

## PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF VALENCIA – ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 2018

### ADDRESS OF THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

Thank you all for coming to our Annual Assembly of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Spain. I appreciate some of you have had to travel long distances.

I have already extended a warm welcome to our M. W. Grand Master who at this time last year appointed me as the Provincial Grand Master of this Province. It has been an honour to be able to work for you and act as your representative in our Province.

Can I ask you all to give a warm round of applause to our Most Worshipful Grand Master.

I pledged my allegiance to you this time last year and I continue to pledge my allegiance to you now.

As I said last year an Assembly does not just happen – it has to be organised –

Particular thanks goes to David Watts and his secretarial team

Graham Simons my Provincial D.C.

and Jeff Hyde my Provincial Senior Warden and Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies who has been of great help

I also thank Very Worshipful Bro Rod Hales for acting as my Senior Warden today.

I wish to record my sincere thanks to Rob Wood and the Provincial Stewards' Lodge and all who have helped to make today's event a one

to be proud of. We in Valencia take pride in thinking that we set the standards for others to follow.

Last year, in London, Masonry was celebrating 300 years of existence – In Spain this year we will be celebrating 40 years of the Spanish Constitution. Most interestingly we have to wait another 4 years for the current Grand Lodge of Spain to celebrate its 40 birthday.

We are a young movement and developing each year as we improve our awareness of what we can do. Much has been achieved and we continue to work to develop Masonry here in Spain. Together we can make a difference.

In the Province of Valencia we have almost 500 members which equates to about 20% of the total membership of the Grand Lodge of Spain. We are a large Province in both area and in numbers. We have some 200 Installed Masters so we can make a difference. We can be proud to say that we have 21 Lodges which include Spanish, British, Norwegian, German and Dutch Brethren. It is a great honour for me to have welcomed you all here today. I personally am proud to say that all of our Lodges are represented here today.

Since the last Assembly I and my team have visited 20 of our 21 and I apologise to our Norwegian Brethren that we were unable to visit you. Your February meeting unfortunately clashed with the Mark Annual Assembly but we will rectify that this year.

Visiting our Lodges has been a great experience. My first visit was to Dama which we did on 28<sup>th</sup> February last year – three days after the Assembly - I saw a First Degree Ceremony and just last Saturday I completed visit number 20 at San Jorge and had the pleasure of seeing another Initiation ceremony. That “young” initiate is here today. During 2017 there were 27 Initiation ceremonies in the Lodges.

Increasing our membership is very important and I have expanded the size and duties of our Membership Committee to include tasks such as how to attract new members, establishing why members leave and generally to look at trends, movement and age profile in our membership. At the end of the day the best publicity we have is in your hands. It is you who can invite your friends to join our Fraternity.

The Membership Committee has produced a new information booklet for our new initiates explaining in general terms how the Lodge functions and what officers are in the Lodge; it also touches on the role of the Province and Grand Lodge. All new Initiates will have the book sent to them and hopefully all of our Initiates who I met today have the booklet.

During the year I have been developing my idea of making much more use of the wealth of knowledge that exists in both of our Installed Masters' Lodges. We are to develop more the idea of those Lodges taking a bigger role in the development of Masonic knowledge by running seminars; special Lodges of Instruction rather than Lodges of Rehearsal; giving lectures; helping where necessary at Installation Meetings for the smaller Lodges and developing the ability of having a chamber where Masonic thoughts can be developed.

I am working on the idea of a debating chamber where our Lodge Masters can get together to discuss new ideas; review current standards and openly and freely express their views on matters relating to the Province and Grand Lodge.

The most significant development during the past twelve months has been the launch of our Provincial Web Site. Now the web site is available to all of us so that any Brother can go online to see a regularly updated Year Book, a Calendar of Meetings including access to

information about the other Masonic Orders who operate in our Province; Lodge Summonses; Maps on how to get to Lodges; Announcements of forthcoming social events and reviews of those events. There are many photos of events in the private area. This is now the easiest way to be kept up to date as to what is happening and what has happened.

This brings me nicely to recall the Provincial events that have taken place since our last Assembly. On 21<sup>st</sup> October we celebrated our Annual Provincial Ladies Night at this hotel. Both my wife and I had an extremely enjoyable evening amongst some 200 guests. Once again our thanks go to all who helped to organise the evening and to that most memorable guard of honour provided by the members of the Provincial Stewards' Lodge.

At the beginning of December last year our Spanish Brethren of the Genesis Lodge hosted the Provincial Lodge of Instruction – for those of you who were lucky enough to be amongst the 130 Brethren who were there we witnessed an outstanding ceremony. Congratulations once again to all who took part in the November Provincial Lodge of Instruction.

So far I have talked about our Province and its events but I also have to talk about the great work that all the Lodges do for Charity. From the web site we see every week Master's of Lodges presenting cheques or delivering food packs and other items to those less fortunate than ourselves. I would like to recognise the work done by Lodge Charity Stewards and their Lodge Members by introducing a new achievement award. I will discuss with the Provincial Charity Committee as to how this can operate.

Thanks to the generosity of our Lodges we in the Province were able to sponsor and pay for 30 children to go to the 2017 Summer Camp in Guadalest organised by our own **R.W. Bro Juan Carlos Ortuño and members of the Hiram Abif Lodge.**

Province		1400	4
Santa Faz	48	350	1
Oliva Mark Lodge	1823	350	1
Oliva LaSafor	112	700	2
Javea 40	40	2100	6
Dama De Elche	163	350	1
Caledonia	68	1050	3
Javea Mark Lodge	1688	700	2
Capitulo Sinceridad	4	350	1
Old Tower	49	700	2
White River Lodge	153	350	1
Las Salinas Lodge	79	700	2
Arenal Deportiva Lodge	65	1050	3
District Mark		350	1

**Ten craft Lodges, the Province, District Mark and the Javea Chapter and Mark Lodges call contributed. Thank you once again.**

I visited the summer camp and saw the happiness on the faces of those children who were having a holiday, having fun, learning new skills, practising sporting activities but most of all realising that someone cared about them.

The cost per young person was 350 euros and once again I would ask for the support of the Lodges in sponsoring this excellent work that is done at Guadalest. Of the 30 Children who attended many came from the Preventorio in Gandia. This too I will support this year.

Whilst our Charity Stewards help to raise money for others our Lodge Almoners have the unenviable task of being there for our Brethren who suffer ill health. Our own M. W. Grand Master has been in the wars with his prostate cancer and during my visits to our Lodges

during this past year so often I have heard of Brethren with similar problems.

For the elder Brethren having prostate cancer is becoming more common and for all it is a very stressful time - particularly if Spanish is not your native language. I am going to ask our Provincial Almoner if he can develop a Prostate Cancer Support Group in the Province to offer help to our Brethren if they need it.

For the sporting members of the Province I am delighted to let you know that this year we will be organising a Provincial Golf Tournament in the Alicante area and we hope that our M.W. Grand Master will tee off for us and at this Assembly next year we can let you know who is our Champion Golfer. We will also hold another Golf Tournament in the North.

Now to our Champion Mason of last year.

This year my Champion Mason and thus Mason of the year is a Brother who has worked extremely hard for the Province. He has helped at every Provincial Event and been with me on nearly all of my visits to our Lodges.

My Mason of the Year is W. Bro. Gordon Ramshead

Finally our Provincial Events of 2018:

The Provincial Ladies Night will be held at the Gran Bali on Saturday  
20<sup>th</sup> October

Vamos a celebrar La Noche de Damas aquí en el Gran Bali el sábado  
20 de octubre

The Provincial Lodge of Instruction will be held in San Juan on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December and will be hosted by the members of the Javea 40 Lodge.

M.W. GRAND MASTER ONCE AGAIN I THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRESENCE TODAY AND I HOPE THAT YOU ARE HERE WITH US NEXT YEAR.

BRETHREN ALL I THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN ME AND I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL DURING THE FORTHCOMING YEAR AND ESPECIALLY AT NEXT YEAR'S ANNUAL ASSEMBLY.