



A Message from our District Grand Prefect

Welcome to the first edition of the Surrey Gridiron newsletter. I hope that you have all been keeping safe and well and staying in contact with one another. Our Zoom meeting in December was a great success with more than 100 in attendance, it would have been so much nicer to see everyone at Croydon but hopefully it won't be too long now before we can safely meet and enjoy each other's company without any restrictions. Some councils have held Virtual Business meetings or Social meetings via zoom so thank you to those councils for making the effort and I'm pleased to say that every one which I had attended were excellent.



My congratulations again to those who have received appointments and promotions in Grand Rank; namely W.Bro. Trevor Currans, promotion to Past Grand Senior Deacon; W.Bros. John Coleman and Terry Carpenter, first appointments to Past Grand Standard Bearer; plus W.Bro. Simon McCarthy, first appointment to Past Grand Sword Bearer (via London). It was such a shame that the Annual meeting of Grand Council at Freemasons Hall was cancelled due to COVID, albeit we will see each other soon and celebrate accordingly.

Brethren, please continue to stay in contact with each other. It is amazing the different ways, we can stay in touch via social media platforms such as Zoom, Twitter, emails, WhatsApp, Instagram - the list is endless but please do not forget the good old-fashioned telephone. I can say first-hand how lovely and rewarding it is to receive or make a call, especially to someone not expecting it, so thank you again and remember brethren: **it is good to talk!** Stay safe, keep well and may the Great Disposer of All have you in his Holy Keeping now and forever.

Kindest regards, John French

Introducing our new District Grand Treasurer

In December 2020 at the District Virtual Business Meeting our District Grand Master appointed Brother Ray Seeley as the new District Grand Treasurer in the District Grand Council of Surrey.

Bro. Ray is well known to most of us as he has been the Provincial Grand Treasurer in the Mark Province of Surrey for many years.

Ray writes:

"Fellow Masons are often surprised when I tell them that I first visited Great Queen Street in 1958. I was just 11 when my father died, and the brethren of my father's Lodge (Petts Wood No. 5435) sponsored my mother's application for me to board at the Royal Masonic School. The process involved an interview at the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys in Great Queen Street. I subsequently attended the Junior and Senior Schools between 1958 and 1962.

My school career could be described as undistinguished, not being good at sports, but I did play for the school chess team, and mustered eight 'O' levels. The school had an active Careers Master, with contacts in most walks of life. He arranged interviews for me with two firms of Chartered Accountants in the City, and in the bleak winter of 1962/63, I started work with one of them, signing 5 year 'Articles of Clerkship'. At the age of 21, in November 1967, I passed my final examinations, and have been a Chartered Accountant for 53 years.

At school, I learnt to be self-reliant, and as a Chartered Accountant I have learnt independence, objectivity and integrity, and to adhere to fundamental ethical principles.

The values I have subsequently been taught in Freemasonry complement these well"



The Annual District Meeting

Due to the suspension of Masonic activity the December 2020 Annual Meeting of the District Grand Council of Surrey was held as a Virtual Business Meeting using the Zoom video conferencing tool.

Attending the meeting was the District Grand Prefect, RW.Bro. John V C French, the members of the District Executive, and a number of Surrey Brethren.



Also present was the Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Thomas Firth Jackson, the Deputy Grand Master, Right Worshipful Brother Clive Robert Manuel, and a number of visiting Brethren from other Districts, just under 100 delegates in total.

The District Grand Prefect said how pleased he was to reappoint W.Bro. Bob Tuthill as the Deputy District Grand Prefect and thanked him for all his support over the past year.

He then asked the District Grand Secretary to read the names of the Brethren appointed to and promoted in District Grand Rank following which the District Grand Prefect congratulated those who received appointment or promotion in the District Grand Council of Surrey.

The District Grand Prefect thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed. Afterwards the Zoom remained open for a few minutes to allow everyone to chat together before saying goodbye.

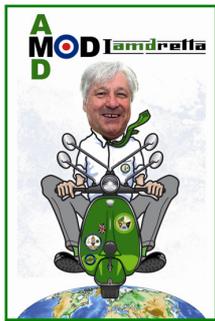
A Look Back on 2020

Who would have thought when we were last together at the District Annual Meeting at Croydon Masonic Hall in December 2019 what 2020 would hold for us all.



During the meeting the District Grand Prefect presented W.Bro. Ian Clark, Provincial Grand Master of the Mark Province of Surrey, with a cheque for £2022 in support of the Mark 2022 MBF Festival. W.Bro. Ian thanked the District Grand Prefect and the Brethren of the District of Surrey for their generous donation and their support for the Festival.

To end a most enjoyable day the Deputy District Grand Prefect presented RW.Bro. John with a caricature of him



riding a Lambretta – his newest vehicle.

In February Runnymede Council was honoured by the presence of our District Grand Prefect and our Deputy District Grand Prefect. The meeting followed a meeting of Chertsey Abbey RSM Council.



After the Council was closed the Companions of Chertsey Abbey Council and the Brethren of Runnymede Council and their guests sat down to a most enjoyable festive board at the Surbiton Masonic Hall.



On the 17th March 2020 a letter was issued by the Grand Secretary of the Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall to all Masonic Units as follows: *"The Grand Masters of the Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall have jointly agreed an immediate General Suspension of all Masonic Activity for a period of four months. This means that no Masonic meetings or related social activities*

should take place until further notice".

The first meeting of Kyngstun Council after the Suspension of all Masonic Activity was lifted in July was at the Masonic Hall, Surbiton. The meeting took place under the recently introduced Covid-19 guidelines from Mark Masons Hall.



The Council was honoured by the presence of our District Grand Prefect and our Deputy District Grand Prefect. Being new to all the Covid-19 regulations our District Grand Prefect had to be shown how to wear his face mask.



The Brethren of Kyngstun Council then got together for a socially distanced group photo wearing their new AMD face masks and face shields.



Also in July our District Grand Prefect presented a cheque for £1,000 to RW.Bro. Ian Clark towards the Mark 2022 Festival.

The first AMD Council meeting in Surrey since the Rule of Six guidelines were introduced took place at the

Southern Cross Council at Guildford on the 16th September.



What also made it special was that they had a Candidate for the Degree of St Lawrence the Martyr, W.Bro. John Massey, the Chair of the 2022 Surrey Mark Festival Committee.

Bro John was Introduced, Received and Admitted as a Brother of St Lawrence in an excellent manner by VW.Bro. Michael Barnes and his small band of Officers.

Sadly due to numbers the Council was unable to be honoured by the presence of our District Grand Prefect. However he sent everyone his best wishes and arranged for a bottle of fine red wine to be waiting for us at the bar to thank everyone for their efforts. RW.Bro. John may not have been with us in person, but he was with us in spirit...

Units unable to hold meetings during the lockdown are encouraged by Mark Masons Hall to make use of the Virtual Business Meeting Scheme instead.