



Address to Mark Grand Lodge 11 September 2025

Brethren, before I begin, I mentioned earlier that I would explain why our Pro Grand Master is not able to be with us today. Unfortunately, he is not too well at the moment and is currently undergoing a course of treatment under the direction of his medical advisors.

I spoke with him this morning and he assures me he is receiving the best of treatment but, as you would imagine, is quite frustrated and disappointed that he cannot be with us all today.

Most Worshipful Brother John has asked me to pass on his best wishes to you all and that he looks forward to being back with us as soon as he is able, and I am sure you will all join with me in wishing him a full and swift recovery.

There is one request I would make on his behalf, and that is to, please, respect his privacy at this time. I am sure you will and I thank you for that.

He has asked that I deliver the address he had proposed giving, and that I will now do.

Brethren, we are gathered here today in the sight of the Great Overseer of the Universe to celebrate service to Mark Masonry by the award of promotions in Mark Grand Rank.

Brethren, I know it has been a long meeting and I assure you I will keep my address to a minimum.

Brethren, I start by bringing you all greetings on behalf of our Most Worshipful Grand Master, His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent, who is unable to be with us today. I know that he will be encouraged when he learns of the magnificent attendance here at the second of our two annual Festivals; today conferring promotion in Mark Grand Rank to those brethren who have continued to serve our Order and keep it at the forefront of progressive and select Freemasonry, ensuring a growing inheritance for the generations to come.

The next twelve months promise to be as busy as ever and I thank the active officers who are joining me and my fellow Rulers during the year at Sesqui-centenaries, Centenaries and Installations. Since our June meeting I have Installed V W Bro Reverend Justin Trevelyan Parker as Provincial Grand Master for Worcestershire. And in a few weeks time I will Install the new Provincial Grand Master for Kent, W.Bro. Martyn Summers.

In July, the 157th Mark Benevolent Fund Festival was hosted by the Province of Oxfordshire under the Presidency of the Provincial Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Ian Watson. It was quite a splendid occasion as I am sure those who attended will agree, culminating in the announcement that the magnificent sum of £592,120 had been raised during the tenure of their appeal. A wonderful achievement by one of our smaller Provinces and I extend my congratulations to all within the Province.

Next year's Festival, the 158th, will be held on Saturday 18th July at Old Thorns Manor Hotel Golf & Country Estate in Liphook under the presidency of R.W.Bro. George Deacon, Provincial Grand Master for Hampshire and Isle of Wight. I do hope that you have familiarized yourselves of the commencement of the Grand Master's Keystone Fund Bursary Scheme which went live on the first of July. The fund is administered by the Mark Benevolent Fund (MBF) who have appointed a team of advisers to assess applications to the fund.

Today, R.W.Bro. Frank Spencer, has retired as Deputy G.M. having served as such since 2022. Prior to this he served as Provincial Grand Master for Worcestershire from 2005 to 2015, as Grand Director of Ceremonies from 2017 to 2022, and then as Assistant Grand Master.

During the past three years, and indeed those years prior to this recent appointment, R.W.Bro. Frank has carried out the duties of his various offices with dignity and confidence, and has represented Grand Lodge to the highest standards, both at home and overseas.

He has been a valuable member of the various committees on which he has been required to serve and was tasked with, perhaps, the most challenging duty of any Deputy Grand Master when asked to lead a review of the Secretariat at Mark Masons' Hall.

R.W.Bro. Frank, thank you for your dedication and commitment, and the contribution you have made to our Order over many years.

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Brethren, now that you have all been duly invested with your Promotion in Mark Grand Rank, you should all be justly proud of your achievements and the service you have given. Whilst this has brought you here today, be aware of what is required of you in the future. Never let us ever forget our aprons are built on a foundation of white.

The most important brethren in the Mark degree are those who will be advanced into the Order in the weeks, months or years to come. They are the future and it is our responsibility to ensure that the inheritance we enjoy from previous generations will continue, thereby ensuring freemasonry prospers and they inherit a relevant and successful brotherhood. We should never forget, and they should be reminded, of the very spring and fount of English Freemasonry from which we derived our continuing masonic nurture.

Let me assure you we are working and productively communicating with the Craft which, I hope demonstrates that by working together, we can ensure a worthwhile inheritance for our brethren in the years to come.

It is at this point, Brethren, that M.W.Bro. John has asked that I introduce our Distinguished Guests, and this I now do with great pleasure. I would ask you to restrain your welcoming applause until I have finished what is an extensive list.

RW Bro Paul Clement, PProvGM for South Wales, Supreme Grand Master of the Great Priory of the United Orders of the Temple and of Malta.

RW Bro Graham Flight, PGSW, Grand Sovereign of the Grand Imperial Conclave of the Red Cross of Constantine.

RW Bro Kessick Jones, PGSW, Grand Master of the Grand Council of Royal & Select Masters.

RW Bro Andrew Sweeney, PGSW, Grand Supreme Ruler of the Grand Conclave of the Order of the Secret Monitor.

WBro Dr Paul Mycock, PGJD, First Grand Master Mason of the Operatives.

VW Bro Tony Llewellyn, PGJO, Supreme Magus of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia.

It is also a pleasure to have with us:

RW Bro David Williamson, PGSW, Past Assistant Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, and Lt Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Rite.

It is now my pleasure to welcome distinguished visitors from Districts Overseas :
From Bahamas & Turks

VW Bro P D Cole, Grand Inspector

From Belgium

RW Bro Jean Verbist, District Grand Master

Accompanied by:

VW Bro Francis Clarembaux, PGJO, P.District.G.Sec

WBro P C Clare, P.A.G.Swd.B

WBro Gilbert Denys, PGSD, Dep.Dist.G.Master

From Germany

RW Bro Michael Cooper, District Grand Master

And he is accompanied by a strong contingent of his brethren.

From The Netherlands

RW Bro Peyer Kirpensteijn, District Grand Master

And he, also, is accompanied by several of his brethren.

From Singapore

RW Bro Justice M Rubin, District Grand Master

From Spain

RW Bro Barrie Mansell, District Grand Master

And he is accompanied by a strong contingent of brethren in support.

From Bolivia

WBro Edmund Tondu

From Hong Kong

VW Bro Hak Chiu Herman Tsoi, PGJO

WBro Clement Chow, PAGDC

From Nigeria

WBro Kelechi Njoku

From Romania

WBro D Dumitras, PAGDC

From South & East Caribbean

WBro Maurice Gaskin, AGDC

WBro Andre Harding, PAGDC

WBro Jerome Herrera

And finally, from Unattached Lodges

Bro Nebojsa Djordjevic, Nikolic Harmonia Lodge

Bro Jussi Tuovinen, Freemasons Without Borders Lodge

I hope I have not missed anyone but, if I have, I ask that they now share in the welcome I know you will wish to show.

Brethen, it only now remains for me on behalf of our Pro Grand Master, to thank the Grand Secretary, R.W.Bro. Daniel Heath, and his team from the fourth floor at Mark Masons' Hall for all their hard-work in preparing for today's meeting. I also extend my thanks to the Grand Director of Ceremonies, R.W.Bro. Christopher Davies, and his team for today's ceremonial.

Brethren, it has been a great privilege and personal pleasure for me to have presided over Grand Lodge today, and I will not now keep you from refreshment any longer.

As our M.W.Pro G.M. concluded, may you continue to live under the protection of the Great Overseer of the Universe in all the years to come.