



THE GRAND LODGE OF MARK MASTER MASONS

of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas

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20 December 2018

To: All Provincial/District Grand Secretaries and equivalents in all Orders
Cc: All Provincial/District Heads of Orders and equivalents; Members of the Management Board and Executive Committees of all Orders

Dear Brethren

Sitting in the Boardroom at Mark Masons' Hall surrounded by the portraits of many of my illustrious predecessors who helped shape our Orders in the years gone by, I reflect on 2018 and what we have achieved.

Recruitment and retention have been our watchwords this year as we strive to attract new members and retain the active engagement of those who have already taken the step and extended their researches beyond Craft and Royal Arch Masonry. It's not been easy, but I am pleased to say that as the year ends I am able to report a net increase in headcount for the Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall. That's no mean feat in the current climate and is a testament to our sharpened focus and hard work in this most important area.

We have continued our journey to improve the way we administer our Orders by refining systems and developing new processes including a new online dining system which will be launched in the spring of next year. We've launched a new website, to great acclaim, and I think you will agree that it gives us the sort of online profile we deserve.

Communication has been a key theme for me since I became Grand Secretary. Throughout 2018 I have delivered on my commitment to improve transparency by engaging more frequently with our leaders and our members on issues that affect them and the future of our Orders. I hope you'll agree that keeping you better informed about our progress and our plans makes you feel that you have a valued place in our organisation.

As always, our commitment to charity has continued this year with numerous grants being made to worthy causes through our Benevolent Funds. In many instances, these grants have appeared in newsletters and press articles and underline our mission to look beyond the masonic arena and help the wider community, where appropriate. That said, we must not forget the more private work of the Funds supporting Brethren and their families when in need.

At this time of year, I am often drawn to consider the message of that famous poem by Minnie Louise Haskins – *'And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown'*.

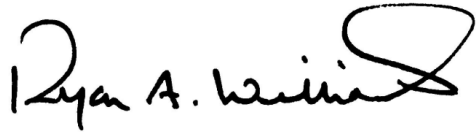
None of us knows what the future holds but our expectations must be for good health and happiness; the love and support of our families and friends and, of course, a bright future for our Orders.

Wherever you are and whatever you may do over the coming festive season, I send you my warmest fraternal good wishes for Christmas and the New Year and look forward to your continuing support in 2019.

Why not view my Christmas broadcast message on our website

<https://markmasonshall.org/>

With fraternal regards and best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan A. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R" and a decorative flourish at the end.

R.W.Bro. Ryan A Williams, P.G.J.W.
Grand Secretary