

A Diamond Mark Lodge

by : Roger Lewis

At a meeting of the St Iltyd Mark Lodge No. 784 on 14 February, the Provincial Grand Master, RWBro Thomas Richard Eirian Jones and his Provincial Officers were present. The Provincial Grand Master congratulated the Lodge on the charitable donation they had made to the Mark Benevolent Fund.

He stated that he was delighted to present to the Lodge, on behalf of the MW Grand Master, a Mark Benevolent Fund Grand Patron Diamond Award Collarette to indicate this very significant donation to the Fund. He informed the Brethren that the Grand Patron Diamond Collarette was the highest award that the MBF presents.

The meeting saw the Advancement of Bro Thomas Owen Hopkin and the Ceremony was very ably led by WBro Garry Hurst in the Master's Chair. The Assistant Provincial Grand Master, WBro Philip W Davies, PGJD, took part in the Ceremony in the role of Junior Deacon.



All photographs by Anthony Howell

At a very enjoyable Festive Board the Provincial Grand Master thanked the Brethren once more for their contribution to the Fund and wished the Lodge continued success in the future.

Mark Provincial Grand Lodge Christmas Lunch

by : Elfan Jones

The fact that it was a fine sunny morning in December 2018 boded well for a successful and enjoyable day of Mark celebrations.

The 2018 Mark Grand Officers' lunch was held at the Towers Hotel, Jersey Marine, Swansea on 2 November. Those who arrived early were most surprised to see that a significant number had already arrived before them, but nevertheless, it was an excellent opportunity to have plenty of time to socialise.

The event was extremely well supported and it was most pleasing to have the presence of not only the Provincial Grand Master, but also his two predecessors, RWBro Desmond Barnett and RWBro Paul Clement.

There was very generous support for the raffle, the prize table groaning under the weight of all the donated raffle prizes. The Stewards distributing the raffle prizes were certainly kept very busy

The hotel excelled themselves with an excellent meal and despite the numbers present, the meal service was prompt but unhurried.

The President for the day, the Provincial Grand Senior Warden WBro Elfan Jones, thanked everyone for their attendance and stated that he was most touched by the number of Dewi Sant Brethren who had come to support him.

He thanked the hotel and stated that he was already looking forward to the Dinner and Dance in May 2019. He ended by wishing all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, but above all, healthy New Year.



Y Dalaith



Mark Benevolent Fund Supports Tŷ Hafan

by : Roger Lewis

It is impossible to imagine the grief that is caused by the death of a baby, child or young adult unless, as a parent or grandparent, it has happened to you. It is equally difficult to know what to say, or do, in such sad circumstances as nothing can be done to turn the clock back to a happier time of joyfulness and laughter.

There are however organisations that can support and help in such tragic circumstances. In South Wales we are extremely fortunate to have Tŷ Hafan, an organisation which offers palliative care and support to those individuals and families in their hour of greatest need.

As happens in many cases, context and circumstance play a pivotal role. It was so in this case when WBro Wyn Davies of Neath Royal Ark Mariner Lodge had a neighbourly knock on his door one morning asking if visitors could park their cars outside his house, as they were holding a coffee morning to raise money for an extra cuddle blanket for Tŷ Hafan Hospital in Cardiff. Wyn was curious to know what a cuddle blanket was and somewhat surprised to realise what they actually were.

His neighbour, went on to explain that her closest friend, Mrs Christine Peel's child had passed away seven years ago and although they rushed to the hospital as soon as they could the body had already begun to change. They then had to leave the hospital trying to remember what he looked like before he died.

If the hospital had another cuddle blanket available, then they would have had more time to say goodbye to their precious child. The aim of the coffee morning was to raise enough money for at least one other cuddle blanket. These blankets are not cheap and cost in excess of £6,000 each. She went on to say that although the hospital had a number of cuddle cots for younger infants they only had one cuddle blanket for older children and teenagers.

The cuddle blanket is a 'blanket', which through a series of tubes which are attached to a machine, ensures that the body is kept at an optimum temperature of eight degrees. This will



All photographs by Anthony Howell

allow time for parents and even grandparents, who may live some distance away, to reach the hospital and see the child before the body changes.

The story now moves to Neath Royal Ark Mariner Lodge, where WBro Philip W Davies APGM read a letter to the Brethren outlining the situation and the urgent need for an extra cuddle blanket. To say that the Brethren were moved is an understatement, and they decided to help in any way they could. It was decided that the Provincial Grand Secretary WBro Martin A Jones be contacted and a request be made to the Mark Benevolent Fund at Mark Masons' Hall for a donation of £9,990, which when value added tax is removed, will enable Ty Hafan to purchase not one but two cuddle blankets.

The necessary procedures were put in place by the Provincial Secretary, and to everyone's delight the application was approved and the cheque was presented to Ms Shelley Kirkham of Tŷ Hafan by our own Provincial Grand Master RWBro T R Eirian Jones accompanied by VWBro John Bell, MBF Trustee and Mrs Christine Peel who started the fund raising appeal.

I am sure that thanks must go to the Provincial Secretary WBro Martin Jones, who secured the funds from the Mark Benevolent Fund, thus enabling Tŷ Hafan to provide ongoing help to those in need at such a sensitive time.

Grand Officers receive Mark Tokens

by : Roger Lewis

At the December meeting of the De Cymru Mark Grand Officers' Lodge held at Caerphilly, VWBro Alan Ford Thomas presented each of the Members with a Mark Token. The meeting was presided over by the Provincial Grand Master RWBro T R Eirian Jones, who thanked WBro Alan Ford Thomas for his generous gift to the members.

The Mark token is presented to the Candidate on his entry to the Mark Degree and it is an integral part of the Advancement Ceremony. It is a symbolic gesture of the wages a Mark Man would receive for his good work in the building of King Solomon's Temple. The Candidate is further instructed to not abuse it but to rejoice in its use.

Mark tokens can and do vary considerably in design and in addition to the standard version from Mark Grand Lodge there are in existence many local versions produced by lodges and provinces throughout the Mark Constitution.

Such is the interest in Mark tokens that there exists a Mark Token Collectors Club which undertakes research into various types and designs.



Picture by Anthony Howell

Alan Ford Thomas receives Grand Patron Diamond Award

by : Roger Lewis

Very Worshipful Brother Alan Ford Thomas was recently presented with his Grand Patron Diamond Award for his considerable contribution to the Mark Benevolent Fund.

Alan is a Senior Past Master of the Barry Lodge of Mark Master Masons and Barry Royal Ark Mariners' Lodge and has been a faithful Member and supporter of these Lodges for many years. It is fitting that his contribution to the Mark Benevolent Fund has been recognised in this way.

The image shows Alan being presented with his award by the Assistant Provincial Grand Master for South Wales WBro Philip W Davies

Double Celebration at Arthur Lewis Mark Lodge

by : Roger Lewis

On 14 February the Provincial Grand Master, RWBro Thomas Richard Eirian Jones, together with his Provincial Officers, attended the meeting of Arthur Lewis Mark Lodge No.585.

The Provincial Grand Master was delighted to present WBro Rhodri J Williams, the Worshipful Master, with a Mark Benevolent Fund Grand Patron Diamond Award Collarette to indicate the very significant donation that the Lodge has made to the Fund. The Grand Patron Diamond Collarette is the highest award that the Mark Benevolent Fund presents.

The meeting was particularly significant for the Provincial Grand Master as it also marked the 25th anniversary of his Advancement into the Mark Order at the Arthur Lewis Lodge.

On 12 January 1994, the Provincial Grand Master was one of eleven Brethren Advanced into the Order so that they could become Founders of a Mark Lodge to be consecrated in Brecon, the Brychan Mark Lodge No.1725, which was consecrated on 22 September later that year.

The Worshipful Master of the Lodge on that night was WBro

Jeffrey David Williams, PGSD., the present Secretary of the Lodge, and he and his officers were about to conduct their first Ceremony.

This multi Advancement had been arranged by RWBro Des Barnett, then Assistant Provincial Grand Master, and VWBro Hywel Davies, both Past Masters of the Lodge. Later that year VWBro Hywel was Installed as the first Worshipful Master of the Brychan Lodge.

Of the eleven Brethren advanced that night, five have since served as Worshipful Masters of the Brychan Lodge. They are WBros Geoffrey Atkins, Ernie Beaumont, Don Moore, Hugh Rosser Williams and the Provincial Grand Master.

The Provincial Grand Master was surprised, but delighted, during the meeting to be informed of the decision of the Arthur Lewis Lodge to elect him as an Honorary member.

The Lodge was further honoured by the presence of RWBro David Powell, Provincial Grand Master of Monmouthshire together with WBro Phillip Sefton, his Deputy Provincial Grand Master.

At the Festive Board the Provincial Grand Master thanked the Brethren once more for the honour they had kindly bestowed upon him.



All photographs by Anthony Howell