



Chairman's Report to the BAMR AGM – 1 June 2013.

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

1. **Recovery Plan.** You will remember that early in the year there was a suggestion we should close down the Association. However, subsequent to an emergency committee meeting on 21 March 2013, a plan was devised to “revitalise the Association” over the next 18 months. It was agreed to review the success or failure of this plan before the AGM in 2014; which, is discussed below.
2. **Association Membership.** By the end of 2012, we had only a small number of paid up members registered with the Association. The committee has now decided that a major recruitment drive is needed, if the BAMR is to remain viable. Hence, a free Membership “Special Offer” is now in place for the rest of this year. The offer has already yielded an number of new members.
3. **Programme & Publicity Officer.** These critical posts have been vacant for some years. Very generously Brian Baker has volunteered to take on both roles and, in a very short period of time he has worked miracles, whilst also putting together today's event.
4. **More Paper's Days are needed.** In addition to today's event, Brian Baker wishes me to announce that there will be a **Paper's Day at Bletchley on Saturday, 12 October**, with 3 very interesting speakers, more details on the website.
5. **Publicity.** Since January 2012, **BAMR Display Stands** have been placed in the bars of Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Bletchley, Wolverton, Slough & Thames Masonic Centres. The display stands include membership application forms and events posters.

We are trying to get posters on all 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.

6. **The March 2012 AGM and Paper's Day**, were well attended and received.
7. **Transactions Volume 14** – for 2012 has been delayed, however, it is now in the final editing stage before it goes to the printers, for which especial thanks is to be given to our new Editor, Michael Power, and his Transactions Team. We still have a recovery plan to publish the backlog, based on publishing two Transactions a year. However, it could still be well into 2015 before we have fully caught up. I am sure the Editor would appreciate additional volunteers to help recover the backlog.
8. With a lot of work by Bernard Frow, the **BAMR library** in the Aylesbury Centre, is still slowly taking shape in a small area, adjacent to 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.
9. **Regular Committee meetings have been held**, dealing with the day to day management issues as well as the plan to revitalise and hopefully relaunch the BAMR into the 21st Century. The planned changes are progressively being implemented; not least of which is the need to vastly improve communications with members and to Buckinghamshire Masons in general.
10. Ken Wotton has been re-appointed for another year as the **Burnham Lecturer for 2011/13** with his paper "The Influence of Freemasonry on the Development of the Modern Olympic Movement". Incidentally and very worryingly, we have had **only one response to the current Burnham Lecturer competition for 2013/14**. We still need to appoint someone soon. Hence, we need the membership's help to identify suitable possible candidates.
11. The revised **Articles of Association (AoA)** were approved at the 2010 AGM. However, further changes may be needed.
12. **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 temporarily 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. Paul Brissenden-Hemstock has very generously offered to redesign / modernise our website, for which we thank him. The redesign process has started, but it has temporarily been put on hold to allow the committee to focus all its efforts on the revitalisation plan.

13. A **number of speakers have been provided** to a variety of Lodge, Chapter, LOI meetings.
14. The Committee continues to consider the approach from one of our members (Ed Robinson) living in New Zealand, 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 and other BAMR members have continued as individual members, which is free. The ANZMRC publish a very good quarterly newsletter (Harashim) and in previous issues are published articles on the progress of Ed's Digital Library Project. For anyone needing more information see the link on the BAMR website.
15. 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.
16. 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 has updated his series of "**Information Papers**", which are now on the website.

17. 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 reciprocal assistance we can provide to each other. One step on this road was made by inviting the Provincial Orator to present a paper, after last year's AGM. The Provincial Mentor has agreed to do a similar presentation at a future Paper's Day.
18. 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 Secretary Bob Chevin.
19. 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 in the critical process of revitalising the BAMR.

Thank you for your attention and are there any questions?

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

1 June 2013

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