



Installation Meeting 15th September 2011

A text of the address from the Provincial Grand Master



Welcome

Ladies and Brethren, a very warm welcome to Provincial Grand Lodge.

HRH the Grand Master has authorised me to appoint a number of Brethren to Provincial rank to celebrate my appointment as Provincial Grand Master.

This is therefore a very special occasion for me, for the Province and, of course, for those that I have selected for appointment to Provincial Rank for the first time and those who will be receiving a promotion this evening.

Provincial Grand Lodge would normally be held in private but tonight we have taken steps to provide an opportunity for wives and partners to witness and enjoy the occasion with us.

To all the recipients, this is your evening, please relax and enjoy it.

Brethren, on your behalf I would like to extend a particular welcome to our Past PGM. RW Bro Stanley Hopkins and to Mrs Sylvia Hopkins.

I am accompanied this evening by the Deputy PGM – Ray Guthrie and Assistant PGMs David Medlock and John Winston.

I am particularly pleased that we are accompanied by Mrs Hazel Guthrie, Mrs Lin Winston and by my wife Susan. To you and all the Ladies a hearty welcome.

Address

It has often been said that “Rank has its privileges”. This evening it has been an especial privilege for me to acknowledge the service to freemasonry given by 27 brethren of this Province.

Appointment to Provincial Rank is not automatic or based purely on time-served.

All of you that I have recognised this evening have made an important contribution to and have been recommended by your Lodge for my consideration. Some of you also undertake work for the Province.



In total, this evening’s recipients represent over 700 years of loyal service. Five recipients have been members for over 40 years.

Each of you has contributed generously of your time and expertise.

You have given loyal and dedicated support to your lodges and to your fellow brethren.

Some of you have had formal roles, for example, as Tyler, Almoner, Treasurer or organist. Others have contributed in practical but no less essential ways, looking after your building, managing the bar and generally ensuring that goodwill prevails and that newer members are made welcome and supported.

It is not a requirement for Provincial Office to have been or to aspire to become Master of your lodge. We all have a part to play and you are all entitled to the distinction and salutation of a Provincial Officer for the contributions that you have each made.

The point to draw from this is that everyone has their part to play and to coin a phrase from Masonic ritual: “the highest is he who performs his part best, not he who fills the most exalted position”.

On occasion there is too much pressure applied to take office and progress to the Chair. Freemasonry is a hobby to be enjoyed. Hopefully, with the right encouragement and support many will take steps up the ladder towards the Chair and find this both fulfilling and enjoyable.

Sometimes freemasonry can become too demanding and people leave. The future of our lodges depends on creating a caring and supportive culture, where a happy and welcoming atmosphere prevails and where a family friendly approach to start and finish times prevails.

We must acknowledge that our Masonic activities take us away from wives and families. I hope though that the net effect of our membership is a positive one and that we are better men, better husbands and fathers as a result of our involvement.

When illness and other needs arise, I hope too that our lodges rally round to give needed practical and moral support.

Ladies, our thanks for your support this evening. We hope that you have enjoyed the proceedings so far and will enjoy the meal afterwards.

Brethren, I would like to take this opportunity to make an important announcement.

W Bro David Medlock, Assistant Provincial Grand Master, will have completed 6 years in that role next spring. He has indicated his wish to retire from office at next year's Annual Meeting.

David has been a great servant of this Province and a huge support not only to me but also to my predecessor RW Bro David Jenkins. We shall wish to thank David properly when the time comes but this evening David, a public thank you for your contribution to Somerset thus far.

I am pleased to announce that next March I will appoint as the new Assistant PGM, W Bro Justin Martin of the Parrett & Axe Lodge No. 814 at Crewkerne.

Bro Justin has been Provincial Grand Registrar for the past 6 years. A time-consuming and key role which Justin has undertaken with distinction.

Justin, thank you for accepting greater responsibility. You will be a real asset to the Province in your new role.

Justin is accompanied this evening by his wife Julia. Julia it is good to see you out and about again. Thank you for supporting Justin in his masonic activities. Our warmest best wishes to you both for the future.

I must place on record my thanks to the Provincial Grand Secretary, Rodney Pring, the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, David Burke and their teams for organising this evening's meeting and dinner.

I am also very grateful to the Taunton Masonic Hall for allowing us to meet here this evening.



Finally, to those that I have appointed or promoted this evening, my congratulations on your achievement.

You will all, I am sure, recognise that your preferment lays on you an obligation to continue to provide leadership and support in your lodges. An obligation I am sure you will all fulfil to the best of your ability.