

Provincial Scribe E's report 2024

I opened my report last year saying "...the learning curve has been vertical at times and it is hard to believe a year has already passed." I can do no more than repeat that. Here we are 12 months on and the time has flown by.

This time last year, we watched as our Most Excellent Grand Superintendent invested a new Deputy Grand Superintendent, a new Provincial 2nd Grand Principal and a new Provincial 3rd Grand Principal. It was a wonderful ceremony and a great way to close one season and open a new season. This year, we will be installing E Comp Graham Puddy as our new Provincial 2nd Grand Principal, to succeed E Comp Martin Slocombe. Both Companions work very hard to the benefit of this Province and E Comp Martin in particular has been putting in some heavy lifting for both Craft and Royal Arch in recent years.

This has been a remarkably busy year, with the introduction of many changes. We have begun to : embed "One Journey, One Organisation"; establish the new Provincial exaltation ritual, known colloquially as "Savage Club" : and to deliver the national strategy of The Membership Challenge. All of these programmes take a great deal of time and effort to promote, as well as individual visits taking time to prepare, and all of the 2023-24 Provincial team are to be thanked and congratulated for their work in supporting the hard-working Rulers in delivering all of these.

"One Journey, One Organisation" aims to forge closer links between the Craft and the Royal Arch, to which end we have seen the introduction of one Cabinet replacing two Executives, the production of the "Discover More" booklet and the creation of a publicity banner with both the Craft and Royal Arch logos (you can see it on the front cover of this summons) which is now used on every new Provincial Craft and Royal Arch paper and website document.

The new Provincial Exaltation ritual has been used by the Provincial Team this season in four exaltations, with one more to come in June. Reception has been positive, with around half the Chapters in the Province adopting it or thinking about doing. The team have taken to the ritual with aplomb – especially as many team members have to switch between the Provincial and their own chapter rituals!

The Membership Challenge will continue to be delivered around the Province by the Rulers next season. 15 Chapters have now received their visit - pop into the Provincial website to see when it is coming to you. The MCV looks to the level of membership in the Chapter and aims to give ideas to help arrest the overall decline in membership. The presentation also emphasises that there is a role for all Companions in attracting Master Masons to become a Companion – we know that personal friendship is the main reason a Brother joins a Chapter.

The Active Provincial Team have been out and about a great deal since they were appointed last May. As well as the four Exaltations under the new ritual, they delivered 3 demonstrations / read throughs; supported St Keyna C1833 in hosting the Annual Quadripartite meeting in Keynsham; supported Brotherly Love C329 in celebrating their bi-centenary; and made team visits to our friends in Somersetshire Chapter C2925. All of these were on top of the team members' own Chapter work. The programme for 2024-25 is under development and is no less busy !

Further afield, the Rulers and others have attended the Annual Convocations of many other Provinces and we are very pleased to welcome our opposite numbers from many of those Provinces here today.

I conclude with a **thank you** from me to all 29 Chapter Scribes - thank you to all of you whom I meet or correspond with. The work you do is so often unrecognised by your members - but I and the Rulers know that you put yourself out and use precious family time for the good of all of us.

Companions, we are widely recognised as a "Happy Province" and I know that we will all continue to keep it so.

Most Excellent Grand Superintendent, I submit this report for your approval.

E Comp Charlie Barker, PGStB
Provincial Grand Scribe Ezra