



the Surrey gridiron



Issue 5 – JULY 2021

A Message from our District Grand Prefect

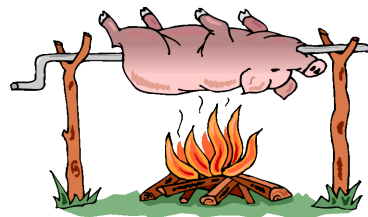
Brethren, I hope that you and your families are all still keeping safe and well and you are looking forward to face to face meetings, it's certainly been a while!



Surrey Council No 64 are holding their next meeting at Croydon Masonic Centre on the 19th July at 5pm and they have a candidate so I'm sure you will be made especially welcome should you want to support them - please contact W Bro Mike Neville mrmikeneville@aol.com if you would like to attend.

So long as I do not get black balled, I am looking forward to becoming a joining member of **Kyngstun Council No 102** which meets at Surbiton on the 2nd Tuesday in May and the 1st Wednesday in September (*installation*). W.Bro. Chris Eley the other DGP or should I say District Grand Photographer (*W.Bro. Bob Tuthills apprentice!!*) is also joining with me and we hope to add more joining members and candidates to swell their membership. Who knows, we might even overtake Surrey Council! If anyone has two days free in their busy Masonic diaries your added support would be greatly appreciated, please let me know dgpsurrey@gmail.com.

We have missed out on 2 of our annual **Hog Roast** events at Guildford Masonic Centre since the lock down and I'm happy to say that a rescheduled one for this year on the **12th September** is being very well supported. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to get together with our families, enjoying each other's company. Our hog is even bigger now and our Past District Grand Prefect RW.Bro. Raymond Hussey has guaranteed that the



sun will shine again! Please contact our event organiser W Bro John Coleman on john.t.coleman@btinternet.com or 07879 408187 - there are not many spaces left brethren so be quick! Next years Hog Roast at Guildford Masonic Centre will be on our normal date of the second Sunday in July (*10th July 2022*).

I was with our Past Deputy District Grand Prefect, VW Bro Frank Powell, and although he looked amazingly well he told me that he will be in hospital again very soon to have yet another operation. He is very positive as always but please keep him in your thoughts and prayers.



Subject to no further setbacks or restrictions our **Annual District Meeting** will go ahead on the first Saturday in December (*4th December 2021*) so please make a note in your diaries.

I finish by wishing you everything you wish for yourself and may the Great Disposer of all have you in His Holy Keeping now, and forever.
John

Six Surrey Heads of Orders Together

The first face to face meeting of a Scarlet Cord Consistory in Surrey after the lifting of the suspension of Masonic activity took place on Tuesday the 29th June at Nutfield Masonic Centre, Redhill. Although the current Covid-19 restrictions limited them to 27 in the Temple it was a good turnout to see R.Dist.Comp. Michael Barnes install Em.Comp. Chris Eley, our District Grand Photographer.

Attending the meeting were six Surrey Heads of Orders, including our District Grand Prefect, RW.Bro. John French. This was the first time they had met up together in well over a year. Also present was the Grand Summus M.Dist.Comp. Ian S Currans.



The main item on the agenda was to Install Em.Comp. Chris Eley, the Provincial Grand Recorder, as President. This was done in a very sincere manner by R.Dist.Comp. Michael Barnes, the Past Provincial Grand Summus.

The Consistory meeting was followed by a meeting of Warlingham Conclave where the Supreme Ruler, Wy.Bro. Chris Eley, Inducted a Candidate into the 1st Grade of the Order with the assistance of R.Wy.Bro. Colin Beerling, Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler and R.Wy.Bro. Michael Barnes, Past Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler

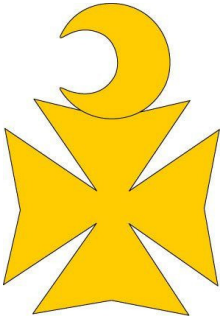


Don't forget to book in to our Annual Hog Roast at the South West Surrey Masonic Centre, Guildford, on Sunday **12th September 2021.**

Our District Grand Prefect will be pleased to welcome you and your families and friends.



Knights of Constantinople



Some of you might think that I've got the title of this little article wrong, but in fact although many brethren refer to this degree in the plural, the regulations tabulate it in the singular! Also, you may feel that I have used the phrase 'little article' because it is the shortest of the delightful five within our splendid order, but again, not necessarily so!

In this vein, I would like to set out a brief description of this fine degree as worked by three Councils in Plymouth. It was introduced there by a certain W Bro Francis George Irwin, a colour sergeant in the Royal Engineers, on the 18th of January 1865, and conferred on eleven brethren. It stimulated great interest among the brethren of St Aubyn Lodge. By the end of the year, councils in Chatham, Hong Kong and Cornwall had been established, AND St Aubyn Lodge (to become Council) had 52 members.

Within a few years, Councils had also been established in Gibraltar (Gebel Tarik, January 1870) and Excelsior, in Plymouth, in January 1874. At much the same time St Aubyn reverted to the status of a normal Council, and a Grand Council of Sovereigns' was formed to regulate the affairs of the order. This Grand Council was originally given the name of 'Red Cross'.

In early 1878, a petition was received for the erection of a Council in Bristol, to be known as Helena Council. It should be noted that at that time, the Council of Sovereigns / Sovereign Grand Council owed no allegiance to the Allied Masonic Degrees Grand Council in London. In early 1896, the Grand Secretary of that Council (W Bro Charles Matier) wrote to the Sovereign Grand Council in Plymouth, inviting them to become part of the London Grand Council. However, after considerable discussions, the invitation was "rejected unanimously".

Between that date and 1907 many new members were attracted, and further Councils were formed, notably Phoenix (South Africa), and Edgcombe Council, at Stonehouse, Plymouth. This latter consecration meant that each of the 'Three Towns' of the City of Plymouth were now possessed of a Council of Knight of Constantinople.

By this time, however, several invitations to submit to the authority of the Allied Grand Council having been summarily rejected prompted London to declare "that brethren professing to be members of the self-styled Council must not be permitted to visit a Council of the Allied Degrees, as they are not legitimate Knights of Constantinople". Similarly, the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons instructed members of their Mark Lodges that they were forbidden to visit any of the 'Plymouth Councils'.

This predicament caused the Sovereign Grand Council to reassess the situation, and in March 1909 it was resolved that the Secretary General should endeavour to come to some amicable arrangement which would preserve the standing of their particular Degree. Unfortunately, the administrative demands, and the financial implications of this resulted in many resignations, and the membership of the Plymouth Councils fell by some Sixty percent.

In April 1910, a special deputation from Grand Council in London arrived in Plymouth, and the full five degrees of the order were conferred upon the brethren being enrolled, having had an Obligation of allegiance previously Sworn. The present and past 'Sovereigns' of the 'Old' Sovereign Councils then received the degree of Installed Master of St Lawrence, following which a composite team from the three Councils demonstrated the Plymouth working of the degree of Knight of Constantinople. A celebratory banquet was then held – much Devonian cider?

Warrants of Confirmation were subsequently issued to St Aubyn, Red Cross and Edgcombe Councils, and they were registered on Grand Council's roll as No's 33, 34 and 35 respectively, with permission to continue to work their traditional degree of Knight of Constantinople, and to wear their distinctive apron and breast jewels.

Within a year it was suggested that the 'Plymouth Apron' be modified to display the colours of the constituent degrees: this was happily approved by Grand Council in November 1911. It was also agreed that breast jewels unique to each of the five degrees may be worn. Clearly this produces a very colourful effect: within the apron may be seen gold, silver, red, black and of course green. The breast jewels are suspended from ribbons individually of gold, purple, brown, red, pink, maroon and black!

Unfortunately, the first World War seriously affected recruitment into the order, and indeed attendance at meetings, but by the mid 20's normality had returned, and each of the Councils were progressing in a viable and healthy state, as indeed has Allied Masonry in the West Country to the present day.

On a personal note, I am pleased to say that I have been privileged to witness this ceremony worked in its original style on two separate occasions and can only say how impressive and colourful it is, especially when worked in the historical settings of Plymouths Masonic buildings. If you get a chance, go and see it!

(With acknowledgements to the "Brief History of The Plymouth Councils of the Knights of Constantinople on their Centenary of Admission into The Grand Council of the Order of the Allied Masonic Degrees, dated April 2010, and written by RW Bro Keith B Jackson).

VW.Bro. Brian Howlett
W.M. Godalming Council No 185

