



17th March 2016

The following document was produced in 2007 by W.Bro. George Evatt OBE, to mark the centenary of the St.George Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners No.383.

St. George Royal Ark Mariners Lodge No. 383

1907 to 2007

Founder Members

F.B. Westlake
J. Griffin
J. Kinton Bond
W.J. Cornelius
R.R. Rodd
B. Skardon Barrett
C. Wilson
J.H. Rugman
H.E. Beere
W.A. Brooks
J. Laurence
H.J. Stamp
A.D. Tarr
Wm. Brockman
F.W.H. Somerville
J.W.A. Skewes
P.T. Pearce
W.J. Wotton
E.A. Holliday
J. Mumford



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The Consecration was held on Wednesday 18th September 1907, conducted by W. Bro. Major G.S.S. STRODE P.G.M.M.

Assisted by V.W. Bro. J. Taylor P.G.S.O (Eng.), P.G.S.W.
 W. Bro. G. Dunsterville, P.P.G. Treasurer
 W. Bro. G.H. Clarke, P.P.G. Treasurer
 W. Bro. Lt. Col. J. Griffin, P.G.Std. (Eng), P.G.S.W.
 W. Bro. Capt. Powell P.G. Secretary
 and other officers.

The First Regular Meeting was held on Tuesday the 12th November 1907 at the Freemasons' Hall, Princess Square, Plymouth at 8.30 p.m.

Officers 1907 – 1908

W. Bro. F.B. Westlake W.C.N.

Bro. C. Wilson I.P.C.N.	Bro. W. J. Cornelius Scribe	Bro. A.D. Tarr Guardian
Bro. J. Griffin Japhet	Bro. R.R. Rodd Senior Deacon	Bro. W.A. Brooks Steward
Bro. J. Kinton Bond Shem	Bro. P.T. Pearce Junior Deacon	Bro. J. Laurence Steward
Bro. Wm. Brockman Chaplain	Bro. Skardon Barrett D. of C.	Bro. J. Rouse Warder
Bro. J. Mumford Treasurer	Bro. H.J. Stamp Organist	

Honorary Members:

R.W. Bro. Major George Sydney Strode Strode P.C.N.
 V.W. Bro. John Taylor P.C.N.
 W. Bro. G.H. Clark P.C.N.

The business was to elevate, the following Brethren:

Bro. C.J. Kent	St. George 383
Bro. T.G. Taylor	St. George 383
Bro. A.W. Debnam	St. George 383
Bro. S. Broad	St. George 383
Bro. H. Spencer	Metham 96
Bro. H.W. Hedge	St. Auibyn 64
Bro. S. Hancock	St. George 383
Bro. L. Wells	St. George 383
Bro. C.S. Tozer	Charity 76

One Joining member Bro. C. Sellick, Hawton Lodge No. 100
 To consider and, if approved to pass the By-Laws
 To collect dues for 1907 – 1908

Thereafter the time of tiling varied between 6.0 p.m. and 8.0 p.m. depending on how much work there was to action.

29 October 1909. It was proposed and carried that a supper be held after the meeting and the price to be one shilling and sixpence.

5 July 1912. A poignant letter penned by W. Bro. Lt. Col J. Griffin was included in the minute book, which read:

Dear Bro. Farr,

I thank you for kind expression of sympathy, but I am suffering from an incurable disease, and the end will not be long coming. Both my Doctors are agreed on this point.

So I bid you good bye and God Bless you.

Yours fraternally

James Griffin

At the September meeting of the Lodge the Brethren were requested to appear in Masonic Mourning as a consequence of the death of W. Bro. Lieut. Col. J. GRIFFIN PCN.



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27 October 1913. Following hearty thanks being extended to W. Bro. Capt. Powell P.G. Sec. for his robust services during the enthronement of the WCN, he replied expressing the hope that all the officers would be able to perform their duties without the aid of books!

5 May 1914. W. Bro. Capt. W. Powell P.G. S. expressed his great regret that the officers had not shown the interest in this Degree which the WCN had expected. The impression made on the candidates had in consequence suffered considerably. Every officer in accepting office should promise to attend regularly or intimate to the WCN so that a substitute be arranged for on due time!

Following this criticism of the Lodge, W., Bro. Capt. W. Powell was then unanimously elected an Honorary Member.

3 November 1914. Once more W. Bro. Capt Powell expressed his great regret at the perilous state of the Lodge as very little interest had been taken by the officers and brethren generally. He impressed on the brethren accepting office the importance of so doing and hoped that a keener interest would immediately be in evidence.

2 November 1915. W. Bro. Engineer Admiral F.T.W. CURTIS was installed as WCN.

It is of note that apart from the meetings being changed to the same dates as that of the Mark Lodge so that both Orders were able to meet on the same evening, nothing of any import was recorded in the minutes covering the whole period of the First World War. The only mention that there was a war was greetings received from a Brother in France.

28 October 1920. Due to several members falling into arrears with their subscriptions it was proposed and carried that the By-Laws be amended to read 'That all Brethren who are 12 months or more in arrears be notified by letter that unless such arrears are paid before the next regular meeting in March 1921 will have their names erased from the list of members of the St. George Lodge RAM's and the Grand Secretary and Pro Grand Secretary notified accordingly.' Note. Subscriptions were five shillings per annum.

1st January 1921. The sum of Five Guineas was given to the Mark Benevolent Fund.

5 May 1924. The sum of £1 was given towards the presentation of a gift to the R.W. Provincial Grand Master.

2 January 1925. The sum of Five Guineas was given to the Mark Benevolent Fund.

Note: It is interesting to see that the circulars were folded and despatched without being enveloped and the copies in the minute book still bear the half penny stamps, post marks and addresses.

13 October 1925. The minute book contains the first copy of a dispensation order for a Brother to be admitted to the Chair of the Lodge. Previous dispensations have only been noted in the minutes.

1 March 1926. The cost of the supper held following the Mark Installation which follows the RAM meeting to which all St. George brethren were invited had increased to two shillings and sixpence each, accompanied by a musical programme.

10 May 1926. Following a communication from the Grand Lodge referring to alterations in the 'Regulations for the Government of the Degree and Ritual, it was agreed to purchase 12 ritual books for use by Lodge officers.

7 March 1927. The regular meetings were changed to the second Mondays in alternate months excepting August.



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10 January 1930. It was proposed and carried that the sum of one guinea be contributed annually to the Mark Benevolent Fund through the Devon Mark Charities Association.

9 July 1931. The sum of ten shillings and sixpence was given to the Warder as a Christmas Gift. It was also proposed and carried that the meeting dates be changed to the second Monday in January and every alternate month excepting July.

13 March 1933. The sum of five guineas was contributed to the Mark Building Fund.

11 September 1933. It was proposed and carried that six copies of the official ritual of the Degree be purchased for sale to the Brethren at two shillings per copy.

11 January 1936. The first appointment of an Almoner is made.

9 November 1936. The regular meetings were changed to the second Tuesday in February, April, September and November. Note. These are the meeting dates to this day.

12 January 1937 The sum of three guineas was donated to the H.B. Spencer Memorial Fund.

14 September 1937. An invitation had been received from the St. George Lodge No. 15 for the members of the Lodge to visit them on Friday 7 May 1938. This invitation was cordially accepted and arrangements were made for a char-a-banc to convey them to Exeter.

At the same meeting it was resolved that a supper be held after the next meeting, whether there were candidates or not. The price to be one shilling and sixpence per head (this was not to include wine). If candidates were present then 15 suppers were to be ordered, if not 10 should be the number. It was also decided that no part of the cost of refreshments should be charged to the Lodge Funds.

9 November 1937. Reciprocal arrangements for a visit by the St. George Lodge No 15 was made for the November meeting.

9 February 1938. The sum of three guineas was donated to the Grand Lodge New Premises Fund in the name of the St., George Mark Lodge who were seeking keystone status. At this meeting an explanation of the apron worn by the brethren was give.

8 November 1938. V.W. Bro. Col. C.B. Spencer OBE P.G.O. P.G. Sec. and Lieut. Gen. R.D. Ormsley CBE P.G.Stwd P.P.G.W. were elected as Honorary Members.

10 September 1940. This is the first recorded singing of the National Anthem on closing, which appeared in the minutes from then on.

9 September 1941. The Lodge moved into Sincerity Masonic Hall, Elliott Street following the loss of the premises due to enemy action in Princess Square.

12 January 1943. W. Bro. B.H. Edwards was elected an Honorary Member of the Lodge.

11 January 1944. Five guineas was donated to the Presentation Fund for the R.W. the Provincial Grand Master after 40 years of service.

12 September 1944. It was decided that a claim for compensation for the loss of Lodge equipment should be made to the War Damage Commission.

13 November 1945. A Christmas gift of one guinea was made to the Warder, W.Bro. C. Rouse who was retiring at the end of the year from the office of Warder which he had held for 45 years. It was resolved



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that instead of taking a collection for charities, a collection be taken and presented to W.Bro. C. Rouse as a mark of appreciation of his services to the Lodge. The collection amounted to £1.19.0d.

2 February 1948. Fees for elevation were increased to 18 shillings for all candidates. The Joining fee for any brother RAM under the English Constitution were increased from ten shillings to 15 shillings; any other Constitution thirteen shillings to eighteen shillings. The annual subscription for members was increased from five shillings to seven shillings and sixpence.

13 April 1948. The R.W. Grand Master attended Lodge to present to the WCN on behalf of the Lodge a copy of the original warrant of the Lodge under the seal of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England to replace the original warrant which was destroyed by enemy action. The PGM in presenting the warrant referred to the fact that one of the Founder members was present at the meeting of the Lodge that day – W. Bro. F.W.H. Somerville.

5 September 1950. Bro. C.J.R. Souhamy was appointed to the office of Provincial Grand Secretary.

13 February 1951. St. Martin's Lodge No. 379 at Liskeard invited the Brethren to attend their next meeting and take part in the ceremony. 15 members indicated that they were willing to attend.

11 September 1951. A letter from Provincial Grand Lodge was read stating that the instruction 'to seal the obligation with his lips on the Porphyry Stone' is to cease, the obligation should finish with the words 'so help me the SCOTU and keep me steadfast in this my solemn obligation'.

6 November 1951. A Christmas gift of one guinea was made to the Warder. The Scribe was instructed to write to all those members whose subscriptions were three years in arrears and point out that they were liable to be excluded if they remain unpaid.

5 January 1954. A donation of £1 was approved to be sent to Grand Lodge towards the painting of a portrait of Major Sir Thomas Lumley-Smith DSO FSA to mark the completion of 30 years as Grand Secretary. The portrait is to be hung in Mark Masons Hall.

5 April 1955. The Scribe was ordered to purchase 15 Collars (leather lined), and 15 collar jewels from Fatorini & Sons Ltd at a cost of £36. 17s.6p. Bro I.S. Hayward was requested to make a box to keep the new collars in and also to make new pedestals for the Lodge.

7 February 1956. As the purchase of regalia and furniture had nearly drained the War Damage Fund, it was agreed to rename this Fund 'The Regalia Fund'.

5 February 1957. The WCN presented the Lodge with 3 Gavel Blocks to prevent marking the new Pedestals.

3 September 1957. One guinea was donated towards the cost of replacing the Provincial Standard which had been destroyed during the war and to mark the Centenary. The Trustees of the Sincerity Masonic Hall regretted that due to the increased rates etc., the rent would have to be increased to £7.10s.0d per annum.

7 January 1958. Following increases in the rent, stamps and printing the subscription was increased to twelve shillings and sixpence.

6 September 1960. W. Bro. N.T. Jago presented two inscribed triangles to the Lodge.

4 April 1961. W. Bros W.S. Coleman & I.S. Hayward presented the Lodge with a set of working tools and a case in which to keep them.



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2 April 1962. Due to increasing costs, it was decided to increase the fees for elevation to 2 guineas, to joining £1. 5s. 0d, to subscription £1.0s.0d, with dues for country members being 12s, 6d.

4 February 1946. A letter was received from W. Bro. W.S. Coleman enclosing sprigs of Myrtle and Olive, which was the first time that Olive had been used as it was normally unobtainable.

5 September 1966. It was resolved to make the officer of Warder progressive, and that suppers for guests are paid for by the Lodge.

2 January 1967. The Scribe read a circular from Grand Lodge reference regalia to be worn at RAM Lodges, which should only be that of RAM's and not Mark Masonry except on special occasions. The Scribe also read a circular from Provincial Grand Lodge re the History of the Ram and suggested that this may be read on some occasion when no candidate was available. Also a circular relating to the retirement of the Provincial Grand Master, each member being invited to donate one shilling and each Lodge one guinea towards a Past Provincial Grand Master's regalia.

14 November 1967. The Lodge voted to move to Huyshe Masonic Hall at Stoke.

1 April 1968. A new apron was presented to the WCN for use by him during his year of office, and his successors.

10 September 1968. W. Bro. G.F. Cavendish presented the Lodge with a past Commanders Jewel, having the George vs the Dragon in enamel attached to the ribbon, and to be worn by the PCN during his year of office.

1 September 1969. £25's was voted from the Lodge Funds towards the Keystone Fund, and another £25's was loaned from the Benevolent Fund for the same purpose.

11 November 1969. The Keystone Collarette was presented to the WCN with the instruction that he was to wear it on all occasions when attending Mark or RAM ceremonies.

1 January 1970. W. Bro. C.J.R. Souhamy MBE Pr. RAM GR was appointed to Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

12 September 1972. The Elevation Fee, Joining Fee and Annual subscription were increased to £3.50, £2.00 and £1.75 respectively, due to increases in rent, postage and printing fees. Sceptres, Triangles and a Palfrey Stone were presented to Unity Lodge on the occasion of their consecration.

9 January 1972. The lodge was informed that as from 1 April 1972, value added tax will be payable by all lodges in England, Wales and the Isle of Man on all dues, Registration fees, Warrants, Dispensations, Declaration Books, Tracing Boards etc., to Grand Mark Lodge, therefore all outstanding debts should be settled before 1 April 1972.

11 September 1973. A presentation of Sceptres, Triangles and a Palfrey Stone was made to the True, Love and Unity Lodge on the occasion of their consecration.

11 November 1975. The Elevation Fee, Joining Fee and Annual subscription were increased to £6.00, £3.00 and £3.00 respectively.

14 November 1978. The subscription was increased to £5's.

12 February 1980. It was agreed to discontinue the January meeting.



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11 November 1980. The Lodge increased the Elevation Fee, Joining Fee and Annual subscription to £7.00, £4.00 and £7.00 respectively.

8 September 1981. Following increases in Grand Lodge fees for the Registration of Elevation to £15's, Joining Fee to £9's and Annual Dues to £5's, the lodge increased the Elevation Fee, Joining Fee and Annual subscription to £20.00, £12.00 and £15.00 respectively.

8 February 1983. A letter from the Provincial Grand Secretary was read concerning the recognition of the office of Charity Steward and the description of the jewel, resulting in the lodge agreeing to purchase a collar and jewel.

11 September 1984. A framed list of the Past Commanders of the Lodge was approved to be hung behind the JW's chair. These minutes recorded the first exclusion of a member for non payment of subs.

10 February 1987. A letter was read from the Provincial Grand Secretary stating that the new RAM Ritual No. 2 was to be used at once. Also that salutes to the Deputy and Assistant Provincial Grand Masters was to be five. It was agreed to purchase 24 copies of the new No. 1 Ritual and 6 copies of the new No. 2 Ritual.

11 September 1990. The lodge increased the Elevation Fee, Joining Fee and Annual subscription to £30.00, £15.00 and £20.00 respectively.

14 April 1992. The Lodge met at the Masonic Hall, Ridgeway, Plympton, due to the Huyshe Masonic Hall being placed on the market for sale, not having sufficient funds to pay for necessary repairs to the building.

13 April 1993. The Lodge increase the annual subscription to £25's.

9 November 1993. The Installation meeting was held at the Erme Masonic Hall Ivybridge due to the large numbers attending.

13 September 1994. The Lodge moved their meetings to the Erme Masonic Hall Ivybridge. The annual subscription was increased to £28's. The Scribe reported that the Sir Francis Drake Lodge No. 617 was consecrated on Thursday 8 September and 7 of St. George No. 383's members were among the Founders, with W.Bro. Major R.F. Fowles Pr. RAM GR as its first WCN.

11 April 1995. The Annual subscriptions were increased to £31's. The new RAM Tracing Board was presented to the Lodge by Bro. A.I. Pearce, framed by W. Bro. R.E. Jago.

12 September 1995. W. Bro. Major R.F. Fowles gave an outline description of the new Tracing Board, stating that there was a definite instruction as to the position of the Tracing Board which, in itself, is not restricted to just the RAM Degree, also the part to be played by the two deacons. The actual lecture was coherently divided into 4 sections to enable the delivery to be shared by a maximum of 4 Brethren. He concluded by informing the lodge that a team of four members of the Grand Master's Lodge of Instruction would be delivering an explanation of the tracing Board on Saturday 21st Oct at the Masonic School for Girls, Rickmansworth.

Calling for volunteers to cover a section each within the Lodge, Bro. G. Evatt volunteered to study sections 1 and 3, Bro. A.I. Pearce section 2 and W. Bro. T.E.J. Savery section 4.

The Scribe also informed the lodge that it was intended to form an Installed Commanders Lodge early in 1996.

8 April 1997. The Lodge increased the annual subscriptions to £27's. For the first time an explanation of all 4 sections of the Tracing Board was given by Bro. G. Evatt.



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13 April 1999. By direction from Grand Lodge, the Scribe detailed the duties of the Lodge Auditors:- The Lodge shall each year at the meeting in September propose two subscribing members of the Lodge (other than the Treasurer and the Scribe) to act as Auditors and carry out the audit of the Statement of accounts i.a.w. instructions issued, from time to time, by the General Board of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons.

11 April 2000. It was unanimously agreed that to mark our forthcoming centenary a Board be placed in the lodge listing the names and dates of all the Commanders of the Lodge from the date of Consecration 18.9.1907. The cost involved to be met from the Centenary Fund started 1.9.1997.

13 November 2001. W. Bro. H.P.T.H. Roberts was presented with a Citation to mark his 38th year in the RAM Degree, having served a period of 28 consecutive years as Scribe, now at the age of 90 he was handing over to W.Bro. G. Evatt OBE.

8 April 2003. Instructions were read concerning the wearing of collars, which differs from the Mark Degree:-

1. No collar shall be worn with a chain.
- 2a. A Grand Officer who also holds an active office in Provincial Grand Lodge shall wear his Grand Rank Apron and his Provincial Collar with his active jewel when performing his Provincial duties.
- 2b. On all other occasions he shall wear his Grand Rank apron and collar with his Grand Rank jewel.
- 2c. He shall not append a Grand Rank jewel to a Provincial collar or vice versa.
- 3a. In a private Lodge a Grand/Provincial officer who is also an officer of his Lodge shall on nights of Installation, or any other occasion when he is required to remove his Lodge collar, wear his Lodge collar over his Grand/Provincial collar.
- 3b. If is he is appointed to more than one office he shall be invested with the collar of the highest. The collars of his other offices may he handed to him when he is brought for investiture to those offices.
- 3c. On occasions other than installations (i.e. when he is not required to remove his Lodge collar), it is acceptable that he wears only the collar of his Lodge office plus his apron.

9 September 2003. The formation of the 150 club was announced and the introduction of a New RAM black tie at a cost of £7.50p.

10 February 2004. W. Bro. H.P.T.G. Roberts had honorary membership extended to him, for which he expressed his deep appreciation. Unfortunately he was now in his 93rd year and bedevilled by arthritis, and because of his dependence on his 'zimmer' frame was contemplating a move into a residential home.

In bringing the history of the St. George Royal Ark Mariner Lodge No. 383 to it's conclusion at the centenary point, it is necessary to record that the Centenary Ceremony was held in the Erme Masonic Hall on Tuesday the 13th November 2007 followed by a banquet in the Refectory. The programme of events for that evening being enclosed with this short history which it is hoped has been of interest.

