

District Grand Lodge of India S.C. & Grand Chapter of U.S.R.A.F.I.C

FREEMASONS'HALL, SUKHADWALLA MARG, FORT, MUMBAI 400 001.



NEWSLETTER

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This Newsletter is only to convey the news and events under the jurisdiction of the Scottish District and is not its official periodical. The views expressed in this Newsletter are solely that of the Editor.

EDITORIAL

Brethren, we, as Freemasons, belong to an ancient order, of which, we need to be legitimately proud. Freemasonry has often been misunderstood and many believe that it is merely a social institution, designed to promote charity and civic duty in society, yet, there is something different in our Masonic institution that is apart from civic duty and promotion of moral behavior – in other words, Masonry is about internal growth.

Masonry can be said to be traditional, since it is handing down knowledge from the past. Tradition is experienced through the handing down of wisdom, which can often be called sacred knowledge, for they are one and the same. How is it possible to give someone wisdom? Well, this is exactly what separates Masonry from all other modern institutions and even religion.

Our Fraternal Organisation is perhaps one of the oldest Orders that has survived over centuries, maintaining in its wake the rich traditions and rituals for a long time. Undoubtedly, it can be stated that perhaps Freemasonry is the most widespread organization in the world, but unfortunately, it has, of late, been witnessing diminishing membership for which we can attribute various reasons.

We, as speculative Masons, use the metaphors of operative Masons' tools to convey what is most generally defined as a system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. We use these symbols to teach Moral and Ethical lessons of the principles of "Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth" or those of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity"

The philosophy underlying Masonry is universal to all religions and all cultures, and this is what separates Masonry from religion.

There are two other very important aspects of Masonry that deserve further explanation, one is the mysterious experience in a Lodge meeting, which begins first with the initiation and then grows and grows through years of attendance. The other is the bonding that happens between Masonic brethren, often referred to as the Fraternity. The bond that exists among Masonic brothers is one of the most pleasant parts of Masonry.

The deep friendship that surrounds brethren that have grown together in Masonry is also difficult to communicate. It is a type of male bond that would not have been created in any other situation than through Masonry. The brotherly love of Masons is both the goal and the effect of self-development and bonding that happens to men growing together.

How cherished are the three tenets of Masonry, i.e. Brotherly love to humanity, Relief to the distressed and Truth as a divine attribute!

Let us be alive with the "4 cardinal virtues" of our order, viz. Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice", because Masonry benefits the entire community by inculcating lofty moral and spiritual values in its members. True Masonic ritual, as it always was intended to do, teaches the great lesson of life: the importance of honour and integrity, of being a person on whom others can rely, of being both trusting and trustworthy, of realising that you have a spiritual nature as well as a physical nature, of the importance of self-control, of knowing how to love and be loved, of knowing how to keep confidential what others tell you so that they open up to you without fear. In short, it teaches us to reach for a higher standard in conducting our lives.

A REFERENCE TO THE HOLY ROYAL ARCH

At times, we are often asked the question, why be a Royal Arch Mason? To respond to the query, I need to elucidate as:-

Every Master Mason aspires to attain the summit of Ancient Craft Masonry. Many feel with regret that it is not practicable for them to share in all the light shed by the several bodies, but all wish most earnestly to receive all the light and instruction which pertains to the Ancient Craft - the origin and foundation of the Institution.

In the life of every Master Mason, moreover, there comes a time when he realizes that he has not yet attained that goal, that he is not yet in possession of all the rights and light of a Master Mason, as these were known and understood by his ancient brethren. But he does not realize that the goal of his aspirations is near at hand-in the Royal Arch Degree.



Arrangements of the Royal Arch Chapter



The Royal Arch emblem (Triple Tau)



The Apron in the Royal Arch Degree

The Degree of Royal Arch Mason is founded upon the destruction of the first and the building of the second Temple. The ceremonies of the Degree have an interesting and graphic historical setting, and a profound and reverential moral significance. The Royal Arch Degree is the complement of the Master's Degree, the unfolding into a second volume of the history of that which was lost to its final recovery. Without the Royal Arch, the Master's Degree is like a song half sung, a tale partly told, or a promise unfulfilled.

The preparatory Degrees conferred in the Chapter are those of Mark Master Mason and Excellent Master. All are beautiful, all are interesting, all teach valuable lessons, but the Most Sublime Degree of Royal Arch Mason is more august, sublime and important than all that precedes it. It brings to light many essentials of the Craft contained only in this Most Sublime Degree and explains many cryptic passages of the first three Degrees incomprehensible to the Master Mason. Without a knowledge of these, the Masonic character cannot be complete.

It has been said that "The Royal Arch stands as the rainbow of promise in the Ritual; it stands as the promise of the resurrection; of that which was lost and that which shall be recovered."

The value of Royal Arch Masonry will be justly appreciated by all who are Exalted to that Most Sublime Degree, particularly by those who are seeking to complete their Masonic education. It reveals the full light of Ancient Craft masonry, presents it as a complete system in accordance with the original plan and confers at last the rights and light of a Master Mason in fact as well as in name. It truly leads to a fuller understanding of the purposes and spirit of Freemasonry, for standing upon this towering summit we are able for the first time to perceive the completeness of the Ancient Craft and to understand how all its forms and ceremonies, from the Entered Apprentice to the Master Mason's Degree, are the preparation for the final goal, the Most Sublime Degree of Royal Arch Mason.

Our membership consists only of those who have been regularly initiated, passed and raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason in a just and duly constituted Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons who are properly vouched for, in good standing in their respective Lodges and in the community in which they reside.

We as Royal Arch Masons, have received the light and instructions which can be communicated only in this venerated Degree. Any Royal Arch Mason can give full information on how to proceed to that end.

HOMAGE TO THE QUEEN

It was with the greatest sadness that Scottish Freemasons globally learned of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, longest serving British Sovereign in history. Queen Elizabeth's father, His late Majesty King George VI and her consort, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, were both Freemasons. Her cousin, HRH The Duke of Kent, has been Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England since 1967. Another of her cousins, HRH Prince Michael of Kent, has been Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales since 1982. Thousands of people waited outside Buckingham

Palace to say their last goodbye to Queen Elizabeth II. The pilgrims kept arriving in a long line, bringing bouquets and notes of endearment that represented the love of the people, worldwide, for her.



The world paid respect to the procession from the Palace of Westminster to Westminster Abbey. The Funeral Service was attended by heads of State and Government Representatives from all over the world. Elizabeth's life brought hope to her people during the period of adversity she lived in, but she stood as an incredibly charitable person, being a role model to everyone in need.

Elizabeth II was Queen of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth realms from 6 February 1952 until her death in September 2022. She was queen regnant of 32 sovereign states during her lifetime, 15 of them at the time of her death. Her 70-year reign was the longest of any British monarch—and spanned a period in which the world radically changed.

Masons throughout the world are members in the National Grand Lodges of the nations over which she reigned and we have toasted her innumerable times after our convocations, and now, overcoming our habitual practice, we toast King Charles III as the Head of the Commonwealth.

King Charles III led the Royal Family in a procession along the Royal Mile from the Palace of Holyroodhouse to St Giles Cathedral, where a service of thanksgiving to celebrate the life of the late monarch took place.

MEETING FOR YOUNG MASONS ORGANISED BY GRAND LODGE

Consequent upon some discussions at the meeting of Provincial Grand Masters in Perth, Grand Lodge of Scotland has organised a Zoom meeting on Sunday, 27th November 2022 at 2.00 p.m. (U.K. time) especially for young Masons below the age of 40 years or for those over the age of 40 who have not completed five years in the Order. The format of the meeting would be open discussions with a presentation.

Those eligible to attend as per the criteria and desirous of doing so, may write to pa@grandlodgescotland.org not later than 23rd November 2022.

UPWARD REVISION IN CAPITATION FEES

At the Regular Communication of The Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland, held on Thursday, 27th October 2022 at Edinburgh, it was unanimously approved that "the amount payable to Grand Lodge to be fixed for the year 2023, in terms of Law 119 and the First Schedule, Part 1, Item 10, i.e. "Capitation Fee", be GB£ 40 per Qualified Member(except non-attending Life Members). The new Capitation Fee of GB£ 40 is now applicable to all annual Lodge returns. This information may be conveyed to Brethren of daughter Lodges.

SCOTTISH MASONIC PRESENCE AT THE QUEEN'S FUNERAL

The service proper commenced with the well drilled coffin-bearers bringing Her Majesty's coffin into the Church followed by the Royal Party. The congregation sang "All people that on earth do dwell" after which the service was conducted by the Minister of St Giles, Rev Calum MacLeod. The lessons were read by Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister, the Most Rev Leo Cushley and the Most Rev Mark Strange while the Eulogy was given by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Rt Rev Dr Iain Greenshields. Another highlight during the service was the singing of a Gaelic setting of the 118th Psalm by Karen Matheson. It was a truly fitting service of thanksgiving for the life of Her Majesty the Queen.

Bro. William Ramsay McGhee – our Grand Master Mason was greatly privileged to be present at the Memorial Service in St Giles Church, Edinburgh representing all Scottish Freemasons at home and abroad. Besides, on behalf of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, Grand Secretary has written a letter of condolence to the HM the King, and the Grand Master Mason had written to the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, Brother HRH the Duke of Kent, a cousin of the Queen.



Brother Dr Joseph John Morrow CBE KStJ KC DL FRSE, Lord Lyon King of Arms

For those of us who were following the broadcast of the Queen's Memorial Service could not miss out the prominent presence of Brother Dr Joseph John Morrow CBE KStJ KC DL FRSE, Lord Lyon King of Arms – Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and presently the Grand Superintendent of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. Throughout all the activity the role that Past Grand Master Brother Dr. Joseph John Morrow played in the entire proceedings was predominantly conspicuous. He was incredibly busy behind the scenes as well as his public appearances of Reading the Proclamation, preceding the Royal Family during State Processions to mention but two of his duties.

It was a truly memorable service which commenced with a fine selection of organ music played by Jordan English, Assistant Organist in St Giles followed by five choral pieces sung by the Choir of St Giles under the direction of the Master of Music, Michael Harris.



Again, it was Bro. Joseph John Morrow who proclaimed the new King Charles III at Mercat Cross in Edinburgh. On behalf of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, Grand Secretary has written a letter of condolence to the HM the King, and Bro. Ramsay McGhee – our Grand Master Mason – had written to the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, Brother HRH the Duke of Kent, a cousin of the Queen.

King Charles III led the Royal Family in a procession along the Royal Mile from the Palace of Holy rood house to St Giles Cathedral, where a service of thanksgiving to celebrate the life of the late monarch took place.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Mrs. Zarine Commissariat - Chairperson of our Scottish Masonic Ladies' Wing - accompanied by Dr. Roshni Chinoy - better half of our District Grand Treasurer - as a part of their ongoing Social activities, visited the Sir J.

J. Hospital on 3rd October 2022. In consequence of their interaction with the Doctors, Patients and Staff of the Old People's Ward and pediatric Ward, they identified some immediate requirements for the treatment of the patients.



Based on that evaluation of needs, the District has donated the following equipments to the hospital:

Description of item	No. of pieces	Total Cost in Rs.
Oxygen Flow Meter	1	1,239.00
Pediatric BP Cuff	2	784.00
Pulse Oxymeter	4	2,684.00
Digital Thermometer	5	708.00
Intra Venous Stand	2	3,422.00
Oxygen stretcher Trolley (with cushion)	2	38,940.00
Nebulisation machine	2	2,184.00
Adult B. P. Apparatus	2	2,240.00
TOTAL		52,205.00

OBITUARY

On 6th October 2022, our Dear Bro. Sam Fakirji Bharucha left this sublunary probation and proceeded to his Heavenly abode in the realms above at the call of our Heavenly Father. Bearing a pleasing countenance at all times and with his jolly good nature full of mirth and joy, Sam was always a pleasing Company not only within the precincts of the Masonic Temple, but even without. An initiate and Past Master of Lodge Zoroaster # 800, he later was affiliated in Lodge Rising Sun # 506 S.C. at my insistence, so to rejuvenate the ailing Lodge, and rose to occupy the Eastern Chair twice. I have had the privilege to travel with him on many an upcountry Masonic visits and his courteous demeanor and mirthful countenance shall always be missed. May his son Jamsheed, his daughter Khurshid, son-in-law Percy and his grandchildren be endowed with fortitude and forbearance to overcome this unforeseen bereavement.

IN MEMORIAM

Bro. Dhunjisha Karkaria – our Past Rt. Wor. District Grand Master – was a Noble Soul and by his dedication to the cause of Scottish Freemasonry, was highly respected within the rank and file of our numbers. Unfortunately, he was called to the Grand Lodge above on 21st August 2021 in the midst of the unfortunate pandemic beleaguering our nation. He was an initiate and Past Master of Lodge Perseverance and also the occupant of the eastern Chair in Lodge Rising Star of Western India.

The various activities he undertook on behalf of the District is recalled with nostalgic reminiscences even today. Due to the aggravation of the pandemic, the contemplated funeral Lodge Services in his pious memory was deferred on three occasions. Finally, the same was convened by the Scottish District on Tuesday, 8th November at the Freemasons' Hall when his daughter Keti was invited with her acquaintances. The solemn ceremony to the playing of recorded Psalms and odes accompanied by the brethren joining in as a Choir was a treat to watch with moist eyes by the entire congregation assembled from all daughter Lodges in Mumbai.

Bro. Kersi J. Limathwalla – District Grand Master - presided over the congregation and Bro. Noshir Paghdiwalla played a dual role both as District Grand Secretary as also District Grand Director of Ceremonies. He also paid rich tributes in his eloquent oration to the memory of the dear departed Soul. Besides the District Grand Master, Bro. Bomi Mehta Past District Grand Master who succeeded Bro. Karkaria as DGM and Bro. Kasim Merchant also delivered their address.



ZOOM MEETING **Zoom meeting Pan-India**

On Sunday, 6th November 2022, District Grand Lodge of India S.C. jointly with Grand Chapter of USRAFIC had organized an interactive workshop of all the Scottish Brethren and Companions pan-India on the Zoom platform with a view to have a fair exchange of views on the current state of Masonry, post-pandemic. It was a memorable session what with the District Grand Master's address being followed by a Power-point presentation by Bro. Paghdwalla and a lecture by Bro. Bharat Epur.

The Power-point presentation was based on the topic of Customs, Practices, Usages and Etiquette in Scottish Freemasonry which was well appreciated and acknowledged as informative by all present. Bro. Epur, a well-known scholar of Freemasonry and known globally, spoke eloquently on How proud he was to be a Freemason."

The feedback we received subsequently, highlighted that such inter-active sessions should be held more often, especially for the elucidation of the newly inducted youth in our Order.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Bro. Kersi Limathwalla – Rt. Wor. District Grand Master will lead a Deputation of Officers holding Grand Ranks bestowed by the Grand Lodge of Scotland to the Festival of India organized by the Grand Lodge of India in the last week of November as representatives of the Grand Master Mason. This, as usual, is expected to be a gala event where Brethren from all the corners of the country are expected to be present.

We eagerly await the arrival of the Grand Master Mason and his officers from the Grand Lodge of Scotland in February 2023, when they are expected to arrive on a visit to India. We hope to see all our Brethren also attending in large numbers when the Grand Master Mason will invest Bro. Kersi Limathwalla for his second term as the District Grand Master. We shall continue to provide the necessary information through our circulars.

The months of November, December and January every year are busy days in our Masonic calendar as most of our Daughter Lodges hold their Election and Installation meetings in this period. Hence, much as the District Grand Master desiring to be present for these events, it is well nigh impossible for the District Deputation to attend all the installation ceremonies. Nevertheless, we convey our best wishes to all the incoming Right Worshipful Masters, and other Office-bearers wishing them a very successful and fruitful year ahead.

Pictorial views of the Freemasons' Hall -Mumbai

Especially for our brethren from Lodges other than in Mumbai





The main Sandhurst Temple – one of the four Temples

The Pipe Organ in the Sandhurst temple

I sat in Lodge with you.

A Poem by Wibur B. Nesbit

There is a saying filled with cheer,
Which calls a man to fellowship.
It means as much for him to hear
As lies within the Brother's grip.

Nay, more! It opens wide the way
To friendliness sincere and true;
There are no strangers when you say
To me: "I sat in Lodge with you".

When that is said, then I am known;
There is no questioning nor doubt:
I need not walk my path alone
Nor from my fellows be shut out.

Those words hold all of Brotherhood
And help me face the world anew
There's something deep and rich and good
In this: "I sat in Lodge with your".

Though in far lands one needs must roam
By sea and shore and hill and plain,
Those words bring him a touch of home
And lightens tasks that seem in vain.

Men's faces are no longer strange
But seem as though he always knew
When someone brings the joyous
change
With this: "I sat in Lodge with you".

So you, my Brother, now and then
Have often put me in your debt
By showing forth to other men
That you your friends do not forget.

When all the world seems grey and cold
And I am weary, worn and blue
Then comes this golden thought I hold
You said: "I sat in Lodge with you

When to the last gray Lodge you fare
My prayer is that I may be
One of your friends who wait you there
Intent your smiling face to see.

We, with the Warden at the gate,
Will have a pleasant task to do;
We'll call, though you come soon or late:
"Come in! We sat in Lodge with you".