



The Masonic Order of Athelstan
in England, Wales and its Provinces Overseas

A History of the Order within Sussex



In July 2006 R W Bro Brian James Prett became the first Provincial Grand Master for this Athelstan Province of Sussex – at which time he was not even a member of the Order!



In September 2006, Brian, together with four other brethren, who included John Hickman the current Provincial Grand Treasurer, was 'Instructed' into the Order in The Court of Ætheling No. 10 in East Anglia.

Brian was now Provincial Grand Master but he did not as yet have any Courts in his Province – the geographical boundary of which comprised Hampshire

& Isle of Wight, Middlesex (South of the M4), Surrey, Sussex and The Channel Islands and was one of the largest Provinces of any Masonic Order in the South of England.

The first Athelstan Court established in the Province was in the County of Sussex; The Court of Prince Edmund No 24 was consecrated at Chichester on 26th May 2007 with Brian Prett as Primus Master. Following the consecration of the court W Bro Brian was installed Provincial Grand Master for Sussex. Two further Courts were founded that same year - The Court of Ælle No. 25 on 9th June 2007 at Herstmonceux, north of Eastbourne, and Archbishop Æthelhelm Court No. 34 on 20th December 2007 at the Nutfield Masonic Hall in Redhill, Surrey.

The Primus Master of the Court of Ælle No. 25 was to have been Peter Fynmore, but unfortunately Peter suffered a broken leg the day before the consecration and the Founding Immediate Past Master Bill Leach undertook the role and was installed Primus Master with Terry Brown as Founding Secretary.

A few months later on 20th December 2007 at Nutfield Masonic Hall, R W Bro Brian assisted by Provincial Officers and other members of the Province, consecrated Archbishop Æthelhelm Court No. 34. The Primus Master was Roy Leavers and Peter McCarthy was Founding Secretary.

With the Consecration of Archbishop Æthelhelm Court, the Province was now established in the Craft Provinces of both Sussex and Surrey.

The next court - the Court of The South Saxons No 60 - was founded at Ferring in West Sussex on 30th November 2009. M W Bro Michael Roalfe, Grand Master assisted by Provincial Grand Master Brian and members of the Province officiated at the consecration. Ross Everett was Primus Master and the Founding Secretary was Gene Earland.

The next court, The Court of King Alfred the Great No. 79, was consecrated at Winchester in Hampshire on 27th April 2012. Again, Provincial Grand Master Brian Prett and his Provincial Team officiated as the consecrating team. The Primus Master was Alan Paxton and Founding

Secretary was Ron Bentley.

The Province now consisted of FOUR Courts and was established in the Craft Provinces of Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire & Isle of Wight.

On 28th November 2012 M W Bro Michael Roalfe, Grand Master, again assisted by Brian Prett and members of the Province officiated at the consecration of The Court of Harrow Way No. 88 at Guildford, Surrey. W Bro Louis Keats was Primus Master and the Founding Secretary was W Bro Roy Leavers.

From the outset of the founding of the Order, it was the wish of those involved in the Inauguration of the Masonic Order of Athelstan in 2005 to have THREE 'Flagship Courts' that were to represent: -

- The Ancient Charges which were delivered at the first Grand Assembly at York in AD 926
- The Coronation of King Athelstan in AD 925 near the site of All Saints Church in Kingston upon Thames
- The burial place of King Athelstan at Malmesbury Abbey in AD 939

Grand Court determined that these Flagship Courts were to bear the Numbers of 1, 50 and 100 respectively.

The first of these courts - The Court of Eorforwic No. 1 - was established at York on 4th August 2007 in the Province of Lindsey. This was followed on 31st May 2008 when Malmesbury Court No. 100 was consecrated at Malmesbury in the Province of Wessex. The last of the 3 Flagship Courts - The Coronation Stone Court No. 50 - was consecrated on 27th January 2014 at Surbiton in Surrey by the current Grand Master M W Bro Paul Johnson, with PGM Brian Prevett and Provincial Officers assisting.

The Rood at Sudtone Sari Court No. 106 was the next court to be established in the Province at Sutton in Surrey on 11th March 2015. The consecration was carried out by the Deputy Grand Master R W Bro John Lloyd with Brian Prevett and his Officers again assisting. Primus Master of this court was Brian Wareham with Leonard Hayward becoming Founding Secretary. There were now EIGHT Courts in the Province of Sussex.

RW Bro Roy Leavers, who had been appointed Deputy Provincial Grand Master in early 2014, stepped down in May 2015 and W Bro Lionel Mee was appointed Deputy PGM in July of that year.

R W Bro Brian Prevett retired as Provincial Grand Master on 31st December 2015 after nine years and W Bro Lionel Broadbent Mee was installed as Provincial Grand Master on Saturday, 2nd April 2016 by the Grand Master at Chichester Masonic Hall in West Sussex. On the same day R W Bro Lionel appointed W Bro Michael Daniel Ellis as Deputy Provincial Grand Master

In June 2016, The Ridgeway Court No. 7 - which had been founded in the Province of Hwicce at Thame in Oxfordshire in May 2006 - was assigned to the Province of Sussex bringing the number of Courts in the Province to NINE.

The next court to be established in the Province was on Tuesday, 11th October 2016 at Croydon in Surrey when the Sword of Constantine Court No. 120 was consecrated by the Grand Master assisted by R W Bro Lionel Mee the Provincial Grand Master and Officers of Grand and Provincial Grand Court. W Bro Ian Clark was Installed Primus Master and Justin Hollingsworth as Founding Secretary.

By the close of 2016 the Province had expanded to 10 Courts.

Unfortunately however, on 20th January 2017 Ridgeway Court No. 7 was removed from the Roll of Courts on the Register of

Grand Court as it had not held a regular meeting since May 2013.

The Coronation Stone Court No. 50 which had been consecrated in January 2014 with 24 Founders and now included the Grand Master who had become a Joining Member, voted to amend its By-Laws in June 2016 to allow for: -

- The Grand Master for the time would become the permanent Master of the Court.
- The Court would be designated the Grand Master's private Court within the Order.

The membership of the Court had continued to expand since being founded in January 2014 and by the beginning of 2017 had grown to almost 50 members, who included the Deputy Grand Master, the Assistant Grand Master for the Americas, 5 Current & Past Rulers in Freemasonry, numerous present and Past Provincial Grand Masters and many other Brethren of distinction. After due consideration, and in accordance with the revised By-Laws, on 23rd January 2017 the Grand Master removed the Court from the Province of Sussex to become an Unattached Court within the Order administered directly by Grand Court.

With the removal of the Ridgeway Court No. 7 and the Coronation Stone Court No. 50 the number of Courts within the Province was reduced to TEN.

TEN YEARS OF THE ORDER IN SUSSEX

To commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the Order in May 2007 a Celebration Dinner & Dance was held in June 2017 at the Chichester Park Hotel in West Sussex. It was attended by over 70 Members of the Order their partners and Guests and was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended.

FOUNDING OF THE COURT OF Wihƿ-land No 123

At early 2017 a Founders Meeting was held on the Isle of Wight leading to the submission of a Petition to Grand Court in June for a new Court to be named "The Court of Wihƿ-land" – the Anglo Saxon name for the Isle of Wight - to meet in Ryde on the Island. This Petition was approved by Grand Court and the Court was consecrated by the Most Worshipful Grand Master on Wednesday, 6th December 2017 at the West Cowes Masonic

Hall on the Isle of Wight. The Primus Master was W Bro Colin Wilson, a long time resident on the Island and also a member of The Court of King Alfred the Great No. 79 in Winchester. The Founding Secretary was W Bro Colin Maddison.

FOUNDING OF THE COURT OF SION Abbey No. 126

In June 2017 a Founders Meeting was held in Twickenham for a Court to meet in the Cole Court Masonic Centre at Twickenham in Middlesex. The Petition for "The Court of Sion Abbey" was submitted to Grand Court in September 2017 and approval was received in November 2017. The Court was allocated with the Number 126.

R W Bro Lionel Mee, Provincial Grand Master, having been given the honour of Consecrating Officer by the Most Worshipful Grand Master, conducted the ceremony of founding the new Court on Wednesday, 28th February 2018. He was assisted by Officers of Grand and Provincial Grand Court. W Bro Martin Smith, the principal organiser of the Court and a Founder of the Rood At Sudtone Sari Court No. 106 in March 2015, was installed as Primus Master and W Bro Roger Short was appointed the Founding Secretary.

Following the establishment of the Courts of Wight-land and Sion Abbey, the Province once again comprises of 10 Courts and the Masonic Order of Athelstan now has a presence in the Craft Provinces of Hampshire & Isle of Wight, Middlesex, Surrey and Sussex.

APPOINTMENT OF A NEW DEPUTY PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER - APRIL 2019

At the Annual Assembly of Provincial Grand Court on Saturday, 6th April 2019 held at Chichester in West Sussex, V W Bro Mike Ellis, KSM, PGSwdB stepped down as Deputy Provincial Grand Master after three years in Office and W. Bro. Mark Peter Donovan, KSM, Provincial Grand Marshal, was appointed the new Deputy Provincial Grand Master. Prior to appointing and installing W Bro Mark in Office, the Provincial Grand Master R W Bro Lionel Mee thanked V W Bro Mike for his excellent contribution and dedicated service to the Province during his term of office.

There are currently 210 members with a total of 230 memberships in the Province.

The future of the Athelstan Province of Sussex is very much alive and doing well

November 2019