



## The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

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

Brethren

25.09.2020

As we move into the last week in September, may I address a few words to our many Jewish Brethren at home and abroad. The New Year (5781) has arrived. This is a Holy Festival when families usually gather together to celebrate. In the current circumstances, this has not been possible, due to travel and other restrictions brought about by Covid-19 and I extend my sympathy to you all as it must be very frustrating not being able to celebrate in the traditional manner. The days between the start of the New Year and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), are a time of solemn reflection, very different from the New Year celebrations with which many of us are familiar. Yom Kippur, on Monday September 28th, is a day of fasting and praying. As it approaches, I extend my best wishes and hope these Holy Days will bring solace, and a happy and peaceful New year.

I have received detailed information from Brother Gordon Michie of Poppy Scotland regarding the procedure for Poppy crosses. An updated letter will be sent out today along with this update.

We have received many requests as to how financial support can be sent to the Lebanon in the wake of the explosion. Due to banking issues in Lebanon we have been unable to give definitive advice but Grand Secretary will hopefully be in a position early next week to circulate details of a new account in Grand Lodge which will be used exclusively for emergency aid to Lebanon. I thank you for your patience in this matter but it is important that we have a conduit that will allow monies collected to go safely to the right place.

Back in May I gave answers to a number of frequently asked questions in the weekly update but of late, Grand Treasurer has been asked again about annual fees – please find below the response I gave in May which is still the case today.

### **Will Grand Lodge give all Lodges a year without paying annual fees?**

The answer is no. First, that would require a motion to be placed in front of Grand Lodge and there will be no meeting of Grand Lodge this year. We would ask that the Brethren continue to pay their Test Fees as normal. Each Lodge pays an annual Capitation Fee of £33 per member to Grand Lodge. In the majority of Lodges but not all, that amount is included in the annual Test Fee. It is important therefore that Brethren continue to pay their Test Fee in order that the Lodge receives its portion and that Provincial or District Lodges receive their portion. We do acknowledge and appreciate that there may be individual Brethren who, as a result of Covid-19 are experiencing extreme hardship. It is expected that the Lodge,



the Province or District and Grand Lodge would all pull together to assist Brethren and their families who experience such hardship but for the vast majority we would ask that they support their Lodge in particular, Freemasonry in general by paying their annual dues.

Latest news from the Scottish Constitution Freemasonry Supports Facebook page is as follows –

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

	<b>Last week</b>	<b>This week</b>
Members	3534	3625
Posts	420	430
No of Members posting	196	199
Lodges mentioned	225	231
Provinces mentioned	30	30
Districts & Lodges abroad	14	15
Monetary Value	£310,568	£324,864

### **SCFS Overseas Report**

- We welcomed **61 Overseas Brethren** this week, bringing our Overseas Membership of the SCFS Group to **999**. The amazing milestone of an Overseas Membership of 1,000 will be reached this coming week. The SCFS Team looks forward to congratulating our 1,000th. member in next week's Report.
- It is heartening to note that, once again, we had an expansive geographical spread of new members this week, Brethren joining from ... The Bahamas, Central South Africa, East Africa, Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Far East, Fiji, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritius, Newfoundland and Labrador, Trinidad & Tobago and Grenada, Zambia.
- The largest increase in membership was from the **District of Lebanon**, followed by the District of Trinidad & Tobago and Grenada and the District of Central South Africa.
- **Lodge Mount Lebanon, No. 1312**, Lebanon, had the largest number of Brethren joining from an individual Lodge ... closely followed by *Lodge Jordan, No. 1339*, Jordan.
- A number of new Members proved to be extremely proactive in encouraging members of their Lodges to join the SCFS group. many thanks to them.
- We received extremely interesting posts from our Overseas Lodges and Districts, sharing the support which they are providing, and thanks is also extended for this.

Just a wee gentle reminder that if your Masonic Club is operating, as and from today you will require to adhere to the 10.00pm curfew. Full details can be found at [-https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tourism-and-hospitality-sector-guidance/pages/overview/](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tourism-and-hospitality-sector-guidance/pages/overview/) and at The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions and Requirements) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2020

### **Contacting Grand Lodge**

The Grand Lodge telephone switchboard is now open on a part time basis - the days/hours will be: - Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between 10am and 2.30pm

**Ramsay McGhee**

Grand Master Mason

