

### GRAND LODGE ATTENDANCE

MW Pro Grand Master: Brethren, how nice it is to see the Grand Temple so nearly full, you never fail. Brethren, amongst you are over a hundred from Yorkshire, North and East Ridings, very precisely eighty-eight from Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, forty from the Dorset Three Pillars Club and thirty from the Cheshire Master Masons Club. So well done to all of you and everybody else, thank you for being here.

### TERCENTENARY JEWELS

MW Pro Grand Master: Brethren, many of you here today, in fact I think the majority of you, are wearing the Tercentenary jewel and I have been impressed by the "take up" of them particularly in the Districts. Now that we have overcome the supply problem I hope you will encourage Members of your Lodges to acquire one if they have not already done so.

That brings me neatly on to the subject of the very fine Tercentenary Master's collar ornament. I have one Brethren, but you won't be able to see it. Many Masters' collars display the 250th and or 275th jewel and as from 24th June, surely the 300<sup>th</sup> would be more appropriate and if Lodges are not displaying any jewel then surely now is the time to show pride in having reached this Landmark. It is a very fine silver gilt ornament.

### CHEQUE SIGNATORIES

Rule 153 was amended in June 2013 to require that every cheque drawn on a Lodge's bank account be signed by two duly authorised members of the Lodge, of whom the Treasurer must, unless it is impracticable, be one. The Rule had previously permitted a Lodge to resolve that a single signatory should suffice.

The object of the amendment was to reduce the risk of misappropriation of funds, by requiring a second signatory in every case. The Board still considers that to have been an appropriate objective, but has noted that Lodges have experienced difficulty in relation to bank mandates in respect of a second signatory. The Board accordingly recommends that Rule 153(b) be amended to enable cheques to be authorised on the sole signature of the Treasurer.

### ANNUAL DUES 2018

The Board recommends, in accordance with Rule 269, Book of Constitutions, that the annual dues (including VAT) payable to Grand Lodge in respect of each member of every Lodge for the year 2018 shall be:

In a Lodge in England and Wales that is unattached	£61.00
In a Lodge in a Metropolitan Area or a Province	£39.00
In a Lodge in a District	£11.00
In a Lodge abroad not in a District	£17.00

The Board recommends, in accordance with Rule 270, Book of Constitutions, that the fees (exclusive of VAT) payable for registration, certificates and dispensations should be increased in line with inflation to:

(a) the Registration of:

1. A Grand Officer, present and past, on first appointment	£120.00
2. A Deputy or Assistant Metropolitan Grand Master or a Metropolitan Grand Inspector (under Rule 60)	£68.00
3. A Deputy or Assistant Provincial or District Grand Master (under Rule 66)	£68.00
4. A holder of Overseas Grand Rank (under Rule 93)	£28.00
5. A Mason, inclusive of Grand Lodge Certificate (initiation, or joining from a Lodge not under the Grand Lodge)	
In a Lodge in England and Wales that is unattached	£66.00
In a Lodge in a Metropolitan Area or a Province	£59.00
In a Lodge in a District	£37.00
In a Lodge abroad not under a District	£49.00
(b) the replacement or amendment of a Grand Lodge Certificate	£66.00
(c) a Certificate for a Serving Brother	£37.00
(d) a Dispensation by the Grand Master	£35.00
a Dispensation by the Grand Master 'nunc pro tunc'	£70.00

**CONTRIBUTION TO THE MASONIC CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**

Under Rule 271 of the Book of Constitutions Grand Lodge must fix each year the annual contribution that is payable to The Masonic Charitable Foundation. The Trustees of the Masonic Charitable Foundation have requested that for 2018 the annual contribution remain at £17 in respect of each member of a Lodge in a Metropolitan Area or a Province, or in England and Wales that is unattached.

**GRAND LODGE ACCOUNTS FOR 2016**

Deputy President of the Board of General Purposes: MW Pro Grand Master and Brethren, I now present the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016. These show an operating surplus of £1.5 million compared to £851,000 in the previous year.

Operating income increased by some £1.1 million due in part to additional income from the receipt in 2016 of Grand Lodge dues from 2015 and an increase in investment income.

The increase in net operating expenditure of some £400,000 included some additional costs in respect of the upkeep of Freemasons' Hall, which were then reduced by the deferral of expenditure on Regent Street Disease treatment for this building, and we also had expenditure on preparations for the Tercentenary.

In mentioning the expenditure for our Tercentenary I should like to stress that due to careful management of our financial resources these are treated as one off projects, which in line with our long standing accounting policy are borne out of investment income. I am pleased to say therefore that the costs of our celebrations which include payments to Provincial Grand Lodges for matched funding of Tercentenary activities, support of the new Masonic Memorial at the National Arboretum and the Shakespeare Garden in Stratford-upon-Avon will not be met from membership dues but rather from our own accumulated reserves.

Below the line this years accounts show a net benefit of £4.5 million including some £8.6 million from a revaluation of the investments and investment properties offset then by a charge of £4.1 million in respect of an actuarial adjustment for the increased pension fund liability.

Overall the balance sheet remains healthy with net funds in excess of £64 million. The President's Report and Notes in the accounts give further explanation of our results and balance sheet, which I shall not repeat here.

Lastly I would like to thank on your and the Board's behalf, all of the Grand Lodge staff for their continued hard work and the support that they gave in 2016 and also in anticipation of 2017 as they meet the challenges in supporting the additional activities and celebrations of Grand Lodge's Tercentenary.

If any Brother has any questions, then having recovered from the shock the Grand Treasurer and I will do our best to answer them.

MW Pro Grand Master: There you are Brethren, now is your chance.

I think you are questionless.

Deputy President of the Board of General Purposes: MW Pro Grand Master and Brethren, I move that the Report and Accounts of the Grand Lodge for the year ended 31 December 2016 be received and adopted.

**ELECTION OF GRAND LODGE AUDITORS**

On the proposition of RW Bro G. Ives, Provincial Grand Master for Lincolnshire, seconded by RW Bro J. Lockley, Provincial Grand Master for Staffordshire, Crowe Clark Whitehill, LLP, were re-elected auditors to Grand Lodge for the ensuing year.

### **PRESTONIAN LECTURES**

(i) 2016

*Foundations: new light on the formation and early years of the Grand Lodge of England*  
The Lecturer, W Bro Dr R.A. Berman, has informed the Board that in addition to the three official deliveries to Zetland and Hong Kong Lodge, No. 7665 (London); Bristol Installed Masters Lodge, No. 8168 (Bristol); and Temple of Athene Lodge, No. 9541 (Middlesex), the Lecture was also delivered on twenty-three other occasions throughout the Constitution. The Board desires to express its thanks to Bro Berman for the considerable time and effort he has spent in this connection.

(ii) 2017

#### *The Grand Design*

The Prestonian Lecturer for 2017 is RW Bro Dr J.W. Daniel, PSGW. Four official Prestonian Lectures for 2017 have been or will be given under the auspices of:  
Lodge of the Grand Design, No. 6077 (Surrey)  
Worcestershire Installed Masters' Lodge, No. 6889 (Worcestershire)  
Old Elizabethans' Lodge, No. 8235 (East Lancashire)  
The London Grand Rank Association

### **AMALGAMATIONS**

The Board has received reports that the following Lodges have resolved to surrender their Warrants:

- (a) Lodge of Dedication, No. 7428, in order to amalgamate with Excelsior Lodge, No. 1155 (London); and
- (b) Lodge of Concord, No. 7233, in order to amalgamate with Holloway Lodge, No. 2601 (London).

The Board accordingly recommends that the Lodges be removed from the register in order to effect the amalgamations.

### **ERASURE OF LODGES**

The Board has received a report that twenty Lodges have closed and have surrendered their Warrants. The Lodges are:

- Addington Lodge, No. 1937 (KwaZulu-Natal)
- Lord Charles Beresford Lodge, No. 2404 (East Kent)
- Gwalia Lodge, No. 4213 (South Wales)
- Rosarium Lodge, No. 5147 (London)
- Horselydown Lodge, No. 5384 (London)
- Danson Park Lodge, No. 5700 (West Kent)
- Lodge of Assembly, No. 5747 (Warwickshire)
- Curfew Lodge, No. 5891 (London)
- Diligence Lodge, No. 5954 (Middlesex)
- Wilcumbestou Lodge, No. 6090 (Essex)
- Lodge of United Friendship, No. 6284 (East Kent)
- Trident Lodge, No. 6407 (Nottinghamshire)
- Cowley Lodge, No. 7571 (Middlesex)
- Latton Priory Lodge, No. 8402 (Essex)
- Gayton Lodge, No. 8640 (Cheshire)
- Lodge of Good Report, No. 8646 (Middlesex)
- Oakfield Park Lodge, No. 8671 (West Kent)
- Manor Abbey Lodge, No. 8873 (Worcestershire)
- Lewes Priory Lodge, No. 9201 (Sussex)
- Sure and Steadfast Lodge, No. 9365 (Worcestershire)

Over recent years, the Lodges have found themselves no longer viable. The Board is satisfied that further efforts to save them would be to no avail and therefore has no alternative but to recommend that they be erased.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

MW Pro Grand Master: Brethren, I have to announce that the MW The Grand Master has made the following appointment:

W Bro John Mark Clark, PSGD, as Provincial Grand Master for Buckinghamshire, in succession to RW Bro Gordon Robertson, who will retire on 31 October. Bro Clark will be installed on a date to be arranged.

### **PRO GRAND MASTER'S ADDRESS**

MW Pro Grand Master: Brethren, as we approach the 24th June 2017, the actual date of our Tercentenary Anniversary, it is very fitting that at this meeting we look back on our history with pride. John Hamill, in his inimitable style, has reminded us of the debt we owe to the Time Immemorial Lodges whose foresight set us on our current path and The Grand Master will be unveiling a plaque recognising this next week.

Whilst mentioning the Grand Master it is fitting to remember the debt we owe him and recognise that today is fifty years to the day since he was elected as our Grand Master. How fortunate we have been. (*Applause*)

We also congratulate W Bro Cyril McGibbon, PSGD, who's 105th birthday it is today. He still attends every meeting, rather appropriately, of the Lodge of Perseverance, No. 155 and recently proposed the toast to the Ladies at their last Ladies' Night Evening, there is hope for all of you Brethren. (*Laughter*)

### **MASONIC MEMORIAL GARDEN**

MW Pro Grand Master: On the 18th April we remembered all our Brethren who have fallen since 1945 in the service of their country by opening the Masonic Memorial Garden at the National Memorial Arboretum and, a week later, in the presence of The Grand Master, we remembered with pride those of our Brethren awarded the Victoria Cross in the First World War in a magnificent ceremony outside the Tower Entrance to Freemasons' Hall. For those unable to witness that event a DVD has been produced, the proceeds of which will be donated to the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association.

### **TELEVISION DOCUMENTARY**

MW Pro Grand Master: And so, as we look back with pride, we must look forward with confidence, recognising that we are a real force for good in society and have so much to contribute to it. The Sky TV programme has given us an amazing platform and viewing figures have been good. The series has been well received and our Provinces are reporting a real upsurge of interest which I know you are capitalising on in order to secure our future. In addition, Brethren, I believe it has enabled us to be aware of how important it is to talk openly about our Freemasonry and, perhaps, even how best to do so. For those without Sky TV, a DVD has been produced which is available in the Letchworth's shop as from today.

### **CHARITY FESTIVALS**

MW Pro Grand Master: Brethren, as Pro Grand Master, it is very encouraging, yet humbling, to witness just how much effort you are all putting in to promoting our Masonic values and making this Tercentenary year such a tremendous success. I congratulate you all.

Your charitable giving never ceases to amaze me and, at the recent Sussex Festival for The Grand Charity, a magnificent total of over £3.6 million was raised. This has been followed by the West Yorkshire Festival for the RMBI, which raised over £3.3 million.

These are fantastic results and, Brethren, I now have firm figures which show that last year we not only supported our own Brethren with over £15 million of grants, but helped non-Masonic Charities with grants in excess of £17 million.

(*Applause*)

Brethren, this year the nation has been rocked by a number of serious terrorist attacks at Westminster Bridge, the Manchester Arena and at London Bridge. You should be aware that we have received numerous letters of support and concern from other Sovereign Grand Lodges around the world, some enclosing generous cheques to the East Lancashire Fund which have supplemented the extreme generosity shown by many towards this fund and I have been assured by the Provincial Grand Master that the money will be spent wisely where need is identified. Thank you so much.