

# DISTRICT GRAND CHAPTER OF SOUTH AFRICA, NORTH

Of Royal Arch Masons of England



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## GRAND SUPERINTENDENT'S ADDRESS ANNUAL CONVOCATION – 3 OCTOBER 2015

Welcome to you all to this 112<sup>TH</sup> Annual Convocation of District Grand Chapter, and I extend a warm welcome to our distinguished guests and trust you have enjoyed our proceedings.

Many of our Members have travelled long distances to attend this meeting. In particular, I would also like to acknowledge and welcome our Members from afar: E Comp Randhir Ramloll, IPZ and Charter First Principal of the Chapter of Friendship in Mauritius accompanied by Companions Vij Mardemootoo, Ajay Nunkoo, Wilfred Koon Kam King and Dan Seewooruthun. I would like to ask the Companions from Mauritius to please stand and Companions please give them a warm welcome.

Also from across our borders, I also acknowledge and welcome E Comp Vaidyanathan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Principal and Comp Malan, Scribe Ezra from Gaborone Chapter, Botswana and E Comps. Lutwama, Taft, de Sila and Smoor from Swaziland Chapter, meeting at Manzini, Swaziland. Companions please also give them a warm welcome.

Congratulations are extended to those Companions who have received District Grand Rank today. These ranks are not just for the work that has been done, but also in expectation for future work in your Chapters and the District.

Earlier this year, the Most Excellent the First Grand Principal was pleased to appoint the following to Grand Rank: E. Companion **Dennis Hammond** received a first appointment to **PGStB** and E Comp **Marcus Zbinden** to **PAGDC**. E Companion **Erné Kleingeld** was promoted to **PGStB**. I extend congratulations to them all and I look to them for their on-going support of the District.

The Royal Arch District is making excellent progress, with a total of 41 Chapters. However, there are still a few Chapters that are in a weak state. Companions, it is extremely important that these weak Chapters are identified and talks are implemented with me, my Deputy and the District Grand Principals. I'm not sure that we will have all the answers, but we must try to find solutions.

Earlier this year, with the movement of Royal Edward Lodge to Johannesburg, Royal Edward Chapter was moved from Jan Kempdorp to Klerksdorp. The Brethren at Royal Albert Lodge had petitioned us for a Royal Arch Chapter and I hope Royal Edward Chapter will find a useful home with Royal Albert Lodge and fill the gap in Royal Arch Masonry in the Klerksdorp area.

I am delighted to learn that the Chapter of Friendship in Mauritius is making excellent progress since its consecration two years ago. The Chapter has exalted some 16 Candidates and has had two joining members since its inception and has several others in the pipe-line.

About a year ago, we consecrated the South Africa North First Principals Chapter No. 8288. This Chapter is fulfilling its purpose as a service Chapter within the District. I thank my Deputy for serving as the Preceptor of this important Chapter. This Chapter was consecrated and is anchored to the Transvaal District Grand Stewards' Lodge, whose number it bears. Indeed the Chapter has similar aims and objectives to Stewards' Lodge and has had an extremely active year assisting in Exaltations and Installation Ceremonies as well as delivering lectures. Lectures are being given to Royal Arch Chapters which encompass the Historical and Symbolical aspects of the ritual and the furniture and layout of the Chapter, so the Royal Arch Ceremony may be better understood and enjoyed.

One of the recent developments to improve the understanding of our ritual is the issuing of a narration to all Royal Arch Chapters, to be presented at all exaltation ceremonies. This narration called "Setting the Scene" is based on a similar narration produced by the Provincial Grand Chapter of Cumberland and Westmoreland. It is a series of brief, clear and concise narratives, well written and easy to understand, given at clear breaks in the ceremony, starting with a brief outline to the Candidate outside. I thank E Comp Tim Smith for sourcing and adapting this narrative. I think with a better understanding of our ceremonies, in particular the story of the exaltation ceremony as it unfolds, will lead to far better retention of Members.

Members of First Principals' Chapter have another important role and that is to lead the way in presenting more lectures about the Royal Arch in Craft Lodges. I am not suggesting that the First Principal's members hold a monopoly on this. In fact, there are many senior Royal Arch members who can perform this important function of presenting a talk on the Royal Arch in their Craft Lodge. I believe, it is important that our younger Craft Masons, the Entered Apprentices, Fellow Crafts and Master Masons are made fully aware of the close association of the Royal Arch and Craft in our Constitution. After all, on being initiated they should receive a copy of the Book of Constitutions and the first words they should read is the preamble to the Constitutions – "That Pure Ancient Freemasonry consists of three degrees and no more, viz. The Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch".

I call on all of you to be pro-active in your own Craft Lodges and ensure that every Master Mason is brought into the Royal Arch as soon as possible.

Companions, several years ago a directive was issued from the Grand Secretary who is the Grand Scribe Ezra, that each Craft Lodge should appoint a Royal Arch Representative and an item should appear on the agenda of Craft Lodges to receive a report on Royal Arch matters. Companions, I urge you to see that this is implemented.

In conclusion Companions, I would like to thank the District Grand Directors of Ceremonies, E Comp Vaughn Williams and his team for the Ceremony today. In addition, sincere thanks are extended to District Grand Scribe Ezra, E Comp David Pickard, together with Mrs Fern Rowles and the administrative staff, here at Park Lane. I thank E Comp Graeme MacKenzie, Chairman of the Organising Committee and members of his committee and the substantial work of E Comp David Whitfield in organising seating, ticketing and printing, together with work carried out by E Comp David Johnston. I look forward to seeing you all at the Craft meeting later this afternoon.

E Comp Prof E Guy Charlesworth  
Grand Superintendent,

3 October 2015