

South Wales Provincial Lodge of Mark Master Masons

Covid-19 Initiatives

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness”- Desmond Tutu

We live in strange times and it's at times like this that Mark Masonry can prove its worth and we put our values into practice by keeping in touch and supporting each other. For those not 'au fait' with emails, texts or Zoom, a phone call is a very welcome contact. These weeks at home have given us time to reflect and our Provincial Grand Master RW Bro T.R. Eirian Jones has led the way with his weekly messages keeping us informed and keeping our spirits up.

The Provincial Grand Master writes:

“When Masonic suspension and the lockdown began in mid-March I decided to keep in touch with the members of the Province with a weekly message of encouragement and Masonic information. My first message was sent out on March 31st which was to have been the day of the official launch of our Provincial History book celebrating 150 years of Mark Masonry in south Wales.

I was very fortunate to have this rich source of information about our Province to draw on and decided to make every weekly message cover an event or personality with a link to that particular week.

My 15 messages have ranged from thumbnail biographies of four of our past Provincial Grand Masters, short accounts of early Lodges (including one which ceased to exist), the early days of the Mark and the formation of Mark Grand Lodge, the thinking behind the creation of Royal Ark Mariner Grand Rank, the division of our Province to a celebration of the 99th birthday of our longest serving Mark and RAM Mason, W. Bro. Donald Lewis Lewis, P.A.G.D.C, R.A.M.G.R.

I very much hope that my weekly efforts provided encouragement, entertainment and some new masonic knowledge to my brethren and supported them during this trying period. If it did so, then I am satisfied.

Keep optimistic brethren, and God willing, as I said in my week 8 message.

*We'll keep a welcome in the hillsides
We'll keep a welcome in the Vales
This land you knew will still be singing
When you come home again.....*

And we will come home again and resume our fraternal meetings.

Keep safe, keep well, be optimistic and Mark Well

Sincerely and fraternally,

Eirían

Provincial Grand Master



PPE Supplies from Mark Masons' Hall

Our Provincial Grand Secretary, W. Bro. Martin A Jones on discovering that PPE equipment was available from Mark Masons' Hall decided to obtain a supply and distribute them locally. W Bro Martin is a member of the Barry Lodge of Mark Master Masons.

"We are all aware of the government's continued endeavours to provide PPE across 58,000 separate organisations, including care homes, pharmacies, and GP surgeries. Many of you will have also read about the exceptional efforts of some Freemasons using 3D printers to produce PPE in the form of full-face visors.

Thanks to the ingenuity and benevolence of a member of the Mark Province of Kent, Grand Lodge has been supporting an initiative to provide Provinces, wishing to participate, with a reasonable supply of full-face visors for onward distribution to those in need locally. The member's manufacturing business has designed a plastic injection mould capable of producing up to 2,500 plastic visors per week.



A supply of these masks was obtained by the South Wales Provincial Grand Secretary, W. Bro. Martin Jones, who distributed them to a number of local organisations including the Vale of Glamorgan Council Covid-19 Crisis Support Team, the Barry RNLI and local care workers."

Assistant Provincial Grand Master Assists in Distribution of Meals

When Cardiff Masonic Hall decided to offer its catering facilities by supplying daily meals to those who were experiencing difficulties W. Bro. Philip W Davies, Assistant Provincial Grand Master was quick to respond. W Bro Philip immediately offered his services and transported 63 meals and made 18 trips to a great number of brethren on a daily basis.

W. Bro. Philip writes:

" It was a great privilege to offer Mark support to this Craft initiative thus illustrating in a practical way that all Masonic Orders are indeed members of an all-encompassing fraternity.

I met many brethren who were not members of a Mark Lodge, many of whom I would not have met under normal circumstances and it was a delight to assist them in these difficult times"



Mark Masons have been active assisting those in need during the pandemic. The Cascade Foodbank in Penpedairheol benefitted from donations from both Caerphilly, £200 and Scouts Cymru, £50, Lodges of Mark Master Masons.

The Mark Benevolent Fund has also generously supported activities across the Province. The South Wales Craft Square Meals initiative in Cardiff received £1000 and the foodbanks in Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea all received £250 each.

South Wales Mark Province celebrates its 150th Anniversary Virtually

The Following events were to be the culmination of much hard work to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Mark Province of South Wales. That it was cancelled was a great disappointment to all. Due to the pandemic some of these events have now to be done virtually

The pandemic that has gripped the world over the last few months or so has prevented the South Wales Mark Province from celebrating its 150th Anniversary in a fashion that would have befitted such a proud and auspicious organisation. However, it is the intention of the Provincial Grand Master R.W.Bro. T R Eirian Jones that the brethren of the Province will at some future date celebrate our Anniversary. He has asked that we should look back and thank all those brethren who over the years have contributed to the ongoing success of the Province. Especial thanks to those who have worked so hard to ensure a successful 150th Anniversary celebration. We look forward to the future when we can all meet again.

The Assistant Provincial Grand Master, W. Bro. Philip W. Davies, took on the mantle of Chairman of the Gala Dinner committee to oversee the celebration we had planned for the weekend of the 4th July. Unfortunately, his superb work was not allowed to see fruition but parts of the planning will be implemented at a later date. He also thanks all brethren who contributed to ensuring the Gala Dinner would have been a great success.

The pandemic did not stop everything from happening albeit not in the way that it was planned. Two events which have been celebrated are outlined below.

Provincial Grand Master Announces South Wales Mark Benevolent Fund Total

The South Wales Mark Benevolent Fund total was to have been announced at the Gala Dinner. This was inaugurated at the Provincial Annual Meeting on 6th June 2012. The then Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Paul R. Clement, stated his wish to launch a charitable appeal programme to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Province in 2020. Our current Provincial Grand Master was the Chairman of the

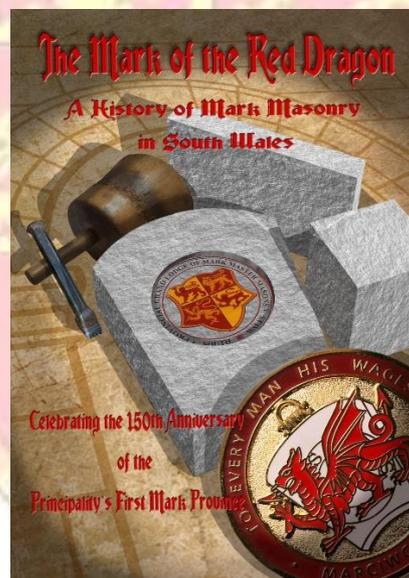
Appeal committee and the key part of the project, later to become known as the 2020 Appeal, was to raise money for charitable purposes to support our brethren in the Province and their families. In view of our forthcoming anniversary, a target of £150,000 was set.

The Provincial Grand Master is delighted to announce that the Appeal, initially set to raise £150,000, exceeded that amount by 56% and due to the generosity of brethren the total raised was:

£234,835.00

This magnificent achievement deserves grateful thanks to all who contributed.

Provincial History Book Launched amidst Corona Virus Pandemic



Back in 2016 when our present Provincial Grand Master was appointed he felt that such a historic occasion should be celebrated with a book. Our Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. Dr. Paul R. Calderwood, readily consented to become the compiler and editor of the Provincial History Book. This book was to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the oldest Mark Provincial Grand Lodge in Wales. This is the first time that a book has been published that brings together in a single volume a detailed description of the birth and development of every Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Lodge that has ever existed within the Province of South Wales.

It is a colourful hardback publication and comprises 340 pages and over 200 illustrations. It is a valuable source of information as well as a souvenir of this historic occasion.

It has the catchy title of *The Mark of the Red Dragon* and brethren of every lodge of the Province have contributed under the guiding, watchful eye of W Bro Dr Paul Calderwood whose superb editing skills have resulted in a magnificent book worthy of a place on every brother's bookshelf.

A copy can be purchased for just £17.50 and can be collected from the Mark Provincial Office or from one of many local distributors.

See under "**Members Only**" on the web page for a full list of distributors

In conclusion this virus has touched the hearts of many, some more tragically than others. Vigilance and care for others is the watchword and we all look forward to the day when we can all meet again.

"No distance of place or lapse of time can lessen the friendship of those who are thoroughly persuaded of each other's worth"

Robert Southey

Compiled by W Bro Roger Lewis

