

**Presentation to**  
**Province of Yorkshire, West Riding**  
**31 October 2007**

**Slide one: Title Slide**

It is a pleasure to be here in Bradford today. I was fortunate to visit Leeds in April of this year for the splendid and enjoyable occasion of the Festival held in support of the Grand Charity which raised an outstanding £5.1 million.

**\*\*Slide Two: Thank you**

This is the highest ever figured raised by a Festival in support of our Charity and I would like to begin by saying thank you.

**\*\*Slide Three: Presentation of Festival Proceeds**

I was delighted to be able to join the President of the Grand Charity and the Deputy Grand Master, Peter Lowndes, a few weeks ago when they welcomed your Provincial Grand Master to London to present the proceeds of the Festival in person. On behalf of the Grand Charity, I would like to once again re-iterate the gratitude expressed on that occasion for the extremely generous support you have shown for The Freemasons' Grand Charity.

After many years of hardwork preparing for the Festival and such an outstanding result, I am certain that you are more than familiar with our activities supporting people in need from the Masonic and wider communities. For this reason, I would like to devote my time today to explaining what your support means for the work of the Grand Charity and how your generous donations will be used to help people in need in the future.

**\*\*Slide Four: Masonic Relief Grants**

As you know the first priority of the Charity is support for distressed Masons and their dependants. In Yorkshire, West Riding we have helped 69 people during the last year with every day living costs, unexpected emergencies and the cost of mobility equipment. The financial value of this support has been some £103,490 or an average of £1,500 per case, but the improvement in the quality of life of these individuals cannot be valued in monetary terms only.

[Details have been changed in the following cases to protect the anonymity of the applicants]

For example, an application was received on behalf of a widow in her late 80's. Despite the mobility difficulties of her advanced years she still took an active role as a volunteer for a number of local charities. On her modest income, however, she was struggling to pay the travel costs involved and it looked like she may not be able to continue helping the organisations for very much longer. A small financial grant was made towards the everyday living expenses of the lady, easing her financial pressures and enabling her to continue her worthwhile voluntary work.

In another example, the wife of a young mason had been diagnosed with a serious neuro-muscular disorder, restricting her movement and mobility. The Charity was able to fund the cost of a special wheelchair, enabling the lady concerned to retain a greater degree of independence and providing respite for the husband from some of the pressures of caring for his wife.

More recently, a Mason who had seen his home devastated by flood waters received our support. Whilst this retired gentleman had a comfortable standard of day to day living, he had very little in savings and was unsure how he would meet the costs of replacing many of the items he and his wife lost when the flood waters filled their home. A grant was made towards the cost of replacing furniture and some other essential items, helping this couple as they begin to make the family house, a home again.

The Masonic Relief Grants illustrated by the examples above account for the majority of the Grand Charity's expenditure and I am proud to say that no case which falls within our guidelines has ever been rejected due to lack of available funds to provide help. Thanks to the support we receive from Masons and their families through Festivals, legacies and other donations we are also able to expand this support for people in need to a much wider audience.

Non-Masonic grants are given to support the work of national charities active on issues of concern, importance or interest to Masons and their families.

**\*\*Slide Five: Breast Cancer Haven**

For example, subject to the appropriate approvals at a forthcoming General Meeting, The Freemasons' Grand Charity hopes to make a substantial donation to Breast Cancer Haven to assist with the development of a new facility situated in Leeds.

Breast Cancer Haven is a charity which offers breast cancer patients a programme of care which is specifically designed to complement and enhance their conventional treatment.

Breast Cancer Haven operates day centres which are staffed by specialist teams and provide free support, information and complementary therapies before, during and after medical treatment. Services offered include counselling, aromatherapy, yoga classes and hair and make-up workshops to name just a few.

The charity was founded after Sara Davenport learned that her children's nanny, Wendy Ricketts, was one of the people dealing with the reality of being amongst the 44,000 new cases of the disease which are diagnosed every year. Sara was concerned by the lack of emotional support and information available to Wendy and, after selling her art business, set about establishing the first Breast Cancer Haven Centre in London.

This Centre alone has provided over 52,000 appointments since it was opened in 2000, helping thousands of women and men who have been diagnosed with breast cancer.

In 2004, a second centre was opened in Hereford and Breast Cancer Haven is now working towards establishing its third centre at a site in Yorkshire. The Grand Charity hopes to provide a substantial boost to the establishment of this centre with a donation in the region of £250,000. We believe this is a popular cause with noteworthy local support and this grant will have a positive impact on the quality of life of a significant number of breast cancer sufferers.

**\*\*Slide six: Hospices**

As well as enabling us to offer substantial assistance to national charities, like Breast Cancer Haven, the support shown through the Festival will help us to continue to make grants to Hospices across the Country, including the thirteen assisted in Yorkshire, West Riding.

For over 20 years, The Grand Charity has made an annual contribution towards the multi-million pound running costs of hospices which receive 60% or less of their funding from the NHS. During this time, more than £6 million has been given and the Hospice grants scheme remains one of our most popular areas of support.

**\*\*Slide seven: Support for Children's hospices**

This year we have, for the first time, included a separate allocation of funding for children's hospices. Previously, grants to these services were assessed alongside applications from adult services but recognising the additional fundraising challenges faced by the children's services we have now 'ring fenced' the money available to them. This year the majority of eligible children's services are expected to receive a grant of over £3,000, compared to an average of £2,300 in 2006. Combined with grants to 189 adult services, the total amount given in 2007 will be some £600,000.

You may be interested to know that the grant cheques are expected to be distributed to Provincial Offices during November for presentation at a date convenient to them.

**\*\*Slide eight: Emergency Disaster Relief**

Just as The Grand Charity has an annual programme of support for Hospices, it also seeks to respond when disasters like hurricanes, earthquakes and droughts occur throughout the world. Relief efforts following such events are frequently supported by an emergency grant made under the authority of the President of the Grand Charity.

Clearly events of this nature are unpredictable and it is not possible for me to set out where the support of the Grand Charity may be given during the forthcoming year. Instead, I would like to use the example of help which was given earlier this year following torrential rain across the UK, resulting in some of the worst flooding to hit the country for over 40 years.

As one of the regions affected, I am sure you will be only too familiar with the devastation caused to hundreds of families as their homes, businesses and communities were swamped by flood waters. I gave you an example of one family affected when I spoke about the Masonic Relief Grants a few moments ago.

The support shown for the Grand Charity by Freemasons and their families ensured that the President was able to authorise grants totalling £100,000 for distribution to charities providing support in the affected areas.

In the early days of the flooding, a sum of £35,000 was made available to match Provincial donations to charities providing relief in local areas, up to a maximum of £5,000 per Province. In addition, £65,000 was given towards the Red Cross's national work providing support as individuals began to return to their homes and rebuild their lives.

The Grand Charity was very happy to be able to boost this Province's own support for the ARC Addington Fund with a grant of £5,000. A further £5,000 was given to match Yorkshire, North and East Ridings donation to the Disaster Relief Fund established by the British Red Cross.

Whilst I hope that the people of Yorkshire, West Riding will not face such a dreadful situation again, your support for the Grand Charity means that we can be on hand to provide assistance if it should be needed.

### ***Relief Chest***

Before I conclude, I would like to say a few words about the Relief Chest Scheme, which is another of the activities of The Freemasons' Grand Charity.

The Relief Chest Scheme, provided free to the user, helps Lodges and other Masonic organisations to increase the value of funds they collect for charity, by taking on the administrative burden of reclaiming tax under the gift aid scheme and investing funds at a favourable rate of interest.

Millions of pounds is given to charity via the scheme every year and last year alone over £6 million was deposited into the fund and more than £0.5 million was added in tax relief under Gift Aid.

Over 3,800 Masonic organisations already take advantage of this scheme, helping them to give to a range of charities easily and tax-effectively.

**\*\*Slide nine: Contact Details**

The grants and services I have outlined are just a few examples of how The Freemasons' Grand Charity will put the generous donation of Yorkshire, West Riding to good use supporting people in need. There are, of course, many more examples which I do not have time to cover here.

So in conclusion, it simply remains for me to once again express our thanks for your exceptional generosity and to encourage you to follow the activities of The Freemasons' Grand Charity as we continue to work on your behalf to make a positive impact on the lives of hundreds of Masons, their families and the wider community. This work is possible thanks to your support and we hope you will watch with pride in your contribution to it as it continues to unfold.

Thank you for your time.

ENDS