

The Annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Court



The Annual Assembly of the Provincial Grand Court of Sussex took place on Saturday the 11th of April 2026 at the at the Chichester Masonic Hall, with R.W.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.

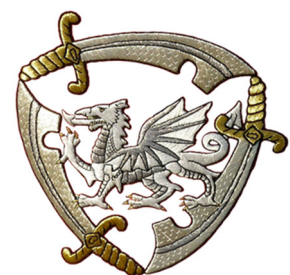
Attending were many members of the Province, plus guests from Grand Court and other Provinces, together with Distinguished Brethren from many parts of our own Province.







It was good to see the Temple so full of Brethren from the Province of Sussex, and guests from other Provinces.



The Provincial Grand Marshal, W.Bro. Mickey Wiles, KAG, addressed the Brethren in the Temple and the Brethren were called to order to receive R.W.Bro. Brian Prevett, Past Provincial Grand Master. The Provincial Grand Masters and other Right Worshipful Brethren then entered in Procession.

The Provincial Grand Master accompanied by Provincial Officers of the Year then entered in Procession.



We were honoured to have with us M.W.Bro. Charles Aspinell, *GCAG*, Grand Master; R.W.Bro. Clive Manuel, *GCAG*, Deputy Grand Master; R.W.Bro. Lionel Mee, *GCAG*, Assistant Grand Master, Past Provincial Grand Master; and R.W.Bro. Brian Prevett, *GCAG*, Past Provincial Grand Master.

Provincial Grand Court was opened by the Provincial Grand Master who was saluted with seven under the direction of the Provincial Marshal, W.Bro. Mickey Wiles, *KAG*.

Provincial Grand Court then received the Grand Master, M.W.Bro. Charles Jonathan Aspinell, *GCAG*, accompanied by the Deputy Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Clive Manuel, *GCAG*, and the Assistant Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Lionel Mee, *GCAG*, who were warmly welcomed by the Provincial Grand Master.

The Grand Master was saluted with eleven under the direction of the Deputy

Grand Marshal, W.Bro. Steve Devlin. M.W.Bro. Charles said how good it was to be visiting the Province of Sussex, in the very Temple where he was Instructed all those years ago.

An In-Memoriam to honour departed Brethren was held. The Deputy Provincial Grand Master read the names of departed Brethren.

The Provincial Grand Master called upon the Provincial Grand Prior for Prayer and the Brethren stood while the Grand Organist quietly played the first verse of Abide With Me.

The Provincial Grand Master introduced and welcomed our honoured guests and visitors.

The Provincial Grand Master was then pleased to greet those Brethren who had been Instructed into the Order since our last Annual Meeting.



After the regular business of Provincial Grand Court had been concluded the Provincial Grand Master thanked W.Bro. Bernard Marchant, *KCAG, PSGD*, 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.

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 Varinder Dhir, *KAG*, as Provincial Junior Grand Warden. A total of 21 appointments and promotions 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.

The Grand Master addressed Provincial Grand Court:



"Brethren, it's a real pleasure to be back here in Sussex. This Province holds a special place in my heart, because it was here that I was first Instructed in our beautiful Order. I am genuinely proud to be a Sussex Athelstan member, and standing among you always feels a little like coming home.

I want to congratulate you on the tremendous progress you've made in growing your Courts and strengthening your membership. What you've achieved hasn't happened by chance. It's the result of enthusiasm, commitment, and a real enjoyment of your Athelstan Masonry, and that enjoyment shows. Your Courts are lively, your meetings are well supported, and the sense of fellowship here is something you can feel the moment you walk through the door.

As an invitational Order, we have a particular responsibility: to bring in Brethren who will truly appreciate what Athelstan offers; its history, its symbolism, its warmth, and its spirit. Sussex has shown that when we focus on quality, the Order grows naturally and in the right way.

So, I encourage each of you: keep enjoying your Athelstan Masonry. Attend your Courts, support your officers, and keep that spark of curiosity and friendship alive. And as you meet worthy Brethren in your Craft Lodges and other Orders, continue to identify those who would flourish amongst us. Brethren who will enjoy the Order as much as you do, and who will add to its strength.

Sussex is setting a fine example. Keep that momentum, keep that pride, and keep that joy in your Athelstan journey. Brethren, thank you for your warm welcome, and for everything you do for our Order".

After the collection of Alms, the Provincial Grand Master proposed donations of £250 to two charities, Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice for Sussex, and Guernsey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The proposition was seconded by the Deputy Provincial Grand Master and approved by the Brethren.

The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and 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, before returning for photographs with the Grand Master and his team.



The meeting was followed a pre-lunch drinks reception in the Chichester Masonic Hall 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 on:
Saturday the 3rd of April 2027 at the Nutfield Masonic Centre.



Provincial Grand Master's Address to Provincial Grand Court



For the second year it is my honour to address Provincial Grand Court, and I thank you all for attending today, especially those who travelled many miles to be here.

It is also always a great pleasure to welcome our Grand Master, M.W.Bro. Charles Jonathan Aspinel, who is a member of this Province.

For the first time at the Sussex Annual Meeting we have 95 in the temple and are dining over ninety brethren, which is fantastic and reflects that someone must be doing something correctly. NOT ME!

The last time I tried to say something complimentary about my Deputy, Bernard, in Guernsey my sore throat came back and stopped me, so I want to say it was very meaningful to reappoint him today and thank him for all his hard work and support he offers me always. I really look forward to working with him again.

I also congratulate all those who were reappointed, received first appointments, or promotions today. Bernard and I look forward to you joining us on our Provincial visits when you are able. And I also thank the outgoing officers.

The numbers in the Province have been excellent this year, from 191 members a year ago we have instructed 29 new brethren, only two of the brethren mentioned in the memoriam were current members so leaving us at 218. With fourteen brethren awaiting instruction.

Of all the Courts in the province 10 of 11 are in a comfortable position, No 24 which meets here needs a little tummy rubbing and Gordon & Michael are working on helping that situation. At this Court on the 11th of September the Grand Secretary, V.W.Bro. Dries van de Burg will be installed as the Worshipful Master. I do know the Grand Master intends to be here that day as it is his Mother Court. We look forward to a bumper evening.

Also, my Official Visit this year to this Court will be on the 13th of November when I hope, with the blessing of the members of the Court, we will be Dedicating a new Provincial Sword.

All Official Visit dates will be issued this week. These are for anyone who wishes to attend and are enjoyable events. I have been lucky this season to attend all but one of the Provincial meetings around the country, R.W.Bro. Keith still will not change his date to suit me!!!!

The highlight of our Provincial year must be the Consecration of the Court of Lenuri No 202 in early March with seventy plus brethren and some ladies traveling to the Island for a fantastic weekend. Russell, thank you for making the effort to attend today. We had fantastic support from all over the country that day including fifteen members from Kent.

All these events are recorded in our monthly newsletter, the Sussex Crown, which I do hope you read. Chris, thank you for all your hard work producing it.

To all those members who received Grand Rank in October last year my congratulations, and of course the reappointments and promotions as well, especially if you were promoted to Most Worshipful Grand Master.

Brethren, we must remember that our support to our Craft Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters is so important, it is what keeps the Companion Orders fed with members and amongst other things helping further down the line with the next generation of Athelstan Court Master Masons. Keep it up.

Lastly, these meetings do not just happen, a lot of planning, thought, hard work and on my behalf shouting, go into making these days work so I thank all those who have assisted in making today a success. You know who you are.

Again, I thank you all for attending and have a safe journey home. Enough from me Brethren

RW Bro Mark P Donovan, GCAG

Provincial Grand Master

11th April 2026





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 11th of April 2026.

Active Rank

Deputy Provincial Grand Master	W Bro Bernard F Marchant, <i>KCAG</i> , <i>PSGD</i> .
Eminent Prior	W & Em Bro Christopher W Eley, <i>KAG</i> , <i>PGBannerB</i> .
Senior Warden	W Bro Satish Dhir, <i>KAG</i>
Junior Warden	W Bro Varinder Dhir, <i>KAG</i>
Secretary	W Bro Colin E Wilson, <i>KAG</i> , <i>PGBannerB</i> .
Registrar	W Bro Andrew Fox, <i>KAG</i> , <i>PGBurgh</i>
Treasurer	W Bro John C W Hickman, <i>KCAG</i> , <i>PDepGSwdB</i> , <i>PPrSGW</i>
Marshal	W Bro Michael J Wiles, <i>KAG</i> .
Almoner	W Bro George Rodger, <i>KAG</i> , <i>PGCofG</i> .
Sword Bearer	W Bro Peter Jack
Deputy Marshal	W Bro John D Billett, <i>KAG</i> , <i>PGBannerB</i> .
Senior Deacon	W Bro Tan Rusby
Junior Deacon	W Bro Robert Toogood
Organist	VW Bro Matthew R Burt, <i>KCAG</i> , <i>GOrg</i> .
Banner Bearer	<i>W Bro Stephen R Campbell (Decd.)</i>
Captain of Guards	W Bro Colin Thurman
Burgh	W Bro Kenneth Chandler
Guard	W Bro Alan Hall

Promotion in Past Rank

Past Junior Warden	W Bro Ian Neve
Past Sword Bearer	W Bro Derek Williamson
Past Junior Deacon	W Bro Michael Lloyd

First appointment to Past Rank

Past Junior Deacon	W Bro Toby Pratt
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