



HELLO THERE!

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter. The first thing we must do is apologise for our recent lack of communication. For anyone who's ever moved premises, I'm sure you'll understand!!! There's just so much going on at BRAMM: new premises, new staff, new board members, new training sessions and seminars to deliver and new BFL test dates coming up. It really is ALL GO!!!

BUSY, BUSY!

Having delivered many seminars during 2010, we're experiencing a real surge of applications from both masons and local authorities! It sounds like our message is being heard and understood. This is really encouraging for us and all those who have already joined. BRAMM really can achieve great things if the majority all work together with a common goal. Here are our current statistics:

Approved Business = 604

Licensed Fixers = 811

Registered Burial Authorities = 140

LOCAL TRAINING

Is your 5 year renewal coming up? Have you gained enough On-Going Training credits for us to automatically renew your BRAMM Fixer License? If not, and we haven't offered free training in your area, please do contact the BRAMM office. Where demand is high, we will endeavour to provide FREE training sessions in your part of the country.

TECHNOLOGY

We've big plans for the future of the BRAMM website. As more and more of the industry embraces the technology, it makes sense to provide an improved online service, allowing masons to access all the relevant documentation online.

Inevitably this will take a little time to design and implement, but inevitably it will significantly improve our service, giving access to everything you need 24 hours a day. In the meantime, we need to address the issue of how the site currently displays in some versions of Internet Explorer. If you're experiencing problems try clicking the 'Compatible View' button (next to 'Refresh').



**FREE
TRAINING
FOR BRAMM
REGISTERED
MASONS**

BACK TO SCHOOL!

When we suggested that fixers had to provide evidence of on-going training in order to renew their BRAMM Fixer License, it was a little like telling the kids the summer holidays are over. There were moans and groans and a general negativity from masons who felt that On-Going Training was unnecessary.

However, in the same way that school kids soon get stuck into the autumn term, making new friends, working together and learning new skills, we have found that resistance to On-Going Training quickly diminishes once people get involved. Soon enough fixer masons get stuck in, meet new people, share their knowledge and enjoy the day!

In the same way as long summer holidays eventually become boring for kids, adults also need regular focus and stimulation. We need to be challenged... it's good for us! Leave it too long and it's easy to become bored and lazy, we start to cut corners and often don't care enough about our performance!

This sentiment is echoed in the success of the FREE BRAMM TRAINING DAYS that we've been running for nearly a year now. The take-up has been fantastic. Nearly every course has been over-subscribed and the feedback is very positive. Topics for training have included: Constructing Lawn Memorials Without the Use of Cement Joints, Installation of Memorials on Sloping Ground, Safety Inspection and Testing of Memorials, Manufactured Foundations and their Technical Specifications.

We advertised many of these courses in our last newsletter. To our delight, the response was overwhelming! Within 24 hours of distribution, every single course was over-subscribed. This is testament to the ethos of BRAMM. We know that conscientious, hard-working and reputable masons welcome training (especially when it's free)! It is in their interest to do a good job, to have well-trained, qualified employees and to work in accordance with the latest guidance. We are promoting more FREE training courses in this newsletter (see inside).



Balancing the Board

We welcomed three new board members to BRAMM a few months back, each committing their time, energy and experience to help improve the industry.

Ironically all three are past Presidents of NAMM and well experienced in the realms of the memorial mason. Each has been voted for fairly and openly by BRAMM registered masons from across the country (see Autumn and Winter Newsletters 2009 – available at www.bramm-uk.org).

This addition returns an equal balance to our board after the loss of the former NAMM representatives. We once again provide a fair representation for both masons and the institutes. This is of great importance, leading to non bias and proactive decision making.

This is how the BRAMM board is now structured:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Ian Hale (Mason) | Tim Morris (ICCM Corporate) |
| Brian Morgan (Mason) | Julie Dunk (ICCM Professional) |
| Jenny Gregson (Mason) | John Rotherham (FBCA) |
| Andrew Hawley (Mason) | Alan Fairchild (SLCC) |

The only major organisation not represented on our board is NAMM. This is a decision their current leadership have made and sadly reflects an attitude we struggle to understand. Every opportunity for them to be involved in a fair and balanced way has been made, but unfortunately that doesn't fit with their agenda.

Over the next few newsletters, we've invited our board members to give us a little background history about themselves and to help put a face to the name. So let's kick off with Brian Morgan...

Brian Morgan



Brian was born and educated in Cardiff, where his father, Wilson Philip and grandfather, Barrett Wilson, had both been indentured by the Mossford family as letter cutters in 1924 and 1904 respectively. Barrett rose to manage Mossfords before retiring after the 2nd World War and setting up the Wilson Morgan memorial business in Barry with Brian's father. Mossfords had been founder members of NAMM in 1907, and had commenced trading back in 1821.

Brian did not follow the family tradition as an apprentice letter cutter, but whilst in school and then studying for a B.Sc. he worked for his father in all aspects of the memorial trade, from wet rubbing and leading marble to fixing full kerb memorials, before granite lawn memorials became so popular. On graduating he entered industry in the early days of computers, firstly with Alcan Industries and then with Burroughs Corporation, who were the leading American computer company in banking. From there he helped found Wales' first computer bureau, before being head hunted as MD of Data Logic a European software group based in the Midlands.

By now married with 6 children he returned to South Wales and set up a financial services company. Meanwhile his father had merged with Mossfords, but with his failing health Brian began to assist with the business, which at that time employed just 5 staff. On Wilson's retirement Brian took over and was soon introduced to NAMM's Wales Region where he was elected Secretary.

Mossfords began to recover its pre-war prime position with a series of acquisitions in Cardiff, Newport, Barry, Ross-on-Wye and Bristol. Brian was considerably helped and delighted when all four of his sons decided to join him after completing their education, although the youngest eventually left as there were "too many brothers in the business". The family business of Memorial Services Ltd. now employs about 60 staff.

NAMM experienced serious financial problems in the mid 1980s and because of his wide business background Brian was invited to take on the role as Honorary Treasurer to help investigate and deal with them. The problems were successfully resolved, and he then served for 16 years before being elected to become National President during NAMM's centenary year in 2007.

During this period NAMM relocated its Head Office from Aylesbury to Rugby, to be more convenient for all its members, initiated the MAB PR campaign, created the Code of Working Practice linked to British Standards, opened the historical memorial garden at the National Memorial Arboretum, and helped found BRAMM.

Since leaving NAMM's General Council Brian has been saddened by their withdrawal from the BRAMM Board. This was why he offered his services to help ensure the continuing success of BRAMM in raising standards throughout the industry. He wishes to represent all memorial masons, and not just disillusioned NAMM members, as NAMM only has about 1/3rd of the trade as members.

Finally, away from work Brian is a Rotarian, a driver for the Convoy of Hope which takes humanitarian aid to Croatia, Belarus, and Kosovo, an avid reader and walker, and is also a typical Welsh Rugger bugger, having played for Pontypridd and Penarth clubs during his earlier years before becoming a worshiper at the Millennium Stadium cathedral.

PROBLEMS WITH ANCHORAGE IN SOFTER SOIL CONDITION

Over the last year we have had several conversations with masons expressing their concerns about installing memorials onto disturbed ground, soft or sandy soil. There are several ways to improve anchorage in weak resistant soils:

- 1) By extending the length of the ground support system we can achieve greater resistance and stability for a memorial;
- 2) An alternative is to use a wider diameter anchor. This will provide a greater surface area and consequently more resistance to the soil and forces applied;
- 3) In very weak soils a combination of both a longer length and wider diameter anchor may be required;
- 4) Even the use of two ground anchors may be a solution.

This industry has developed only a few anchor systems for installation in weaker soils. However there is no established test for such systems in these soil conditions.

With this in mind we were encouraged to consider current ground anchor testing procedures.

Most ground anchor testing is carried out in dryer weather, after all who wants to be testing in the rain, snow, and frost. Current testing means most systems are tested when the ground is dry and firm. The accredited test methods may not therefore reflect a worst case scenario.



GAINING A BRAMM FIXER LICENSE

There are now 3 options to achieve a fixer license...

- 1) Pass the BRAMM Fixer License Test Day
- 2) Hold an NVQ VR194 Fix & Secure Memorial Masonry
- 3) Hold the new Memorial Fixing City & Guilds qualification

TRAINING FOR THE BRAMM FIXER LICENSE (BFL) TEST DAY

If you or your fixers are due to take the BRAMM Test Day to achieve your/their BFL, you/they will certainly benefit from a little preparatory training. The BRAMM board wish to support BRAMM registered businesses with discounted training for fixer masons preparing to take their test.

The normal price for this training day is £150 + VAT per fixer. However, for a further 12 months we are offering this for £60 + VAT to BRAMM registered businesses. For more information, contact the BRAMM office.

**SAVE
£££**

BRAMM

2010 MASON TRAINING COURSES

We have arranged the following training courses that are absolutely FREE to BRAMM registered masons. These courses can be used to gain credits for extending your BRAMM Fixer Licence. Numbers are limited and some courses are already heavily booked, so please apply early if you are interested in attending.

South Wales – 6th October 2010

Installing Memorials to Sloping Ground

Normal Price = £125

**FREE
TO BRAMM
REGISTERED
MASONS**

Torfaen – 19th October 2010

Installing Memorials Without Cement Joints

Normal Price = £125

**FREE
TO BRAMM
REGISTERED
MASONS**

Stoke-on-Trent – 26th October 2010

Safety Inspection and Testing of Memorials

Normal Price = £125

**FREE
TO BRAMM
REGISTERED
MASONS**

Manchester – 23rd November 2010

Installing Memorials Without Cement Joints

Normal Price = £125

**FREE
TO BRAMM
REGISTERED
MASONS**

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK, CALL THE BRAMM OFFICE NOW ON:

01788 544963

Have we offered FREE Training Days in your part of the country? If not, why not give us a call – let's see if we can put that right! We will only organise training where there is sufficient demand, so be sure to get involved.

UP-COMING BRAMM FIXER LICENSE (BFL) TEST DAYS

South Wales: 14th Oct 2010

Stoke-on-Trent: 2nd Nov 2010

The above Test Days have been organised. To register, please contact the BRAMM office.



LOCAL AUTHORITY INTEREST**ESSENTIAL READING FOR ALL MASONS AND CEMETERY MANAGERS**

The British Standard 8415 (BS8415) provides information about the minimum structural design criteria and performance requirements of components and materials used to construct memorials. This is the standard that BRAMM registered masons must work to. Changes to the British Standard and other related documents have recently raised several questions for both masons and cemetery managers, who have in turn contacted the BRAMM office looking for clarification. We hope the following information will help explain the queries and advise on what is required from BRAMM registered masons and burial authorities:

1) BRITISH STANDARD CHANGES

BS8415 now requires a memorial above 625mm (previously 500mm) to be designed to withstand a load of 70kg applied at the apex of the memorial.

To meet this design criteria, BRAMM recommends the use of a ground anchor when installing on a precast foundation.

When fixing a memorial that is less than 625mm in height, we recommend bonding the memorial base and foundation using a stainless steel pin method to ensure the memorial will not simply fall if, for example, the cement weakens.

2) FOUNDATION SIZE

Ground anchors are accredited using an individual foundation with a minimum size of 15 inches front to back (further details can be found from manufacturers who have tested ground anchors).

BRAMM recommends that if smaller foundations are being considered then the manufacturer of the anchor system should be contacted. It is essential to ensure their product is compliant to the British Standard when used with a smaller foundation and that the manufacturer's guarantee and indemnity insurances will not be infringed. A written response from the manufacturer is recommended for your files.

Don't leave yourself open to possible liability if your memorial fails using a smaller underbase.

3) USE OF CEMENT IN COLD WEATHER CONDITIONS

A recently published document states that cement should not be used when the temperature is below 5°C (due to the risk of water freezing before it can react with cement). Unsurprisingly, this has concerned many masons who rightly point out that during the winter months the temperature in Britain barely exceeds 5°C! Last winter especially, virtually no work would have been carried out based on this criteria!

BRAMM recommend 2 solutions:

- a) **Antifreeze products may be considered where cement is to be used in low temperatures;**
- b) **There are also methods of construction which avoid the use of cement.**

Courses about cement free fixing are available for masons as part of our free On-Going Training. For further information contact the BRAMM office.

TO CONCLUDE:

British Standard 8415 (BS8415) is the memorial industry standard and all BRAMM registered fixer masons must comply with it.

We advise all Burial Authorities to review their rules, ensuring that they require all masons to comply with the current British Standard 8415 (BS8415).

If confusion exists on the above topics, we recommend following our advice as set out in this article 'Essential Reading For All Masons and Cemetery Managers'.

The matters raised in this article may change with the review of BS8415. Our representative on the British Standard will make clear any new requirements in future BRAMM newsletters.

Safer Cemeteries 2010!

We have been busy across the country presenting our Safer Cemeteries 2010 seminar. We've had a good reception, with many burial authorities recognising the challenges and embracing BRAMM as an obvious and desirable solution. One reoccurring comment is the isolation experienced by many burial authorities. BRAMM not only offers support, but a network of other burial authorities and thus a pool of knowledge and experience on which to draw.

Safer Cemeteries 2010 FREE Seminars

Sandy: 5th Oct 2010 (Bedfordshire)

City of London: 12th Oct 2010

Bridgwater: 2nd Nov 2010 (Somerset)

Glasgow, 9th Nov 2010

Contact the BRAMM office for more info.

Regular Checks

There have been a few instances recently where masons are working in BRAMM registered cemeteries without a BFL. When problems have then arisen with the installation, burial authorities have turned to BRAMM for help.

It is essential that burial authorities regularly check the status of the masons/fixers they allow into their burial sites to ensure they are BRAMM registered and hold a valid BRAMM Fixer License.

It's all a bit late once the stone has been installed, and can prove extremely distressing for the bereaved.

SPREAD THE WORD

If you know someone who would benefit from this newsletter, please send us their contact information and we will send a copy directly.