

Provincial Grand Lodge
Of
Mark Master Masons
Of



Worcestershire

Handbook
For
Lodge Secretaries & Scribes

Amended & Updated Edition August 2015

B P Scoffield, PGSD, RAMGR, Provincial Grand Secretary

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Lodge Secretaries & **Scribes**
(Amended & updated Aug 2015)

Based on an earlier 2002 issue by VWor Bro Ron Gee, TD, PDepPGM, PGJO

This handbook is intended as a guide for those Brethren who have recently been appointed and invested as Secretary or **Scribe** of their Lodge and to assist in the duties associated with that office. Hopefully, it may also prove a useful aide-memoire for established Secretaries & **Scribes**.

In most cases, the title of Secretary may also be taken to be **Scribe**. Where differences occur between Mark and **RAM** this is highlighted in **RED**.

Note: Members of the Ancient & Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners are bound also by the Constitutions and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons except where differences are specified: Section XII applies.

This document should be regarded as an adjunct to the Book of Constitutions and Regulations (C&R) contained within the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons (GLMMM) Year Book posted annually to every Lodge Secretary direct from GLMMM and invoiced to your Lodge with the annual membership returns and fee invoice. Additional copies are available for purchase from GLMMM.

Answers to most administrative questions may be found in C&R Section VI, entitled Private Lodges, comprising Regulations 91 to 155 inclusive which contains the most useful areas likely to be encountered by a Lodge Secretary. Intermediate amendments to the C&R are published in the Minutes of the Proceedings of GLMMM also issued to every Lodge Secretary (and Grand Lodge Officer) direct from GLMMM.

Lodge Records

Attendance Register, Regulation 126(ii)

All Mark / **RAM** Lodges must have an Attendance Book (i.e. Tylers Book) in which each member of the Lodge attending a meeting must sign his name and be encouraged to append his mark. Each visiting Brother should sign his name, append his mark, indicate his rank, Lodge name, Lodge number and also enter the name of his host. ***If a visiting brother cannot be vouched for by any member of the Lodge, then he should be proved according to established custom by a suitably experienced brother.***

(Note: there is no brother's mark in RAM to append to his signature).

(This Attendance Register may also prove useful in cases of emergency).

Minute Book, (Regulation 126)

The Lodge Secretary must record the Minutes of every Lodge meeting, both Regular and Emergency, in an appropriate Minute Book. This should have a facility for interleaving and attaching loose documents securely (e.g. Dispensations, Summonses and any other items of note) and be capable of

providing an archive for our successors to recover and read minuted information a century or so hence. Loose-leaf file systems may not be the best medium for this unless bound and archived appropriately when complete.

At the next Regular meeting the minutes may be read in full by the Lodge Secretary, approved by the brethren and signed by the Worshipful Master. If the Provincial Grand Master (or Deputy / Assistant Provincial Grand Master) is present then they will be invited to sign the minute book as well as the WM).

If the Minutes of the previous meeting have been previously circulated to all members then a proposal should be put to the brethren that the minutes as circulated be taken as read. This should be seconded and offered to the Lodge for confirmation. The Master / **Commander** will then enquire if any Brother, who was present at that meeting, has any comment to make regarding the minutes and to indicate if they are to be accepted as a true and proper record. If proved so, they should then be signed as above.

If there is a Presiding Officer present, (i.e. at Installation Meetings) this item will be under his direction.

The Minute Book should not only contain a record of items on the Agenda but also, in the nicest possible way, any little individualities which might occur. Any humorous occurrence may also be recorded. Minutes serve as an archive for posterity and should reflect the ethos and ambience of the Lodge. A separate Minute Book should be used for Committee or other official meetings and the same safeguards apply with respect to safe keeping.

Register of Members (Regulation 127)

All Mark Lodges must have a Register of Members which should contain the names, addresses, advancement / **elevation** or joining dates and registered marks of the members of the Lodge. A record of cessation of membership should also be retained together with the reason. It can also be useful to maintain other contact or personal details for future reference. This can be checked against the GLMMM membership detail recorded on KOL.

Note: there is no Register of Marks for RAM but a Register of Members is still required, Regulation 16.

Declaration Book

Every brother for Advancement or Joining is required to read and sign the appropriate declaration. **This MUST be done BEFORE the ballot is taken.** Attention is further drawn to the need to witness the signature of the candidate and the requirement for the safe keeping of the declaration book. (Regulations 136(i) (ii) (iii) (iv)) (**RAM: Regulations 19(i) (ii) (iii) (iv)**).

Clearance Certificates (Regulation 146)

Every Brother on request is entitled to a certificate, stating whether or not he is indebted to the Lodge and if appropriate and further requested the reason for

cessation of membership. This certificate must be marked clearly with the date of issue and signed by the Lodge Secretary. **This is the only certificate a Lodge Secretary or *Scribe* has the power to issue.**

The above mentioned books may be obtained from Masonic suppliers and become valuable historic works of reference when completed and placed in permanent safe keeping. A note of their whereabouts should also be kept, perhaps pasted into the front of the current Minute Book and passed on to your successor.

It is also useful to keep an inventory of Lodge property: particularly important where more than one Lodge shares the same building.

Summons

The format and content of most Lodge Summons is usually a long established tradition within the Lodge and may contain some or all of the following:

- Name and number of the Lodge with the Lodge logo
- Date of Consecration
- Patronage of Charities
- If a Keystone Lodge
- Contact details of the Master / **Commander**
- Contact details of the Secretary / **Scribe**
- Contact details for the Treasurer and Almoner
- List of current Officers with their Provincial / Grand ranks. (Updated)
- List of Past Masters / **Commanders** with date of Installation or date of joining if not a PM / **PWCN** of the Lodge.
- Names of Brethren NOT in Office (Space may preclude this item in very large Lodges)
- Labour of the Lodge
- Date of the next regular meeting, date and time of committee, rehearsal and L of I meetings
- Dining information, including any requirement to pay for meals if not cancelled in good time.
- Dress expected
- Identify if a Regular, Installation or Emergency meeting
- Time of opening of the Lodge.

The summons for a Lodge of Emergency will contain an abbreviated agenda only, (Regulation 124):

1. To open the Lodge
2. **To read the Dispensation convening the meeting (Necessary)**
3. The item or items necessitating the need for the meeting
4. To collect alms
5. To receive apologies
6. To close the Lodge

A copy of the Lodge summons for each and every meeting (Provincial Bylaw 20) should be sent to:

- a. The Provincial Grand Master
- b. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master
- c. The Assistant Provincial Grand Master
- d. The Provincial DC
- e. The Provincial Grand Secretary

A copy of the summons for Installation meetings should also be sent to the Provincial Grand Wardens together with the Provincial Deputy / Assistant Director of Ceremonies or any other officer you have previously been notified by the Provincial Secretary will be on duty at the meeting.

A copy of the summons for non-installation meetings should also be sent to the Provincial Representative if applicable.

No minutes may be read at a Lodge of Emergency and there will be no risings or items of business other than those detailed on the summons. The minutes of any such meeting should be read at the next regular meeting. **Note: a Dispensation must be obtained via the Provincial Secretary in order to hold any Lodge of Emergency (See Dispensations).**

Regulation 134: the Summons must be in the hands of members at least 7 clear days prior to any Lodge meeting (**14 days if notice of intention to propose a new candidate for Advancement / Elevation / Joining**).

A copy of the summons for every meeting must be interleaved in the Minute Book.

Candidates

Candidates

Any candidate for advancement or joining must be proposed by a subscribing member of the Lodge (or if an Honorary member then a Past Master / **Commander** OF the Lodge) and seconded accordingly.

He will normally* be balloted for at some future meeting and should appear on the summons for that meeting as an item on the agenda.

*Regulation 134(iv) allows formal notice of any proposal of a candidate to be circulated to all members at least 14 days in advance of the meeting.

He must be Advanced / **Elevated** / Join (and have paid his dues) within twelve months of election (Regulation 138) or the election will be declared void.

Particulars of the candidate to be submitted to members of the Lodge at least 7 days (*14 days) in advance of the meeting are to be found in Regulation 134, **Regulation 18**.

A candidate for Advancement must produce his Craft Grand Lodge Certificate (Regulation 135(i)) for inspection or a certificate from the Secretary of the Lodge in which he was raised.

A joining member requires clearance certificates from **every** Mark / **RAM** Lodge of which he has **ever** been a member (regulation 135(ii), providing that it is still active. You may need to confirm this with the various Mark / **RAM** Secretaries / **Scribes** if the brother is unable to do so himself. Note: If a joining member is shown to be indebted to any Lodge, then **your** Lodge will become responsible for the settlement of any outstanding dues to other Lodges.

Note: a candidate for Elevation must also produce his Mark Grand Lodge Certificate or a certificate from the Secretary of the Mark Lodge in which he was Advanced, Regulation 18(ii).

A GLMMM Registration Form MEM / **MEM** giving particulars of the candidate for Advancement / **Elevation** / Joining with his proposer and seconder should be completed for every candidate and submitted to the Provincial Secretary immediately on his membership of the Lodge with the appropriate fee (payable to GLMMM). Regulation 127(iii).

On advancement or joining a candidate **must** be presented with an **up to date** copy of the Constitutions and Regulations together with a copy of the Lodge By-laws; *both of which he should keep and that fact recorded in the Minutes.*

In the case of a candidate for joining from a Constitution other than English, an enquiry must be made via the Provincial Grand Secretary if the 'other' Constitution is recognised by GLMMM in London.

Returns

The Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons issues an Annual Return of Lodge members (AR) (**also for RAM**) following the 31st August each year accompanied by an Annual Invoice to the Lodge for fees and dues payable to GLMMM.

This return & invoice is available via Keystone OnLine (KOL) to which every Lodge Secretary / **Scribe** will have been granted access through the Provincial Secretary for their particular Lodge. It is important that the Lodge Secretary carefully checks this membership list for content and accuracy and reports any inconsistencies immediately to the Provincial Secretary. Failure to do so in a timely manner may result in additional fees to GLMMM and / or the Province being incurred for future accounting periods.

Note: the fees and dues are payable for anyone who has been a subscribing member of the Lodge **for any period** during the previous 12 months (even only 1 day!). You should liaise closely with the Lodge Treasurer during this period and ensure that the Invoice is settled promptly. (Note: Provincial By-Law No.19 requests return by 15th October).

An Installation return (Regulation 129, Provincial Bylaw 18) on GLMMM Form INST must be submitted to Grand Lodge via the Provincial Grand Secretary **immediately following** the Installation meeting.

The Provincial Grand Mark Lodge of Worcestershire, Bylaw 16, also requires a return immediately after the Installation meeting of annual dues for any brother who has been a subscribing member for any period since the previous Installation meeting. Cheques should be made payable to **ProvGLMMM Worcs**

The Worcestershire Provincial Yearbook return is also due immediately after the Installation meeting and should be sent to the Provincial Grand Registrar in the format required. Please ensure that the information you submit is accurate so that it reflects the true membership status. Please check that you have removed the names of deceased brethren.

Three copies of the audited Lodge Accounts must be submitted to the Provincial Grand Secretary following approval and adoption by the Lodge (Regulation 132 C&R, Provincial Bylaw 17)

Honorary Membership

Sometimes it is suggested that a member of the Lodge, due to long and distinguished service, may be made an honorary member of the Lodge. Whilst this is undoubtedly a great honour, it must be borne in mind that this would prevent the brother from having any voting rights (and also the right to propose candidates unless he is a Past Master / **Past Commander** of the Lodge). Such membership could also preclude the Brother from any further advancement in the Order as he may no longer be a subscribing member in the Province. This should be made clear to anyone who may be considered for honorary membership.

Keystone OnLine (KOL)

Every Lodge Secretary registered as such with GLMMM is provided with continuous (read-only) access via KOL to their particular Lodge membership details as recorded by Grand Lodge. Please ensure that the details for each member are updated as appropriate by informing the Provincial Secretary of any changes required. The Provincial Secretary will then update your Lodge membership data on your behalf. Note: Currently only one member per Lodge is permitted access to this data (Data Protection issues).

The KOL system is in the process of upgrade and additional facilities may be available in due course. (e.g. currently no Provincial Grand Rank detail can be entered).

Fees

A list of current fees (GLMMM & Province) is available from the Provincial Secretary.

Grand Lodge

All communications to Grand Lodge must be made through the Provincial Grand Secretary.

Provincial Grand Lodge

Lodge Secretaries may communicate directly with the Provincial Grand Secretary by whatever means is available. The Provincial Grand Secretary is available for help and advice but would be grateful if Secretaries would endeavour to solve day to day problems by referring to the Book of Constitutions and Regulations in the first instance and then, if necessary, contacting him for confirmation or clarification.

All forms and cheques should be returned to the Provincial Secretary.

Up to date information, news and much more on what is happening within the Province can always be found on the Worcestershire Mark Provincial website:

<http://www.worcestershiremarkpgl.org.uk/>

Members of the Province can apply to the Provincial Information Officer, W Bro John Icke, Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary, jficke@btinternet.com, for personal controlled access to the site in order to maintain their own e-mail contact details.

Dispensations

Dispensations **must** be issued for any of the following:

The qualifications of the Master / **Commander** Elect to be Master / **Commander** being in doubt:

MARK Regulation 97(ii), Regulation 14 - GLMMM Dispensation required.

1. the Master / **Commander** Elect has not served the office of EITHER Junior or Senior Warden for a complete year (i.e. he was not present at the previous Installation meeting) The Provincial Grand Secretary must be notified of the date of subsequent investiture.
2. has not been Installed as Master of a Craft Lodge of Freemasons.
3. is not currently a subscribing member of a Craft Lodge of Freemasons.

MARK Regulation 107 – GLMMM Dispensation required.

4. is currently Master / **Commander** of another Lodge of Mark Master Masons and will still be so at the date of Installation of this Lodge.

RAM Regulation 14 - GLMMM Dispensation required

- 1. The Commander Elect has not served the office of Master of a Lodge of Mark Master Masons.**

In such cases, a dispensation must be applied for immediately after election, on GLMMM Form DISPM / **DISPM** identifying the situation. The completed form together with the appropriate fee should be sent to the Provincial Grand Secretary at least four weeks before it is required for approval by the Provincial

Grand Master and subsequent endorsement by GLMMM; who require 3 weeks notice of such. Cheques should be made payable to **GLMMM**.

In the event of a late submission of any request then a Dispensation (Nunc Pro Tunc) will apply and a surcharge will be imposed by GLMMM.

Provincial Grand Lodge Dispensations are required for:

Changes of Lodge meeting dates, change of venue (including meeting out of the Province) or the holding of an Emergency meeting. There is a fee payable (Provincial Bylaw 12), which may be waived if the meeting is for the Advancement / **Elevation** of a candidate. Cheques should be made payable to **ProvGLMMM Worcs**.

A dispensation is not required where the change of date is necessitated by the regular Lodge meeting falling on a public holiday or Good Friday, when the regular Lodge meeting may be moved by up to 14 days, Regulation 122. **Note: the Provincial Secretary must always be informed of such a move.** When choosing an alternative date, particularly in the case of Installation (Regulation 105) care should be taken to choose a date which does not clash with a meeting of another Worcestershire Mark or RAM Lodge where possible. The Worcestershire Masonic Provincial Yearbook should assist you in this respect. Please note that changes of date may not be approved in instances where the Provincial Grand Master considers that the reason is not sufficient.

Change of Particulars Form

When the particulars of a member alter, i.e. change of address, e-mail, phone number, death, resignation, exclusion, ceased membership, honorary membership, etc. a Change of Particulars form should be completed and returned to the Provincial Grand Secretary without delay. A copy should also be sent to the Provincial Information Officer (jficke@btinternet.com) so that the Provincial database may be updated.

Cessation of Membership

Regulation 145 clarifies the situation for a member in arrears of subscription. Under this rule any member who is 2 years in arrears of subscription will automatically **cease** to be a member of the Lodge.

General

It is important that the Provincial Secretary, Provincial Information Officer and the Provincial Almoner are kept fully informed of any brother in distress or in the case of death, the funeral arrangements, without delay.

The Secretary should also work in close conjunction with the Lodge DC, informing him of impending visits from Grand Officers, official, or unofficial as guests, giving him full names and ranks and constitution (if not English Constitution). ***If a member of the Lodge intends to have as his personal***

quest a PGM, Deputy or Assistant PGM from outside the Province, then the Provincial Grand Secretary must be notified immediately.

The Lodge Secretary is responsible for ensuring that the candidate receives a copy of the Lodge By-Laws and an **up to date** copy of the Constitutions and Regulations. Although a copy of the Provincial By-Laws is usually presented by a Provincial Warden on Installation nights to a Brother on first appointment as Overseer and to any Warden who has not previously served the office of Overseer, the Lodge Secretary should ensure that spare copies of the Provincial Bylaws are available for that purpose. A note that this has been done should be entered in the Minutes.

A copy of the Lodge Bylaws should be presented to all Joining members.

In summary, the Lodge Secretary should make sure that he always has to hand the following items:

1. An **up to date** copy of the Constitutions & Regulations
2. GLMMM membership application forms (MEM)
3. Changes of Particulars forms (for Provincial use)
4. Worcestershire Masonic Yearbook (Craft)
5. Bylaws of Provincial Grand Lodge (Mark)
6. Bylaws of the Lodge

If you require further help and advice, please contact the Provincial Grand Secretary who will endeavour to assist.

Appendix

Forms

- A. Change of Particulars (Province) - attached
- B. Membership Application Form (Mark) - GLMMM MEM
- C. Membership Application Form (RAM) – GLMMM MEM**
- D. Installation Annual Return (Mark) - GLMMM INST
- E. Installation Annual Return (RAM) – GLMMM INST**
- F. Dispensation for Master Elect - GLMMM DISPM
- G. Dispensation for Commander Elect – GLMMM DISPC**
- H. Dispensation for Lodge (Mark) – GLMMM DISPL
- I. Dispensation for Lodge (RAM) – GLMMM DISPL**
- J. Lodge Annual Provincial dues (Mark)
- K. Lodge Annual Provincial dues (RAM)**

Forms B to I are available for download from either:

The Province of Worcestershire Mark Provincial website:

<http://www.worcestershiremarkpgl.org.uk/downloads/>

or: the GLMMM website:

<http://www.glmmm.com/Mark/Useful%20forms/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

or: on request from the Provincial Secretary:

secretary@worcestershiremarkpgl.org.uk

Appendix A: Change of Particulars (Province)

Provincial Grand Lodge of MMM of Worcestershire

Please complete this form immediately whenever there is a change of particulars of a member in your Mark / RAM Lodge and return to the **Provincial G Secretary**

Name and number of Lodge

Name and Rank of Member

The Brother named above has:

- a. Resigned
- b. Ceased Membership
- c. Been Excluded
- d. Passed to the Grand Lodge Above
- e. Been elected to Honorary Membership

On (date)

f. Received the following Appointment / Promotion in another Province

Rank Date Province

g. Changed his address, telephone number, e-mail as below

Address

Post Code Tel:

E-mail address

Secretary

Date



Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Worcestershire

Provincial Grand Master R W Bro Eric John Rymer

Provincial Dues 2015 - 2016 (Mark).

Name of Lodge:..... Lodge Number:.....

Number of members as of now or part of year =

The cost is £3.50 per member thus total cost = £.....

Signed (Lodge Secretary):

Please make the cheque payable to "Provincial Grand Lodge of MMM of Worcestershire" and return this form and cheque to the Provincial Secretary **with the Annual Installation Return.**

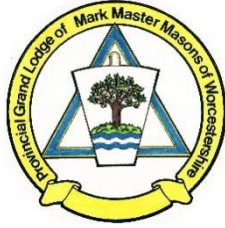
Online Banking

Lloyds Bank

Sort Code 30 92 99

A/c 00755020

A/c Name Provincial Grand Lodge of MMM Worcestershire



Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Worcestershire

Provincial Grand Master R W Bro Eric John Rymer

Provincial Dues 2015 - 2016 (RAM).

Name of Lodge:..... Lodge Number:.....

Number of members as of now or part of year =

The cost is £3.50 per member thus total cost = £.....

Signed (Lodge Scribe):

Please make the cheque payable to "Provincial Grand Lodge of MMM of Worcestershire" and return this form and cheque to the Provincial Secretary **with the Annual Installation Return.**

Online Banking

Lloyds Bank

Sort Code 30 92 99

A/c 00755020

A/c Name Provincial Grand Lodge of MMM Worcestershire