

CLOSURE OF A LODGE/CHAPTER

Appendix II

POINTS TO NOTE

The District Amalgamation and Closure Officer should be kept involved and informed throughout the Closure Procedure.

At the final meeting, which the members may wish to make as memorable as possible by the invitation of guests etc., the Lodge Warrant/Chapter Charter should be formally handed over to the APGM/APGP.

The Secretary/Scribe E should give to each member a Clearance Certificate which he will need when joining another Lodge/Chapter. A single copy of the Clearance Certificate on which is stated the names of those to whom it was issued, and identifying those, if any, who were still indebted to the Lodge/Chapter should be attached to the final Minutes.

Widows, Dependents and Beneficiaries must be looked after.

The members of the Lodge/Chapter must take care to dispose of their monies with this in mind. Where the members are being dispersed, this may not be possible.

However, the ELMC [via the Provincial Grand Almoner] has agreed to maintain contact with their Widows by

informing them of a contact address in case of need or emergency,

sending Birthday cards and

sending a small gift at Christmas.

With the surrender of the Warrant/Charter and books to the APGM/APGP, the Lodge/Chapter is effectively closed. The APGM/APGP will hand the Warrant/Charter to the Provincial Secretary/Scribe E. who will, after the RW Provincial Grand Master/ME Grand Superintendent has given his authority, liaise with London regarding its return. Similarly books and any surplus artefacts, regalia etc. should be lodged with the District. These will be transferred to the Province Grand Secretary/Scribe E. who will forward the books to United Grand Lodge/Supreme Grand Chapter (Book of Constitutions Rule 190) whilst the artefacts and regalia, (not required for the Provincial Museum/Library) will be available for subsequent issue to other Lodges/Chapters in need.

FINANCIAL RETURNS

All dues are, of course, paid annually in retrospect according to the Annual Return. This includes current members, joining members, excluded members, and members who have ceased membership under Book of Constitutions Rule 148 during the year, i.e. all members included on the final Annual Returns.

(i.e. If at the commencement of the subscription year the Lodge/Chapter had, say fifteen members and during the year two members died, three resigned and one was excluded and, in addition two joined and one was initiated/exalted, the dues payable would be in respect of fifteen members plus two joining members and one initiate/exalte giving eighteen dues payable).

Please contact the Provincial Secretary/Scribe E as soon as possible to clarify the Dues required by Grand Lodge/Chapter and Provincial Grand Lodge/Chapter. You will then be in a position to quantify the financial liability before the final closure of the Accounts.

POINTS OF INTEREST

The following points of interest should be noted carefully:-

Before the final closure the Lodge Secretary/Chapter Scribe E should contact the Provincial Grand Secretary/Scribe E to ascertain whether or not closing Annual returns for United Grand Lodge/Supreme Grand Chapter are required. This will depend upon the timing of the closure and whether any arrears of dues will be payable.

The Lodge Secretary/Chapter Scribe E may need to inform the Grand Charity or any other of the Charities if they are involved in payments to either Brethren/Companions or dependents. *[NB. Withdrawals from the "Relief Chest" can take considerable time]*

If the Worshipful Master/First Principal of the Lodge/Chapter has not served a full year – beware of short service - (see Book of Constitutions Rule 105) similarly if the Second and Third principals of a Chapter have not served a full year, their eligibility for election to First or Second principal may be affected (book of Constitutions Rule 105a).

These notes are intended as guidance but are not exhaustive. Queries or difficulties not covered should be referred to the Provincial Grand Secretary/Scribe E for further clarification.

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RULE 188 BoC - Lodge with less than five members

Whenever the number of subscribing members of any Lodge, as shown on the last return to Grand Lodge, shall be fewer than five, the Lodge shall cease to meet, and the Warrant, books and papers shall be delivered up to the Grand Master, who may, nevertheless, if he thinks proper, grant a dispensation to enable the members to meet, subject to such conditions as he may deem expedient, until he has finally decided whether the Lodge shall be continued or erased.

RULE 190 BoC - Surrender of Warrant

Upon the dissolution of a Lodge, the Warrant, together with all the books and papers relating to the affairs of the Lodge, must be delivered up to the Grand Master. Its other property shall be disposed of as the Lodge [*Chapter*] may, prior to its dissolution, have resolved, or in default of or subject to any such resolution, as the Grand Master may direct. A warrant cannot in any circumstances be transferred.

This can be interpreted as meaning that if a Lodge/Chapter does not make a specific donation (or resolution) the artefacts pass to the Grand Master, via the Provincial Grand Secretary/Scribe E.