



Provincial Assembly of The Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariner
Friday 27th March 2020

Scribe's Report

The Fourteenth Annual Assembly

Brethren,

I present my second Report for The Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariner within the Province of Durham. Our Provincial Grand Master now presides over his sixth Royal Ark Mariner Annual Investiture Meeting.

Lodge Visits

During the past year, the Provincial Grand Master led Deputations to the following Royal Ark Mariner Lodges: Stockton-on-Tees 122 (Centenary); Dunelm 356; Wouldhave Tyne Dock 362; Hackworth 761; Durham Lodge of Installed Commanders 1492.

Installations

The Provincial Grand Master was represented at all the Royal Ark Mariner Installation meetings and the reports of the Representatives attending indicated that the ceremonies continued to be of a high standard. Thanks are extended to all those Brethren who represented the Provincial Grand Master so ably, and for compiling the reports to a very high standard. Grateful thanks also go to the Lodges for the courteous and friendly manner in which the Representatives and the Provincial Assistant Directors of Ceremony were received.

Grand Honours

In December 2019 the following Brethren received Grand Honours in the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariner from The Pro Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Raymond John Smith:

W Bro Jeffrey Awdas	Industry Lodge No. 293
W Bro Michael Davis	Bede Lodge No. 605
W Bro Robert William Emerson	Spennymoor Lodge No. 981

These Brethren are very well known throughout the Province, and congratulations are extended to them all in the hope that they enjoy good health to continue in their efforts towards the good of the Order.

Membership

Summary of Annual Returns of Lodges Year Ended 31st December 2019

No.	LODGE	Total Members Installation 2018	Ele	J	Res	D	Exc	HM	Total Members Installation 2019
39	Eclectic	17	3	0	1	1	0	1	17
122	Stockton-on-Tees	19	2	0	0	1	0	0	20
124	Union	22	1	1	0	0	0	0	24
250	Darlington	24	3	0	2	3	0	1	21
293	Industry	29	1	1	0	0	0	0	31
356	Dunelm	24	3	0	2	0	0	0	25
362	Rockcliffe	37	1	0	2	1	0	0	35
605	Bede	30	2	0	4	0	0	0	28
761	Hackworth	23	1	0	3	0	0	0	21
778	Barnard Castle	22	1	1	1	0	0	0	23
854	St. Andrews	18	2	1	1	0	2	0	18
860	Bernard Gilpin	17	1	0	0	1	0	0	17
896	Clavering	16	0	0	1	0	0	0	15
925	Moseley	20	0	1	1	0	0	1	19
930	Castle Eden	15	0	0	1	2	0	1	11
981	Spennymoor	28	1	1	3	1	0	1	25
1055	Monument	20	1	0	1	1	0	0	19
1112	Elevation	25	0	0	0	2	0	0	23
1492	Durham Lodge of ICs	30	0	2	2	0	0	0	30
1551	Stanhope	21	0	0	1	0	0	0	20
1714	Ryton	17	0	0	1	0	0	0	16
1806	Chief of the Builders	46	1	4	0	0	0	0	51
		520	24	12	27	13	2	5	509

The Annual Lodge Returns show an overall decrease in membership of 11 during 2019. This represents an overall decrease from 2018 of 2.18%. However, the overall trend over the last 5 years since 2014 shows a decrease in membership of 24 over this 5 year period (4.5%). Therefore, perhaps this last year shows a slowing down in this overall rate of decrease. This, added to the fact that 24 is the highest number of Elevated new members for 3 years, gives us some grounds for optimism.

Recruitment of new members is so important if we are to continue to grow our membership base, as well as doing everything possible to try to reduce the number of resignations.

Hopefully, this year's slowdown in the downward trend can be reduced even further next year, by encouraging more of our Mark Lodge members to join the Royal Ark Mariner Lodges. We must ensure that every one of our Mark Lodge members is aware of the Royal Ark Mariner Degree as the next step in their Masonic development. Each Mark Lodge now has a nominated Lodge Representative to encourage members to join the Royal Ark Mariner Degree. However, we should all remember that we are all recruiters of new members.

Obituary

Since the last Annual Assembly, the Province has suffered the sad loss of the following members of our Royal Ark Mariner Lodges. We acknowledge the service and dedication that they gave to the order, and our thoughts go to their families.

Alan George Nichols, Lodge 362.
Born 30th April 1953 - Died 31st July 2019.

Charles Wilding, Lodge 930.
Born 11th December 1952 - Died 10th October 2019.

Derrick Redden, Lodge 930.
Born 30th June 1932 - Died 30th October 2019.

John Nicholson, Lodge 1055.
Born 13th January 1947 - Died 17th January 2020.

Alan Simpson, Lodge 925.
Born 28th May 1930 - Died 4th February 2020.

William John Coward, Lodge 1055.
Born 21st August 1940 - Died 13th February 2020.

Neil Anderson, Lodge 761.
Born 4th June 1943 - Died 15th February 2020.

Ian McDonald, Lodge 605
Born 9th July 1950 - Died 25th February 2020.

Conclusion

Brethren, I present my second Report for your information and consideration. My grateful thanks go to all the hard working Lodge Scribes for the dedication they have shown in ensuring that returns are completed accurately and within the stipulated timeframe.

My Deputy Provincial Grand Scribe, W Bro Graham Wharton, my Assistant Provincial Grand Scribe, W Bro Doug Quickmire, and the Provincial Grand Registrar, W Bro Malcolm Ormiston have all worked diligently, and executed their roles most efficiently. Their assistance, and readiness to take on even more tasks whenever requested, is greatly appreciated. W Bro David Battensby has now been added to the Secretariat Team. His role is to oversee the Provincial Website in general, with particular emphasis on uploading items of interest, and documents as required. Brethren, the website (as well as emails) will play an ever increasing part in communicating information over the coming years, as more and more documents are publicised through this medium, rather than having to be printed out in booklet/leaflet format – thus saving us time and money.

Congratulations are due to those Brethren being honoured this year. No doubt they will continue to support the Provincial Grand Master, and will strive to work for the good of the Fraternity in general, and this very happy and vibrant Province in particular.

Allan Gurney,
Provincial Grand Scribe.