

## Provincial Grand Registrar's Report for the year ending December 2015

My first duty is to express my grateful thanks to those who continue to volunteer their expertise at the Provincial Registry. To the Deputy Provincial Grand Registrar W Bro Kelvin Jones, the Assistant Provincial Grand Registrar W Bro Les Pickford and W Bro Mel Jones I offer my personal and grateful thanks. It is so pleasing that so many others have volunteered to assist with additional projects associated with the Registry and in particular those who are making such a valuable contribution towards Membership Focus and Retention. I must pay particular tribute to W Bro Sylvester Crowley who has been able to dedicate himself to updating and correcting a vast amount of our data, enabling far greater reliance on the new Adelphi system than would otherwise be the case. He is understandably taking a deserved rest from his computer screens and we wish him well in his retirement from the team.

I am most grateful too to all Lodge Secretaries who have seamlessly adapted to the way we work at Provincial Office as well as the new systems introduced through the Adelphi System promoted by United Grand Lodge. We are aiming to improve upon the effectiveness of this system and will refer to certain aspects of reporting later in this report.

The Province began 2015 with 163 Lodges. The consecration of the Albert Edward Court Lodge of Research compensated for the loss of Observer Lodge and we end the year with the same number. Whilst we have a further Lodge currently not meeting, the further consecration of Music Lodge in 2016 has heralded an exciting new Lodge for those who are lovers of the liberal arts.

In analysing our data the number of initiations has grown further to 250 in 2015 from 239 in 2014, continuing the growing trend for the last three successive years. Joining members of 220 compared with 239 in 2014. Total memberships have increased from 6944 in 2014 to 6981, a net increase in membership of just 37. Pleasingly whilst we lost 24 memberships through the loss of Observer Lodge many of its members relocated to other lodges in the Province assisted in a number of cases by the encouragement of the Provincial Retrieval Team. Whilst our total membership numbers have increased, our actual member numbers have declined by 31 over the year to 5750.

Resignations are down further in this year from 296 in 2014 to 282 with Exclusions and Cessations also substantially down from 70 in 2014 to 53 in 2015. Those called to the Grand Lodge above have further reduced from 97 in 2014 to 81 in 2015.

The average age of an initiate in 2015 is 44 compared to 45 in 2014 and 46 in 2013.

The average age of a Worshipful Master in 2015 remains at 57 in 2015

The Average number of members per Lodge in 2014 is 42.60 compared with 43.43 in 2014

The percentage of members who are aged 51 or older in 2015 is 74.43% compared with 76.3% in 2014 and 78.9% in 2013. Indeed, the greatest percentage increase in numbers initiated are in the age group 18 to 30 with percentage increase in membership in this age category of 29.59% and a percentage increase of 14.2% in the age group 31 to 40.

I mentioned improvements which I intend to make to the systems we have in place, and am relying on the excellent continued support of the vast majority of Lodge Secretaries who provide information to Provincial Office in a very timely and complete manner. Unfortunately however there are too many occasions where such information is being presented late. We have experienced advice of resignations some nine months after the event and this is unfortunately unacceptable. I intend therefore to put in place a standard of 72 hours within which to present changing data by the already well established methods to Provincial Office. This is with immediate effect and is a recognised standard shared by the vast majority of other Provincial Offices in the constitution. Including where appropriate accompanying paperwork such as the Resignation Circumstances Report and copy resignation letter for example. Typically a resignation received after this reasonable timescale will not have the effect of being backdated such that Provincial or Grand Lodge fees otherwise due for that member could be avoided. The voluntary nature and co-operation of our very hard working Lodge Secretaries is appreciated and admired, nevertheless, if we are to be able to operate our Province as efficiently as possible as well as providing our retrieval teams and membership focus groups with the very best opportunity, such data needs to be supplied in a timely manner.

Volunteers continue to be in great demand. Many of those who have already volunteered their service to this office are already gaining much satisfaction in working towards the 7 Point Plan. Great strides are being made in conducting very effective exit interviews with those who are either organising their affairs late in life or considering retiring from the order in general. Overwhelmingly there has been a genuinely warm response received from those whose time has come to sever their relationship with their lodge and who have appreciated the time taken by membership focus team officers to consider their circumstances and future needs. A most satisfying and positive outcome for all. Those who feel they are able to contribute to this initiative or in a voluntary capacity within the Registry are welcome to contact me or the Provincial Grand Secretary.