



Warwickshire Mark

June 2021

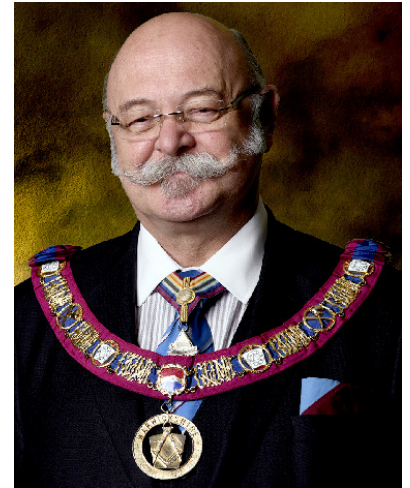
A Message from The Provincial Grand Master

Brethren, you will no doubt remember, that on the 25th September last year I along with the vast majority of Heads of Orders administered from Mark Masons Hall imposed a local suspension of all Masonic activities in Warwickshire. The reason this was done was to prevent Secretaries and Scribes having to produce and circulate a Lodge Summons, only to have to declare the meeting cancelled. That suspension remains in effect and will probably stay in place until 31st August 2021, but will be kept under review during the coming weeks.

The Provincial Grand Secretary has already been in contact with all Secretaries and Scribes with the detailed requirements regarding future Meetings, Installations and Festive Boards.

I am well aware of the frustrations felt by many at not being able to meet for such a long time and the eagerness of many of you to resume our meetings. I am also very much aware of the concerns which some Brethren are experiencing with respect to the resumption of Lodge activities and the possibilities of contracting the Covid-19 virus. Let me make it quite clear Brethren that **No-one** should feel coerced into returning to Lodge activities until they feel safe and comfortable to do so! Let us remember again that well known phrase... 'of my own free will and accord'.

However, on a brighter note the Social Committee have not been idle during the 'lock-down' and have been making plans to resume some of our well-loved social activities. Hopefully, Government Restrictions allowing, we will be holding the Summer BBQ at the Berkswell and Balsall RFC on Sunday 8th August.



There will be a Brass Band performing for us, along with a Troop of Morris Dancers and of course a display of Classic Cars from members of the Square Wheels Lodge, thanks to W.Bro. Peter Manning. The Event will also host the Annual Mark Skittles match against the Craft and Holy Royal Arch.

As we approach the general lifting of restrictions we can look forward to a number of celebratory events such as, Centennial Celebrations, a Sesquicentennial Celebration and in 2022 the Consecration of the 'Provincial Grand Wardens Lodge of Mark Master Masons, all of which bode well for the future.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support of this trying period, support given to the Province, support given to your Lodges but most of all...support you have given to each other.

R.W.Bro. P.Wills, Provincial Grand Master

THE PROVINCIAL GRAND TREASURER

At the recent Provincial Lodge of Instruction meeting, W.Bro Nigel Bridges, Provincial Grand Treasurer gave a brief resume of his role.

There are four offices as part of the duties of Provincial Grand Treasurer:

- Provincial Mark finances.
- A committee member of the Mark Executive.
- Trustee of the Warwickshire Mark Benevolent Fund.
- Treasurer of the Warwickshire Mark Social Fund.

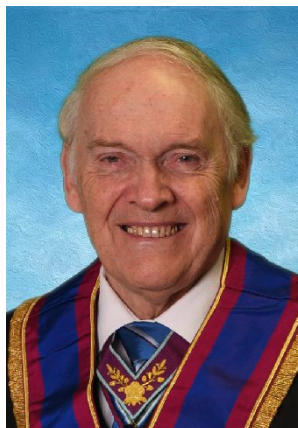
The Provincial Mark finances involves ensuring that all receipts and expenditure is correctly recorded and annual accounts are prepared for audit/examining. The main functions are the Provincial AGM, the annual in/out officers lunch and ensuring that all annual fees are collected in conjunction with the secretariat.

Being a member of the Mark Executive Committee largely involves offering financial advice to the committee.

Being a trustee of the WMBF involves a considerable amount of reading various reports, especially from the Charity Commission. All of the proposals being put forward have to be carefully considered before offering an opinion to the other trustees.

The WMBF run a variety of functions each year namely Skittles, Family Lunch, Summer BBQ, Fireworks, Church Service and London trips to Mark and RAM investitures. All of these functions involve working closely with the organisers, receiving and banking monies, paying accredited invoices and attending committee meetings. Annual accounts have to be prepared and ensuring that they are available for audit/examination.

It is essential to have a close relationship with the various secretary's and organisers of each function as this enables reconciliations to be carried out fairly problem free.



Bits and Pieces

The LOI Festival will be Saturday 9th October. It will follow the usual format of breakfast at 9am followed by demonstration at 10. The rehearsal Will be on Tuesday 6th July, Coventry rooms, 7.30pm

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Although we are all keen to be getting back to face-to-face Mark Masonry there may be a little time before ceremonies start to happen again. If this is the case remember that the Provincial Deputy Grand Secretary (Email below) has assembled a number of lectures and talks that might fit into your programme planning.

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Items available at the Mark Provincial Shop include the ritual books, Warwickshire Mark Provincial Tie and the Warwickshire Mark token. If you have items of regalia that you no longer need and would like to donate for sale for brethren to purchase with proceeds going to the 2027 festival please post them to James Freakley. Midland Flooring Unit 9 The Cedars Coton Road Coleshill B46 2HH. Any questions about the shop or products please contact

James Freakley,
provdepgsec@warksmarkpgl.co.uk

Can I phone a Friend Please?

Nowadays there are so many ways to call a friend for free—Zoom, Facetime, Skype and WhatsApp, or even as part of a contract deal on a mobile or landline. So between now and when we are able to open up again why not phone, or contact online, one or more members of your Lodges—and while you are on there why not practice some ritual. Not complete rituals or ceremonies as practiced in a Lodge of Instruction, but just reading aloud from the book the texts you have not heard in real life for too long.

Just getting in touch with ones fellow Lodge Brethren is good, but it is probably a long time since any of us have gone this long without attending a single Lodge Meeting and the first one back, whenever you feel safe for it, needs to be special!

The Duties We Owe to Mark Masonry in General

A commentary of snippets from the Constitutions and Regulations of the Order.

Governors of the Degree.	3. The Degree of The Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariner is governed by the Most Worshipful Grand Master for the time being, with the advice of a Board to be called the Grand Master's Royal Ark Council. The Grand Master, the Pro Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master and Assistant Grand Master must have been Obligated as Royal Ark Mariners and be Installed Commanders of a Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners prior to their Installation or Appointment.
Grand Master's Royal Ark Council.	4. (i) The Grand Master's Royal Ark Council shall consist of those members of the General Board who are holders of Grand Rank in the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariner and other brethren similarly qualified, appointed by the Grand Master during his pleasure.

Members of the Grand Master's Royal Ark Council (G.M.R.A.C.) wear a distinctive jewel on a rainbow collaret, consisting of a miniature globe with a pair of wings. Three of our Warwickshire Mark Brethren have served on the G.M.R.A.C. in the past - M.W.Bro. Richard V. Wallis, R.W.Bro. Michael W. Guest and R.W.Bro. Andrew C. Sweeney. As Past Members of the G.M.R.A.C., they are entitled to retain the style and dignity of Grand Master's Royal Ark Council (Honoris Causa) - look out for G.M.R.A.C.(H.C.) after their names.

Powers.	5. (i) The Grand Master's Royal Ark Council shall possess power and authority over the Degree of The Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariner similar to those of the General Board over the Order of Mark Master Masons. It shall also exercise powers similar to those exercised by Grand Lodge in respect of hearing appeals from other Authority; in dealing with questions of erasure and expulsion; in amendment of these Regulations and approval of alterations in the fees prescribed by Regulation 23; and in all other matters where the Grand Master may so direct. (ii) Provincial and District Grand Masters, their Deputies and Assistants (who shall have been Obligated as Royal Ark Mariners and be Installed Commanders of a Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners prior to their Installation or Investiture) shall have the same powers over Royal Ark Mariner Lodges and their Provinces or Districts as they have over Mark Lodges.
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It's worth noting that only Prov.G.M.s, their Deputies and Assistants carry over their Office from the Mark. The Mark Secretariat, D.C. Team, Spiritual and Welfare Officers do not hold any formal office in R.A.M., although looking after the R.A.M. is considered part of their Mark duties.

16. A Royal Ark Mariner Lodge shall keep a minute book, cash book, and roll of members, separate from those of the Mark Lodge to which it is attached. A separate fee shall be charged for conferring the Degree, and each Royal Ark Mariner Lodge shall procure for every Brother taking the Degree therein a Certificate from the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, to be paid for by the Lodge at the same time.	Books to be separate from those of Mark Lodge.
17. Lodges of Royal Ark Mariners shall not be convened by the same summons which is issued for Mark Lodge meetings, and they shall have a separate and distinct set of Officers from those of the Mark Lodge to which they are attached, there being nothing to prevent the same Brethren from being Officers in both.	Separate Summons and Officers.

It's important to note that, although a R.A.M. lodge is intrinsically connected to a Mark Lodge, bearing the same number and often the same name, they are considered as very separate entities, with separate officers, books and accounts..

A report from the Southern Hemisphere—W.Bro James Langley

In the April issue, V.W.Bro. Stephen Wright discussed some of the things that Warwickshire Mark Masons have been doing to help others particularly since Covid 19 came to into our lives. As many of your readers will know, Jackie and I now live in Western Australia and I thought that you might be interested in a related perspective. The nation generally has escaped much of the impact of Covid, in many respects I imagine because of the great allocation of space we all have but also because we can readily control our borders. Being the least populated and with the greatest area, WA has done even better and by and large, other than for travel, our lives remain relatively unchanged over the last fifteen months.

I had wanted to engage in some form of voluntary work and early last year I became involved with the St John Ambulance Community Transport operation. St John provide the emergency medical service by contract with the State Government. Those old enough will recall the old white taxi bodied 'ambulance cars'. Community Transport is the updated version of the service and we drive heavily branded Honda Odyssey cars. This model is a people carrier and its big advantage is the sliding rear doors which allows really easy access for passengers; indeed, the nearside door is powered. The task is to collect people, normally from their place of residence and take them to and from medical appointments, respite events and, on occasions, social events. By far majority of the drives carry the passenger and perhaps an escort only but occasionally we might have multi-where two passengers are travelling to the same place at the same time, routine dialysis being a typical example.

Currently, I volunteer for two days a week, each day being nominally, a nine hour shift. In that time, I might handle up to eight transits in an area that extends from Perth city, 40 kms south, 70 kms north and 40 kms east. We hardly travel far to the west as that's the Indian Ocean!

On the eve of my shift, I get my preliminary run sheet though my drives are dictated, on the day, by an app on the mobile phone assigned to the car. Frequently there will be changes caused by all manner of things, treatments not running to schedule, sickness and sometimes people having no idea at all about how long an appointment will take.

Our team seeks to deliver a safe, comfortable and enjoyable ride to our passengers and the charge to them is strictly nominal and irrespective of distance. Importance is placed not only on getting people where they want to be and on time but also in safety. This means that there are rigorous hygiene routines that have to be followed between each trip. We are not the only service provider but it's clear we are highly regarded by passengers and for most, the preferred option. I've had some fascinating conversations during our travels together and I've learned a great deal. Of course, not everyone wants to chat on every occasion. I tend to try three times to trigger discussion and then let the passenger sit quietly if that's what they want.

I've been with St John since February of last year though my doctor did advise me to step back during April, May and June given the then unknown extent of Covid. I really enjoy my time there. Firstly, I get a real feeling of satisfaction from doing something useful and making a contribution, secondly, bearing in mind how short a time we've been here, I've really learned my way round Perth now and feel much more comfortable traversing its many suburbs, from Kensington to Coolbellup and Ascot to Yangebup. I've also been able to learn a great deal from the many people I've transported and my Wednesday and Friday shifts have become an important part of my antipodean life.



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Name that Rune—The Winner!

W.Bro. Mike's set of puzzles have produced a winner!

W.Bro Bob Harrison is the lucky Brother who wins a set of WMBF cufflinks for his efforts.

Even if you didn't enter an answer to one of Mike's puzzles, why not get ready for the opening up of Mark Masonry in Warwickshire by looking back at the puzzles and the suggestions to re-read the different parts of the ritual ready for when it happens for you?

Well Done Bob!

Book Review – ‘Marking Well’ by Andrew Prescott (ed.)

‘Marking Well – Essays on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas’ was commissioned by GLMMM in 2006 and contains fourteen essays by different contributors on various subjects connected with Mark Masonry.

The titles of the essays are as follows:

- Well Marked? Approaches to the History of Mark Masonry
- A History of Stonemasons Marks and Stone Bonding Methods
- ‘In the Beginning...’ The Establishment of Mark Masonry in England and Wales
- The Revenge of the Operatives
- The Genesis of the Mark Degrees: The Cornish Evidence
- The Development of the English Mark Jewel and its Craftsmen 1780-1856
- The Lord of Stoneleigh Abbey: William Henry, 2nd Baron Leigh (1824-1905)
- Canon George Raymond Portal, MA (1827-89) from Rebel to Ruler
- The Invention of a Mark Province, 1858-1894
- Who were the Mark Masons? A Look at Some Lodges in West Cornwall during the Victorian Period
- The Homes of Mark Masonry 1856-2006
- Mark Masonry Abroad
- A Note on Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Masonry in the Channel Islands

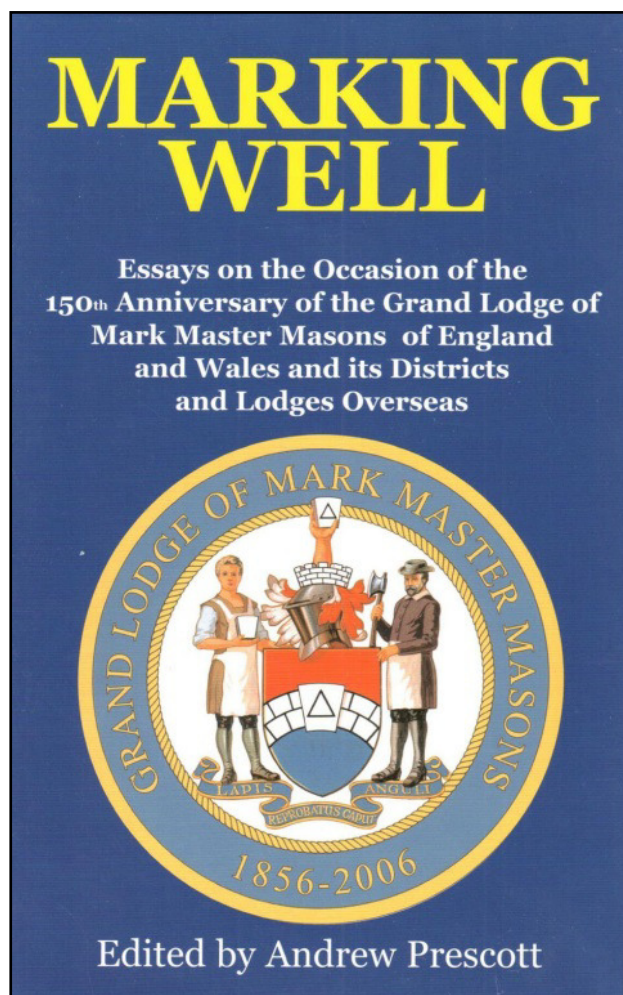
The author of the first of these essays and editor of the whole book is Andrew Prescott who was from 2000-2007 Director of the Centre for Research into Freemasonry in the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield.

As can be seen from the titles of these essays they are not a ‘how to’ guide to Mark Masonry or even a complete history of the degree, although much of history is described within them, but rather a broader journey through the themes, events and times that surround the Mark since its founding.

The nice thing about a collection of essays is that they are all separate and you don’t need to read them in order or all at once, but can dip in and out as the fancy takes you. I went straight for the essay on Lord Leigh, both for its local connection and also because it is the contribution to this book by Rev. Neville Barker Cryer, one of the most prolific and readable writers on Masonic subjects in recent years.

This book is heartily recommended to all Mark Brethren, both those who have been recently Advanced and those of longer standing.

Although published in 2006 This title is still available new, in hardback, from Amazon, although the publishers, Lewis Masonic no longer show it in their website.



May Lodge of Instruction

The May meeting of the Warwickshire Mark Lodge of Instruction featured three speakers.

The evening started with W. Bro Nigel Bridges **P.A.G.D.C.**, Prov.G.Treas giving a brief talk on his duties as Treasurer for the Province and the W.M.B.F.. A position that not many volunteer for but as Nigel said is very rewarding.

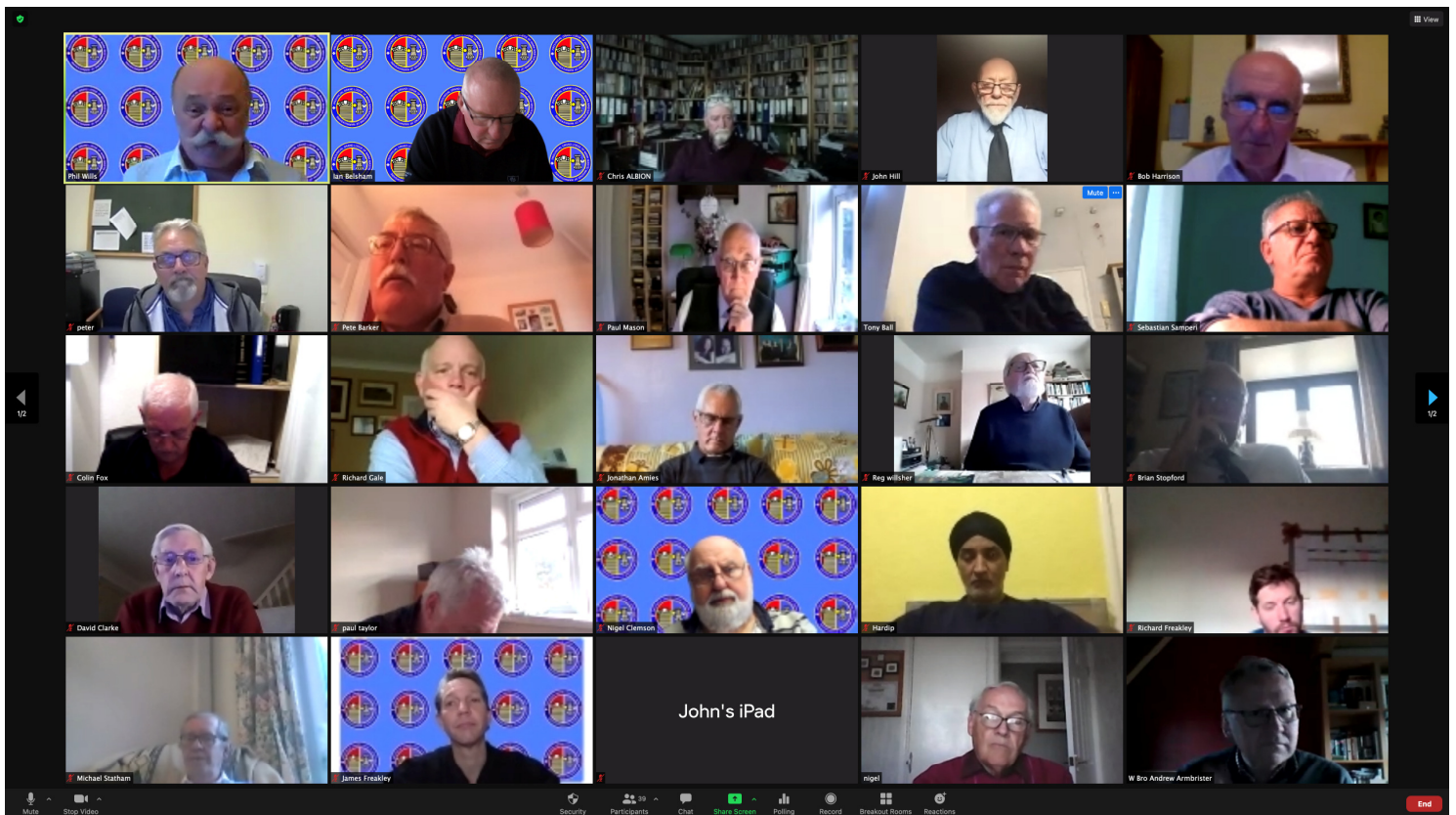


The second speaker was W. Bro Bill Davies who explained the rationale behind the new Provincial support team, explaining that the team will be there to help any Lodge to fill any vacant Office at a meeting - Advancement, Installation, or Business.

He asked that anyone interested in joining the support team should make contact with him.

The final speaker was R.W. Bro Philip Wills Prov.G.M. who talked about a return to normality. The Provincial suspension of meetings will continue until 31st August 2021 but R.W. Bro Philip explained that if a Lodge wishes to meet before then, and conditions allow, a dispensation to meet will be granted, each request will be considered on its own merits.

Since this talk further guidance has been issued from Grand Lodge and circulated to all Brethren.



Provincial Golf v Worcestershire

On Tuesday 11th May twelve Golfers from the Province took on the best that Worcestershire has to offer.

The day started dark and gloomy but soon the sun came out, and apart from one very heavy shower, the odd rumble of thunder, and a hailstorm all went well.

The matches were all played in good spirit, Worcestershire fielded a strong team including Past Provincial Grand Master R.W. Bro Frank Spencer who combined forces with Provincial Assistant Grand Master W.Bro Paul Yarnell to take on W. Bros Paul Hayward and Paul Rowlands, despite much barracking from Rowlands and trying to put them off with the colour of his shirt, Warwickshire managed to lose that rubber.



Gaudet Luce G.C. , Droitwich

Overall the result was Worcestershire 4. Warwickshire 2, congratulations go to W. Bros Cliff Bull , David Evans, Jon Thorne, and Bro Paul Skinner, for winning their matches.

The Warwickshire team consisted of

W. Bros Cliff Bull, David Evans, Roger Sargent, James Ashmore, Paul Rowlands, Paul Hayward, Jon Thorne, Ian Belsham, Denis Trent, Bros Tony Patara, Pete Rana, and Paul Skinner.



Brethren enjoy a post match drink - Just look at the colour of that shirt !



Bros Pete & Tony enjoy a well earned drink.



W.Bro Denis Trent Drives off

So if you see any of these Brethren over the coming months, remind them that they need to practice more to defend the honour of Warwickshire Province.



Team Captains
W.Bros Barry Bengé, Ian Belsham

Editor's Final Note

Once again I have to say a great big thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition of Warwickshire Mark. The next issue will hopefully be with you towards the end of June/Early July but that does depend upon contributions and every member of Mark and RAM is welcome to contribute. The original intention was to move to a bi-monthly format over the summer months, but so many great contributions have been made by Brethren it looks like we can continue with a monthly edition until Lodges start to meet again. It is all down to you!

As Mark Masonry starts to come to life as soon as it is safe to do so, please let the editor know what you and your Lodges are doing, not just the date and time, but also what is happening—ceremonies, lectures or special events. Please send your contributions (or any other news) to comms@warksmarkpgl.co.uk