



**Provincial Grand Master's Address at the**  
**Provincial Grand RAM Assembly,**  
**Tuesday 19th March, 2019**

Brethren I start by thanking you all, once more, for your support today, I am sure your support is also much appreciated by those who have just received Royal Ark Mariner Honours.

Today is a new record for attendance at this meeting so you should be very pleased and proud of yourselves, thank you.

To those brethren I have just invested, I also say "thank you" for the effort and support you have contributed over the years not only to your own Lodges, but also to our Province, which has warranted this appointment. You can wear your collarette with pride and take every opportunity to explain to others what it represents. It is not an appointment that merely comes in time, it is earned and deserved.

Remember, however, that with this honour comes responsibility; I ask you to continue to take office in you Lodge when needed; deliver ritual where you can, go back in the chair if necessary and continue to encourage new members to our order.

Brethren, as is the case every year, this is my first opportunity in an open Provincial Meeting to also thank all those who attended the Annual Grand Assembly of Royal Ark Mariner in December and to congratulate those brethren who received Royal Ark Mariner Grand Rank from the Most Worshipful Pro Grand Master.

Those receiving that honour were:

John Davies

John Edwards, a wonderful man who sadly passed away in November after the Provincial Mess.

John was a well-liked and respected Mark and RAM mason and will be missed. I understand that John has left our Province a very generous legacy from his estate which I will be discussing how best to use in his memory over the near future

Nicholas Franklin

Raymond McKerron

Peter Nash

Christopher Smith

I congratulate you all.

Now, before I move on to some parish notices I would like to take this opportunity to address those of you who are Scribes, Treasurers and/or Secretaries of your Lodges.

Brethren, unfortunately over the past few years there has been a worrying trend for annual dues and installation returns not being paid in due time or completed promptly, not only in this Province but around the Country. Because of this you were informed towards the latter end of last

year of the importance for ensuring these were paid or submitted on time. Thankfully most Lodges did just that.

But, I have to tell you, Brethren, that the Grand Secretary has made it quite clear to all Provincial and District Grand Masters that Lodges who continue to fail to pay their dues or fail to submit installation returns on time run the very real risk of having their Warrants suspended.

The consequence of this of course is that the Lodge would no longer be of continuous service which, not only, could affect any significant anniversaries, but also members of those Lodges may not receive otherwise deserved promotions or appointments and these are particularly difficult to achieve as it is, without adding further complication to the process.

I can tell you that Warrants have already been suspended in other parts of the country; I do not want this to happen in Essex.

For those of you with access to Keystone On line, please check the status of your Lodge. Have the dues been paid and the Installation Returns submitted? I looked this morning and can say, according to the information available to me; one Mark Lodge has still to submit Installation Returns for 2017 and 2018 and 5 other Mark Lodges have not submitted returns for 2018. On the positive side all Lodges have paid their Grand Lodge Dues.

With regard to Royal Ark Mariner Lodges there is still one which has not paid its Annual Dues, the deadline was the end of last year and there are 8 more Lodges who have not submitted returns for 2018.

Brethren, you will please ensure these returns are submitted promptly.

To those brethren who are not Scribes, Treasurers or Secretaries, ask for an agenda item to be added to your Lodge GP meetings asking for an update on these submissions. Do, however, support your Secretaries and Treasurers; offer help, check they are okay, support them where you can and where they need it. We are, after all, all in this together and part of the team, so let us be successful together.

Lastly, I remind you that Lodge Accounts are also required to be submitted to the Provincial office, we have a number who have not done so. The appropriate member of the Executive will contact those Lodges that have not submitted their accounts to the Province shortly. Let this be enough said please.

On the positive side, our members and membership numbers continue to grow and I do truly thank you for hard work and commitment in their recruitment. We recently held another successful Mark Awareness Evening at Upminster and I do thank my DPGM, VW. Bro. Richard Bowyer and the hosting lodge for their support. Other awareness dates are advertised on the website.

To those Lodges who find they are still struggling, you don't need me to say candidates won't come to you, you need to find them. As an example, Centurion Lodge recently held a small "blue table" meeting. After the Lodge work was completed, the Lodge was closed and a few invited guests were made welcome and listened to a short talk on the Mark Degree by one of the members. It was a very informal evening that hopefully has picked up much needed candidates. My point, Brethren, is that Awareness Evenings do not need to be large, well-orchestrated, events; they can be as small and informal as fits your needs. All I ask is that you contact your APGM or the Provincial Secretary so that we can just check that the material is suitable and assist with advice where needed.

I am also aware that West Ham Lodge has plans to move from its current location and has other plans for perhaps blue table events and talks. So, if any other Mark or RAM Lodge would like further support from your Province, be it ideas, help in filling offices, recruitment material etc. please ask. We are all in this together and we all benefit from the same success.

Moving on to the usual parish notices. I remind those of you who use Facebook to please sign up to our Facebook page, you can request to become a member via the page at "Essex Mark and Ram Masons".

Additionally, make sure you regularly visit our website for news, events and information on meetings as well as tips on ritual and protocol. Your Secretary or Scribe will have the details of the password protected area.

Our golf day will, this year, again be at The Stockbrook Manor, Billericay on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July. All the information is available on the Essex Mark website or speak to W.Bro Richard Goodwin the main organiser; if you can support us on the day, please do so.

The location and date of this year's Officer's Mess has now been decided; and in keeping with your request to move the Mess around the Province I can report that it has been agreed to hold the Mess at the Kirby Cross Masonic Centre at Frinton on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November

For those of you who still do not have a Provincial Tie or a set of our cuff links, we have both available for you to buy today. All proceeds will go to our Welfare Fund and you can pay via your debit or credit card.

I also take this opportunity to remind you of our Provincial Grand Lodge Meeting will be at Felsted on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May. All booking details and additional information will appear on the website shortly. We are in the process of sending out individual invitations to every member of the Province and are trying hard to encourage as many Mark Master Masons as can to attend as well. If you have not received your email invitation by the end of the month it means the Province does not have a current email for you. If that is the case please update us by either speaking directly to the Provincial Grand Deputy Secretary, W. Bro Tony Goater or send him an email via the website link.

Lastly, brethren, please try and support our bonus ball scheme, either individually or via your Lodge. Bonus balls can be purchased through our website or by sending an email to the bonus ball email address [emwfbonusball@gmail.com](mailto:emwfbonusball@gmail.com), you can also buy them today, again by your debit or credit card if you wish

Before I close, I thank the Secretariat and Ceremonial teams for their work in putting today together, in the run up behind the scenes; in the Temple and the festive board. They put in a deal of effort and always do such a wonderful job; I am very grateful, thank you.

Brethren, thank you for your attention and congratulations again to those who received their Provincial Royal Ark Mariner Grand Rank, continue to enjoy your day and I look forward to seeing you all, proudly wearing your new collarettes, at Felsted.