

District Grand Prefect's Address 23rd March 2024

Brethren, welcome to the 2024 Annual General Meeting of the Allied Masonic Degrees, District of Yorkshire.

This is my second meeting as your District Grand Prefect, and I would like to thank you all for your support during this last year. I also thank you for your patience, I've still not got to the end of my learning curve.

During this year we have begun to introduce some new initiatives and procedures, but like all new things teething problems do arise, if so, these will be looked at, and hopefully rectified. We are all doing our best to move things forward to hopefully achieve our objectives.

We are still, like many Orders in masonry, experiencing smaller, but still very enjoyable meetings. To try to address this, please look at your District Directory and see if there is another Council Meeting that you could go and visit. You will be made most welcome, and that meeting will be all the better for your presence.

As we heard earlier today, we have suffered some unfortunate losses, but by the same token 11 new members have joined us. We currently have registered on our data base 184 members with 245 memberships, so we are holding our own, but new members are always welcome, so talk to your friends and see if you can interest them in joining us.

Brethren, all Allied meetings are a highlight for me, including a Council Meeting of 9 and eating in a local chippy, our own, or other District Meetings, but one of the highlights has been the Grand Council Meeting. Last October it was wonderful to witness Brethren receiving their Grand Honours, and it was particularly pleasing for me to see some of our members being recognised by the Grand Master and appointed or promoted to their respective Grand Ranks. Brethren these were all very well deserved and I would now like to introduce those brethren. The District Secretary will read out your name, please stand and remain standing until everyone is called, we can then congratulate you.
(awaiting information)

Thank you, Brethren, but none of this would happen without new members joining our Order, and I would like to acknowledge the new members of the year who have been able to be with us today, Bro Dist Sec. (awaiting information)

By the same token we would not exist without a constant influx of good men via the Craft, so if you can encourage, and I repeat, "GOOD" men, to join the Craft, Royal Arch and Mark, those good men become prospective Allied Masons, which then enables them to enjoy this happy, wonderful Order of ours as we do.

Acting District Officers, it means just that, you will be expected to make every effort to attend and support Clive and myself on our three Team Visits which this year will be at, Stokesley Council, on the 4th April, this is a daylight Council and starts at 11am, Ryedale Council at Malton on the 29th April and South Riding Council at Doncaster 17th June. These visits are for Acting Officers, but any District Officer would be more than welcome to join the District Delegation. Brethren most of these meetings are Installations and as we all know a good attendance always enhances the occasion, particularly for the incoming WM.

There have been some other appointments made this year, one being Archivist & Webmaster RW Bro Tom Spinks, who is well known to most of you, being the past District Secretary. Tom is currently doing some work refreshing and improving our website, which is to be the source of most of the important information in respect of the District and all things Allied. Shortly it is hoped you will soon be sent detailed instructions as to how to use it.

Another source of useful information is our pocket-sized District Year Book kindly produced by W Bros Barry Massam and Ian Cotton, who must also receive our thanks, and it has been decided to issue one to each member free of charge, please make sure you take one away with you.

You should now have everything you need to contact and visit any Council or other District meeting you may want to attend.

Another appointment was that of Bro Shaun Churm as Social Media Officer, which is the management of a dedicated Facebook page to provide a source of information and news items of interest to the membership in general, and again you will be receiving instructions in the near future regarding the use of this too.

W Bro Algis Vasis as District Grand General Factotum - a new title! He will have a varied roll involving District equipment, regalia and artefacts and assisting with organising for Councils who need help or advice in performing their Ceremonies. Thank you to these brethren for taking on these important roles.

Brethren the success of these roles will greatly depend on being fed items and information from the membership, so how much is on, or not on them will depend on you.

I would like to thank everyone who I've met as I've gone ON TRAMP both in the District and travelling around the country for their wonderful hospitality and kindness, it has been second to none. I haven't been able to make them all, but as we all know, sometimes life and other masonic duties get in the way.

We are all aware that these events need organising they don't just happen, so I thank our District Secretary, our Deputy District Grand Prefect, District Director of Ceremonies, and his team, for making this meeting possible, not forgetting those who helped us set things up last night, it is very much appreciated.

Brethren, keep enjoying yourselves in everything you do, life is short, we cannot allow ourselves to be down beat, it's not the Allied way, we are the Happy Order, and we must be positive, and strive to keep it that way.

It only remains for me to extend my grateful thanks to you all for being here to support myself and the District of Yorkshire, particularly. My fellow District Grand Prefects and their supporters, Distinguished guests and Brethren, you make these occasions what they are.

For those of you who are leaving us after the meeting, a safe journey home. To everyone else I look forward to enjoying your company at lunch.

Thank you.