



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

William Ramsay McGhee, M.St.J., D.L., Grand Master Mason

Brethren

Last weekend I participated in two Zoom meetings – one with the District Grand Lodge of Central South Africa and one with the District Grand Lodges in the Caribbean. Both were well attended, and both were positive in looking at the way ahead. A pleasing aspect of the meetings was that several Proxy Masters also participated. Zoom is a tool that should enable all Proxy Masters to keep in close contact with their respective lodges. Please get in touch with your Proxy Lodge if you haven't already done so and find out if they are having Zoom meetings and join in. The Lodges will be delighted to put a face to the name and you will be able to do likewise with the members.

Latest news from the Scottish Constitution Freemasonry Supports Facebook page is as follows –
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Scottish.Constitution.Freemasonry.Supports/>

	Last week	This week
Members	2394	2584
Posts	219	246
No of Members posting	132	143
Lodges mentioned	127	148
Provinces mentioned	29	29
Districts & Lodges abroad	8	8
Monetary Value	£166,870	£182,933

The SCFS Group now has Overseas Members from:

Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Botswana, Central South Africa, Chile, East Africa, Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Far East, Gibraltar, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, KwaZulu Natal, Malawi, Mauritius, Middle East, Namibia, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Zealand South, North Island New Zealand, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Sierra Leone and The Gambia, Sri Lanka, Trinidad & Tobago and Granada, Western Australia, Western Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Within the past week: **Namibia** and **New Zealand South** have joined us
There were **113** Overseas Brethren approved this week

There has been a notable increase in membership from East Africa, Middle East, and North Island New Zealand. Middle East membership has now hit **100** members
There are now over **450** Overseas Brethren.



Indoor Gatherings

Over the past week I have received queries about allowing groups who use Lodge premises back into the premises and I was also asked – “can bingo sessions restart”. The basic answer is no on both accounts.

The Scottish Government guidelines for gatherings are quite plain and straight forward albeit they do not yet allude to indoor gatherings. Regarding mass gatherings outside, their response, while aimed at households, is nevertheless quite specific that it is recommended the maximum number should not exceed eight people.

As far as indoor activity is concerned, all we can do is look at specific areas such as church buildings which are as close to Lodge buildings as we can find in the guidance notes.

Places of worship will be able to reopen for individual prayer or contemplation from 22 June under physical distancing rules and hygiene safeguards. This means that individuals can go to their place of worship on their own or in their household group to pray or take part in religious or spiritual contemplation.

It follows therefore that neither Masonic meetings nor meetings of other groups who use Masonic premises, can take place for the foreseeable future. There may be some movement when Phase 3 is announced but it is more likely that we will not see any significant movement until Phase 4. In general terms you should still adhere to the general guidelines -

- stay at home as much as possible
- only go outside for limited purposes
- stay 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people
- wash your hands regularly and as soon as you get home
- wear a face covering on public transport and enclosed public spaces
- self-isolate if you have symptoms and book a test

Just for avoidance of doubt we moved to Phase 2 on 19th June. It is expected that Phase 3 will be announced next Thursday 9th July.

Please remember for any urgent issues whether at home or abroad – you can contact Grand Lodge on the following numbers - Dawn Oliff - 07464 683630, Sue Williams 07881 440272 and Andrew Paterson 07787 217772. Emails to Sue at pa@grandlodgescotland.org will also be picked up and forwarded to the correct person.

Even although some of the restrictions are easing, please take care of yourselves and each other – stay safe.

Kindest regards to you all.

Ramsay McGhee

