

# THE GRAND CHARITY

ESTABLISHED BY THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

Registered Charity No 281942

60 Great Queen Street London WC2B 5AZ

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GRAND PRESIDENT

HRH THE DUKE OF KENT, KG, GCMG, GCVO, ADC

DEPUTY GRAND PRESIDENT

THE MOST HON THE MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON, DL

VICE GRAND PRESIDENT

THE RT HON LORD LANE OF HORSELL

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15 February 2006

Dear Sir and Brother

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Grand Charity will be held at Freemasons' Hall, London, as part of the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge, on Wednesday, 8 March 2006, but separate from it. Members of the Grand Charity are hereby invited to attend. Detailed instructions (including dress) for those attending, are the same as those for the meeting of Grand Lodge.

The Agenda for the meeting is included in this booklet. The Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 30 November 2005 are contained in a separate document.

Yours faithfully and fraternally

RICHARD L. CAMM-JONES  
Secretary of the Grand Charity



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE GRAND CHARITY

8 March 2006

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## AGENDA

1. Minutes of the General Meeting held on Saturday, 29 October 2005 at Newbury Racecourse, Newbury, Berkshire, for confirmation (see page 9).
2. To receive the Report of the Council (see page 5).
3. To receive and adopt the Annual Report and Accounts of the Grand Charity for the year ended 30 November 2005 (see separate document).
4. To report Emergency Grants made since the last meeting.
5. To consider resolutions that the following grants be made (the paragraph references relate to the relevant narrative in the Report of the Council):-

### DISABILITY

- a. £52,000 to The Children's Trust (Report paragraph 8)

### VULNERABLE PEOPLE

- b. £105,000 in three equal annual instalments to Home-Start UK (Report paragraph 9)
  - c. £30,000 in two equal annual instalments to Friends of the Elderly (Report paragraph 10)
  - d. £30,000 in two equal annual instalments to Counsel and Care (Report paragraph 11)
6. To consider a resolution that £500,000 be placed at the disposal of the Council for grants to hospice services in 2006 (Report paragraph 12).
  7. To consider a resolution that £100,000 be placed at the disposal of the Council for general non-Masonic grants of £5,000 or less, in 2006 (Report paragraph 13).
  8. To consider a resolution that £30,000 be placed at the disposal of the Council in 2006 for match-funding grants of £5,000 or less (Report paragraph 14).

9. DISASTER RELIEF CHESTS (Report paragraph 15)
  - a. To ratify the opening of the following Relief Chests:
    - i. Hurricane Katrina 2005 Disaster Fund (opened 2 September 2005)
    - ii. Asian Earthquake 2005 (opened 10 October 2005)
  - b. To consider a resolution that the Council of the Grand Charity be given authority to make grants, at its discretion, from any of the Relief Chests opened for the Grand Charity by the Council in respect of specific major national or international disasters. Details of the grants made to be reported at the next General Meeting of the Grand Charity.
10. Appointments and elections of members to the Council of the Grand Charity under Regulation 0203.
  - a. To announce the name of the member appointed by the Grand President to be the Deputy President for the ensuing year.
  - b. To announce the name of the member appointed by the Grand President to be the Treasurer for the ensuing year.
  - c. To announce the names of members appointed by the Grand President to serve for the period 2006 to 2009.
  - d. To announce the names of members elected to represent Provincial Lodges for the period 2006 to 2009.
  - e. To announce the name of the member appointed by the Provincial Grand Master for the Province holding a Festival for the Grand Charity in the year 2007.
  - f. To announce the name of member elected to represent London Lodges for the period 2006 to 2009.
11. To elect the auditors of the Grand Charity's accounts.

# **REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE GRAND CHARITY FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

8 March 2006

## **GENERAL**

### **1. VICE GRAND PRESIDENT**

The Council is pleased to note that the Grand President has re-appointed RWBro the Rt Hon Lord Lane of Horsell, PSGW, as Vice Grand President of the Grand Charity.

### **2. VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE GRAND CHARITY**

Under the terms of Regulation 0202(e), the Council has re-elected WBro John D. Maynard, PAGDC, and elected WBro David W. Morrow, PGStB, as Vice-Presidents for the ensuing year, with effect from the end of the Annual General Meeting.

### **3. CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

Under the terms of Regulation 0203(b), the Council has co-opted WBro Grahame N. Elliott, CBE, PSGD, and WBro John D. Maynard, PAGDC, to serve for a period of one year:

### **4. RETIREMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Council wishes to extend its thanks and good wishes to the following members who complete their service at the end of the Annual General Meeting:

WBro Ray Elders, PSGD  
WBro Richard Hone, QC, PJGD  
WBro Bakul Vyas, PAGDC  
WBro Reginald Walter, PSGD  
WBro John Yeldham, PSGD

### **5. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

The Council presents the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 30 November 2005, which are contained in a separate paper.

## **MASONIC GRANTS**

### **6. MASONIC PROVINCE OF MIDDLESEX CHARITABLE TRUST**

Before the launch of Middlesex 98 in December 1992, the Province had been continuously fund-raising for Masonic charity for 22 years and the Provincial charity funds had long since been exhausted. In recognition of this, the Council of the Grand Charity at the time, agreed that, as a special arrangement, a proportion of the funds raised for the 1998 Appeal would be given as a grant to that Province's charitable fund. A further amount of £51,000 raised for the Festival has now been received and so a grant of

£12,750 has been made to the Masonic Province of Middlesex Charitable Trust.

#### 7. APPLICATIONS TO THE MASONIC RELIEF GRANTS COMMITTEE

Since the last report, the Council has ratified the following grants made by the Masonic Relief Grants Committee:

DATE	NO OF APPLICANTS ASSISTED	RELIEF GRANTED
17 August 2005	144	£204,292
21 September 2005	118	£172,730
19 October 2005	168	£253,527
16 November 2005	139	£188,039
20 December 2005	174	£241,502
18 January 2006	96	£133,340

These figures include grants made under Rule 0311.

### NON-MASONIC GRANTS

The Council proposes the non-Masonic grants set out below. (The reference in brackets at the end of each item relates to the Agenda item for the Annual General Meeting to be held on 8 March 2006, which is the resolution to implement the relevant proposals.)

#### DISABILITY

8. THE CHILDREN'S TRUST The Council recommends a grant to The Children's Trust of £52,000 to fund a ceiling-mounted hoist and tracking system in two residential units for severely disabled children. The Children's Trust provides both short and long term care, special education and therapeutic programmes for children who have profound learning and physical disabilities and complex health needs (Item 5a).

#### VULNERABLE PEOPLE

9. HOME-START UK The Council recommends a grant of £105,000 payable in equal annual instalments over three years to Home-Start UK to assist in setting up a regional network in north-east England and new schemes in Durham and Northumberland. Home-Start UK provides parent-to-parent support and practical help to families with babies and young children through 335 local volunteer schemes across the country (Item 5b).

10. FRIENDS OF THE ELDERLY The Council recommends a grant of £30,000 payable in equal annual instalments over two years to Friends of the Elderly to help support a day care centre in Malvern for older people with dementia. Friends of the Elderly provides residential care for the elderly and runs 17 care and nursing homes, as well as a home support service and day care centres for isolated older people and community services for those with dementia (Item 5c).

11. COUNSEL AND CARE The Council recommends a grant of £30,000 payable in equal annual instalments over two years to Counsel and Care to help establish an independent advocacy service for older people. Counsel and Care supports older people with an information and advice service and produces comprehensive reports and fact sheets on many relevant issues. The charity also runs a telephone helpline assisting about 10,000 older people each year (Item 5d).

#### GRANTS TO HOSPICES - 2006

12. The Council recommends that £500,000 be placed at its disposal for grants to hospice services in 2006 (Item 6).

#### GENERAL SMALL GRANTS – 2006

13. The Council recommends that £100,000 be placed at its disposal for general non-Masonic grants of £5,000 or less, in 2006 (Item 7).

#### MATCH-FUNDING GRANTS

14. The Council has now allocated funds from the amount placed at its disposal in March 2005, to match grants to national non-Masonic charities made by Provincial Grand Lodges (these are referred to at Appendix A of the Annual Report and Accounts). The Council now recommends that a further £30,000 should be placed at its disposal for similar grants, in other areas during 2006, which meet the guidelines of the Council and are of £5,000 or less (Item 8).

#### DISASTER RELIEF CHESTS

15. Immediately following the Asian tsunami disaster in December 2004, the Council, on behalf of the Grand Charity, opened a Relief Chest to receive donations from Freemasons who wished to support the relief work. At the Annual General Meeting in March 2005, authority was given for all money donated via the Relief Chest to be placed at the disposal of the Council for grants to charities caring for children affected by the disaster. Subsequently, additional chests have been opened following Hurricane Katrina and the South East Asia earthquake, for which the Council seeks retrospective approval. The Council also recommends that it should be given the authority to disburse, at its own discretion, any funds placed in the Disaster Relief Chests and to report details of the grants at the next opportunity (Item 9).

#### GENERAL SMALL GRANTS - 2005

16. The Council has now allocated the £100,000 placed at its disposal in March 2005 for small grants to non-Masonic charities. Appendix A of the Annual Report and Accounts is a list of these and other grants, individually under £10,000.

## GRANTS TO HOSPICES - 2005

17. The Council has now allocated all of the £500,000 placed at its disposal in March 2005 for grants to hospice services. Appendix B of the Annual Report and Accounts is a list of the grants made.

## **GENERAL MATTERS**

### LEGACIES AND BEQUESTS

18. Since the last General Meeting, the Grand Charity has received the following amounts from legacies of £1,000 or more:

Oscar F. Boehringer	£500,000.00
Catherine B.W. Acton	£135,381.11
Arthur E. Manly	£105,000.00
Charles H. Agar	£98,362.66
Doreen E. Gregory	£60,145.53
Peter Allen	£25,000.00
Arthur E. Manley	£20,500.00
Ernest Trotter	£18,677.04
Ronald A. Firmstone	£5,235.00

On behalf of the Grand Charity, the Council expresses its grateful thanks to all those who remember the Grand Charity in their Will.

### GENERAL MEETINGS

19. Arrangements have again been made with the Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London to hold a General Meeting of the Grand Charity on Wednesday, 21 June 2006. Although it will be specifically targeted at members of London Lodges, the meeting will be open to all members of the Grand Charity, who may also bring guests. Further details will be made available later.

20. The Grand Charity also now holds a General Meeting each year in one of the Provinces. The meeting held at Newbury Racecourse, Berkshire, on 29 October 2005, provided an opportunity for several of the surrounding Provinces to be involved. The Council wishes to record formally its thanks to the Provincial Grand Masters and members of those Provinces who assisted in organising the meeting. Similar arrangements have been made, with the assistance of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Yorkshire, West Riding, for a meeting to be held on Saturday, 16 September 2006, at the Harrogate International Centre. Further details will be made available later.

### LODGE CONTRIBUTIONS

21. The Council recommends to the Board of General Purposes that contributions to the Grand Charity, payable by Lodges under Rule 271, Book of Constitutions, in respect of each of their members, for the year 2007, should be not less than £11.50.

RAYMOND J. LYE  
President of the Grand Charity  
18 January 2006

# THE GRAND CHARITY

ESTABLISHED BY THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

## MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING

HELD AT

NEWBURY RACECOURSE, NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE

ON SATURDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2005

UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE VICE GRAND PRESIDENT

**As well as officers and members of the Grand Charity, many invited guests were present.**

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The Vice Grand President entered and opened the meeting at 11.00 am by welcoming all those present. He then called on the President of the Grand Charity.

### OPENING REMARKS

PRESIDENT OF THE GRAND CHARITY: This is the seventh General Meeting of the Grand Charity to be held outside London, and on behalf of the members of the Grand Charity, I am very pleased to welcome this morning their Worships the Mayors of Windsor & Maidenhead, Woodley, the Constable of the Town and Manor of Hungerford, together with several Town Councillors and other special guests, as well as our ladies and members of the public and press.

This is a meeting of the members of the Grand Charity and its business is typical of a general meeting, of which there are usually three held each year. I am sure that it would be helpful to most of you if I gave you a brief background and some explanation of what the meeting is about.

The Grand Charity is the central Masonic charity. It is administered by a Council of 31 members, who together broadly represent Freemasons in all areas of England and Wales.

The Grand Charity is responsible to all Freemasons in that area of whom the vast majority, those who are Master Masons, are members of the Grand Charity and can influence its affairs, by attending and voting at meetings such as this one today. Its principal activities, on behalf of English and Welsh Freemasons, are:

- To provide financial help to Masons or their dependants who are in financially distressed circumstances
- To assist other Masonic charities in time of special need
- To provide the central channel for giving to non-Masonic charitable causes - as a result of which the Grand Charity has become one of the major grant making charities in the United Kingdom
- To provide relief, throughout the world, to those affected by major disasters.

The agenda for this meeting today will demonstrate all of these aspects and the meeting will, I hope, approve the decisions taken by the Council.

After the formal business of the meeting has been completed, you will hear about the work of the Grand Charity from two of its officers and receive addresses from the representatives of two operating charities that have received major grants from the Grand Charity and of a local organisation that has received support from local masons, the Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust.

From this meeting, therefore, I hope that you will gain an overview of the scale of operations of the Grand Charity and an insight into the charitable work that is undertaken on behalf of its members. You will learn about grants made to support many organisations involved in welfare, care and medical research, which help Masons and non-Masons alike and none of which would be possible without the support of individual Freemasons and their families, for the work of the Grand Charity is funded entirely by contributions from Freemasons and their families.

As I have explained, one of the prime objectives of the Grand Charity is to make grants to operating charities. The work of these organisations is frequently neither recognised nor appreciated by the general public and it is most gratifying to have an opportunity to provide a forum for their efforts to be publicised. I hope that you will particularly enjoy that aspect of today's meeting.

After the meeting, you will have an opportunity to meet the members of the Council and discuss with them any matters that you wish to raise. This is an important opportunity for communication between the Council and staff and the members.

The purpose of the General Meetings held outside London is to bring an insight and explanation of the workings of the Grand Charity to as many members as possible. While the Grand Charity has taken a direct responsibility for the organisation of the meeting, enormous help has been received from the members of the Masonic Provinces of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire & Isle of Wight, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire. I wish to thank the members of those five Provinces who have given so much time and support in helping to achieve this result. The members of the Council and I are most grateful. Judging from the attendance today, your efforts have been most successful and we thank you for your support.

On a personal basis, I am grateful to Provincial Grand Masters RW Bros Englefield, Bellinger, Wakeham and Reed for their personal support today. Sadly, Michael Hooton is unable to be here but we wish him a speedy recovery. Martin Peters, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master is representing the Province of Berkshire. Like me, you may wonder if the presence of Hywel Davies from South Wales, Eastern Division, heralds the possibility of a General Meeting in Cardiff in the not too distant future! It is good to see you and Andrew Gretton here today. Thank you all for coming.

Finally, I wish to say how pleased we are that the Vice Grand President, Lord Lane, is presiding over this meeting. Many Masons here today will remember Lord Lane in office as President of the Board of General Purposes from 1991 to 1995 and as Senior Grand Warden from 2002 to 2004. We are most fortunate to have his advice and experience within the Grand Charity.

Ladies Gentlemen and Brethren, I do hope that you find the meeting interesting and enjoyable.

### **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the General Meeting held on 28 June 2005, at Freemasons' Hall, London, were taken as read and were confirmed.

### **REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE GRAND CHARITY**

The President (RWBro Raymond J. Lye, PJGW) proposed and the Deputy President (WBro Ian R. Chalk, PJGD) seconded that the following report of the Council of the Grand Charity be taken as read. The members agreed.

## REPORT DATED 29 OCTOBER 2005

### GENERAL

#### 1. NEW MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL

The Grand President has appointed RWBro Sir Stuart Hampson, PJGW, to the Council.

### MASONIC GRANTS

#### 2. APPLICATIONS FOR MASONIC RELIEF GRANTS

Since the last report, the Council has ratified the following grants made by the Masonic Relief Grants Committee:

DATE	NO OF GRANTS AWARDED	TOTAL RELIEF
18 May 2005	146	£206,440
15 June 2005	140	£185,001
20 July 2005	194	£240,373

These figures include grants made under Rule 0311.

### NON-MASONIC GRANTS

The Council proposes the non-Masonic grants set out below. (The reference in brackets at the end of each item relates to the Agenda item for the General Meeting to be held on 29 October 2005, which is the resolution to implement the relevant proposals.)

### MEDICAL RESEARCH

3. ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH TRUST The Council recommends a grant to Alzheimer's Research Trust of £150,000 payable in three equal instalments to fund a research project investigating whether a diet of oily fish could be a means of slowing down Alzheimer's disease. The Trust is currently spending £5.8 million on research to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease, which affects at least 500,000 people in the UK (Item 3a).

4. TOMMY'S The Council recommends a grant of £69,500 to Tommy's for the second year of a two-year project to investigate the effect of anti-oxidant therapy in pregnancy and in preventing pre-eclampsia. Pre-eclampsia occurs in 5% of pregnant women and can cause renal failure, liver damage and brain haemorrhaging in the unborn baby (Item 3b).

5. MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE ASSOCIATION The Council recommends a grant to the Motor Neurone Disease Association of £50,000 payable in two equal instalments to fund a PhD student to work with an established senior researcher carrying out research into motor neurone disease. The Association is funding 22 biomedical research projects amounting to £1.3 million per year (Item 3c).

#### VULNERABLE PEOPLE

6. ABBEYFIELD UK The Council recommends a grant of £85,000 to Abbeyfield UK to fund a new training programme for staff to improve staff retention, motivation and job satisfaction and to ensure a consistently high level of service to residents. Abbeyfield UK provides housing, care and support for almost 2,000 older people in 185 houses supported by volunteers and nearly 1,400 staff (Item 3d).

7. ST JOHN'S FAMILY RESOURCE UNIT The Council recommends a grant of £40,000 to St John's Family Resource Unit to develop a children's nursery to help neglected or abused children to overcome profound developmental delay. St John's is a residential assessment centre providing advice to social services and a tailored programme of counselling and rehabilitation to develop parenting skills (Item 3e).

8. TOUCHSTONES 12 The Council recommends a grant of £15,000 to Touchstones 12 to fund a support worker in a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in North Wales for homeless clients who have voluntarily entered the 12-step abstinence programme for recovery. Funding will be made in two tranches with the second payment being dependent on a satisfactory six-month review (Item 3f).

#### DISABILITY

9. ELIZABETH FOUNDATION The Council recommends a grant of £25,000 to the Elizabeth Foundation to fund a baby and toddler programme for deaf babies. The Foundation facilitates the early detection of deafness and follows a diagnosis with intervention services so that deaf children have the highest possibility of acquiring speech and language skills enabling most to participate in mainstream education (Item 3g).

#### YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

10. DEPAUL TRUST The Council recommends a grant to the Depaul Trust of £50,000 payable in two equal instalments to fund a community centre and hostel for homeless young people in Birmingham. Depaul runs 40 projects across the country helping 3,000 homeless young people. This integrated project caters for the local community and for young offenders making the transition back into society (Item 3h).

11. OVER THE WALL The Council recommends a grant of £30,000 to Over the Wall to fund a one-week residential activity camp for 60 children affected by cancer and other serious illnesses to be held at Bryanston School. The camp is free of charge and has a structured programme of physical, creative and performing activities. Children are referred by their medical teams from 50 hospitals all over England (Item 3i).

#### EMERGENCY GRANTS

12. The President has authorised an Emergency Grant of £50,000 to the Mayor of London's Fund to support victims of the 7 July London bombings.

#### **GENERAL MATTERS**

##### LEGACIES AND BEQUESTS

13. Since the last report, the Grand Charity has received the following legacies of £1,000 or more:

Mrs Evelyn R. Stokes	£10,163.47
Mrs Hilda D. Dove	£5,010.25

On behalf of the Grand Charity, the Council expresses its grateful thanks to all those who provide legacies to the Grand Charity.

##### WILTSHIRE FESTIVAL - 2005

14. The Provincial Grand Lodge of Wiltshire's Festival for the Grand Charity held on 18 June 2005 at Salisbury Racecourse, raised £980,650. The Council is grateful to RWBro Francis Wakem, QPM, Provincial Grand Master for Wiltshire, and the members of his Province for their most generous support.

##### NORTH WALES FESTIVAL - 2006

15. The 21st Annual Festival to be held on behalf of the Grand Charity will take place on Saturday, 10 June 2006, at the North Wales Conference Centre, Llandudno, under the Presidency of the Provincial Grand Master for North Wales. Details of the arrangements may be obtained from:-

WBro R. Leonard Ellis, PJGD, Provincial Grand Secretary  
8 Mostyn Avenue, Craig-y-don, Llandudno LL30 1YS

Tel: 01492 860223      Email: [office@northwalesmasons.com](mailto:office@northwalesmasons.com)

## ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

16 At the request of the Board of General Purposes, the Council has considered the proposal that Installed Masters Lodges should be exempt from paying Annual Contributions to the Grand Charity. Notice of Motion to amend the appropriate Rule in the Book of Constitutions is to be given at the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge in September and the Council fully supports the Board of General Purposes in this respect.

### **END OF REPORT DATED 29 OCTOBER 2005**

#### **COMMENT ON THE REPORT**

PRESIDENT OF THE GRAND CHARITY: I only wish to comment on two items in the report, which are not the subject of separate agenda items.

Paragraph 2 relates to Masonic Relief Grants and shows that, in the three months to July this year, 480 applications were relieved, for sums totalling just over £630,000, at an average of £1,320 for each grant. These figures indicate a welcomed awareness of this most important activity. In a few minutes, Dr Vivian Thomas, who is Chairman of the Masonic Relief Grants Committee and therefore deeply involved with this aspect of our affairs, will be giving a brief overview of the help that we give.

I am pleased to report that the 2005 Festival for the Grand Charity, which was held in Salisbury last June by the Province of Wiltshire, was a most successful event. A sum of almost £1 million was raised – an excellent effort for such a small Province of only 44 Lodges.

The members of the Council and I are most grateful to the Provincial Grand Master, Francis Wakem, and the members of his Province, for their hard work, dedication and generosity and I am delighted to see him and his colleagues here today.

I propose that the report, with the exception of paragraphs 3 to 11, which are the subject of separate agenda items and will be dealt with later, be adopted and entered in the minutes.

The motion was seconded by the Deputy President  
and was agreed by the members.

The President then proposed that the approval of the nine grants set out in agenda items 3a) to i) be taken together.

The motion was seconded by the Deputy President  
and was agreed by the members.

The President proposed that the nine grants set out in items 3 a) to i) of the agenda be approved.

The motion was seconded by the Deputy President  
and was agreed by the members.

The President introduced WBro Dr Vivian Thomas, PJGD, Chairman of the Masonic Relief Grants Committee, who outlined the work undertaken by the Committee and emphasised some of the recent changes that had taken place.

The President reported the following Emergency Grants that he had authorised to be made:

- £10,000 to Save the Children for famine relief work in Niger
- \$35,000 (about £19,200) to the Red Cross for the relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina
- \$15,000 (about £8,500) to the Disaster Relief Fund of the Masonic Service Association of North America following Hurricane Katrina to help with the long term relief efforts for Freemasons and their families in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi
- £100,000 to the Red Cross to aid victims of the earthquake in South Asia

The President introduced Laura Chapman, Chief Executive of the Grand Charity

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE:** One of the primary reasons that the Grand Charity was established in 1980 was to enable the Craft, as a whole, to make donations to non-Masonic charities. With these grants, the Grand Charity seeks to achieve four objectives:

- To make a significant difference to people in real need.
- To support issues that individual Freemasons and their families are concerned about and will be glad to be helping.
- To maximise the impact we achieve.
- And finally, through the publicity received from grants to national charities, to raise public awareness about Freemasons' charitable support.

In the past five years, the Grand Charity has made grants totalling more than £12 million to many different non-Masonic charities. Since 1984, it has donated more than £5.5 million to hospices throughout England and Wales.

Here, in the five Provinces that have helped the Grand Charity plan our meeting today, 18 hospices are being supported, with nearly £200,000 donated to help with their annual running costs over the past five years. The scale of the Grand Charity's non-Masonic donations makes it among the leading grant giving bodies in the UK.

In the year to end of November 2004, more than £2.3 million was donated to 300 charities in England and Wales. As you can see from the leaflets that you found on your seats, the Grand Charity supports charities under five main headings:

- Medical research
- Vulnerable people
- Youth opportunities
- Hospices and
- Emergency relief work

Our speakers today represent two of these - medical research and vulnerable people.

Before I introduce our speakers, I would like to spend just a few moments updating you on the Grand Charity's support for victims of the Asian tsunami disaster. Immediately following the disaster on Boxing Day, indeed, on the 27th of December, the President signed an Emergency Grant of £100,000 for the British Red Cross, which was hand delivered, and most graciously received, by Sir Nicolas Young, Chief Executive of the British Red Cross, personally, on the first day that the Red Cross officially reopened following the holiday closure. In addition, the President authorised a £10,000 Emergency Grant to the District Grand Lodge of Madras and £25,000 to the District Grand Lodge of Sri Lanka to assist those Districts in their support for the tsunami victims.

In response to requests from the Craft, the Grand Charity also opened a Relief Chest for tsunami victims, and for those of you unfamiliar with the jargon of Freemasonry, this is effectively a designated account, operated by the Grand Charity, to receive charitable donations from Lodges, Chapters and individual Masons who wanted to help the relief efforts. The response by the Craft has been overwhelmingly generous; donations now approach £800,000, with deposits still coming in. Very few, if any, organisations other than the world's governments, have given as much for the victims of this terrible disaster.

Such a magnificent outpouring of generosity from the Craft has placed a significant responsibility on the Council of the Grand Charity to ensure that this money is used to the best of purposes. Recent press coverage on the inefficiencies and waste of charitable money in the tsunami relief efforts

highlights the importance of due diligence and monitoring. Our task has been to identify excellent projects, with first-rate charities, to ensure that the Craft's donations provide relief, in an efficient and cost effective way, to those who really need it.

Following meetings in London and a visit to review on the ground delivery capability and meet with local staff, we decided to select Plan International as our partner to manage projects at the local level in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. With your support a three-year programme to help families in 10 villages in the Villapuram area of Tamil Nadu is already up and running. With a grant of £320,000, the project is helping families to rebuild their lives through a series of activities including:

- ensuring the men have the boats and nets they need to return to their work as fishermen;
- setting up childcare and healthcare centres; and
- offering evening tuition to help children continue their education.

I hope that if you have not done so already, you will take an opportunity during lunch to see a display of Plan's work and to speak to Shanthi Ayres, from Plan, who traveled with me to India in the spring to see the relief underway in the area.

The Council has also agreed to support a project developed by members of the Light of Siam Lodge in Phuket, Thailand. The men from this Lodge, who are residents of Phuket and very much part of the local community, were there on the day of the disaster, helping to pull survivors from the rubble and providing shelter in their own homes for those made homeless. They have created a project to help the most vulnerable—the children of the poor, orphaned or left destitute by the tsunami—by building an orphanage and day-care centre. The Grand Charity intends to offer support of approximately £100,000 over an initial three-year period, to help with the on-going running costs of the centre.

The Chief Executive then introduced speakers from the Institute of Cancer Research, Contact a Family and the Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust.

The Vice Grand President, RWBro the Rt Hon Lord Lane of Horsell, PSGW, then addressed the meeting. He thanked all those involved, in particular those who had attended.

The meeting was closed.

**END**



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**The Grand Charity, 60 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AZ**

Registered Charity No 281942

**Tel: 020 7395 9261 - Email: [info@the-grand-charity.org](mailto:info@the-grand-charity.org)**