



# The Provincial Grand Lodge of Hampshire and Isle of Wight

R.W.Bro. Michael J. Wilks  
Provincial Grand Master

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Brethren,

We are now in our second month of the suspension of Freemasonry, and for many that already seems like an eternity! I know that our brethren are working hard to keep the light of Freemasonry burning during this difficult period, and to ensure that we continue to adhere to our principles whilst caring for one another, and supporting the local community as best we can.

We should also be mindful of those brethren whose Masonic journey has been interrupted at the most inopportune time for them! Those who were looking forward to the next step in their Masonic journey – from the Initiates and Fellowcrafts through the various Lodge offices to the Masters' elect and beyond. All put on hold – for the time being. I have been through all these stages on my Masonic journey, and so to those brethren I say – you will love the next stage. Be patient and your time will come. Your experience will be the richer when the time arrives.

Later this month eight brethren in our Province were due to be honoured by the MW Grand Master at the Annual Investiture and Grand Festival. To those brethren, I say that the honour is still yours and is an outward acknowledgment of your value to our Province. The celebration has been delayed but that should not in any way mar your enjoyment of your new rank. Indeed, perhaps as time goes on, there will be something very special about the 2020 Grand Officers, all of whom will have something in common, unique to them!

In May we were planning to Consecrate a new Lodge in the Province – our Country Sports Lodge. An enormous amount of work, borne of enthusiasm, was carried out by the Founders in preparation – all postponed and on ice. To those brethren I say, your dream of the new Lodge will become a reality and the Lodge will be that much more special to you when it comes into existence.

Later in May my successor was due to be installed as your Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master. In February Jon was offered and accepted the appointment and all was set for his Installation on the day after my retirement – an ideal situation. That will not now occur. To Jon I say, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May you will assume responsibility for our wonderful Province and will be Deputy in Charge until your Installation. I know that you will continue to enjoy all that you do, that you will continue to be an inspiration to the brethren and that the postponement of your Installation will in no way mar your joy at taking the reins and driving the Province forward in these uncertain times.

At our Annual Meeting in July, Jon was due to honour and congratulate 438 brethren, a joy which I have been privileged to experience annually for the past 10 years. To those 438 brethren, as for the Grand Officers who were due to be invested later this month, I say that the honour is yours from the 1<sup>st</sup> July, and is an outward sign of your value to the Province. Enjoy the honour – the celebrations will follow.

There are so many events, Lodge celebrations, and Lodge anniversaries for which brethren have been working hard – these are delayed but they will come, and you will enjoy them all the more.

Keep in touch with each other brethren. Follow the guidance provided by the Provincial Grand Secretary in his regular Bulletins. Look after each other, and please also ensure that your loved ones and families remain fully involved, which is one of the strengths of our great Province.

Brethren, the present pandemic may be a wake-up call for Society as a whole. Arguably the human race has been abusing the planet for centuries, but that abuse has increased an hundred fold in this last century. The pandemic is an indication that the force of nature is supreme and far greater than the human race with all its progression over the years.

It will be a different world when this is all over, but Freemasonry will be the stronger for it. Our organisation provides a constant for its members and for all those aspiring to embrace our values of honesty, integrity, friendship, and charity - all of which will be very much needed in the new world.

Please take care brethren, stay safe, and may God bless you all

Yours very sincerely and fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Wilks', with a stylized, cursive script.