

# MAY

## My Beloved Brethren,

Notes from a busy Provincial Grand Master: This is one of my busiest times of the year in the Masonic Calendar. The Annual Investiture at Grand Lodge in London, Provincial Grand Lodge in Harrogate and a plethora of delightful visits to the meetings of other Provinces. I am also delighted to see just how busy our Lodges have been and the number of Provincial support activities taking place. AND! It's such a lovely day today.

### Provincial Grand Lodge – Harrogate – 8<sup>th</sup> May

Yet another glorious occasion celebrated in such good company. So many happy, smiling faces! This was the 50<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of Provincial Grand Lodge being held at the Royal Hall. I am told that our association with Harrogate goes back to 1903 when the meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge was held in the Dining Room of the Majestic Hotel.

The “no-increase” in Provincial fees has been roundly welcomed. This is as a result of ongoing prudent and disciplined financial management. This is further demonstration of the passion and commitment of all of the Rulers to ensure that every Brother enjoys value for money from their fees to Provincial Grand Lodge.

Congratulations to all who received preferment in Provincial Grand Lodge. Richly deserved! “Well Done” to the 2017/18 Team of Tercentenary/Bicentenary Acting Officers and “Greetings” to the 2018/19 Team. My thanks also to all who made everything happen so well on the day!

**2018 Major Grants = £90,000.** The generosity of our Membership is legendary! Among many of the highlights of the day was the presentation of the cheques to the recipients of the major grants awarded from the Provincial Grand Master's Fund. Donations to such worthy and eclectic activities provide a further example of the generous support that we, as Freemasons, provide to the well-being of our local communities. All the recipients told me just how grateful they were for the donations and what a difference the money will make. All also told me how impressive we look at the Royal Hall in our resplendent regalia. Not surprisingly, some recipients were very nervous, even trembling, when they came onto the stage. A few kind words of welcome and reassurance always settle even the most nervous recipient.

Thank-you Brethren I am deeply conscious that our donations are from family funds.

My Address – Extended extracts are published in full in the White Rose Magazine however my words can be condensed into a few key messages:

1. We continue to attract new members and our Province is vibrant
2. Provincial funds are available to support Open Days and the Membership Pathway
3. Things are changing around us and need to be managed effectively
4. We are ALL very much part of the present and have a duty to shape the future

Our Provincial Grand Organist reported to me that he was satisfied with the enthusiastic singing. Be pleased Brethren! This is praise indeed from a professional musician!

I have been made aware of certain service deficiencies experienced at the Majestic Hotel. These matters are being discussed with the current management who we understand will be handing over to new Owners in the near future. Our 2019 booking will be honoured by the new Owners.

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## **Provincial Office Team**

After several years of stable staffing, we now have a new Team at the Provincial Office brought about by moves and promotions.

We bid a sad farewell to Rachel Dolman who is seizing a fantastic career opportunity. We all extend our grateful thanks to Rachel and send her our very best wishes for the future. On the retirement of WBro. Keith Tolan, WBro. Mick Dyson is now the Provincial Grand Secretary and WBro. Malcolm Whiteley continues as Assistant Provincial Grand Secretary.

The Office is now managed by Ruth Waythe, ably supported by Margaret Hooks and now joined by our most recent recruit, Connie Greenwood.

The recruitment and selection process for all the roles was conducted in the most professional manner resulting in the appointments.

I receive tremendously positive feedback about the Team in the Provincial Office who are always friendly, helpful and efficient. We are so fortunate to have such a Team at the heart of our Provincial operations. If you are ever passing the Office at Castle Grove, Leeds, do drop in as it is always good to put a face to a name.

## **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

This cannot be ignored and comes under the quality objective of the Province and Lodges always being "Model Corporate Citizens". GDPR affects everyone personally and also impacts on private Clubs and Associations. Your Lodge Secretary will have received the guidance sent out by both Grand Lodge and also Provincial Grand Lodge. I urge every Lodge to be represented at one of the training events being conducted to ensure that there is no misunderstanding concerning individual actions and responsibilities concerning Data Protection. If for any reason your Lodge cannot be represented then the Slide decks will be sent out however this would be no real substitute for attending a training event.

## **Universities Scheme**

On Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> of May, we were honoured by the visit of our Assistant Grand Master, RWBro. Sir David Wootton in his capacity as President of the Universities Scheme.

At a Regular meeting of Universities Lodge, Sheffield No: 3911 we were treated to an exemplary Second Degree Ceremony. I was delighted by the quality performance of my personal Acting Provincial Officers who attended upon me and also on the Assistant Grand Master. All had only been appointed some 24 hours earlier at Harrogate.

## **Great Yorkshire Show (GYS): 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July**

The joint Stand with our Sister North & Easy Province will again be very much in evidence at Harrogate. We have been at the GYS for a number of years and always look for ways to refresh the presentation to engage with the general public. This is a major public-facing activity offering golden opportunities to educate and enlighten.

This year, with the full support of our Grand Lodge, we are inviting the Order of Women Freemasons (OWF) to join us on the Stand. The OWF already participate with us in appropriate public-facing activities such as Fresher's Week at Universities.

There is a gentle and refreshing breeze blowing through Freemasonry and this is the time to show the public what we are about and what we do. We are always eager to educate the public regarding male and female participation in the practice of Freemasonry.

At the same time it is an opportunity to confirm our separate identities by providing information on the equality of opportunity regarding membership choice.

Gentlemen who choose to practice Freemasonry with gentlemen will come to UGLE Lodges. Ladies can choose either of the Female Grand Lodges.

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## **Provincial Tie**

I have been asked if I have any plans to introduce a new Provincial tie. I confirm that I have no such plans as our current tie remains both elegant and sartorially pleasing.

I am however following an example set by the Province of Derbyshire. This year is the centenary of the end of the First World War. I have mentioned previously that I would like as many Brothers as possible to attend local Remembrance Day activities as a tribute to those brave Freemasons who have given their lives on the field of battle.

For the month of November only, I am authorising the wearing of a special tie at Lodge meetings that combines a masonic emblem and also a poppy. The wearing of such a tie is optional and purely a personal matter. The ties will be marketed on the Provincial Website.

## **White Rose Magazine**

Providing this excellent publication at no cost to Members means that the cost of production and distribution must be self-financing. Acts of enormous generosity by discreet donors has meant that the books have balanced – Just! I am appealing to all the Brethren to see if additional advertising can be secured. The Editor would be delighted to hear from you.

## **On the Horizon**

- The first visit for the Team of 2018/19 to Boothferry Lodge No: 7637
- Dedication of a new Banner for Bawtry Lodge No: 5174
- A 75<sup>th</sup> Certificate – Yes! 75 years of service to Freemasonry! Amazing!

Finally, do keep the pulse of your own Lodge beating powerfully with the oxygen of innovation, motivation and new Members of the right calibre!

Actions always speak louder than words. So please do not wait – Take action now!

Maintain standards, look for ways to evolve to match the needs of Members, involve every single Member in planning for the future, find out why Members are not attending and provide support and.....

## **Go out to attract new Members**

**Do not be shy! They are out there just waiting to be invited!**

My fraternal best wishes to you, your families and loved ones as ever,

**2018 – Our Best Year Ever!**

**Right Worshipful Brother David S. Pratt**  
**Provincial Grand Master**