

When the candidate enters the Lodge room his attention is directed to three pillars and at one stage the Ark is momentarily symbolised in terms similar to the Ark of Salvation. The candidate is finally instructed to advance in the spirit of the Cardinal Virtues.

The teaching of the Degree emphasises the importance of the family strengths and the need for each member of society to play his part for the benefit of all. We are taught that out of chaos and catastrophe mankind can survive and that we should face adversity together, helping to look after those less fortunate than ourselves. During the ceremony analogies are drawn between the dangers of the flood and the dangers of life. We are reminded of how we should strive to reach the Ark, the haven of rest, just as did Noah's family and the other occupants of the Ark in the Biblical tales of the deluge.

Most Royal Ark Mariner Lodges meet three times per year, usually on the same evening as their Mark Lodge. In some instances the RAM installation may be held at a different meeting so as to allow the incoming Worshipful Commander to preside over the Festive Board and to have "his own" evening.

The officers of a Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners are similar to those in a Mark Lodge although they bear different names. The Master is known as The Worshipful Commander, the Secretary as the Scribe, the Inner Guard as the Guardian and the Tyler as the Warder. There is only one ceremony (apart from installation of a Worshipful Commander) and that is the ceremony of elevation which at around forty-five minutes is relatively short. Only one ritual is used throughout the constitution. There is currently only one Lodge in the District of Cyprus – Kypros Royal Ark Mariners Lodge No. 1835 – which meets at the Apollo Rooms, Episkopi.

If you would like further information on the Royal Ark Mariners Degree your Mark Lodge Secretary will be able to provide you with the name of a contact.



The Ancient & Honourable Fraternity of Royal ark Mariners

A Fact Sheet for the information of
Mark Master Masons interested in
Joining the Degree of Royal ark Mariner

Royal Ark Mariners Degree

Information about the Degree of Royal Ark Mariner

The Royal Ark Mariners Degree

This Fact Sheet has been drawn up to make the Mark Master Mason aware of the Royal Ark Mariners Degree and to invite you to seriously consider taking 'the next regular step' in Freemasonry.

The degree is otherwise known as The Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners, and is sometimes referred to simply as RAM. This Degree, although worked under the aegis of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, and requiring every candidate to be a Mark Master Mason, has no historical connection whatsoever with that degree. Mark Grand Lodge's rule over the 'Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners' is simply a quirk of fate. It stands entirely alone and totally unrelated to any other Degree in Freemasonry.

The history of the degree

The degree is around two hundred years old and, as its name suggests, it has a nautical flavour taking for its setting the circumstances leading up to the Great Flood and the steps taken by Noah to build the Ark by which mankind was preserved from perishing in the 'Universal Deluge'. Like the Mark Master Mason's Degree, which is based on an established fact (i.e. the construction of the Temple at Jerusalem), so the degree of Royal Ark Mariner is also based on an actual happening, i.e. the Great Flood, as recorded in the Bible.

We are, of course, reminded of the widespread practice of the degree every time we enter a Craft Lodge and observe the use of the dove bearing an olive branch by the Deacons rather than Mercury, the messenger of the Gods, which we see in Mark Lodges.

In 1870 Brother The Reverend Canon Portal, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons announced that since the degree of Ark Mariner had been worked in Mark Lodges since 1790, the Mark would protect the Royal Ark Mariner degree under a new Grand Master's Royal Ark Council. This is the reason for Mark Grand Lodge's current control of the Royal Ark Mariners.

Qualifications for membership

The degree of Royal Ark Mariner may only be conferred on Mark Master Masons, the government of the two degrees is inextricably linked and a Royal Ark Mariner Lodge is said to be moored to a Mark Lodge bearing the same number, irrespective of age, and generally bearing the same name.

RAM regalia



A different set of regalia is required in the RAM consisting of an Apron and Jewel and you should be aware of the costs involved in this. The jewel is not worn when attending a Craft or Chapter meeting.

The ceremony

More recently the Tracing Board has been re-introduced, it having been out of favour for over one hundred years. That it could be re-activated was in no small measure due to Gladsmuir Lodge No. 367 (of the Province of Hertfordshire) who kept a copy of their tracing board and, with the assistance of the then senior members of the Province, persuaded the 'powers that be' that it would add value to our Lodges and their ceremonial. Some Royal Ark Mariner Lodges are also starting to revive the use of a special floor cloth which adds much lustre to the ceremonies. The qualification for "elevation to membership" is, as mentioned above, that of being a Mark Master Mason.

Elevation into the Royal Ark Mariner Degree commemorates the providence and mercy of God and relates to the legend of the deluge. The subject matter being taken directly from The Bible is naturally both beautiful and instructive.