

Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Somerset
Notes of the Secretary and Director of Ceremonies Annual Meeting
Held at the Masonic Hall, Wedmore on Friday 28th August 2009

Agenda item	
	<p>Present</p> <p>R.W. Bro. D.B. Nelson, Provincial Grand Master, V.W. Bro. R. Guthrie, Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. J.G. Morgan, Provincial Grand Secretary, W.Bro. R. Johnstone-Smith, Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, W.Bro. J.W. Winston, Provincial Deputy Grand Secretary.</p> <p>Secretaries/Scribes (or representatives)</p> <p>W.Bros. S.J. Smith (781), P. Morrisey (102), R. Newman (119), P.F. Boice (1652), A. Wilcox (128, 155), I. Strickland (730), D. Veale (697), J. Fletcher (807), K. Fisher (191), J. Lendon (1652, 1615, 697), R. Baber (571), B.J. Baker (1656), J. Allan (128), G. Nash (191), M. Waterman (162), C. Matthews (807), R. Tozer (1295), R. Cooper (TI), S. White (1608), A. Kemlo (967), V. Puddy (119), C. Hannabuss (1548).</p> <p>Directors of Ceremonies (or representatives)</p> <p>W.Bros. C.T. Cooper (191), R. Babbage (TI), D. Holden (102), G. Gamble (697), D. Wilton (730), S. Kitch (749), D. Hutchings (967), N. Ackland (697), M. Condick (1295), A. Dummett (1295), M. Gamble (1656), R. Stone (162), D. Platten (128), J. Morey (781), M. Cotton (1608), A. Fisher (119).</p>
1.	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>After some delay to the start of the meeting because of severe traffic problems on the M5, the PGM welcomed all present and thanked everyone for the welcome and hospitality afforded to him and the Deputy PGM at visits to Lodges in the Province. He thanked those Officers who had retired at the Annual Meeting in May and in particular W.Bro. Cliff Hannabuss as Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies and W.Bro. Derek Shailer as Provincial Deputy Grand Secretary. He welcomed their successors in office, W. Bros. Ray Johnstone-Smith and John Winston.</p>
2.	<p>Programme of PGM's visits for 2009/10 and Provincial Team Visits</p> <p>2.1. The Provincial Grand Secretary, W.Bro. John Morgan, advised that following the request made by Secretary's and Scribes at the previous meeting, a schedule of Team Visits and Programme of Installation Meetings had been prepared and was available for all in the envelope which could be collected at the end of the meeting. Individual Lodge Secretary's and Scribes had been sent a letter informing them who is to attend the Lodge Installation Meeting, PGM and Team Visit for those occurring up to and including January 2010 and details of subsequent arrangements will be sent in October.</p> <p>2.2. The PGM hoped that the 25th anniversaries of Somerdale (1608) and Langdale (1615) lodges will be well attended. He reminded everyone that at Official Visits the Provincial Wardens take precedence over Grand Officers in both the temple and at the festive board.</p> <p>2.3. The Deputy PGM reminded Secretaries and Scribes that his attendance at Lodge Meetings is in his own right and not as a representative of the PGM. The summons convening the meeting should reflect this.</p>

3.	<p>Provincial Grand Lodge Meeting 2010</p> <p>The 2010 meeting will be held under the banner of Portal Lodge (155). Offers for subsequent years will be welcomed. Secretaries to inform Provincial Grand Secretary.</p> <p>For such meetings the Lodge is responsible for insuring furniture during transit but while in situ at Provincial Grand Lodge it is covered by the Province's insurance. Secretaries to note and take action as necessary.</p>
4.	<p>Ceremonial Issues</p> <p>4.1. The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, W.Bro. Ray Johnstone-Smith, thanked Lodge representatives for the efforts made to make Provincial Officers welcome at Installation and other Official Meetings. He particularly thanked W.Bro. Cliff Hannabuss for his support over the years and in the years to come.</p> <p>4.2. The ritual to be used is the 2000 amended version. There is no objection to those lodges that perform work from earlier versions provided the ritual is set out for the benefit of all members. Secretaries to note.</p> <p>4.3. Each candidate for advancement should be made aware of what is expected of him during the ceremony particularly the correct proof of the 3 Craft signs. The Overseer's part in the ceremony when examining the work is important and should be done correctly. In some instances it has become frivolous and does impact on its importance. Rehearsals are as important as the ceremony itself and all officers taking part should be encouraged to attend. At the opening of a Mark Lodge the VSL should be opened at Chronicles 2, Chapter 2. A book mark is quite acceptable. DC's to note and take appropriate action.</p> <p>4.4. Only the collars of the office are to be worn at meetings. The only exception is at Installation Meetings.</p> <p>4.5. All signs should be done correctly and it was suggested that CC's may want to take some time either at rehearsals or the beginning of the lodge meeting to demonstrate. DC's to note.</p> <p>4.6. The lectures on the degree of Mark Master Mason and on the Tracing Board should ideally be delivered at least once a year. If no member of the lodge is able to deliver either of these lectures then W.Bros. David Platten or Derek Wilton have agreed to provide support where possible. It was mentioned that time may be an issue but it was suggested that the lectures could be delivered when meetings are lightly loaded and/or meetings better planned and less time wasted. Suggestions made were: Some business could be transacted while the candidate was out of the lodge, salutations could be given to the senior officer present only (subject to approval of the senior officer), less time wasted at the festive board. DC's to take note and action accordingly.</p> <p>4.7. A new up to date Book of Constitutions and Regulations should be presented to the WM during the Installation ceremony. Secretaries to note.</p> <p>4.8. Members of the Lodge of Improvement are prepared to assist Lodge DC's if required e.g. shadow Lodge Officers at a rehearsal. The point of contact is W.Bro. Derek Wilton. It was emphasised that there is no intention to change long standing lodge traditions. DC's to note.</p>
5.	<p>Meeting Returns and Resignations</p> <p>The meetings return process is working well and the information from them and sent to Grand Lodge is most welcome. There is no need to send 'nil' returns only where any changes need to be made e.g. changes of address, resignations, deaths etc. The PGM is most anxious to know of any resignation; particularly where this may be because of financial hardship or any personal difficulty and a copy of the letter of resignation will prove useful. A subcommittee is to be formed to monitor such resignations and a member of the subcommittee may contact the Lodge Secretary and feed back to Provincial GP committee. There was some doubt whether a resignation via e-mail was acceptable (not acceptable in Craft Lodges because a signature is required). Provincial Grand Secretary to contact Grand Lodge and inform Lodge Secretaries as appropriate.</p> <p>Will Lodge Secretaries please ensure that on application forms the handwriting and the mark</p>

	selected are legible. Secretaries to note.
6.	<p>Correspondence from Grand and Provincial Grand Lodge</p> <p>6.1. Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge returns were available to collect at the end of the meeting. With the Grand Lodge return Secretaries/Scribes are required to identify both the Secretary/Scribe and Treasurer. Returns should be sent back to the Provincial Grand Secretary by 31st October.</p> <p>6.2. A number of Lodges overpaid subscriptions by a small amount and these amounts will be refunded. VAT on subscriptions and other fees revert to 17.5% from 1st January 2010.</p> <p>6.3. For attendance of Officers of Grand Lodge at consecration meetings a standard fee will in future be charged.</p> <p>6.4. Recent Provincial correspondence sent includes: To Mark Lodge Secretaries – Minutes of the Annual Provincial Meeting, the Keystone Programme, Installation and Visits Programme and application forms. To RAM Lodge Scribes – Minutes of the RAM Assembly, the Travelling Ark Programme, Installation and Visits programme and application forms.</p>
7.	<p>RAM Assembly</p> <p>The next Assembly will be held on 30th January 2010 at Nailsea. The PGM has decided that this Assembly will in future stand on its own and for all Royal Ark Mariners to receive an invitation. The Provincial RAM banner is to be dedicated at a meeting of Fidelity & Unanimity RAM Lodge on 9th October. Following a brief discussion, Scribes agreed to send out the invitations and dining slips to members.</p>
8.	<p>Provincial Website</p> <p>V.W. Bro. Ray Guthrie said that long term the Provincial Magazine, Triangle, is unlikely to continue. Currently the approximate annual cost of production and distribution is £2000 and this is being covered by a very generous benefactor. This was equal to about £2 per member per year but he was not sure if every member would agree to this increase in the Provincial subscription. Secretaries were asked to take the issue back to lodges to be discussed at the next available committee meeting and thoughts etc. fed back to V.W. Bro. Ray. For this reason a Provincial website had been designed and this can be found at http://www.somersetmarkmason.co.uk/. Material on the site includes return forms, dining slips (both for download), pages for individual Mark (with one exception) and RAM lodges with names of officers. Apart from Secretaries and Scribes (and only where there has been no objection to the information being included) addresses have not been shown. A calendar of events is also available and it is planned that information can be updated soon after an event has happened. The aim is to update the list of a Lodge's officers within a week of the information being received. The objective of the website is to keep Somerset MMMs up to date with what is happening in the Province. Any comments or observations to improve the site and contribution from each lodge to be addressed to V.W. Bro. Ray. The PGM thanked V.W. Bro. Ray for all his efforts thus far.</p>
9.	<p>Somerset Provincial Masonic Reference Book</p> <p>The information for Mark and RAM lodges needs careful updating and for this reason W.Bro. John Winston will liaise with the editor of the Reference Book and lodge secretaries/scribes as necessary to ensure that the 2010 edition is as accurate and up to date as possible. Secretaries to note. If additional copies of the Reference Book are required for those members of Mark or RAM lodges and who are not members of a Somerset Craft lodge, Secretaries/Scribes should contact W.Bro. Bryan Kenna, Provincial Grand Secretary.</p>

10.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>10.1. Every encouragement should be given to WMs/Commanders and PMs/Commanders to become members of the Somerset Installed Mark Master Masons and Commanders Lodges. The aim is to sharpen the focus of both lodges to benefit past masters and commanders.</p> <p>10.2. The Provincial Grand Secretary has received details of The Scout Lodge of Mark Master Masons being consecrated on 31st October 2009 at Derby Masonic Hall. Future regular meetings of the lodge will be held on the third Saturdays in February (Installation), June and September. The Installation meeting will be held at Long Eaton, Derbyshire and other meetings in different Provinces.</p> <p>10.3. A Mark Lodge in the Province meeting during the day was being planned and anybody interested should contact W.Bro. John Peters.</p> <p>10.4. It was agreed that a meeting of Lodge Secretaries/Scribes and DCs should be held every year but if possible avoiding the August bank Holiday weekend.</p> <p>10.5. Thanks were extended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - W.Bro. Derek Shailer for his help in providing the refreshments for the evening, - W.Bro. Peter Tinney of Alfred & Guthrum Lodge for running the bar, and - All Lodge Secretaries Scribes and Directors of Ceremonies for their support during the year.
11.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>To be advised.</p>

30th September 2009