



# Knightly News

The Grand Priory of the Knights Templar in England

Autumn 2023

## New Grand Master

Following the sad death of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Grand Master of the Order, HSE Chevalier Gérard Willery, EMC, on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023, following a short illness, the World Convent of Grand Priors met in Paris on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and elected the 53<sup>rd</sup> Grand Master of the Order.



**HSE Chevalier Jacques Charles Dubos**, EMC, until recently the Grand Prior General of Switzerland, was elected as the new Grand Master of the Order, and will assume his duties with immediate effect.

On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2023, the Order held a memorial service in Paris for the recently deceased previous Grand Master.

The Grand Priory of England extends the warmest welcome to our new Grand Master and we genuinely hope that we shall all meet him at one of our investiture services in the near future.

**FORWARD NOTICE:** The Grand Priory is considering holding an International Convent at our May 2025 investiture. Please advise the Grand Secretary if you

have contacts with a Cathedral or other substantial church, which we could approach to hold such an event.



## Diary Dates

Our next investitures will be held as follows, please ring-fence the dates them in your diaries:

**SUNDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2024** - Annual General Meeting [Time/Place TBA]

**SATURDAY 25th MAY 2024** – Holy Trinity Church, Rothwell, Northamptonshire.  
*Hotel:* 3 Swans Hotel, 21 High St, Market Harborough LE16 7NJ

**SATURDAY 19th OCTOBER 2024** – The Knights Chapel at Rothley Court Hotel in Leicestershire.

**SATURDAY 24th MAY 2025** – (*Possible International Convent*) Venue to be confirmed.

**SATURDAY 18th OCTOBER 2025** – Venue to be confirmed.

The Grand Prior has expressed his disappointment at the low turnout for the Autumn investiture in 2023, which was held at the iconic Royal Garrison Church in Aldershot, and hopes that by publishing the dates of the upcoming events, a greater number of members will be able to attend.

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CHECK YOUR SPAM FILTERS FOR MISSING EMAILS!

## From the Grand Prior's Pen...

**K**nights, Dames and Fellow Templars, but most especially, friends, we are now in 'Winter Quarters' and time for a spot of R & R before once again girding our loins and saddling-up to charge into 2024.

2023 has been an 'interesting' year, commencing with an excellent Service of Investiture in Hereford Cathedral where we were honoured by the attendance of the Grand Master himself, HSE the Chevalier Gerard Willery and also delegations from Belgium and Scotland, including the Grand Priors of those countries, the Chevaliers Bernard



Matagne and Ron Sinclair accompanied by members of their Grand Priories, at which we welcomed new members being invested into the Order, and the year concluded with another superb service of investiture in the Royal Garrison Church of All Saints in Aldershot, the Home of the British Army. We also have a large number of Postulants awaiting investiture who will be welcomed into the Order over the next several events, the dates of which are published in this newsletter.

We were deeply shocked and saddened to receive the tragic news that our beloved Grand Master had died unexpectedly only two weeks after he had visited us in Hereford and this in turn resulted in an election for a new Grand Master. At the worldwide convent of Grand Masters that was held on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023, there were three candidates under consideration, and I am very pleased to confirm that HSE Chevalier Jacques Dubos, the Grand Prior General of Switzerland was elected as the 53rd Grand Master of the Order. The following day a Service of Commemoration for the late Grand Master was held.

I continue to maintain regular close communications with the new Grand Master, the Grand Prior General of Scandinavia, the Grand Secretary General of the Order and other senior members of the Order world-wide on your behalf and I am pleased to advise that we, in the Grand Priory of England are well-thought-of internationally.

Onto other matters: **Can I please ask all members to advise the Grand Secretary of their email and postal addresses.** We know that some members have moved-house but we do not have their new addresses in order to correctly communicate.

### MEMBERS OF CHAPTER:

Grand Prior – H.E. Chevalier. Paul Grant KGCTJ

Deputy Grand Prior and Grand Treasurer: Chevalier Ian Bates KGCTJ

Grand Secretary: Chevalier Dr Robert Webber KGCTJ

Grand Seneschal: Chevalier Sir Robert Worcester KBE, KGOTJ, CH, DL.

Grand Marshal and Master of Ceremonies: Chevalier Paul Tredgett KGCTJ

Grand Constable: Chevalier Danny Gill KGOTJ

Commander of the North and Warden of Benevolence: Dame Tina Walford-Stretton DCTJ

Commander of the South: Chevalier Troy Close KCTJ

Warden of Regalia: Chevalier Dr Albin Wallace KOTJ

Chair of the Ladies Committee: Dame Sally Ann Hayes DOTJ

Preceptor of the Axe: Chevalier Simon McIlwaine KOTJ

Preceptor of the East: Chevalier David Venn KOTJ

Preceptor of the Gauntlet: Chevalier Zain Carter KTJ

Preceptor of the Helm: Vacant

Preceptor of the Lance: Chevalier Jeff Charlton KTJ

Preceptor of St George: Chevalier Bob Blackledge KOTJ

Preceptor of the Shield: Chevalier Mark Stretton KCTJ

Preceptor of the Spur: Chevalier Dr Albin Wallace KOTJ

Preceptor of the Sword: Chevalier Mike Shepherd KCTJ

## ADVANCEMENTS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members of the Grand Priory of England:

Chevalier Doug Campbell  
Chevalier Perry Futer  
Chevalier Ciprian Panagachi

Congratulations to the following on their appointments:

Grand Sword Bearer: Chevalier Nicolai Webber KOTJ  
Crucifer: Chevalier Mark Stretton KCTJ  
Preceptor of the Gauntlet: Chevalier Zain Carter KTJ  
Chief Steward: Chevalier Bill Straub KOTJ  
Deputy Chief Steward: Chevalier Marcus Sutor KOTJ  
Stewards: Chevaliers James Gautreaux KTJ and John Mefragata KTJ  
Standard Bearers: Chevaliers Bob Blackledge KOTJ, Perry Futer KTJ and Jeff Charlton KTJ.  
Quartermaster: Chevalier Doug Campbell KOTJ  
Historian and Archivist: Chev. Dr. Peter Mellon, KOTJ

### Promotions:

Chevalier Troy Close to Knight Commander  
Chevalier Nicolai Webber to Knight Officer  
Chevalier Bill Straub to Knight Officer  
Chevalier Doug Campbell to Knight Officer  
Chevalier Dr Peter Mellon to Knight Officer

## DINING & DRESS CODE

It is an historic and established tradition that Templars dine together, which assists in bonding, is common courtesy and is especially important when we welcome new members. When dining, we always commence with grace before we eat, and we include a sung grace at the end of the main meal. In England, our traditional sung grace is Laudi Spirituali, which is also traditionally sung in the Livery Companies of the City of London.

### DRESS

As an ancient and Chivalric Order with international standing and which conducts ceremonial at the highest levels, it is important that we have a formalised Dress Code, of which there are several styles, as follows:

**White Tie:** Full Evening Dress (white bow tie, wing-collared shirt, black tailcoat, white Marcella waistcoat and black patent leather shoes).

**Black Tie:** Black bow tie worn with a Dress-shirt, Dinner Jacket or Tuxedo and Evening Dress trousers.

**Smart Casual:** It is understood that not all members have the more formal styles of dress and that they are worn infrequently, however, those members who do have them are encouraged to wear them. All others are asked to wear a dark lounge suit with a white shirt. All male members should wear the KT tie, available from the Warden of Regalia, Chevalier Dr Albin Wallace.

Military uniform is permitted for those authorised to wear it. This may be Number 1 Dress Blues, Mess Dress or Service Dress and additionally, there is a military-style Templar uniform for those who wish to have one made.

Female members are requested to dress in keeping with the occasion or to wear the style agreed by the Ladies Committee.

## From the Grand Prior's Pen (Continued)

It must be emphasised that only senior members of the Order may officially communicate directly or indirectly with other Orders and then only with permission from the Grand Master himself. As we now have a new Grand Master and we are not yet aware of his position in regard to communication outside this Order, none of us have any authority to communicate with other Orders, and that includes me. I will advise further when we know the will of the new Grand Master.

Finally, if any member has a friend who may wish to support us but who does not wish to be a full member, they will be welcome to join as a Friend of the Order which costs only £20 per year and does not require them to purchase any regalia. As a Friend of the Order, they are entitled to attend all functions including Services of Investiture, dinners banquets and social events upon payment of the usual dining fees.

Which just leaves me the most pleasant task of wishing you all, each and every one, a very Merry Christmas 2023 and a peaceful and prosperous New Year 2024





# The Rule of the Knights of Christ

A Preface by Chevalier Dr Albin Wallace, KOTJ

Our message is especially directed to all who oppose following their own will and in the purity of their soul desire to fight for the highest and true king, so that they may hope to obtain the armour of obedience and a distinguished life by fulfilling the rule with most attentive care, and that they may fulfil this rule through perseverance. Therefore, we exhort you, who until now have embraced the secular army, in which Christ was not the reason, but by human favour alone you were drawn, to constantly strive to join the body of those whom God has chosen from the mass of the damned and has brought together for the defence of the holy church through His kind devotion. Moreover, above all, whoever you are, O soldier of Christ, it is proper that in choosing so holy a life you show pure devotion and steadfast resolve concerning your profession, which is distinguished by God as so holy and so high that, if you keep this rule purely and steadfastly, you will deserve to possess your lot among soldiers who have given their souls for Christ. For in this profession the military order has now emerged and so revived, which, when the desire for justice had been despised, strove not to protect the poor or the churches (which was its duty), but instead to rape, pillage, and kill.

Therefore, it is well with us, to whom our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ has directed His friends, from the Holy City to the borders of France and Burgundy, who, on account of our own welfare and propagation of the true faith, did not cease to present their souls as an agreeable offering to God. Therefore, we, with all kindness and brotherly devotion and the prayers of master Hugh, in whom the aforementioned militia obtained its beginning, with many, as the Holy Spirit was directing, from the various dwellings of the province beyond the mountain, on the feast of Saint Hilary, in the one thousand, one hundred and twenty-eighth year from the birth of the Son of God, in the ninth year after the beginning of the aforementioned militia, with God leading we have assembled here together at Troyes. And we deserved to hear both the manner and observance of the knightly order, chapter by chapter, from the mouth of the aforesaid master himself, Hugh. And, according to the apprehension of our limited knowledge, that which seemed well and useful to us we have highly praised; but that which seemed absurd to us we have avoided. Furthermore, everything that was not able to be told and reckoned from memory at the present council we have unanimously commended by counsel of the entire chapter of the poor knights of Christ, not lightly but deliberately, to the prudence and discretion of the reverend father, Honorius, and to the renowned patriarch of Jerusalem, Stephan [Gormund], who by benefit and need is knowledgeable of the eastern region.



*"The Arrest" of Jacques de Molay  
by Chev. Albin Wallace ©*

Clearly, moreover, though the very great number of religious fathers who have assembled in this council by divine injunction commends the authority of our letter, we must not silently pass over the names of the fathers present at the council, for whom, as they saw and expressed true statements, I, Johannes Michael, was privileged by divine grace to be the humble scribe, responsible for the present document by the order of the council and of the reverend abbot, Bernard of Clairvaux, to whom this was committed and entrusted. Matthew, Bishop of Albane, legate to the holy Roman church by God's grace, was the first in rank present; then Rainaldus, archbishop of Rheims; third, Henry, archbishop of Sens. Then their bishops: Gaufridus, bishop of Chartres; Gocelin, bishop of Soissons; the bishop of Paris; the bishop of Troyes; the bishop of Orleans; the bishop of Auxerre; the bishop of Meaux; the bishop of Chalons; the bishop of Laon; the bishop of Beaves; Raimundus, abbot of Versailles, who shortly after was made archbishop of Lyon and legate to the holy Roman

## The Rule of the Knights of Christ (continued)

church; the abbot of Citeaux; the abbot of Pontigny; the abbot of Troiffons; the abbot of Saint Stephan of Dijon; the abbot of Saint Denis of Rheims; the abbot of Molesmes; also present was the abovementioned abbot, Bernard of Clairvaux, whose opinion the aforementioned fathers praised with an open voice. Moreover, present also were master Albert of Rheims and master Fulgerius and several others who are too numerous to mention here. But concerning the illiterate it seems proper to us that the friendly witnesses of truth be cited here: count Theobald, the count of Nievre, and Andreas, count of Baudiment—with most earnest care they participated in the council seeking what seemed best to them and shunning what seemed absurd to them. Truly, the master of the militia himself, by the reverend name of Hugh, was present and had with him some of his brothers; for example: brother Godfrey, brother Roland, brother Geoffrey of Biso, brother Payens from Mondidier, and brother Archembald from Saint-Amant-Lez-Puurs. Truly, that master with his followers revealed to the aforementioned fathers according to the perception of his memory the manner and observance of the humble beginning of his military order, which took its beginning from him who says, "What I have told you from the beginning."

Thus it pleased the council that the instruction refined there and examined diligently with the consideration of divine scripture and with the wisdom of the Roman Pope and of the patriarch of the people of Jerusalem, and also with the agreement of the chapter of the Poor Knights of the Temple (that is in Jerusalem), be protected inexplicably so that it not be handed to oblivion in order that they by the true path may deserve to honourably reach its author (whose sweetness so exceeds honey, that compared to it, honey becomes very bitter as wormwood), with Him leading, for whom they fight and are able to fight throughout the everlasting ages. Amen.

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## The Grand Priory & the Cost of Living

Dr Robert Webber, KGCTJ, Grand Secretary

It seems that everywhere you look nowadays, there are organisations, companies and workers complaining about how much more things cost, and how unaffordable this or that is compared to what was being paid last year. Many public services are being sacrificed on the altar of expediency, sizes of prepacked groceries are shrinking, people are not holidaying as frequently or luxuriously as they once did, all because costs are going up and incomes are not.

For the first time in many a long year, it has started to affect our organisation as well. Our recent investiture at Aldershot was supported by fewer members than we have ever known at such an event—and there can be no doubt that cost was a significant factor. Staging investitures is becoming an increasingly expensive task; hotels have put up their room prices to cover their increased staffing and running costs; hospitality venues, who used to include room-hire in the cost per diner, are now adding several hundred pounds for the rental of the banquet space; even churches, where the Vicar would happily accept the contents of the collection plate as a donation, are now charging hundreds of pounds and adding other ancillary costs for organists and the like. But, for those who missed the investiture, it was a truly spectacular event and many attending members commented that they could not remember a better investiture!

As an organisation, we fully understand the financial pressures that our members are under, and you can be sure that we are doing everything that we are able to reduce costs so that we do not have to increase fees. We have kept our membership fees static for the last few years, we have moved the accounting period so that membership dues do not fall immediately after Christmas, we have trimmed unnecessary costs, but still, our last two investitures have run at a loss. You will appreciate that it does not help budgeting when we have to chase members for their subscriptions many months after they fall due!

The Magisterium and Chapter of the Grand Priory will be looking at various new funding models that will reduce the cost of membership of the Grand Priory and the Order, and we hope to be in a position to put these to the membership at our AGM early in 2024—but please rest assured, we appreciate and feel your pain, but we thank you for your continued support.

# A Meeting with Friends over the Border

by Chevalier Doug Campbell, KOTJ

On Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at Hereford Cathedral, it was my great honour to be invested as a Chevalier within the Order. It was a very beautiful setting to hold an investiture and to have our late Grand Master H.E. Knight Grand Cross Gérard Willery in attendance was a real blessing. It was an honor to have been able to meet him and a real sadness to have learned of his passing.

As well as my investiture, it was also the delivery date for the second of two pieces of ritual items commissioned for the Order by Preceptor of the Sword Chevalier Mike Shephard, on this occasion a floor standing candelabra that was used for the first time during the investiture at Hereford to represent the nine Grand Master's invoked during the ceremony.

It was after the ceremony when I was taking some photographs of the candelabra, that I was approached by a gentleman who introduced himself as Ron Sinclair, of course I recognized the name, but it took me a minuet due to the excitement of the day, to realise that I was talking to the Grand Prior of Scotland.

Very briefly in the Cathedral and during the evenings celebrations we discussed the commissioning of a small tabletop candelabra that Ron would like to have made for the Temple at the Sinclair Sheiling in Scotland. After a couple of telephone conversations and a quick design drawing, a piece was agreed upon and commissioned.

The piece was to include, The St. Andrews Cross, The Malta Cross, The Cross of Pattee upon a representation of the Holy Grail and The Sinclair Engrailed Cross.



Both my partner Sheree and I were invited by Ron up to Scotland to attend the ceremony held on Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2023 to mark the celebration of our orders founder St. Bernard, where our Scottish Templar brothers and sisters would also dedicate their new ceremonial candelabra. This was a very exciting time for me, as our late grand Master, our Grand Prior Paul Grant and Troy and Nancy Close were also due to attend. This would have given me a fantastic chance to get to know them all better as a newly invested Chevalier of the Order. However, as we now all know this sadly was not to be the case, our Grand Master passed away, our Grand Prior Paul Grant who has not been well, was not well enough to travel, and Troy and Nancy were unable to attend.



## A meeting with Friends over the Border (continued).

We arrived in Scotland on the Friday afternoon to deliver the candelabra to ensure that it was in place for the ceremony on the Sunday. At the Sinclair Sheiling we arrived to a very warm welcome from Ron and his lovely wife Lesley, where we had some gorgeous cake and a cup of tea. We were given a tour of the wonderful Temple where the ceremony would be held on the Sunday and what a beautiful space it is indeed!

After a very busy few weeks at the forge and an early start to our drive to Scotland from Hertfordshire, Sheree and I, feeling a little worn-out left Ron and Lesley in peace. But not before arranging with Ron to meet the following morning at Rosslyn Chapel, where we were taken around for the first time by Ron before the brief presentation about the chapel was given. We were both blown away by the beauty of it. As a master craftsman myself not only did I love the outstanding craftsmanship that had gone into the building, but the overwhelming amount of symbology within it. I endeavor to use symbology within my own work to give deeper meaning and all I could do was dart my eyes from one point to another. This first trip will be the first of many I think, with the next to have a more focused point to it, with Ron providing me with a good title on bestiary within the church to help me on my way.

It suddenly dawned on me during dinner on the Saturday evening that I, as a newly invested Chevalier of the Knights Templar of England was now, due to the unfortunate absence of our Grand Prior and Troy and Nancy both officers of the Order, it's only emissary. Not only delivering a ceremonial item for the temple there but representing our Order..... Gulp! I wasn't nervous..... much.

The welcome that we both received was fantastic, not only from the brothers and sisters assembled, but from their partners too. After the opening of the conclave there was a guest speaker, Reverend David de Verny, who is a retired Episcopalian Priest who resides in Dumfries, who gave a fantastically informative speech on St. Bernard, the Cistercians and the Templars. The rituals of dedication for items to be used within the temple and the subsequent meeting held at the end was open to us all. During the meeting, concerns for our Grand Prior were put forward and well wishes sent for his speedy recovery.

After the conclave had closed, we adjourned to the dinning room where a lovely curry and trifle had been prepared by Lesley and Sheena and we were soon all talking like old friends.

From the moment we arrived to the moment we left, we were treated as though we belonged and to our surprise, we both received a small gift. Sheree a Templar jewelry box and I a copy of a painting depicting a kneeling Templar knight praying at an altar with the skull of St. John the Baptist upon it. I was also given quite a lovely little handbook about the Templars which has also been very informative.

Ron is a fountain of knowledge; his library is quite extensive, and he has a very lovely collection of Templar items. Having had the opportunity to have a bit of a chat with him without being too direct in my questions and just being happy to look, listen and learn. I have been given some avenues to look at, hopefully to direct my reading and expand my knowledge in a bit of a better direction.

We were sad to leave, but we did so with gladdened hearts, knowing that we had made friends across the border and that the doors were open for a return. We hope to see you all again soon and hope that the next time will not be as fleeting a visit as the last.



*The Grand Prior of Scotland, H.E. Chev. Ron Sinclair  
with Chev Doug Campbell and the candelabra in the background.*

## Other Templar Groups

*A message from the  
Grand Prior of England.*

It has come to our attention that some members are in direct communication with other Templar groups who are not part of our legitimate Templar Order and while we cannot dictate to you who you have as friends outside this Order or with whom you communicate, you are advised that you may not under any circumstances speak on behalf of this Order or accept any role, official or unofficial with any other Order.

There are many out there who claim legitimacy but who do not have any at all and others who broke away from this Order many years ago and set themselves up as an alternative Order. This was a tragedy and it has long been my hope that there may be some form of reconciliation and I have offered the hand of friendship on more than one occasion, almost always without result.

## COMPLINE

**REMEMBER THAT WE  
HOLD A REGULAR  
ONLINE COMPLINE  
ON SUNDAY  
EVENINGS.**

**Contact the Chaplain for  
details.  
[chaplain@osmth-england.org](mailto:chaplain@osmth-england.org)**

## Arts Review

By Chev. Stuart Milson, KTJ

### Ancient churches host England's music

Still preserving a sense of rural remoteness, Romney Marsh in Kent is one of the country's most unusual localities. Once a watery world of creeks and salt marsh, then drained and given over to crops and sheep-grazing, the green low-levels extend as far as Dungeness and Denge Marsh, a unique shingle promontory jutting into the English Channel ~ and designated as our nation's only official desert. The scene is partly dominated by the atomic power station, which is linked to its sister-facility in the North-West of England, by way of a single-track railway line (spared by Beeching) that threads its way through the hamlets of the Marsh. The tower of Lydd Church provides a contrast to the austere atomic monolith on the Ness; and rising above the landscape just to the east is the equally impressive Church of St. Nicholas, New Romney ~ the venue for a London Mozart Players concert of English (and American) music for strings, held as part of the JAM on the Marsh Festival.

JAM stands for John Armitage Memorial, commemorating a far-seeing patron of the arts who saw the necessity of blending music of the past and present, with new commissions to build the repertoire; and a mixture of local, national and international performers to make music in the landscape that he adored. Sarah Armitage now continues his great mission, with conductor, Nicholas Cleobury acting as 'Curator' ~ and on the occasion of the 15th July, taking up the baton to bring a capacity audience the works of Elgar (*Serenade for Strings*), Samuel Barber (*Adagio*), Vaughan Williams (*Tallis Fantasia*) and Sir Michael Tippett. And to underline the idea of championing imaginative new music, Nicholas Cleobury included in his programme a piece by James Aburn ~ a composer still in his 20s.

### Supernatural...

Entitled, *Silent Shadows*, James's inspiration came from the legend of supernatural marshland light (the 'will-o'-the-wisp' phenomenon) said to have confused travellers on lonely lanes; leading them, not to a welcoming farm steading, but into the sinister boggy darkness... Played with enormous commitment by the London Mozart Players, the work proved to be tonal and accessible, but with growing touches of tension and an evocation of the surrounding light and landscape: a worthy successor to the intensive string-writing of Britten and Tippett. And it was Tippett's masterpiece, the *Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli* which followed: a great, single span, elaborating on the baroque composer's melodies of 300 years gone by, yet drawing them firmly into the 20th-century, and suffusing them, too, with echoes of Tudor England.

For example, just after a particularly knotty section, close to the end, in which tension builds to an almost unbearable strain and stress, Tippett seems to draw back ~ releasing a great sigh of relief, with a tune that could almost have come from *The Lark Ascending*. And yet this is not music of the southern Downland, walled gardens or the Cotswolds. Instead, Tippett paints a more obscure scene: the England of rough hedges all hewn into weird shapes by endless gusts of sea-wind, and garlanded, not by roses, but by sea kale and viper's-bugloss. In fact, the perfect music for St. Nicholas, New Romney, which on that sunny Saturday in July, still withstood a strong breeze from the seashore, some two miles away as the crow flies. Music-lovers who crave the right setting and atmosphere for their orchestral and choral passions will find it all here, at JAM on the Marsh.



# A Commander's Role

by Chevalière Tina Walford Stretton, KCTJ

I am frequently asked what it is that a Commander does within the Order, and the simple answer is the a Commander looks after a Commandery!, but that does not really address the question. I can only speak personally in the way that I approach the role, so this is my personal reflection on the Role of the Commander of the North.

The North Commandery consists of three Preceptories - roughly everything above a figurative west to east border, level with mid Wales, to Norfolk. It includes the Counties of: Shropshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, East Midlands, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Cheshire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, all of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cumbria, County Durham, Tyne and Wear and Northumberland.

The three Preceptories that encompass these counties are called Helm, Gauntlet and Shield. Each has a Preceptor, who is directly responsible for the local needs and social activities of its members and is encouraged to carry out its own small social gatherings and to perform some useful charitable works in its community - obviously dependant on numbers. Mostly this is done by individual members who make a difference in their own church or parish, or as an officer or volunteer in their local favourite charity, group, or Church.

Where any Preceptory doesn't have a Preceptor, the Commander of the North acts in this capacity until a suitable member is found and installed. Also, any questions, issues or problems arising in the areas, are dealt with by the Commander of the North or brought to the attention of the Council or the Grand Officers depending on nature and necessity.

I aim to have three joint events during the year where all Chevaliers in the North can meet up and build friendships, our last meeting was to attend Sunday morning Church Service together in Selby Abbey, followed by a good Pub lunch and chat. Our planned summer BBQ never happened due to the prevalence of rain throughout July and August.

Other activities that take place out of view of the members, are the ongoing vetting of prospective new candidates, attending Council meetings and taking an active part in the decision-making, planning and management of our biannual National events. These include putting together goodie bags, getting commemorative mugs printed for the event, researching suitable venues in the North, with nearby Hotels, good carparking, front desk badge giving on arrivals, and last minute back-office tasks (when printing errors were found in our programmes 2 hours before the Investiture), meet and greets, organising the Raffle prizes and problem solving on the hoof during investitures and banquets.

It is also a friendly (unless someone refers to me as 'guys'!) and direct contact for all new Chevaliers with any questions or difficulties that are not able -or suitable - to be resolved at Preceptor level. My qualifications and problem-solving experience has come from being a Senior Manager in Health and Social Care, College Lecturer, Guide Leader, Chairman of a Pipe Band, Director of a Youth Marching Band, and business owner of the biggest bookshop in the Midlands!

Every event brings with it different challenges, and there is always a new problem to solve as well as something new to learn. The satisfaction of seeing a well-run event, with all members getting on well and enjoying the ceremony and friendship, is reward enough...



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Grand Priory proposes that the AGM will be held on **SUNDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2024**  
the time, place and other arrangements will be notified when the venue has been booked,  
but is likely to be in the Midlands.



## RANKS AND APPOINTMENTS:

Some members can be confused by the difference between Ranks and Appointments.

A **Rank** is the level of seniority which you have achieved, and an **Appointment** is a task for which you have responsibility, as follows:

### RANKS:

- Knight or Dame
- Knight or Dame Officer
- Knight or Dame Commander
- Knight or Dame Grand Officer
- Knight or Dame Grand Cross

### APPOINTMENTS:

Grand Prior  
Prior  
Chancellor  
Seneschal  
Secretary  
Marshal  
Treasurer  
Chaplain  
Warden of Regalia  
Area Commander  
Preceptor  
Steward

## Templar Fayre

### SLYT SOPS

Templars were only allowed to eat meat very occasionally, so for the majority of the time, they ate a vegetarian diet. The recipe for “Slyt Sops”, given in the recipe book *Curye on Inghysch*, is reputed to date from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and would almost certainly have been cooked by the Templar chefs, as it was not considered “poor man’s fayre” but more for the discerning who wished to live a Godly life.

The original recipe reads:

*Take white of lekes and slyt them, and do not hem to seeth in wyne, oile and salt.  
Tost brede and lay in dishes, and cast the sewe aboue, and serue it forth.*

### SOPS in WINE

Here’s a recipe (to serve 6) more suited to modern parlance!

8-10 leeks (depending on size)

2tbs olive oil

1 bottle (75cl) white wine

3-4 slices of soft grain bread freshly toasted

1. Slice the white parts of the leeks thinly (keep the green bits everyday soups)
2. Simmer the sliced leeks, oil and salt in the wine until soft.
3. Meanwhile, break or cut the toast into small pieces and divide equally amongst the bowls.
4. Ladle over the leeks and hot wine.
5. Serve as soon as the toast sops have softened.

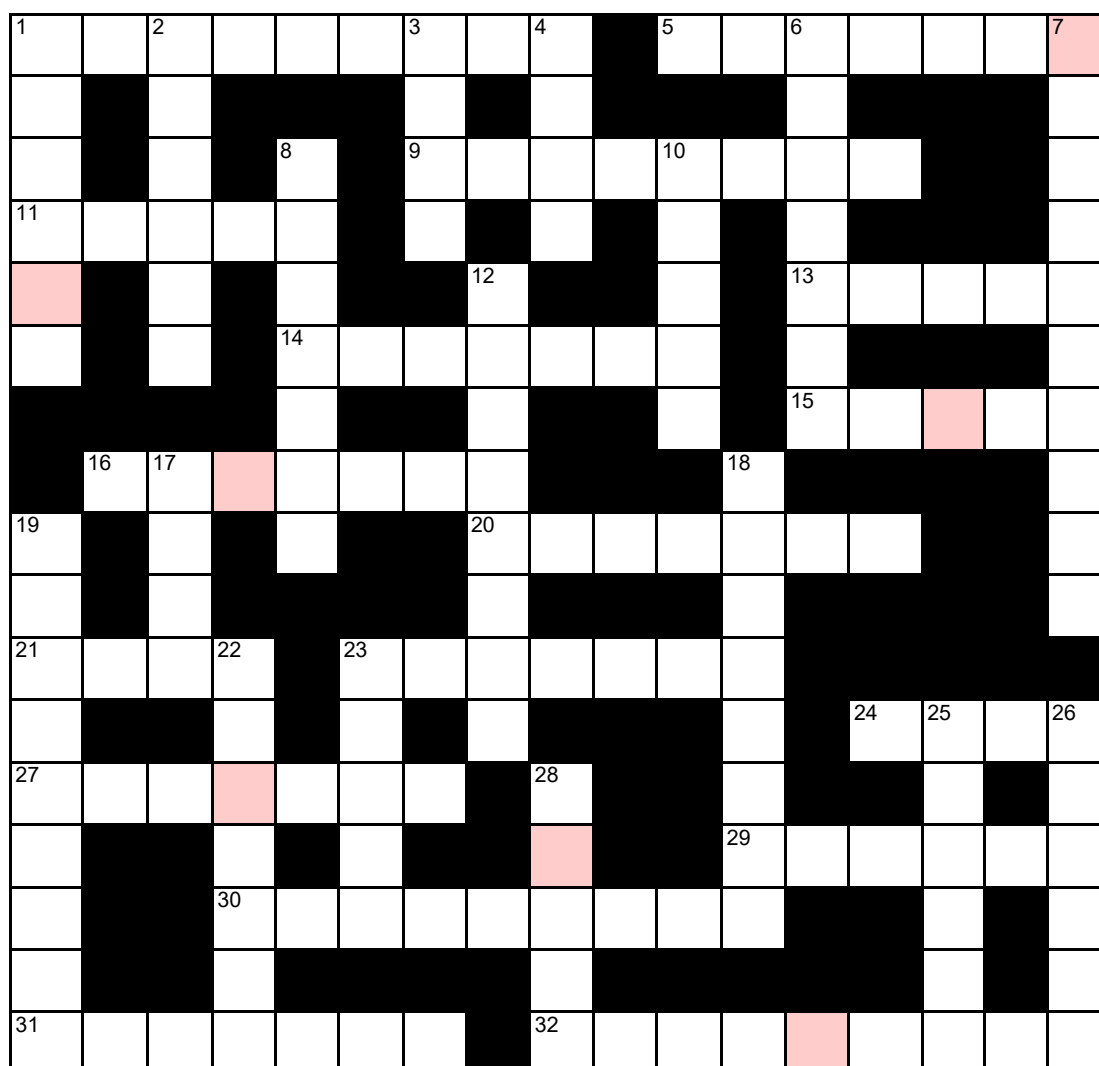
Bread was very important in the antiquity and early middle ages, and the local baker was a much revered local tradesman. Sometimes, however, the baker cut corners to make a little more for himself, which was considered “rogueish” behaviour! If a baker was found to have given short weight, he (or she) might be dragged through the streets on a rough sledge with the offending loaf hung around his/her neck—such ignominy!

Members are reminded that wherever possible our annual investitures are scheduled for weekend closest to 24<sup>th</sup> May each year (the anniversary of the death of Hugues de Payen, our first Grand Master) and the weekend immediately after the 13<sup>th</sup> October (Templar Remembrance Day) to facilitate planning and to maximise attendance.

**PLEASE TRY TO KEEP THESE WEEKENDS FREE OF OTHER COMMITMENTS!**

# The Knightly News Prize Crossword #6

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## Across

- 1 With a narrow outlook (9)
- 5 Ales for carriers of luggage, perhaps? (7)
- 9 Name given to old object to differentiate (e.g. Snail Mail" or "Analogue Watch" (8)
- 11 Aristocratic gas, maybe? (5)
- 13 Verbal improvisation (5)
- 14 Brief excerpt (7)
- 15 Whimsical and amusing (5)
- 16 Biological replication (7)
- 20 Flashy airman? (7)
- 21 Take on the run (4)
- 23 Arthur's court (7)
- 24 Briefly, an oily cartel (4)
- 27 Meet Rex, who's confused (7)
- 29 Hypnotically canter around (6)
- 30 Easily nauseated (9)
- 31 Neither here nor there (7)
- 32 Disreputable rascal (9)

## Down

- 1 Reward for Bligh's ship? (6)
- 2 Poetic meter (6)
- 3 Bloody steaks (4)
- 4 Possibly a sticky appointment (4)
- 6 Masfield's poem about a fox (7)
- 7 Bickering amongst very young pigeons (10)
- 8 Biblical readings in church (7)
- 10 Excludes from a moist recipe (5)
- 12 Short and witty sayings (8)
- 17 Peruvian bean? (4)
- 18 Diamond anniversary (8)
- 19 Vacuum tube found in microwave (9)
- 22 Russian soup that's hard to beet (*sic*) (7)
- 23 Welsh Wales (5)
- 25 Reflect deeply (6)
- 26 French horse for knights, perhaps? (6)
- 28 Songs of Praise (5)

**The letters in the PINK squares form an anagram of a town in England said to have Templar significance.**

Send answers including the anagram solution to [secretary@osmth-england.org](mailto:secretary@osmth-england.org)  
Winning correct entry will be drawn by the Grand Prior and notified at the AGM early in 2024.



## OSMTH ENGLAND WHO'S WHO

for the benefit of our new members, the  
Officers of our Order are as follows:

(\*) Denotes Chapter Member

### GRAND PRIOR \*

H.E. Chev. Paul Grant

### GRAND TREASURER and DEPUTY GRAND PRIOR \*

Chev. Ian Bates

### GRAND SECRETARY \*

Chev. Dr. Robert Webber

### GRAND SENESCHAL \*

Chev. Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL

### GRAND CONSTABLE \*

Chev. Danny Gill

### GRAND MARSHAL \*

Chev. Paul Tredgett

### CHAPLAIN

Revd. Chev. Les Fraser

### GRAND SWORD BEARER

Chev. Nicolai Webber

### COMMANDER OF THE NORTH \*

Chev. Tina Walford-Stretton

### COMMANDER OF THE SOUTH \*

Chev. Troy Close

### WARDEN OF REGALIA \*

Chev. Dr Albin Wallace

### WARDEN OF BENEVOLENCE

Chev. Tina Walford-Stretton

### CHAIR OF THE LADIES CTTEE \*

Chev. Sally-Ann Hayes

### HISTORIAN/ARCHIVIST

Chev. Dr Peter Mellon

### CHIEF STEWARD

Chev. Bill Straub

### PRECEPTORS \*

Preceptors are now included as Chapter  
members

## MAGISTERIUM

Chair:

Grand Prior

Members:

Grand Secretary

Grand Seneschal

Grand Treasurer

*In the absence of the Grand Prior, the Grand  
Secretary will take the chair.*

The Grand Priory of England holds two  
investiture services each year, that are  
fixed as the Saturday immediately after  
the 13th October

(Templar Remembrance Day)

each year and the Saturday closest to 24th  
May each year, being the anniversary of  
the death of Hugues de Payen, our first  
Grand Master.

# The Pilgrim Project Photography Competition

Chevalier Warren Cruickshank, KCTJ

As you know, there is a lot of history out there and a good bit of it belongs to a relatively small group of 'warrior monks' called, amongst other names, The Knights Templar. Many excellent books have been and are still being written because the interest in Templar history still excites today.

This green and pleasant land is dotted with sites associated with the Templars, some are obvious and well documented while others are more elusive or even yet to be discovered and as part of the Pilgrimage Program we would like a photographic record of these sites, taken and credited to members of the OSMTH England.

So, get your phones out or even use an actual camera and if you have a Templar site near you or you are travelling North, East, South or West, then why not get snapping and send me your photos. To help you out I have listed a small selection of known sites around the country.

**Temple Cornwall. Built 1120 St Catherines Church, Bodmin Moor PL304HW.** I have been past the sign that points to this church many times as a kid but never got round to having a peak.

**Templecombe Somerset.** All that remains of 12<sup>th</sup> century preceptory is a stone boundary wall (7ft high) and footings/ruins of a small chapel found in an orchard at the back of the farm to south of village. Built as refuge for pilgrims en route to the Holy land in 12<sup>th</sup> century. ***This is a tough one and would need a bit of investigation for possibly little reward.***

**Temple Manor Strood, 1159. Knight Rd Rochester ME2 2AH.** Lodging for dignitaries travelling between Dover and London. ***Hidden in an industrial estate, need to check for opening times as surrounded by very inconvenient fencing.***

**Cressing Temple Barn 1137 Essex CM77 8PD.** Possibly the oldest standing timber framed barn in the world and shows a remarkable insight into building techniques of the time.

**There are 4 Round Churches in use in England, two of which were built by the Knights Templar.**

**The Holy Sepulchre, Northampton 1100** built by Knights Templar Simon de Senlis, Earl of N'hampton who joined the First Crusade to the Holy Land

**Temple Church, London. 1185** Built by Knights Templar as their headquarters and consecrated on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1185 by Patriarch Heraclius of Jerusalem during the reign of King John.

**Church of St Peter and St Paul Great Missenden.** Missenden Abbey built 1574 constructed on site and incorporating monastic remains of 1133 Abbey Church contains a *cross pattee* in east window and mounted knight in the north window of the church tower. Also a stone outbuilding incorporating early stone crosses.

**Denny Abbey, Cambridge CB25 9PQ** Founded in 1159 as a Benedictine Monastery, taken over in 1170 by the Knights Templar and used as a home for aged and infirm members of the Order.

**Rothley Court 1240, Leicestershire LE7 7LG** preceptory's chapel. (*Venue for Oct '24 investiture*)

**Temple Bruer Preceptory 1150 Lincolnshire.** One of the few Knights Templar sites in England where the ruins remain standing.

There are many many Templar sites across our land and the list covers but a handful. So if you have or know of a site near you then please take a picture or two (good lighting is recommended) and send them to me.

Email all photos to [wjc.pics@gmail.com](mailto:wjc.pics@gmail.com)

The rules are simple, the photos have to be yours, by all means edit them if necessary, only photos of Templar sites in the UK to be entered, you may submit a maximum of 6 photographs per site. Your photos can and will be used for OSMTH England business.

Photos will be judged by Chapter who will pick out a winning picture and they will **win a prize!!!**

**Winner and prize will be announced in the spring edition of Knightly News**

For details of our Order, please visit our website: [www.osmth-england.org](http://www.osmth-england.org)  
Or contact our Secretary at: [secretary@osmth-england.org](mailto:secretary@osmth-england.org)