



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

William Ramsay McGhee, MStJ, D.L., Grand Master Mason

Brethren

18.09.2020

On Saturday we enjoyed a unique experience when the majority of District and Provincial Grand Masters got together via zoom to meet up with each other and discuss a variety of topics. The feedback from the meeting has been good and it will become an annual feature of the Grand Lodge Calendar. A date is now being arranged to have a joint meeting between District Grand Masters and Proxy District Grand Masters.

Some of those who have put their names forward for the Register of Interests will soon receive an invitation to join several small Working Groups. We do not have many Brethren on the Register of Interests, but I would encourage you to do so if you feel that your skills and experience could benefit Scottish Freemasonry. Please contact Grand Secretary if you wish to be included.

I have received detailed information from Gordon Michie of Poppy Scotland about the Poppy Crosses which we will circulate next week but the good news is that we will have the Poppy Crosses this year – distribution will be a bit different from normal – they won't go out to Lodges in boxes – there will be an on-line facility made available, details of which I'll pass on as soon as it has been set up. The other good news is that we will be planting crosses in Princes Street.

For those Provinces and Districts who are due to put forward recommendations for new Provincial and District Grand Masters, the protocol for Proxy Voting in lieu of physical meetings, has been finalised and will be circulated to all Districts and Provinces who will be affected, by Grand Secretary.

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	3458	3534
Posts	415	420
No of Members posting	194	196
Lodges mentioned	224	225
Provinces mentioned	30	30
Districts & Lodges abroad	14	14
Monetary Value	£309,963	£310,568

SCFS Overseas Report



- The **900** Overseas Membership milestone has now been reached. We welcomed **49 Overseas Brethren** this week, bringing our Overseas Membership of the SCFS Group to **938**.
- Congratulations is extended to *Brother Mike Herbert*, PM, Lodge East Rand Scots, No. 1093, in RSA, Central South Africa, on being our 900th Overseas Member.
- It is heartening to note that, once again, we had an expansive geographical spread of new members this week ... from The Bahamas, Barbados, Central South Africa, East Africa, Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Far East, India, Jamaica, Lebanon, Malawi, Middle East, Newfoundland and Labrador, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia
- The largest increase in membership was from the **District of Central South Africa**, followed by the District of Middle East and the District of the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope.
- *Lodge Piet Retief, No. 1501*, Central South Africa, had the largest number of Brethren joining from an individual Lodge.
- An interesting route to membership was adopted by Brother Archie Dempster, Lodge Margate, No. 1420, Kwa-Zulu Natal, who made a video call to ensure that he had correctly provided the requested Masonic details. Welcome, Brother Dempster.
- We would strongly encourage posts from our Overseas Lodges and Districts ... sharing the support which they are providing.

I am aware that over the past couple of weeks, there has been a tendency to express concern and nervousness about the future in general, Freemasonry in particular. I fully accept and acknowledge that times are hard for many Lodges and that things will not get much better in the foreseeable future. However, this is a time, especially for Provincial and District Grand Masters, to take the initiative and lead from the front. Over the past six months we have all witnessed many great examples of inventive and novel ways to try and keep things on an even keel financially and socially both at home and abroad. We have a number of Lodges who, for example, have simply asked the Brethren to sign up to a monthly standing order to put a sum of money equivalent to what they would have spent at the Lodge on a normal Lodge night into the Lodge account – things like collection / raffle / drinks – if the Brethren sign up to such a scheme with even £10 per member per month, it could make a significant difference to the Lodge finances and keep the Brethren in touch. Many Lodges are engaging their members and families in on-line quiz nights and they contribute a sum of money for entry to the quiz. Others have adopted programmes to keep members fit by indulging in exercise each day and in many cases getting that exercise sponsored with the sponsor money going into the Lodge coffers or to charity. Where Covid restrictions have allowed, Brethren have organised outdoor afternoon teas or coffee mornings all of which are designed to raise sufficient funds to cover the essential costs and at the same time keep members involved. Can I actively encourage Provincial and District Grand Masters with their Commissions to take the initiative and organise events to not only build up funds that can help the Lodges but initiatives that are going to keep the members in touch and active. Such programmes are only limited by imagination – in these difficult times, we must be as imaginative, innovative, and creative as we possibly can. Let's all adopt a positive and upbeat outlook. We will, working together, overcome the present difficulties.

Contacting Grand Lodge

The Grand Lodge telephone switchboard will open on a part time basis from next week – the proposed days/hours will be: -

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between 10am and 2.30pm

Ramsay McGhee

Grand Master Mason

