



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

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

Brethren,

15th January 2021

At the meeting of the Heads of Orders on Wednesday, it was unanimously agreed that meetings of all Orders in Scotland will remain suspended for the foreseeable future. The decision was based on a number of factors – the current rise in cases and in deaths, the speed by which vaccine will be available and administered to all and the fact that we received notice that all public events have been cancelled indefinitely – for example, I received notification yesterday through the Lieutenancy that the Garden Parties in July have been cancelled. I know, accept and appreciate that this will be disappointing news to many, but the health and safety of our membership is paramount. With regard to our Lodges abroad, my advice is to remain closed unless you are 100% sure of the safety of the Brethren and are working in strict compliance with the law of your country.

As a result of Wednesday's meeting, I will be calling an early meeting of the strategy group and will be tasking them, as a matter of urgency, to bring forward their work to ensure that we can do all that we possibly can to keep interest and enthusiasm as high as we can possibly can. We all need to remain positive and upbeat. I will also be meeting at an early date with all Provincial and District Grand Masters to emphasise to them the role that I expect them to play in this ongoing pandemic.

Brethren, please be assured that I will do all in my power to keep morale, enthusiasm and passion for our Craft as my number one priority. I don't enjoy the situation any more than anyone else – however, I am confident that we will come out of the pandemic strong and vibrant – it may just take a bit longer than I was anticipating.

In the meantime, please keep the Zoom meetings going – I'll move to try and expand the meetings so that we can do more than we are maybe doing at the present time. Keep in touch with the more vulnerable Brethren, widows and families. Make sure they are safe.

I'll also explore the possibility of Lodges applying to "Connecting Scotland" for i-pads for those members who have no way of connecting to the internet. I would also make an appeal on two counts – if anyone has a laptop or i-pad that they no longer use then I'm sure we all know someone who could use it and secondly, if we can get second hand devices, it would be good if we could get some expertise in the Provinces and Districts to ensure that they are stripped of all data and the recipients shown how to use them – I'll expand on this with the PGM's and DGM's.

My sincere thanks to you all for your patience and perseverance. The Heads of Orders are going to meet again in June to review the situation.



SCFS

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

The group can now boast a membership of 4346 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 611, submitted by 246 of its members.

With the District Grand Lodge of Zambia being added this week, these updated contributions can now be attributed as to being made on behalf of 297 Lodges, from within 31 Provincial Grand Lodges, 21 District Grand Lodges, Superintendencies and Lodges under the direct supervision of Grand Lodge.

An increase in the quantifiable monetary value of contributions to £534,515 was recorded during the week.

There have been 88,325 individual comments, likes, and other reactions to the group since its inception.

SCFS Overseas Report

- We welcomed another **13** Overseas Brethren this week, bringing our Overseas Membership to **1281** Members.
- The geographical spread of Overseas Members saw Brethren being welcomed from ... the Bahamas, Barbados, Far East, Zambia.
- The largest increase in membership was from the *District of Zambia*.
- **Lodge Lusaka, No. 1368, (Zambia)** and **Lodge Perla del Oriente, No. 1034, (Far East)**, had equally the largest number of Brethren joining from an individual Lodge.
- Our International Constitution Members (ICMs) viewing the SCFS page has increased to **185** with new ICMs joining the group from the Grand Lodge of *India*, Grand Lodge of *South Africa*, *UGLE*, United Grand Lodges of *Germany*, United Grand Lodge of *New South Wales and ACT* (we were delighted to welcome *Brother Jamie Melville, Past Grand Master*), Grand Lodge of the *Philippines*, Grand Lodge of the *District of Columbia*.

Outstanding posts were received this week.

- Brother Andrew Shaw shared news of a donation of £4,000 organised by *Lodge Lusaka, No. 1368, and Lodge NKana, No. 1378*, in the District of Zambia, for the erection of a hospital partition for Covid treatment.

Brother George Rogers, IPDGM of Western Australia, shared news of a donation, by the *DGL and Daughter Lodges*, of over £11,300, to support funds of the Motor Neurone Disease Association (WA).

I have asked Sue to distribute a paper by Brother Alan Carmichael from Lodge `Dalkeith Kilwinning No 10 in which he gives some expert advice on grants that are currently available. The paper will accompany this update. My sincere thanks to Alan for his assistance in this matter.

Finally, please stay safe and look after each other.

Ramsay McGhee

Grand Master Mason

