



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

William Ramsay McGhee, MStJ, D.L., Grand Master Mason

Brethren

21.08.2020

While we won't be having any meetings soon, I'm delighted to tell you that we had an outdoor sports event last Sunday. The Grand Lodge of Scotland Clay Shooting Championship was held at the National Shooting Centre with 22 guns participating. I was impressed by the organisation and the adherence to all the social distancing protocols. Congratulations to the winner, Brother Iain Cochrane from Lodge the Bruce No 593 and the runner up, Brother Stephen Cochrane, Lodge of Glamis No 99.

Latest news from the Scottish Constitution Freemasonry Supports Facebook page is as follows –
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Scottish.Constitution.Freemasonry.Supports/>

	Last week	This week
Members	3214	3278
Posts	364	371
No of Members posting	178	179
Lodges mentioned	207	209
Provinces mentioned	29	29
Districts & Lodges abroad	12	12
Monetary Value	£262,766	£268,733

The seven days under report has once again seen an extremely encouraging increase in the number of Overseas Brethren who have become members of the SCFS Group. In addition to Brethren independently joining via the published link, a number of existing Members have been extremely proactive in extending invitations to fellow Brethren and following these through. Their support is greatly appreciated. Significant Membership milestones have been reached.

- We welcomed our first Member from **Guyana** ... from *Lodge Irenaeus, No. 1791*. This means that every District Grand Lodge under the Scottish Constitution is now represented in the SCFS Group.
- From the Overseas Lodges under the Supervision of Grand Lodge, we welcomed our first member from **Togo** (*Lodge of Togo, No. 1677*). We also welcomed our first members from **West Indies Islands** (*Lodge Mount Olive, No. 336*) and **Malta** (*Lodge St. Andrew, No. 966*). This means that all geographical areas with Lodges under Grand Superintendents or under the Supervision of Grand Lodge are now represented in the SCFS Group.
- Congratulations is extended to *Brother Remond Safi* from Lodge Trinity, No. 1846, in Lebanon, who was invited by Brother Dany Hajjar, Lodge Al Mizab, No. 1130, Lebanon, and is our *800th Overseas Member*.
- We had **50 Overseas Brethren** join this week, bringing our Overseas Membership of the SCFS Group to **810**.
- We had new members from Bahamas, Bermuda, Central South Africa, East Africa, Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Far East, Guyana, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, Kwazuku Natal, Malta, Mauritius, Middle East, Newfoundland and Labrador, North Island New Zealand, Sierra Leone and The Gambia, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago and Grenada, Western Australia, West Indies Islands.



- The largest increase was seen in the Districts of **Lebanon (19)** and **Jordan (6)**

The support of the SCFS Group continues to be extended to our Brethren in the District of Lebanon and details of an online contribution page will soon be published. Those Brethren, and their loved ones, remain in all of our prayers.

Although there has been wide-spread agreement with only a few dissenting voices about having no meetings this year, there is, understandably, much confusion about opening Lodge Social Clubs. Given that there are so many individual scenarios, it is difficult to clarify the situation with a one size fits all explanation. Basically, Lodge Social Clubs are “Licensed Premises” in terms of the 2005 Licensing (Scotland) Act and are entitled to open provided they adhere to all the licensing conditions. However, some clubs meet in Lodge premises where the management committee have determined that the building is not opening given the stringent conditions they have to meet. If that is the case, then the club cannot open. If you have any doubts about the situation facing your own Lodge/Club let me know and I’ll do what I can to clarify matters for you – that apart, let common sense prevail and adhere to the guidelines.

The historian Hugh Sebag-Montefiore is writing a book about the Arctic convoys of WW2. I have attached his appeal for information and would urge any Brethren who can proffer any information to do so.

‘Historian Hugh Sebag-Montefiore who is writing a book about the Arctic convoys of WW2, commissioned by the British publisher Harper Collins, would like to find out if any of our members know of any:

- 1. living veterans who participated in the Arctic convoys, or their relatives in case these relatives hold the veterans' memoirs.*
- 2. detailed written or recorded personal accounts of what was witnessed by the participants during these convoys, or in Russia when the convoys reached Murmansk and Archangel.*
- 3. relevant photos or little-known books*
- 4. associations, groups, clubs or local archives that he might have missed.*

He stresses that he is only using personal accounts written or recorded by a witness. And he is only using accounts which describe battles or attacks by the Germans which resulted in ships being badly damaged or sunk, rescued, attacking German ships/aircraft or accounts of what happened in Murmansk and Archangel, and the surrounding ports, when the convoy crews landed there.

If anyone in your organisation thinks they can help, please email him at sebags@hsmontefiore.com; they should only ring 44-20-7-435-1035 if Hugh has not replied to an email within 48 hours, or if they don't use email.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland Autumn golf outing was due to take place at Auchterarder Golf Club at the beginning of September. Due to the current situation with Covid, the competition has been postponed. However, planning is well underway regarding the competitions in 2021 and the ‘golfers’ will be notified of the future dates and venues soon.

We have had several enquiries about the 2000 Club, and this was discussed on Wednesday when the Benevolence and Care Committee met by Zoom video conference. So that we can complete the 3 draws for the current year, the final draw, which was missed in June, will be held at the first possible opportunity. We appreciate that many payments for the coming year have already been made, therefore, going forward, we hope to issue the membership letters shortly which, unfortunately couldn't be sent earlier due to the lockdown restrictions and the furlough of most Staff in Freemasons' Hall. We shall then programme in the 3 draws (due in October 2020, February 2021 and June 2021) as near to timetable as possible. The Committee thanks you for your patience and understanding and trusts that you will continue to support this fund-raising initiative.

The total funding given to Prostate Scotland by Scottish Freemasons now stands at £583,000

Brethren, in the figures published by the Scottish Government at the beginning of the week, 26 new cases of Covid-19 were reported. In many of our District Grand Lodges the numbers have been rising at an alarming rate. This virus is still very much in our midst - please stay alert, look after yourselves, your families and the Brethren who are in any of the vulnerable categories.

Kindest regards



Ramsay McGhee
Grand Master Mason



Freemasons' Hall 96 George Street Edinburgh Scotland EH2 3DH
Telephone 0131 225 5577 E-mail gmm@grandlodgeScotland.org Website www.grandlodgeScotland.com