



## The Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Court



The Annual Assembly of the Provincial Grand Court of Sussex took place on Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2025 at the Winchester Masonic Hall, with RW Bro Mark P Donovan, *GCAG*, Provincial Grand Master presiding.



Brethren started to arrive from 9 am and made their way to the bar where coffee, tea, and bacon rolls were being served.

It was good to catch up with Brethren from around the Province and further afield.

Attending were many members of the Province plus guests from Grand Court and other Provinces, together with Distinguished Brethren from many parts of our own Province.

We were honoured to receive RW Bro Charles Aspinell, *GCAG*, Deputy Grand Master, and RW Bro Lionel Mee, *GCAG*, Assistant Grand Master who were warmly welcomed to the meeting.







At 10.50 am the procession of Provincial Grand Masters, other Right Worshipful Brethren, and Very Worshipful Brethren entered Provincial Grand Court.

At 10.55 am the Provincial Grand Master accompanied by the Provincial Officers of the Year entered in Procession.

At 11.00 am Provincial Grand Court was opened by the Provincial Grand Master who was saluted with seven under the direction of the Provincial Marshal.

The Provincial Marshal then called to order the Brethren below the rank of Right Worshipful Brethren who were saluted with seven.

Provincial Grand Court then received the Deputy Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Charles Jonathan Aspinell, accompanied by the Assistant Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Lionel Broadbent Mee, and the Past Assistant Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Christopher Ansell, who were warmly welcomed by the Provincial Grand Master. The Deputy Grand Master was saluted with nine under the direction of the Deputy Grand Marshal, W.Bro. Duncan McGuire. R.W.Bro. Charles said how good it was to be visiting the Province of Sussex, especially in this lovely Temple.

An In Memoriam was held to honour W Bro Derek Franklin Oliver who passed away on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 2024 and a prayer was said by the Provincial Prior, W & Em Bro Chris Eley.

The Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master welcomed and introduced the visitors and other distinguished brethren, Heads of Orders, their Deputies, and members of the Executive within the Province which comprises Hampshire & Isle of Wight, South Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex, and The Channel Islands.

The Provincial Grand Master greeted the new members instructed into the Order since the last Provincial Assembly in April 2024 who were present today. The Provincial Grand Marshal led the brethren to centre of the Court and the Provincial Grand Master came onto the floor to welcome them.





W & Em Bro. Chris Eley was thanked by the Provincial Grand Master and re-invested as the Provincial Prior.

W Bro Satish Dhir, *KAG*, was appointed and invested as Provincial Senior Grand Warden and W Bro Martin Smith, *KAG*, as Provincial Junior Grand Warden. A total of 21 appointments and promotions in Provincial Grand Rank were made.

The RW Provincial Grand Master then addressed Provincial Grand Court. A copy of his Address is at the end of this article. He said how good it was to see so many Brethren at the Annual Meeting and thanked everyone, members and guests, for coming.



He then presented W.Bro. Duncan Maguire with a gift thanking him for his support as Provincial Marshal wishing him every success in his new role as Deputy Grand Marshal.

He ended by thanking the Secretariat and the Marshal and their teams for all their hard work in ensuring today was a success.



The Deputy Grand Master addressed Provincial Grand Court. He said what a pleasure it had been to be with everyone and to see the Temple so full. The Deputy Grand Master, the Assistant Grand Master and the Past Assistant Grand Master retired from Provincial Grand Court.

Provincial Grand Court was closed, and the RW Provincial Grand Master, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, the W&Em Provincial Prior, and the Provincial Grand Wardens retired in procession, greeting their honoured guests and Brethren of the Province as they left the Temple.

The meeting was followed a pre-lunch drinks reception in the grounds of the Winchester Masonic Centre after which the Brethren of the Province of Sussex and their guests enjoyed an excellent and convivial Festive Board.

We now look forward to getting together again at the Official Visits planned for the year, as well as our next Annual Meeting to be held at Chichester on **Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2026.**



After the regular business of Provincial Grand Court had been concluded the Provincial Grand Master thanked W.Bro. Bernard Marchant, *KAG*, **PGBurgh**, for his dedication and support over the year and was pleased to re-appoint him as Deputy Provincial Grand Master. W.Bro. Bernard was saluted with five under the direction of the Provincial Marshal and responded appropriately.



He asked the Provincial Marshal to escort R.W.Bro. Lionel Mee to him. He had much pleasure in presenting R.W.Bro. Lionel with a gift in appreciation of all he done for the Province over the years.











# Provincial Grand Master's Address to Provincial Grand Court



It is my honour to extend a warm Sussex welcome to you all, in particular the Deputy Grand Master RW Bro Charles Aspinell, great to have you with us, and to everybody who has travelled long and short distances to be here with us today, I thank you. We have again dined over 80 Brethren, with more in the temple who sadly could not be accommodated at lunch,

I was delighted to re-appoint my Deputy, W.Bro. Bernard Marchant, today who from our conversation back in last April when I first asked him to be my Deputy on to his installation here in this building on 16<sup>th</sup> of August last year to this day has offered nothing but unequivocal support, advice and friendship, and to think that our first meeting back in 2014 nearly ended in a fight....

Congratulations to all the active, first time, and Past Provincial Officers invested today. Bernard and I look forward to seeing you all around the Province on our official visits. Thank you also to the outgoing Officers for their support this year. Between my Deputy and I, we have visited all ten courts on our official visits (*one by Lionel when he was a mere PGM before his promotion*). We have also visited many of the other Provinces at their Annual Meetings.

This year's official visit dates will shortly be on the new website, as from now we will be sending emails to all members of the Province on all matters and all members are most welcome to attend these visits.

We have only lost one Brother this year as you heard earlier, but have instructed 17 new members into the order, four who are with us here today. This is since last April, with another 11 brethren already approved and awaiting Instruction over the next few months. Thank you to W.Bro. Mickey Wiles for press ganging so many of the KT Bodyguard members in Sussex. Our current membership is currently 190

The move to Eastbourne has proved good news for the court of Aelle with two new members Instructed and another one to join in July. I also thank the members of that Court for allowing us to hi-jack their January meeting to dedicate our new beautiful Provincial Bible.

Likewise, I also thank the members of King Alfred Court 79 for allowing us to as well use their Installation meeting to open Provincial Grand Court and install my Deputy Bernard, another 80 attendees strong meeting, which was a most memorable day for the Province. I was very conscious of not undermining the installation of W Bro Malcolm Lloyd, and we certainly did not, W.Bro. Peter Jack did a fantastic job installing Malcolm.

Also, I must mention the fantastic support from the Brethren from the Isle of Wight who were present at all OV's and other grand meetings.

All these events are recorded in our very successful magazine The Sussex Crown. My most sincere thanks go out to W & Em Bro. Chris Eley for all his hard work putting this together and also his recording of meetings through the lens of his camera.

Other events in the Province over this last year also included the wonderful and memorable day which took place at Mark Mason's Hall in July when the Grand Master installed R.W.Bro. Charles as Deputy Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Lionel as Assistant Grand Master, and then of course there was the main event of the day..... Yes, Brethren it has been a wonderful year in the Province of Sussex.

Several members of Sussex received Grand Rank in October at Grand Court and those here today include, R.W.Bro. Charles Aspinall, Deputy Grand Master; R.W.Bro .Lionel Mee, Assistant Grand Master; W.Bro. Mathew Burt as Grand Organist (*then a field promotion in Wigan to Past Grand Sword Bearer, so now VW Bro Mathew*); W.Bro. Duncan Maguire as Deputy Grand Marshal; V.W.Bro. Chris Cradock, Past Grand Sword Bearer, W.Bro. Simon McCarthy, Past Captain of the Guard; W.Bro. John Billett, Past Grand Banner Bearer; and lastly although not a member of our Province R.W.Bro. Ian Smith reappointed Junior Grand Warden; but he has put a joining form in at Court 88 in Guildford, so deserves to be noted.

Lastly, meetings do not happen on their own. My most grateful thanks go out to my Provincial Secretary Colin Wilson, and his wife Jean for putting up with me, my Deputy, Bernard, for all his patience, tolerance etc., when I did not feel like checking the dining plan for the nine hundredth time that week, amongst other things. To our Provincial Marshal and his team. Martin Smith and Rick Prior on the front desk today, Rick Prior for acting as Sword Bearer, and Richie Bratton for standing in as Secretary at short notice.

Lastly, the staff at this wonderful centre who look after us so well.

I bless you all and thank you for listening.

**RW Bro Mark P Donovan, GCG**  
**Provincial Grand Master**  
**5<sup>th</sup> April 2025**





# Congratulations



Congratulations to those Brethren who were appointed, promoted, or received a first appointment in Provincial Grand Court at the Annual Meeting held at Winchester on Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2025.

## Active Rank

|                                |                                                                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Deputy Provincial Grand Master | W Bro Bernard F Marchant, <i>KAG</i> , <b>PGBurgh</b> .                |
| Eminent Prior                  | W & Em Bro Christopher W Eley, <i>KAG</i> , <b>PGBannerB</b> .         |
| Senior Warden                  | W Bro Satish Dhir, <i>KAG</i>                                          |
| Junior Warden                  | W Bro Martin H Smith, <i>KAG</i>                                       |
| Secretary                      | W Bro Colin E Wilson, <i>KAG</i> , <b>PGBannerB</b> .                  |
| Registrar                      | W Bro Andrew Fox, <i>KAG</i> , <b>PGBurgh</b>                          |
| Treasurer                      | W Bro John C W Hickman, <i>KCAG</i> , <b>PDepGSwdB</b> , <b>PPrSGW</b> |
| Marshal                        | W Bro Michael J Wiles, <i>KAG</i> .                                    |
| Almoner                        | W Bro George Rodger, <i>KAG</i> , <b>PGCofG</b> .                      |
| Sword Bearer                   | W Bro Hugh J Everitt                                                   |
| Deputy Marshal                 | W Bro John D Billett                                                   |
| Senior Deacon                  | W Bro David J Poulton                                                  |
| Junior Deacon                  | W Bro Stuart R Sale                                                    |
| Organist                       | VW Bro Matthew R Burt, <i>KAG</i> , <b>GOrg</b> .                      |
| Banner Bearer                  | W Bro Anthony J Green                                                  |
| Captain of Guards              | W Bro Alan J Swaby                                                     |
| Burgh                          | W Bro Stephen J Walsh                                                  |
| Guard                          | VW Bro Glen Coneley, <i>KCAG</i> , <b>PGMar</b>                        |

## Promotion in Past Rank

|                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Past Junior Warden | W Bro John Bryant |
|--------------------|-------------------|

## First Appointment to Past Rank

|            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| Past Burgh | W Bro David Morgan |
|------------|--------------------|

# The Court of Sion Abbey



A meeting of the Court of Sion Abbey No. 126 was held on Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> of April 2025 at the Twickenham Masonic Centre.

The Court was opened by the Worshipful Master, W.Bro. Felix Brown, who welcomed all the visitors. Not able to be present at the installation meeting W.Bro. Felix, was proclaimed as Master by the Marshal, W.Bro. John Billett. He was acknowledged and greeted with the traditional waepentake. The officers unable to be present at the installation meeting were then invested.

The brethren received an interesting and informative Lecture on The Concept of Masonic Ritual by W.Bro. Gordon Smith.



The Court was closed and after refreshments the Brethren of The Court of Sion Abbey and their guests sat down to dine at the Twickenham District Masonic Centre.



*Thanks to Satish Dhir*

# The Deputy Provincial Grand Master visits the Court of Prince Edmund

On Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025 saw the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, W.Bro. Bernard F Marchant, make an Official visit to the Court of Prince Edmund No. 24 in Chichester.

The Deputy Provincial Grand Master thanked the Team who had accompanied him, and a special mention to W.Bro. Alan Trotter who came to visit from France. This was the last Official visit for the current year before the Annual Meeting in April.

The evening was well attended with the usual Isle of Wight contingent present to support the Sussex Team. This meeting was the Provincial Marshal W.Bro. Duncan Maguire's last visit in this position. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master thanked him for his work over the past few years.

Prince Edmund held a rehearsal for an instruction ceremony. The Court Marshal thought it would benefit the members to get instruction for the Circle of Nine.

The Deputy Provincial Marshal, W.Bro. Mickey Wiles was present, and as he has performed this part of the ceremony many times gave a very impressive instruction on the best way to achieve this.

We then had an excellent festive board, and everyone went home after a most enjoyable evening.

*Thanks to Bernard Marchant*



## Prince Edmund

Edmund Ironside (c. 990 –1016) also known as Edmund II, was King of the English from 23 April to 30 November 1016.

He was the son of King Æthelred the Unready and his first wife, Ælfgifu of York. Edmund's reign was marred by a war he had inherited from his father; his epithet "Ironside" was given to him because of his valour in resisting the Danish invasion led by Cnut.

The intensity of Edmund's struggle against the Danes in 1016 is only matched by Alfred the Great's in 871, and contrasts with Æthelred's failure. Edmund's success in raising one army after another suggests that there was little wrong with the organs of government under competent leadership. He was probably a highly determined, skilled and indeed inspiring leader of men.

Edmund died on 30 November 1016, probably at London. Edmund was buried near his grandfather Edgar at Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset.



# The Consecration of a new Court in Guernsey



At the Annual Meeting in Winchester following his Address to the Brethren our Provincial Grand Master had a "special announcement. He stated that we were going to consecrate a new Court in the Province of Sussex. The Court of Lenur will be on the Island of Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands, and will be the 11<sup>th</sup> Court in the Province of Sussex.

RW Bro Mark went on to explain that he had been in regular contact with Andrew Henton, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Mark in the Channel Islands, for around ten months and that there is now sufficiently enough interested brethren to move this project forward.

The consecration date is the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2026 and will take place in Guernsey with the Province of Sussex taking a team out to perform the consecration ceremony. All Brethren are invited to attend and enjoy the weekend. Ladies will be catered for and invited to attend the Saturday evening banquet.

As our Provincial literature has always stated "the Channel Islands are part of the Province of Sussex", that part of our desire is now beginning to take shape. More information will follow.

## The Lenur Islands

Evidence for Roman settlement of the islands is sparse, although the islands were visited by Roman officials and traders. The Roman name for the Channel Islands was Lenuri (Lenur Islands) The traditional Latin names used for the islands were Caesarea for Jersey, Sarnia for Guernsey, and Riduna for Alderney.

In the sixth century, Christian missionaries visited the islands. Samson of Dol, Helier, Marculf and Magloire are among saints associated with the islands. In the sixth century, they were already included in the diocese of Coutances where they remained until the Reformation.

There were probably some Celtic Britons who settled on the Islands in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD (the indigenous Celts of Great Britain, and the ancestors of the modern Welsh, Cornish, and Bretons) who had emigrated from Great Britain in the face of invading Anglo-Saxons. But there were not enough of them to leave any trace, and the islands continued to be ruled by the king of the Franks and its church remained part of the diocese of Coutances.

From the beginning of the ninth century, Norse raiders appeared on the coasts. Norse settlement eventually succeeded initial attacks, and it is from this period that many place names of Norse origin appear, including the modern names of the islands.

In 933, the islands were granted to William I Longsword by Raoul, the King of Western Francia, and annexed to the Duchy of Normandy. In 1066, William II of Normandy invaded and conquered England, becoming William I of England, also known as William the Conqueror. In the period 1204–1214, King John lost the Angevin lands in northern France, including mainland Normandy, to King Philip II of France, but managed to retain control of the Channel Islands. In 1259, his successor, Henry III of England, by the Treaty of Paris, officially surrendered his claim and title to the Duchy of Normandy, while retaining the Channel Islands, as peer of France and feudal vassal of the King of France.

Around 1290, Otto de Grandson split the Channel Islands into two separate bailiwicks which were never absorbed into the Kingdom of England nor its successor kingdoms of Great Britain or the United Kingdom. During the Hundred Years' War, the Channel Islands were part of the French territory recognizing the claims of the English kings to the French throne.

## The Masonic Centre

The Guernsey Masonic Centre is situated on the Rue de la Vallee, St. Martin, Guernsey. GY4 6HW.

The Province of Guernsey and Alderney in the Channel Islands is one of the smallest Provinces of the United Grand Lodge of England, supporting just eleven Lodges. However, the Channel Islands are not within the United Kingdom, having been a possession of the Duke of Normandy long before 1066.

Today they still remain British Crown Dependencies in a unique relationship under the British Monarchy. The Channel Islands lie just a few miles off the French coast in the English Channel.

There are essentially five populated Islands. The Province of Guernsey and Alderney also includes the smaller Islands of Sark and Herm, whilst the Island of Jersey is a separate Province.

Freemasonry came to Guernsey, the second largest Island in the Channel Islands, in 1753 during in the reign of King George II.

In 2003 the Province celebrated 250 years of Freemasonry on the islands.

