

ELECTION OF GRAND MASTER

W BRO JAMES NEWMAN, PAGDC: MW Pro Grand Master and Brethren, what an honour it is for me, a proud Yorkshireman, to have the opportunity to propose this resolution this afternoon. The Grand Master's connections with Yorkshire are well known and he is a regular visitor to the County.

My own involvement with the RMBI has enabled me to see, at first hand, the tremendous support that he and the other members of his family have given and continue to give, to all the central Charities over so many years. Their visits to our homes are a great source of inspiration, not only to the residents but to all the staff and management team.

Like me, I suspect that the majority of us here today have known only one Grand Master during our Masonic careers as, as His Royal Highness will soon start his forty-fourth year in this role, the longest of any Grand Master in our almost 300 year history.

These last four decades have seen tremendous changes in the way we all live and communicate with each other, life-changing technological advances and the emergence of new values and standards across the world. Throughout this time, Freemasonry has held firm to its basic beliefs and principles, making subtle changes where necessary. Encouraged by our Grand Master, it has pursued a policy of openness, which has changed the attitude of society towards us so demonstrably as a result.

Apart from bringing so much stability to our fraternity, he has been a true leader. Like all good leaders, he has led us by example, and his public reputation, as a Mason and as a Member of the Royal Family, is as pure and unsullied as he would wish all of ours to be.

I am sure I speak for everyone here today and all Freemasons under this Constitution, in hoping that he will remain able and willing to continue to lead our wonderful organisation for many more years to come. It therefore gives me great pleasure to be able to propose that His Royal Highness, The Duke of Kent, be re-elected as Grand Master for the ensuing year.

W BRO SIMON ROWE: MW Pro Grand Master and Brethren, we are greatly honoured to have such a distinguished leader of our fraternity as His Royal Highness, The Duke of Kent. He has accepted this trust with great dignity and dedication for over four decades, and has shouldered his responsibilities with immeasurable distinction.

Brethren, we are mindful that pure Antient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more: namely the Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch.

To have such a member of our much loved royal family as the head of pure Antient Masonry is undoubtedly a great honour, and indeed a privilege for us all. Therefore Brethren, as a Brother, and a Royal Arch Companion, it is with the utmost pride, as a man from Devonshire, I second the proposition, that His Royal Highness, The Duke of Kent, be re-elected as Grand Master for the ensuing year.

The Motion was accepted with loud acclaim.

The Brethren stood while the Grand Director of Ceremonies (VW Bro O.A.W. LODGE, TD) proclaimed MW Bro HRH The Duke of Kent, KG, GCMG, GCVO, ADC, as Grand Master by his several styles and titles.

EXPULSIONS

In the Paper of Business for the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge held on 8 September 2010 the expulsion with effect from 17 June 2010 of Bro Michael Walter Robson was reported. Owing to an administrative error the particulars of the wrong Brother were provided. The Brother who should have been expelled was Malcolm Robson and his expulsion is accordingly reported in the Appendix.

COMMISSION FOR APPEALS COURTS

The following Brethren have been elected by the Rulers' Forum as Members of the Commission for Appeals Courts, with effect from the Annual Investiture of Grand Officers, for the period of 2011 to 2014:

Name	PM of Lodge
W Bro E.B.D. Waldy, PSGD	No. 28 (London)
W Bro M.J. Messent, AGReg	No. 23 (London)
W Bro G.G. Dearing, PAGReg	No. 1725 (East Kent)
W Bro His Honour Judge L.C. Goldstone, QC, PAGReg	No. 3140 (East Lancashire)
W Bro P.E. Lawton, PAGReg	No. 5871 (Yorkshire, West Riding)
W Bro P.L. Bird	No. 6632 (Buckinghamshire)
W Bro D.N. Cheetham	No. 475 (Bedfordshire)
W Bro His Honour Judge R.J.S. Foster	No. 6398 (London)

PANEL FOR CLEMENCY

The following Brethren have been elected by the Rulers' Forum to serve on the Panel for Clemency, with effect from the Annual Investiture of Grand Officers, in addition to the President and Deputy President of the Board of General Purposes:

VW Bro M.B. Davies, PGSwdB
VW Bro J. Gillyon, PGSwdB
VW Bro M.W. Bayes, PGSwdB
W Bro P. Mitchell, PAGDC
W Bro N.J. Burger
W Bro D.H. Lane

IN MEMORIAM

MW PRO GRAND MASTER: Brethren, the Board's Report lists the names of those Grand Officers whose deaths were reported up to 8 of February, including W Bro Maj 'Freddie' Smyth, a noted Masonic historian and a holder of the Grand Master's Order of Service to Masonry. I now call on you to stand in memory of those departed Grand Officers and other members of Grand Lodge.

The Brethren stood in silence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MW PRO GRAND MASTER: Brethren, I have to announce that the MW The Grand Master has made the following appointments:

VW Bro Peter Allan Taylor, PGSwdB, to be Provincial Grand Master for, and Grand Superintendent in and over, Shropshire, in succession to RW Bro James Hodgson, who retires on 3 July. Bro Taylor will be installed on 9 July; VW Bro Martin Geoffrey Peters, PGSwdB, to be Provincial Grand Master for Berkshire, in succession to RW Bro Michael Hooton, who retires on 31 July. Bro Peters will be installed on 27 September; and W Bro Gordon Robertson, PJGD, to be Provincial Grand Master for Buckinghamshire, in succession to RW Bro Raymond Reed, who also retires on 31 July. Bro Robertson will be installed on 24 October.

In his capacity as First Grand Principal, the MW The Grand Master has appointed E Comp Richard Vernon Gutteridge, PAGSoj, to be Grand Superintendent in and over Nottinghamshire, in succession to E Comp John Howitt, who retires on 18 May. Comp Gutteridge will be installed on 20 May; and E Comp Philip Alan Berman, PAGSoj, to be Grand Superintendent in and over Hampshire and Isle of Wight, in succession to E Comp Dr Roger Jago, who retires on 19 May. Comp Berman will be installed on 11 June.

THE MASONIC POCKET DIARY 2012

We are pleased to be able to offer the unique Masonic Diary especially designed for members of the Craft. Sixteen months of use, from September 2011 to December 2012 and full of Masonic information. Available from July 2011 and priced at £6.85, postage free. Cheque with order made payable to Jolly's Ltd, and send to Jolly's Ltd, Seaspray, 1 Purbeck Avenue, Poole, Dorset BH15 4DN. Telephone 01202 680395.

PRO GRAND MASTERS ADDRESS

MW PRO GRAND MASTER: Brethren, in February, accompanied by a Grand Lodge team, I consecrated the Grand Lodge of Monaco. It was an enormously successful occasion with representation from many Grand Lodges from around the world – all meeting in harmony.

The Lodges that make up the new Grand Lodge are from the English, French and German constitutions and we were delighted to be asked, as the mother Grand Lodge, to run the Consecration assisted by the Grand Master of Germany and a past Grand Master of France. On behalf of the Grand Master, I presented them with a fine sword. For the rest of the day we found ourselves on the receiving end of countless handshakes and heartfelt congratulations on the ceremony, which had been superbly organised by the Grand Director of Ceremonies and his team.

I am delighted to tell you that *Freemasonry Today*, due out in early April, will be the first of the newly designed issues to reflect the magazine as the official journal of the United Grand Lodge of England. The editorial side will evolve to align the content more closely with our communications strategy, as the magazine is an ideal way for us to communicate our key messages to our members, their families and potential members.

To that end the Strategic Communications Committee, which I told you about in my September Quarterly Communication speech, has asked the Board of General Purposes to agree a clear policy on editorial content for the future. Our aim is that you enjoy the magazine, are proud to show it to your family and that it becomes an award winning journal.

It was very timely to have the head of Disaster Management at the British Red Cross talk to us today. Most particularly we are mindful of the plight of our Brethren in Christchurch, New Zealand. Although there has been terrible damage to many of their homes none of them are amongst those who have been killed. The District Grand Master's home is in ruins but they are doing the best they can to maintain morale. It is suggested that at least one third of the buildings will have to be destroyed.

When I attended the 150th celebration of their District in Christchurch at the end of 2009 we changed in the Cathedral before our street march to the civic centre where the celebrations were held. The following day the Dean invited us to attend their Holy Communion service in regalia and I read the lesson. It is particularly distressing to see on the news that the Cathedral spire has collapsed and I am informed that the civic centre, where we held the main celebration, has been completely destroyed. The Grand Charity immediately sent £30,000 via the Red Cross to Christchurch.

But Brethren, there have also been, for example, the floods in Brazil where another emergency grant of £20,000 has been made to the District Grand Lodge of South America, North Division, to assist with the devastation after the mud-slides and flooding north of Rio de Janeiro. The key is that the Grand Charity sends the money through the Red Cross and we know that they will use the money properly at the beginning of these disasters.

On the subject of charity, many of you may be aware that the Attorney General has referred to the Court questions directed to clarify the law relating to some charities for the relief of poverty among those who fall within a particular class or category and the public benefit requirement following the coming into effect of the Charities Act 2006. The Reference has potential implications for Masonic charities at various levels although it would seem that it will not affect our four main Masonic Charities.

I wish to assure you that both the Rulers and the Board of General Purposes are treating the Attorney General's Reference seriously. A leading firm of solicitors specialising in charity law has been retained and we are in the process of instructing Leading Counsel to advise and represent us.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE QUARTERLY
COMMUNICATIONS OF GRAND LODGE
WEDNESDAY, the 9th day of MARCH 2011

The initial advice that we have received is that any of our Lodge Benevolent Funds which have been established using the Objects Clauses in the Model Trust Deed we have been promulgating for over sixty years are unlikely to be affected. We intend to apply to be joined as a party to the Reference proceedings and hope that our vast experience of charitable activities for the public benefit will be of assistance to the Court, the Charity Commission and all who will be participating in this Reference.

To keep this in perspective, the Attorney General is looking at charities in general, and although in the schedule to the Reference they have named over one thousand of our Charities we do not believe this to be in any way discriminatory. On the contrary – and it is very good that there are so many Masonic Charities – we should look at this as a reflection of the extent of our charitable activities. There are few organisations who can boast such a large number of Benevolent Funds.

AMALGAMATIONS

The Board has received reports that the following Lodges have resolved to surrender their Warrants:

Sale Lodge, No. 2962, and Timperley Lodge, No. 3555, in order to amalgamate with Cope Lodge, No. 1357 (Cheshire); and Ainsdale Lodge, No. 5884, in order to amalgamate with Samaritan Lodge, No. 4342 (West Lancashire).

The Board accordingly recommends that the Lodges be removed from the register in order to effect the respective amalgamations.

ERASURE OF LODGES

The Board has received a report that thirty Lodges have closed and have surrendered their Warrants. The Lodges are:

Phoenix Lodge, No. 1030 (East Lancashire)
Derby Lodge, No. 1055 (East Lancashire)
Rock Lodge, No. 1289 (Cheshire)
Thornham Lodge, No. 2279 (East Lancashire)
Royal George Lodge, No. 2643 (South Africa, North)
Birkenhead Lodge, No. 2826 (Cheshire)
Robertson Lodge, No. 2850 (South Africa, Western Division)
Archimedes Lodge, No. 3802 (Warwickshire)
Fenham Lodge, No. 4019 (Northumberland)
Woodchurch Lodge, No. 4308 (Cheshire)
Prenton Lodge, No. 4311 (Cheshire)
Blyth Lodge, No. 4484 (Northumberland)
Grange Lodge, No. 4583 (Cheshire)
Walkden Lodge, No. 4685 (West Lancashire)
Alexandra Park Lodge, No. 4889 (London)
Olympus Lodge, No. 5488 (London)
Victoria Lodge, No. 5504 (East Lancashire)
West Gate Lodge, No. 5513 (Northumberland)
Old Headington Lodge, No. 5798 (Oxfordshire)
Lodge of Saint Peter, No. 6765 (Derbyshire)
White Rose Lodge, No. 6781 (Warwickshire)
Fairmead Lodge, No. 6894 (Essex)
Crane Park Lodge, No. 7433 (Middlesex)
King Solomon Lodge, No. 7564 (Northumberland)
Amity Lodge, No. 8135 (South Africa, North)
Tenebo Lodge, No. 8591 (Cheshire)
New Horizons Lodge, No. 8703 (South Africa, North)
Stoneleigh Oak Lodge, No. 8709 (Surrey)
Broadhead Lodge, No. 9092 (East Lancashire)
Tame Valley Lodge, No. 9402 (East Lancashire)

Over recent years, the Lodges have found themselves no longer viable. The Board is satisfied that further efforts to save them would be to no avail and therefore has no alternative but to recommend that they be erased.