

12th June 2020 - Latest from Grand Lodge



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland
William Ramsay McGhee, M.St.J., D.L., Grand Master Mason

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Brethren

At long last we are seeing a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel with our Lodges in Hong Kong and Western Australia ready to open once again and the Lodges in the Bahamas not far behind albeit I understand that the Government in the Bahamas have stipulated that no one over the age of 65 will be allowed to attend.

That said, at home and in many of our Districts, there is little prospect of getting back to regular meetings in the foreseeable future. Yesterday, we should have been in Edinburgh for the June Communication at which we would normally have made recommendations in respect of Office-bearers for the coming year. As that was not possible, I did write to all members of Grand Committee and they have agreed to my suggestion that the current Grand Lodge Office-bearers will remain in Office for a further year and that all Lodges, where practicable, should consider taking the same action. It follows that those who were due to come off Grand Committee this year will remain in situ and that we will simply move the elections for Grand Committee forward to next year.

We would also have welcomed new Provincial and District Grand Masters yesterday. I have written to them all welcoming them to their new Offices and have likewise written to those demitting office yesterday to thank them for their endeavour over the past five years. We welcome to the ranks of Provincial and District Grand Masters, Brother Chrispin Deigh in Sierra Leone and the Gambia, Gary Dinham in Newfoundland and Labrador, Chris Wong in the Far East, David Collings in Sutherland, Gordon Sewell in Stirlingshire, Andrew Forsyth in the Scottish Borders, William Semple in Perthshire West, Alan Balfour in Orkney and Zetland and Michael Mulholland continuing for a further five years in Forfarshire. I look forward to installing them all in due course. That was supposed to happen at a joint Installation meeting in October but unless there is a monumental change in direction from the Government that date will possibly have to be rescheduled. Likewise, all the Lodges that we have scheduled or rescheduled to have Rededication Ceremonies from September onwards will, in all likelihood, have to be rescheduled again. I would ask you to sit tight on the dates until we get more positive guidance from the Scottish Government and thereafter, I will be in touch with you all to agree when we can best carry out the ceremonies.

All Lodges will have much to do before being allowed to reopen. Grand Lodge are preparing guidelines that will hopefully provide a step by step routine to ensure that every possible precaution can be taken to safeguard all Brethren.

Could I give another reminder about the Covid-19 Business Relief Fund – there is still time to apply and contrary to the belief held in one Lodge, Grand Lodge do not receive a proportion of the grant from each Lodge. The grant, in full, is for each Lodge to use to best advantage in their respective premises.

The Scottish Constitution Freemasonry Support Group (SCFSG) now has 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, Middle East, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Zealand North Island, Panama, Republic of Mauritius, Sierra Leone and the Gambia, Trinidad & Tobago and Granada, Western Australia, Western Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Zambia, Zimbabwe (28 in total).

Zimbabwe has just joined us within the past week with 12 members. There are now over **185** overseas Brethren with Central South Africa, Middle East and Western Australia having most representation.

As of this week the Facebook has:

Members	2061
Posts	182
Members Posting	120
Lodges Mentioned	114
Provinces mentioned	28
Districts etc.	7
Monetary value	£146,061

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Scottish.Constitution.Freemasonry.Supports/>

The History and Heritage Group presented the first of a series of five lectures on Thursday night with Brother Tom Wood, PGM of Lodge Mother Kilwinning No 0 giving a history of the Lodge. The lectures take place at 19.00 hours each Thursday night. Next week Brothers Scott Harrison and Ewan Rutherford will give a joint presentation on The Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) No 1. If you miss any of the lectures you can catch up on the Scottish Craft Freemasonry Facebook page.

This past week Brother Charles Iain Wolrige Gordon and I attended the monthly Zoom conference of the European Grand Masters. Many of the Grand Lodges throughout Europe are beginning to look at opening up again but all three of the Home Grand Lodges reported that there is no immediate likelihood of a resumption of Lodge meetings anywhere in the UK or Ireland.

It was with great sadness that I learned this past week of three more Covid-19 deaths within our ranks. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of all Brethren who have been taken from us as a result of the Pandemic.

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.

Please take care of yourselves and each other – stay safe.

Kindest regards to you all.

Ramsay McGhee Grand Master Mason