

**ROSE CROIX DISTRICT OF WEST KENT**

**INSTALLATION of INSPECTOR GENERAL - 24TH SEPTEMBER 2014**

**GRAHAM HIGGS ADDRESS TO THE BRETHREN**



Brethren,

Freemasonry has been a constant source of joy to me throughout my adult life and it is an even greater joy to see you all here to today to celebrate with me something that can only be described as one of the most wonderful experiences of my life along with my election to and perfection into the 33rd degree.

In the craft I was the last person in the province of West Kent to receive the benefit of the full installation ceremony as an assistant provincial grand master and its costliness and splendour were impressive to say the least but I have to say that, for me, the Rose Croix is so very personal and so demonstrates the full depth and emotion of joy, brotherly love, and friendship that it touches the heart and not just the senses.

The duties of my office require me to inspire the proper performance of the ritual and above all to secure the happiness and well-being of all the members of all the chapters in my district and, brethren; I fully and freely commit myself to these aims and to you all.

In my view genuine pleasure can only be achieved in the fraternal fulfilment and pride which follows a job well done. The compromising of our standards to achieve some kind of fleeting and shallow perception of 'fun' cannot in any way match the genuine pleasure and pride that result from knowing that you have done the best that you possibly can and contributed to the success of your team.

To be part of a successful team is indeed a great and wonderful feeling.

Although our order is limited to those who can affirm their acceptance of the Trinitarian Christian faith we must not forget that we are also part of a movement which is basically open to any man who can affirm his faith in the great architect of the universe, the true and living god most high. We must work to bring men of goodwill together and the ancient and accepted rite must never be seen as a cause of dissension amongst us.

As many of you will know I am no great advocate of counting numbers, setting meaningless deadlines or artificial targets but I do want to highlight that the craft province of West Kent has around 5,500 members of whom around 400 are members of our District.

This is not, in itself, of great significance but it seems to me that our ambition must be to communicate to the other 5,000 that they are missing out on something wonderful in the joy and masonic fulfilment that we share in our Rose Croix.

It is my wish and my aspiration that no freemason in West Kent remains in ignorance of these things and that all is granted the opportunity to consider uniting with us in fraternal affection, in fidelity and friendship.

We are, of course, not only concerned with new members and potential members but, equally crucially, with the happiness and well-being of our existing members.

We not only affirm our acceptance of the Christian Trinity but we must never forget those other trinities that are at the very heart and soul of freemasonry and I refer of course to: -

Faith, hope and charity

Brotherly love, relief and truth

The former is embodied in our Rose Croix ritual but the latter should be engraved in our hearts. Our adherence to these principles should ensure that we never underestimate our obligation to care and provide for the needs of others particularly our brethren in freemasonry, be they elderly or in poor health or need help in any way.

Brethren, this underlines the need for better communication and I wish to emphasize that we must all fully appreciate the subtle but important difference between information and communication.

Information is passive and purely provides data. Communication is the two way exchange of information and it requires active participation and commitment on our part.

We look after our brethren because we really care about them not because it says so either on a check-list, schedule or rule book.

Brethren, enough is enough, I am under strict instruction not to take more than three minutes. I can assure you all that I have no idea how long I have taken but I suspect that I am perhaps starting to get a bit too serious. Many of you will not have seen me in this mode before so it will perhaps be a bit of a shock to you.

Brethren, I am being serious because the Rose Croix is very dear to me and its values are my values.

What I really want to say is how grateful I am for the way that you have all received my appointment, to thank you for your support and to assure you that for as long as I am allowed to continue in this office you can be assured of my total commitment to your happiness and welfare.

Brethren, in the Rose Croix we have achieved the full perfection of masonry and I rejoice in pledging to all of you my fidelity, my friendship and my fraternal affection.

Thank you