

# The Royal Arch Province of Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire



Province of  
Northamptonshire & Huntingdonshire



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## 2023/24 Newsletter Number 1

To: All Royal Arch Companions

### 1. GRAND SUPERINTENDENT'S CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AWARD

E Comp Dick Godwin of Beneventa and Fidelity Chapters has been awarded the Grand Superintendent's Certificate of Meritorious Service. E Comp Dick was Initiated in to the Craft in Christopher Lodge 2309 (Bucks) in 1975 and the Royal Arch in Horsa Dun Chapter 3123 (Middx) 1977. He joined Beneventa Chapter 2380 in 2009 and Chapter of Fidelity 445 in 2020. E Comp Dick has served in many offices across many Chapters and Provinces and has amassed a total of 20 years as a Scribe E during that time. The award was presented at Provincial Grand Chapter on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

### 2. ROYAL ARCH AMBASSADORS

Following the announcement in February of the Royal Arch Ambassador initiative. The MEGS has now confirmed the following structure and appointments:

<b>Centres: Daventry and Towcester</b>	<b>Centre: Northampton</b>
<b>Lead Ambassador: E Comp Scott McNeil</b>	<b>Lead Ambassador: E Comp Barrie Goulding</b>
<b>Ambassadors:</b> E Comp David Butt E Comp David Markham E Comp Alan Sparham Comp Weston Charlesworth	<b>Ambassadors:</b> E Comp Nigel Dickens E Comp Kevin Foreman E Comp Reuben Freeman Comp Steve Dowdy
<b>Centres: Peterborough &amp; Stamford</b>	<b>Centres: St Ives, St Neots, Huntingdon &amp; Ramsey</b>
<b>Lead Ambassador: E Comp Andy Petrie</b>	<b>Lead Ambassador: E Comp John Napper</b>
<b>Ambassadors:</b> E Comp Peter Ellis E Comp Paul Hoffman E Comp John Phillips Comp Simon Biggs	<b>Ambassadors:</b> E Comp Jeremy Crompton E Comp Andy Walker Comp Mark Dutton Comp Ian Simpson
<b>Centres: Rushden, Thrapston &amp; Wellingborough</b>	<b>Centres: Corby &amp; Kettering</b>
<b>Lead Ambassador: E Comp Stuart Phillips</b>	<b>Lead Ambassador: E Comp Roger Hutchinson</b>
<b>Ambassadors:</b> E Comp Trevor Cook E Comp Russ Dickinson E Comp Frankie Hawson E Comp Stephen Wood	<b>Ambassadors:</b> E Comp Andy Mackie Comp Alan Brooks Comp Mark Bosence Comp Chris Winfield

### 3. MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE – BUILDING THE FUTURE

The Pro First Grand Principal, ME Companion Jonathan Spence announced the Membership Challenge initiative in 2022.

The Membership Challenge enables Provinces, Lodges and Chapters to quantify the growth/losses in subscribing memberships sustained over a period of time.



One Journey  
One Organisation



### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



**First Principals' Chapter**  
3422  
Corby  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September  
2023



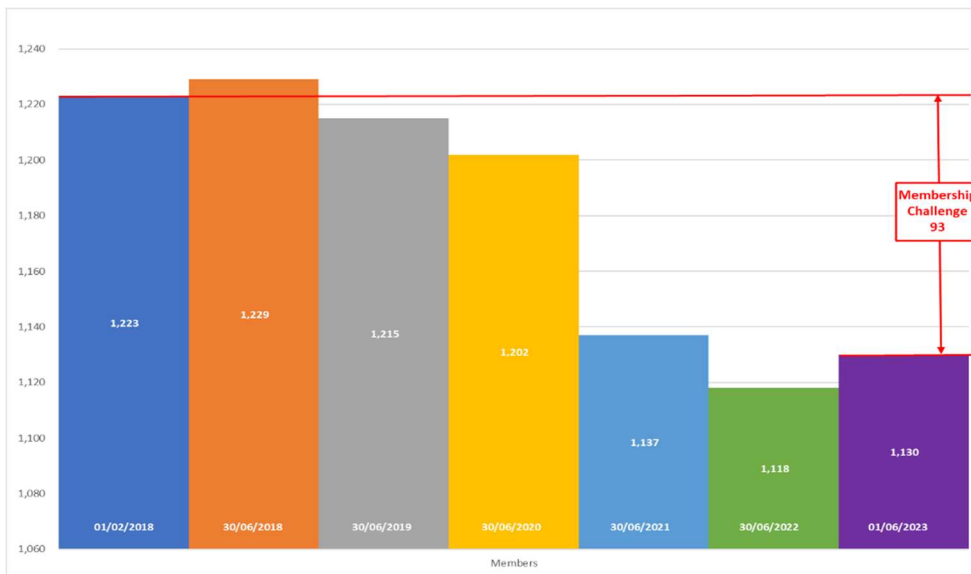
**Supreme Grand Chapter**  
Bi-Annual Meeting  
Freemasons' Hall  
London  
Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023



**Master Masons' & Exaltees**  
Evening  
Rushden  
Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

In general, as a Province our numbers have been contracting in recent years - not least due to the effects of the COVID-19 Shutdown. This has seen members re-evaluate their commitments to Freemasonry. In a number of cases, this has resulted in their electing to either reduce their commitments, or in some cases to leave the Royal Arch or indeed the fraternity entirely.

Below is a graphical representation of the Membership Challenge for this Province:



This shows that, since February 2018, we have a net loss of approx 8% or 93 members.

***This Masonic season just past has seen no fewer than 56 Master Masons Exalted in to our Chapters. That equates to an average of 2 new RA Companions per working Chapter. This is an amazing achievement and represents the fruits of YOUR efforts to grow your Chapters. Well done!***

However, we must not lose sight of the fact that over the same period, 31 Companions resigned their Chapters. In addition, 4 Companions were elected to Honorary Membership, 30 of our members passed to the GL above, 1 was Excluded and 6 ceased membership under BoC regulation 71 for non-payment of subscriptions for two years.

*(I am always left wondering how a Companion can be allowed to avoid subscription payments for two years without prior action being taken - resulting in their fellow Companions having to pay the debt in their stead).*

Do you know what the Membership Challenge is for your Chapter? Companions, I would suggest you should. Armed with that knowledge you are better placed to plan your membership strategy and better understand what you need to do to sustain and grow your Chapter. You can get your historical and present membership data from Hermes. If you need help, just ask us at Province – we are here to help.

A net increase in membership of 19 Companions per year will see the Province return to its February 2018 level in five years. What do YOU need to achieve the same?

**Mike Binsted, PGStB**  
**Second Provincial Grand Principal**

#### **4. FESTIVE BOARD TOASTS**

Following changes to the Provincial Executive, the revised Toast List has been issued to Chapter Scribes E and Provincial DCs.

A common mistake is often made when toast number 3, the toast to Grand Officers (either in a Royal Arch or Craft Festive Board), is given. Having listed the various elements of the item, the Companion giving the toast will often say “The toast is Supreme Grand Chapter”. This is incorrect. Every member at the Festive Board is a member of Supreme Grand Chapter (or Grand Lodge in the case of the Craft). You cannot toast yourself! When abbreviating toast 3, the correct abbreviation is “Grand Officers”.

#### **5. SOLOMON: ‘LEARNING – EDUCATION – PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT’**

##### **SOLOMON - FOSTERING CURIOSITY, DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING**

***The summer, new season, and Solomon***

With the appearance of a Summons (or two!) it is now time to realise that the summer break away from Freemasonry will soon come to a close and that we will all be back, with refreshed energy levels, to look forward to a new and busy masonic season ahead.



**Principals’ & Scribes E**  
**Dinner**  
**Corby**  
**Wednesday**  
**29<sup>th</sup> November 2023**



**PSA Testing**  
**Sheaf Close**  
**Northampton**  
**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023**



**Active Officers’ Full Team Visit**  
**Chapter of Fidelity 445**  
**Towcester**  
**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024**



**PSA Testing**  
**Peterborough**  
**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024**



**PSA Testing**  
**Corby**  
**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April 224**



**Thistle & Rose Chapter 6644**  
**Banner Dedication**  
**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024**



Yet before we get too involved in the season ahead, we may wish to enjoy spending some time considering the delights and pleasures that masonry brings.

In this respect **Solomon** (at [www.solomon.ugle.ork.uk](http://www.solomon.ugle.ork.uk)) is always an excellent place to gain that period of delight in viewing (or reviewing) something that may be new, to broaden masonic knowledge, or just to gain some information that may not be so readily available.

Upon entering **Solomon** (at [www.solomon.ugle.ork.uk](http://www.solomon.ugle.ork.uk)) you will see at the top of the page two icons – one entitled ‘**Discover Freemasonry**’ and the other entitled ‘**Getting started with Solomon**’.

For those new to **Solomon** go to the second of these ‘**Getting started with Solomon**’ and you will be taken through the easy and speedy process of self-registration which will then give you immediate access to the whole **Solomon** library of masonic information and knowledge.

Once registered go to the first of the two icons ‘**Discover Freemasonry**’. Then (as an example) scroll down the page and you will find links to the series entitled ‘**Solomon Live**’.

**‘Solomon Live’ is a series of monthly webinars incorporating lively, engaging Freemasonry conversation covering all aspects of the Royal Arch and Craft.**

At any time in ‘**Solomon Live**’, you can register for the next webinar by clicking the link in the "Coming up..." section or catch-up on those you may have missed by watching the recordings or listening to the podcast.

The ‘**Solomon Live**’ interviews that have been broadcast over time are listed and by clicking on each respective screen you will be taken to around 45 minutes of delightfully interesting conversation and dialogue.

Some that might especially interest may include the recently recorded:

- **1723 Constitutions: Inventing the Future - Dr Ric Berman discusses the importance of the 1723 Constitutions from the Enlightenment to the present day.**
- **What's the future of Freemasonry? - Following the launch of the 7-year strategic roadmap for the Craft (and to some extent the Royal Arch also), the Pro Grand Master (and Pro First Grand Principal), Jonathan Spence, outlines his mission to ensure that UGLE remains a thriving organisation.**

To the more light-hearted:

- **Discover Special Interest Lodges - Meet the Science Fiction & Fantasy Lodge, the Nomads Rugby Lodge, and Craft Beer / Horus Lodge and find out about the world of Special Interest Lodges. Indeed, relevant in considering the current Membership Challenge for the Craft.**
- **Meet the new Masons - What attracts young people to Freemasonry today? Four newly minted Freemasons with diverse backgrounds and careers, discuss why they became Freemasons and how it enhances their lives.**

As well as the most amusing:

- **Masonic "howlers" and how to avoid them - UGLE institution and author of Masonic Etiquette Today, VW Bro Graham Redman discusses the importance of Masonic convention.**

But never forgetting the Royal Arch with the broadcast:

- **Through the Archway - E Comp Patrick Penny shares his insights into the Royal Arch. This is an interesting pre-cursor to what we may all be seeing in the year ahead with the introduction of ‘Archway’ as the Royal Arch considers its own ‘Membership Challenge’.**

At this time of potential development and change for the Craft and the Royal Arch, as we see the implementation of the ‘Members’ Pathway’ focussing more on the Craft and the forthcoming ‘Archway’ for the Royal Arch, I wish you all a very peaceful and safe return to the delights and pleasures of Freemasonry and especially the Royal Arch in the new Masonic season.

**E Comp Dr Christopher R Clark, PGStB**  
**Provincial Grand Mentor**

**Supreme Grand Chapter**  
**Annual Investiture**  
**Freemasons’ Hall**  
**London**  
**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024**



**First Principals’ Chapter 3422**  
**Sheaf Close**  
**Northampton**  
**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024**



**Provincial Grand Lodge**  
**Sheaf Close**  
**Northampton**  
**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024**



**Provincial Grand Chapter**  
**Sheaf Close**  
**Northampton**  
**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024**



**You can keep abreast of matters Royal Arch (and Craft) in the Province by signing-up to the Provincial website. Not already signed-up? Here is the web address you need:**

**//www.northants-hunts-masons.org.uk**

**The next Royal Arch Newsletter will be published in December 2023**

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