An emotional Provincial Meeting

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Standing ovation as PGM tells packed annual meeting, ‘time for me to retire’

There were emotional scenes at this year’s Provincial Meeting as our popular PGM Paul Gower announced he was to retire.

At the end of his heartfelt address he told a gathering of more than 900 members and guests at Freemasons Hall in London that he planned to stand down before next year’s meeting.

His words were greeted with a long and heartfelt standing ovation.

He said: “I have been proud and honoured to hold the highest provincial office, that of Provincial Grand Master for Hertfordshire.

“It has been a most satisfying and rewarding experience and I have enjoyed almost every moment of it. But on Saturday of this week I will reach my 73rd birthday and it is time for me to make way for a younger man. Brethren, I would not have been able to undertake this office without the help and support of so many members of this very happy Province and I thank you all for your goodwill and encouragement.

“May God bless you all.”

Earlier in his address the PGM made reference to several milestones for the Province over the past year. A highlight, he said, was the success of the Festival dinner where it was announced £3.63m had been raised. “I wish to publicly thank VW Bro Dick Knifton, WBro Chris Noble and all Festival Committee Members for their untiring efforts to ensure the success of the Festival,” he told the gathering.

He made special mention of the growing success of the Visiting Officer Scheme and the Province’s young masons group, the Fleet House Light Blues Club. He said: “The club undertakes a significant number of events throughout the year. Very notably, in the summer, a charity walk organised by them raised in excess of £3,000 for the MIND charity in memory of a deceased member.”

The PGM went on the announce that the newly designed website was to launch that evening and thanked members of the communications team for their hard work and commitment. He also thanked all those who had made the annual meeting such a huge success including the teams at Fleet House and Freemasons Hall, along with the Provincial DC and his colleagues.

Central to the annual meeting, he went on, was the conferring of various Provincial honours including his Certificate of Service, “the highest honour a Provincial Grand Master can confer”.

He said: “To all of recipients of the Certificate of Service, together with those appointed and promoted within Provincial Grand Lodge today I offer my warmest congratulations and hope they will be encouraged to strive towards yet greater achievements.

“Brethren, whatever your rank continue to demonstrate the high ideals and standards that we adhere to and encourage your friends and acquaintances to become members of this wonderful fraternity of which we are all so very proud and, above all else, continue to enjoy your Freemasonry.”
Nearly 480 members and guests packed into the Connaught Rooms for the festive board after a memorable annual meeting. After an enjoyable meal it fell to our Deputy Provincial Grand Master VW.Bro Dick Knifton to give the toast to the PGM Paul Gower. And, of course, it centred on his decision to retire. He said: “I am certain I speak for every Brother, both here tonight and in Provincial Grand Lodge this afternoon, that we are all tremendously shocked by your announcement in Lodge that you have decided to stand down as our PGM at the end of May next year. "Your achievements since taking office in 2013 are too numerous to mention, but for starters, you have successfully interpreted and introduced Grand Lodge policies necessary for Freemasonry to remain relevant in our modern world, with a gentle but firm hand.”

He went on to highlight, “the birth and development of the FHLBC which now has over 100 members and is thriving so successfully that it has made a very professional pitch to host the 2020 meeting of the new young Masons conference.” Under his guidance the Universities Scheme had progressed “from strength to strength”, with multiple candidate ceremonies which were the envy of many Provinces. VW.Bro Knifton also highlighted the success of the 2019 Festival Appeal which had topped “£3.6m and still counting”. He concluded: “PGM, we were certain you would continue in office for the foreseeable future, but we all understand that nothing lasts forever in life, and change is always inevitable. “But PGM, you are standing down just as we were just getting used to you! “I know I express the warmest best wishes and support from every member of our Province when I say we wish you and your family the very best for the future, and offer you our heartfelt thanks for everything you have done for, and achieved with, the Brethren of Hertfordshire. “Our Province will be handed on in due course to a new PGM in robust and fine form, which is a legacy of which you can be justifiably very, very proud.” He then asked all present to drink a bumper toast to the PGM which was, again, greeted by an enthusiastic standing ovation.

Among the various appointments and promotions at the annual meeting another high profile retirement was announced. Assistant Provincial Grand Master W.Bro James Harrison also stood down. He was thanked for “many years of exceptional service” to the Province by the PGM RW.Bro Paul Gower. The PGM then presented W.Bro Harrison, who had also held the post of Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, with a past APGM’s collarette. Appointed to the role of APGM was W.Bro Ollie Wells. W.Bro Wells has been married to Karen for over 30 years. They have two children and two young grandsons. He has been Master of his Mother Lodge, Bishops Hatfield, three times and a highlight was initiating and installing his son. In Province he was appointed ProvAGDC in 2001 and promoted to ProvDepGDC in 2008. W.Bro Wells was appointed ProvSGW in 2016. In Grand Lodge he was appointed PAGDC in 2012. His interests outside Freemasonry include DIY, woodwork, dinghy sailing, kayaking and clay pigeon shooting.
### Long Service Certificates

**April 2019 to Sept 2019**

#### 2019 70 year certificates
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#### 2019 60 year certificates
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<td>Marcus Abbott</td>
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#### 2019 50 year certificates
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<td>Brian Cohen</td>
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<td>Robert Carvall</td>
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### Brian Cohen

Brian Cohen enjoyed an unusual double in the summer – he was installed in the chair, and presented with his 50-year certificate.

Brian became Master of Tree of Life Lodge, which he was a co-founder of in 1989, and at the same meeting celebrated his half-century in Freemasonry. He told Provincial News: “I received my certificate from VW.Bro Richard (Dick) Knifton in an extraordinary manner. I was asked to leave my Pedestal and to join him in the centre of the Lodge.

“It was presented with warmth and dignity. It was fantastic.”

Brian was initiated into Probit 4911 in May 1969 and served as Master in 1978. He joined Chapter of Friendship and Fidelity in 1974 and Universal Tree of Life Chapter in 2016.

### W.Bro Reg Luckman

W.Bro Reg Luckman was recently presented with his Craft 70-year and Royal Arch 50-year certificates by his lifelong friend W.Bro John Hay, with the addition of an oration written by VW.Bro Dick Knifton, DepPGM. Reg was initiated into James Terry Lodge No.2372 in January 1949 after an eventful war-time service in the Royal Navy serving on battleships in the North and South Atlantic, Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Reg subsequently joined Chapter and many other orders. Throughout this time, holding active offices, he has “encouraged many others to embrace the ideals of the Craft and other orders”.

### W.Bro Derek Burgess and W.Bro Edmund Homewood

At the Installation meeting of Gresham Lodge No 869 in June, W.Bro Derek Burgess and Edmund Homewood celebrated 50 years in Freemasonry. Edmund was initiated into Gresham Lodge in April 1968 and became an honorary member in 2018. Derek was initiated into Ley Spring Lodge No 1598 in1968, becoming a joining member of Gresham Lodge in 2011. RW Bro Paul Gower, the Provincial Grand Master, presented both Brethren with a 50-year Certificate.
Norfolk Blood Bikes
If you remember VW.Bro Rev Andrew Davey, PGChaplain, you will know he was, and remains, anything but the archetypical priest. Among other achievements, he worked with the Province on a skydive in 2000 and latterly, in Norfolk where he now lives, he obtained a Private Pilot's Licence and scuba diving qualifications. Much more recently, thanks to meeting Colin Farrington, chairman of SERV Norfolk, he has a new interest. He has become part of a life-saving team of volunteers. SERV Norfolk is now known as Norfolk Blood Bikes. The county's PGM and brethren have been big supporters of the charity and a couple of years back raised enough money to buy three bikes named Faith, Hope, and Charity. Enter Andrew. Having passed his motor bike test four years ago – many may remember him on his little bike in and around our Province back in the day - and his Advanced bike test last year, he was inspired at the age of 65 to join NBB. He tells us he has been trained on the handling of blood products and has completed both overnight runs on a Yamaha FJR1300, and a session as controller. He told Provincial News: “Yes, the madness continues. And I am about to retire, so watch this space.” NBB is a part of a nationwide association of bikers who give their time and skills carrying samples and blood products from hospital to hospital, overnight and at weekends, when the NHS does not have a dedicated service of its own. These volunteer bikers save the NHS hundreds of thousands of pounds each year in taxi fares, money which can be spent on other vital services. To see more information, visit www.bloodbikes.org.uk

A striking performance
James Davis, Master of Royston Lodge 4304, has been awarded a silver matchbox inscribed with the dates “he achieved perfect working of Craft ritual” in the period leading up to his installation last year. The presentation was made by the Preceptor, Graham Holmes in the presence of Colin Hellyer, who instigated the challenge and acted as monitor. The test, which is similar to that set by the Emulation Lodge of Improvement in London which requires a Brother to perform in four sessions:

1. Opening and Closing in all three degrees including the risings and prayers.
2. The First Degree and Charge including the prayer.
3. The Second Degree and Tracing Board including the prayer.
4. The Third Degree and Traditional History including the prayer.

Charity Report
By Provincial Grand Charity Steward Chris Noble
The 2019 Festival ended in July when 520 members and partners enjoyed a wonderful Festival celebration dinner at Guildhall London and the final figure of £3,632,638 was announced exceeding the Provincial Grand Masters’ minimum by 21 per cent. Thank you Happy Hertfordshire. You may ask, what now? Well, for the past six years we have successfully supported the RMTGB with our Festival and we can now concentrate elsewhere for the next five years. But we must not completely forget the MCF, our own charity, which is there to help us all in times of need. Most of my time will be dedicated to helping you all with your support for our local and national charities. I am actively meeting various charities worthy of consideration for an award and encouraging support and awareness into our Herts Lodges and membership. Why not ask them to come and give a talk to your members? These are some of the charities I am currently considering:

- Waterways Experience of Hemel Hempstead. Volunteers take special needs children and adults on a canal cruise for a day.
- Forgetmenot Musicians Harpenden. Members take quality live music into Dementia and Alzheimer’s homes.
- Tilehurst Counselling in Hitchin, which offers professional counselling and therapeutic group work for adults and young people.
- Playskills of Watford. This group organises parent and child term-time groups for pre-school children with special physical needs.

And of course...

- TLC (Teddy Loving Care). This involves giving away a free teddy bear (from a family of six colours) to every child visiting A&E hospitals. Last year we gave away our one millionth teddy bear. Watch out for the giant teddy bear asking for your help in Masonic centre in Herts. Please buy a lapel badge for £2 to help us provide the children’s teddy bears. However there are many more charities and worthy causes you and your Lodge might wish to receive Provincial support. So please let me have your recommendations in good time before the Provincial Petitions Committee meets in the autumn.

We will be running a series of workshops across the region for new, nearly new and experienced Lodge Charity Stewards. I must once again thank you all for your very generous support throughout the Festival Appeal. See page 24 for a full report and pictures from the celebration banquet.
Fit and well, Martin Stannard nevertheless attended a prostate awareness day organised by the Province. And it proved a potentially life-saving decision. For while on a business trip to India he received news that his blood test had proved positive.

Martin, a quality and compliance manager for a London based clothing company, said: “I had a worrying couple of weeks before I could get to see my GP.” In the weeks that followed he underwent further blood tests, MRI scan, biopsy and bone scan. The results showed he had an aggressive tumour and would need surgery. His prostate was removed in late June.

He said: “The speed of action by the medical professionals has been fantastic. “The support from family and friends wonderful, enabling me to confront the cancer with confidence. Martin, who has been married to Sandra for 35 years and has a son, daughter and grandson, said: “At 59 and perfectly healthy, I had no thought for asking my GP for a PSA test. “I have always been reasonably active, enjoying and arranging hiking trips around Europe until a few years ago, and as JW I did a skydive to raise funds for the RMTGB. “Had I not gone to that Masonic Prostate Awareness Day I would not have had any cause to seek a PSA test of my own volition, such that a year or so down the line I would be having a very different conversation with my family about life expectancy.”

Martin is keen to raise awareness about Prostate issues. This article is one way and was also raised at a meeting of his Lodge, Dacorum. He said: “At the meeting I stood in the Risings to thank both the Provincial Grand Lodge and Provincial Chapter for arranging the Prostate Awareness Day in Watford, which included a free PSA blood test. “I announced this not to seek any sympathy, but as a cautionary notice to brethren that they may also wish to consider asking their GP for a PSA test, as most of them are over the age of 50 and so of an age where this cancer becomes more likely to appear.” Happily Martin is now on the road to recovery. He said: “The op went as planned with all traces of the cancer removed (pending confirmatory tests), and I am now at home recovering and enjoying the garden, the sunshine and a summer of sport; all under the wonderful care of my wife, family and friends.” Martin joined Dacorum Lodge in 2011, serving as Master in 2017 and is now ADC. He is also a member of Hooks Cross Chapter.
It was a wonderful occasion.

Freemasons, family and friends once again gathered at the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban for the Biennial Service of Thanksgiving. And this year the service was even more special and memorable. For it also included the dedication of an Icon of St Michael the Archangel, a gift to the Cathedral from the Province of Hertfordshire.

The Dean of St Albans, V Rev. Dr. Jeffrey John said: “We are very grateful this beautiful icon will grace the St Michael Chapel and assist our worship.”

More than 400 Freemasons and others graced the historic landmark building for the occasion. They included the Mayor of St Albans, Cllr Janet Smith, our Provincial Grand Master RW.Bro Paul Gower, and our Grand Superintendent, VW.Bro James Sharpley.

The Provincial Grand Master said: “It was a truly magnificent occasion, and one in which it was appropriate to reflect on our very close and happy association with the Cathedral. “This stretches back over many years.”

It had also provided an opportunity “to give thanks for the continued well-being of this Masonic Province during somewhat turbulent and difficult economic and political times”.

RW.Bro Gower told Provincial News he had received many positive messages following the service, including one from one attendee who said: “It has to be the one of the best services in the Cathedral, made even more special by the dedication of your stunning St Michael icon.

“I continue to be overwhelmed by the support you give to the local community and thank you with all my heart for what you do.”

During the service a collection was taken for the 2019 Festival in aid of the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys, which concluded in July.

After the formalities, the congregation enjoyed light refreshments in the North Transept, provided by the Province. Following the occasion the Provincial Grand Master and Executive put on record their grateful thanks “to all at the Cathedral for their organisation and assistance, to VW.Bro David Ferris, who worked tirelessly to co-ordinate the Service, to the Provincial Grand Stewards’ Lodge and the Fleet House Light Blues Club for their very hard work on the day, and to the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies and his team, who displayed the high levels of efficiency, tact and professionalism that we have come to expect from them as standard, but which are the envy of many other Provinces”.

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Friday
• Check-in from 3pm
• Welcome letter with itinerary
• Three-course dinner served from 7pm - 9.30pm
• Overnight accommodation

Saturday Festival Banquet
• Full English breakfast available from 7.30am-10am
• Pre-dinner drinks served in one of the lounges
• Photographer
• Private use of one of our function suites until 1am
• Four-course gala dinner including tea/coffee and mints
• A raffle prize
• Overnight accommodation

Sunday – Depart
• Full English breakfast available from 7.30am-10am
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Salisbury Union Lodge

Congratulations to W.Bro Oghale Enuku who was initiated, passed and raised at Salisbury Union Lodge, for he was recently installed as Master of Travellers Lodge 3726 under the District Grand Lodge of Nigeria.

He told Provincial News: “I joined Masonry as a post graduate student at the University of Hertfordshire in 2015 under the Universities Scheme and moved back to Nigeria in 2016 after my program ended."

Speaking of his installation he added: “It was indeed a memorable experience as I received hearty felicitations from my Mother Lodge which had sent me fond pictorial memories of my initiation, passing and raising.

“My Installation, as rightly stated by W.Bro Peter Lucas, is a tangible embodiment of the aims of the University Scheme.”

W.Bro Enuku hoped that by featuring in Provincial News it would provide a “great opportunity for the Province and the Universities Scheme to reach out to youngsters at universities, especially international students, and show how masonry is helping foster diversity and encourage members to continue the journey wherever life may take them”.

He is pictured alongside the District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of Nigeria, Dr Onyechi Ikpeazu.

Light Blues Walk

Mental health issues touch the lives of thousands of people throughout our community – sometimes with tragic consequences.

Earlier this year the Fleet House Light Blues Club of Hertfordshire lost a very active member, Charles Wandrag. He had suffered silently with mental illness and took his own life.

Members of the FHLBC hosted an eight-mile charity walk around St Albans in memory of brother Charles and to raise awareness.

More than 25 people joined the walk and many more donated to the cause. Club secretary Dan O’Connell told Provincial News: “The walk fell on the hottest day of the year, so with plenty of sun cream the group first headed for Old Gorhambury House.

“Events secretary Luke Crouch directed the way while membership secretary Lee Canon (dressed in a banana man costume) made sure nobody was lost at the back.

“After a quick rest it was off to find the first pub and enjoy some cold refreshment.

“It was delightful to see Charles’ widow and mother-in-law on the walk standing alongside members of his mother Lodge Halsey 1479 and the FHLBC.”

Once refreshed the group visited two more pubs and enjoyed a large buffet before arriving at St Albans cathedral where walkers lit a candle in Charles’ memory and viewed the Halsey Lodge emblem on the pulpit.

The fundraisers then returned to Ashwell House for “an even bigger buffet, a raffle and presentation”. Dan said: “The grand total raised is ongoing as we are still accepting donations, however we have exceeded £3,300 so far.”
Age UK (Hertfordshire) received a welcome boost from the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF). A £1m grant has been awarded to 12 Age UK branches across the country. It will be used to support a three-year programme to help older people feel less lonely and get the most out of life. The project is branded “Later Life Goals”.

A spokeswoman said: “This is a specially designed programme providing tailored, one-to-one support for older people who are experiencing major transitions in their lives, such as bereavement, serious health diagnosis or a partner going to live in a care home.”

Thanks to “Later Life Goals”, older people in Hertfordshire have been benefiting from tailored support from specialist, trained advisors, be that information, advice or links to services or social activities.

One person to have benefited from the grant to the Hertfordshire branch, based in Welwyn Garden City, is Mary, 65, who said: “I live alone, with no family nearby. A number of health issues meant that I had been signed off work and as a result, I was struggling financially and falling behind on my mortgage payments.

“My house was in bad shape and my living conditions were poor as I couldn’t afford to make any repairs. “I got in touch with Age UK (Hertfordshire). A Later Life Goals advisor helped me. She told me I was due to receive my State Pension. I was shocked when they told me I was actually due a back payment of almost three years.”

Mark Hanna at Age UK (Hertfordshire), said: “We’re proud to be delivering the Later Life Goals programme and are very grateful to Hertfordshire freemasons for their generous support.

“The programme has already had significant impact, helping us improve the well being of older people in the local area.”

Chris Noble said: “We’re very pleased to be able to work closely with the Herts branch of Age UK to help with one of the most difficult issues affecting older people today. “Loneliness not only makes people miserable, but can have a very serious impact on physical health. With the right support there are many older people who can have their lives transformed.”
Members of Catuvelauni Lodge presented a £1,000 cheque, which included a £400 Provincial donation, to the Stand-by-Me charity. Ian Cotterill, Chair of Trustees for Stand-by-Me, said: “Can I take this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation of your support. It will go directly to support children suffering from bereavement. Many, many thanks.” Our picture shows Ian with lodge members David Curwen, Andy Gough and Stewart Kennedy.

A cheque for £500 has been sent to The Alzheimer’s Society by The Ayot Mark and Royal Ark Mariners Lodges. WM W.Bro Jim Cutler chose the charity in memory of Bro Allan Buxton who passed away in March. Charity Steward W.Bro Mike Herman with Treasurer W.Bro David Perkins and W.Bro Melvyn Nathan presented a cheque to Lyn Simmons, (Allan’s daughter), all pictured, before sending it on to the charity.

There have been many donations from our Lodges to a variety of worthy causes, so keep an eye on our monthly newsletter where more examples will be included.

Serial fundraiser and Provincial Information Officer Terry Mitchinson again took part in an annual sponsored walk run by the rotary clubs of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. He raised £465 for Willow which organises special days for seriously ill young adults. He said: “It seemed fitting to support Willow as at the end of the year the charity marks its 20th birthday.” Terry, who has raised thousands of pounds over the years, was a founding trustee of the charity set up by Bob and Mags Wilson in memory of their daughter Anna.

Work on the Orangery Room extension to the dementia ward at Prince Michael of Kent Court in Watford received a welcome boost from Province. W.Bro Chris Noble, Provincial Grand Charity Steward, enjoyed a morning touring the complex before handing over a cheque for £20,000 to Julian Simpson, chairman of the Friends of Prince Michael of Kent Court, towards the cost of the project.
Provincial Almoner’s report
Simon Cooper PAGDC

I recently received the Masonic Charitable Foundation Grant statistics for membership and dependants in Hertfordshire. It was pleasing to see that in Quarter 1 (April to June 2019) compared to Quarter 1 in 2018, numbers of grants awarded had increased from 14 awards in 2018 totalling £38,277 to 26 awards in 2019 totalling £78,652.

In addition we have 14 elderly Hertfordshire Masons residing in the RMBI care homes, of which six are being supported by the Masonic Charitable Foundation. This demonstrates Lodge Almoners are transmitting the support available to their membership. In addition support is also given by our Visiting Volunteers and the Advice and Support Team.

Members need to be aware that loneliness affects many elderly Masons and their widows and this can lead to depression and isolation. It is important that Almoners and members alike continue to keep in contact with the senior members and their widows on a regular basis. They may have hobbies or interests and require help finding local clubs or groups to join.

If members live in another Province, I am happy to contact my counterpart to arrange a local Almoner to undertake a visit and keep in contact, to make sure support is in place or assess if we need to apply to the MCF for assistance. The Masonic Charitable Foundation can be contacted directly by members and dependants using the confidential Freephone and email help lines; 0800 035 60 90 and help@mcf.org.uk

As always I would like to thank Almoners for being proactive and members of the Visiting Volunteer team who carry out a tremendous amount of work behind the scene.

Provincial Curator’s Report
By Museum curator Brian Tierney

Once again, another busy time in the Provincial Museum and Library, but much busier than usual with the Provincial Archive. This work will never stop. The formation of an archive, and Library, but much busier than usual with the Provincial

So we have two large drawers full, plus that on display amounting to over 200 items. A superb ebony and ivory maul has been received from a closed Lodge together with two most unusual alms collection boxes in the form of a square and a church. Our collection of unusual charity boxes grows. More are welcome if they are lurking unused at the back of your Lodge locker.

The new vertical glass cabinet on the staircase landing continues to attract interest from members going upstairs to the regalia department. We could do with one or two more such cabinets. If anyone has an unwanted one, please let us know.

The jewel collection receipts never cease to amaze me. Due to various legacies and donations with restrictive terms, we have jewels from all over the world but mostly non-Hertfordshire units in the UK. It seems strange that we have more Founders and Past Masters jewels for non-Hertfordshire units than from our own Province. But they make a very impressive collection. Interested jewel collectors or members are very welcome to come and have a look. While it is not practical to display such a quantity, they are all filed and readily available.

The family of the late Godfrey Kent has kindly donated the Grand Master’s ‘Kent Cube’ that was presented to Godfrey on his Installation as PGM. This now stands proudly next to that of Michael Jones. I always find it strange that the cubes are not named. Hence those on display at Cheshunt and St. Albans are anonymous and their recipients unknown. If the 275th anniversary jewel on your Master’s collar has lost its crossed banns as many have, do contact me as I can easily replace them.

Please do not throw anything away before letting me see it, especially paper, photos, etc. I make no apology for repeating this plea. It is also vital that the archive file of your unit has a copy of any history you may produce. Now the massive task of the chronic is nearing completion I will be writing soon asking for items where the file has little or nothing in it. Finally as usual, do come and see us. Lodge or Chapter group visits are welcome by arrangement, usually when the office is closed. We welcome questions about unusual masonic items you may have and have contacts if we cannot identify. We can also carry out minor repairs or replacement of missing jewel parts as well as cleaning of jewels and other metal items.

Provincial Curator’s Report
By Museum curator Brian Tierney

Once again, another busy time in the Provincial Museum and Library, but much busier than usual with the Provincial Archive. This work will never stop. The formation of an archive, and Library, but much busier than usual with the Provincial

So we have two large drawers full, plus that on display amounting to over 200 items. A superb ebony and ivory maul has been received from a closed Lodge together with two most unusual alms collection boxes in the form of a square and a church. Our collection of unusual charity boxes grows. More are welcome if they are lurking unused at the back of your Lodge locker.

The new vertical glass cabinet on the staircase landing continues to attract interest from members going upstairs to the regalia department. We could do with one or two more such cabinets. If anyone has an unwanted one, please let us know.

The jewel collection receipts never cease to amaze me. Due to various legacies and donations with restrictive terms, we have jewels from all over the world but mostly non-Hertfordshire units in the UK. It seems strange that we have more Founders and Past Masters jewels for non-Hertfordshire units than from our own Province. But they make a very impressive collection. Interested jewel collectors or members are very welcome to come and have a look. While it is not practical to display such a quantity, they are all filed and readily available.

The family of the late Godfrey Kent has kindly donated the Grand Master’s ‘Kent Cube’ that was presented to Godfrey on his Installation as PGM. This now stands proudly next to that of Michael Jones. I always find it strange that the cubes are not named. Hence those on display at Cheshunt and St. Albans are anonymous and their recipients unknown. If the 275th anniversary jewel on your Master’s collar has lost its crossed banns as many have, do contact me as I can easily replace them.

Please do not throw anything away before letting me see it, especially paper, photos, etc. I make no apology for repeating this plea. It is also vital that the archive file of your unit has a copy of any history you may produce. Now the massive task of the chronic is nearing completion I will be writing soon asking for items where the file has little or nothing in it. Finally as usual, do come and see us. Lodge or Chapter group visits are welcome by arrangement, usually when the office is closed. We welcome questions about unusual masonic items you may have and have contacts if we cannot identify. We can also carry out minor repairs or replacement of missing jewel parts as well as cleaning of jewels and other metal items.
Harpenden Business Breakfast Club

Members of a business club enjoyed a trip to Freemasons Hall in London – thanks to our Provincial Charity Steward Chris Noble.

Following a talk by him on Freemasonry at a meeting of Harpenden Business Breakfast Club, 57 of its members toured the iconic landmark building in early summer.

Chris told Provincial News: “The tour was very well received and enjoyed by the members.

“They told me they had found it most interesting, informative and very enlightening. Many did not realise what a large organisation Freemasonry is.”

“Our guide Steve gave us an hour tour with an incredible amount of information, facts and figures, all from memory.

“We visited the Main Temple, which was set up for RA Chapter, and were allowed to sit in the ‘big chair’. We also visited the Denmark Craft Temple.

“My guests then spent almost a second hour looking round the museum.

“After the tour we walked to the Building’s Triangle Apex to view the Victoria Cross commemorations and the ‘Spooks’ entrance to HQ.”

Freemasons Hall was used by the producers of hit TV series Spooks as its version of MI5 HQ. Internal and external scenes were shot there, especially using the Tower entrance as a backdrop.

It is been used in many other TV shows and movies including the five part drama series ‘Patrick Melrose’.

Tours are free and conducted by a knowledgeable guide. Week day tours do not need to be booked, but those on Saturdays do.
Ultimate Illusion

Mystic Mark the magician, AKA W.Bro Mark Warwick, showed off his skills at a fundraising event. The charity steward of Hertford Lodge fronted an evening of mind-reading and other magical mysteries. The Lodge raised £100 for the Noah’s Ark Children’s Hospice in Barnet.

Mark said: “By profession I am a Government registered podiatrist, but my hobby is mind-reading, mentalism and magic which I perform for charity.”

For more, check out his You tube channel.

A retired Master’s Marathon efforts for Charity

Genetically destined to be large, recently retired Master of Bishop’s Hatfield Lodge Chris Hubbard decided in 2009, when in his 20s, he needed to reduce his weight. By physical effort and diet he would also hopefully beat his asthma and increase his life expectancy.

Chris speculated that running marathons might work. He also reckoned raising money for worthy causes through sponsorship would provide the necessary incentive for a sustained, prolonged and perhaps agonising effort.

Ten years later, despite Masonic meals, Chris has shed seven-and-a-half stones and, according to Lodge Almoner Bob Padget, “looks a fine example of healthy living”.

Bob said: “Charities have benefited appreciably by a combination of Chris’s motivation, huge effort and self-funding and the encouragement and support of family, friends, work colleagues and members of our Lodge.”

His achievements include three Great North Runs, the London Marathon, the Inca Trail in Peru, the Great Wall of China – with financial help from his employer, Lloyds Banking Group – the London to Yorkshire cycle journey and climbing Ben Nevis and Mt. Snowdon.

He plans to run the Glasgow half marathon in September with more to follow in 2020. Chris has raised about £21,000 so far. Beneficiaries include Asthma UK, St. Francis Hospice, BBC Children in Need, NSPCC, Mental Health UK and Tommy’s.

Bob said: “This is a fine example to others of altruistic effort on behalf of the less fortunate and a credit to his wife, his young children and Hertfordshire masonry.”

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Charity Steward Kieran Doyle said: “We encourage other lodges to run this simple activity which all members can get involved with.”

Our picture shows, left to right, IPM Tom Golds, Kieran Doyle, Treasurer, Graham Rouse, and David Judd.

Food Bank donation

At its Installation meeting members of Dacre Lodge launched a Bring-A-Tin campaign to collect food for a Letchworth food bank. With the help of other lodges and side degrees meeting at The Cloisters, 300 tins were collected and delivered.

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Travelling Gavel

Members of Catuvellauni Lodge took part in an unusual ceremony this summer. They travelled to the Province of Middlesex to take possession of the Pines Travelling Gavel from Fulcorn Lodge.

Mystery surrounds the background of the gavel. It originated at the Pines Lodge in Queensland, Australia. It turned up at East Barnet Lodge and then Fulcorn Lodge in 2011. But as the Australian Lodge surrendered its warrant in June 2015, how the idea of a traveling gavel came about remains unclear.

The idea of its adoption by Catuvellauni Lodge came about early in 2019 when W.Bro Andy Gough of Catuvellauni Lodge noticed on a social network site that W.Bro Sanjay Mehta, of Fulcorn Lodge, had ascended to the chair of King Solomon at the same time and both were to receive Provincial Honours in the same year. Andy and Sanjay had worked together many years ago before they were Freemasons, so it was quite a surprise to learn of an old friend’s progress in Freemasonry.

W.Bro Stewart Kennedy Master of Catuvellauni Lodge was accompanied by many members of his Lodge when the gavel was handed over. It proved “a very enjoyable meeting, which also included Initiations and was followed by a Festive Board of delicious rice and curry”.

If you have any knowledge or history on the Pines Travelling Gavel contact its current ‘passport holder’ at www.fulcorn-lodge.org.uk

Family event

Brethren of three Ashwell House-based Lodges met with relatives of departed Brethren at the nearby Prae Wood Arms in St Albans.

Family members were treated to lunch and an opportunity to catch up. Current members were able to learn more about the history of their Lodge from a relative’s perspective and in turn brought their guests up to speed with what has been happening in Freemasonry.

Organiser W.Bro Rob Gurney said: “So often the only contact relatives receive is a card at Christmas and we rarely appreciate the importance that Masonry has had on their lives over many years. “Wives, children, grandchildren and brothers or sisters have often been involved in many social events in the Masonic calendar and the link can be lost when a brother passes away.

Getting together at events like this allows us to maintain that link and offer support or a listening ear to someone who may be lonely or just missing their Masonic connections.”

Diane Harrop, the widow of King Henry VIIIth member Jack Harrop said: “The Lodge has stayed in touch with me for many years, but I was thrilled when my daughter and I were were asked to join the Brethren for lunch.

“I experienced that sparkle I hadn’t had for years. I don’t often get to go out for lunch in salubrious surroundings and I really enjoyed having a chat about my family and Lodge events in the past. We are all very grateful that the Brethren are thinking of us. Jack would have been very happy to know we are being looked after.”

The lodges represented were King Henry VIIIth, Dacorum and Trust & Fear Not.

Rob is now exploring other ways of better maintaining the relationship with Masonic widows and their families.
WHAT IS THE ORDER OF ROYAL AND SELECT MASTERS ALL ABOUT?
Those of you who are not members of our Order should realise one of the central themes running through the various degrees is the story of the Ark of the Covenant and its concealment in a secret vault or crypt beneath King Solomon’s Temple.

It is from this analogy the common name of the Order, the ‘Cryptic Degrees’ has its origin. The study of the Ark of the Covenant and what it could have possibly been has occupied the mind of many Biblical historians and researchers throughout the centuries.

One of the greatest mysteries of all time is what actually happened to the Ark.

We have all seen the Indiana Jones film Raiders of the Lost Ark and while this might be pure Hollywood, the fact remains that a close reading of the Old Testament reveals more than 200 separate references to the Ark of the Covenant until the time of Solomon (970-931 BC). After his reign it is almost never mentioned again.

At some unknown date between the 10th and 6th BC, this uniquely precious object vanished from its place in the Holy of Holies of King Solomon’s Temple; vanished without mention in the Scriptures, almost as though it had never existed at all.

With such a fascinating theme as a backcloth, is it any wonder that the four degrees the Order offers are reputed, with some justification, to have some of the finest furniture, equipment and ritualistic story-line in Masonry.

Why not join us and find out more? Qualification is that one has to be a Craft Mason, a Royal Arch Companion and a Mark Master Mason. It is not necessary to have attained the Chair in any of them.

Details of all the Councils in the District with contact numbers are shown in the Masonic Year Book and there is bound to be a Council somewhere near you – just make sure that it is a Hertfordshire one!

CHANGE OF DISTRICT GRAND MASTER
At the forthcoming Annual District Meeting on October 19, M.Ill. Companion Kesick John Jones, the Grand Master, is due to install Ill Companion Peter John Brindle as the fourth R.III. District Grand Master for Hertfordshire.

Peter has been a member of St Albans Council No 215 since 2003, was its Master in 2011, and is now a member of four Hertfordshire Councils, and of a London Council. He is a Founder of two Hertfordshire councils, and an honorary member of seven other councils around England. He is currently the Deputy District Grand Master and was recently honoured by the Grand Master as his Standard Bearer.

Outside Freemasonry, Peter retired as a Group Captain after 29 years of service in the Royal Air Force.
The District Grand Master Right Illustrious Companion Colin Hellyer welcomed seven newly ‘chosen’ Companions earlier this year. The District is always excited to meet new members of the Order and truly show why we are part of ‘Happy Hertfordshire’. As can be seen the welcoming picture, members of the Executive of other Orders are being welcomed… it’s never too late to find out more.

MEETING AT THE ARDMORE HOTEL
It was yet another great success. The annual District Luncheon was held at the Ardmore House Hotel and following tradition it was themed. This year Companions, their partners and friends took to the theme with great gusto and transported us to the Wild West. The District Grand Master once again outdid himself and found a fantastic costume for the theme. Will our DistGM Designate be able to top him next year? As usual, the theme will be announced during the next Masonic season so do keep an eye out and join us next June for a fun-filled afternoon of great food and company within this very happy Order!

NEW COMPANIONS
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R&S District was constituted in October 1996. It was in October 2011 R. Ill. Comp Colin Hellyer was Installed as the third DGM. For the ensuing eight years, he has led the District outstandingly, building positively on the sound footings set by his R. Ill. predecessors, Peter Baikie and Colin Thurston. Colin Hellyer is widely active and very well-known across all forms of Hertfordshire masonry. One of his missions as DGM has been to foster the friendliest of relationships with the Craft, the Royal Arch, and other progressive Orders throughout ‘Happy Hertfordshire’, regularly pointing out that keeping Craft, Chapter, and Mark units thriving is the best guarantee of keen recruits for Cryptic masonry, and in return keeping keen, happy Masons active in their other units. R. Ill. Companion Colin will be missed for his commitment and leadership and for his general energy, kindness, and sincere interest in other Masons active in Hertfordshire Freemasonry. He has been ever-present and available to all his R&S units and their individual companions. As a consequence, he is respected by all – a fact clearly demonstrated by the spontaneous and lengthy standing ovation by all present at the Installed Masters’ Council (Trulla Argentea) on the day he announced the appointment of his successor and his own retirement. As the DGM-designate said after Colin had sat down: “Colin has been a perfect example of what is hoped for, by the companions, from their District Grand Master and, without doubt, is the epitome of ‘a very hard act to follow’.”

Colin Hellyer - retiring DistGM

Ill. Comp Peter Brindle, DistGM Designate
2019 ROYAL ARCH GOLF DAY

The weather was again kind to the 47 golfers who played in the 2019 Royal Arch Golf Day at Redbourn Golf Club in July. The course was in superb condition and this allowed the day to be very much enjoyed by everyone and with some excellent scoring all round.

Our Grand Superintendent, Jim Sharpley carried out his obligatory annual “harassing of players” duties from his on course buggy accompanied by Wayne Williams from Northamptonshire. Jim’s humorous banter was pitched just right, level but we only wished he might have shared some of his – intended obviously as thirst quenching material – chilled sparkly stuff !!

For the second year running we had a playing lady participant and we would encourage more to join in. The dinner was attended by a further 12 guests including Elaine Clift, widow of Ian Clift, who was present to make the inaugural presentation of the Ian Clift Memorial Trophy in memory of our dear friend who helped put this annual golf day in the centre of the Hertfordshire Royal Arch social calendar.

Also, we were delighted to welcome our former Grand Superintendent John Iott and his wife Glenyx. As ever, Redbourn Golf Club enabled us to have a superbly enjoyable day both on the course and at the dinner in the evening. They always make us feel very welcome.

The event made a surplus of £1,250 and which will be donated to local charities.

The major prize winners were: The Alec Fuller Trophy for the best singles player – David Broomer.

The Sydney Tuck Trophy for the best pairs – East Herts Chapter (Ali Osman & David Broomer).

The Ian Clift Memorial Trophy for the best score on all par 3s – Roy Hay.

A huge thank you to all those who participated in any capacity and helped make this once again a highly enjoyable and rewarding day. The 2020 event is on Friday, July 10.

INSTALLOCATION CONVOCATION OF CHESHUNT CHAPTER, ESBJERG

In Esbjerg, Denmark 35 companions witnessed the installation of three new Principals of Cheshunt Chapter. E.Comp Peter Wind, the current MEZ, installed his successor utilising the kneeling chair he had just completed and presented to the Chapter. E.Comp Per Jørgensen and E.Comp Thyge Bjerring also installed their successors.

In addition, two new members were balloted to join and swell the growing number of members in Cheshunt Chapter. This included W.Bro Walter Schwartz, the Grand Master of Denmark (operating under the ‘Swedish’ rite, which includes the exaltation ceremony) and Comp John Harbo who is also the outgoing Past Provincial Grand Master of Denmark.

Following the meeting Companions dined together with a superb lunch prepared and served by member Jozsef Toth, a keen amateur chef. The festive board was presided over by E. Comp Tim Huckle, the Provincial Grand Treasurer and E.Comp David Broomer, the Provincial Assistant Grand Scribe.

ROYAL ARCH PROVINCE OF HERTFORDSHIRE PROSTATE AWARENESS SCREENING

Nearly 140 men, Masons and their families attended the first ever privately-run Prostate screening session in Hertfordshire at the Halsey Masonic Hall, Watford.

It was organised by E.Comp Phil Masters, along with the Graham Fulford Charity Trust, and supported by E.Comp James Sharpley and the PGM, RW.Bro Paul Gower.

Complimentary teas and coffees were provided by the centre.

Additional help was provided by members of the Board from Halsey Masonic Hall and Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge. Eight Phlebotomists gave up their time to assist in raising awareness of this cancer and the testing of men over the age of 40. Before the session started, the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent presented the girls with a small gift as a token of our appreciation.

The team of Phlebotomists was led by Tracey Dempsey, partner of E.Comp Darren Bending, Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals who travelled down from Lincolnshire to assist in the event.

Our 100th participant in the initiative was E.Comp Robert Asser, Past Provincial DC and Third Provincial Grand Principal designate.

Over £1,000.00 was collected on the day for the charity.

Prostate cancer is one of the biggest killers of men over 40. This event gave men the opportunity to be tested but was also designed to raise awareness.

The Graham Fulford Charitable Trust was set up by Graham Fulford to promote awareness of Prostate Cancer following the deaths of a close friend and a family member.

Since 2004 the GFCT has been involved in testing over 80,000 men and conducting over 112,000 tests. Consequently, there has been well over 1,500 cancers identified that otherwise may not have been discovered.
OLD FULLERIAN CHAPTER NO 4698 – BANNER & ROBES
DEDICATION; ODENSE, DENMARK

In May 2018, owing to its decreasing membership, The Old Fullerian Chapter no 4698 held its last meeting at Watford and with the help of the Royal Arch Province of Hertfordshire, had decided to “export” itself to Odense in Denmark. At this last meeting on UK soil, members donated a new set of Robes and Sceptres for the Danish Companions to take with them to use in their new home. In May this year those Robes and Sceptres were dedicated. The MEGS, E.Comp James Sharpley, accompanied by the Second and Third Provincial Grand Principals, E.Comps Phil Masters and Rod Hancock and other Provincial Grand Officers, all who travelled to Odense for the ceremony. The team was met in Copenhagen by Comps Bjarne Rojbaek and Kurt Kunz. On arrival in Odense other members of the Old Fullerian Chapter, Comps Jakob Skarregaard and Hans Madsen took them to the hotel.

Next day started early with a run-through of the proceedings. The Chapter was then opened.

The Proclamation and Installation of the Principals was then carried out. The Most Excellent Grand Superintendent, supported by the Second Provincial Grand Principal, presented Supreme Grand Chapter certificates to seven Companions. The day was rounded off when all the ladies, who had been enjoying a tour around Odense and some of the Hans Christian Anderson museums, joined Companions for a white table festive board.

Saturday evening was spent relaxing in one of the local bars and after breakfast on Sunday, the party returned to Copenhagen where they were treated to a guided tour of the city by the MEZ of Old Fullerian Chapter, E.Comp lb Ravn-Aagaard, including a canal tour of the city, before returning to the airport where most of the party had flights to catch back to the UK.

Scribe ‘E’ Clive Bradnum closed the ceremony with a potted history which concluded with the fact that it had performed a total of 204 Exaltations and welcomed 33 joining members in its 75 years.

SUPREME GRAND CHAPTER

At the Annual Investiture Convocation of Supreme Grand Chapter, to a full house in the Grand Temple at Freemasons Hall, Great Queen Street, London, the First Grand Principal, HRH the Duke of Kent invested eight Companions from the Province of Hertfordshire. The Most Excellent Grand Superintendent, Comp James Sharpely, stated it was “indeed an accolade for Hertfordshire to receive so many honours” and submitted his heartiest congratulations to all.

First Appointments:
E.Comp John Norris, Grand Organist, E.Comp Mark Atkins, AGDC, E.Comp John Burnage, PAGsoj, E.Comp Barrie House, PAGDC, E.Comp Timothy Huckle, PAGDC, E.Comp Kenneth Williamson, PAGDC.

Promotions:
E.Comp Gary Warren, PAGsoj E.Comp Eric Misselke, PGstB. A further 21 Companions from the Province of Hertfordshire supported all those receiving honours.

A HELPING HAND AT SUPREME GRAND CHAPTER

At Annual Investiture Convocation of Supreme Grand Chapter, eight current or past Provincial Grand Directors of Ceremonies or Provincial Deputy Grand Directors attended to support those being honoured. It was a great pleasure to have E.Comp Robert Asser back in the ranks after his long absence through illness in 2018 and he is equally looking forward to his new role as the Third Provincial Grand Principal. He will be invested at the Hertfordshire Annual Convocation on November 4.

THEOBAUDS 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

A total of 64 members and guests attended a meeting of Theobalds Chapter to celebrate its 75th anniversary. Among those present was its longest serving member, E.Comp Ron Fidler, who was presented with his 50-year Certificate by E.Comp Tim Coles. They are pictured with ‘Z’ Chris King and ‘J’ Richard Bates.

The Companions then enjoyed an excellent Exaltation Ceremony for W.Bro Frank Freeman of Welwyn Viaduct Lodge.
East Hertfordshire Lodge of Mark Master Masons celebrated its centenary at a meeting early in the year. After the lodge was opened in the normal way, Provincial DC W.Bro Roy Moth led in the Provincial Grand Master RW.Bro Richard Walker and his escort. Deputy Grand DC W.Bro Mathew Hampson then entered and announced that the Assistant Grand Master was without. RW.Bro Stephen Davison then entered accompanied by W.Bro Daniel Heath, the Assistant Grand Secretary. The Assistant Grand Master was offered the Gavel which was declined. A Grand Lodge Certificate was presented to Bro David Keen, by the Assistant Grand Master.

W.Bro Philip Lever was installed as Worshipful Master. W.Bro Patrice David performed the ceremony with feeling and seeing that this was done in W.Bro Patrice's second language it was a pleasure to listen to. He presented the Address to the WM to the same high standard.

The Address to the Wardens was given by W.Bro Bob Asser and that to the Overseers by W.Bro Norwell Roberts QPM. The Provincial Grand Master delivered the Address to the Brethren. W.Bro Philip Lever handed the gavel to the Assistant Grand Master Stephen Davison. He congratulated W.Bro Patrice David on the way he had conducted the Ceremony before referring to a new warrant for the Lodge, commemorating its first 100 years and on the collars bought by Lodge Officers. Assistant Grand Secretary W.Bro Danial Heath then read out both the original Warrant and the new one. The Assistant Grand Master presented the new Warrant to the Worshipful Master before vacating the Chair. The WM then presented cheques to the Asst. Grand Master for £500 to the Benevolent Fund and similar amount to the Prov Grand Master for the Province Mark Benevolent Fund. Lodge Secretary W.Bro Bill Rumford presented a brief history of the first 100 years of the Lodge's existence starting from its launch at Cafe Monico, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, in December 1918, recounting memories from that date to this in a most informative manner.

The Lodge was then closed. Some 60 brethren attended the festive board to enjoy both wine and food. Around 90 guests attended a lunch at Mayflower Place, Hertingfordbury, back in April. It was organised by Geoff and Jan Parrish. The lunch itself was very good and compliments must be given to the caterers. There was a short speech from the PGM Richard Walker, before he introduced a pottery model of a Hedgehog adorned with the Hertfordshire roundels. He explained this money box was his way of collecting money; a tradition started by the previous PGM Chris Radmore who had a pig. All money collected would go to the Mark Benevolent Fund.

A presentation was then made to Geoff and Jan Parrish and Richard Walker thanked them for all their hard work as they were retiring from the position of Chairman of the Social Committee.

REPORT BY OUTGOING INFORMATION OFFICER

JACK FRANKS

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NORWELL ROBERTS TALKS ABOUT HIS ROLE AS PROVINCIAL GRAND ALMONER QPM, PGJD

I was asked to be the Mark Provincial Grand Almoner in 2016 and have embraced the post as fully as I am able. I have always looked upon it as a very important Office and regard it as a 24/7 job.

Not only does it involve dealing with members who require support and advice, but must also of necessity include their families who ought never to be forgotten. This is particularly important when loved ones are lost, or where the elderly are concerned or those living alone.

The role must be handled with tact, patience and of course with a great deal of compassion understanding and empathy. I am also canvassed for advice by other Almoners and members, which I provide where necessary.

I am privy to all sorts of information so discretion and of course confidentiality is of the utmost importance. It is generally assumed that an Almoner enjoys the very best of health at all times, although of course he will himself often suffer in silence, mainly because his ailments will often pale into insignificance in comparison to those he deals with. Every day a number of phone calls are made seeking updates on those who have been brought to my attention, and to ensure the continuance of their general wellbeing. This is important as in certain cases this may be their only contact with the outside world and a few minutes spent on the phone is invaluable.

My reports must always be kept up to date. Appropriate information is added daily. If I am aware, or have been made aware of any changes in their condition or circumstances, I may need to act immediately.
I often eavesdrop on conversations and act accordingly. It is often the case that members do not notify an Almoner of their ailment or needs, and information is often received second, third, or sadly fourth hand. Hospital visits are also high on my list of priorities if able to do so, if the hospital allows such, or if the patient or their families allow visitors. However with the aid of mobile communications, I am able to make direct contact. Appropriate cards and flowers are a necessary tool of my trade, and I place a liberal interpretation on this.

On occasions I have been at the fore in arranging a rota by canvassing the assistance of others so that wives are able to visit their husbands in hospital. Offers of help are always overwhelming which shows Masonry at its best. On one particular occasion following a routine call to a member, I discovered he had fallen on hard times. I visited him and completed a Petition for Assistance from the Mark Benevolent Fund with his consent. The questions asked are intrusive, as they must be, so tact and confidentially is liberally employed in all cases. Such reports can take up most of the day with travelling and compilation of evidence. It will then need to be comprehensively completed and forwarded for a final decision.

The reports have in the main been successful. The recipients have been very grateful. I always try if possible to attend funerals, not only for a member but also his family. This is a necessary though sad part of my brief. Home visits are normally made at weekends where possible. When a member lives some distance away I will liaise with a local Almoner for assistance. My wife also helps as she takes messages in my absence. She will also if necessary speak to an elderly widow or member where appropriate.

The rewards of the Office are when a smile is discerned on a recipient’s face, or when someone says ‘thank you’, or when I am aware that the quality of life of someone has been improved by the support that I or Masonry has given.

PROVINCIAL MEETING

After the annual Provincial Meeting was opened by the PGM and guests welcomed, donations to various worthy causes were proposed. W.Bro Michael Gerschel was then appointed a trustee of the Herts Mark Benevolent fund replacing W.Bro Prof Jordan Giddings. W.Bro Maurice Smith was re-appointed as Deputy PGM. The PGM then appointed, obligated, invested and installed W.Bro Michael Gerschel as Assistant Provincial Grand Master. Provincial Grand Officers for the year were then invested. In his address the PGM thanked W.Bro Trevor Clarke for his work, presenting him with a gift for himself and one for his wife. He also thanked W.Bro Ken Gooding and Geoff Parish for their sterling work. Provincial Grand Lodge was then called off. John McCombe gave an address about the Blood Bikes charity whose riders deliver blood within Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. The PGM Richard Walker presented him with a cheque for £2,000 representing the running cost of a bike for one year. Provincial Grand Lodge was then closed. For more details of the annual meeting and other Mark news go to www.hertsmark.org

Brethren please note a new Address at the top of the page and a new name. I am retiring and I offer my thanks to you all for following my pages for the past few years. Any enquiries in future please send to details at top of article.
Our Annual Service was again held at the ancient medieval Abbey Church at Waltham Cross. The Abbey Church is undergoing major renovations to the huge organ and loft at the rear of the apse, so our processions were limited. However, this beautiful building is always a wondrous pleasure to experience with remarkable historic artefacts and beautiful medieval stonework. The existing Abbey dates back to the 12th century. In the grounds are former structures dating back as far as the seventh. Our knights assembled and processed into the church with the banners of the Preceptories. This year we welcomed back soprano Helen Strange who again gave excellent and very moving renditions of familiar classics.

Over the past few years Hertfordshire’s Knights Templars have enjoyed ‘Away Weekends’. Two visits to York were very well supported by Knights, families and friends. The city and the area had much to offer, sustaining busy programmes for those who wished to explore and visit the cultural and historic parts of the city. A recent visit found local stone masons working at The Minster had set up their own authentic Lodge!

The weekends include a fine banquet with dancing, entertainment and local visits. Such is the success of these weekends, that arrangements are well advanced for a visit to Windsor from the 23rd to 24th of May, 2020. Full details will be published on the website, but we can confirm the venue will be one of the finest hotel estates at Royal Windsor. This event will be open to family and friends, so is an ideal opportunity for a great social occasion for Masons All.

The most important event in our year, Provincial Priory, was held at the Metropolitan Police Sports Club in Bushey. In addition to the usual annual celebratory matters, we received and welcomed the recently appointed Very High and Right Eminent Great Seneschal, Andrew Christopher Rainbow and his Escort. They were accompanied by many high-ranking representatives from Provinces nationwide. The Annual Meeting continued with the highest attendance so far. The Temple was full and it was a pleasure to see The Bodyguard and The Provincial Officers carry out their ceremonial duties with such accuracy and precision. The new Provincial Officers for the year were Escorted, Presented and Invested by The Provincial Prior. A long, but most enjoyable day was completed with an excellent Festive Board.
**Red Cross of Constantine**
The Masonic and Military Order of the Red Cross of Constantine and the Orders of the Holy Sepulchre and of St. John the Evangelist.

**GRAND IMPERIAL CONCLAVE (RCC)**
The annual meeting of Grand Imperial Conclave of the Red Cross of Constantine was held in July at Freemasons’ Hall, London.
Appointments and promotions in Grand Rank were conferred on worthy recipients. Congratulations therefore go to two of our Hertfordshire Knights who received their first appointments in Grand Honours.

Tony Wright received the rank of Past Grand Prefect and is now in his 9th year of faithful service in this Division as our Divisional High Prelate. John Campbell was appointed Past Grand Warden of Regalia, and currently serves as our Divisional Deputy Marshal.
Following the meeting a very enjoyable Festive Board was held in the Connaught Rooms, where the attached photo captures the Hertfordshire contingent in convivial mood.

**APPENDANT ORDERS**
This year the ‘Appendant Orders’ will be held on Saturday, October 12, at the new venue of Mayflower Place, Hertingfordbury. This is an extremely deep and meaningful Christian ceremony attached to the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine which is a necessary progression to enable a member to progress to the Chair.

**JOINING RCC**
The Order of the Red Cross of Constantine, together with its Appendant Orders, is a natural step from Royal Arch Chapter to Masonic Christian Fellowship. It is a particularly good order for Masons who are interested in knowing more about Masonry and the foundation of early Christianity.

The regalia of the order is simple and inexpensive consisting of a Sash and two Jewels although a sword will be required later on as you move up the ranks.
Our Conclaves meet at Radlett, Royston, Cheshunt, Watford and St Albans, usually two or three times a year.
The only qualifications for membership of this Order are to be a Companion in a Royal Arch Chapter and to profess a belief in the Trinitarian Christian Faith.

For further information about this small, but friendly and growing Order, please email Mark Pedroz our Divisional Recorder, (mark@mapedroz.plus.com). We’ll be delighted to hear from you.

**GRAND COLLEGE 2019**
The Annual Assembly of Grand College was held in June at Hinkley and was attended by the Grand Superintendent, R.Em Kt Pt Barry Searle, GCPO. and he was supported by other Kt Pts from the District.
A number of Knight Priests from Hertfordshire received appointments and promotions.
Receiving first appointments were Dennis Cope as PGBB, Michael Phelan (sadly now deceased) as PGBB and Ronald Rowland as PGBB.
Richard Brown was reappointed AGDC after Annual Assembly.
Receiving promotions were Ivor Cook to PG1VP, Neil Evans to PGV1P, Malcolm McCaw to PG1VP, Stephen Murphy to PG1VP and Bernard Willis to PGV1P.
The Grand Superintendent was pleased that a number of recipients were able to attend in person and join him on the Hertfordshire table for lunch.

**ORDER OF HOLY WISDOM**
We had the opportunity to work the Order of Holy Wisdom Ceremony for the fourth time in the District at the meeting of the John Owen Place Tabernacle in April. At this meeting seven of the new Divisional Kt Pts were admitted to the order in a ceremony conducted by Ill.Kt.P Geoff Cheshire and presented with their Cordelia.
The recently reintroduced ceremony of the Order of Holy Wisdom was worked in the 18th century, but it required a lot of costly equipment and at least two rooms. The new abridged ritual maintains the spirit of the original whilst eliminating much of the cost involved.
All newly-made Kt Pts are eligible to be admitted. Progress in the Tabernacle is dependent on membership of the Order of Holy Wisdom

**PILLAR FUND**
The Order, which was founded in 1924, will soon reach its centenary. Our aim is to secure our own premises to celebrate the occasion.
In order to do this a Centenary Pillar Fund was officially launched at Annual Assembly in 2012.
Whilst there is no fixed target, in view of the current price of property in York, a figure of £400,000 is not unrealistic. The Pillar Fund has now stands in excess of £280k. While this is a tremendous effort, support is still very much needed.

**JOHN OWEN PLACE TABERNACLE**
The John Owen Place Tabernacle will meet at Cheshunt on Thursday, October 24. The Tabernacle will host the District Meeting and there will also be a demonstration of one of the Appendant Degrees, all Kt Pts are encouraged to attend.
**Guildhall dinner**

It was a fitting and glittering end to more than five years’ hard work and dedication. London’s Guildhall was the spectacular venue for a gala banquet marking the completion of our Province’s 2019 Festival. More than 500 Hertfordshire Freemasons, their wives, partners and guests attended.

It was hosted by Provincial Grand Master Paul Gower and his wife Barbara. Highlight of the evening was the official unveiling of the money raised by ‘Happy Hertfordshire’ – a magnificent £3,632,368.

PGM Paul Gower told Provincial News: “This was the climax of our 2019 Festival, launched on January 1, 2014. It was a very happy occasion in the magnificent setting of probably the most historic venue in the City of London. And it was a fitting location in which to receive our Principal Guest, MW.Bro Peter Lowndes, Pro Grand Master, together with senior figures from the RMTGB to hear the announcement of the Festival total of almost £3.65M.

“Five hundred and twenty guests, after enjoying convivial pre-dinner drinks, repaired to the Great Hall of Guildhall, which dates back to 1430, to dine in style and splendour looked down on with imperturbable self-denial by those honest giants Gog & Magog.

“Congratulations to all who helped organise it and to all those who worked tirelessly over the last few years to raise such a magnificent total for the Hertfordshire 2019 Festival.”

Deputy Provincial Grand Master, VW.Bro Dick Knifton, proposed a toast to the Masonic Charitable Foundation and W.Bro Les Hutchinson responded. It was he who announced “with great delight” the fantastic total of £3,632,368 raised by the Brethren of Hertfordshire. He also acknowledged the “enormous amount of hard work put in by Provincial Grand Charity Steward W.Bro Chris Noble and his team”.

VW.Bro Dick Knifton told Provincial News: “VW.Bro Mike Woodcock and the Pro Grand Master made very complimentary remarks about the achievement of our Province in their responses. “The Provincial Stewards on duty did a splendid job in guiding and marshalling guests from the champagne reception in the Old Library and Print Room, to the Great Hall for a sumptuous formal dinner, and finally to their carriages. “Well done, Happy Hertfordshire!”