

BERKSHIRE MARK BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION



The Minutes of the 28th Committee Meeting of BeMBA. Held at Sindlesham Court on Wednesday, 23rd January, 2019.

The Chairman, VW. Bro. Graham Seeman, opened the meeting at 6:45pm., welcomed all present and thanked them for their attendance :-

THERE WERE PRESENT :-

V. W. Bro. G. Seeman (Chairman)	Rep. Friendship & Care Mark;
W. Bro. R. Head (Vice-Chairman)	Rep. Caduceus Mark;
W. Bro. J. Payen (Treasurer)	Rep. Porchester RAM & Hungerford Mark;
W. Bro. H. Ranscombe (Secretary)	Rep. Jersey RAM;
W. Bro. G. Barlow	Rep. Cranley Mark;
W. Bro. J. Edmundson	Rep. Valentia Mark;
W. Bro. F. Hames	Rep. Wallingford Mark;
W. Bro. A. Hardiman	Leopold Mark & Rep. Leopold RAM;
W. Bro. H. Hopkin	Rep. Leopold Mark;
W. Bro. D. Lambton	Rep. Charles Wilkinson Mark;
W. Bro. D. Wiltcher	Rep. Conrad Costin Mark.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :-

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting had been received from :-

W. Bro. D. Fisher	Rep. Jersey Mark (helping set up the Blood Bike presentation);
W. Bro. R,M Haydon	Rep. Windsor Castle Mark;
W. Bro. D. Medley	Rep. Linden Acre & Pangbourne Mark;
W. Bro. S. Ostrowski	Rep. Erleigh Mark.

2. MINUTES :-

The Minutes of the 27th Committee meeting held on Monday 29th January, 2018 had been circulated to all BeMBA representatives. They were proposed as a true record by W. Bro. D. Wiltcher, seconded by W. Bro. J. Edmundson, confirmed by the Brethren present and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING :-

There were no matters arising from those Minutes.

3. TREASURERS REPORT :-

The Treasurer, W. Bro Jim Payen, gave a report of the financial position of BeMBA, a copy of which is attached to the paper copy of these minutes. The balance stands at £22,457.16. This is near the balance of the pre-festival Accounts and is due to Lodges again making donations from income at their Lodge Meetings.

4. HOLIDAY SCHEME :-

There are no claims in the pipeline so far but Lodge representatives are encouraged to stress this in their reports.

5. BERKSMARK WIDOWS :-

The Secretary reported that a letter and Christmas card had been sent to all the Lodge widows, together with a S.A.E. for a reply.

Lodge reps. were asked to update their widows list, in anticipation of sending out gift vouchers at Easter.

6. CLAIMS FOR ASSISTANCE :-

BeMBA had received no requests for assistance from members of BerksMark, although the Secretary was keeping in touch with several Mark Men and their wives who were not so well at the moment.

- 6.1. One Brother requested help (in the form of advice rather than finance) in getting a stair lift installed. The Secretary sent information and recommendations on selection and installation.
*A stairlift was installed three days later, much to the relief and satisfaction of the Brother.
- 6.2. BeMBA agreed to pay £250 for the Breakdown Cover of the Burghfield and Mortimer Handibus.
- 6.3. The request from Elle Parry was considered out of our remit as there was no family connection with BerksMark.
- 6.4. It was felt that the Wokingham Food Bank was already well supported by other Masonic units.
- 6.5. Whilst the West Berkshire Homeless Charity had received some support from the Berkshire Masonic Charity, it was agreed to 'top up' this support with a donation of £200.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS :-

7.1. Support for the Blood Bike Charity.

The President and other Officers of BeMBA put forth the suggestion that BeMBA should try and support one Province-wide Charity each year. Following the presentation of fully-kitted-out motorcycles to the National Blood Bike Groups at Birmingham by the Mark Benevolent Fund, there was general agreement that we should 'adopt' the Bike Charity which covers Berkshire. To that end, a presentation by the Chairman of the Blood Bike Group was arranged to follow this meeting, to which all Berkshire Masons had been invited.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :-

The next Committee Meeting was set for Wednesday, 2nd. May, 2019.

There being no other business, the Committee Meeting was closed by the Chairman at 7.20pm. and the meeting retired to the Flavell Suite for the Blood Bike Presentation.

Signed

Chairman.

Date

Appendix 1.

Summary of the Presentation by Captain Kamran Irani, Chairman of the Registered Blood Bike Charity which covers Berkshire.

Captain Kamran was received by our Provincial Grand Master, R.W. Bro. Richard Olliver and W. Bro. David Fisher, who helped set up the Flavell Suite.
Approximately sixty Brethren attended the presentation.

The speaker was introduced by V. W. Bro. Graham Seeman (the Chairman of BeMBA), who explained why the meeting had been called and outlined the objectives. BeMBA planned to support one Province-wide Charity each year in addition to the smaller, local Charities recommended by Lodges. Following the support given by the Mark Benevolent Fund to the National Blood Bike Charity as a whole, the Blood Bike Group which covered Berkshire was recommended for this year's backing.

The Charity was started in 1962 by Margaret Ryson, who foresaw the need for a rapid response to hospital's requirements for blood products and other vital items essential for the health of a patient.

The group covering Berkshire has approximately 150 volunteers who man the bikes, cars and central office. They responded to ~2,000 calls last year and are funded entirely by public donation (much like the Air Ambulance, which receives no support from central government). This figure includes ~400 breast milk collections / deliveries between mothers, The John Radcliffe Hospital Milk Bank and other hospitals which have no milk bank, in support of neonatals.

The bikes are named by their sponsors, rather than by model or number plate. Several of the bikes recently presented at the National Motorcycle Museum by the Mark Benevolent Fund incorporated 'Mark Mason' or the Grand Master's identity in a prominent position on the bike.

The group covering Berkshire has twelve bikes (a few newer than others !!) and three are on duty each night. Of the newer bikes, the Yamaha FJR1300 is chosen for its load-carrying capacity, the BMW F800GT for manoeuvrability, and the Honda ST1300 for long-distance work. Captain Kamran apologised for the no-show of the Blood Bike, as they were not insured to be on the road when the temperature was below 3deg.C. (It was a bitterly cold night !!!!), Volunteers** must be at least twenty-five years old, have an Institute of Advanced Motoring Qualification and be RoSPA and Police certified.

Assessments are carried out on a 1:1 basis and volunteers receive training on load-carrying, route preferences and hospital layouts.

The National Association of Blood Bikes has thirty-two groups around the country with 3000 volunteers using 260 vehicles. Over 80,000 runs were made in 2018. The Charity's website gives more detailed information - <http://www.bloodbikes.org.uk/about-us/>.

At the end of the presentation, the speaker was thanked for his delivery and received a hearty round of applause from the audience in acknowledgement of the work carried out by the Charity and the enthusiasm to provide additional support.

** At the end of the evening, one Mark Man volunteered his services in riding for the group.