

# Supreme Grand Chapter of England



Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AZ

*Second Grand Principal*

Telephone: 020 7831 9811

Fax: 020 7831 6021

6<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Dear Grand Superintendent

## **Royal Arch Bicentenary and Royal College of Surgeons Appeal 2013**

Now that 2013 is safely behind us, I can finally sit down and write to you with my grateful thanks for all your hard work and efforts generally for the Royal Arch Bicentenary.

I hope you will agree that the Bicentenary has been a great success, and has not only been enjoyable but has raised the profile of the Royal Arch, and has given us an opportunity to explain more about our origins, our connection with the Craft and the importance of the journey through pure antient freemasonry. This would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and energy with which all Provinces and London have embraced the concept of the Bicentenary, looking forward as well as back.

This brings me to the Appeal for the Royal College of Surgeons, for which I am Chairman, and forms part of our commitment to the future of the Royal Arch. I am absolutely delighted to report that the **total raised** (or promised imminently) **is now £2.4 million**, and I am confident that with a final sweep and a few more twisting of arms, we can reach the magic figure of £2.5 million. This will be added to the existing 250<sup>th</sup> Craft Fund of £3.5 million to make a grand total for the benefit of the Royal College of £6 million, one of their biggest endowments for surgical research. I am certain that this will produce results over the years ahead to benefit society in general and our families in particular. The Royal College always has and will continue to support us enthusiastically.

Thank you, therefore, for your tremendous efforts over the last couple of years towards raising this magnificent amount, bearing in mind that our original target was £1 million, representing £10 from each Companion, plus gift aid of £2.50, making £12.50. As of September 2013 we had 81,359 individual Companions in England and Wales (including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) but we have also received valuable support from some of our Districts, other Masonic orders, and indeed members of the public and anonymous donors.

You can probably work out that the amount actually raised to date is the equivalent of £29.40 per Companion, or an average of £820 per Chapter, based on 2,923 Chapters in England and Wales; assuming we raise the final £100,000, the total per Companion will rise to £30.70. At that point, I suggest we can all sit back with a sigh of relief and satisfaction!

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According to our central records, we have received £65,370.40 from your Province, representing an average of £2,421.12 per Chapter (based on 27 Chapters) or £53.14 per Companion (based on 1,230 Companions). I would like to extend my thanks to you, your executive, and all the Chapters and Companions of Northamptonshire & Huntingdonshire for exceeding the average amount raised and I hope you will be able to extend my thanks to all those Companions over the coming months. The overall Provincial results will be published, probably in May, so that you can judge the performances for yourself.

Thank you again for your magnificent support for the Appeal, for the Bicentenary and for organising local celebrations.

Finally, very many thanks for entertaining me and the other rulers, if we managed to reach you in 2013. I hope to be able to visit you again before long, to thank you all once more, in person.

Yours sincerely and fraternally

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George P. Francis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

George Francis  
Second Grand Principal