

Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master and Brethren, I have much pleasure in presenting to you the Provincial Grand Mentor's Report for the period to 30th April 2017.

Needless to say, the major activity of the last year has been the formation and development of The **Norfolk Blues**, our group for new Norfolk Masons. It seems barely possible that Norfolk Blues was first announced by the PGM at our Provincial Grand Lodge Meeting just last year. Less than a year on it already feels like it has always been there and that it has become an integral part of the fabric of the Province.

When the group was first discussed, we all knew it was something we needed, but I don't think any of us really appreciated just how much of a positive impact it would bring, not just to our new members but also to the Lodges they visit. It has simply been a delight to be part of its development and rollout and the positive feedback and support we have received from members and non-members alike has been truly humbling.

Norfolk Blues communicates with its members mainly through its own private, secure Facebook page, although we also keep in touch with brethren via email and other means. The Facebook page has proved very valuable for keeping our members up to date and during the year has also hosted some fascinating questions and conversation threads. Please encourage your new members to sign up to it.

We have run a comprehensive series of supported visits with Norfolk Blues at Centres all across the Province. These have been a great success and well received both by the new members attending and the Lodges hosting the visits. We have been able to work with Lodges to put on demonstrations of both the First and Second Degree Ceremonies, stopping at key points to explain the origins and the symbolic meanings of our ritual, regalia and furniture. At one of these in September last year, we were particularly honoured to have our Provincial Grand Master act as Candidate for the demonstration.

We have made visits to Lodge meetings in London and in September will be holding our first Norfolk Blues visit to a Grand Lodge Quarterly Communication.

I continue to endeavour to keep our Lodge Mentoring Coordinators updated via regular reports and also communicate our planned events via Lodge Secretaries to make sure everyone knows what is happening. I have tried to ensure that all Mentoring Coordinators have a more visible profile in their Lodges by asking them to give a very short update at each meeting of all the activity taking place both locally and across the Province. It has also been suggested that they may be the appropriate Officer to present the Initiate's Guide to our new Initiates. This however should be a Lodge decision based on who is the "best person for the job". It must always be remembered that this, and all our activities should support what is best for our members.

We ran an update to our “Becoming a Norfolk Mason” booklet to ensure the Tercentenary celebrations were included and are currently drafting the next update which will update the process for joining and refresh some of the images. In addition to our short booklet for brethren on completing their Second Degree another has been issued providing information for those raised to the Third Degree. These are all available via the Provincial Office.

This year’s focus on Norfolk Blues has meant that I have not been able to complete all of the work that I had wished to do to support our wonderful network of hard working Mentors. For the forthcoming year I intend to ensure that this is put in place with tools and training available to them and a mentoring seminar to support their development.

I will also be seeking to include our more experienced brethren in supporting The Norfolk Blues by engaging enthusiastic brethren to act as **Norfolk Blues Ambassadors** to assist with guiding the newer brethren on our visits and to support and encourage participation in Norfolk Blues activities with their own Lodge Members. I see this as being a perfect opportunity for those brethren recently coming out of the Chair to pass on the benefit of their knowledge and experience to support the next generation of Norfolk Masons. We are increasingly involved in supporting events across the Province to inform prospective and new members of who we are as Norfolk Masons and what we do. I envisage a team of Norfolk Blues Ambassadors being engaged to support these events near to their own Lodges.

Finally brethren, thank you all for the huge support, welcome and friendship you have shown me throughout the year at your Lodge meetings. Please remember that I am here to help and support you, your brethren and your Lodges. If there is anything I can do or should you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me. My details are available in the Provincial Yearbook or via the Provincial Office.

Tim Ridley
Provincial Grand Mentor