

A message from the Grand Secretary On-line rehearsals and LOIs

In these testing times, I have already been immensely impressed by the determination shown by a number of Freemasons to maintain their daily advancement in Masonic knowledge, and how receptive everyone has been to the challenges we face.

As the joint letter that I, and the CEO of the Masonic Charitable Foundation, the Freemasons' Charity, has said, there is so much that we ought to do to demonstrate the value of who we are and what we do as Freemasons in the community. This also affords a great opportunity for every mason to expand his masonic horizons by taking advantage of the new Solomon website as well as honing and passing on their ritual skills.

While we will all be required to make adjustments during this period of suspension, I would also ask that members fully acquaint themselves with whether certain adjustments can co-exist with the Obligation that we all took when initiated. It is the opinion of the Grand Registrar that it is an "Antient Landmark of the Order" that Lodge meetings and the related ceremonies can only take place with all Brethren physically present in a properly tyled Lodge Room; however, it is acceptable for members to practise such ceremonies, most particularly those aspects which make up the spoken parts of the ritual, over the internet. The security implications and pitfalls (for example the ability to record on a number of software platforms) unfortunately do not square with our Obligation to assure privacy and confidentiality of proceedings - and we therefore ask members to refrain from any demonstrations of those elements of the ceremonies covered in the Obligation, or any attempt to reproduce the 'choreography' online. We have no doubt that our Directors of Ceremonies will have no difficulty in putting our Brethren right on such things when we are happily able to meet again. For these reasons please do not try to hold a genuine Lodge or Lodge of Instruction in a virtual form, but feel free to practise those elements outlined above.

We will, in the days and weeks to come, be providing LOIs with material from Solomon, and our extensive archives to enable learning, discussion and that ever important Daily Advancement in Masonic Knowledge.

As previously stated, I have no doubt that Brethren will continue to adapt to this challenging situation - but simply ask that thought is given to the implications that these have on our ancient Craft.