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MASONIC PROVINCE OF SOUTH WALES



28 October 2020

Brethren and Companions,

It is now some time since we wrote to you with a joint message in these unhappy and frustrating times. Since March, we have been unable to meet in Wales and that situation looks as if it is going to continue for at least some months to come. Nevertheless, Freemasonry continues to shine brightly in South Wales with fantastic examples of help, support and charitable actions going on across the Province. We can all be very proud of the fact that we are still doing what we do best by thinking of others during these most trying of times.

The many initiatives in our local communities have not gone unnoticed. Not only have we received some welcome coverage in local media and on social media platforms, Freemasonry has shown itself to be an organization which people wish to join. We now have well over 100 prospective members who have expressed an interest in joining us since the start of the pandemic; and many of those have said that their interest has been aroused because they have seen what we do to help others in need. You can be assured that our Provincial membership team is keeping in close touch with these prospective candidates and will be looking to allocate them to appropriate lodges when the time is right.

On the question of keeping in touch, we have seen some excellent examples of lodges and chapters doing just that with their members and those waiting to join. It is, of course, especially important now to contact members who may be alone, feeling ill or vulnerable; and we must make mention of the crucial need to speak regularly with our newer members in the Craft and Royal Arch so that they feel part of organisations which care and which demonstrate how much we value their future contributions to our Orders.

We have both been heartened to see the fabulous work being done by those who run and manage our Masonic Halls. Many of you are in for a real treat when we return to our labours. It is surely at times like these that we should really appreciate the work that these brethren do to provide meeting places of which we can be proud. Like us, we are sure you are all looking forward to returning to our meetings as soon as we are able. Why is it that we only really appreciate what we've got when we can't have it?

Brethren and Companions, you may have recently seen an excellent video message from R W Bro Sir Paul Williams regarding a final 12 months' effort towards the end of the 2021 Festival. Let us all hope that in just over a year's time we will be able to celebrate in fine style the culmination of 6 years' effort to provide much needed support for the RMBI, which has been so badly hit by the pandemic.

Brethren, we both miss you all very much. Like you, we miss our meetings, our friendships, our social gatherings and our Orders that we hold so dear. We remain positive that we will meet again in happier times and we look forward to raising a glass once more after a happy Masonic meeting. Until then, stay optimistic about seeing each other again before too long. If you need any help, advice or support, please feel free to contact the Provincial Office which is working as near normally as it can.

God bless you and your families and stay safe and well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gareth Jones'.

**Gareth Jones, OBE**  
Provincial Grand Master  
South Wales

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Gerald Rowbottom'.

**D. Gerald Rowbottom**  
Grand Superintendent  
South Wales