

Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Berkshire

RW Bro Graham D Seeman
Provincial Grand Master



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Christmas 2024

Dear brethren,

As 2024 draws to a close it is my great pleasure to send you a message for Christmas and to thank you personally for your support over the last year. Writing this message naturally causes me to reflect on the past year as well as to look forward to what might lie in store for 2025.

Firstly, I must thank you all once again for the very warm welcome you always extend to me when I visit your lodges and I know that you show the same warm welcome to the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, both to V.W. Bro. Mike Sanders who retired in September after three very successful years in that post and to W. Bro. Jim Payen who was invested at the Provincial meeting, has made a tremendous start and I know is already hugely enjoying his new role. I would also like to thank the Provincial Officers for their steadfast support to me and their devotion to the order throughout the year. I include in those thoughts both the 2023-24 team who covered most of the year and to the 2024-25 team who I hope are also enjoying their new offices. As well as a new Deputy Provincial Grand Master, there were two other significant changes to the Provincial team. V.W. Bro. Digby Woods retired after ten years as Chaplain, and I again thank him most warmly for his outstanding service throughout that entire period and welcome W. Bro. Jem Whitmore as the new Chaplain who I know is already enjoying that role. I also welcome W. Bro. John Kirkpatrick to the Executive as our new Treasurer to fill the vacancy created by Jim's promotion to Dep.P.G.M.

I was delighted to see an increase in both Mark and Royal Ark Mariner members this year and I know that doesn't happen by accident so I would like to thank all of you who are introducing new members to your lodges and urge you to continue to do so. When a new member joins us it is so important that they have a good Advancement ceremony. It is the best way of making them pleased to have joined the Mark and (hopefully) encourage others to join us. The Provincial team are always happy to come and assist in the Advancement ceremony if you need some help filling the offices or delivering any part of the ritual.

Rewarding those brethren who have given outstanding service to the Province is the nicest part of being a Provincial Grand Master. At the recent Grand RAM Assembly W. Bros. Digby Woods and Alan Spearman were both honoured with Royal Ark Mariner Grand Rank and I heartily congratulate them. In June our Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro. Tim Spriggs, was deservedly appointed to the active rank of Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies. A great honour for the Province as well as for Tim. At the September meeting of Mark Grand Lodge there were promotions for W. Bro. Peter Hughes to Past Grand Junior Overseer, thus making him a Very Worshipful brother and for Hugh Ranscombe to Past Grand Junior Deacon. Sadly, Hugh was not to enjoy his new rank for very long as he passed away suddenly and unexpectedly in late November, just a week before he was due to be Installed as Commander of the Installed Commanders Royal Ark Mariner Lodge. An

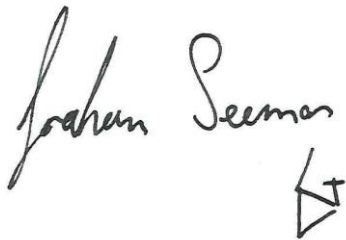
indefatigable and hugely popular supporter of Mark and RAM, Hugh will be greatly missed by us all. This seems an appropriate place to remember all those other brethren who have been called to higher service and who we shall see no more. We mourn their passing but are grateful for the times we shared with them and the memories we cherish.

The first edition of the Provincial Newsletter was published shortly after September's Provincial meeting and we are hoping to publish another edition early in the New Year. I thank the Communications Team for their hard work in putting this together and ask you to forward any interesting items that you would like included to the team and we would also love to hear what you would like to see in future editions. It is YOUR newsletter so please do everything you can to support the team.

Looking ahead to 2025 I know we are in for another exciting and rewarding year. Many lodges have candidates in the pipeline who I look forward to welcoming. The Provincial Grand Master's Reception is always a highlight of the year and Fiona and I look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible in April, along with your partners and friends, when we hope to welcome guests from Thames Hospice to talk about the important and inspirational work they do. Booking details will follow in due course.

In closing, I hope that you are all able to spend time with your families over the festive period, recharge your batteries and then take on 2025 with the joy and enthusiasm that I know you all have for our wonderful degree, and may the Great Overseer and Supreme Commander of the Universe have you in His special keeping, until we meet again in His Most Holy Name.

Yours sincerely and fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Seeman". Below the signature is a small, stylized logo consisting of a triangle with a horizontal line through it, resembling a Masonic symbol.

RW Bro Graham Seeman
Provincial Grand Master