



A Message from our Deputy District Grand Prefect

It's fair to say 2020 has been a year like no other for the world and by default our Masonic meetings. But among all the challenges there have also been many things worth celebrating.

In a world that is always evolving, the global pandemic has spurred us on to be more agile, more creative and more inventive than before and there have been plenty of lessons learned along the way.

I think that the experience of lockdown has been an awakening. I don't think many of us will ever go back to working in the office with a two-hour Warlingham to London daily commute. For some of you school drop-off and pick-ups are now back in your domain rather than the au pair's or grand parents, and I love the walking around the local neighbourhood, talking to the neighbours and shop owners.

I've really learned inspiration can come from anywhere. I've learned sourdough making takes far too long for me to make on a weekly basis. But I've also discovered my degree was perfect for certain home-schooling lessons for my young grandson; and that chatting to brethren in person can easily be replicated by doing so over Zoom/Teams calls and at a much more personal level as we all meet each other's kids, puppies, babies etc, which goes a teeny way towards making up for not being able to talk to them in person. One day, one day.

Hopefully that day will be fairly soon, many of us have had our first vaccinations and this goes a long way to a safe return to everyday life, and I know we are all looking forward to being able to return to full Masonic meetings after June 21st.

Our Allied meetings will improve by way of numbers being able to attend as the weeks pass by. Brethren what other order gives you the choice of five separate, meaningful and happy ceremonies.

Why not invite that guest who has been missing their Masonry to your next Allied meeting in Surrey and get back to enjoying each others company once again.

Both the District Grand Prefect and I have been representing the Province on virtual Annual District business zoom meetings throughout the country and many Council Zoom meetings in the Province as well; and we hope to attend as many 'live' meetings as possible once normal Masonic duties commence.

May I also ask you to contribute to our new monthly newsletter by providing us with a story of general interest to all masons. Together we can make this most interesting order in Masonry continue to grow after the lockdown and lay a firm foundation for the future of the Allied Masonic Degrees in Surrey.

Brethren remain safe, enjoy your Allied Masonry and stay well. I am looking forward to when we can confine this last year of uncertainty to history.

Best wishes, Bob



Introducing our District Grand Secretary

I hope you are all fit and well Brethren and looking forward to greater normality from June 2021, at the latest! As an active member of many Masonic Orders, I am certainly on my starting blocks and ready to go. As I am sure many of you are.

I was quite late in coming into Freemasonry, due to the old system of needing to know a Mason to be proposed. Interestingly, having finally joined our fraternity, I regularly came across Masons that I had known professionally and socially for years.

My educational history involved a move from South London to Surrey at Secondary level, before completing a Degree. I then had a period as Examinations Secretary for the Institute of Legal Executives and in Management Services for Racal Decca. Followed by many challenging and enjoyable years in Local Government in the area of Special Educational Needs and as a Government Advisor, before taking early retirement.

My hobbies included playing, Refereeing and Managing in Football and Men's Lacrosse at Semi Pro level. Also did a bit of amateur Boxing. I'm also a Liveryman in addition to holding membership of a number of historical based organisations such as the Guild of Freemen, Walbrook Ward and Royal Society of St. George.

I'm married to Wendy (during the break in the lockdown) but unable to fit in the Wedding Reception or Honeymoon. I have three sons now based in Oxted, Sheppey and Cornwall.

In addition to my important administrative role within the Surrey Allied Degrees, I am a unit Secretary in the Craft and two other Orders, OSM and Athelstan.

I am also a member of the Surrey Mark 2022 Festival Committee and an active Provincial Official Visitor in the Craft. My position as Provincial Grand Guide in the OSM also requires the organisation of the Visiting Officers.

Some of you may be aware that I organise two popular Charity Party Nights each year on behalf of the Mark and OSM; plus supporting with the dining arrangements for the Surrey Craft and Royal Arch Annual Meetings.

Do keep safe Brethren and look forward with enthusiasm to your Allied and other Freemasonry; and to seeing your friends and Brothers again.

Alan



Surrey Council Virtual Business Meeting

A Virtual Business Meeting of the Surrey Council No 64 was held via the Zoom Video Conferencing tool on Monday 15th February 2021. There were 17 members and guests of the Council present at the meeting, including our District Grand Prefect, RW.Bro. John French.



The Presiding Officer, W.Bro. Steve Jones, Worshipful Master, declared the meeting open and welcomed all present.



The Presiding Officer welcomed their distinguished visitor, RW.Bro. John French, to the first Virtual Business Meeting of Surrey Council. RW.Bro. John said that he had made a promise to the Council to attend any meeting where

they had a candidate. Although not possible to hold a ceremony today due to the Covid situation he was still very pleased to be with everyone.

After the regular business of the Council had been completed the Council voted to donate the sum of £100 towards the Surrey Mark 2022 Festival. Our District Grand Prefect thanked the Brethren of Surrey Council for their generous donation, which will be very much appreciated by the Provincial Grand Master, RW.Bro. Ian Clark.



Resumption of Masonic meetings

On the 29th of March the Grand Secretary wrote to members of all Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall



Dear Sir and Brother,
By now, many of you will have received this morning's communication from the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) about the relaxation of government restrictions and the options for a resumption of Craft and Royal Arch meetings in the next few months. This may have left many of you wondering what is happening as far as the Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall are

concerned and I wanted to let you know our position.

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

R.W.Bro. Ryan A Williams
Grand Secretary

The Silent Summons

A member of a certain Lodge, who previously attended meetings regularly, stopped going. After a few months, the Worshipful Master decided to visit him.

It was a chilly evening, and the Worshipful Master found his brother at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for the Worshipful Master's visit, the brother welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited. The Worshipful Master made himself comfortable, but said nothing.

In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After several minutes, the Worshipful Master took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth, all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent.

His host watched all of this in quiet contemplation. As the one, lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow, and its fire was no more. Soon, it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The Worshipful Master glanced at his watch and chose this time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember, and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately, it began to glow once more, with all the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the Worshipful Master reached the door to leave, his host said, with a tear running down his cheek, "Thank you so much for your fiery summons, my brother. I'll be back in our Lodge next meeting."

LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE.

Mike Neville's Walks and Talks

Mike Neville's Masonic walks will be up and running after 21st June.

Mike is working on an East End Masonic Walk around Whitechapel. Masonic links to the Krays, the Elephant Man, Jack the Ripper scenes, the Siege of Sydney Street, murder and wickedness....with a pint in the Blind Beggar pub where Ronnie Kray shot George Cornell.

A good social event for your Council and friends! For more information see:

<https://www.mike-neville-walks-and-talks.co.uk/>



The Order of the Allied Masonic Degrees

In this issue you will find a paper written by VW.Bro. Michael F Barnes, PGRG, on the Order of the Allied Masonic Degrees of England and Wales and Districts and Councils Overseas.

We hope you will find this interesting and informative; and something you may wish to share with your Masonic friends who are not yet in the Order.

In **Issue 3** there will be another paper. This one will be on the Allied Masonic Degrees as practiced in the USA.





the Allied Masonic Degrees



Introduction

In his epic poem “The Task” (1785), the British poet, William Cowper, has a line which reads: “Variety is the very spice of life, that gives it all its flavour” But other expressions on a similar theme can be found as far back as the ancient Greeks and it is a view to which many of us would subscribe.

Variety is one of the great attractions of the AMD. Of course, there are other Masonic orders with multiple degrees but, in these, they are progressive and have a common theme, as in the three Craft degrees. But in the AMD each of the five degrees is entirely separate and with a different theme.

Thus, each of the degrees of the Order teaches a particular moral lesson or related set of moral lessons. These may be briefly summarised as:

St Lawrence the Martyr
Knights of Constantinople
Grand Tilers of Solomon
Red Cross of Babylon
Grand High Priest

Fortitude and Hospitality
Humility
Duty and Responsibility
Fidelity, Integrity and Truth
Service and Dedication



Before we explore each of the degrees in more detail it would be worth explaining how the Order came into existence and to look at some of the significant developments in its history.

A Brief History of the Order

Originally the various degrees beyond the Craft were worked in Craft Lodges under warrant from the Antient or Atholl Grand Lodge. This was during the late 18th and early 19th century. However, in order to introduce some standardisation of the rituals, and to exercise central control over the operation of the various degrees, it was agreed in the late 1870s, that a governing body should be established. Thus the “The Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees in England and Wales and the Colonies and Dependencies of the British Crown” was constituted as a sovereign body in 1880, with the Reverend (*later Canon*) George Raymond Portal as its first Grand Master.

The first degrees to acknowledge the supremacy of the new Grand Council were the Grand High Priest, St Lawrence the Martyr, the Red Cross of Babylon and the Knights of Constantinople. Further developments were largely influenced by the establishment in America in 1892 of a similar body styled the “Sovereign College of Allied Masonic Degrees for the United States of America”, with a similar objective to the English body. Among the degrees that came under the control of this body were the Grand Tilers of Solomon and the Order of the Secret Monitor.

By agreement with the American body, in 1893, the degree Grand Tilers of Solomon was conferred upon the Earl of Euston, the then Grand Master, and other leading members of Grand Council. The degree was then added to the original four under the Grand Council.

Then in 1895 the Grand Master was invited by the American Order of the Secret Monitor to work the American version of that degree in the UK. He then duly authorised councils to work the American degree of Secret Monitor, notwithstanding that a UK OSM body had existed since 1887. This unsatisfactory situation continued until 1931 when the Grand Council of the AMD recognised the Grand Council of the OSM as the sole authority for that Order and ceased to work the American version.

In 1897 the Grand Council also obtained control of the Order of Holy Wisdom, a series of degrees worked by a Newcastle Tabernacle since about 1810. In fact these degrees were never worked under the Grand Council and were transferred to the Grand College of Knight Templar Priests when it was constituted in 1923.

So, at various times, the Grand Council has controlled between 4 and 7 orders. But since 1931 Grand Council has controlled the five degrees we have today. Apart from the degree of St Lawrence the Martyr, which must be conferred first, the other four degrees may be conferred upon candidates in any order.

Let us now examine the five degrees and discover what they have to offer.

St Lawrence the Martyr.

This is the degree in which a council is always opened and closed and in which all business must be conducted. The degree commemorates the martyrdom of St Lawrence in the year AD 257 (*sic*). Lawrence was born in Spain in AD 225. He later moved to Rome where he was ordained as a deacon by Pope Sixtus in AD 257. Among his duties he was given charge of the Treasury and the Church’s riches.

This was at the time of Valerian who was Roman Emperor from AD 253 to 260. He ordered that Lawrence should hand over to him all of the Church’s riches. Lawrence was granted 3 days to arrange this. During this time Lawrence quickly dispensed most of the wealth to the poor and needy, who he then presented to Valerian as the true treasures of the Christian Church. Valerian was so infuriated by this that he ordered Lawrence to be slowly roasted on a gridiron.

It might be added that Valerian got his comeuppance two years later when he was captured by the Persians and spent the rest of his life as their prisoner. This episode does not form part of the degree.

Legend has it that Lawrence taunted Valerian during his torture by saying that he was already roasted on one side; it was time to “turn me over”. From this Lawrence was adopted as the patron saint of cooks, chefs and comedians, among others. In reality, it is much more likely that Lawrence was executed by decapitation, which was the usual method of execution at that time.

The degree teaches the lessons of courage, fortitude, charity and hospitality.



Knights of Constantinople

After the rather gruesome tale of St Lawrence's demise, this fairly short but highly entertaining degree is a real delight. The temple for this degree represents the courtyard of the palace of the Emperor Constantine in Constantinople during the fourth century AD.

In the chair of the Council, which is arranged like a Craft Lodge, is the Illustrious Potentate, supported by the Chief of the Builders (*Senior Warden*) and the Chief of the Artisans (*Junior Warden*).

A key element to the success of the ceremony is the work of the Senior Conductor, who is in charge of the candidate. On entering the Council he tells the candidate that those working people around them (*the brethren*) are to be regarded as inferiors and to be ignored. Later in the ceremony he learns the error of his attitude and acknowledges that all men are equal in the sight of God.

The ceremony is great example of the drama and humour that can be enacted in teaching a valuable lesson, principally that of humility.



Grand Tilers of Solomon, or Masons Elect of Twenty-Seven

This degree has a theme very similar to that of the Cryptic Degree of Select Master. The lodge room represents a secret vault beneath King Solomon's Temple. The three principal officers represent Solomon King of Israel, Hiram King of Tyre and Hiram Abif.

In order to build and furnish the vault, the three Grand Masters have recruited 24 highly skilled craftsmen making a total complement of 27 Masons Elect.

During a secret convention of the Masons Elect, an intruder, the candidate, unwittingly enters the vault. This is a great embarrassment to King Solomon because he has only just been warned by King Hiram that the vault was not properly secured. Solomon had dismissed the warning saying that the vault was too remote to be discovered by strangers. In anger, King Solomon orders the immediate execution of the stranger.

Fortunately for the stranger Hiram Abif intervenes by suggesting to King Solomon that he should not be too hasty but find out how the stranger came hither. This is agreed to and when it becomes apparent that the stranger arrived there by accident he is pardoned and, having already witnessed part of the secret convention, he is admitted to their number.

An important lesson has been learned, the great danger of carelessness.



Red Cross of Babylon

This degree, which is in three parts, relates to the period in the reign of the Persian King Darius (*the successor to Cyrus*) when the work on building the second Temple at Jerusalem is interrupted and threatened by the hostility of neighbouring tribes.

The first part of the degree takes place in the Grand Sanhedrim when it is resolved that Zerubbabel (*represented by the candidate*) should journey to Persia to seek an audience with the King and ask him to restore the permission, previously granted by Cyrus, to continue the building work without further impedance. The candidate is accordingly entrusted with the necessary signs to pass the sentries.

The second part involves crossing the bridge between the two domains. He successfully crosses the bridge but on the Persian side the Jewish pass is not recognised and he is arrested by the Persian guards. Zerubbabel explains that he is Prince of Judah and insists on an audience with the King. This is granted in part three of the degree when it transpires that the King recognises Zerubbabel as a friend of his youth. Zerubbabel is greatly honoured in the Persian Court and eventually obtains the necessary decree from Darius to continue with the building work without further interruption.



The Holy Order of Grand High Priest

This was one of the first of the four degrees to come under the jurisdiction of the newly formed Grand Council in 1880 but it has always been referred to as an "Order".

This impressive Order has a complicated history and has been known under many different titles in various countries. The earliest references appear around 1770.

The brother in the chair, The Most Excellent President, represents Melchizedek, King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God. This relatively obscure Biblical character appears in the book of Genesis in the Authorised version of the Bible.

The temple (*tabernacle*) represents the encampment of Melchizedek. The ceremony is in two parts.

In part 1 the candidate is obligated and then attends to some tongue-twisting readings from Genesis, read by the Chaplain, which describes a battle of four kings against five. The candidate then represents the patriarch Abram returning from his journey after the battle of the kings, when he is received by Melchizedek.

In part two, after having partaken of bread and wine he is entrusted with the various signs, words and grip – no less than ten!

Finally, he is anointed, consecrated, and set apart to the Holy Office of Grand High Priest.



Regalia

At the completion of each degree a brother is invested with a breast jewel showing the emblems of that degree. On completion of the five degrees a brother is entitled to wear a breast jewel which is either a composite jewel or a bar from which are suspended five miniature jewels.

Qualifications

To gain admission to the Order a brother must be a Mark Master Mason and a Royal Arch Mason.

MF (Mik) Barnes
April 2021