



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

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

Brethren,

8th January 2021

I hope you had an enjoyable, albeit quiet New Year within the lockdown restrictions. May I take this opportunity to wish you all, and your families, a very blessed, happy and healthy 2021. We will overcome the nightmare that is Covid and we will get back to our meetings – we just need to hang in there a bit longer, but we will get there.

That said, it has not been the start to the New Year that we would have wished for. Little did I think when I penned the first update that I would be writing the 50th update in January 2021. The whole country is back in total lockdown but that little light, provided by the vaccine being made available, is still shining and we should all be eternally grateful for the skill of the scientists for getting us to this stage. Last night I had a Zoom meeting with the European Grand Masters and while it is no consolation, we are not alone in this upsurge – it is widespread throughout Europe and the Brethren in Croatia are also fighting against earthquakes. It was reported at the meeting last night that in and around Zagreb yesterday they experienced thirteen tremors – the day before it was seven. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this very difficult time.

As I reported last week, the Heads of Orders meeting will take place on this coming Wednesday. Please don't expect a definitive answer as to when we can get back to holding meetings again. We will be looking at all our options and the Strategy Group are working on guidelines for a safe return to opening. I have asked Grand Secretary to contact the Scottish Government this week – they have never responded to any of my three letters to them – and ask that when the lockdown is over and some of the restrictions are lifted that we are given the same privileges that the churches have enjoyed. If we can get that assurance, then we can start planning in earnest.

I am very much aware that I haven't been in contact with the Lodges who should have had Anniversary Celebrations – simply because the goalposts keep changing. This week I have rescheduled the Calendar yet again in the hope that we will get out and about sooner rather than later but what I can do is give an assurance that every single Lodge who have had an anniversary over the past year will have a Rededication Ceremony carried out by Grand Lodge. Depending on future restrictions there may be a greatly reduced Deputation from Grand Lodge, but we will be there with you. Each Saturday, my Depute and Substitute will be heading Deputations so that we will have three events running every Saturday – we may even do some mid-week, but we will be in every Lodge on the list. Once the Government give us a clue as to what we can or cannot do, we will be in touch with proposed dates.

Likewise, I am mindful that I have eight Provincial Grand Masters waiting to be installed. That too will happen, and I will be speaking to each of them soon to discuss arrangements.



SCFS

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

An additional 68 new members joined the group which now has a membership of 4308 Brethren from both Scottish Constitution Lodges and Lodges from other Constitutions recognised by the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

This week saw the total examples of charitable giving recorded within the group rise to 605, submitted by 246 of its members.

These updated contributions can now be attributed as to being made on behalf of 294 Lodges, from within 31 Provincial Grand Lodges, 20 District Grand Lodges, Superintendence's and Lodges under the direct supervision of Grand Lodge.

Another £11,644 was added to the total identifiable monetary value of the contributions, which now stands at £527,615.

SCFS Overseas Report

- With another **11** Overseas Brethren joining the group, Overseas Membership is steadily climbing and is now standing at **1268** Members. New members were welcomed from Lodges in Central South Africa, Far East (Japan), Lebanon, Peru, Sierra Leone and The Gambia, Trinidad & Tobago and Grenada, and Western Australia.
- The first Overseas Member of 2021 was *Brother Gary Bonifacio, Lodge Perla del Oriente, No. 1034*, the Philippines in the District of the Far East. Congratulations, Brother Bonifacio.
- **40 International Constitution Members** joined .. coming from the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and ACT, Grand Lodge of Quebec, UGLE, Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, Grand Lodge of Spain, Grand Lodge of Ireland, Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines, Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon, Grand Lodge of India, Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, Grand Lodge of China, Grand Lodge of Virginia, Grand Lodge of South Africa, Grand Lodge of Cuba, Grand Lodge of Nigeria, Grand Lodge of Russia, Grand Lodge of Alberta.
- We now have **172** members from other Masonic Constitutions which are in amity with the GLoS. News of the wonderful support by our Brethren, featured on the SCFS page, is truly being spread world wide.
- The first ICM of 2021 was *Brother Michael Van Der Linde, Lodge de Goede Trouw, No. 2*, from the Grand Lodge of South Africa. Congratulations, Brother Van Der Linde.
- *We had the greatest of pleasure in welcoming Brother Andrey Bogdanov into the group as an ICM. Brother Bogdanov is the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Russia.*
- Finally, a very interesting post from the Widows Sons Lebanon Chapter was shared with the group ... we look forward to receiving and sharing many more posts from our Overseas Districts, Lodges and Brethren this coming year.

Finally, please stay safe and look after each other.

Ramsay McGhee
Grand Master Mason

