

Companions, welcome to our District Meeting in sunny Hull. Firstly I would like to congratulate all of the District Officers I appointed and promoted today. I look forward to working with you during the forthcoming year. My congratulations go to Geoff Mankin and Bob Fairbairn on their promotions in Grand Council. Our District is in good form, our numbers have increased and I thank you, the Companions of North & East Yorkshire, for your efforts and support. I may be the District Grand Master, but the District is yours.

On Wednesday 14th December 2022, Tom Spinks and I undertook an almost arctic expedition across the North Yorkshire Moors. Our destination was the Mission to Seafarers at Seal Sands near Stockton-on-Tees. The purpose of the visit was to pay our respects to a dear departed Companion, Charles Joel-Chilton, who supported the Mission over many years. The Mission assists men and women working at sea with personal and spiritual help. It's a place to meet and relax with others after long voyages. I had the pleasure of meeting the Centre Manager, Aiden Webster, and the Welfare Officer, Allison Liddle. After a tour of the facility, we gathered in the Chapel along with our PCW, Geoff Mankin, and Ill Comp John Hemy, where I presented a cheque for £300.00.

On Tuesday 21st February, Comp David Kirwan led a deputation of our companions to Tees Port, from where they boarded a launch to take them five miles out into the North Sea. There, under the guidance of Rev Philip Bullock, and as a final farewell, they scattered the ashes of Charles into the water. The day had taken David many long months of work to get the necessary permission for this simple act. It was a marvellous endeavour.

On a brighter note, I attended a Heads of Orders Ladies Night hosted by the Provincial Grand Master of Yorkshire North & East Ridings, Dr David Chambers, at York racecourse.

I must echo the thoughts of the Grand PCW in respect of our support the Craft, Chapter and Mark, for without those Orders we have no candidates. However, I recently had the pleasure of addressing both the Red Cross and Allied (assisted by our Recorder) on the origins and background of our wonderful Order, and we hope that some of their members will join us in the near future.

These meetings do not happen without a great deal of time and effort. To all who helped, and I know who you are, thank you.

Luncheon approached! Thank you all for your support and for making the meeting a success. I hope that you all have a safe journey home. God bless you all.