

Delivering the Ritual.

A good practice guide for inclusion, involvement, and development.

Introduction

This guide is aimed at improving understanding of the Royal Arch and in maintaining the interest in and increasing the enjoyment of the Royal Arch throughout the Province. It embraces the objectives of the Devonshire Provincial Strategy by encouraging a whole team approach to delivering our ritual and ceremony.

“it would be fantastic to see Chapters evolve to include for more Companions to be actively involved in the Royal Arch ceremonies and Lectures. This will help them to understand the ceremony better as well as to gain in confidence and to have a stronger sense of involvement and purpose”

**E.Comp Christopher Roach MEGS
October 2022**

Why?

Many of us recognise from our working environment that encouragement, learning, development, and teamwork are essential to success, but these obvious tools are not always transferred into our Chapters.

Tradition and the “*we have always done it this way*” approach is great, but “*what if*” we were to think about things a little bit differently by proactively looking to the future and by allowing our Companions to gain understanding by experience?

Involving more members to actively participate in our meetings is a great way to encourage attendance and to promote Royal Arch learning and development. It is also a superb tool for allowing Companions to gain in confidence which will, in turn, encourage them to progress through the Chapter Offices.

Planning and Teamwork.

The planning of each meeting is key to its success and good practice is that the content of each Convocation should always be well planned by the Principals, the Director of Ceremonies and the ScribeE.

Good practice is also for the work of the Chapter to involve as many Companions as possible. This proactively engages with the membership and promotes a whole team approach.

Just because something has never been done in a certain way before doesn't mean that it can't be. A forward-thinking Chapter will think of the “bigger picture” and have a vision for where it wants to be in 5 years' or 10 years' time.

The Chapter Work

Alongside the administrative parts of our meetings our labours can be broken down into:

- Presentations.
- Lectures.
- Exaltations.
- Installations.

Consideration for “good practice”

- Presentations: Presentations should be planned to actively engage with the audience.
As an example, the presentation may be on a subject of Royal Arch interest, it may be a planned discussion on a certain part of the Ritual or it may be the delivery of the “In Camera” playlet, delivered by the Learning and Development Team. Whatever the presentation is, the audience must feel they are a part of it.

A possible approach to this could be to ask that one of the Companions facilitates this part of the meeting. **(it does not have to be the MEZ, or Scribe E who would traditionally take on the role)**

The role of the Facilitator is to introduce the presentation before it is given and then to summarise the presentation at the end in such a way as to encourage questions from the audience. Done properly this encourages active listening and promotes learning and development through audience participation.

- Lectures (Mystical, Historical and Symbolical): Consider splitting these lectures into component parts by using the permissive or catechetical format.
With some thought and planning the Mystical Lecture could be delivered by three Companions, the Historical by perhaps four and the Symbolical by as many as ten.
- Exaltations: using the permissive versions of our Ritual allows for several Companions to be involved. Splitting the Ritual between all three Principals and all three Sojourners immediately involves six Companions. Three “junior” Companions could read the Sojourners Readings. The permissive Mystical Lecture can be split between three Companions. Add in the explanation of the signs and the work of the Scribe N, the Janitor, the Scribe E and the DC and an Exaltation could be planned to involve as many as 16 Companions.
- Installations: Installations are often considered the domain of the Installing Principals, the Scribe E and the DC, but even here we can include other Companions.
There is nothing to say that the Robes have to be delivered by the Installing Principal and these addresses could be delivered by another competent Excellent Companion or Companion.

Summary

Every Companion is a valued member of the Devonshire Royal Arch Team and teamwork is an essential element in securing the future of the Royal Arch in the Province.

Looking after the needs and expectations of our Companions is key to the future success of our Chapters.

Happy Companions make for a happy Chapter and all Companions should be actively encouraged to become involved in the work of their Chapter should they wish.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Comp C.A. Roach', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

E.Comp C.A. Roach
Most Excellent Grand Superintendent
October 2022