



Freemasonry@86 News - 23 December 2020



Welcome to your news and information update for the progressive/companion Orders of Freemasonry administered from Mark Masons' Hall, 86 St James's.

This bulletin is emailed to all 'leaders' in the Provinces, Districts & Divisions and their Secretariats.

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Christmas wishes from all of us at Mark Masons' Hall

As the year comes to a close we take this opportunity to share this video with you and send you our best wishes for the festive season. We look forward to resuming activities in 2021.

¹<mailto:communications@mmh.org.uk>



<https://sway.office.com/aBcqVQg5BLQ1cXJ7#content=GmU60qTIDJ0Dsu>

Christmas Hampers Delivered

Last week we reported on the £4,000 MBF Grant for this scheme. Here Peter Gibson-Leitch, Prov.G.Sec., Leicestershire & Rutland tells us about the results.

Just a quick note to let you know what a truly marvellous morning we all had yesterday organising and delivering 160 Festive Hampers to our most vulnerable and widows. A truly wonderful Mark success yet again and every single volunteer - be they suppliers, packers, loaders, marshalls or drivers - came together to deliver a fantastic team effort.

From the first arrival of drivers at Lutterworth Masonic Hall at 9.30 a.m., a steady stream of nearly fifty vehicles were loaded and passed through in only an hour and ten minutes.

We've always been quite clear that what we did back in the spring with the Keystone Boxes and again yesterday was a heartfelt gesture of affection and the brotherly love for those who sadly can often be forgotten during challenging times, and by the many emails and calls we've taken since, it was mission accomplished. Many were so moved to be remembered, the broad smiles and tears of emotion in equal measure were much in evidence at the doorsteps.

Our Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Phil Mann was in attendance throughout the morning and later in the day expressed his thanks to the whole team of volunteers "Hope everyone got back safe and sound. Well done and thank you to the whole team again! I'm sure you've put smiles on the faces of the Ladies and Brethren who received a visit and made their Christmas a lot brighter. The Mark does it at any time of the year!! I wish you all a happy, safe and joyful Christmas and may we all meet up again in what I hope will be a safer and normal 2021. Keep smiling."

Our collective thanks from Phil and every one of the volunteers go to the M.B.F. for kindly agreeing to fund the exercise.



MBF update from St John Ambulance

We were pleased to receive the following update from our friends at St John Ambulance highlighting the work they have been carrying out this year, with the help of the support they receive from the MBF.

You can download a copy [Here](#)²



MBF Update from St John Ambulance

What a year it has been! Hopes for you are now rising into the open again to Christmas.

Here at St John things are continuing apace. As you may have heard, we have been invited by NHS England to be a lead partner in its vaccination programme over the coming months and so, alongside our ongoing community support activities, we are also getting thousands of volunteers ready to administer and support COVID-19 vaccinations.

As you know, we held our first ever virtual evening event on 3rd December to celebrate, with our family of supporters, all our achievements over the past year. We were delighted that Ryan Williams could join us for this special night. A link to a video of the event is now available here: <https://youtu.be/W2HJatXMS> Please do dip in for some incredible stories from our volunteers and a guest appearance from Sir Trevor Macdonald.

As ever, we remain extremely grateful to Mark Master Masons across the country for their continuing support. I know that some local operations have been made over the past few months and that, in our effort to keep people safe in exceptional times. In addition, our Mark Master Masons continue to play a vital role in moving our communities, and I am delighted to share with you some of the ways in which these vehicles have enabled us to respond to local needs during the pandemic. I hope that you enjoy reading the attached report which comes with our sincerest thanks for all your support.

From all of us here at St John, our warmest wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a very happy new year. Victoria.

Victoria Lee, Trusts and Statutory Manager

St John Ambulance, 27 St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BS



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²[http://download.mmh.org.uk/Update for the Mark Master Masons Dec 2020.pdf](http://download.mmh.org.uk/Update%20for%20the%20Mark%20Master%20Masons%20Dec%202020.pdf)



Thank you for the difference you have made to our work

"This pandemic is already giving rise to that spirit of charity and community that brings people together"
Charity Commission, June 2020

The spirit of charity and community has motivated St John Ambulance for over 140 years. Our focus is, and has always been, to respond to health emergencies, support communities and save lives. The exceptional circumstances of covid-19 have given new impetus to our work. With your support, St John has been proud to offer services directly relevant to the major crisis our communities have faced, and we will continue to do so whatever the future may bring.

Our wonderful volunteers

The months from March 2020 have been unprecedented, harnessing all our charity's assets to the fight against the pandemic.

Our skilled volunteers have given over **200,000 hours of support to patients in this time**. We are proud to have worked alongside all the nation's ambulance trusts and in hospitals around the country and to have developed partnerships to deliver many small-scale local healthcare projects. Our contribution has been significant, and much appreciated by those we have worked alongside.

How the Mark Master Measons have helped us

In 2017, the Mark Master Measons generously donated over £3million to help fund 92 replacement ambulances, treatment centres and support vehicles. These vehicles continue to be invaluable to our work and, in recent months, to our covid-19 effort. The examples below show just some of the ways these special vehicles have been helping to keep local communities safe during the pandemic.

Brighton and West Lancashire Mobile Treatment Centres – helping the homeless

Brighton

In Brighton, we address the health needs of homeless people with a team of volunteers, made up of healthcare professionals and members of the public. The volunteers are trained in first aid and other healthcare specifics like foot care, mental health and alcohol-related problems were the most common problems addressed last year, with over 500 instances between them.



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We run nurse-led outreach clinics in partnership with local organisations. The clinics typically take place both within partner buildings and in our mobile treatment vehicle, which has an area where patients can be assessed and treated privately.



A client being treated in the mobile centre by a volunteer.

Due to covid restrictions, we have been running all our clinics uniquely from this vehicle ensuring people continue to get the help they need. We are also able to take the service to other locations across Sussex, including Hastings and Eastbourne where there is a high homeless population. At the beginning of the pandemic, we also travelled to the hostels and hotels that our clients were staying in temporarily as part of the 'Everyone In' measures. In the period from April to November, we saw almost 200 people.

Case study: The Brighton team had one complex case of a man who had long-term damage to his feet sustained in a war. He required multiple appointments with our nurses and podiatrist. The care he received from our volunteers has resulted in a significant improvement in his quality of life as evidenced by his increased mobility and emotional wellbeing. Our support prevented a possible for amputation and hospital admission, at a time when our health service was under enormous pressure.

Manchester

In Manchester, we provide a similar service for rough sleepers, working as part of a Street Engagement Hub. In response to covid-19, our training team developed a 'covid-19 care' module enabling volunteers to work in hospitals and emergency wards for the first time. During the government's 'Everyone In' measures volunteers who had completed the covid-19 care module visited homeless people to deliver first aid care to those in need and signpost them to further services if needed.



Some of our volunteer team with the treatment centre.

As the hotels began to close it was decided that the service would change to a mobile hub. Our West Lancashire Treatment Centre now parks in Manchester city centre twice a week and works alongside the other partner agencies. This has made us more visible not only to the homeless communities but also the general public. The treatment space has also been used by other health care services during the pandemic, such as the blood borne virus team who have been able to use the vehicle to treat their clients in a clean, safe and dignified environment.

Working with the Street Engagement Team has been great as it's allowed us to update relationships with different organisations and helped me to understand the support an offer for those sleeping rough around Manchester. We can offer first aid support to individuals but also signpost them to the agencies there on the day. *Caroline Broadbent, Lead SA Volunteer*

Over the coming months, St John will continue to be there for the homeless communities in Brighton and Manchester, providing the care and compassion they rely on from our volunteers.



West Lancashire Treatment Centre – assisting in covid-19 research

Since July, our volunteers have been assisting with a research study evaluating the presence of COVID-19 antibodies in children and young people in collaboration with the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust. The What's the STORY? (Serum Testing of Representative Youngsters) study was originally intended to assess the presence of antibodies against vaccine-preventable diseases like meningitis and was given urgent public health status following the outbreak of covid-19.

For the study, 400+ children and young people were recruited across Greater Manchester. Using our mobile Treatment Centres, mobile clinics were made accessible to local residents providing a clean, safe space for the trial. Without the vehicle, the study might not have gone ahead, given the closure of clinics and other venues.

The SJA team could not have been more accommodating and despite venues not opening up, the research team have chosen to continue with the mobile SJA study visits. It has been a pleasure working together. **Angela Branson, Senior Clinical Trials Coordinator**

Oxfordshire Treatment Centre – a volunteer welfare space

Our work since March has been very different from our business as usual, of providing workplace training and first aid support at events. It has demanded exceptional levels of commitment from all St John people, focussing the whole organisation on the pandemic response. Our volunteers have shown remarkable strength and maturity – stepping forwards, upskilling and taking on new and challenging roles, such as caring for covid patients in hospital wards, during an incredibly difficult time.



Hospital volunteer Hannah, pictured left, recalls her experience caring for an elderly patient: "As we walked, and knew soon the time would come, I went and held the patient's hand. She was so quiet, so even in those last moments her family couldn't be on the ward. I'm glad I held her hand, but I almost feel guilty that I was there, and they weren't. I now see it was a strange sort of honour, to be there when they couldn't."

"What is amazing in this crisis is the family, the friends and the compassion of the patients – all patients are worse. Although I enjoy using my clinical skills in the hospital using ECG interpretation, cleaning wounds, the greatest impact St John volunteers can have is the human element. Talking to patients, comforting them, even just making sure they have had a drink and something to eat."

Throughout the pandemic, we have been using our Oxfordshire Treatment Centre outside Stoke Mandeville Hospital to provide a place of respite for our volunteers. The centre has given them warmth and space to take breaks away from their physically and mentally demanding hospital roles.

Warrickshire Treatment Centre – supporting hard to reach communities

Since the first lockdown, there has been reduced access to health services with some clinical services and walk-in clinics being closed. Some of our Treatment Centres have been used to deliver mobile health services to those unable to access other services in their local area. One example of this is our Warrickshire Treatment Centre which has been used to support community clinics to local people in and around Coventry.



St John's role in the vaccine programme

We are proud to announce that St John Ambulance has been invited by NHS England to be a lead partner in its vaccination programme over the coming months. We will lead a team of organisations to help NHS staff vaccinate the nation's at-risk groups against flu this winter and as the vaccine becomes more widely available, against covid-19.

The logistical challenge of conducting a county-wide intensive vaccination programme for covid, in addition to the annual flu vaccination schedule, is huge. In the coming months we will train thousands of volunteers to help the NHS to deliver vaccines up and down the country.

Moving forwards

The financial implications of the pandemic for St John have been huge. We experienced, overnight, a complete loss of our normal operating income from first aid training and event cover, which made up over 50% of our income in 2019. Despite this, our volunteer deployment continued at scale and we have taken steps to reshape our organisation for the future. Whilst painful decisions have had to be made to reduce our workforce and close some of our properties around the country, we have found ways to adapt our business model for the new circumstances.

- Workplace training is being redesigned to blend digital elements alongside our traditional face-to-face input, with suitable social distancing.
- All St John volunteers now complete Covid-19 care training preparing them for the safe return of public events and providing them with the necessary skills to serve in hospital settings and support people in their local communities as covid cases continue.
- We are continuing to keep our young people engaged through online sessions, as well as encouraging local digital interaction, whilst we prepare to reopen our face-to-face groups in 2021. We know that young people have been hit hard by the pandemic, especially those who were already being disadvantaged. That's why we are refreshing our syllabus and developing new ways to engage and include young people who wouldn't typically access uniformed groups.

With winter fast approaching, the coronavirus and its effects continue to put our communities at risk. St John will continue to stand by communities whatever happens through covid and beyond.

"On the 3 June 2020, I had a heart attack at home, my wife dialled 999 and the first responders were St John's Ambulance and they literally saved my life. When they came in a few minutes later I went into cardiac arrest, and the St John Ambulance team brought me back twice and saved my life, kept me stable until the medics arrived on scene. I can't thank them enough and feel lucky to be here to tell my story." **Michael Dunne, patient**

A special thank you to Mark Master Masons

On behalf of St John volunteers, staff, and the communities we serve, we would like to thank you for your generous support of our work. The vehicles donated by the Mark Master Masons have enabled us to adapt our services to meet the changing needs of communities during the covid-19 pandemic and will continue to help keep communities safe, in ordinary and extraordinary times, for many years to come.



And also from Dogs for Good

You can download a copy of the update and the 2020 Newsletter Here³

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Registered in Scotland: SC038225



Mark Benevolent Fund

Dogs for Good 2020 Summary

The Mark Benevolent Fund has very kindly supported Dogs for Good for several years. Your support and interest in our charity are hugely appreciated. We are writing with an update on our work. Like most organisations, our services have been heavily impacted by the coronavirus crisis. Between March and June and again in November, we had to close our training centre and suspend our activities temporarily due to the national lockdowns. The majority of our clients are vulnerable to coronavirus and hence they have been shielding or self-isolating. The pandemic has compelled us to adapt and find new ways to deliver our services in order to continue improving disabled people's lives through trained dogs. We are pleased to provide a summary below of our work in this unique year.

Assistance Dog Service

We have relied heavily on technology and video calls to provide virtual support and guidance to our clients and to our volunteers who look after our puppies and dogs in training. Despite the pandemic disrupting our assistance dog training, we have succeeded in creating 17 new assistance dog partnerships. Our existing partnerships, of which we have over 300, have been a lifeline for our clients as their dog has helped them to remain safe and calm during these difficult and anxious times. Our aftercare support that we provide to all our partnerships usually involves home visits during which we provide advice and guidance to help each client and their dog work effectively together. Throughout the lockdowns we replaced face-to-face contact with remote visits in the form of regular video calls with each client. In August we surveyed our clients to ask their views on our aftercare service during lockdown. 74% of clients said that they were very satisfied with the service and 19% said that they were satisfied. Our aftercare has enabled us to help our clients adjust to working in public situations with their assistance dog in their accustomed terms after months of being in lockdown or shielding. We have resumed visiting our clients, whilst maintaining social distancing and using PPE, and are continuing to provide virtual support to clients who have concerns about face-to-face visits. As one of our staff members comments: "None of us could have imagined the situation we are in but it's definitely helped us to think about using technology to support people in new ways. Lockdown has led us to make many changes in the way we work for the better and we'll definitely continue to use many of these new methods in the future".

Family Dog Service

Prior to the pandemic, our Family Dog service was delivered through series of workshops at community venues in towns and cities across the UK. The workshops provide specialist advice to parents with an autistic child to help them train their pet dog to support the child with everyday activities and reduce the child's meltdown. After parents have attended the workshops they receive ongoing aftercare via email, telephone and a support forum. 2020 has marked the 10th anniversary of the service. Unfortunately, since March, we have had to cancel our face-to-face workshops. In order to continue the service and to support families who had already booked to attend workshops, the Family Dog team have adapted the service to be delivered virtually. Since September we have been holding five workshops online. Feedback from families has been positive. The Family Dog team plan to hold the workshops virtually until at least next June. One of our Family Dog instructors says: "It's a different way of doing things but we've worked hard to be able to offer the same service, the same advice and the same support as we were doing before the pandemic hit".

³http://download.mmh.org.uk/DfG_Combined.pdf

Community Dog Service

Our community dogs are specially trained to work in community settings such as health and social care to improve the physical and emotional well-being of people with a range of disabilities and conditions including autism and dementia. As with our other services, we are now holding virtual community dog sessions via video call. Many of our Community Dog clients suffer with anxiety and mental health issues which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Virtual interaction with our dogs is helping to reduce their feelings of loneliness and isolation. Our Community Dog team have created some particularly innovative sessions such as 'Doggie bingo' for people living with dementia. The dog bingo sessions involve our clients participating in a game of bingo via video call where one of our community dogs chooses a numbered toy ball and our Community Dog instructor calls out the number. The sessions are enjoyed by the clients and are providing them with a positive and fun focus. Our instructor comments: "Everyone has taken a toll on everyone but for people with a dementia diagnosis and their carers it's been extremely hard. We wanted to offer our clients something that was fun and interactive to help with the inevitable social isolation that lockdown brings and, importantly, to continue engaging with our dogs".

Good Advice

In November we launched a new area of our website called 'Good Advice' which we're using our expert knowledge of dog training to help people develop a deeper relationship with their dog and understand more about their dog's behaviour, health and well-being. Good advice is available at: <https://www.dogsforgood.org/good-advice/>

Further information about our work this year can be found in our newsletter which is usually called 'Good Times' but has been amended to 'Changing Times' in 2020.

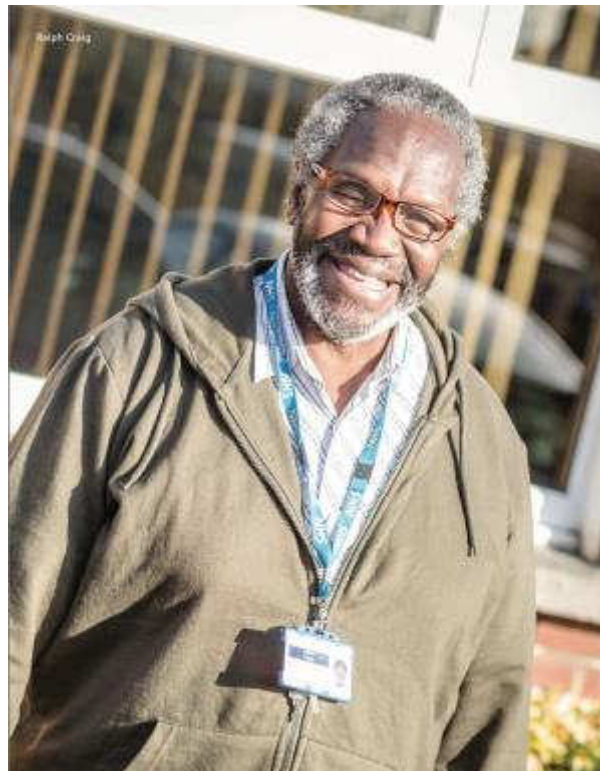
Despite the difficulties we have faced this year, there have been many positives and we have learnt new ways to deliver our work. We plan to build on our virtual activities to develop our services next year.

Nobody is certain what 2021 will look like but, as we have done this year, we hope to remain resilient and adapt in order to transform the lives of people with disabilities through the power of dogs.

On behalf of all involved with Dogs for Good, thank you so much for supporting our work. We wish you a peaceful Christmas and a brighter 2021.



A Worthy Recipient



Congratulations to W. Bro. Ralph Maxwell Craig, P.G.J.D. the Mark Provinces of Kent and South & East Caribbean who has been awarded the KMPT 'Lifelong Achievement Award' by the Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust.

Ralph told Provincial Grand Master Archie Torrance that the award is now sitting proudly on his mantelpiece at home. It came as a complete surprise. He knew he had been nominated but when he turned up at the awards ceremony he asked where the other nominees were, only to be told that it was him that was the winner!

R.W. Bro. Torrance also sent us this article about Ralph's life that was published a few years ago entitled: 'Inspiring Journey of a Good Man'.

INSPIRING JOURNEY OF A GOOD MAN

After Ralph Craig a Garibaldi with his coffee and he is taken to a very different place and time.

The creative belly of Marsorbentur dips the 36 Articles to be precise when the four-year-old Ralph was landed with the 'dead' his parents' parents to the UK from his Guyana homeland with his two brothers.

Their final destination was Woolwich in south London, where his older brother was stationed. The family settled and grew, adding one more girl to the mix.

Fast forward to 2018 and now 70, Ralph has devoted his working life to mental health care.

That's not strictly true – he was initially a DJ, bringing his reggae roots to south London and the Medway towns and beginning a teenage music fan (much to the chagrin of his Canadian father). But love prevailed and Ralph and Mary Powell's relationship for many years with the Samaritans) have now been married for 45 years and have two sons and three grandchildren.

Ralph's career began in August 1971 in Grove House Hospital, the forerunner of Little Brook hospital in Dartford. It was a private mental health facility for the City of London.

He had reported for duty at an army recruitment office, ready with 'dove pecks and quavers' to follow in his father's hobnob boots. But his heart was turned by running and he spent time on remote wards and in early crisis teams and M&E. Salazar, one of the pioneers involved in developing frontline services.

Ralph said: "I remember sixbury police officers grappling with one of our patients who was being aggressive and me and my mate

stepped in and he affectionately put his arms around us and calmly walked into hospital. He told us: We wanted that food, both on trust and understanding."

"People have always been fearful of mental health, although it's better now. You lack of understanding. I always said it was more dangerous walking down Rochester High Street on a Sunday night than being an acute ward!" He says he was growing up in the UK when signs were displayed saying 'no dogs, no blacks and no dogs welcome', but personally experienced no real racism; his charm may have disarmed the bigots.

The community mental health nurse from Gillingham said: "I think Caribbean people and those from Ireland were the first in large numbers to be compatible with English ways."

"We always made the point to: engage people about integration, jabbering away in your own language was never any good for the patients. It's all about good communication, and respect. Respect for your elders."

By working with Ralph between Elizabeth House in Rainham, where he is part of the older gang's' team, and the Coxs coffee around the corner – it takes an absolute age as he is stopping and chatting with every other person. "Eh mate!" is his favourite greeting.

His ability to show empathy has been the difference between the way in the early days, by being encouraged to be trained counsellors as a matter of routine and advice seem to be followed to the letter.

He said: "We can talk until the cows come home, but I can't talk

in colloquialisms that put people at ease. It builds relationships and although I am in an assessment, we can get chatting about the issues there are always road works everywhere or the first weather warship docked here and the conversation gets going. You get a lot more from people that way. They relax."

"I say to the youngsters what are you waiting for? Speak to your mum and dad, your grandparents. Get to know them. Do the same for your patients. Embrace emotion and feeling. They will be looking forward to coming to seeing you. They might be lonely with family dispersed. You can make them feel like a petting again."

He has served as both a prison inspector and a magistrate, a sense of justice and fairness in his community being pivotal for him.

Others over the years have included riding BIKS bikes with his boys and - interns. Add and he just being his knee bearing the brunt of many admirers in both.

In 2013, he became a statistic. One of four black men will get prostate cancer and what was believed to be a simple infection turned out to be an aggressive strain of the disease. Radiotherapy and hormone treatment followed and the future is brighter. "My doctor and he could see I was still one of the lads" and wanted to preserve that for me, my prostate that is."

He urges men to talk about it and stay vigilant with their health. "Life is what you know. The NHS has been good to me. It has been a really nice job."

Visit <https://pswdatascanuk.org>



Kent's MBF Festival 2020 Total Revised

Staying with Kent, Archie Torrance was very pleased to announce "that our 2020 Festival for the Mark Benevolent Fund was even more successful than we thought. The revised total is £2,057,000, which is a very special number given that Kent will next host an MBF Festival in the year 2057. Now there's a thing!".



Middlesex Mark working with The Salvation Army



V.W.Bro. Steve Vanhinsbergh, Dep.Prov.G.M., Middlesex, tells us:

At the start of the pandemic we delivered a "thank you" box for care workers at a number of care homes around the Province.

As we entered the latest round of shutdowns we look again at what was needed and after conversations with the Salvation Army we have sent them a £1,500 donation to provide circa 300 welcome packs for homeless people in one of their residential centres (Lifehouses) that caters for the homeless within the Mark Province of Middlesex.

The only "Lifehouse" that would fit the above request is located in Whitechapel and we have suggested that once the covid restriction permits that we would like to visit and see the facility and discuss what we may be able to assist with in the future.

Centurian takes the Chair

Athelstan Lodge of Mark Master Masons No. 958 meeting in Topsham, Devonshire, met on the 18th of December 2020 for a very special, if not unique Installation of Bro. Ken Winfield who celebrated his 100th birthday in June of this year.

Born in 1920, just after the last great pandemic, W.Bro. Ken was Initiated into the Wainuiomata Lodge No. 379 in Wellington, New Zealand in 1956 where he worked for the Ford Motor Company. He continued his Masonry when he moved back to England in 1959 and joined Mark Masonry in 1985, and so it has taken him 35 years to rise to the Masters Chair. "Well, it's about time I did it" he said!

During the meeting letters of congratulations were read including one from the Grand Master of the Degree, HRH Prince Michael of Kent.

Due to the current situation, the ceremony was slightly modified to comply with Government and Grand Lodge instructions and thanks must go to the Topsham Hall Committee for making the hall Covid safe and available for use.



The "Cryptic" at Christmas



Companions of the Royal and Select Master, sometimes referred to as the Cryptic Rite, received the following Christmas message from the Grand Chaplain, V.III.Comp. Dr Vivian Thomas, *JP*, along with the best wishes of the Grand Master, M.III.Comp. Kessick John Jones.

“And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year”

“Give me light that I may tread safely into the unknown”

And he replied: “Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God, that shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way”

So, I went forth and, finding the hand of God, trod gladly into the night.

We have experienced a year unlike any other. King George VI, in his Christmas broadcast of 1939, could never have envisaged the horrors that were to befall this and other nations over the ensuing six years. Yes, there were hardships, deaths and starvations, but the past year has given us a more chilling command than ever we might have expected. “You must now self-isolate”.

We are not solitary creatures; we scarce can exist without contact with our fellows. But images of forlorn and desperate faces, peering in their loneliness through curtained windows, will surely haunt us for years to come. Why can't I hug my mother, why can't I hold my father's hand as he slips away, unloved and alone? How cruel these past months have been.

There now appears a glimmer of light in the gloomy tunnel we presently occupy, but still we are faced with further limitations in our freedom. How large can our “bubble” be before it bursts? The doom-sayers still talk of increasing numbers of cases and deaths, whilst the lonely and isolated remain so, terrified, so often, of leaving the safety of their own home.

We must all rise to this challenge by putting forth our hand; not to touch the hand of God, not yet, anyway!! No, we can offer the hand of friendship, even if that hand is an email, or a telephone call, or a Christmas card, to someone who we know to be on their own. A gentle reminder that they are not forgotten, that there remains that eternal spark of hope that the night will pass behind us and

we shall be able to say with the utmost conviction “O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory”?

Let us who are able, give hope to the helpless, the widow and the widower, the bereaved and those whose needs are greater than our own, so that we may all enjoy this Christmas and tread gladly into the next year.

And staying with the R.S.M.

In the District of west Yorkshire, the recently appointed District Grand Master, R.III.Comp. Fraser McPherson, hosted an informal get together via Zoom on the evening of the 16th December.

A full report is on their website Here⁴



The Red Cross of Constantine gather for a virtual Christmas Service



On Sunday, 20 December, The Grand Sovereign, Graham Leslie Flight, G.C.C., and Knights from across the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine were welcomed by the Division of South Wales and Monmouthshire at their virtual Christmas service. The evening of readings and carols was hosted by Ill.Kt. Nigel Lloyd Angell, JP, P.G.St.B.(L.), Deputy-Intendant General In Charge, who only a few days earlier had been informed that it was the Grand Sovereign's pleasure to appoint him as Intendant-General for the Division from a date to be confirmed in the New Year.

In support were Ill.Kt. John Steward and W.Kt. Adrian Thomas, with readings from R.III.Kt. Paul Clement, K.C.C., Ill.Kt. Geraint Puw, and P.Kt. Barry Stubbings, while Prayers were delivered by Ill.Kt. Richard Edwards and Ill.Kt. Viv Thomas gave the Address.

Thank you to all involved for putting on a very enjoyable and festive event.

⁴<http://rsmwyorks.com/district-informal-zoom-get-together-16th-december-2020>



Across Social Media

[On Facebook - Brother. The Masonic Podcast kick off season 3 with a very special guest.](#)

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[And the Mark Province of Warwickshire receive a toast from Santa](#)

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[On Twitter - The Mark Province of Staffordshire and Shropshire hold a Christmas Party](#)
<http://twitter.com/statuses/1341112851721797635>

[And, the A.M.D. District of London release their latest newsletter](#)
<http://twitter.com/statuses/1340637727142899713>

[On YouTube - Freemasons Without Borders explore The Societas Rosicruciana In Anglia \(SRIA\)](#)



<https://youtu.be/77qtXII4P9s>

Not seeing your news? Join us on Social Media

Social Media is becoming an increasingly important platform for how we get to hear about what is going on further afield in all of our Orders. If your Province/District/Division has a Facebook Page/Group or Twitter Feed, or if you represent a Masonic Club or Society linked to our Orders, please send us an invite to join or follow you.

We can be found at:

Facebook - Mark Secretariat⁵ - This is the contact account for the Mark Masons' Hall Facebook Page⁶

Twitter - @MarkMasonsHall⁷

Or you can email us at communications@mmh.org.uk⁸

MBF Festival 2021



East Lancashire Province, hosts of the **153rd Mark Benevolent Fund Annual Festival in 2021**, have produced a unique **Souvenir Festival Calendar** for the year **2021** and copies are now available.

These large, wall hanging calendars feature twelve contrasting prints of iconic sights in East Lancashire, commencing with the beauty of Pendle Hill in January and ending with Manchester's colourful Christmas Market in December. The 12 original watercolours were painted by Annette Young over the past four years specially for this calendar without cost to the Province. Calendars are priced at £10 each and all proceeds will go to the MBF.

⁵<https://www.facebook.com/mmh.secretariat.3>

⁶<https://www.facebook.com/MarkMasonsHall/>

⁷<https://twitter.com/MarkMasonsHall>

⁸<mailto:communications@mmh.org.uk>

So, let us brighten your kitchen or office wall and at the same time provide much needed support for our Mark Benevolent Fund. Why not purchase several more copies to send to friends and family at Christmas?

Thank you very much for your support.



The calendar measures: 318mm x 228mm folded – 318mm x 456mm open

To order:

By email: eastlancscalendars@gmail.com⁹ By telephone: 07766731307

Payment by **cheque to East Lancs Mark 2021 Festival** – post to:

East Lancs Calendars. 47 St Leonards Way, Woore, Crewe. CW3 9SS

Or contact them for electronic payment details

And don't forget, Stewardship, Badge and Festival orders can be places as well.

Click Here¹⁰ for the Stewardship and Festival Badge Form

Click Here¹¹ for the complete Festival pack

And you can visit the Province of East Lancashire's website Here¹²

The KT 20 for 2020 Appeal has now passed £43,000 and continues to raise money



Please note that the MCF, who are handling donations to this appeal, have moved their payment collection site from the Everyday Hero platform to that of Just Giving. This doesn't impact how you make your donation but unfortunately it isn't possible for us to set the amount of your donation automatically to £20. The default set by the website is £30 and you will need to adjust it down.

⁹<mailto:eastlancscalendars@gmail.com>

¹⁰https://www.markmasonshall.org/images/news_articles/2020/2021_MBF_Stewardship_Badge_Form.pdf

¹¹https://www.markmasonshall.org/images/news_articles/2020/2021_MBF_Festival_Complete_Forms_Pack.pdf

¹²<http://www.wordpress.eastlancsmark.org/?p=11465>

You can support the Eye Hospital by making a £20 donation. Just Click Here¹³ or use the Text Donate facility below.

100% of donations will be given to the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group to support their vital work. To recognise your generosity and support, The Great Priory of Knights Templar is sending a limited-edition Swift tie/lapel pin to every donor.

The Swift pins are now being posted out but please bear with us as we are only in the office one day per week to carry out this task so some deliveries will take longer than others. Thank you for your patience.



The Knights Templar
20 for 2020 Appeal



Text KT2042020 to 70500 to donate £20

All monies donated to this text number go towards the **The Knights Templar 20 for 2020 Appeal**

For a text donation, you will be charged for one standard text message plus your donation of £20. Always get the bill payer's permission. The Relief Chest will receive 100% of your donation. If you do not want to be contacted by text in the future, add the words NO INFO when texting your donation. All donations are administered by the Relief Chest Scheme (Grand Charity Registered Charity No. 201942), Text donation helpline: 020 3146 3352. Masonic Charitable Foundation Charity No. 1164703, Company No. 09751836

60 Great Queen Street | London | WC2B 5AZ | www.mcf.org.uk

The Shop@86 will re-open for online orders from Monday, 4 January



¹³<https://fundraising.mcf.org.uk/Appeal-KT2042020>



Helping to Combat Covid



At the start of Lockdown the Grand Secretary, R.W.Bro. Ryan A. Williams, P.G.J.W., shared the COVID Symptom Study¹⁴ app.

As local lockdowns and UK cases increase, with over 4 million users, this app is a useful source of information regarding the situation in your area, as well as being a portal through which people of all ages and backgrounds are joining together to fight COVID, support the NHS, help scientific research and help get us out of lockdown safely.

¹⁴<https://covid.joinzoe.com/>

Mark Masons' Hall is pleased to be

