



Chairman's Report to the BAMR AGM – 17 March 2012.

W. Bro. David J Peck PPJGW (Bucks).

I will start by quoting an extract from my Feb 2009 report: *“after 3 very challenging and enjoyable years, I am standing down as Chairman of the BAMR.”* Well I did stand down, but in Feb 2011, I was persuaded to take up the reins again, when the BAMR was entering into a new, challenging and uncertain future.

I can report we have had an active, interesting, challenging and perhaps eventually, in some areas, a productive year. However, we are still struggling with a significant number of long term issues, some of which, I will revisit again in the report which follows:

1. **Association Membership is very badly declining**, we now have very few paid up members and a major recruitment drive is needed by all of us, if the BAMR is to remain viable.
2. Starting in January, a **Transactions Display stand** has been placed in the bars of Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Bletchley, Wolverton, Slough & Thames Masonic Centres. The display stands include membership application forms and events posters have been put on notice boards. When you visit centres will you please check that these displays and posters are still visible and current. If they are not please let a committee member know.
3. **The February 11 AGM and Papers Day**, was well attended and received.
4. **Transactions Volume 13** – for 2011 was published in January, for which especial thanks is to be given to our new Editor, Michael Power, and his Transactions Team. I must thank our previous Editor, Tim Hancock, for his continued support. We still have a significant number of unpublished

items. We have a recovery plan to publish the backlog, based on publishing two Transactions a year. However, it could still be well into 2014 before we have fully caught up. I am sure the Editor would appreciate additional volunteers to help recover the backlog.

5. With a lot of work by Bernard Frow, for which I must thank him, the **BAMR library** is slowly taking shape in a small room off the Committee Room upstairs. Bernard now needs a volunteer, during the summer, to help him update the catalogue, which will then be published on the website.
6. **Regular Committee meetings have been held**, dealing with the day to day management issues as well as the plan to relaunch the BAMR into the 21st Century. The planned changes are progressively been implemented; not least of which is the need to vastly improve communications with its members and to Buckinghamshire Masons in general.
7. Ken Wotton was appointed as the **Burnham Lecturer for 2011/12** with his paper "The Influence of Freemasonry on the Development of the Modern Olympic Movement". A shorter version of his paper got an informal airing, after last year's AGM. The first formal presentation was given, as is the usual practice, at the Bucks Masters Lodge in February this year. Incidentally and very worryingly. we have had **no responses to the current Burnham Lecturer competition for 2013/14.** We need to appoint someone by the end of the summer. We need the membership's help to identify a suitable candidate.
8. The revised **Articles of Association (AoA)** were approved at the 2010 AGM. However, further changes may be needed.
9. **BAMR entry on the Bucks. Provincial Website** has been updated and simplified. All new information is now placed on our own BAMR Website of which I am planning to continue as the Webmaster. It is hoped that the Website could become the main method of keeping the membership and others updated with news on the activities of the BAMR, its members

and other like minded organisations. The establishment of **Links from other relevant Websites** has continued.

10. A **number of speakers have been provided** to a variety of Lodges, LOIs and NECC meetings.
11. The Committee continues to consider the approach from one of our members (Ed Robinson) living in NZ, that the BAMR apply to become an Associate Member of the **Australia and New Zealand Masonic Research Council (ANZMRC)**, and participate with them in their major ongoing process of the cataloguing of Masonic research papers. However, it was discovered that a direct corporate BAMR involvement could have been quite expensive. Hence, I have continued as an individual member, which is free. The ANZMRC publish a very good quarterly newsletter (Harashim) and in previous issues are articles on the progress of Ed's Digital Library Project. For anyone interested the Kent Henderson, ANZMRC Assistant Secretary can be contacted via kenthen@optusnet.com.au or <http://kenthenderson.com.au/>
12. The above possible corporate Associate Membership was only one example of the possible benefits to our membership of the development of much closer **relationships with a number of other Masonic research organisations in the UK and abroad**. I reported previously that informal contacts with a number of like-minded organisations have already started and these continue. As a committee we wish to investigate the possibility of expanding the BAMR catchment area and as neither of the Provinces of Oxfordshire or Berkshire have current Masonic Research Lodges or Associations, they may prove fertile ground.
13. The **opportunities for the BAMR to provide assistance** to Province are numerous. Previously, we were approached to prepare a number of 'Short 5 minute Educational Talks' to be given in LOIs, by Preceptors, to increase the knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of masonry by newer masons, unfortunately this project stalled and additional volunteers were needed to get it going. We now have one such

volunteer, Brian Baker, who was one of the founders of the BAMR. He is updating his series of "Information Papers"

14. We also need to develop a formal relationship with such organisations as the **Local Provincial Orator & Mentor Schemes, North East Corner Clubs and the Provincial Training schemes** to see what assistance we can provide to them or them to us. One step on this road has been made by inviting the Provincial Orator to give us a paper after the AGM. Provincial Mentor has agreed to do a similar presentation at a future Paper's Day.
15. Almost finally, we have a very **able, willing and talented committee**, who have worked hard this year, and I would like to record my personal thanks to all of them for their support, especially our new Secretary Bob Chevin.
16. Finally, **we still have major manpower resource limitations in most sections of the BAMR's activities**. You will perhaps have noted examples of our painfully slow progress in a number of areas, in this report. The committee would be very grateful to receive help from any new volunteers. We would welcome offers of assistance and participation that does not necessarily entail formal membership of the BAMR Committee. The Committee is always very pleased to hear the views of the membership on how we might improve our services and the benefits provided to members. I look forward to a successful year ahead for the BAMR.

Thank you for your attention and are there any questions?

David J Peck

14 March 2012

Post AGM note: Should anyone be reading this on the BAMR website and have any questions or comments please email me at davepeck@bamr.co.uk