

Address of our new Grand Superintendent on 29 September 2007

Firstly, it is a delight to see so many of you here this morning. With my appointment having been announced only a few weeks ago, and in the summer recess, there will be Companions in some Chapters who do not yet know that they have a new Grand Superintendent. The fact that we have nearly a full house is entirely due to the wonders of the electronic age and the use of email between the centre and the Scribe Es and then between them and the Companions. If only we could communicate with everyone in this manner, but that is a dream for the future.

I then want to extend a warm welcome to all our visitors today and to couple with that welcome an enormous thank you to so many for their contribution to today's event. In particular I refer to the team from Supreme Grand Chapter lead by our own Comp Iain Ross Bryce, Past Second Grand Principal. (applause). He and his minders, the Grand Director of Ceremonies together with the two Deputies, with support at short notice from Alan Hall as Acting Grand Scribe E and the Grand Tyler, conducted a splendid and colourful ceremony with typical Grand Chapter skill, precision and panache. Thank you to all the Companions of that team for travelling so far and giving up much of your weekend for us (applause).

Likewise, a sincere welcome to our many Distinguished Guests from this and other Provinces, both from the Craft and other Orders. I am not going to name them all, indeed I am not even going to summarise, but I would give a special mention to the neighbouring Grand Superintendents. They are:

Comp John Hale from Cumberland and Westmorland

Comp John Clayton from Yorkshire West Riding

and

Comp Derek Richmond from Durham

I regret to advise that Comp Derek Scarborough from Lincolnshire had to cancel yesterday due to health problems

One Companion who is missing today, after some 18 years in active Chapter Provincial Office, is my predecessor Donald Davinson. I wish to pay tribute to his unstinting contribution and commitment to so many facets of life as an active Freemason. There are few of us in this room from Yorkshire North and East this morning who have not benefited from his wise counsel or been considered, on his recommendation, for some active role within the Province. Companions, he will be sorely missed (applause).

This huge contribution was formally recognised at the Chapter Dinner in March of this year with a presentation and I have made it clear to Donald that I do not wish him to be invisible as Past Grand Superintendent. I have invited him to feel free to participate in all our Royal Arch activities and to visit any of our Chapters where and whenever he wishes.

Events like this do not just happen, and I am indebted to two Companions in particular. The Deputy Grand Superintendent Alan Brundall who has quietly, but effectively, been in charge and has lead the extensive team of DCs and Stewards who have worked hard to prepare, in recess, for today - thank you Alan (applause). The other Companion is a workhorse with true dedication, the Provincial Grand Scribe E, Brian Baker who has taken on every task given to him, including all the communications with Grand Chapter and delivered everything in the right place and at the right time despite lots of peoples' efforts to distract him and he can still smile (or is it now a grimace?). Thank you Brian (applause).

Allow me to congratulate all those whom I have invested or promoted today. Provincial Honours are not a right, they have to be earned and I hope that you will all wear your new regalia with pride, but remember we will be judged by the example you set and the quality of the guidance that you give to the Companions.

In the Spring, one of last year's appointees had an accident while skiing and was extensively injured. After weeks in intensive care abroad he was brought home, and I am delighted to tell you he is here with us. Companions, please welcome Graham Miles.

If I have a strategy, it could be summed up in a word "Together". I believe that the established relationship between Craft and Chapter is special and unique and benefits both parties. Despite the efforts of the recent working party, I believe THAT relationship is the most powerful weapon available to the Royal Arch. I intend, as the head of both Orders, to bring the two even closer together. I also want to involve more Companions in the development of Provincial Grand Chapter and intend to have regular meetings of an enhanced Chapter General Purposes Committee, to discuss, debate and action new ideas and developments, to raise the profile of the Royal Arch so that every Craft Mason wants to be exalted and thus complete his journey from the North East corner.

I will finish with a few words from the Royal Arch Charge

Companions, as members of this Supreme Degree we strictly enjoin you to be good to all and that by diligence and fidelity in the duties of your respective vocations, by liberal beneficence and diffusive charity, by constancy and sincerity in your friendships and by your uniformly kind, just amiable and virtuous deportment, prove to the world the happy and beneficial effects of our ancient and honourable institution. Finally Companions, be all of one mind; live in peace; and may the God of Love and Peace delight to dwell within you and bless you for ever more.

Thank you.