



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 meant to convey the news and events under the jurisdiction of the Scottish District, but is not its official periodical. The views expressed herein are solely that of the Editor, and not that of the District.

EDITORIAL

Freemasonry can be termed as a membership-based organization, since it brings together like-minded individuals who share common values and principles with the fraternal bond of membership serving as the foundation upon which its values and practices are built. To be a Freemason means being part of a brotherhood that values moral integrity, mutual support, and the pursuit of knowledge. It needs to be emphasised that by valuing and revitalizing its membership, Freemasonry can continue to be a beacon of ethical guidance and personal growth in an ever-changing world. If Freemasonry is to survive and flourish in the changing environment, then it will have to endeavour to modernize, engage, and include upholding its proud traditions while evolving to meet the needs of future generations.

Some of the salient yet significant issues relating to the concept of membership in the Order can be elaborated as acknowledging the significance of individuals coming together to form a united and supportive fraternity offering opportunities for personal growth, lifelong learning, social connections, charitable endeavours, and a deeper understanding of oneself and the world. Freemasonry cannot but ignore the role of its members in upholding the principles and traditions of the Craft.

Brethren joining Freemasonry form meaningful social connections and build lasting friendships. Proceedings at the Lodge meetings, social events, and charitable activities provide opportunities for members to interact and bond with one another. By joining the fraternity, individuals become part of a global network of Freemasons who support and uplift one another.

A Brother is groomed to accord great emphasis on undertaking charitable projects, thereby repaying the community by making a positive impact in ameliorating their sufferings. Performing rituals with the aid of symbolism adds to the Masonic experience by gaining a deeper understanding of the principles of morality and virtue. By engaging in discussions, lectures, and educational programs one enhances one's knowledge, wisdom, and intellectual stimulation.

These days, Freemasonry faces several challenges related to declining numbers, aging demography, and competition from other social and civic organizations that threaten its traditional model. Nevertheless, these challenges also present opportunities for revitalization.

However, encompassing the youth in its fold by attracting younger members is crucial for the future of Freemasonry. Towards this purpose, effective outreach by enlightening the youth on the nuances of Freemasonry and creating an environment conducive to their liking assumes great importance. In the present days, one must adapt to the expectations and lifestyles of modern society. This might involve leveraging digital platforms for communication, offering flexible membership options, and promoting the relevance of Masonic values in contemporary contexts.

Yet, at the same time, the continuity of the traditions of ritual and symbolic education needs to be meticulously preserved and passed down through generations. It should not be forgotten that each new member becomes a custodian of our rich and time tested Masonic heritage. I am of the firm view that embracing diversity within the membership can enrich the organization. Freemasonry should strive to be all-inclusive, welcoming individuals from diverse backgrounds and fostering within the diaspora a culture of respect and understanding.

Concept of brotherhood lies at the heart at the heart of Freemasonry. Members are bound by a shared commitment to ethical principles and mutual aid. This fraternal bond fosters a sense of belonging and provides a support network that extends beyond the confines of the lodge. Freemasonry places a strong emphasis on the moral and personal development of its members. Through rituals, symbols, and teachings, members are encouraged to reflect on their character, strive for personal betterment, and live by high ethical standards. Membership thus becomes a journey of self-improvement guided by the wisdom of the craft.

It may be concluded, that placing membership at the heart of Freemasonry is essential for maintaining its relevance and vitality. Membership is not merely about numbers; it is about fostering a community of individuals committed to the timeless principles of brotherhood, moral development, and service to humanity. By valuing and revitalizing its membership, Freemasonry can continue to be a beacon of ethical guidance and personal growth in an ever-changing world. Through intentional efforts to modernize, engage, and include, Freemasonry can uphold its proud traditions while evolving to meet the needs of future generations.

BRITISH ROYALTY GREETED BY THE GRAND MASTER MASON

Freemasonry was well represented when King Charles and Queen Camilla began two days of events in Edinburgh as part of their official stay in Scotland. The Grand Master Mason, Bro. Dr Joseph J. Morrow, in his role as Lord Lyon, greeted His Majesty King Charles and Her Majesty Queen Camilla on their arrival at Edinburgh Castle on Wednesday 3rd July, 2024 and summoned the Garrison to open the gates to the King and present the Keys to the Castle.



Grand Master Mason greets His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen at Edinburgh Castle

The Right Honourable the Lord Lyon King of Arms, the head of Lyon Court, is an Officer of State in Scotland and is the Scottish official with responsibility for regulating heraldry in that country, issuing new grants of arms, and serving as the judge of the Court of the Lord Lyon, the oldest heraldic court in the world that is still in daily operation. The Lord Provost, city councillor Robert Aldridge, then presented the keys on a red velvet cushion, which the King symbolically touched. Ahead of the ceremony, the garden of the Palace of Holyroodhouse was transformed into a parade ground where the King met senior military and uniformed figures, including Police Scotland Chief Constable Jo Farrell, before receiving a royal salute and inspecting a guard of honour of soldiers from Balaklava Company, 5 Scots.



Also lined up were the Royal Company of Archers, who serve as the sovereign's ceremonial bodyguard for Scotland, a role first created in 1822 for King George IV. Several distinguished Freemasons are members of the Royal Company of Archers, including Past Grand Masters, Brother J.M. Marcus Humphrey of Dinnet, Brother Sir Archibald D. Orr Ewing, and Brother Charles Iain Robert Wolrige Gordon of Esslemont, along with Past Substitute Grand Master, Brother Alexander C.G.

On Tuesday 2nd July, Queen Camilla met with the Grand Master Mason, Brother Dr Joseph J. Morrow, along with Grand Lodge Homes and Charities Manager, Dawn Oliff, at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. The occasion was a Royal Reception to celebrate Scottish literature. The Queen heard from both Dawn and the Grand Master Mason about the new pilot project Grand Lodge is supporting in Dundee with Literacy Trust Scotland.

The King and Queen rounded off their trip with a celebration at Edinburgh Castle to mark the city's 900th anniversary, after it was founded by King David I in 1124. The Grand Master Mason was accompanied by Brother Adam Bruce, Past Master, and

Brother Liam Stewart, Past Master. Brother Stewart, a Substitute Provincial Grand Master of Ayrshire and well-known musician, had the honour of playing the accordion for the Royal couple.

MASONIC OUTREACH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has become an integral part of modern society, influencing various aspects of life from personal interactions to business operations. Social media platforms have revolutionized how people communicate and stay connected, regardless of geographical barriers.

Social media serves as a significant source of information and news. Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn provide real-time updates on global events, making it easier for people to stay informed. Additionally, social media allows for the rapid spread of information, which can be crucial during emergencies and for raising awareness on various issues.

For businesses, social media is a powerful tool for marketing and customer engagement. Companies use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn to promote their products and services, reach a wider audience, and interact directly with customers. This interaction helps in building brand loyalty and understanding consumer needs and preferences, ultimately driving business growth.

Social media has a profound impact on social and political landscapes. It provides a platform for activism and advocacy, enabling individuals and groups to campaign for social justice, environmental issues, and political change. Movements have gained momentum through social media, demonstrating its power in mobilizing public opinion and effecting change.

Social media also plays a significant role in education. It offers access to a vast array of resources, online courses, and educational content. Educators and institutions use platforms like YouTube, LinkedIn Learning, and educational blogs to share knowledge, provide tutorials, and engage with students in innovative ways. This democratizes education, making it more accessible to people worldwide.

Social media is a hub for entertainment and creativity. Platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram provide a space for creators to share their talents and entertain audiences. This has led to the rise of influencers and content creators who shape trends and culture. The creative freedom offered by social media encourages innovation and artistic expression.

LinkedIn and other professional networks have transformed the way people seek job opportunities and professional connections. Social media allows individuals to showcase their skills, experience, and accomplishments, making it easier for employers to find suitable candidates and for professionals to network and advance their careers.

Social media analytics provide valuable insights into consumer behavior and market trends. Businesses can track engagement, monitor feedback, and analyze data to understand customer preferences and market demands. This information is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies and improving products or services.

Social media can support mental health and well-being by providing communities where people can share their experiences and seek support. Platforms like Reddit, Facebook groups, and specialized forums offer spaces for discussions on health issues, offering advice and emotional support. This connectivity can help reduce feelings of isolation and promote mental health awareness.

The importance of social media in contemporary society cannot be overstated. It has transformed communication, business, education, and social interactions, making the world more interconnected. While it comes with challenges, such as privacy concerns and the spread of misinformation, the positive impacts of social media on connectivity, information dissemination, and societal engagement are profound and far-reaching.

EXCELLENT MASTERS' DEGREE

At its meeting on Wednesday 11th July 2024, Chapter Rising Star of Western India was privy to an unprecedented number of attendees when it performed The Excellent Masters' Degree.

The working under this degree which is set 470 years after the first building of King Solomon's Temple, portrays the dramatized passing of the veils by the Israelites on their way to the Council of King Cyrus and is an interesting and depiction of history of yore.

Excellent Masters of Chapter Rising Star of Western India at their Regular Meeting held on 11th July 2024 when three Companions were exalted to that degree



It narrates the saga of the release of the Jews, who had been held captive in Babylon under the decree of King Cyrus the Great, with his dictat to permit them to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the destroyed Temple. The Ceremony of Passing the Veils may be considered as emblematical of the wanderings of the Israelites in the Wilderness, and of their return from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Israel was conquered in a round-about way by the Babylonians and as was the custom back then, the spoils of war went to the victors, and in line with Mesopotamian practice, Nebuchadnezzar deported around 10,000 Jews to his capital in Babylon. The exile to Babylon was a traumatic event in Jewish history, as the destruction of the political independence of the kingdom coincided with the destruction of the monarchy and of the First Temple of Jerusalem.

As you well know the Babylonian Empire doesn't exist anymore, for in 539 BC, the Persian King, Cyrus took Babylon. The *Decree of Cyrus* for the Jews to return and to rebuild their Temple was given in 538 B.C., the year after he had taken Babylon. It is this period in time that is referred to as "...wandering in the Wilderness", and is the setting for the Excellent Masters Degree.



Lodge Zoroaster No. 800 at one of its regular meeting, played host to Bro. Brian Hopkins, District Grand Secretary of the District Grand Lodge of the Far East, Scottish Constitution.



Bro. Yohan Kersi Limathwalla, of Lodge Zoroaster No. 800, a budding legal practitioner, being felicitated by the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court.

MASONIC HUMOUR

A newly raised Master Mason had completed his proficiency and was asked by the Worship Master if he had any questions.

"I have one, I know the signs and tokens for all the degrees except one. What does this mean?" He places his little finger back in his ear and twists his hand.

"Oh, that's not a sign, that is the Past Masters adjusting their hearing aids."

CHARITABLE PROJECTS

Masonic charities encompass a range of philanthropic activities and organizations. Masonic charities frequently support hospitals, medical research, and healthcare services paediatric care, education and scholarships, community services. Masonic charities often engage in local community service projects, such as food drives, disaster relief, and support for the elderly and vulnerable populations, Youth Programs.

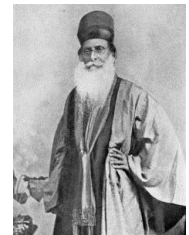


These charities are funded through donations, fundraising events, and the contributions of Masonic members. The emphasis is on making a positive impact in society and supporting those in need. District Grand Lodge of India (S.C.) has a range of charitable activities disbursements for which are made throughout the year, but does not restrict its disbursements to the causes of its own choosing. Instead, in the true spirit of Freemasonry, it also joins hands with the charities identified by the Sister Constitutions.

On Saturday, 20th July 2024, Brethren from the Irish Constitution organised a bus-load of Brethren braving torrential rains and disrupted roads to visit schools in the Adivasi areas to distribute books, shoes, raincoats, etc. to children. Our District contributed its mite to join hands in this commendable drive. Our District has also contributed towards a cancer detection camp organised by the Brethren of the Indian Constitution on Sunday, 11th August 2024 at the Freemasons' Hall, Mumbai.

COMMEMORATING OUR VETERAN FREEMASONS OF YORE.

Within the ranks of our ancient and honourable fraternity deeply rooted in principles of charity, integrity, and the pursuit of knowledge, are many distinguished individuals who have not only dedicated themselves to the craft but have also served with valour and distinction the nation, society, community, et al. As a thanksgiving tribute to commemorate these veteran Freemasons, our District Grand Master has contemplated celebrating their contributions to both Freemasonry and to their public service.



While it is envisaged that every year, the district shall honour one such veteran of yore, in the current year it has been decided to honour the eminent name of Late Rt. Wor. Bro. Kharshedji R. Cama. The event is scheduled to be held on Saturday, 3rd August 2024 at the Freemasons' Hall Mumbai, the particulars of which have already been communicated to all brethren.

During his helmsmanship of the Scottish Constitution in India (having been the first Provincial Grand Master of the Scottish Province as the District was then known) he embraced the core values of Freemasonry, viz. brotherly love, relief, and truth. His commitment to these principles earned him the respect and admiration of his brethren.

Parallel to his Masonic journey, our honouree embarked on a distinguished community career. His dedication to the community, to Society at large and to various causes was unwavering, and he demonstrated exceptional leadership in various capacities. Throughout his service, he embodied the Masonic tenets of duty, honour, and integrity.



On the strategic roles, his contributions were invaluable. He received numerous commendations for his commitment to excellence and his unyielding spirit. His community service was marked by moments of great challenge, yet he remained steadfast, always prioritizing the well-being of his brethren and his country. He believed that the pursuit of knowledge was key to personal growth and the betterment of society. His efforts in preserving Masonic traditions while embracing contemporary ideas earned him widespread acclaim.

Commemorating a veteran Freemason is an opportunity to honour a life dedicated to service in the pursuit of Masonic ideals. His legacy is a testament to the enduring values of Freemasonry and the profound impact that one dedicated individual can have on his community and beyond.

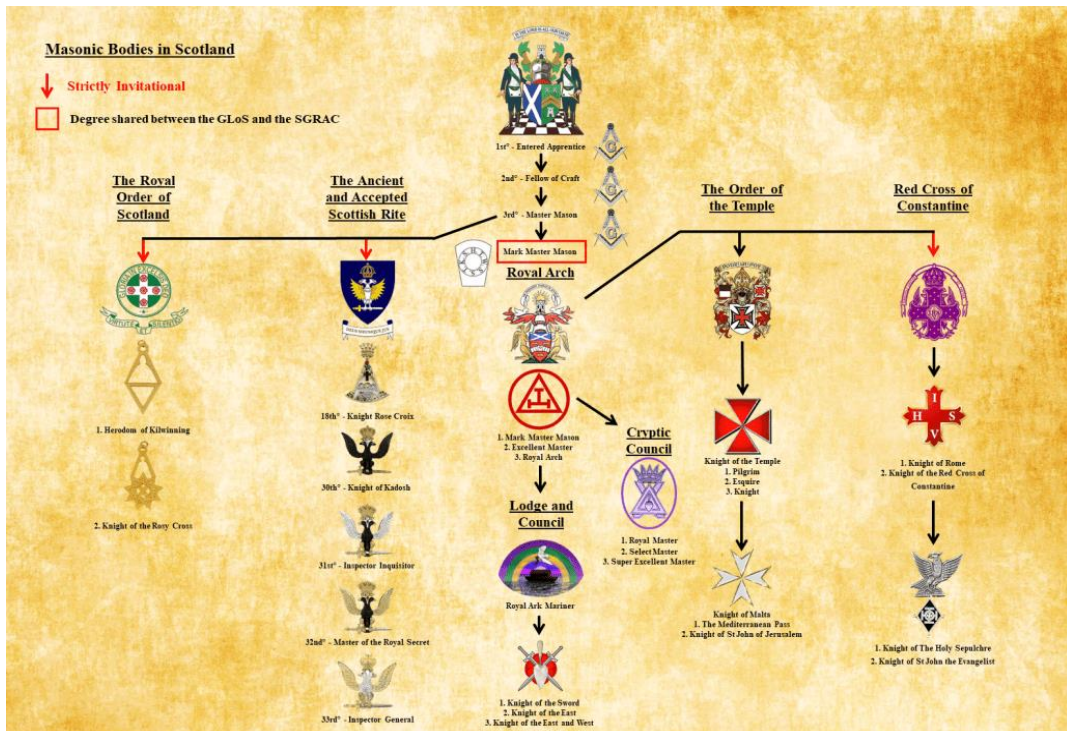
In remembering our esteemed brother, we are reminded of the timeless principles that unite Freemasons around the world. His life serves as an inspiration to all, a beacon of integrity, courage, and altruism. As we celebrate his contributions, we reaffirm our own commitment to these noble ideals, ensuring that his spirit of service and brotherhood continues to guide us.

Let us take this moment to reflect on the contributions of all veteran Freemasons, whose lives exemplify the highest virtues of our fraternity. May their legacy inspire future generations to pursue lives of honour, service, and brotherly love.

THE ORDERS OF MASONRY IN SCOTLAND

[Excerpted from the Quarterly Newsletter of the Grand Lodge of Scotland]

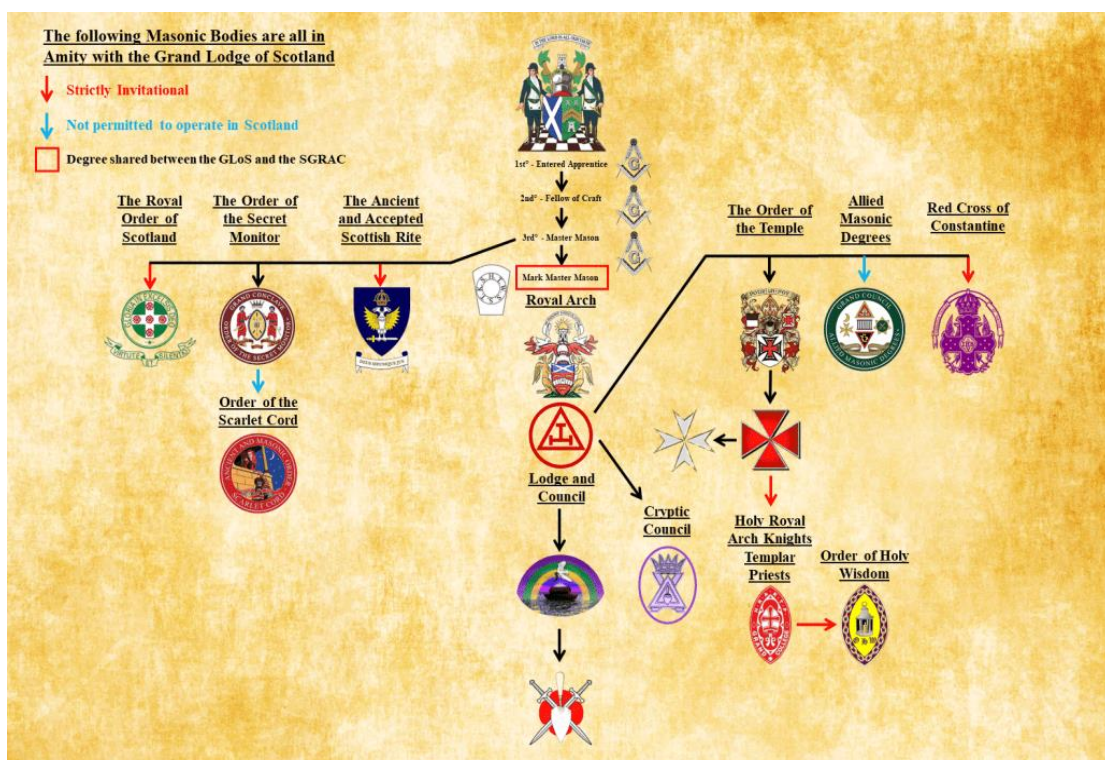
Very often, our Brethren enquire of us “After the Master Mason’s degree, what lies ahead”? For those who are interested, the following pictorial chart highlights the path of the various degrees available to us as Scottish Masons. In India, we can progress from the Craft to the Royal Arch and also be a part of The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite leading up to the 33rd degree.



MASONIC BODIES IN AMITY WITH THE GRAND LODGE OF SCOTLAND

[Excerpted from the Quarterly Newsletter of the Grand Lodge of Scotland]

The following Masonic Bodies are in Amity with the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Some of these Bodies however, are not permitted to operate in Scotland, with their headquarters being in England. This graphic depiction shows the pathways that Scottish Masons are permitted to join / be invited to join.



SCOTTISH CORE OPERATIONAL TEAM (SCOT)

Our Rt. Wor. District Grand Master has decided to constitute a forum within the District nomenclated as the “**Strategic Core Operational Team – DGLI**” [hereinafter referred to as ‘**SCOT**’ for brevity].

SCOT can further be envisioned as a specialized body within the District focussing on the development, implementation, and oversight of strategic initiatives that align with the core values and long-term objectives of Freemasonry. Such a group would essentially be composed of experienced and dedicated members who bring a diverse range of skills and perspectives to the table. Hereunder is a detailed write-up on the concept and functions of **SCOT**:

The primary purpose of **SCOT** is to ensure that the Scottish Masonic organization under the aegis of the District remains a dynamic, forward-thinking, and effective force in achieving its goals. This involves not only preserving the traditions and values of Freemasonry but also adapting to contemporary challenges and opportunities. **SCOT** is expected to Develop long-term strategic plans that outline the vision, mission, and goals of the Scottish District and to foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in masonic activities and community engagement.

Besides, **SCOT** is envisaged to enhance member retention and satisfaction through targeted initiatives and programs, to strengthen the presence of Scottish Freemasonry and impact in the community through philanthropic and service-oriented projects as also to identify and cultivate future leaders within the District to ensure sustained leadership and governance.

SCOT would be constituted based on the members’ skills, experience, and commitment to Freemasonry. The team is expected to foster open and transparent communication within the District to ensure all members are informed and engaged and to build and maintain partnerships with other Masonic bodies, community organizations, and stakeholders. At the same time **SCOT** is expected be mindful of the District’s financial and human resources when developing and implementing initiatives and to prioritize initiatives that offer the greatest impact with the available resources.

Young and dynamic masons within our fold who teem with innovative ideas and who have a penchant for Masonic service are requested to enroll themselves in this commendable endeavour.

