



2020 Annual General Meeting Report

Due to Covid-19, the 2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Kent Masonic Museum & Library Trust was held by post and email, and in accordance with Charity Commission rules and guidelines.

President's Address

It is quite amazing that a year has gone by since I last had the pleasure of addressing the Annual General Meeting of the Kent Masonic Museum and Library Trust. And what a year it has been with the challenges that have arisen during that 12 months. Because of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic we have all had to adapt our lives and activities to varying degrees and dealing with the AGM in the way we are this year is one of its unfortunate but inevitable consequences.

However, I am delighted to say that throughout all of this the enthusiasm and commitment of all involved in the operation and management of the Museum and Library continues to shine through even with the additional demands and changing practices that have had to be introduced. Despite the prevailing situation an enormous amount of work continues to be undertaken by those who freely give so much of their time and energy to ensure that the Museum and Library continues to move forward. In some cases it means a different or innovative way of working whilst at the same time maintaining the high standards that are now accepted as the norm for our Museum and Library. But I do have every confidence that we will again soon have that face to face contact especially in the welcoming of visitors which is so important to its success and high reputation.

I would like to pay tribute and express my thanks to the many volunteers, the Curator, the Operations Manager, the administrative staff, as well as the Trustees, the Association of Patrons and their management team, the Stewards, the Lodge Ambassadors and the many others involved in the functioning of the Museum and Library both financially and practically. There are many, many people involved in making sure that everything continues to tick and whose ongoing commitment could so easily be taken for granted. But I can assure them that it isn't and that each and every one is essential to the success and reputation of the whole operation. I join the Trust Chairman in expressing appreciation for everything that continues to be undertaken by them all.

I will also add a word of thanks to the Vice President, R.W.Bro. Mark Estaugh, the Provincial Grand Master for West Kent, for his unwavering support for this terrific asset we share. It not only

serves the interests of our two Provinces, but those of Freemasonry as a whole and, arguably more importantly, it serves the public by satisfying their curiosity and dispelling the myths of the past.

This is also an opportunity for me to commend the personal and energetic commitment of the Chairman, W.Bro. Roger Waltham, whose dedication and leadership have ensured that the Museum and Library goes from strength to strength. He would undoubtedly say that it's a team effort, but a team needs a focal point to succeed and I am delighted, as I am sure we all are, that someone with Roger's capabilities and enthusiasm holds that position.

Finally, you will see from the Chairman's report that there is a lot more to do in the immediate future in maintaining and indeed developing the premises in terms of building works. That is another of the challenges that I referred to earlier, and whilst there is disappointment in the temporary closure, plans are well in hand for when the time comes to open the doors, welcome our visitors and show our renewed pride in the Kent Museum and Library. I am sure we all look forward to that day and in the meantime I sincerely hope that everyone remains safe.

Neil Hamilton Johnstone
President

Chairman's Report

First and foremost, both personally and on behalf of my fellow Trustees, I would like to express my genuine, heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in the work and promotion of the Trust; the wonderful, amazing Stewards who look after our visitors so brilliantly and earn us so many great reviews on Trip Advisor, the Lodge Representatives – or Ambassadors as we now like to call them – who continuously promote our important work to the membership, the key people and managers who organise everything so superbly, including: our Curator and Assistant Curator – David Birch and Mike Farrell; Phil Zygmant our Operations Manager; Adrian Wagstaff our Assistant Secretary, and Phil Moore, Mark Rosen and Steve Fletcher the Deputy Chairman, Secretary and Membership Manager of our essential Association of Patrons, without the financial support of which we would cease to function. Brian Blake continues, as he has for many years now, to add to that essential income through his wonderful work in the sales of regalia. Thank you so much, Brian – it is greatly appreciated. A special additional thank you goes out to Jim Flower who has been invaluable in helping us to ensure compliance to our insurance requirements regarding the security and safety of the building throughout this extended period of closure.

As I pointed out last year, the overall team needed to maintain and continuously improve our value, our work and our operation, is large, consisting of more than eighty people. If you add the Lodge Ambassadors to that, there are well in excess of 200. That's a big family for sure, and I'm grateful that I don't need to buy them all a Christmas present! I want each and every one of that extended family to know that your contribution is greatly valued and that without your zeal and attachment, the important and ever-growing reach and benefit of this Trust would simply not work. It is an enormous privilege to be the Chairman of the Trust and I am ever mindful of the value that you all bring to our work and to our family. It is difficult to express that gratitude sufficiently, so I hope that a simple but very sincere "Thank you all" will suffice.

I would like to take this opportunity to also extend those deep and heartfelt thanks, of course, to our Trustees, very importantly including David Tyler our Deputy Chairman, Peter West our Chief Executive Officer, John Andrews our Secretary, Charles Byford our Treasurer, former Chairman

and Life Vice President Charles Boxer who has overarching responsibility for our collections, and Charles Pottle, who is also Chairman of the vital Association of Patrons. This year, I would like to extend a very special thank you to Robin Evans who has looked after marketing so brilliantly for the Trust for over ten years. I am saddened that Robin will be stepping down this year. We will miss his extremely valuable input so very much. Thank you, Robin, and we wish you every good health and happiness.

I'd also like to offer my very special thanks to Right Worshipful Brothers Neil Johnstone and Mark Estaugh, the Provincial Grand Masters of East and West Kent, for their invaluable and highly appreciated support of, and enthusiasm for, the work of the Trust. Their respective positions as de-facto President and Vice President of the Trust continues to deliver an ongoing powerful message of joint support, which adds significant strength and benefit to the future of the Trust, and will carry on doing so from generation to generation.

Added to that strong message, Phil Moore, as Deputy Chairman of the Association of Patrons continues to work very closely with Charles Pottle and the AOP team in his endeavours to reinforce and expand the steadily growing support of West Kent Members and their Lodges for the continued and future benefit of the Trust. Adrian Wagstaff's support, as Assistant Secretary of the Trust, adds further to that very positive message.

In recognising our status both as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and as a responsible Trust with a strong public connection and alignment to Freemasonry, I have spoken on a number of occasions of the absolute importance of us developing our mindset so that we come to positive terms with modern organisational practices, including some of those legally essential things such as regulatory compliance, health & safety for the visiting public, passers-by, and our own team members, the dreaded GDPR data regulations, and so on. David Tyler and Peter West have been superb in ensuring that those essential changes are happening and that our working practices are re-visited to ensure proper compliance with all of those difficult rules, regulations, and guidelines.

That work continues as we look at the very important issues being raised, quite rightly, to ensure conscious positivity within organisations with regard to diversity and inclusion. Whether it is related to race, colour, gender, background, disability, sexuality, or anything else, we want it to be clearly seen and understood that diversity and inclusion are more than just words to the Kent Masonic Museum & Library Trust. They are positive and guiding principles as we continue to maintain our teams and cultivate our key people. Inclusion, where everyone is welcome, should be in the very heart of the Trust. You will see positive developments in this genuine endeavour as we work towards the re-opening of our doors to visitors.

That leads me to the issue of the building works. As we are all aware, in addition to the Covid-19 situation that has enforced a shutdown of operations, disruptive maintenance work needs to be carried out over the coming months. We are currently exploring how best to manage everything whilst those works are underway. It is probable that the building will need to remain closed for a further six to nine months. It could, potentially, even be a little longer.

There have been some security concerns, which have been troubling for the Trustees. We have also been concerned about our ability to ensure the safety and wellbeing of unexpected visitors to the building and car park during the closedown period. It also became clear that we would be unable to provide accurate information of keyholders should it be required by our insurers or the Police. For these reasons, and to ensure that we can manage safety aspects properly during the

building works period, the decision was made to change the locks. Keys will be re-issued when the works are completed, before we re-open.

There have also been some difficult situations, before and during the closure period, regarding access and car park arrangements. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the management team of the Canterbury Masonic Centre, who have worked closely with us in resolving those situations. That amicable and positive support is greatly valued.

It has certainly been a rather challenging year and it looks like it will continue to be so for some time to come, but we are all absolutely determined to work through these trials to ensure that the work of the Trust starts anew as soon as possible. The combination of Covid-19 and the essential building works are a trial, for sure, but we are resolute in reaching a positive end result that provides a solid platform for the benefit of future generations. Thank you all, so very much, for your continued support. It is invaluable and hugely appreciated.

Thank you.

Roger Waltham
Chairman

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020

[The Financial Statements can be downloaded via this link](#)

Marketing Report

Even before the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the effects that it has understandably had on our outreach, we were already experiencing a challenging set of circumstances in engaging with our internal and external audiences far and wide.

In the period from last year's AGM up until Christmas we started well; with several private evening tours from groups such as Canterbury Rotary; we also welcomed more than 30 members of the Kent Association of Agricultural Merchants. The Cornwallis Lecture series (Freemason Robert Thomas Crucefix 1797-1850, Charity and The Duke of Sussex) got off to a great start and as you would expect we continued to receive wonderful, positive comments from around the globe in our visitors' book and were tracking, pro rata, for annual visitor numbers in the region of 10,000.

We were even listed in "The Daily Hawker" as one of the best things to do in Canterbury.

However, things changed somewhat after our return in the New Year. Even before the enforced Covid-19 closure, we welcomed storms Ciara and Dennis which along with other weather factors minimised our opening hours. That said:

- We continue to secure rewards from our close working relationships with Visit Canterbury & Visit Kent.
- Our social media channels continue to grow, with our open Facebook page now having almost 850 followers across 6 out of 7 continent and our Twitter feed is fast approaching 500 followers.
- Fortunately, you can still visit us when our doors are not open due to our interactive Google walk through tour.
- Our Association of Patrons, which presently falls under my Outreach umbrella has had another

astounding year, but I will not steal any of Charles Pottle's thunder save that of, yet again, publicly thanking and congratulating him and his team for their hard work and sustained efforts.

Finally, at the time of writing I am awaiting imminent news from TripAdvisor to see if we have attained our fifth consecutive TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence. If this is the case, and it looks promising, then we will be inducted into their Hall of Fame – a wonderfully fitting tribute to the whole team, but especially our wonderful Stewards who give up so freely of their time to make our visitors warmly welcomed.

Robin Evans

Trustee - Marketing & Outreach

Association of Patrons Chairman's Report

Ladies, Gentlemen and Patrons

It is my pleasure to offer this report on the activities of the Association of Patrons (AoP) since the last AGM in 2019. Overall, we have made continued and sustained progress during 2019-20 despite the unprecedented challenges prevalent in the wider world. These are uncertain times for many but the light of Freemasonry will, I am sure, sustain many of us until we can return to more normal activities in our daily and masonic lives. Doubtless you will be aware that there is much work being done behind the scenes to ensure the Museum is fully ready to re-open in due course and on behalf of the AoP I thank all those who dedicate so many hours to this labour of love.

As is customary, I extend a sincere thank you to all our Patrons. Without your ongoing support the Kent Museum of Freemasonry could not operate. The importance of this wonderful facility is only likely to grow in the years ahead. The success of the AoP is key. Please, even in these abnormal times, encourage your friends, Lodges, Chapters and other Orders to sign up, support and share in its future.

I am very happy to report that with your help and the hard work and commitment of all those on the AoP team 2019-20 showed further growth in the key areas. Everyone has played their part and I am grateful to them all.

Specifically, with regard to Patrons and Patron Income, during the financial year 2019-20:

- Total AoP income (inc Gift Aid) was £12,976.85. Another record high and an increase of 10% on 2018-19.
- We achieved an uplift of 30 new Patronages and 11 reactivations. Another year of strong growth and means that in 2 years we have reached 88% of target set out in our original 2018-21 planning.
- The Patron list has now been fully assured and sanitised of all those who are, unfortunately, no longer currently supporting the Museum. W.Bro. Steve Fletcher's excellent work as our Membership Manager means that as at Sept 2020 we are able to state that there are 292 active (paid-up) Patrons. This is a significant increase compared to our initial 2017 baseline and mirrors the continued growth in annual income.

I know the whole AoP Team are very proud of these results but, there is always more to do. We will continue to seek new Patrons and re-engage with those who have lapsed. Current circumstances are extremely challenging, but I am hopeful that our efforts in 2020-21 will still deliver further success.

The AoP continues to be mindful that it is the Kent Museum of Freemasonry and we are therefore grateful for the support given thus far from our friends across the border in West Kent. Our Deputy Chairman (W.Bro Phil Moore – West Kent) reports that 27 Lodges have appointed Ambassadors/Reps so far. Currently 10 Lodges and 11 individuals are active Patrons. The lockdown has precluded the delivery of museum presentations and face to face activities, but information and communications have been circulated, with the kind assistance of the West Kent Provincial Office, across the network. We are particularly grateful for the continued support and encouragement of the PGM and Deputy PGM for West Kent and it is hoped that further follow-up will bear fruit.

W.Bro Peter Lapage heads up our activities within the Kent Mark. It was with great sadness that COVID impacted on the magnificent plans for the culmination of the 2020 Mark Festival. The AoP had some great ideas in place but were likewise postponed. Nevertheless, we will continue to promote the interests of the Kent Museum of Freemasonry within Mark Lodges and are very grateful for the support already shown. I am confident that our activities will deliver increased Patron representation in due course.

Communications – “Museum Matters”, the feedback has been very positive and I thank W.Bro Howard Griffin for all his work in producing it. It is a most important way we can engage, provide articles of interest and relevance and say a “Thank You” to our Patrons. The regularity of 3-4 issues per year is now bedded-in and distributed electronically except for a small number who receive hard copies. We are always looking for support and ideas so please get in touch if you can.

In closing I reiterate how lucky we are in Kent to have the Kent Museum of Freemasonry and the invaluable “window to our world” it provides. It deserves our full support and the strength of the Association of Patrons will continue to underpin this most important endeavour. Lastly - a reminder to all Patrons – if your contact details do change, please ensure you update the AoP, we won't know if you don't tell us!

Wishing you all the very best of health.

Thank you.

Charles Pottle

Chairman - Association of Patrons

Votes & Resolutions

The following propositions and supporting reports were circulated by email &/or post by the Trust Secretary to those entitled to vote in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines:

Dear Museum and Library Ambassador,

Due to the necessity of social distancing at this time, it has unfortunately proved necessary to radically change the format of this year's Annual General Meeting. There will be no physical meeting, all the necessary, legally required, votes will either be online or by post. I have attached the Audited accounts, a statement by the Chairman W.Bro. Roger Waltham and a list of the necessary votes. There is also a voting form for you to return to me at the Museum either by e mail or post if you prefer. Your votes must reach me by 19th September, which was the scheduled date for the AGM. If you have any questions about the Accounts, or indeed anything else, please ensure I receive them before 22nd August to give sufficient time for me to answer any queries before you vote.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter at this difficult time for us all.

John Andrews
Secretary Kent Masonic Museum and Library Trust

1. To approve the accounts ending 31st March 2020
2. To re-elect Bro. Charles Byford as Treasurer.
3. To re-appoint Kreston Reeves as auditors
4. Resignation and Appointment of Trustees. In accordance with the requirements of the Trust Documents, 1/3 of the Trustees must retire in rotation each year and may seek re-election for a maximum of three times. This year R.W.Bro Mark Estaugh, and W.Bro. Robin Evans are resigning and not seeking re-election. W.Bro. Roger Waltham is resigning and seeking re-election.
5. In addition W.Bro Peter West and W.Bro. Charles Pottle. are seeking election as Trustees for the first time.

The responses received by the due date of 19th September were unanimously in favour of all five propositions and thus all were duly carried.