

## PGM's Address to PGL on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2012

Brethren it is a great delight for me to see that this Provincial Grand Lodge meeting is so well supported by the many Brethren of the Province together with our many visitors and guests from other Provinces, some of whom have travelled a considerable distance to support Somerset today. I am particularly pleased to welcome the many Mark Master Masons who have accepted my personal invitation to attend this annual Provincial meeting. Lets us not forget Brethren that this is our meeting and not just my meeting, and is a very important annual business meeting in our Masonic calendar. I am also extremely pleased to welcome members of the Royal Ark Mariners delegation who represent all the Lodges within the Province.

The year has been extremely busy for the Province and the Provincial Officers of the year, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing Wardens for all their support and assistance to me during the last 12 months. WB Tony Heliker the Senior Warden has been particularly busy and his detailed reports to me on the status of the Lodges in the Province have been very encouraging. The Provincial Officers of the year have been very active and also tolerant of my changes to the Provincial schedule of visits which had been severely changed due to my recent knee operation, to all the outgoing Officers I do thank you all for your kindness and support throughout this past 12 months. The Provincial Team assisted me with 2 Banner dedications during the year, one for the Mendip Mark and one for the Nailsea Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners both meetings were very well supported by members and visitors.

I was privileged to be asked to consecrate a new Royal Ark Mariners Lodge at Yatton Masonic Hall on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011, and I do thank and congratulate the Organising Secretary WB Garry McKenzie and his committee for making all the arrangements for the day. It was a very grand affair with over 70 Brethren present to witness and launch a new Royal Ark Mariners Lodge, which does take the total number of Royal Ark Mariners Lodges in the Province to 12.

The Somerset Ancient Mark Masters demonstration Team continues to entertain and raise considerable charitable funds for charities both locally and nationally. It therefore would be remiss of me not to thank VWB Geoffrey Nash the organising Secretary and all the Members of SAMM's for giving up their time to ensure that this demonstration Team keeps alive the ancient Mark ceremony that was found in Bath and being worked a couple of hundred years ago by the Royal Cumberland Lodge TI, one of the founding Lodges of Mark Grand Lodge. I am particularly pleased to report to Provincial Grand Lodge that the SAMM's Team have been invited to the District of Spain to perform the ceremony in January 2013, but I am not too sure how the Brethren will cope with the heat of the day in wigs and tights.

The 600 club is extremely well managed by WB John Nicholson who continues to raise considerable sums of money for the Somerset Mark Benevolent Fund and I do thank him on behalf of the Province for all his hardwork in promoting and arranging all the draws which are held around the Province. In respect of the Provincial Charity fund I have been pleased to be able to match selective donations that Individual Lodges have been making to local charities within the Somerset area, this has on some occasions doubled the amount that certain Lodges have been able to donate. We are Brethren in a community and are very much part of the community and it is our Masonic duty to support our local charities, many of which do not receive national or outside funding. This will be an item for discussion on the agenda for the Charity Stewards and Almoners meeting in the autumn of this year.

The Royal Ark Mariners Assembly was again very well supported at the Nailsea Masonic Hall with the Lodge of Improvement demonstrating parts of the Royal Ark Mariners ceremony. The RAM Assembly has become so popular with large numbers attending the meeting that it begs the question as to whether we shall require a larger venue in the future if the support for this meeting continues to grow. I am convinced that Brethren of the Province enjoy and use our Web Site as much as I do, and our thanks to VWB Raymond Guthrie for the hardwork and effort he put into updating and modifying this very useful communications tool, which provides Lodge Secretaries and Members of the Province

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with a consistent reference source for forms and Masonic information. We should also thank WB Pat Morrissey for all his hardwork in editing the twice yearly Triangle magazine which I know is also read by many Ladies who wish to find out what their husbands are up to during the year. It has been most gratifying to see that some Lodges are actively donating money to fund the publication of the Triangle and I would urge and ask that all Lodges try to make donation to ensure that our newsletter can continue to thrive and be published in the future.

It has been a great pleasure for me to invest the many Provincial Officers I have appointed and promoted within Provincial Grand Lodge today. I have said it many times and will repeat the message that I sincerely hope that the Brethren will enjoy their new status, but in doing so will also remind Provincial Officers that a dark blue apron brings many additional duties and responsibilities to the Order, to the Province and to their Lodges, and I particularly charge them to make a special commitment to show fraternal kindness and understanding to our new Brethren in the Mark Degree. It is a particular characteristic of Mark Master Masons that they enjoy the happy friendly atmosphere engendered within the Order please continue to provide our meetings and ceremonies with the special ingredients that will ensure that Brethren and visitors will want to attend our meetings. To the many Mark Master Masons present may I say to them that they have to play their part in the running of a Lodge and to ensure that they attend rehearsals and support the Worshipful Master and the Provincial Officers when they make reasonable requests for assistance and help with the ceremonial, or operation of their Lodge.

To the new Team of Provincial Officers I can confirm that they will also have a busy year with many varied tasks that we have been requested to carry out for Lodges around the Province. For those who are Royal Ark Mariners we shall be carrying out a banner dedication in September for Irwin Lodge RAM who will be celebrating their centenary on the same day. Irwin is one of the oldest Royal Ark Mariners Lodges in the country being consecrated in 1873, and although over 100 years old could not produce all the minute books or documentation to prove continuous working, and this must be a solitary message to all Secretaries and Scribes to ensure that records and minute books are kept safe for future generations. This will be a subject which will be raised at Secretaries, Scribes and Director of Ceremonies meeting to held in September and which will be chaired by the Deputy PGM. I have also been asked to carry out the ceremony of Advancement with my Officers of the year at the Isle of Wedmore Lodge also in September, so up to date ritual books will be the order of the day. There are a number of other visits planned for the Provincial Team but I have decided that each year the Installed Masters Lodge and the Somerset Commanders Lodge installation meetings will have a full Provincial Team in attendance to support both these very important Lodges in Somerset. We are Brethren going to have a very happy and memorable year together, so please commit yourselves to supporting the Lodges in the Province for the next 12 months they will no doubt welcome you with open arms.

I am pleased to report to this Provincial Grand Lodge that at the Annual Investiture the MW Grand Master has appointed and promoted the following Brethren within this Province.

WB John Smith the new Provincial Grand Secretary is appointed to the rank of Past Asst Grand Director of Ceremonies.

WB Terry Haggatt the new Provincial Charity Steward from the Portcullis Lodge appointed to the rank of Past Assistant Grand Sword Bearer.

W.Bro. Philip Coles from the Monument Lodge, appointed to the rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer.

W.Bro. Ian Strickland the new Deputy Provincial Grand Secretary, from the Hallam Lodge, appointed to the rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer.

W.Bro. Stephen White Secretary of the Somerdale Lodge, appointed to the rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer.

Promotions:-

W.Bro. Clifford Hannabuss is promoted to the rank of Past Grand Junior Overseer and becomes a Very Worshipful Brother.

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W.Bro. Derek Wilton the Preceptor of the Lodge of Improvement is promoted to the active rank of Deputy Grand Sword Bearer.

W.Bro. John Morgan our new Deputy PGM, is promoted to the rank of Past Grand Senior Deacon I know you will all join me in congratulating these Brethren on their preferment and wish them a very memorable day at the Investiture meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> June in the Grand Temple, Great Queen Street. There is I understand a large contingent of Somerset Brethren travelling on the John Lendon coach complete with all major onboard facilities, but no trolley dollies.

Brethren, we have this year, many of what may be regarded as the permanent Provincial Officer of the Province who are retiring from Office and I would like to thank WB John Winston for his Stirling work as the Deputy Secretary, WB Eric Kellett who did a tremendous amount of work raising money as Charity Steward, WB Graham Gamble the outgoing Deputy Director of Ceremonies who accompanied me on numerous occasions to Installations and official visits around the Province.

This annual Provincial Grand Lodge meeting is of course very special to me as your Provincial Grand Master and I know that takes a considerable amount of time and effort on the part of the Provincial administration team and the Provincial Director of Ceremonies team to make this a very memorable day. I do want to express a special thank you to WB John Morgan and WB John Winston for the hardwork in organising the administration for meeting and arranging the table plans for dinner. Also, I wish to thank WB Ray Johnstone-Smith, WB Graham Gamble, WB Mark Golding, and WB Andy Grey for arranging all the ceremonial for the day. I would also like to thank the other Brethren who turn up early in the morning to set up the Temple and layout the chairs and summons, thank you Brethren your personal assistance is very much appreciated.

Brethren as we leave this meeting today we start a new Masonic year for the Province and I am confident that we shall all work together to ensure that the Province of Somerset will make significant progress and will prosper during the next 12 months. We of course must maintain the close relationship, and total support our Craft Lodges as they are the source of our new membership, but let us not just regard obtaining new members as our sole ambition in our Masonic life, but let us enjoy and celebrate our unique ceremony, let us also enjoy our unique Mark fellowship, let the wonderful happiness that prevails at our festive boards continue, and let these characteristics be our recruitment philosophy.

Brethren, may the Great Overseer of the Universe be a constant inspiration to us all, by reminding us of our duties to him, to our Families, to our Brethren and to our great Fraternity.

**God bless you all and thank you for the courtesy of listening to my address this afternoon.**