



## Mark Grand Lodge



1,450 Mark Brethren had notified their intention to attend the Annual Investiture meeting of Mark Grand Lodge and by the very small number of vacant seats in the Grand Temple at Freemasons Hall, several others came to the meeting on the spur of the moment.



As is our usual practice, we arranged to meet up at the Shakespeare's Head, a popular Wetherspoons pub in Holborn for refreshments before the meeting. Many of us brought along our AMD napkins as our Provincial Grand Master is also the District Grand Prefect of the Allied Masonic Degrees in Surrey.



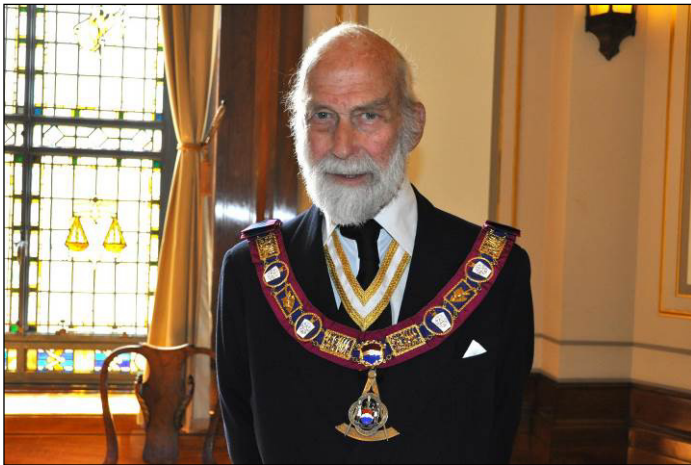
We then made our way along to Freemasons Hall where we received a very warm welcome.





We had hoped to welcome M.W.Bro. HRH Prince Michael of Kent, GCVO, to last September's meeting so that we could celebrate his 40th anniversary as our Grand Master.

However, Royal mourning for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II rightly took precedence and so this was our first opportunity to join with Prince Michael in celebration of this notable landmark in his Masonic career.



Grand Lodge having been opened, there was much business to attend to, including a re-launch of the Keystone Fund.



V.W.Bro. Bill Divall, **P.G.M.O.**, President of the Mark General Board, gave a short presentation explaining that the name and purpose of the "150th Anniversary Keystone Fund" has changed to "The Grand Master's Keystone Fund" to celebrate our Grand Master having given forty years of service to Mark Masonry.

Initially, the purpose of the new fund is to grant awards to individuals to offer encouragement and financial support with their educational, vocational, and sporting achievements.

The Grand Master's Keystone Fund will be administered by the Mark Benevolent Fund Board of Trustees.



The M.W.Bro. HRH Prince Michael of Kent, GCVO, was then proclaimed as Grand Master. He then proceeded to re-appoint M.W.Bro. John Herbert Prizeman as Pro Grand Master; R.W.Bro. Francis Charles Spencer as Deputy Grand Master; and R.W.Bro. Denovan Keith Wilson as Assistant Grand Master.



Then followed the investiture of 81 Active Grand Officers and a further 137 first appointments to Past Grand Rank, each recipient being invested personally by the Grand Master, warmly shaken by the hand, and receiving a few kind words of congratulation.

Surrey Brethren honoured with Active Grand Rank were W.Bro. David Barden of Redhill Mark Lodge, appointed as Grand Senior Deacon; and W.Bro. Tony Callister of Percy Mark Lodge, (*seen below*) appointed as Grand Steward.



The Grand Master then addressed Grand Lodge as follows:

*Brethren, change is often desirable, frequently necessary but always inevitable and in the wake of the recent pandemic our Order, like so many others, has had to adapt not just to the post-pandemic world in which we now live but also to meet the needs of our Brethren in the twenty-first century.*

*I am greatly encouraged to learn from the Grand Secretary that stability has returned to the Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall. Headcount and membership numbers are rising steadily; there is an increasing confidence among the Brethren and a renewed enthusiasm to resume our labours as Freemasons.*

*If evidence of this recovery was required, we need look no further than*

*the Grand Temple today. That so many of you have made the effort to attend this meeting is very gratifying indeed and serves to underline the value we all place on our Brotherhood and sharing in the joys of Mark Masonry.*

*Brethren, each of the mainstream Masonic Orders is separate and distinct with its own story and teachings, but they all share a set of common values. Those values bind us together in the worldwide family of freemasonry and encourage us to work together for the good of all.*

*This has become a resoundingly strong theme of the renewed focus to bring the Craft and Companion Orders closer together which Most Worshipful Brother Jonathan Spence, Pro Grand Master and Pro First Grand Principal, spoke about when he addressed Grand Mark Lodge in March and I encourage you all to actively embrace the opportunities this will undoubtedly create.*

*During the last year I have enjoyed exceptional support from the Pro Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and Assistant Grand Master all of whom have travelled extensively in England & Wales and overseas. In each case, their reappointment today is an acknowledgement of their commitment to our Order, and I thank them for all that they are doing to develop Mark Masonry at home and abroad.*

*This afternoon I have been pleased to invest over two hundred Brethren with Grand Rank and to each of our worthy recipients, I offer my warmest congratulations.*

*The award of Grand Rank is not something that is given without careful consideration. It is a positive reflection of, and reward for, the work that each of today's recipients has carried out and I have no doubt that their preferment will stimulate them still further to promote the Order at every opportunity.*

*Brethren, I have always been impressed by the support you give to the Mark Benevolent Fund which has conscientiously distributed funds to worthy causes in our communities and supported Brethren and their families in times of hardship.*

*It speaks volumes about the Order and its members that even after making these grants, the Fund continues to grow and is now more financially stable than at any time in its history.*

*During my visit to Romania late last year, I was able to meet a group of Ukrainian refugee families for whom the Mark Benevolent Fund has been a lifeline providing food, shelter, clothing, and education via an initiative run by Mrs Diana Constantin-Tiglar.*



Those of you present at the March Communication will have heard her speak passionately about the work she is only able to do with our support and although the size of the Ukrainian refugee population in Romania far exceeds our capacity, the impact on those families we are able to assist is life changing.

Today sees the retirement of Right Worshipful Brother John Bell after nine years as a Trustee of the Mark Benevolent Fund, the last three years of which he served as President of the Fund. Brother Bell has been a great advocate for the Mark Benevolent Fund, working diligently to foster strong relations with various grant recipient charities, most notably Hope for Tomorrow. I am most grateful to Brother Bell for all his efforts on our behalf and wish him well in his retirement from active office.

Also retiring as a Trustee today is Right Worshipful Brother David Ashbolt who was first appointed to the Board of the Mark Benevolent Fund in 2017. He too has displayed a deep commitment to the Fund achieving success with the new Provincial Festival Jewel Scheme raising a significant sum in a relatively short time. I extend to him my personal thanks for his all that he has achieved in the last six years, particularly as Deputy President since 2020."

The Grand Master then welcomed representatives from eight Sovereign Mark Grand Lodges, and 13 of our own Districts Overseas.



He continued: Brethren, I want to thank you all for making the effort to be here today on what is a very special occasion. I am immensely proud to have been your Grand Master for the last forty years and I can do no better than repeat what I said at my installation in 1982 the words spoken by my father when he became Grand Master in June 1939: "I can assure you that it will be my great endeavour during the time that I hold this high position to do all I can to promote the interests of the Order".



Those present couldn't help but be touched by the emotion in our Grand Master's voice as he recollected his father's words, before he closed his address by saying: Brethren, I look forward to continuing to serve the Order for as long as I am able.

The address was met with warm applause from the assembled Brethren.

Grand Lodge was then closed and, to complete this special occasion, the London Banqueting Ensemble's trumpeters, who had provided fanfares throughout the meeting, launched into the rousing Gordon Jacob introduction to God Save The King.

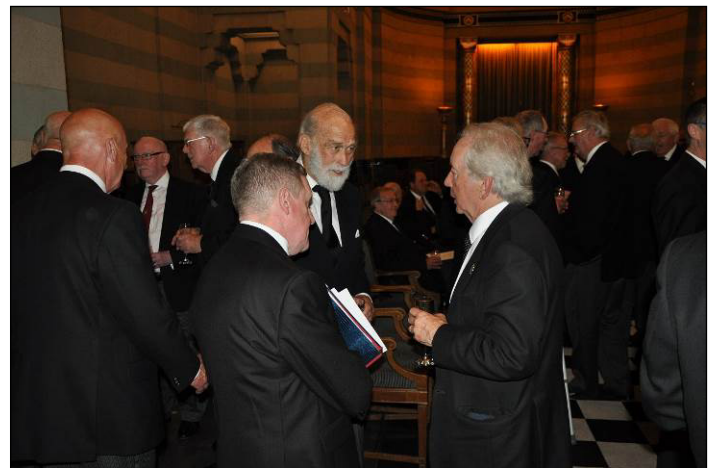


It had been a fantastically warm day, both outdoors and in the Grand Temple. But, overall, the warmth seemed to come from the atmosphere generated by the friendly and fraternal relationship which exists between Mark Brethren.





To cool down, the Brethren retired to refreshment before nearly 1,100 went through to the Grand Connaught Rooms to dine.



*Article by Dan Heath and photos by Bob Tuthill and Chris Eley*



# Farewell to Dorking Lodge



Dorking Lodge of Royal Ark Mariner and Dorking Lodge of Mark Master Masons held their last meetings on Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup> of April at Croydon Masonic Hall. In attendance was W.Bro. Bill Barr, Deputy Provincial Grand Master, and several Provincial Officers of the year.



The Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners was opened by the Worshipful Commander, W. Bro. Anthony Chong, who welcomed the Deputy Provincial Grand Master and all the visitors. The minutes of the Regular Meeting held on Tuesday, 21st February 2023, were confirmed and signed, and the final accounts as presented by the Treasurer and duly audited, were received and approved.

After the regular business of the Lodge had been completed the Worshipful Commander handed over the Warrant to the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, who assumed the Chair to close the meeting. After giving a response to the Lodge the Deputy Provincial Grand Master closed the Lodge for the last time.

A Lodge of Mark Master Masons was then opened by the Worshipful Master, W. Bro. Sonny Chong. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master entered into the Lodge escorted by the Provincial Officers of the year, was welcomed by the Worshipful Master and saluted with five under the direction of his Escorting Officer.



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After the customary photographs the Brethren of Dorking Lodge and their guests dined together for the last time.

# A Special Day for Comites Sigillorum Lodge



At the meeting held on May 9th our Worshipful Master, R.W.Bro. John French, carried out his first Advancement as our Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master.

At the meeting we advanced Bro Gavin Durbin. And presented a Mark Master Masons certificate to Bro Richard Powis.



We welcomed George Roger and John Fermin who joined after the Closing of Dorking Lodge, and also David Lawrence became a joining Member.



We ended a most enjoyable afternoon with a meal together at the Croydon and District Masonic Hall where those in the Allied Masonic Degrees wore their AMD napkins. I am very proud with the progress that we have made but we still need to grow as a Lodge. *Article by Ray Beadle*

## Farewell to Mary



The funeral service for Mary Turner was held on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June in Sussex.

There to support Jim were many Brethren and Companions from several Orders, along with many of the staff from the Croydon Masonic Hall where Mary used to work.

Jim and Mary were strong supporters of all the Mark events over the years and we will miss Mary's smiling face and convivial company.



## An enjoyable afternoon at Prince of Wales Lodge



In May I was invited along by Bro. Bradley Collins to Mark Masons Hall to attend the Installation Meeting of the Prince of Wales Mark Lodge No 4. Present on a private visit was the Provincial Grand Master of the Mark Province of London, R.W.Bro. Tom Quinn.

The Lodge of Mark Master Masons was then opened by the Worshipful Master, W.Bro. Constantine Trizis, who welcomed all the visitors, especially the Provincial Grand Master.

The main item on the agenda was to install Bro. Bradley Collins as the Worshipful Master of the Prince of Wales Lodge. This was done in a very sincere manner by the Worshipful Master, W.Bro. Constantine Trizis.

After W.Bro. Brad had been installed as Master the

Provincial Grand Master congratulated him and wished him a most successful and enjoyable year.

After the Lodge was closed several Surrey Mark Masons, W.Bro. Bradley's personal guests, got together for a group photo with the new Worshipful Master.



We then retired for dinner. V.W.Bro. Jerry Gangadeen, P.G.M.O., a member of Richmond Lodge of Mark Master Masons, had made one of his special rum cakes for the occasion.

*By Chris Eley*





# A little tippie at the new Woodstock Grape and Grain Lodge

Brethren of the Woodstock Grape and Grain Lodge of Master Masons No.1569 come together to celebrate the grain at Surbiton Masonic Halls.



The Lodge was reponed in September 2022 by the RW Provincial Grand Master with his Provincial team in attendance making for a very special meeting indeed. The Lodge kept the former Lodge's number 1569 but requested to change the name to Woodstock Grape and Grain.



On this occasion Worshipful Master, Mike Ellis, invited Brother Steve Potts to give a talk on whisky, which represented the grain element leaving the grape to be explored in the future.

Although this may be some time as members are very busy over the summer preparing for the reponement of Woodstock Grape and Grain Royal Ark Mariner Lodge in September.

If you would wish to be involved, or just come along to this quite unique Lodge, please do not hesitate to contact the Worshipful Master, W.Bro. Mike Ellis via email [mikeellis11@btinternet.com](mailto:mikeellis11@btinternet.com) or mobile 07856 543988.