



MAKING OUR MARK

The Newsletter of Staffordshire & Shropshire Mark Master Masons

Royal Ark Mariner Grand Rank Investiture



Tuesday December 8th 2020 was a happy day for W. Bros Alan Thomas Howls and Maxwell Charles Pipe when they were awarded Grand Rank in the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners. Sadly, there were none of the usual celebrations as Freemasonry was suspended due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Worshipful Brothers Alan Howls and Max Pipe are both dedicated Masons in many Orders and have both served as active Provincial Wardens in the Mark Degree and hold the Rank of PGSD, but it is their contribution to the Royal Ark Mariners that has now been recognised by the Grand Master's Royal Ark Council as worthy of honouring.

W.Bro. Alan Howls was elevated into the Shropshire Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners No 444 on Thursday 18th November 1994 at the Masonic Hall in Church Stretton. He was the penultimate Brother elevated at Church Stretton during that Lodge's period of exile before it returned home to Shrewsbury in November 1995. He was Worshipful Commander in 2003 and awarded Provincial Royal Ark Mariner Grand Rank in 2008. He has continued to support his Lodge faithfully ever since despite his demanding role as Sub Prior in the Knights Templar for the last seven years.

VW.Bro.Ian CM Smith

W.Bro. Max Pipe got involved with Mark and RAM in Tamworth a short time after he opened his Dental Surgery in Polesworth.

In his own words, he 'was pestered' by two of his patients after finding out that he was already on the Square and was persuaded to join a Staffordshire Lodge, hence St Editha's No 1426 Mark, 'the start of a very enjoyable Masonic journey'.

W Bro Max pipe was initiated into the Old Veseyan Lodge 7924 in the Province of Warwickshire on 23rd Feb 1979, and was the W Master of that Lodge twice in 1990 and 1992

On the 7th November 1983, W Bro Max Pipe, having seen the light, was Advanced into St Editha's Lodge of Mark Master Masons 1426, in the Province of Staffs & Shrops.

He took the Chair as the W Master of St Editha's twice, firstly in 1996 and then again in 2004.

He became a Joining Member of Joseph Whittall Lodge of MMM's 1392 on 21st Jan 2006, Staffs and Shrops Grand Officers Lodge of MMM's on 15th Sept 2011,

The Croft Lodge of Mark Provincial Grand Stewards No 1524 in 2019

W Bro Max was also a Founder of Mancetter Lodge of MMM's 1883, founded in the Province of Warwickshire on 26th May 2007, and was the WM in 2015.

W Bro Max, has held the following Ranks in the Province and Grand Lodge

Prov G Stwd, Prov GSO, Prov GJW

PAGDC and PGSD.

W Bro Max, was Elevated into St Edith's RAM 1426, on 3rd May 1990 and was the W Commander in 2002.

Joined Kenneth Shenton Lodge of RAM 1392 in 2011

Was appointed to Prov RAMGR on 31st Oct 2007, and received his RAMGR in 2020.

Although this is a short history of his Masonic history, W Bro Max is in many other Masonic Orders, holding some very high Offices in these Orders.

As a member of our Province of Staffs and Shrops, we congratulate

W Bro Maxwell Pipe on his preferment to the rank of RAMGR.

W.Bro Bob Sagoo



Phone a Friend



Brethren after some 18 months away from any Masonic activity for the majority of the Lodges, we are once again able to resume our meetings, and attend Lodges with our Brethren, some of whom we may have in constant touch and some maybe not.

A lot of Lodges have been holding regular ZOOM Meetings, but there may be some Lodges that have not held as many as they would have hoped to and have maybe lost touch with some of their Members.

As Masonic activity now resumes it is more important than ever for us to get together and contact members of our Lodges.

Some members may have concerns about resuming meetings and concerns about their health, it is most important that we do not force these Brethren to do anything that they may not be too happy about, but we must support them with their decisions at this time.

For the Brethren who are looking forward to resuming the meetings, there may be challenges ahead as to whether we will have enough members to hold the Offices that require filling or not.

This is the time now for everyone to seek support for their Lodges, why not call your regular visitors to make up the numbers.

If all members of their respective Lodges do this, there should be no reason as to why you can not help boost your numbers.

Alternatively there is help available, by contacting the Provincial Secretary and asking him to send out an email to the Active Provincial Officers, who may be able to assist you in your Lodges.

There is also help and support available by contacting W Bro Derek Burns, the Secretary of 'Croft Lodge Of Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge of MMM's' on the following email address:- derekburns007@btinternet.com

Remember among Mark Master Masons you will ever find friends, who will administer relief to your distress and comfort in your afflictions, so don't forget to phone a Bro Mark Master Mason Visitor.'

W.Bro Ajay Passap

Mark Benevolent Fund– Hospice Donation



[Click on the above photo to view all images taken on the day](#)

On Tuesday 24th August 2021, the Charities Manager of the MBF –Darren Coleman-Heald visited the Rt. W.PGM Michael Richard Heenan at the Masonic Hall, Wolverhampton where they were joined by representatives from each of the Mark Lodges of the Province of Staffordshire and Shropshire together with Fund Raising staff from NINE hospices based within the Province.

In April 2021 the MBF made a Major Capital Grant in memory of the late Duke of Edinburgh and every Mark lodge throughout the country was allocated £1000 to donate to the Hospice of their choice.

After a warm welcome from the Rt. W. PGM this became an opportunity for the Brethren to meet with hospice staff – fund raisers, physios, managers and carers – and each hospice gave a comprehensive and heart-warming run down on where their support went and how much our support was appreciated.

The Acorn Trust in the Black Country works with seriously ill children and our monies will pay for a 'sibling support worker' who is charged with looking after the welfare of siblings who don't have a normal home life and may have to deal with the loss of a sibling.

The Compton Hospice at Wolverhampton had set up call lines for people who were lonely and isolated during the pandemic and 300 people were now regularly contacted on a weekly basis. Our donation would provide ongoing training for grief counsellors who had extended help to a further 60 people.

The Douglas Macmillan Hospice had recently amalgamated with The Donna Louise Children's Hospice and was looking after patients aged from 3 months to over 100 years. The care takes £15 million per annum - with funding of £3 million from the government and the rest from donations from the people of North Staffordshire. Though often considered a place for cancer treatment, 30% of patients suffer heart, lung and motor neuron issues. Care is extended to almost 500 people in their own homes.

Hope House Hospice in Shropshire cares for terminally ill children and would be using our donation to redesign playroom areas. Children with limited movement, sight or hearing needed tailored switches to empower their independence and specially designed computer controls to enable their interaction with the modern world. Dark areas encourage relaxation whilst bright areas assist play and mental well being.

The John Taylor Hospice in Birmingham offers support for the terminally ill particularly relating to child bereavement. Our donation would assist with both community hub interaction and telephone help lines.

The Fund Raising Manager of Katharine House at Stafford added our donation to over £1 million already provided by the local community and would enable terminally ill patients to receive treatment in their own homes.

The Severn Hospice told us that our £3000 donation would be split between sites at Shrewsbury and Telford where 'Living Well Centres', gardening clubs and somewhere to simply drop in to eat would be funded. They even bring pets to visit their patient owners to promote a sense of wellbeing – including an Alpaca!

The St Giles Hospice of Walsall provides 'whole person' care. Not just physical treatment but promoting mental health and assisting with the difficult conversations that people are forced to engage in near end of life situations. They had lost a nurse through COVID illness but staff still put patients before themselves when the need arose. A 'good life to the end' was their watchword.

Overall, at this event, the Province presented cheques totaling £35,000 and the MBF has in total supplied £ 1.25million to Mark lodges around the country. It's all money that we as an organisation have raised together and a blessing to be allowed to put our contribution where we felt it was most needed.

Brethren, this may look like just a list – but it's more than that. It shows what every hospice does for the community and informs every Mark Mason where his donation went and who has been helped by his generosity. Let's hope it also acts as a reminder that our continued support is required – and always appreciated.

Steve Bird, P Pr GSW.

The Wardens Report

At the Provincial AGM of the Province on Wednesday 4th August 2021, Masonic Rooms, Wellington a report was given by W.Bro Steve Bird, P Pr GSW. The following is an excerpt which he hopes will be considered by the Brethren of the Province.

Brethren All,

The Rt W PGM extended a huge honour to me and W.Bro Pete Thompson appointing us as Senior and Junior Wardens of the Province on 17th October 2019. It was an honour that we were delighted to accept but which was considerably reduced by the March 2020 lock-down.

In the five months afforded to us, we attended Installations both in the Mark and Mariners Degrees together. Occasionally, when two Installations were held on the same night, we attended separate meetings.

On every occasion it was delightful to see that each meeting was attended by Grand Lodge Officers and a good array of Past and Active Provincial Officers. Those officers should be proud of themselves having fulfilled their obligation to the Province and much enjoyment was had in their company.

Ceremonies were generally of a good standard with a few being exceptional. Occasionally, when the officers of the Lodge put in less than a top notch performance, almost without exception it was explained that no rehearsal had taken place. Both Peter and I feel that there would be an improvement, ritually, if they had a practice immediately prior to the meeting. This of course also reduces the number of times member have to travel to Lodges of instruction or Rehearsal.

We further noted that the DC of the Lodge was an essential ingredient and when ceremonies went well he was an active participant. In the less impressive ceremonies the DC appeared inactive and unsure of his role.

Brethren the selection of DC is as important as that of the Secretary ensuring the administration of the lodge in every aspect.

We did not find any particular problems save that we would occasionally need to chase Secretaries for the information requested to fulfil our administrative commitments to the Chained Officer attending the meeting.

Having all of the information requested prior to the meeting not only helps the Provincial Wardens, but also the Duty Director of Ceremonies, who has to ensure that all of the protocols are followed on the evening. I would suggest that early return of as much information that the Lodge has already decided upon is preferable to imparting everything on the evening of the meeting.

In summary we found that the majority of Lodges throughout the Province were well attended by members and guests, who were both helpful and willing to assist whenever and wherever they could. The Presiding Officers were treated with honour within the Temple and the Festive Boards.

Both Peter and I enjoyed our brief time as the Provincial Wardens and it was a great shame that nature has been so cruel. Brother DPGM I hope that this report will be favourably received by the Brethren present who, we hope, may report back to their brethren - particularly their administrative officers - on the observations of the Provincial Wardens who were entrusted with these duties by the Rt. W. PGM.

Brethren – the Wardens report

