonry when he was advanced into Cornwall Legh Mark No.839 in 1999, becoming Master in 2004 and 2017, the latter being a unique year as his younger son was Senior Warden and his elder son was Junior Warden. He is very proud of having two sons who have followed him into Freemasonry. He held the rank of P.Pov.G.J.O. prior to being promoted to acting Provincial Junior Warden.

He was elevated into Cornwall Legh Royal Ark Mariner Lodge No.839 in 2005, becoming the Worshipful Commander in 2013, and he was promoted to RAM Provincial Grand Rank in 2019. He is also the Chair of Directors of Stockport Masonic Guildhall Co Ltd.

His hobbies are Supporting Manchester City, motorbikes/trikes, caravanning, DIY and model making, however, at present has very little time to pursue them.



By Mike A. Jones

THE Burns Supper held at Christleton in March proved quite a success and was enjoyed by all who supported it, raising £1,640 for the Cheshire Mark Festival 2024.

The haggis was piped in and paraded and the address, "Great Chieftain o' the Puddin' race," was performed by Harry Fynn, while Fraser McCord (pictured above in full flow) gave an excellent rendition of Tam O'Shanter, although no one could understand a word he said!!

Musical arrangement was by Howard Waddell, with traditional Scottish songs and music on his acoustical guitar.

Bob McMillan was Chappit Maister (*Master of Ceremonies*) resplendent in his clan's tartan kilt, but he would not divulge if he was dressed

in the true Scottish style ... thank goodness. The undoubted stars of the evening were Eric McConnell and his wife Liz with a no-holds barred in their "non-politically correct" speeches. Eric giving the toast to the Lassies with Liz McConnell responding.

A very hard-fought debate emerged between the two of them in establishing which of the sexes held supremacy, with neither giving quarter.

I think, gentlemen, that we won the day, confirming we men "wear the trousers in our households," but **ONLY** when our ladies are away.

Grateful thanks to all our performers for their contribution towards a successful evening and to Fraser McCord for organising the event.

On parade

THE Provincial team, led by V. W. Bro Glyn Hewitt, performing one of his last duties as A.P.G.M., saw Bro. Simon Wall advanced by a well-orchestrated ceremony conducted by the members of Neston Mark No.1445 followed by a fun-filled festive board.

Pictured right are members of the Cheshire Provincial team - the Prov. Grand Junior Warden Cyril Rose, Prov. Deputy Chaplain Basil Keys, Prov. Grand Senior



Deacon Harry Shone, Prov. Grand Steward Kish Balgobin and Provincial

ADC's - Graham Kirby and Derek J. Walsh, plus Grand, Steward W. Bro. Mike Nolan.

A MESSAGE FROM THE R.W.P.G.M.

DEAR Brethren, Due to the ongoing situation in the country with Coronavirus and the attendant suspension of all Masonic and associated activity I am taking the unusual step of writing to you all.

Brethren, may I ask you to consider in these very testing times, those less fortunate than yourself.

The impact Covid 19 will have on our lives could be immense. Many of our members will find themselves socially isolated, separated from loved ones, family and friends and their lives on hold, including all Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Lodge meetings and social events.

Our overriding concerns should now be the welfare and health of our brethren and their families, some of whom are elderly, isolated and vulnerable.

Big impact

Many of our older brethren rely on their Masonic friendships, meetings and social gatherings for their wellbeing. Freemasonry is a way of life.

Regrettably this has now been suspended for at least four months and will undoubtedly have a big impact on them.

Our younger brethren might not escape the impact of Covid 19 and may experience financial hardship through loss of income and find themselves in need of assistance.

All this should prompt us to be aware of the needs of our brethren and ensure that our Lodges are aware of those who are considered to be most vulnerable to the effects of social isolation.

The Lodge Almoner should inform any member considered



to be at risk how to access assistance and who best to contact in their time of need.

Lodge members should also consider telephoning each other to offer emotional support and human interactions.

As Mark Masons and Royal Ark Mariners we are a Family and as such we should offer as much support as we can for those we consider in need.

Please help each other where you can within your own Lodges, phone each other on a regular basis and pay special attention to those who are self-isolating.

Remember, by supporting the weakest in our fraternity we enhance the strength of our society.

In line with current Government Guidelines, Grand Lodge have cancelled the Investiture in June however, those receiving Grand Rank will

be notified by email shortly and will assume the Rank from 9th June as if they had been invested.

I am sorry that this year's recipients will miss the buzz of the occasion and the comradery of other Cheshire brethren at the Bedford.

In Cheshire, we have had to take the necessary steps of cancelling the Mark Weekend Away for this year as well as the Masters and Commanders dinner, the Grand Officers dinner and the East End Salmon Lunch.

The Hotel have agreed to postpone the Mark Weekend Away until Friday 16th & Saturday 17th April 2021 with the same terms and conditions.

We have thanked the Hotel Manager for his assistance in this matter and wished him and his staff well in these very challenging and difficult times.

Take care

I must also thank you all for your continued support for all the functions that we run and of course for your incredible generosity.

A substantial number of you have donated your dining fees from our cancelled Provincial meeting and the Masters and Commanders dinner to our festival efforts which will help to alleviate the loss of revenue from other events.

Please take care of one another and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Yours sincerely and fraternally
David R Sellers

PROVINCIAL GRAND
LODGE OF MARK MASTER
MASONS OF CHESHIRE