



PROVINCE OF EAST LANCASHIRE



To: Royal Arch Companions
Cc: Craft Brethren

5 December 2020

Dear All,

I wanted to write to you all before the end of the year, especially as we are approaching the Festive Season.

It appears from the media that there is every right to feel optimistic that there is an end in sight for the pandemic. In practical terms, it will mean that as Royal Arch Freemasons, we will have lost a year of meeting each other, of friendship and companionship.

Enough has been said and written by the media and politicians concerning what we have all had to live through. But no one other than ourselves, truly knows how we have been affected as individuals and families. We have all borne our own burden, our own sacrifices, our own losses. But with (please God) the 'end in sight' for this pandemic and with the forthcoming Festive Seasons approaching, we must more than ever before, maintain our contact with each other.

Some of you may feel that you are having sufficient contact from the Lodges, Chapters and other Orders you are a member of; some may feel overwhelmed by them! However, if just one Companion in one Chapter receives a contact which was welcomed, timely and much needed, then it is worth us all receiving them.

And keeping in touch, as I have previously said, is not down to just one person, one Companion. Keeping in contact is not just the reserve of your Craft memberships either and there are so many examples of it:

- Scribes E forwarding communications from members, news, even trivia and, maybe, things to make us smile!
- Almoners checking in on all members, whether they need the contact or not: a call, an email, a letter
- Charity Stewards keeping members updated on all the good work which is happening whilst we are not meeting, the good which is being done in our (your) name
- Social media accounts for Lodges/Chapters, the Province and nationally, providing another channel of news, of contact, of engagement
- Our own Royal Arch Provincial newsletter which, through the hard work of the team, has continued to be prepared and circulated
- The Provincial website populated with updates on the work of the Province, our members and the work which continues to be done, again, in your name

Provincial Secretariat, Rossendale Masonic Hall, Ashday Lea, Haslingden Road,
Rawtenstall, Rossendale BB4 6QX

Telephone: 01706 833170 Email: secretariat@eastlancsmasons.org.uk

Visit: www.pglel.co.uk Twitter: @pglel Facebook: pglel



- Online/'virtual' meetings and social events so that as many Companions as possible can see and hear each other
- Keeping in touch with candidates for Exaltation and maintaining their interest
- And lastly, and most importantly, any member of a private Chapter, picking up a phone and calling another Member for no other reason than to simply say "hello."

We never know what someone is living with, how they are coping; maybe, the positive impact of an unexpected friendly voice and a reason to reminisce, to smile, to share a story, talk about the future and when we will meet again, may be what they are hoping for.

And with the future in sight, the new year will bring with it work within the Province to help us all prepare for that first Meeting back.

After a year of not seeing each other there will be a lot to be done. We will of course be able to remember those who are no longer with us, whom we have lost and it is important to pause and reflect upon their contribution, their friendship. Then we can look to the future, plan for the future and make sure that we have a future. And when we are all able to meet again, let's plan for it to be a celebration and why not, a party!

There are so many personal events which Companions have not had a chance to mark, personal 50ths, 60ths and even a personal 75th! We cannot, must not, allow these to go by unnoticed. And let's not allow for it to be just a feeling of "meeting again." We should take the moment to make our first meeting back memorable for all of the right reasons and not just a restart, but a rededication of our Royal Arch Freemasonry and our commitment to it.

We have such a passionate and dedicated membership in East Lancashire. I know so many friends within the Order who are not just members because they feel obliged to be, but because they love their membership and what it means being "a Companion."

There will be a lot to do, but I am convinced we have the people and the passion to make it happen and your APGPs and RADOs, as well as all within the Districts and the Province are here to support you.

On behalf of the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent and the Province, may I wish you all every best wish for the coming seasons...

Happy Christmas, Happy Chanukah, Happy Kwanzaa!

Keep well, keep safe and keep in touch.

Martin P Roche
Deputy Grand Superintendent