

A PERSONAL MESSAGE



HELLO

Ah yes! It's that time of year again when the ground is so hard it's like digging stone, and the stone is so cold it's like chiselling ice, and before you've managed to scrape Jack Frost off the windscreen in the morning, it's already started to get dark. But let's face it – if it wasn't for the cold misery of winter, we wouldn't fully appreciate the wet summer!?

So, why not take this opportunity to come in from the cold, don the kettle and enjoy a nice cup of hot tea and have a quick read of this season's BRAMM newsletter. As time ticks on we're making plenty of advancements and as more and more burial authorities sign up a real sense of community is growing within our industry.

Which reminds me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

MONOLITH FIXER LICENCE



The BRAMM Fixer's Licence has been designed to cater for masons fixing standard lawn memorials. We are now introducing a new test which will also cater for Monolith fixing in accordance with the NAMM Code of Practice. Masons signing up for a test day will now need to specify which of these 2 tests they wish to do.

TEST DAYS



We're looking to arrange Fixer Test Days in the Midlands, Southend-on-Sea and the Lincoln area. However, we do need more fixers to run these tests, so if there are any fixers waiting to be tested in these areas, please contact us so we can get dates organised as soon as possible.

BRAMM ONLINE



A fundamental ingredient to the success of BRAMM is the website. If you haven't yet made use of it, please give it a visit. It's well worth a look.

In the last 6 months the website has had:

Visits41,325

Page Views 131,261

Document Downloads 7399



THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-GOVERNANCE

In the UK's ever increasing 'blame culture', most industries now face some level of regulation. With so many examples of poor workmanship in our cemeteries and churchyards and the resulting injuries to members of the public, it is little wonder that eyebrows have been raised with regard to memorial masons.

In such circumstances, it is not uncommon for the Government to step in and take charge. This would typically lead to a costly blanket regulation across the whole industry, resulting in huge expense to masons, excessive paperwork and plenty of red tape.

It is to avoid this external Government intervention, that the BRAMM scheme exists. We are here solely to improve and maintain standards to an acceptable level. The BRAMM board is made up of volunteers from within the industry and this, unlike any Government body, is of huge advantage to masons and burial authorities alike. Firstly we understand our own industry and the needs and challenges that exist. Secondly, we encourage opinions and participation from you. With BRAMM regulation, you can help direct the future of your industry.

To maintain this situation, BRAMM needs the support of burial authorities and most importantly a willingness from masons to get involved. Yes, there are some costs, but these are minimal – we're not trying to profiteer from the scheme. Of course there is some paperwork – but we plan that once the scheme is fully adopted nationwide you'll actually see less paperwork than having multiple authority contracts. Inevitably there is some red tape – but only as needed to improve standards to an acceptable level.

With your support and the inter-activity made possible through our website we are developing a really effective regulation scheme. Reputable masons have little to worry about and burial authorities gain instant access to up-to-date information. So please support our efforts by participating and getting involved and most importantly, preventing the need for Governmental regulation.

PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS WITH BRAMM
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Many masons are now using their BRAMM accreditation as a marketing tool to promote their business. The association sends a clear message that the mason's company is forward-thinking and responsible – it adds credibility, confidence and helps build trust.

By the same token, accredited masons need to help promote BRAMM to burial authorities if they are to get the most out of the scheme. Many authorities have joined BRAMM, but some are still dragging their heels – failing to see the clear advantages of membership. If, as an accredited mason, authorities in your area are not getting involved, this is clearly detrimental to you. What it means is that the authority is either quite happy to stick to their own regulation scheme, which just creates more paperwork for you, or they're happy to let in 'any old jack' to work in their burial grounds.

In addition to our activities to recruit these authorities, it's the accredited masons who probably have the most sway. You've put the effort in to up your game, so why aren't you being supported by the authority? Why not ask them this question?! If enough reputable companies encourage their authorities and parish councils to sign up, it makes life more difficult for less-reputable masons who get away with under-cutting you (their competition) by doing a less than adequate job.

So, let's create a level playing field, and encourage authorities to come on board and help create a proper national regulation scheme that will benefit everyone within the industry.

MAKE THE MOST OF OUR LOGO

The BRAMM logo forms a major part of our identity, and can be used to promote the businesses of accredited masons. So when you promote yourself in press adverts or just on your stationery, remember to incorporate our logo into the design, sending a clear message to the public and burial authorities that you are a reputable business.

We can email the logo to you on request as a hi-resolution jpeg (on a white background) or as an Adobe Illustrator (ai) file. It is important that you print your accreditation number below it.

If you're running a 4 colour print job it would be desirable to print our logo in its proper dark red colour. However, we understand that many masons print as a 1 colour job, and therefore we're happy (in this instance) for you to change the colour of the logo to match your corporate colour scheme.



High resolution RGB jpeg on white background. Suitable for importing into applications such as Microsoft Word



Adobe Illustrator (ai) vector logo on transparent background. This logo can be enlarged to any size without pixelation issues and is the best file to supply to your graphic designer or printer.



An example of how your designer or printer might adjust the colours of the above 'ai' file to suit your branding. Allowing you to produce stationery, press ads etc. as a one colour job. Note the addition of your accreditation number

Do you have the skills to enthuse others?



We need a positive and dynamic character to promote BRAMM and help increase its success. You will need to have a sound understanding of the memorial mason's industry, great organisational and marketing skills and be prepared to travel throughout the UK.

The role will involve general promotion and presenting as well as the organising and attendance of meetings, seminars and workshops. You will need experience and fixing knowledge as you will take an active role in the monitoring and policing of the BRAMM scheme – spot checking the quality of work performed by accredited companies.

You will also take part in providing on-going training, as well as working closely with burial authorities.

Salary, hours and terms of employment are negotiable. Please send a letter of application and your CV to:

BRAMM, 1 Castle Mews, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 2XL



WELSH SEMINAR (SEPT 2008):

On Wednesday 10th September we met with masons at the Wenalt Chapel, Thornhill Crematorium in Cardiff. This was another great opportunity for discussion and for individual masons to really get involved. A big THANK YOU goes to all those who attended and many thanks also to everyone at Thornhill for their hospitality.

FUTURE SEMINARS (2009):

We've now held seminars in the SouthWest and Wales, and are now planning future meetings in the NorthEast and the South of the country. We'll keep you up-to-date with the plans for these events, and urge both masons and burial authorities to come along and join in.

BRAMM & NAMM EXECUTIVES' MEETING

On the 28th August an executive's meeting was held by members of BRAMM and NAMM to discuss the direction, and way forward for BRAMM. It was a very positive meeting highlighting that the general ideas between the 2 bodies run comfortably alongside each other. Issues were raised with regard to the NVQ route to achieving a BRAMM Fixer's Licence and the importance of on-going training was highlighted. These are subjects that will be concentrated on heavily. We are in agreement that we must avoid too much red tape here, whilst ensuring that training is regular and of an acceptable standard. We realise the importance of ensuring that training is widely available to masons at a reasonable cost. We'll keep you up-to-date in future newsletters on the progress of these matters.

BRAMM'S RELATIONSHIP TO NAMM?

BRAMM is the British Register of Memorial Masons. NAMM is the National Association of Memorial Masons.

BRAMM is essentially the regulatory body for the memorial mason's industry that NAMM, amongst many others, have always wanted. As such, NAMM are very supportive of the BRAMM scheme and have helped to facilitate it.

It is no secret that NAMM provides administration facilities (staff, premises etc.), to aid BRAMM's operation. For example, when the BRAMM website was first launched it was done so within the NAMM website, the BRAMM email address still clearly demonstrates this.

So, whilst there is a strong connection between these two bodies, it is wrong to consider that BRAMM is 'in the pockets' of NAMM. We must be clear that BRAMM is independent. It has its own finances and pays for the facilities it uses and the activities it pursues. Most importantly BRAMM has its own board of volunteers from all sectors of the industry (including representation from NAMM and Non-NAMM members). BRAMM, as a body, is therefore able to have its own opinions and directives separate from NAMM.

THE BRAMM BOARD

- **Jenny Gregson (Chair)** – NAMM representative
- **Ian Hale (Vice Chair)** – representing Non-NAMM member masons
- **Mark Boulton** – NAMM representative
- **Alan Lawrence** – NAMM representative
- **Tim Morris** – ICCM Corporate
- **John Rotherham** – FBCA
- **Alan Fairchild MBE** – SLCC
- **Chancellor George Pulman QC** – Ecclesiastical Judges Assoc.



Promoting a sense of Community

BRAMM is a wonderful opportunity to help further a sense of community and can act as a means of communication within the masons industry. For example, if any masons have equipment or machinery for sale, they might like to consider using this newsletter as a means to advertise it to fellow masons across the country. Within reason, we are happy to facilitate such activities. If you have any questions you'd like to ask us, or other masons in your area, or burial authorities as a whole, here is a fantastic opportunity to take advantage of.



Send us your questions, adverts or information and we'll endeavour to publish them in the next newsletter.

Email: bramm@namm.org.uk

A BIG WELCOME TO RECENTLY JOINED BURIAL AUTHORITIES

Much Hoole Burial Ground	Preston, Lancashire
Barry Town Council	Barry, Wales
Tonyrefail & District Community Council	Tonyrefail, Nr Porth, Wales
Nottingham City Council	Nottinghamshire
Stafford Borough Council	Staffordshire
Ely City Council	Ely, Cambridgeshire
Barnstaple Town Council	Barnstaple, Devon
Dartford Borough Council	Dartford, Kent
Earley Town Council	Reading, Berkshire
Farnham Town Council	Farnham, Surrey
Hertford Town Council	Hertford, Hertfordshire
Medway Council	Chatham, Kent
Rother District Council	Bexhill on Sea, Essex
Sturry Parish Council	Canterbury, Kent
Three Rivers District Council	Rickmansworth, Herts
Blakesley Parish Council	Towcester, Northamptonshire
Bournemouth Borough Council	Bournemouth, Dorset



SIGN UP NOW! CALL: 01788 544 963

SIGNING UP TO BRAMM A BURIAL AUTHORITY'S PERSPECTIVE

In Autumn 2005 Sedgemoor District Council embarked on a significant investment project to extend and upgrade our two cemeteries, to provide future burial plots for the next 25–30 years.

It was at this time, during discussions and meetings with other burial authorities and local masons that we became aware of the BRAMM scheme. We incorporated BRAMM into our new rules and regulations ensuring our standards as a Burial Authority are nationally accepted.

We now require all masons working in our cemeteries to be registered with BRAMM. This is easy to regulate with instant access to the BRAMM electronic register (on their website). It is a straight-forward process to check if masons who requires permits to work in our cemeteries are registered and have current fixer licences. The BRAMM website also provides lots of useful information, including downloads such as Health and Safety issues and answers to a list of frequently asked questions. There are also links to other relevant organisations such as NAMM and the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authority.

It is clear that as a Burial Authority joining part of a national registration scheme, our actions will eventually lead to safer burial grounds. We now look to BRAMM to provide guidance to help improve safety standards for the fixing of memorials.

It is also very helpful to be able to contact BRAMM for advice, as some Cemetery Officers are quite often isolated being the only one employed by an Authority.

Having completed our project, it was recognised with a National Green Apple award, receiving a Gold award under the Built Environment and Architectural Heritage Category.

Val Colwill, Cemeteries Officer, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset

ARMISTICE DAY SERVICE "Lest We Forget"

THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM, ALREWAS

11 NOVEMBER 2008

Ian Gostling (National Executive Officer) and Lisa Jones (Senior Administration Officer) of NAMM were invited as VIP guests to the 90th Anniversary of the Armistice. The commemorative service was in the presence of HRH Prince Michael of Kent, HRH Princess Michael of Kent and Right Honourable Bob Ainsworth MP Minister of State for the Armed Forces.

A fanfare by The Band of HM Royal Marines (Plymouth) commenced the service at the National Armed Forces Memorial.

There were some poignant hymns and solemn prayers to commemorate those servicemen and women that had lost their lives at war.

The Last Post was played and at 11:00am the sun shone through the gap in the commemorative wall, which lit up the centre plinth (the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month).

Wreath laying by the Royal Party, other organisations and individuals followed.

For the finale a Musical Parade and a spectacular Flypast Triple Tornado took place with a salute by HRH Honorary Rear Admiral Prince Michael of Kent.

The NAMM Centenary Garden is a major component of the National Memorial Arboretum with more than 150 memorials at the site devoted to the concept of remembrance. Please pay a visit. The National Memorial Arboretum website: www.thenma.org.uk



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