

DISTRICT GRAND CHAPTER OF SOUTH AFRICA, NORTH

Of Royal Arch Masons of England



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GRAND SUPERINTENDENT'S ADDRESS ANNUAL CONVOCATION – 1 OCTOBER 2016

Welcome to you all to this 113TH Annual Convocation of District Grand Chapter, and I extend a warm welcome to our distinguished guests, some of whom have travelled far to be with us today and trust you have enjoyed our proceedings. I will acknowledge your presence at the end of this address.

Many of our Companions have also travelled far to attend this meeting. In particular, I would like to acknowledge and welcome our Members from the Chapter of Friendship in Mauritius, Gaborone Chapter in Botswana and Swaziland Chapter at Manzini, Swaziland, as well as those from the far corners of our District in South Africa.

I welcome Companions Mustapha Adamjee, Vij Mardemootoo, James Ho Fong, Kailash Juddoo and Rajeev Nathoo. I would like to ask the Companions from Mauritius to stand and Companions please give them a warm welcome.

From Gaborone Chapter, I acknowledge and welcome E Comp John Ebby, PAGDC from Botswana and from Swaziland Chapter, meeting at Manzini, Swaziland; E Comps. George Lutwama, Gaz Barlow, George Mavhunga and Paulo da Silva. Companions please also give them a warm welcome.

Congratulations are extended to those Companions who have received District Grand Rank today. I look to you all for future work in your Chapters and the District. I particularly welcome E Comps **Kevin Hyde** as District Grand Registrar and **Jerry Davies**, District Grand Janitor, who take-over from E Comp Gordon Martin and Comp Frans Visagie respectively. I will have more to say about these long serving Companions, Gordon Martin (15 years) and Frans Visagie (27 years), at the Craft meeting as they held corresponding Offices in District Grand Lodge.

Earlier this year, the Most Excellent the First Grand Principal was pleased to appoint the following to Grand Rank: E. Companions **Colin Robinson**, **John Stevens** and **Vaughn Williams** received first appointments to **PGStB** and my Deputy, E Companion **Tim Smith** was promoted to **PGSwdB**. I extend congratulations to them all and I look to them for their on-going support of the District.

The Royal Arch District is making excellent progress, with a total of 783 Members as at 31 March 2016, in 41 Chapters. The total number of Members currently constitutes some 41% of the total Craft members in the District. This is a significant improvement compared to previous years and the average of some 33% across the Constitution. However, there is still room for improvement. I believe it is vitally important that our younger Craft Masons, the Entered Apprentices, Fellow

Crafts and Master Masons are made fully aware of the close association of the Royal Arch and the Craft in our Constitution.

The Royal Arch is the completion of “Pure Ancient Freemasonry” and in essence is the completion of the third degree. I am an active member and support many of the additional degrees and Orders in Freemasonry. Several of these Orders require membership of the Royal Arch as a pre-requisite for admission, others do not. However, I think that it is most important for the Master Mason to complete the Royal Arch and hence “Pure Ancient Freemasonry” and not use one of the other Orders, such as the Rose Croix of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, or the Secret Monitor or the Mark, as a substitute for the Royal Arch.

I am extremely grateful to my Deputy, E Comp Tim Smith for his leadership in sourcing material and developing suitable literature to improve the understanding of the Royal Arch and our ritual. A series of booklets have been produced which are available from the Office of the District Grand Scribe Ezra.

First, a colour pamphlet has been upgraded for distribution to introduce all Master Masons to the Royal Arch. This pamphlet is sent-out with their Master Mason’s certificate. It is also available for distribution to any Master Mason, for example, when presentations are given on the Royal Arch in Craft Lodges.

Secondly, a booklet has been prepared specifically for distribution to Craft Masons, called 50 Questions and Answers on the Royal Arch for the Craft Mason. These questions and answers are designed to be given in a Craft Lodge.

Thirdly, a booklet entitled “ Exaltation explained” has been produced for the Royal Arch Mason and could be presented in Chapters.

These last two booklets are available from the Office of District Grand Scribe Ezra, for a nominal amount to cover printing costs. These booklets and the pamphlet are available today at a table near the front entrance of the Hall.

An additional booklet entitled “The Relationship between the Craft and Royal Arch” is in preparation and will be available shortly.

Hopefully, some of this literature will encourage Master Masons to join the Royal Arch and the literature designed for the Royal Arch Mason will give a better understanding of our ceremonies, in particular the story of the exaltation ceremony as it unfolds, and will lead to far better retention of Members.

Members of the First Principals’ Chapter have an important role to lead the way in presenting more lectures about the Royal Arch in Craft Lodges. I call on all of you to be pro-active in your own Craft Lodges and ensure that every Master Mason is brought into the Royal Arch as soon as possible.

In conclusion Companions, I would like to thank the District Grand Directors of Ceremonies, E Comp Vaughn Williams and his team for the Ceremony today. In addition, sincere thanks are extended to District Grand Scribe Ezra, E Comp David Pickard, together with Mrs Fern Rowles

and the administrative staff, here at Park Lane. I thank E Comp Graeme MacKenzie, Chairman of the Organising Committee and members of his committee and the substantial work of E Comp David Whitfield in organising seating, ticketing and printing, together with work carried out by E Comp David Johnston and Stanley Elms and the District Grand Janitor, E Comp. Jerry Davies.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Craft meeting later this afternoon.

E Comp Prof E Guy Charlesworth
Grand Superintendent,

1 October 2016