



# Hamilton-Toronto Commandery News

Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller

SPRING ISSUE 2025



## THE GRAND PRIORY COUNCIL

### TERMS OF OFFICE Oct. 2023 - Oct. 2027

**Grand Prior:** Bailiff Grand Cross Glenna Swing  
**Lieutenant Grand Prior:** KCdr John Vanthornout  
**Grand Chancellor:** DCdr Evelyn Wilkie  
**Grand Marshal:** KCdr Henik Koksanowicz  
**Grand Treasurer, Treasurer KHF:** DCdr Lynda Murdoch-Furchner  
**Grand Prelate:** HE The Very Rev Paul Millward  
**Archivist:** Vacant  
**Grand Registrar:** Bailiff Nancy Standard  
**Attorney General:** Bailiff Grand Cross Michael Rehill  
**Commander Hamilton:** KCdr Robert DeWolfe, KH  
April 2025 - October 2028  
**Commander London:** DCdr Beth Dykeman  
April 2023 - October 2026  
**Commander Montreal:** HE Bailiff Malcolm McLeod  
October 2021 -October 2024  
**Past Grand Prior:** Bailiff Grand Cross George Hope  
October 2023 -October 2027  
**Grand Councillor:** HE Baliff Joe Petozzi  
October 2023 - October 2027  
**Grand Councillor:** HE Baliff Allan Halfper  
October 2024 -October 2027

## AGM Hamilton-Toronto 2025

**WHEN:** Saturday April 12

**WHERE:** Church of the Resurrection, Hamilton

**ATTENDANCE:** 20 members including the Chair

KCdr Bob (Robert) DeWolfe replacing KCdr Brian Robinson.

### Elected Officers for Hamilton-Toronto 2025

**Commander:** KCdr Robert DeWolfe, KH

**Deputy Commander:** DCdr Lynda Murdoch-Furchner, DH

**Treasurer:** Chev Val Patrick, KH

**Secretary & Marshall:** Chev Doug Furchner, KH

**Membership:** Ann Haberl Baxter, CH

**Honours and Awards:** HE Bailiff Mike Rehill, KH

**Hospitaller:** KCdr Robert DeWolfe, KH

**Newsletter:** Vera Rehill, CH

**Good and Welfare:** Please contact Bob DeWolfe if you would like to volunteer for this position.  
r.dewolfe2023 @outlook.com



## **GRAND PRIOR, CANADA**

Excellencies, Dames, Knights and Members – I hope your Easter was enjoyable and you had some time to spend with family and friends. Alleluia!



I am writing to you as I await transport to take us to the airport, enroute to Athens and Rhodes with a few other Hamilton Commandery members. This is my second Pilgrimage with Hospitallers and I'm sure I will have much to write to you about when we get home! I'm not a particularly comfortable traveler. I fret right up to boarding, but Greece promises pleasant weather, good food and exceptional company. Pictures to follow!

From our medieval beginnings and church associations we continue to do good work on behalf of the Order. At our beginning we acquired wealth, land and combined the tasks of tending the sick and defending Christendom. Along with the Templars, the Hospitallers became the most formidable military in all the Holy Land. We have evolved over the last several hundred years to the Chivalric order that we are today. Although our scope is somewhat diminished to where there is focus on smaller charities rather than hospitals, our efforts are good. Our treasures make a difference, and our combined talents ensure that good work is being done.

I love the words I read at Church a few weeks ago, from the First Letter of Peter. It read: 'Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God.'

We are asked in this scripture to share our resources, do good work and to love one another.

I thank you for the gifts each of you so freely offer: your time, talent and treasures. Your membership helps us achieve our motto. I bid you all peace. Thank you!

Yours in Christ and St. John

Glenna Swing

## **WHO IS ROBERT DEWOLFE?**

I guess it would be a good idea to let you know a bit about my background since I am now the Hamilton-Toronto Commander.



Since a young age, I came up through the ranks of the cadet program on the naval side. After graduating from high school in Hamilton, it was work, more schooling and serving as an officer for the cadets. I am still involved with the Navy League along with the engineering association. Along the way, I have become involved with HMCS Star, Historical Collections, the Hamilton Naval Association, the city of Hamilton's Veteran's Committee, and membership in several veterans associations. As the Covid era arrived, I made application to join the Hospitallers and found I was back with people I have known and worked with throughout my years.

I assumed this position rather suddenly and I will do my utmost to insure that I continue on the tradition of the leadership before me. I do not believe in making changes to something that works as well as it has but will try to enhance the current operations.

We need to build our Order with a few more likeminded individuals, so if there is anyone you know who might consider joining us, please bring them along to any of our functions and introduce them to our fine group.

Our Spring Dinner is shortly upon us, at the Burlington Golf and Country Club. If you have not attended lately, you are missing a wonderful location with splendid food and great camaraderie. Planning for the Investiture in 2026 in Hamilton will be starting to take shape and we will be looking for volunteers to assist shortly. More information will be forthcoming. I look forward to meeting with everyone soon.

Yours in Christ and St. John,

Robert



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2025

### Celebration of Life

#### **John Tinsley**



**WHEN:** Friday May 2, 2025

**WHERE:** Royal Hamilton Yacht Club

**TIME:** 1400 to 1600 hrs

**DRESS:** Business suit with neck decorations and medals. Ladies the equivalent.

**INTERMENT:** private family affair

### Spring Dinner Social

**WHEN:** Friday May 30, 2025

**WHERE:** Burlington Golf and Country Club,  
422 North Shore Blvd. E., Burlington Ontario

**TIME:** 1800 for 1900 hrs

**COST:** \$125.00 / person

**DRESS:** Black tie, business suit, and  
miniature medals. Ladies the equivalent.

Guests are welcome!

**RSVP:** r.dewolfe2023 @outlook.com  
by May 16, 2025

**E-transfer:** vpatrick50@hotmail.com

or **cheque** made out to **HOSJ**, and mail to  
V. Patrick

76 Lakeside Dr., Nanticoke ON. N0A 1L0

**FUNDRAISING:** There will be a 50/50 draw.



### Summer BBQ Social

**WHEN:** August 24, 2025

**WHERE:** Gary and Jane Hatton

530 Butler St., Niagara on the Lake, Ontario

**TIME:** 1200 to 1900 hrs

**COST:** to be determined (burgers/sausages, salads,  
and desserts)

**DRESS:** summer casual, outdoor weather

**FUNDRAISING:** prize raffle, 50/50 draw,  
horse races. Bring toonies for the horse races.  
Raffle prize donations requested.

### Christmas Cocktail Party

**WHEN:** Friday November 28, 2025

**WHERE:** RHLI Officers Mess, James Street Armory

**TIME:** 1800 to 2300 hrs

**COST:** to be determined

**DRESS:** business casual, cocktail dress

**FUNDRAISING:** silent auction, 50/50 draw  
Auction prize donations requested.

### PLAN HEAD 2026

#### AGM Hamilton-Toronto 2026

**WHEN:** April 2026

#### HOSJ Investiture, Hamilton Ontario

**WHEN:** October 1-3, 2026

**WHERE:** Marriott Courtyard, 1224 Upper James St,

**COST:** to be determined

We will be looking for volunteers to assist with  
investiture planning and taskings. If you are interest  
in helping, watch your email for the volunteer  
opportunities.







## HOSJ FUNDRAISING, How You Can Donate

### New This Year, 2025

We have decided to have fund-raising activities at ALL of our events. Meetings and formal events will hold 50/50 draws. We will continue to have special fundraising activities at our summer event and Christmas Cocktail party. Members please bring cash for 50/50 draws and toonies for summer event horse races.



### Summer BBQ Event, Raffle Prizes

We will gladly accept prize donations for our summer prize raffle. These need not be expensive as those that are donated for the Christmas Silent Auction.

Members donating prizes are asked to bring their prizes with them to this event. If you cannot attend this event, but would like to donate a prize, please contact a commandery officer who would be happy to collect your gift and take it to the summer event.



### Christmas Cocktail Party, Silent Auction

We will gladly accept prize donations for our annual Christmas Silent Auction. If you wish to donate prizes, please contact Lynda Murdoch-Furchner and provide a description and approximate value of your prize. Lynda will prepare bidding sheets in advance. Please bring your prizes with you to the event. If you cannot attend this event, but would like to donate a prize, please contact a commandery officer who would be happy to collect your gift and take it to the Christmas event.

lmfcga@gmail.com

### Charity of Choice



Hamilton Food Share, is the Commandery's charity of choice because it is Hamilton's emergency food shipping and receiving hub. It is the systems coordinator for the emergency food network comprised of 22 hunger relief programs operating in neighbourhoods across our city helping more than 17,000 local people each month.

Every \$1 donation provides \$5 worth of food.

### Monetary \$\$\$ Donations

Monetary donations are welcomed throughout the year. Some members choose to add a donation when paying their annual dues and oblations, others choose to donate at different times.

These monetary donations are eligible for tax receipts. If you are adding a donation to your dues and oblations cheque, please make note to treasurer Val Patrick as these funds are accounted for separately and forwarded to the Knights Hospitaller Foundation for distribution to our charity.

Other **donations** can be sent at any time with **cheques** made **payable** to **Knights Hospitaller Foundation**.

**Mail to** Lynda Murdoch-Furchner,

28 Goodwin St. Hamilton, ON L9C 6V9

All donations collected and received during the year are consolidated and donated in December.

### DONATIONS 2024-5

\$6,748 donated to Hamilton Food Share in 2024 (Spring \$2,470, December \$4,278)

\$2,470 allocated from the Knights Hospitaller Foundation

\$863 additional donations paid with annual dues \$920 funds and donations, from Summer Event

\$2,495 funds and donations, from Christmas Event 2025 Allocation from the Grand Priory for Hamilton Commandery donation, for this year, is \$2,630.00 and was donated to HFS on April 17, 2025.



## **MEMBERSHIP, AWARDS, OTHER INFORMATION**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### **ORDER OF CHIVALRY**

Membership in the Hospitaller Order of St. John, Hamilton-Toronto, is by invitation only. It is granted based on service, support and devotion to helping others. Individuals must be nominated by a member of the Order.

### **HONOURS AND AWARDS**

Reminder to members that they can nominate someone for the following two awards. Send names to Mike Rehill to start the application process.

mike.rehill@outlook.com

#### **The Grand Priors Medal**

This award is presented by the Grand Prior, to a member of the Canadian Grand Priory. The member must have shown outstanding dedication to the Ideals of the Order and acknowledging the member's selfless contribution to the respective Grand Priory and the general well being of the Order.

Only one medal shall be awarded on a yearly basis.



Grand Priory Medal

#### **Certificate of Commendation**

This award is presented upon an individual or group to acknowledge worthwhile accomplishments and contributions on the part of the individual or group in keeping with the principles of the Order.

Recipients need not be a member of the Order.

### **OUR ORDER IN CANADA – Part I**

If you search the internet for Orders of St. John, you will uncover a veritable feast of Orders all proclaiming to be legitimate and the “real” Order.

The leadership of our Order decided a long time ago that time spent in proving legitimacy or provenance was time wasted that could be better spent helping our fellow man. We publicly state that we recognize all chivalric and fraternal orders that help humanity.

Our present-day Order was reformed in 1965 when King Peter II of Yugoslavia ordained our constitution. We still recognize and are governed by this Constitution today. At the time of the formation, there were several Orders of St John throughout the world and North America.

In Canada, our Order was known as the Knights of St. John and Malta in Canada. The Malta Order was first introduced to Canada in 1829 when a regimental “lodge” attached to troops stationed at London, Ontario was instituted. In 1841 the Grand Master of Scotland, George Donaldson, resigned his office in Glasgow and set out for Montreal with authority to organize the Order in North America. Within ten years a half dozen encampments had been established, from Quebec to London, and two Grand Priorities organized. In 1858 the two Grand bodies were merged, but within a few years the order began to slip downhill until by 1863 there was, but one encampment left, and it expired in 1867.

In 1870 a fresh start was made, this time at Toronto. St. John's Encampment No. 1 was established at that time in that city. It was destined to survive almost seventy years and, less its number (no longer used), to be revived once more in 1970 as the first commandery of a rebirth of the Order, now called “Hospitaller,” in Canada. To be continued.





## **ABOUT HAMILTON FOOD SHARE**

### **SPRING DONATION 2025**



April 17, 2025

Today, on behalf of the Hamilton Commandery of the Hospitaller Order of St. John, KCdr Bob DeWolfe, KH, Hamilton Commander and myself DCdr Lynda Murdoch-Furchner, DH, Deputy Commander visited the offices of Hamilton Food Share to deliver our donation cheque for funds raised through Oblations collected in 2024.

On hand to accept the cheque, was Haleigh-Rain Eady, Senior Manager, Fundraising and Development. She also provided a tour of the facilities, which we found quite informative.

Food donated and purchased is sorted by category, then allocated to the over 20 local food banks and organizations that Hamilton food share supports. They appreciate cash donations as \$1 of donation can buy \$5 of food due to the large discounts they can get from suppliers.



Operating since 1990, Hamilton Food Share is the emergency food shipping and receiving hub and emergency food systems coordinator for the network of agencies we support in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. They provide industrial-scale food resources to hunger relief agencies, operating emergency food programs open to the public. The food is equitably delivered to food banks and meal programs to ensure that people living in poverty have access to healthy food for themselves and their families. Most of the food distributed is donated by our generous local food industry, including wholesalers and farmers. Some is purchased in bulk at deep discounts and the remainder comes from local community groups through food drives or special events.



Comments or newsworthy HTC News items, please contact  
Vera Rehill vera.rehill@gmail.com