



# **UNITED GRAND LODGE MARK MASTER MASONS VICTORIA**

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## **GRAND MASTERS COMMUNICATION**

**February 2022**

Brethren,

This communication is significant for a number of reasons.

It will be the last communication with the current Ark and Mark teams before the Grand Installation in April. The team members took on their roles with a great deal of optimism despite not knowing how the pandemic would play out. It's been a difficult, frustrating and disjointed year. However, every team member has supported Mark and Ark Mariner Masonry to the best of their ability, and I thank all for their continued support of our Orders. I extend particular thanks to the DGM, RWBro Ron Goodburn and our two Grand Wardens, RWBro Rob Redman and RWBro Paul Rigby for their leadership and commitment. Our Directors of Ceremonies have also managed the frustrations of the past year with good humour and patience and I thank them for their work.

To the Ark team particularly, thank you for your continued support of this small but important Order. As usual, you have ensured that the Enthronements, though few, have been conducted with the dignity and friendship we're all come to expect of the order.

I must thank our admin team, Bro Craig Spendlove and RWBro Wayne Smith for their eternal patience and dedication during this time. They have not only managed the present but have really started to imagine an exciting future for Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Masonry.

COVID has frustrated us but it has also allowed us to better understand the job ahead and how we can use technologies to enhance what we do and how we do it.

Brethren, this Communication also addresses some overdue changes to the way we do things. We're proposing constitutional changes to allow for the proclamation of the DGM and Masters being reinstalled. These changes reflect practice of recent times where the GM and DGM can be proclaimed in their second year and also allow for the same approach to be used for returning masters in Lodges. We are also giving notice tonight of an important change to our constitution that will allow all members of the Mark Degree in good standing to a vote in this Grand Lodge. This notice of motion, should it succeed at the next communication, will remove the outmoded practice of restricting right to vote to invested Wardens and Overseers,

installed Masters and Past Masters and will make our organisation more inclusive, and better reflect contemporary community standards and expectations.

During the past months I've had the honour of representing this Grand Lodge at a number of functions. These have included the Grand Installations/Investitures of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of South East Asia (via zoom), The Royal Order of Scotland, The Order of the Eastern Star, The Supreme Council for the Province of Victoria and the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Greece (via zoom) also the Quarterly Communications of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria and Supreme Grand Chapter.

I thank the Grand Master of Grand Craft for the courtesy of allowing me to present a 50 Year RAM service jewel to MWBro Les Dodd PGM at Allara Daylight Lodge No 855. It was a very happy morning in the presence of MW Bro Richard Elkington and our Grand Secretary/Grand Scribe RWBro Wayne Smith.

I also thank MEmComp John Ives and Grand Chapter for the courtesy of allowing me to spring a surprise on RWBro Peter Crick, PSGW by presenting his 50 Year Mark jewel at the installation of Bairnsdale Chapter No 62. This was achieved in the presence of MEmComp John Ives and his team and MExComp Robert Drake First Grand Principal and Grand Master from United Supreme Grand Chapter of Mark and Royal Arch Masons NSW&ACT. This meeting amply illustrated the close bonds between Grand Mark and the Holy Royal Arch and our combined fraternal ties with the United Supreme Grand Chapter of Mark and Royal Arch Masons of NSW&ACT.

In addition, I've represented this Grand Lodge at the installation of WBro Garry Miles as WM of the Portland Lodge of Victoria No 6. (UGLV). Gary is one of our very active Grand Master's District Representatives

Such events signal an important evolution in the relationships between the three Grand bodies in Victoria and amply illustrate our united endeavour to promote Rule 2 in our respective Books of Constitution. I thank the Grand Master and the First Grand Principal for their continued support of this endeavour.

The recent Grand Teams Australia Day Picnic was a great success and, for the first time included the Grand Officers of the Royal and Select Masters. I thank Most Illustrious Companion Peter Crick for the invitation to attend Royal and Select Masters functions as Grand Master of this Grand Lodge. Our DGM represented me at such a function on Monday evening, marking closer ties between our Orders.

What a privilege it was to spend a few minutes sitting with VWBro Herman Gurwitz, PGMO at Sandringham Lodge of MMM and presenting him with his 60 Year Service Jewel. Herman is recognised in Freemasonry for his dedication to our Orders and his great wisdom and experience. He is a man of great Masonic knowledge who never fails in his courtesy to others.

It's also been pleasing to attend the elevation or advancement of a number of new members and welcome them to Mark and Royal Ark Mariner Masonry. I extend my thanks to those Lodges for the courtesy extended to me on those very happy occasions. We can see

considerable improvement in the level of activity in our Lodges now that restrictions have eased.

Pleasingly, a number of Lodges have accepted the challenge of exploring how they might chart their futures post COVID. In these explorations we need to be creative and innovative and ensure that the next generation of our members are active participants in reimagining Mark and Ark Mariner Masonry into the future. I particularly thank our Bro Craig Spendlove for providing the data Lodges need to explore their future potential.

Brethren, our path is at once difficult and exciting, challenging and rewarding, but with a united endeavour we will have a strong future. Let's not consign our Orders to being mere whispers in the chatter of history but ensure they are enduring voices to be heard, understood and respected.

W R Jones,  
Grand Master