



**DISTRICT GRAND LODGE OF MARK MASTER  
MASONS  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2015/20**

Mark Masonry Seminar  
Saturday, October 31, 2015

W. Bro. Frank Whyllie

# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



A Committee was established by the District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons to prepare a Five Year Strategic Plan for the District. The members of the Committee were:

- W. Bro. Frank Whyllie – Chairman
- W. Bro. Kirk Douglas – Secretary
- W. Bro. Owen Francis
- W. Bro. David Robotham
- W. Bro. Christopher Spaulding

# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



The Plan inter alia examines the strengths and weaknesses of the Mark District and recommends strategies for achieving the directions chosen namely:

- Membership growth – growth & retention
- Benevolence & Charity – financing the MBF
- Finance & Administration – dues, fundraising, etc.
- Relationships – to the Craft, MARK lodges in the Caribbean

# METHODOLOGY



The Committee adopted a number of strategies to collect information namely:

- Data mining of the records of the District Grand Secretary
- A Focus Group meeting with the Worshipful Masters of seven Mark Lodges, all of whom are also members of RAM lodges
- Discussions with the Rulers of the District

# SWOT ANALYSIS



A SWOT analysis was conducted and enumerated the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the District

# STRENGTHS



- Second largest District after the Craft
- Is over 130 years old and has enjoyed sound leadership since its inception
- Has managed the Mark Benevolent Fund well, even with limited resources
- An emerging synergy between the lodges in the District has developed thereby improving inter lodge relationships among the Brethren

# WEAKNESSES



These were found to be many. The key ones are highlighted below:

- Lack of physical space to house a Secretariat, records and other materials of the District
- Poor record keeping - both financial and secretarial
- Growth in the MARK and RAM lodges anaemic

# WEAKNESSES



- Absence of a strong promotional/growth ethos among current membership
- Insufficient knowledge of the Order by Master Masons generally, which translates into low recruitment of new members
- Past Masters rarely attend once they have installed their successor, hence knowledge and history of the lodges are lost to younger members



# WEAKNESSES



- Treasurers and Secretaries are not fully aware of their duties:
  - Many lodges do not have access to the Grand Lodge website
  - Treasurers keep many members on roll even when their dues are more than two years in arrears
  - Annual returns are frequently late, cheques sent to the District Grand Secretary are misplaced, etc.

# WEAKNESSES



- Poor quality ritual work by the senior officers of the lodges - reading of ritual work is common
- Poor attendance at meetings which is probably caused by:
  - lack of interest
  - unimpressive ritual work
  - the gap between meetings
  - little mentoring of new members
  - length of time to reach the chair
  - qualifications to reach the chair, etc.

# OPPORTUNITIES



- It is estimated that as at August 1 2013, 28.7% of the Craft Master Masons are Mark Master Masons, and only 61.5% of Mark Masons are members of the RAM, there is therefore room for growth in both Orders hence there is an opportunity to:
  - Grow the membership of both Mark and RAM lodges through more aggressive recruitment strategies given the low membership of each

# OPPORTUNITIES



- Improve the retention of the membership by improving the quality of the meetings, as well as the participation of its members

# THREATS



Anaemic growth in membership could lead to:

- A possible reduction in the number of lodges in the District
- The possible attrition of potential members to another Constitution

High delinquency rate among the lodges could lead to erasure and a consequent reduction in the size of the District

# MEMBERSHIP



- As at August 2014, there were three hundred and forty eight members in eight lodges in the Mark District with the following breakdown:

Name of Lodge	Number	Members
M.M.M. LODGES		
SUSSEX	42	34
ROYAL	240	44
PHOENIX	242	43
KINGSTON	368	56
CORNWALL	1232	32
MELROSE	1424	47
FRIENDLY	1559	42
CAYMAN	1618	50
<b>Total MMM</b>		<b>348</b>

# MEMBERSHIP



- The number of Royal Ark Mariners Lodges as at the same date was seven, with Jamaica #368 having the largest number of members with forty six and Cornwall #1232 and Melrose #1424 the newest, tying with nineteen members each.

# MEMBERSHIP



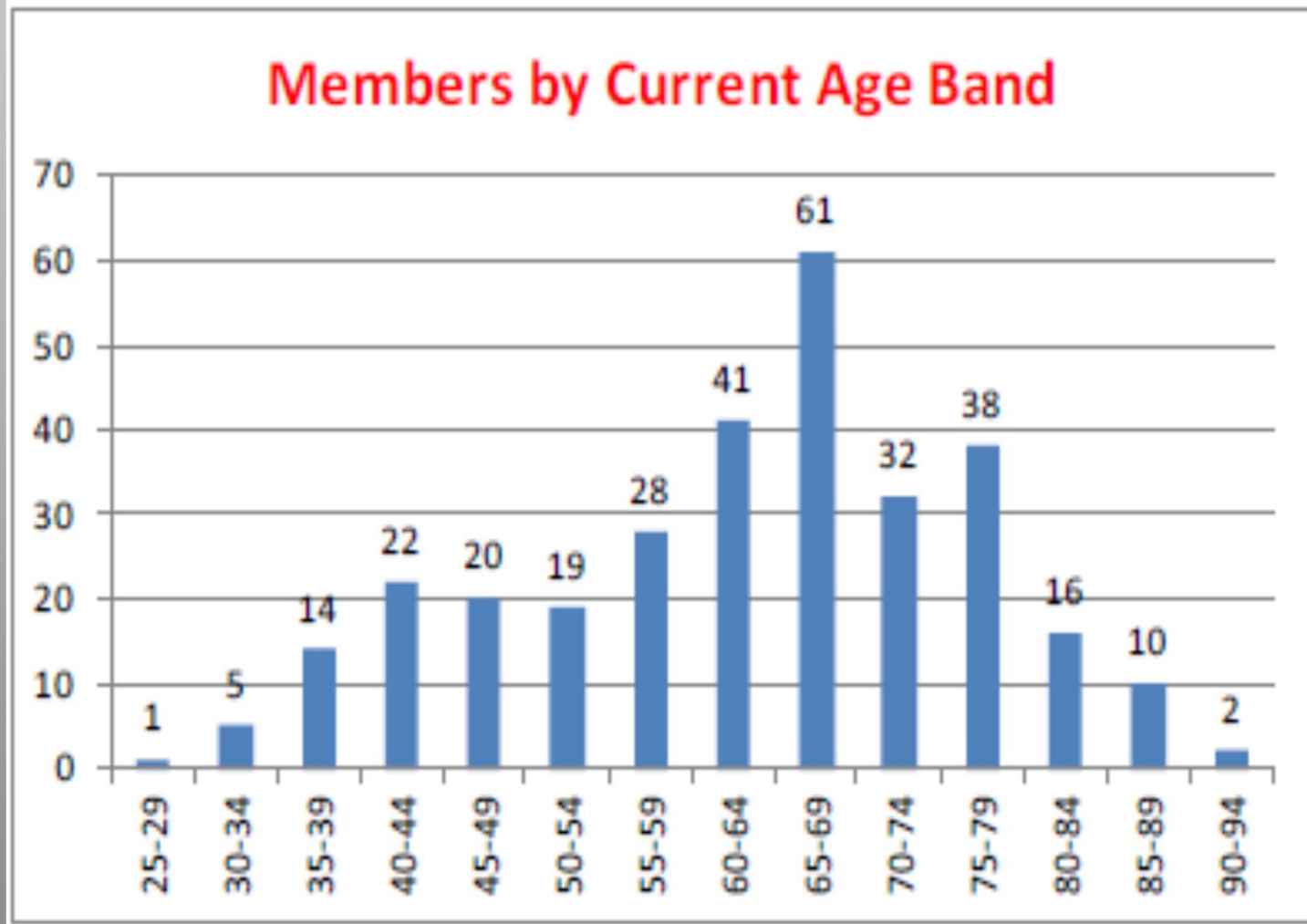
Name of Lodge	Number	Members
R.A.M. LODGES		
SUSSEX	42	28
ROYAL	240	33
JAMAICA	368	46
CORNWALL	1232	19
MELROSE	1424	19
FRIENDLY	1559	29
CAYMAN	1618	40
<b>Total RAM</b>		<b>214</b>



# Membership by Five Year Bands



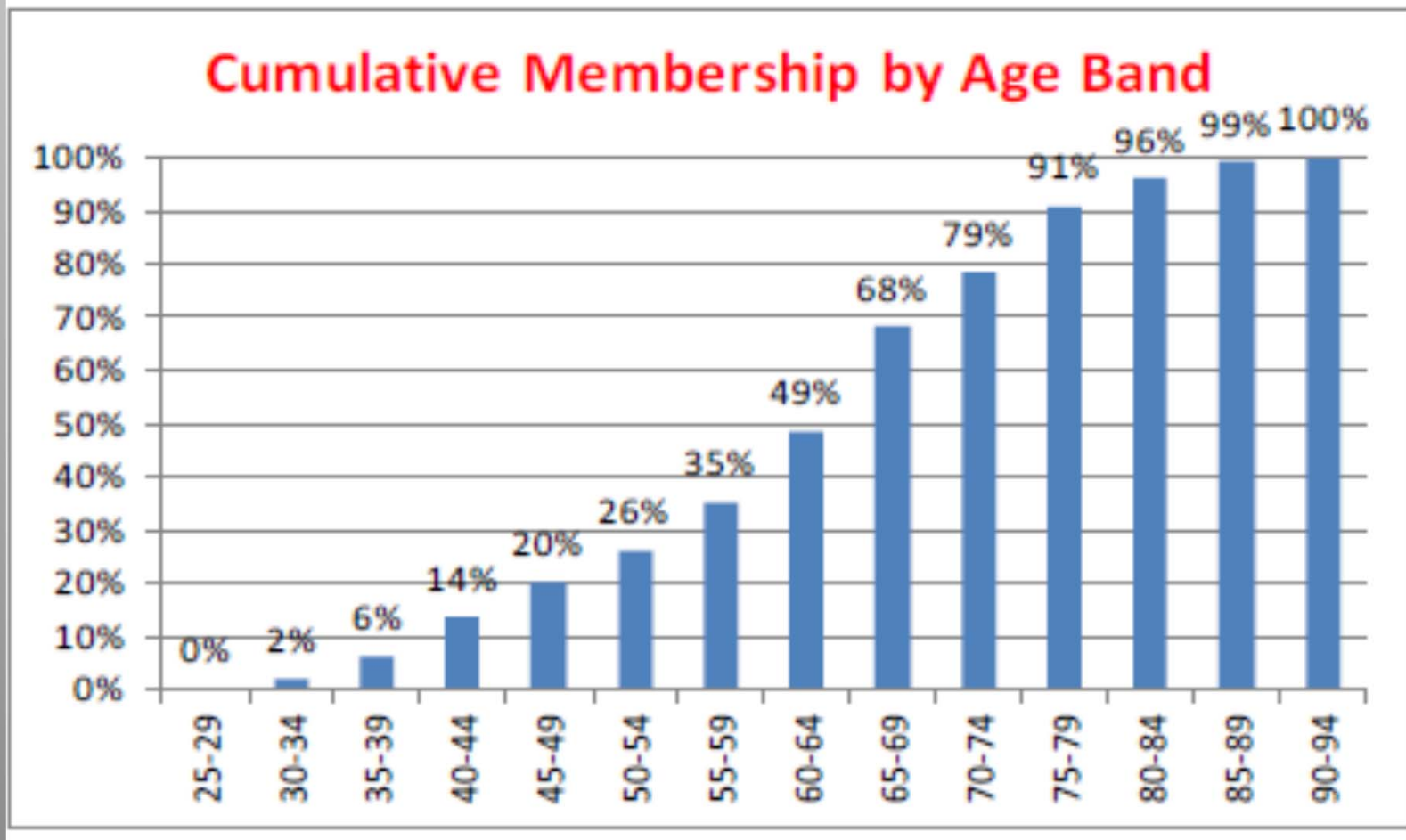
## Members by Five Year Age Bands



# Cumulative Membership by Five Year Bands



Cumulative Membership by Five Year Age Bands



# Current Average Age of Members by Lodge



## Current Average Age of Members by Lodge

### Current Average Age

Lodge	No	Average	Members
Kingston	368	68	44
Sussex	42	65	32
Friendly	1559	64	34
Melrose	1424	62	43
Royal	240	60	39
Phoenix	242	59	43
Cayman	1618	57	56
Cornwall	1232	52	30

# Current Average Duration in Years by Lodge



## Current Average Duration in Years by Lodge

### Current Average Duration in Order

Lodge	No	Average	Members
Sussex	42	21	32
Royal	240	16	39
Kingston	368	16	44
Friendly	1559	15	34
Phoenix	242	15	43
Cayman	1618	14	56
Melrose	1424	14	43
Cornwall	1232	11	30

# FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE DISTRICT



- As at the end of August 2014, only Cayman #1618 and Phoenix # 242 were not in arrears to the District.
- Total arrears for the remaining six Mark Master Mason lodges was \$225,800
- Similarly, with the exception of the Cayman Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners, the other six RAM Lodges were in arrears for a value of \$133,800
- The District posted a total loss of \$122,376

# FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE DISTRICT



Name of Lodge	Number	Members	BAL C/F 31/8/14	PMTS 2015	2015 Adjustments	BALANCE
M.M.M. LODGES						
SUSSEX	42	34	32,300			32,300
ROYAL	240	44	41,800			41,800
PHOENIX	242	43	47,900	(47,900)		-
KINGSTON	368	56	53,200			53,200
CORNWALL	1232	32	20,650			20,650
MELROSE	1424	47	37,950			37,950
FRIENDLY	1559	42	9,900			39,900
CAYMAN	1618	50	40,889	(29,500)	(11,389)	-
<b>Total MMM</b>		<b>348</b>	<b>314,589</b>	<b>(77,400)</b>	<b>(11,389)</b>	<b>225,800</b>

# FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE DISTRICT



Name of Lodge	Number	Members	BAL C/F 31/8/14	PMTS 2015	2015 Adjustments	BALANCE
R.A.M. LODGES						-
SUSSEX	42	28	23,800			23,800
ROYAL	240	33	28,050			28,050
JAMAICA	368	46	39,100			39,100
CORNWALL	1232	19	16,150			16,150
MELROSE	1424	19	17,050			17,050
FRIENDLY	1559	29	24,650	(15,000)		9,650
CAYMAN	1618	40	26,726	(17,400)	(9,326)	-
<b>Total RAM</b>		<b>214</b>	<b>175,526</b>	<b>(32,400)</b>	<b>(9,326)</b>	<b>133,800</b>

# THE PLAN



## VISION STATEMENT

To be the Order of choice for brethren who seek to extend their Masonic experience beyond the Craft.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The District Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Jamaica & the Cayman Islands seeks to provide a Masonic experience which is fulfilling and enjoyable for its members, while it actively promotes their commitment to those essential Masonic characteristics – Benevolence and Charity.



# FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE



## OBJECTIVES

- Improve the financial status of the District to make it financially sound and stable
- Increase all Joining and Honour fees annually over the next five years
- Capitalize the Mark Benevolent Fund

# FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE



- Eliminate outstanding receivables from all MARK and RAM lodges to District Grand Lodge by June 2016
- Institute payment plans for delinquent lodges to ensure receivables are cleared in one year
- Implement an invoicing system to ensure all lodges are given timely notice of their dues and follow up to ensure repayment-July 2015

# FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE



## INITIATIVES

- Implement sanctions on delinquent lodges-July 2016
- Increase Joining fees by 50% annually over the next five years
- Increase Honour fees by 100% annually over the next five years
- Plan and implement one major fund raising event annually to capitalize the Mark Benevolent Fund

# MEASURES/TARGETS



- All lodges in the District to be current with their dues and contribution to the MBF by June 2016
  - **Target:** No arrears in dues by July 2016
- Achieve financial self-sustainability for the Mark Benevolent Fund
  - **Target:** \$1M per annum
- Achieve financial sustainability for the District

# INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESS



## OBJECTIVES

- Improve the administration of the Secretariat
- Improve the Communication between District Grand Secretary and the Lodges in the District
- Develop relationships with MARK districts in the Caribbean

# INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESS



## INITIATIVES

- Set up a physical Secretariat to ensure the proper safe keeping of files and records
- Assign more administrative functions, particularly the compiling of the Annual Returns, to the Deputy District Grand Secretary
- Transfer, categorize and store hard copies of all important documents and records belonging to the District and house them in the Secretariat

# INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESS



- Improve internal communication between the District and Lodges by maintaining a sustained communications programme through **a dedicated email address** to keep members informed of pertinent issues relating to the lodges, the District, as well as MARK masonry in general – June 2016.
- Establish a link with the MARK districts in the Caribbean

# INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESS



- Use the District Grand Lodge website to provide additional information on all MARK & RAM lodges, the Order in general as well as provide all members with electronic reminders of meeting dates and ceremonies to be done.



# MEASURES/TARGETS



1. Office space for the Secretariat obtained, part-time Secretary hired, and all files and document properly housed.
  - **Target:** March 2017
2. Annual Returns for all lodges corrected and filed
  - **Target:** December 2016
3. Internal communication improved by 20% as measured by an annual survey
4. Annual survey conducted in January of each year of the plan

# MEASURES/TARGETS



4. External links established with Mark Districts in the Caribbean
  - **Target:** June 2017

# LEARNING AND GROWTH



## OBJECTIVES

- Improve officer efficiency as well as the quality of ritual work of lodges in the District
- Improve the satisfaction of members by providing assistance to lodges in the District to improve the efficiency of their meetings

# LEARNING AND GROWTH



- Improve retention of members
- Increase membership by developing a recruiting policy to attract Master Masons
- Build and sustain good, harmonious, relations with the Craft District

# LEARNING AND GROWTH



## INITIATIVES

- Target the leadership of all MARK and RAM lodges for training in their roles as leaders and managers
- Provide greater opportunities for interaction by running efficient meetings to provide greater time for improving camaraderie at the festive board
- Recruit master masons four weeks after becoming a master mason in a Craft lodge

# LEARNING AND GROWTH



- Encourage District Grand Officers to make quality presentations on the MARK & RAM orders or other lectures annually to all lodges in the district
- Encourage lodges to develop a visitation programme to elder members to maintain their interest in the lodge as well as the feeling of “belonging”
- Encourage lodges to structure their dues to accommodate older members on fixed incomes
- Arrange for the Rulers of Craft and Mark Districts to meet biannually to discuss *inter alia* matters that affect the growth, finances and membership retention of each District

# MEASURES/TARGETS



- Training programme for lodge officers implemented once annually the first to be completed by 2015 year
- Reduce attrition rate of members in the District by 10% in 5 years
- Improved attendance
  - **Target:** 10% annually
- Improved retention
  - **Target:** 5% annually

# MEASURES/TARGETS



- Increase in member satisfaction
  - **Target:** 20% as measured by the annual survey
- Increased membership
  - **Target:** 10% increase in MARK & 5% increase in RAM
- Excellent relations developed between the two Districts as measured by the annual survey



# CONCLUSION



The Committee is of the view that if the PLAN is implemented with some rigour, the District Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons should achieve the projected growth and financial soundness by the end of the administrative year 2020.

It will however require careful monitoring to prevent slippage and lack of the will to adjust and change the old order.

As such, our final recommendation is that the District establishes a Monitoring Committee and give it very clear terms of reference to ensure that the targets are met.



THANK YOU