

# PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE of MARK MASTER MASONS of DURHAM

***R.W.Bro. Prof. Denovan Keith Wilson***  
***Provincial Grand Master***

## **Report of the Provincial Grand Secretary to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Durham**

Brethren, I present my fourth Report to the Mark Provincial Grand Lodge of Durham. As you will see from the items listed below, the return to Masonic Meetings as of September 2021 has been very full and enjoyable, with a variety of Provincial Visits arranged. The Pandemic, although in no way over, is at least now allowing us to reconvene in our Lodges, and get back to what Mark Masons do best – have fun and enjoy ourselves. I can say that the general administration of the Province has continued to the normal set deadlines, and I rely on the various Lodge Secretaries to assist me in those matters, and I look forward to seeing you all again in the future.

On a personal level, as you all know by now, the last few months have not been easy with my cancer diagnosis coming as a sudden and complete shock, and the sudden upheaval caused to my lifestyle. At this point in time, can I state that I have no plans to step down as Provincial Grand Secretary. Neither has the Provincial Grand Master asked me to do so. I was back at my desk the day after leaving hospital, and am able to do a little more each day as I get stronger. In the meantime, I will not be attending any Lodge meetings to which I cannot walk, as I am currently not allowed to drive. However, I must put on record my thanks to the many Lodge Secretaries, and ordinary Lodge members, who have contacted me by text, phone or email. These 'conversations' were a great source of comfort, especially during my 13 days in hospital staring at the same piece of blank, yellow painted wall!. I hope to return to full fitness by September, if not a little earlier.

### **Lodge Visits (15).**

The Provincial Grand Master very much appreciates the support from his Team of Active Provincial Officers which has enabled him to accept invitations to make Provincial Team Visits to the following Mark Lodges:

Percy 122 (delayed Sesquicentenary); Union 124 (delayed Sesquicentenary); Dunelm 356; Auckland 596 (50 year Certificate); Ravensworth 718 (delayed Centenary); Harte 740 (Centenary); Ernest Dixon 1015; Penshaw 1055 (50 year Certificate); Elevation 1112 (50 year Certificate); St. Aidan 1145 (50 year Certificate); Cestria 1151; Durham I.M.M. 1492; St. Thomas 1511 (return of Warrant); Ferryhill 1560 (Wardens' Night); Indaba 1936 (10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary).

### **Installations.**

Since September, many Lodges have held their normal Installation Meeting, at which the Provincial Grand Master was represented by a cohort of willing volunteers from amongst the Provincial Wardens and Grand Lodge Officers. I am indebted to them all for completing their Report Forms conscientiously, speedily, and to a high standard.

### **Mark Grand Lodge Honours.**

With effect from Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the Most Worshipful Grand Master has been pleased to make the following appointments to Brethren from this Province:

Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies	Leslie Baker, St. Andrew's Lodge 854
Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies	Robert William Emerson, Walton Lodge 1106
Past Grand Standard Bearer	Lewis John Ayers, Harte Lodge 740

With effect from Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022, the Most Worshipful Grand Master will be pleased to make the following appointments to Brethren from this Province:

Past Grand Junior Warden	Frank Alexander Rankin, Ambrose Crowley Lodge 1269
Past Grand Junior Overseer	George Clark, Ryton Lodge 1714
Past Grand Junior Deacon	Arthur Joseph Clark, Cestria 1151

Congratulations are extended to all the above, with the wish that they have good health to enjoy their preferment, and the determination to continue to work hard for the betterment of the Order.

### **Membership (all figures are taken as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021)**

The Membership at the end of 2016 was 1233. Last year (2020), it had fallen to 1092. This year we have lost a net total of 62 memberships. This decrease represents a further decrease of 5.68% over the last year; and a total decrease of 16.22% over the last 5 years. If we consider that over the 5 year period, 126 Brethren have passed to the "Grand Lodge Above", and we had 242 resignations, and we have had Covid to deal with, then

clearly, 'resignations' are still a major issue. All resignations are followed up by contact from either the Deputy or the Assistant P.G.M., and it is imperative that details of all intended resignations are sent to Province as soon as Lodge Secretaries are informed of them – a follow-up phone call is useless several weeks later. The one real shaft of light at the end of the tunnel is that, due to Covid, we have had hardly any new members advanced into the Order. Now that we are back to full meeting lists, these new members are now beginning to come through. It is up to you, Brethren, to ensure that it continues.

## Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Durham Summary of Annual Returns of Lodges Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021

No.	LODGE	Total Members Installation 2020	A	J	R	D	Ex	HM	Total Members Installation 2021
39	Eclectic	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
122	Percy	21	0	2	1	1	0	0	21
124	Union	21	0	1	0	1	1	0	20
250	Darlington	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
293	Industry	27	0	0	0	0	1	0	26
356	Dunelm	42	0	0	2	0	0	0	40
362	Wouldhave Tyne Dock	34	0	0	1	0	0	0	33
596	Auckland	22	0	0	1	1	0	0	20
605	Bede	27	0	0	2	0	0	0	25
701	Jarrow	33	0	0	0	2	3	0	28
718	Ravensworth	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
740	Harte	25	0	0	2	1	0	0	22
761	Hackworth	36	0	0	0	1	0	0	35
778	Barnard Castle	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
827	Unity	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
846	Steadfast	22	0	0	1	1	0	0	20
854	St. Andrew's	30	0	0	1	1	0	1	27
860	Bernard Gilpin	24	0	1	1	2	0	0	22
896	Clavering	28	0	0	4	0	0	0	24
925	Moseley	25	0	0	1	4	0	0	20
929	William Todd	26	0	0	1	0	0	0	25
930	Castle Eden	23	0	0	3	0	0	0	20
981	Spennymoor	25	0	0	1	2	0	0	22
1015	Ernest Dixon	18	0	0	1	1	0	0	16
1055	Penshaw	17	0	1	0	0	0	0	18
1093	St. Lawrence	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
1106	Walton	27	0	0	2	0	0	1	24
1112	Elevation	18	0	0	0	2	0	0	16
1145	St. Aidan	19	0	0	0	2	0	0	17
1151	Cestria	52	0	0	2	0	0	0	50
1269	Ambrose Crowley	35	0	1	2	2	0	0	32
1271	Sportsman's	36	2	4	2	0	0	0	40
1492	Durham L. of I M	39	0	0	0	1	0	0	38
1511	St. Thomas	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
1551	Stanhope	28	0	0	0	0	0	1	27
1560	Ferryhill	26	0	0	1	0	0	0	25
1626	George Washington	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
1714	Ryton	31	0	0	1	0	1	0	29
1806	Chief of the Builders	74	0	0	2	1	0	0	71
1820	Provincial Stewards	24	0	0	2	0	0	0	22
1936	Indaba	22	0	0	2	0	0	0	20
		<b>1092</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1030</b>

**NB: Lodges shown in RED, are Lodges where the Warrant is "in Abeyance", or the Lodge has now officially closed.**

## **Obituary.**

The Province has suffered the loss of many Mark Brethren, whose names are recorded below. We acknowledge the service they gave to the Order in general, and to this Province in particular.

<b>R.W. Bro. Stephen Davison</b>	<b>Assistant Grand Master</b>	
V.W. Bro. James Edward Harker	P.Prov.D.G.M.	Bede Lodge 605
W.Bro. John Connelly	P.P.G.J.O.C.	Ambrose Crowley Lodge 1269
W.Bro. David Loughrey	P.P.G.J.O.	Harte Lodge 740
W.Bro. James Cole	P.P.G.Reg.	William Todd Lodge 929
W.Bro. Sydney Harrison	P.P.A.G.Chap.	Jarrow Lodge 701
W.Bro. Alan William Stapleton	P.P.G.St.B.	Hackworth Lodge 761
W.Bro. Graeme William Telford	P.P.G.S.D.	Castle Eden Lodge 930
W.Bro. Charles Lindsay Johnson		Barnard Castle Lodge 778
W.Bro. John Brockett Harrison		Auckland Lodge 596
W.Bro. Joseph William White	P.P.G.J.W.	Hackworth Lodge 761
W.Bro. Raymond Norman Dinning	P.G.J.D.	Shipleigh Lodge 1271
W.Bro. John Michael Burdess	P.P.G.Reg.	Barnard Castle Lodge 778
W.Bro. Phillip James Etherington	P.P.G.J.O.	Steadfast Lodge 846
W.Bro. Maurice Edwin Cooper		Dunelm Lodge 356
W.Bro. Leonard Armstrong		Percy Lodge 122
W.Bro. Lawrence Tinkler	P.A.G.D.C.	Cestria Lodge 1151
W.Bro. Arthur Stonehouse	P.P.G.Swd.B.	Industry Lodge 293
Bro. Ronald Read Dodds		Spennymoor Lodge 981
W.Bro. Eric Thompson	P.P.G.J.W.	Hackworth Lodge 761
W.Bro. Raymond Oxley	P.P.G.J.O.	St. Andrew's Lodge 854
W.Bro. Raymond Armstrong	P.G.St.B.	Spennymoor Lodge 981
W.Bro. Thomas William Kenneth Smith	P.P.G.S.W.	St. Aidan Lodge 1145
W.Bro. Albert Williamson		Jarrow Lodge 701
W.Bro. Robert Main	P.P.G.M.O.	St. Andrew's Lodge 854
Bro. Roy John Tozer		Harte Lodge 740
W.Bro. Brian Michael Twedde	P.P.G.J.W.	Harte Lodge 740
W.Bro. Leslie Dobson	P.G.St.B.	Eclectic Lodge 39
W.Bro. Ronald Clark	P.P.G.S.O.	Indaba Lodge 1936
W.Bro. Brian Dove	P.P.G.J.W.	Indaba Lodge 1936
W.Bro. William Tyers	P.P.G.J.W.	St. Aidan Lodge 1145

**“THEY REST FROM THEIR LABOURS, AND THEIR GOOD WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM. THANKS BE TO GOD, THEY HAVE MARKED WELL.”**

### **Visits to Other Provinces (11).**

Since last August, the Provincial Grand Master accompanied by members of his Senior Team, have visited the Annual Meetings of other Provinces as listed below:

Cumberland and Westmorland; North & East Yorkshire; Cheshire; Lincolnshire; Nottinghamshire; West Yorkshire; Derbyshire; West Lancashire; Leicestershire and Rutland; East Lancashire; and North Wales.

### **Other Events.**

As well as the Sesquicentenaries, Centenaries, and presentations of several 50 year Certificates listed , above, about 35 members of the Province visited Grand Lodge in September for the combined Appointments and Promotions meeting, and it was very pleasing to see such support for the recipients.

In February the Annual Wardens' Dinner was again held at Ferryhill Masonic Chambers, and once again, was an excellent evening organised by John Dodds and John Nye.

In May, the Grand Officers' Dinner was revived at Ferryhill, and was an excellent evening run by John Nye and John Dodds, with over 60 people booked in. This was open to Grand Officers from both the Mark and RAM Degrees.

### **Conclusion.**

Brethren, I present my report for your information and consideration. My grateful thanks go to all the hard working Lodge Secretaries for their help and assistance during the last 12 very difficult months, and I am sure they will continue the good work in their Lodges.

My particular thanks go to my Deputy Provincial Secretary W.Bro. Graham Wharton, my Assistant Provincial Secretary, W.Bro. Doug Quickmire, the Provincial Registrar, W.Bro. David Battensby, and W.Bro. Ian Heaviside who has assisted in various tasks when required. They have all executed their roles most efficiently, and I am indebted to them all.

Brethren, it will be a great relief to renew our annual pilgrimage to the Lancastrian Suite Conference Centre in June. I am sure it will again prove to be a great success, and that everyone will have a most enjoyable day. Fortunately, although it has not been a normal year, we are at least beginning to return to something like normal in terms of our meetings and other activities. So for now, Brethren, I wish you all well, and may the Great Overseer of the Universe look kindly upon us all, and grant you good health throughout the coming year.

*Allan Gurney P.G.J.D.,*

**Provincial Grand Secretary, 1st June 2022.**