



Freemasonry@86 News - 1 April 2021



Welcome to your news and information update for the progressive/companion Orders of Freemasonry administered from Mark Masons' Hall, 86 St James's Street.

This bulletin is emailed to all 'leaders' in the Provinces, Districts & Divisions and their Secretariats.

Please share this content with your members by forwarding this email or let them know that it's available on the MMH website.

If you don't currently receive this email directly but would like to subscribe please email communications@mmh.org.uk¹

¹<mailto:communications@mmh.org.uk>

Light at the end of the tunnel?

This week, the following letter was circulated to members of our Orders, updating them on our plans to make an announcement about the resumption of Masonic meetings



Grand Secretary's Office
Mark Masons' Hall
86 St James's Street, London, SW1A 1PL

Sent via E-mail

29 March 2021

To: Members of all Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall

Dear Sir and Brother

Resumption of Masonic meetings

By now, many of you will have received this morning's communication from the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) about the relaxation of government restrictions and the options for a resumption of Craft and Royal Arch meetings in the next few months.

This may have left many of you wondering what is happening as far as the Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall are concerned and I wanted to let you know our position.

No decision has yet been made on whether meetings in our Orders will resume in May or later. We are waiting to hear the content of the government's next roadmap update, due on 12th April 2021, following which I will then write to you setting out the timetable to resumption.

With fraternal regards and best wishes.

R.W.Bro. Ryan A Williams, P.G.J.W.
Grand Secretary

Click Here² to download a copy



A Joyous Easter

A message, on behalf of the M.III. Grand Master Kessick John Jones, from V.III.Comp. Viv Thomas, Grand Chaplain.

It was Engelbert Humperdinck (Gerry Dorsey) who sang, so many years ago, "Please release me, let me go". A sentiment felt and expressed by so many of us over the past fifteen months. Well, the release is now tantalisingly close, as the vaccine programme continues to roll out, the level of immunity increasing and the number of deaths rapidly falling.

As far back as AD 595, Pope Gregory sent a mission of monks to England with the directive to convert the pagan inhabitants to Christianity. Their leader, a Benedictine monk named Augustine was advised to take as many of the religious festivals that already existed here and somehow blend those in with recognised Christian celebrations. The Ancient Brits had a number of deities, amongst whom was Oestre, the Goddess Of Spring. Oddly enough, eggs and the Easter bunny pre-date Christianity, although THEN, the rabbit was a hare!! The hare was considered worthy of deifying because of its fertility. It was not uncommon to find carvings of hares in cathedrals and churches, whilst decorated eggs were found in the graves of Egyptians 5,000 years ago.

²http://download.mmh.org.uk/29.03.21_Update_on_plans_for_the_resumption_of_masonic_meetings.pdf

And so, the ancient legends of new birth at Spring, the fertility of the hare, led to the Christian Church's adaptation of this ancient festival, now to be known as Easter, that most important part of the Christian calendar, when we remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Of course, so many of us have experienced the despair of seeing loved ones struggle and eventually succumb to the dreadful disease that has beset the world, and yet, through all this shines that ray of hope eternal. Jesus, talking to His disciples about the miracles, said to them (and to us, today) "greater things than these shall you do". Our miracle is the development of a vaccine in such a rapid time-scale. And so, this Easter, we can celebrate new birth, as the gold of the daffodils brighten our days, even if we no longer display Easter bonnets!

As we remember those who have passed before us, listen to the words of Kahlil Gibran "Wear not the black of mourning, but rejoice with me in white raiment. Speak not in sorrow of my going, but close your eyes and you shall see me among you".

So, as the hope of a better year ahead becomes a reality, let us rejoice that, once again, the promise of re-birth, new life in eternal Spring, may surround us all.



District Grand Council of Surrey Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the District Grand Council of Surrey was held as a Virtual Business Meeting on Saturday 26th March 2021. Attending was the Grand Master, M.III.Comp. Kessick John Jones, and the Assistant Grand Recorder, Ill.Comp. Dan Heath. There were 19 District Grand Masters, 7 Deputy District Grand Masters and 13 District Principal Conductors of the Work from 23 Districts among the 150 Delegates that attended the meeting.



The District Grand Master, R.III.Comp. David J Blackburn, declared the meeting open and the Assistant District Grand Recorder, Ill.Comp. Chris Eley, read the permission to hold a Virtual Business Meeting.



The District Grand Master welcomed everyone to the second Virtual Annual Meeting of our District and said his first duty, and great pleasure, was to extend a warm and cordial welcome to all our guests and visitors and, very specially and in particular, to our Grand Master. M.III.Comp. Kessick John Jones thanked the District Grand Master and said how much he was looking forward to the meeting.



The District Grand Master said that the Virtual Meeting facility has been a marvellous link enabling Companions to stay in touch during these difficult times and we have more visitors than ever. He welcomed everyone and regretted that he could not do the usual introductions; but he would like to single out one or two for whom it is seven in the morning, as the zoom facility has allowed us to visit far off places and R.III. Comp. David's wife is quite envious of his recent visit to the Caribbean. He was therefore pleased to welcome R.III.Comp. Llewellyn Gill, as they have sat together on more than one occasion at the Sussex meeting, and Ralph Craig.

After the regular business of the District had been concluded the Assistant District Grand Recorder read the names of the Companions appointed to and promoted in District Grand Rank. These can be found on the District web site Here³

The District Grand Master confirmed the re-appointment of all active District Officers for a further year, something unprecedented in the annals of our District, with the hope that at some stage this year they will actually be able to participate in our Team visits. He also congratulated those to be re-appointed, appointed and promoted within Grand Council next month.

The District Grand Master then addressed District Grand Council.

He said that it is hard to believe that it is now two years since we held a traditional real meeting at Croydon Halls. He invited us to encourage others to join in our enjoyment of Cryptic Masonry as we do not have a single Council in the District that would not benefit from a few new members. What better way to re-start our Cryptic Masonry in a few months than with a Candidate or two.

He spoke about communications in the District and the launch of our new monthly Newsletter, the Surrey Trowel, our publication to keep our members fully informed of activities in the District and beyond.

He thanked Ill.Comp. John Coleman for all he does caring for our Companions particularly with respect to recently deceased Companion Duncan Bell. John assisted Duncan over several years.

³<http://www.royalandselectmasters.co.uk/officers.html>



R.III.Comp. David expressed particular thanks to the Provincial Grand Master for the Surrey Mark Province, R.W.Bro. Ian Clark, for allowing us to use their De -Luxe Mark Zoom account and to borrow his Provincial Grand Secretary and Zoom expert Ill.Comp. Tim Ford. He said that we are only too well aware that the Mark 2022 Festival looms and he is grateful to the Companions of Waverley Council and Pride of Surrey Council who have in the past couple of weeks donated nearly two thousand pounds to the Festival.



He was very pleased to be able to repeat earlier donations from the District and virtually presented Companion Ian with a further Cheque in the sum of £1,000 for the Festival. Companion Ian thanked the District Grand Master and all the Companions of Surrey for their generous donation to the 2022 MBF Festival.



The M.III. Grand Master said how much he had enjoyed the meeting and how good it was listening to all the friendly conversation before the meeting. The Zoom facility certainly has enabled us to keep in touch and also visit Districts that would not normally be possible. He congratulated those Companions who will receive appointment or promotion in Grand Council and said how sorry he was that we could not meet up.



The District Grand Master then thanked everyone for their attendance and support and declared the meeting closed.

Article and photos by Chris Eley, District Assistant Grand Recorder

Cookies for the Coastal Covid Cream

On Sunday 28th March John Linkin and Brian Ward, the Charity Stewards of the Folkestone Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Lodges No. 380, made a delivery of very fattening and highly calorific chocolate cookies to the NHS staff and volunteers working at the town's main vaccination centre in the former Debenhams store on Sandgate Road.



1 - (L to R) Debbie Dobson, W.Bro. John Linkin, Teresa Tester and W.Bro. Brian Ward

The idea to deliver the tasty treats to the vaccination centre was unanimously supported by the Brethren of both Lodges and it is planned to make further deliveries of cookies to the teams at the other vaccination centres in Folkestone over the next few weeks.

Teresa Tester and Debbie Dobson, Managers at the centre, were delighted to receive the cookies on behalf of everyone at the centre and asked that a big thank you be passed on to all of the Kent Mark Masons and Royal Ark Mariners who had made this very kind and thoughtful delivery possible.

W.Bro. Robin Evans, Prov.G.Insp.Wks., Communications Manager Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Kent

Take Five with the AMD District of Thames Valley



The degrees of:
 St Lawrence the Martyr
 Teaches fortitude and humility
 Knight of Constantinople
 Teaches humility and universal equality
 Grand Tilers of Solomon
 Warns of the great danger of carelessness and of hasty judgment
 Red Cross of Babylon
 Emphasises the importance of fidelity, integrity and truth
 Holy Order of The Grand High Priest
 A special and uplifting ceremony

<https://sway.office.com/9zbuGHDtfGqgvexF#content=S2OzHHeuV7bmQw>

Across Social Media

On Facebook - The Mark Province of Surrey's Virtual Balloon Race is fast approaching

Embed://<iframe

src="https://www.facebook.com/plugins/post.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FMarkMasonsHall%2Fposts%2F804473880419104&width=500&show_text=true&height=608&appId" width="500" height="608" style="border:none;overflow:hidden" scrolling="no" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen="true" allow="autoplay; clipboard-write; encrypted-media; picture-in-picture; web-share"></iframe>

And, the Mark Province of Oxfordshire gear up for their MBF Festival Virtual Relaunch

Embed://<iframe

src="https://www.facebook.com/plugins/post.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FOxfordshireMark%2Fposts%2F783746565611887&width=500&show_text=true&height=702&appId" width="500" height="702" style="border:none;overflow:hidden" scrolling="no" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen="true" allow="autoplay; clipboard-write; encrypted-media; picture-in-picture; web-share"></iframe>

On Twitter - The Knights of the Vision Beautiful mark Maundy Thursday

<http://twitter.com/statuses/1377518351908532232>

And, the Mark Province of Bristol's MBF sponsored St John Ambulance vehicle is spotted out and about giving much needed support

<http://twitter.com/statuses/1377589321956483073>

Not seeing your news? Join us on Social Media

Social Media is becoming an increasingly important platform for how we get to hear about what is going on further afield in all of our Orders. If your Province/District/Division has a Facebook Page/Group or Twitter Feed, or if you represent a Masonic Club or Society linked to our Orders, please send us an invite to join or follow you.

We can be found at:

Facebook - Mark Secretariat⁴ - This is the contact account for the Mark Masons' Hall Facebook Page⁵

Twitter - @MarkMasonsHall⁶

Or you can email us at communications@mmh.org.uk⁷

⁴<https://www.facebook.com/mmh.secretariat.3>

⁵<https://www.facebook.com/MarkMasonsHall/>

⁶<https://twitter.com/MarkMasonsHall>

⁷<mailto:communications@mmh.org.uk>

The Shop@86 is open for online orders via the website

[Click Here⁸](#) to visit the Shop@86 website

Please note: During the current Government Lockdown restrictions, there will be limited access to Mark Masons' Hall. As a result there will be delays to the despatch of orders, which will take place on a weekly basis, normally on a Tuesday. Customers will be notified via email once their order has been despatched. For enquiries about your order please email ordersinfo@mmh.org.uk⁹



⁸<https://www.shopat86.co.uk/>

⁹<mailto:ordersinfo@mmh.org.uk>

The KT 20 for 2020 Appeal has now raised over £46,000 and continues to grow



Please note that the MCF, who are handling donations to this appeal, have moved their payment collection site from the Everyday Hero platform to that of Just Giving. This doesn't impact how you make your donation but unfortunately it isn't possible for us to set the amount of your donation automatically to £20. The default set by the website is £30 and you will need to adjust it down.

You can support the Eye Hospital by making a £20 donation. [Just Click Here¹⁰](#) or use the Text Donate facility below.

100% of donations will be given to the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group to support their vital work. To recognise your generosity and support, The Great Priory of Knights Templar is sending a limited-edition Swift tie/lapel pin to every donor.

The Swift pins are now being posted out but please bear with us as we are only in the office one day per week to carry out this task so some deliveries will take longer than others. Thank you for your patience.



Text **KT2042020 to 70500 to donate £20**

All monies donated to this text number go towards the **The Knights Templar 20 for 2020 Appeal**

For a text donation, you will be charged for one standard text message plus your donation of £20. Always get the bill payer's permission. The Relief Chest will receive 100% of your donation. If you do not want to be contacted by text in the future, add the words NO INFO when texting your donation. All donations are administered by the Relief Chest Scheme (Grand Charity Registered Charity No. 281942). Text donation helpline: 020 3146 3352. Masonic Charitable Foundation Charity No. 1184703; Company No. 09751836

60 Great Queen Street | London | WC2B 5AZ | www.mcf.org.uk

¹⁰<https://fundraising.mcf.org.uk/Appeal-KT2042020>

MBF Festival 2021



East Lancashire Province, hosts of the **153rd Mark Benevolent Fund Annual Festival in 2021**, have produced a unique **Souvenir Festival Calendar** for the year **2021** and copies are now available.

These large, wall hanging calendars feature twelve contrasting prints of iconic sights in East Lancashire, commencing with the beauty of Pendle Hill in January and ending with Manchester's colourful Christmas Market in December. The 12 original watercolours were painted by Annette Young over the past four years specially for this calendar without cost to the Province. Calendars are priced at £10 each and all proceeds will go to the MBF.

So, let us brighten your kitchen or office wall and at the same time provide much needed support for our Mark Benevolent Fund. Why not purchase several more copies to send to friends and family at Christmas?

Thank you very much for your support.



The calendar measures: 318mm x 228mm folded – 318mm x 456mm open

To order:

By email: eastlancscalendars@gmail.com¹¹ By telephone: 07766731307

Payment by **cheque to East Lancs Mark 2021 Festival** – post to:

East Lancs Calendars. 47 St Leonards Way, Woore, Crewe. CW3 9SS

Or contact them for electronic payment details

And don't forget, Stewardship, Badge and Festival orders can be places as well.

Click Here¹² for the Stewardship and Festival Badge Form

Click Here¹³ for the updated complete Festival pack

And you can visit the Province of East Lancashire's website Here¹⁴

MBF Festival Stewardship Jewels Now Available

The new-look MBF Stewardship Jewels have now multiplied in number and are available for the following Festivals:

2022 Surrey¹⁵

2023 West Yorkshire¹⁶

2024 Cheshire¹⁷

2025 Oxfordshire¹⁸

2026 Hampshire & IOW¹⁹

2027 Warwickshire²⁰

2028 Somerset²¹

¹¹<mailto:eastlancscalendars@gmail.com>

¹²https://www.markmasonshall.org/images/news_articles/2020/2021_MBF_Stewardship_Badge_Form.pdf

¹³[http://download.mmh.org.uk/Complete_Forms_Pack_Final_2021_-_Updated_18.01.2021\(002\).pdf](http://download.mmh.org.uk/Complete_Forms_Pack_Final_2021_-_Updated_18.01.2021(002).pdf)

¹⁴<http://www.wordpress.eastlancsmark.org/?p=11465>

¹⁵<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2022-surrey-mbf-festival-stewardship-form-2/viewdocument>

¹⁶<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2023-west-yorkshire-mbf-festival-stewardship-form/viewdocument>

¹⁷<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2024-cheshire-mbf-festival-stewardship-form-2/viewdocument>

¹⁸<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2025-oxfordshire-mbf-festival-stewardship-form-2/viewdocument>

¹⁹<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2026-hants-iow-mbf-festival-stewardship-form-2/viewdocument>

²⁰<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2027-warwickshire-mbf-festival-stewardship-form-2/viewdocument>

²¹<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2028-somerset-mbf-festival-stewardship-form-2/viewdocument>

2030 Essex²²



²²<https://www.markmasonshall.org/mbf-download/2030-essex-mbf-festival-stewardship-form-2/viewdocument>















We reported recently that the new style MBF Festival Stewardship is aimed principally, (but not exclusively), at members of each host Festival Province.

In return for a qualifying donation of £100, each Steward will be entitled to:

- A distinctive Stewards' breast jewel, year bar and pocket jewel holder.
- Inclusion of their name in the Festival Stewards' Roll of Honour in the Festival booklet

- And for individuals making their first donation under the scheme, qualification as a Life Governor of the Mark Benevolent Fund – the first step on the ladder of honorifics.

Monies raised by the take-up of Festival Stewardships will, of course, be included in each respective Festival total.

Helping to Combat Covid



At the start of Lockdown the Grand Secretary, R.W.Bro. Ryan A. Williams, P.G.J.W., shared the COVID Symptom Study²³ app.

As local lockdowns and UK cases increase, with over 4 million users, this app is a useful source of information regarding the situation in your area, as well as being a portal through which people of all ages and backgrounds are joining together to fight COVID, support the NHS, help scientific research and help get us out of lockdown safely.

Business as usual for the Staff@86



²³<https://covid.joinzoe.com/>

Staff from the 4th Floor at Mark Masons' Hall have returned to working from home but all departments and teams are available via email and telephone to help and support as usual.



Mark Masons' Hall is pleased to be

