

The Royal Arch

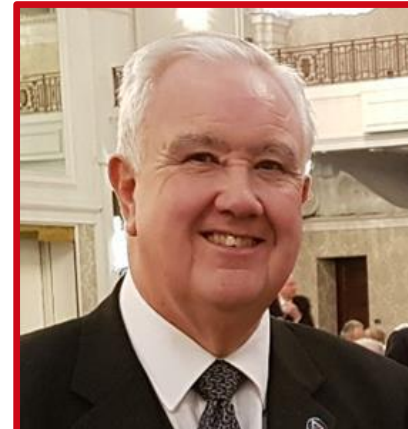
In East Lancashire



Robert I Frankl
Most Excellent Grand Superintendent



EComp Paul G Bowen
2nd Provincial Grand Principal



EComp David Hudson
3rd Provincial Grand Principal



EComp Harvey Basger
Deputy Grand Superintendent

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Companions,

12 months have passed since I was Invested as Grand Superintendent. Where has the time gone?

It has been a real pleasure to have attended meetings and other events over the last year, to have met so many of you, and enjoyed your company. Wherever I've visited, I have invariably been met with kindness, warmth and generosity, which has been extended to Fiona whenever she has joined me. Companions, I am very grateful to you for that.

I am writing this foreword just a few days before our Annual Meeting when I will have the great pleasure in appointing, reappointing and promoting a number of you.



I congratulate you all and am looking forward to sharing a very happy day with you in Blackburn, together with the many other Companions who will be at the Meeting.

It has been a very eventful year, not just in East Lancashire, but also for the whole of the Royal Arch, most notably, the appointment of EComp Jonathan Spence as Pro First Grand Principal. EComp Spence is determined that the unique relationship between the Craft and Royal Arch be articulated and emphasised. He has already demonstrated that in so many ways, including the launch of the combined Craft and Royal Arch Strategy. More initiatives will continue in the time ahead.

A Master Mason being exalted into the Royal Arch, when the time is right for him, should be as natural as progressing through the degrees from Entered Apprentice to Master Mason.

Companions, first and foremost, we need to enjoy our Royal Arch masonry, and we need to convey that enjoyment to Craft brethren not yet exalted, as well as to Companions who are no longer members of a Chapter. At the same time, we need to value and look after each other within our own Chapters.

If we do all that, the Royal Arch in our Province will continue to flourish.

Fraternal and warmest greetings to you all.

Robert I Frankl

Grand Superintendent





Every year the meeting of Provincial Grand Chapter sees changes in the Officers of the Royal Arch. This keeps the Royal Arch “fresh” and awards hard work for the Province across all our Chapters.

In the next 4 pages the new Provincial officers and past officers are listed. We congratulate them and wish them all the very best for the future.

Most Excellent Grand Superintendent:	EComp Robert Frankl
Deputy Grand Superintendent:	EComp Harvey Basger
Second Provincial Grand Principal:	EComp Paul Bowen
Third Provincial Grand Principal:	EComp David Hudson
Assistants to the Provincial Grand Principals:	
Eastern Area:	EComp Steve Boyle
City East and West Areas:	EComp Dr Mo Afsa
Northern Area:	EComp Aubrey Oldham
Southern Area:	EComp Peter Douthwaite
Western Area:	EComp Peter Faulkner
Provincial Grand Scribe E:	EComp Chris Wildman
Provincial Grand Director Of Ceremonies:	EComp Andrew Procter
Royal Arch District Officers:	
For the City East:	Comp Brian Wilson Comp Peter Maguire
For the City West:	Comp John Roberts Comp Bill Lister
For Eastern Area:	Comp Andrew Evans Comp Robert Whitlow
For Northern Area:	Comp Michael Stubbs Comp Paul Smillie
For Southern Area:	Comp Leslie Kaye Comp Walter Spence
For Western Area:	Comp Andrew Kinsey Comp Stephen Holcroft



New and Renewed Acting Officers of Provincial Grand Chapter for the Masonic Year 2023/2024



ProvGSE	Christopher M Wildman	C6594 Ark and Menorah
ProvGSN	Jonathan S Brownson	C6594 Ark and Menorah
ProvGTreas	David J Cowen	C6005 Good Companions of Commemoration
ProvGReg	Gordon McMillan	C1775 Leopold
ProvGDC	Andrew Procter	C9640 Red Rose of Lancashire
ProvGSwdB	Harold Cooper	C1723 St George's
ProvDepGDC	Jonathan Basger	C6594 Ark and Menorah
ProvDepGDC	Stephen P Holcroft	C9468 Euclid Chapter of Installed First Principals
ProvGAlmoner	David Hudson	C993 Alexandra
ProvGChStwd	Robert W Findlay	C37 Concord Deane
ProvGMO	Christian D Halford	C3317 Ben Brierley
ProvGMentor	Joseph M Glass	C6594 Ark and Menorah
ProvGSoj	Jonathan N Perry	C7224 Fairfield
Prov1stAGSoj	Bryan W Ross	C1504 Red Rose of Lancaster
Prov2ndAGSoj	Raymond Charlton	C7224 Fairfield
ProvAGSE	Roger S Norris	C9640 Red Rose of Lancashire
ProvGStB	Philip Moore	C226 Chapter of Benevolence
ProvGStB	Geoffrey W Leach	C42 Chapter of Unanimity
ProvGStB	Michael G Bluer	C344 Chapter of Beauty
ProvGOrg	Christopher P Stokes	C62 Social
ProvAGDC	Francis ES Davies	C268 Union
ProvAGDC	Andrew B Evans	C367 Probity and Freedom
ProvGStwd	Alexsander P Capewell	C266 Naphtali
ProvGStwd	Michael Dawson	C350 Chapter of Meribah
ProvGStwd	Jozef D Markisz	C2185 Ardwick
ProvGStwd	Steven J Markisz	C7814 Cathedral
ProvGStwd	Alan C Ogden	C1723 St George's
ProvGStwd	John S Wood	C42 Chapter of Unanimity
ProvGJan	Bruce J Wood	C369 Limestone Rock



First Appointments to Provincial Grand Chapter March 2023



PPGSoj	Christopher I Armstrong	C6594 Ark and Menorah
PP2ndAGSoj	Michael W Frost	C1322 Waverley
PP2ndAGSoj	David Wood	C1055 Derby
PPGStB	Barry E Bainbridge	C116 Cana
PPGStB	David J Allan	C3787 Chapter of Remembrance
PPAGDC	David AR Mottershead	C1775 Leopold

Promotions within Provincial Grand Chapter March 2023



PPGSN	David B Armistead	C226 Chapter of Benevolence
PPGSN	Ronald Coucill	C1083 Townley Parker
PPGSN	David E Hawkins	C116 Cana
PPGSN	Thomas Smith	C268 Union
PPGReg	Peter Blackhurst	C350 Chapter of Meribah
PPGReg	Michael D Gibbons	C1055 Derby
PPGReg	Rodney Schofield	C367 Probity and Freedom
PPGReg	Graeme A Wilkinson	C2529 Abbey
PPGSwdB	Harry K Stephenson	C37 Concord Deane
PPGSwdB	Martin Stott	C128 Prince Edwin's
PPGSwdB	Philip J Titterton	C44 Chapter of Friendship
PPGSwdB	Paul Waring	C8798 Pennine
PPDepGDC	Peter Cole	C268 Union
PPDepGDC	Jeffrey R Normie	C6594 Ark and Menorah
PPDepGDC	John M Rimmer	C7814 Cathedral
PPDepGDC	Mahtarr KM Samba	C44 Chapter of Friendship
PPDepGDC	Graham Stott	C1322 Waverley
PPDepGDC	Stephen Whitelegg	C367 Probity and Freedom
PPDepGDC	Gary R Williams	C3120 Sincerity
PPGSoj	Robert I Clarke	C367 Probity and Freedom
PPGSoj	Gordon J Lewis	C1775 Leopold



Promotions within Provincial Grand Chapter 2023 (contd)



PPGSoj	John M Wignall	C2185 Ardwick
PPGSoj	John L Wilkinson	C116 Cana
PP1stAGSoj	Keith Hammerton	C116 Cana
PP1stAGSoj	John F Hood	C1723 St George's
PP1stAGSoj	John Kenyon	C381 Hutchinson
PP1stAGSoj	Robert G Prestwich	C1055 Derby
PP1stAGSoj	Brian J Wilson	C3336 Samaritan
PP2ndAGSoj	Jonathan M Banks	C815 Blair
PP2ndAGSoj	Alan Cavanagh	C350 Chapter of Meribah
PP2ndAGSoj	Barrie W Hughes	C9659 Internet
PP2ndAGSoj	Thomas C Lewis	C1322 Waverley
PP2ndAGSoj	Paul A Liles	C7814 Cathedral
PPGStB	John Bouch	C1775 Leopold





SUPREME GRAND CHAPTER
OF ROYAL ARCH MASONS
OF ENGLAND

Every year we also see exceptional contribution to the work of Provincial Grand Chapter recognised by appointment to, and promotion within Supreme Grand Chapter. The following Companions have been so recognised this year:

New Appointments

EComp Peter Douthwaite - Past Grand Standard Bearer

EComp Steven Boyle - Past Grand Standard Bearer

EComp Chris Wildman - Past Grand Standard Bearer

Promotions

EComp Harvey Basger – Past Grand Sword Bearer

EComp Christopher Butterfield – Past Grand Sword Bearer

EComp Andrew Holland - Past Assistant Grand Sojourner

EComp Paul Bowen – Past Assistant Grand Sojourner

We congratulate all these Companions and also those who are being appointed to and promoted within the United Grand Lodge of England

Appointments to Acting Rank

WBro John Curry – Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies

WBro Stephen Wall – Grand Standard Bearer

Appointments to Past Rank

WBro Chris Wildman – Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies

WBro Paul O'Carroll - Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies

WBro Keith Bernard Jones – Past Assistant Grand Swordbearer

Promotions

WBro Peter Hegerty – Past Senior Grand Deacon

WBro David Lightbown – Past Junior Grand Deacon

WBro David McGurty – Past Senior Grand Deacon



A message for us all from Most Excellent Comp Jonathan Spence our new Pro First Grand Principal.



The Most Excellent Grand Superintendent has already mentioned the appointment of EComp Jonathan Spence as our new Pro First Grand Principal.

EComp Spence discussed the Royal Arch in the regular "First Rising" newsletter as a Question and Answer session:

How important has the Royal Arch been for you during your time as a Freemason?

Very important. My time as a Companion has allowed me to experience a new dimension to my Freemasonry, be that through the beautiful Exaltation ceremony, new friendships as my mother Chapter draws candidates from three Craft Lodges, or a better understanding of what it means to be a Freemason. I became MEZ (the Royal Arch equivalent of Worshipful Master) of Pentangle in 1994 and found that, just like the Craft, this position of leadership within the Chapter provided a new perspective.

What advice would you give to a Master Mason who is unsure about whether he should join the Royal Arch?

Master Masons are often under pressure to do all sorts of things next. I would strongly encourage them, when the time is right for them to do something more in Freemasonry, to talk to their Royal Arch representative or to attend one of the many Master Masons evenings that are held in several Provinces and Districts. Perhaps best of all, talk to one of your friends who is wearing the Royal Arch jewel.

I have heard it said that a Freemason should wait until they have served as Worshipful Master of a Craft Lodge before they join the Royal Arch. I do disagree with this approach and had been a member of the Royal Arch for five years by the time I became the Worshipful Master of Sir Joseph Williamson Lodge No. 4605. I have no regrets about this choice.

What advice would you give to a newly Exalted Companion?

My first piece of advice would be to see an Exaltation ceremony from the view of a spectator rather than as a participant. You will undoubtedly have heard the same after your Initiation and it really shouldn't be underestimated how much you will gain in understanding the place of the Royal Arch and of the ceremony from seeing someone else go through the same experience.

Second, make sure that you aren't stretching yourself too thinly by taking on several roles in too short a space of time. It is important that everyone does it at a pace that suits their individual circumstances. The most important thing is to enjoy it.

We know that the new Strategy applies to both the Craft and the Royal Arch. Why has the decision been taken to make it a unified Strategy?

The English Constitution is unique in the fact that the Royal Arch is an integral part of our Masonic experience and the strong links between English Craft Freemasonry and the history of the Royal Arch in our Constitution are well documented.



A message for us all from Most Excellent Comp Jonathan Spence our new Pro First Grand Principal (contd).



The undeniable and intrinsic link between the two means that it is imperative for us to move forward with a coherent, integrated plan for both the Craft and Royal Arch. This way, we can make sure that Freemasonry within the English Constitution remains as special and unique as it always has been. Coherence is absolutely the key in this case and the new Strategy reflects that.

What are your priorities for the Royal Arch going forward as Pro First Grand Principal?

I would like to empower Freemasons who are not yet members of the Royal Arch to find out more about it. There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes to help us improve on describing the Royal Arch, having a compelling narrative that explains it and its importance to members.

Be it the striking ceremony or the fascinating history included within, there is undoubtedly something for all Freemasons to enjoy and appreciate. The more Freemasons who can experience this extension to their journey as Freemasons, the better off we will all be for it.

The Pro 1st Grand Principal's message is reflected in our Most Excellent Grand Superintendent's strategy for the Royal Arch in East Lancashire.

We will hear more of this in future Newsletters, and it is also a key point made at your Chapter Installations by the representative of the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent. These are exciting times for the Royal Arch and we must embrace all our opportunities.



A short autobiography from the 3rd Provincial Grand Principal Elect



Companions,

It is a huge privilege to have been selected to be your new 3rd Provincial Grand Principal. Colin will be a different act to follow.

I was proposed into Freemasonry in January 2002 by a work colleague WBro Denny Stevens who is now a Cheshire Freemason. I have known Denny since 1974 when I started work in the laboratories at ICI Pharmaceuticals (now AstraZeneca) based at Alderley Edge. 1974. I retired in December 2013.

I was initiated into St David's Lodge No.1174 and twelve months later joined St David's Chapter. Sadly the Chapter closed in 2011, 12 months after I became First Principal.

Fortunately I was invited to join Alexandra Chapter No. 993 and became First Principal in 2021.

I am a member of East Lancashire Provincial Grand Officer's and Stewards Chapters, both since 2012 and have had the privilege of serving in several different offices in both Chapters. I am also a member of Friendship Chapter No. 44 from 2004 along with EComp Tony Freemont who continues to edit this News Letter on our behalf.

I remember my Initiation ceremony to this day. As mentioned I was initiated into St, David's Lodge but unknown to me, three other work colleagues attended the ceremony and to my surprise when the blindfold was removed they sat in the then Derby Lodge room with rather large grins on their faces!

In the Craft I am Secretary of Travellers Lodge No. 1253 I am also a member of The Duke of Connaught Lodge No. 3264 and The Lodge of Virtue No.152 all based in Manchester.

Over the years I have been given wonderful opportunities to grow in several Masonic roles within the Province of East Lancashire. I served on the District Teams in Manchester from 2009 having been appointed by the then APGM Bro Martin Caller. I was so grateful that he gave me my first opportunity to work in the District system as Communications Officer. From 2011 I served as Secretary for City Derby District and from 2014 as Chairman. In November 2018 Sir David Tripper appointed me as Provincial Grand Almoner an office I will hold until November.

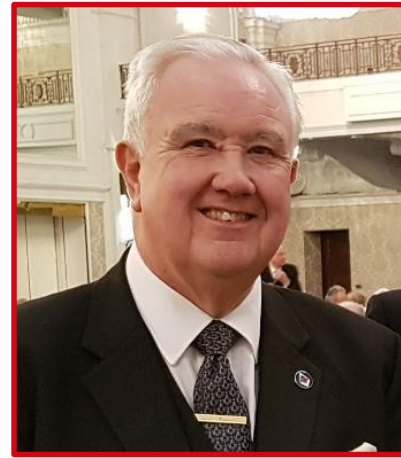
The high point of my Masonic career came, in 2016, when I served the Province as Provincial Senior Grand Warden. This will be matched in March this year when I'm invested as Third Provincial Grand Principal.

I am also an active member of several Lodges in the Degree of Mark Master Masons, the Royal Ark Mariners and the Ancient and Accepted Rite – Rose Croix.

Outside of freemasonry (when I have time!), I play golf at Stockport Golf Club where I am a member. I support Manchester City attending my first game in 1964 with my Mother's brother. I have been married to Elaine for 36 years and I'm so grateful for her support.

I now look forward to carrying out my new role next month and meeting as many members of the Royal Arch as possible.

Finally, I wish EComp Colin Whittaker a happy "retirement" and I hope to continue the good work that he carried out as 3rd Provincial Grand Principal.



EComp David Hudson PGStB. - 3rd Provincial Grand Principal Elect



Spring Newsletter 2023



From the North
EComp Aubrey Oldham,
PGStB, APGP

The Return of the Royal arch Dinner in the Northern Area is up and running. It is being held on Saturday the 25th March at Clayton-Le-Moors, and is now fully booked with 80 people attending. The Guest of Honour is our Most Excellent Grand Superintendent and his wife Fiona. We are looking forward to an enjoyable evening.



Whilst as might be expected in the prevailing circumstances we are experiencing one or two closures, on a brighter note, rather than closing, No.462, Bank Terrace Chapter and No. 1775, Leopold Chapter at Accrington Masonic Hall are amalgamating. This will take place on Tuesday October 3rd presided over by the Deputy Grand Superintendent, EComp Harvey Basger.

It is worth sharing how this process will occur as it shows the work that goes into an amalgamation. Thursday February 2nd 2023 - Leopold Chapter Members who are coming across are joining Bank Terrace Chapter at their Installation meeting. Tuesday April 4th 2023 - Final Meeting of Leopold Chapter. Leopold Warrant to be sent to Supreme Grand Chapter for erasure and Bank Terrace Chapter warrant sent for enfacement. Tuesday October 3rd 2023 - Amalgamation Meeting.

From the South
EComp Peter Douthwaite,
APGP



The Membership in Southern area is slowly growing. In 2022 there were eight exaltations bringing our Craft:RA membership to just over 50%. And 2023 we have already seen an increase of 5 new members with more in the pipeline, and some chapters seeing re-joining companions.

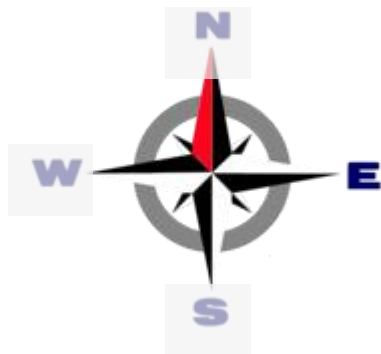


In February the companions of Southern Area were delighted to welcome the East Lancashire Learning and Development team for the presentation of 'An explanation of Exaltation Ceremony' Hosted by Ardwick Chapter 2185. Over forty-two companions attended including the Second Provincial Grand Principal Excellent companion Paul Bowen. The Members of the team were companions Peter Faulkner, Harold Cooper and Professor Tony Freemont. It was good to see Tony back in Southern Area.

The presentation was really informative and lead us through the different elements of the ceremony and their significances I have no doubt we all enjoyed it, and hopefully we learnt something from it.

The exaltation is one of the most beautiful and colourful ceremonies we will ever experience in Masonry. Long may its beauty be seen by 21st century man!





From the East
EComp Steven Boyle,
APGP

Since the start of my tenure as APGP, I have been really busy I have spent the year getting round to as many Chapters as possible as well as Craft installations and celebrations supporting our APGM Peter Rhodes and his district teams.



It was also a very good experience representing the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent in other Areas around the Province and visiting other Provinces (Blackpool on a cold and wet October day is very bracing).

The Pro Grand Master told us that the 'Strategy for Freemasonry 2022 and beyond' will be launched through the December Quarterly Communication.

He then went on to say ***"a key part of this Strategy is that the Craft and Royal Arch must work seamlessly together at all levels as one organisation"***.

Companions this is what we are striving to do in East Lancashire.

I have been working alongside fellow APGP Mo Afsa and Provincial Grand Mentor Jo Glass. Our goal is to attract more Craft members into the Royal Arch and bring back into our fold those members who have let their membership lapse.

The Royal Arch in Eastern Area have been very fortunate over the last few years, I have had tremendous support from my RADO's Chris Cunliffe and Andrew Evans. Sadly, Chris has come to the end of his tenure as a RADO and we will be sorry to see him go. Chris has been succeeded by Robert Whitlow, please give the same level of support to Robert as you gave to Chris.

The Pandemic gave all of us tremendous problems and now that there is light at the end of the tunnel I am hoping we can all get back to Freemasonry doing what we all enjoy best.

Please enjoy the summer break when it comes, and I hope to see more of the companions around the Eastern Area and beyond soon.



From the West
EComp Peter Faulkner
APGP

Western Area at the Bolton, Bury, Radcliffe and Rawtenstall Masonic Halls, has eleven Chapters across the four halls, with around 239 members. Two who meet in the daytime, very encouraging to report that the Area has six exaltations planned in 2023.



We recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of EComp John Tyler at Concord Deane Chapter No. 37 on the 20th February 2023. A good attendance made the meeting most enjoyable for all present, especially John who was joined by his two sons, Robert and Jason.





The Chapter of Beauty No. 344 at their October meeting is pleased to recognise the 70th anniversary of EComp Norman Pickles exaltation into the Chapter. Norman has long been a Honorary member and lives outside the Province but is remembered with respect by the Chapter.

St George's Chapter No. 1723 is hosting 'Passing of the Veils' at their 6th October meeting in Bolton by the ELRAPT, this prestigious event is open to all, especially Companions from Western Area. Our ME Grand Superintendent EComp Robert Frankl and a deputation will be attending and supporting, please diary this meeting for your attendance.

I hope that a calendar for all Western Area meetings will be online very soon. Previous notification has been given regarding the LRARep's and RADO meeting to be held at Bury on the 29th March, this is a Province wide meeting with content of interest and importance to us all. As a RADO or LRAR your attendance is essential.

My specific area of responsibility is the liaison of L&D (Learning and Development) and the ELRAPT (East Lancashire Royal Arch Presentation Team) across the Province. L&D held their last 'Explanation of the Exaltation Ceremony' on the 22 February to a full meeting of Ardwick Chapter No. 2185, our next steps are to further develop their offering and rollout across the Province, ELRAPT are always looking for new presenters, if interested please let me know.

Our Provincial meeting is on the 16th March at Blackburn, at a slightly later time of 3:30pm, I do hope you will make every effort to attend and support Companions Appointed and Promoted from Western Area in particular. Please remember that upon appointment to Provincial Rank the opportunity to join either the EL Provincial Officers Chapter No. 3747 or Provincial Stewards Chapter No. 8408 becomes open to you, your additional support is sought as appropriate, each meets twice a year at the Manchester Hall, give me a call to discuss if unsure.

I regularly discuss 'hot topics' with our Scribe E's but always welcome calls from you all. I am looking forward to meeting you all.



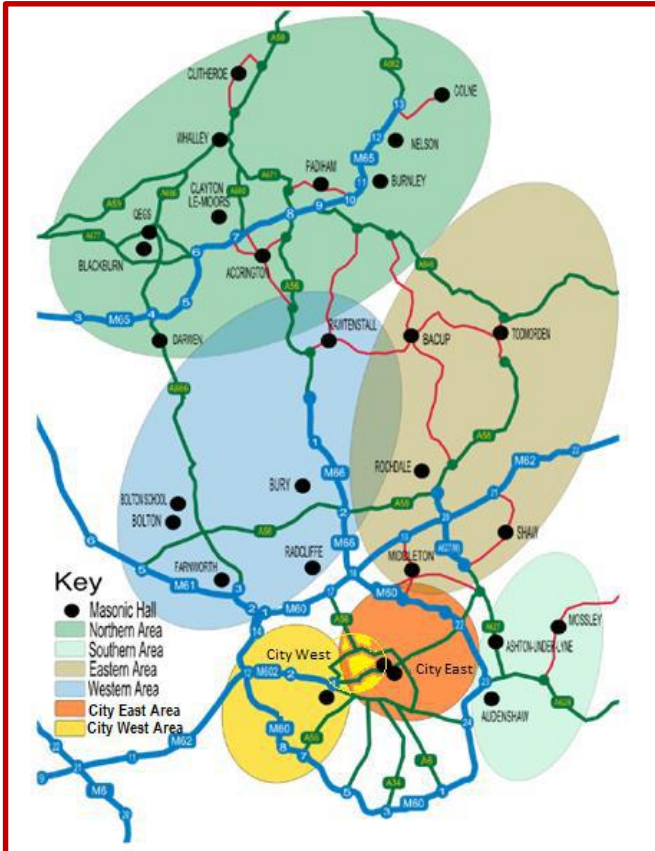
From the City Areas EComp Mo Asfa APGP

This has been a very busy time in City East and City West areas, but three events stand out.

The first was a revision of the Area structures in the Province. The first for many years. It has taken a little time to implement and was only possible through the complete support of the Brethren and Companions in the Lodges and Chapters.



Thoughts of our Assistants to the Provincial Grand Principals from all points of the Provincial compass (contd)



In the new structure, some of the Lodges which meet at Manchester Hall, are now part of the City West area; together with all the Lodges and Chapters which meet at Hemsley House; with 26 Lodges in each area and 11 and 9 Chapters in City East and City West respectively; with one APGM for each Area and one APGP for both.

Shortly before those fateful days in March 2020 two Chapters, St John's 325 and Manchester Epworth 9321 moved to Hemsley House from Bolton. They were renamed Maritime and Internet respectively. Both are large Chapters and with others meeting in Hemsley House were cramped in the existing Chapter Room. So a decision was made to change one of the 2 large meeting rooms into a dual purpose Lodge and Chapter room. The Province marked this change of use with a Chapter Room dedication meeting. The large room was packed for this once in a generation event, and it lived up to its advertising. It was a truly spectacular occasion with a full Provincial team in attendance.

The two Masonic Halls serving the members of City East and West Areas, underwent some Changes. The hard work of a dedicated team who completely redecorated and refurbished Hemsley House, has now led to great improvements enjoyed by members of the Masonic units meeting there. Whilst the hard work of the Manchester Masonic Centre committee, has assured that the units meeting at Manchester Hall, will be unaffected by the recently-announced changes to the administration and running of the Hall.



Finally, Companions and Brethren meeting at City East and City West areas were delighted to see E Comp Tony Freemont, our Past APGP, regaining his good health and returning to Masonic activity. His sense of humour has not changed a bit and he continues to generously give outstanding support to the RA team.



Here is an excerpt from the February Festival Newsletter. The whole newsletter and all the links you would need to donate can be found at this Provincial webpage:

<https://eastlancashirefreemasons.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Festival-Newsletter-February-2023-min.pdf>

“It has over 12 months since the Festival Launch Banquet in February 2022, where we were privileged to have the support and attendance of Sir Paul Williams, OBE, (Deputy President of the MCF) and Howard Wilson, Head of Fundraising for the Charity. Our Festival Appeal aims to raise £2.4M by 2026 and, as of 31st January 2023, our projected total is: £1,043,185.

By far the most important thing to say now is “Thank you”.

Thank you to the many individuals (brethren and family members) who have signed up to monthly regular payments or have made single larger donations to the Festival, to the Lodges and Districts who have given or held events in support of the Festival, and to the Royal Arch and other Orders, Masonic Halls, Luncheon Clubs or other bodies who have also contributed.

The projected total above is calculated from monies already donated, plus the total amount we will have accumulated if all paying by regular payments keep them up until after the end of the appeal period.

The truth is that the best and only way we will achieve our target is if more members make a personal commitment.

To date 19.36% have signed up to a regular payment and we would really like more to consider this. At his Installation the Provincial Grand Master, RWBro Robert Frankl, said:

“In the years running up to the Festival, we can look forward to many more happy social and fundraising events, not losing sight of the fact that the bedrock of a Festival total to be proud of, will be the personal financial commitment each of us individually makes.”

This is so true, so if you aren't already, please consider setting up an affordable regular payment. Remember, if you can afford £5, £10 or £20 per month matters not, and the charity can claim 25% Gift Aid back on all donations made in this manner if you are a UK Tax Payer”.

So why give? - The festival income goes to the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) for their good works. Recent headlines include £500,000 to support Ukrainian refugees and £60,000 through the British Red Cross, UNHCR and UNICEF who lead the relief effort on the ground in Turkey and Syria.

A full picture of the use of donations is available for MCF's financial year 2021/22. In all it awarded £19.6M to support the work of 726 Charities and help 3281 Individuals and Families.

The MCF is funded entirely through the donations of Freemasons, their families and friends. The core work of the Charity is responding to the needs of disadvantaged people and communities across England, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and internationally. Since 2016, East Lancashire has benefitted from: 1000 grants to Freemasons and their families amounting to almost £2.5M. Most were supported with daily living costs and others were helped with health, care and support for children and young people to give them the best start in life; almost 100 Charities received grants amounting to ~£1M, across all our Areas. In addition £130K was given to help our response to COVID providing PPE, meals for the vulnerable and many other projects.

In total, MCF support for individuals and charities within our Province over the last 7 years has been almost £3M.



Saturday, March 18

7:00pm Music & Comedy Night
Stanley House, Audenshaw. M34 5GB

Friday, March 24

6:45pm: Race Night
Radcliffe Masonic Hall, BL2 6QU

Saturday, March 25

6:30pm Murder Mystery Night
Manchester Hall, M3 3BT, UK

Saturday, April 1

7:00pm 60/70S Disco Night
Hemsley House, Salford, M5 4PE, UK

Saturday, April 15

7:00pm Crompton Lodge Race Night
The Gables Masonic Hall, Shaw, OL2 7AJ

Wednesday, April 19

7:00pm Festival Quiz Grand Final
Ashday Lea, Rawtenstall, BB4 6QX

Friday, April 28th

7:30 Oldham District Quiz Night
Middleton Masonic Club, M24 4DY

Sunday, May 14

Zip Line Challenge
Penrhyn Quarry, Bethesda, Bangor LL57 4YG, UK

Saturday, May 20

6:45pm Race Night
The Gables Masonic Hall, Shaw, OL2 7AJ

7:00pm Ballroom Extravaganza

Rochdale Masonic Ballroom, OL11 1DU





East Lancs Freemasonry has changed since before lockdown. The APGP reports remind us that there have been Chapter closures and events that have impacted our Halls, but also highlight an increase in membership. One thing I have noted, in myself as much as others, is that it seems to me that some of our members are reluctant to come out to meetings through a combination of disquiet about continuing health risks, the death of close friends and perhaps even a hesitancy to re-engage with society as a whole.

This is a huge shame for us, because every Companion adds something to our meetings, and for them because these are often men who have been regular attenders over many years and clearly found something very positive in their Masonic experience.

Our ME Grand Superintendent wants us to work on retrieval of members back to the Royal Arch because he believes that the Royal Arch embodies the completion of the core Masonic journey. I would argue that those Companions mentioned above should be a “retrieval priority” for us all, particularly if we believe they are missing out on something that was not so long ago an important part of their lives.

He has also said that we should be very aware of the value of recruitment into, and retention within, the Royal Arch. There are lots of different ways of doing this but clearly discussing the importance of the Royal Arch in the Masonic story with Master Masons, and ensuring meetings are enjoyable, interesting and instructive will make members want to come to the next meeting and the next, etc.

We know that many of us enjoy Chapter meetings because we catch up with the gossip and banter that friendship centres upon. Some Lodges and Chapters add to this by orientating towards non-Masonic hobbies and interests, I’m for instance a member of a Lodge of bell ringers that meets in Oxfordshire and we are discussing forming a Chapter.

Now, at this point in my musings, I have to fess up to being totally biased. I was a University teacher for 40 years and this desire to impart knowledge, mixed perhaps with a little thespianism, led me to join presentation teams within the Province.

In terms of the Royal Arch, I am involved with the: Talking Heads (a short “play” performed in Lodges that shows Master Masons some aspects of Royal Arch Freemasonry they might find attractive); L&D presentation of the Explanation of the Exaltation Ceremony, and East Lancashire Royal Arch Presentation Team (ELRAPT). ELRAPT has a presentation called Crafty Companions that it delivers in Lodges and which complements Talking Heads. It also has a repertoire of presentations on: the Banners; the Platonic Bodies; historical perspectives of key characters and events in the Royal Arch story, and several others. As well it can undertake exaltation ceremonies for Chapters or supplement Chapter officers with ELRAPT members to help out in undertaking installations and exaltations.

There are two common themes in all these presentations – recruitment of Master Masons into the Royal Arch and assisting in retention by giving Chapters the opportunity to bring a different and interesting angle to Chapter meetings whilst attracting visitors to the Chapter to experience something different.

We are always looking for new members to join our teams. Because we work in teams the amount any one member has to learn is relatively small (a few hundred words at most), but when taken together the individual pieces of work form a unique, entertaining whole.



If you would like to contribute to the life of the Royal Arch as a member of one of our teams, please contact me on - Tonyfreemont@Hotmail.com



Upcoming Royal Arch Events



Here is a list of Royal Arch Events in East Lancashire already timetabled.

It would be wonderful to have packed houses at all these events to support the Companions and Chapters involved.

- 16th March: Provincial Grand Chapter: King George's Hall, Blackburn
- 29th March: RADO / Lodge RA Representatives Forum: Bury Masonic Hall, BL9 0LY. The ME Grand Superintendent will be in attendance. PLEASE RESPOND IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY
- 3rd April: RA Cabinet Meeting. Rossendale Masonic Hall, BB4 6QX
- 27th April: Supreme Grand Chapter – Investiture
- 11th May: East Lancashire Provincial Grand Officers Chapter No 3747. Manchester Hall, M3 3BT
- 22nd May: Grand Officers Meeting with ME Grand Superintendent. Middleton Masonic Hall, M24 4DY
- 23rd May: ME Grand Superintendent Rossendale Masonic Hall, BB4 6QX
- 5th June: RA Cabinet Meeting. Rossendale Masonic Hall, BB4 6QX,
- 10th June: Royal Arch Banquet. Manchester Hall, M3 3BT
- 21st Sept: Talking Heads: Rochdale Masonic Ballroom, OL11 1DU
- 6th Oct: Passing the Veils Ceremony. Bolton Masonic Hall, BL1 1PZ. The ME Grand Superintendent will be in attendance
- 11th Oct: Joint Convocation. Padiham Masonic Hall, BB12 8LZ. The ME Grand Superintendent will be in attendance.
- 12th Oct: East Lancashire Provincial Grand Officers Chapter No 3747. (Installation). Manchester Hall, M3 3BT



And Finally



Those who have been fairly recently exalted will have seen the black and white image of the layout of a Chapter Room on the RA USB stick. It can also be found on page 3 of our approved ritual book.

EComp Peter Faulkner APGP has provided this coloured version for you to use as you wish.

