



## Provincial Priory of Somerset

### THE KNIGHTLY NEWS

Issue No.6 March 2025



#### Welcome to the 6<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Issue of the Somerset Masonic Knight Templar Newsletter

All previous issues of the Newsletter can be found on the Provincial Website.

**FOREWARD** by R.E.Kt. Paul Jeffery Davis, the Provincial Prior for Somerset



Well, a lot has certainly happened since our last publication notwithstanding The Christmas Carol Service and the start of another Year!

I am pleased to report that our Order in Somerset remains in good health; despite having lost two of our stalwarts quite recently – E Kt. Ray Sheppard - my Past Provincial Sub Prior and E. Kt. Paul Cooper

– A Past Intendent General of Red Cross of Constantine. Both will be sadly missed not only by their families, but by all their Brother Knights. Our tributes to both can be found below.

On my visits around the Province, I am heartened to see that the camaraderie for which this 'Progressive and Select Order' is renowned. and which the above two Knights held so dear, is still cherished and very much sustained. Indeed, with 4 new Knights having already joined us and with another 9 waiting to be installed, our numbers are gradually improving; but we cannot afford to sit back on our laurels. Some Preceptories could benefit from pro-active support, so why not become a joining member? (The Vice Chancellor is able to advise on Preceptories who would love to welcome you into their ranks).

Visiting is our life blood. Therefore, I was delighted to see the return of the Fraternal visit from Gloucestershire and Herefordshire and my congratulations go to the Keynsham Priory for hosting such a spectacular Malta meeting with 90 Knights in attendance. I am sure the new Knights who were installed in the Degree were as equally impressed as I was.

Equally, Cumba Preceptory deserve to be congratulated for organising such a successful Burns Supper, which included ladies and partners – and I look forward to welcoming you to the Black-Tie event in July (details below).

So why do I visit – simple - it is because I enjoy it!

But, most of all thank **you** for making this especial Order so special.

*Paul*

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS 2025

##### March

4<sup>th</sup> - Keynsham Installation

5<sup>th</sup> - King Arthur Installation

7<sup>th</sup> - Cumba Installation

13<sup>th</sup> - Templecombe

27<sup>th</sup> - Estune Command

##### April

10<sup>th</sup> – King Ina

24<sup>th</sup> - Bladud

25<sup>th</sup> - Antiquity - Installation

28<sup>th</sup> - Exmoor - Installation

##### May

2<sup>nd</sup> - Cumba

7<sup>th</sup> - Worlebury

20<sup>th</sup> - Templecombe

21<sup>st</sup> - **GREAT PRIORY (Temple)**

22<sup>nd</sup> – Estune Command

#### A EXTRA-SPECIAL EVENING FOR KNIGHTS & LADIES

A Three Course Banquet  
+ Musical Accompaniment

**Tickets £35 pp**

Booking forms available from the  
Provincial Sub-Prior/Development Officer



A Black-Tie event is to be held at the  
Saltford Golf Club

All Knights and their Ladies  
Family & Friends are welcome



**SATURDAY, 28 JUNE 2025**



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#### MEETINGS THROUGHOUT 2025 ENTAILING PROVINCIAL PARTICIPATION

The Schedule of Visits for 2024 – 2025 is available on the Provincial website however the following Preceptory meetings in Somerset will receive formal Provincial attendance:

- † **The Templecombe Preceptory No.686 on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March, the first Provincial Team Visit**, will see the arrival of the Sword of Chivalry borne by a delegation of Knights from King Ina Preceptory No.211; and there will be a candidate to Install.
- † **The Selwood Preceptory of St. John No.244 on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, the second Provincial Team Visit**, where it is planned for the KEVII P of I to be in attendance to provide us with their wisdom on the KT Ritual.
- † **The Keynsham Priory of St. Keyna No.455 on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October, for a Banner Dedication.**

#### RECENT EVENTS

##### *PRECEPTORY/PRIORY MEETINGS*

Since the last issue of this publication congratulations and welcome to the following who have been Installed as Knights of the Temple:

Bro.Kt. R.S. O'Connor in Worlebury Preceptory  
Bro.Kt. D.A. Bomford-Glayser in Worlebury Preceptory  
Bro.Kt. M.R. Oxenham in Bladud Preceptory; and  
Bro.Kt. M.J. Knight in Antiquity Encampment

Also, as Eminent Preceptor:

E.Kt. Derek Tadman **P.Gt.Her.** at the Selwood Preceptory of  
St.John for a second term, the last being in 2013

Plus, the following who became Knights of Malta:



At Cumba: Bro.Kt. Brian Palmer  
At Keynsham: Bro.Kt. Mark Wilcox  
Bro.Kt. Gosta Vou



#### COMMITMENT & RECOGNITION

At the Selwood Preceptory Installation Meeting a tribute was accorded to E.Kt. David Hobbs **P.Gt.Her.**, not only for the way that he had conducted the ceremony or for having completed 2 years as Eminent Preceptor but for the fact that he had been a member of the Preceptory for 46 years; a milestone that had gone unnoticed. The last time he had performed the Installation Ceremony in Selwood was 24 years earlier when he was the Eminent Preceptor for the first time. What a marvellous achievement, what stamina and what dedication!

It's worth noting also that when E.Kt. David was in the chair the first time around membership was a lot different. Selwood was flying-high with 49 members, surpassed only by King Ina with 55; with other Preceptory memberships being hale and hearty also - Antiquity 30, Bladud 30, Worlebury 36, Estune 27, Keynsham 32, Cumba 31, and King Arthur 27. Exmoor, Our Lady of Walsingham and Templecombe not being in existence at that time.



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#### CHRISTIAN ORDER CAROL SERVICE

Our annual Carol Service in 2024 was held at All Saints Church, Weston-super-Mare on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December. The service was arranged primarily in conjunction with the Ancient & Accepted Right and Red Cross of Constantine, and other masonic brethren of Orders and Lodges who meet in W-s-M.



Grateful thanks go to E.Kt. The Revd Stuart Boyd who led the service, Fr Brendan Clover & Church Wardens of All Saints Church, W.Bro. Rod Pring the guest Organist, E.Kt. David Smith the conductor of the choir and the St. Cecilia Ensemble.

A large contingent of Somerset Knights were present on this special festive occasion together with many other Freemasons, their friends and families; and we were also delighted to welcome R.E.Kt. The Revd Malcolm Lane G.C.T., the Great Prelate as guest speaker, who gave the sermon.

The readings were given by W.Bro. Tony Guthrie, Mrs Carole Davis (the Provincial Prior's Lady), R.Wy.Bro. Julian Frost, R.W.Bro. Phil Voisey, R.Ill Kt. John Housden, V.Ill Bro. David Mason, E.Comp. Graham Puddy & Rt. Ill Comp. Keith Surry.

Our Provincial Prior, R.E.Kt. Paul Davis, gave a brief résumé on the work carried out by the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem, following which a collection was taken resulting in the sum of £600 being raised for the Charity supported by our Order and for which the Provincial Prior was pleasantly overwhelmed.

The opportunity was also taken by the Provincial Prior and his Bodyguard Commander, Bro.Kt. Ralph Howard, to present a framed picture to R.E.Kt. Revd Malcolm Lane of him with members of the Provincial Prior's Bodyguard at the 2024 Provincial Priory meeting.

Following last year's success plans are already underway for this year. So, for your Diaries

#### THE 2025 CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

will be held on

**WEDNESDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2025**

*Details to follow in due course*





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#### SOMERSET HOST GLOUCESTERSHIRE & HEREFORDSHIRE

After several impromptu interruptions, including the hiatus of covid, the annual fraternal Visits between Somerset and Gloucestershire & Herefordshire, at the beginning of the calendar year, finally resume.

Having received an invitation from the Province of Somerset R.E.Kt. Peter Burrows, the Provincial Prior of Gloucestershire & Herefordshire, accompanied by a strong contingent of his Knights descended upon the Keynsham Priory of St. Keyna on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January. They were warmly welcomed by R.E.Kt. Paul Davis, the Provincial Prior for Somerset and his Officers, the Knights of the Keynsham Priory commanded by the Eminent Prior, E.Kt. David J. Smith, and other visiting Knights present.

Ninety Knights in total were in attendance at this meeting to witness the installation of two Somerset Knights into the Order of Malta.

- † Bro.Kt. Mark C. Wilcox, a member of Estune Command Preceptory No. 354; and,
- † Bro.Kt. Gosta G Vou, a member of Worlebury Preceptory of St. Dunstan No. 121.

The prominence of the visit was exemplified by the welcome parade given to the two Provincial Prior's, their Sub-Priors, and R.E.Kt. Roger Edgar K.C.M. who were received under an Arch of Steel formed by the Provincial Prior of Somerset's Bodyguard.



Once the meeting was opened, welcomes exchanged and business conducted, the Degree of St. Paul was bestowed on both Knights before their Installation as Knights of Malta. Both ceremonies were conducted most splendidly by the Eminent Prior and his Officers, with the Accolades being conferred by the Provincial Prior for Somerset, R.E.Kt. Paul Davis, and the Addresses given in turn by E.Kt. John Creech, E.Kt. Bill Whitehead and E.Kt. Graham Jeffery.

On completion and before the recession, a collection of Alms was taken during which the Malta Hymn was sung with gusto. The renowned Keynsham hot buffet awaited the Knights at the Festive Board, and with good company, fine stimulant and a lively atmosphere, culminating in the appropriate Toasts and appreciative thanks, a grand evening was had by all.

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Sadly, the evening was tarnished by a mishap which resulted in Bro.Kt. Richard Hibberd having to be taken to Hospital in Bath. Fortunately, paramedics were in attendance at the meeting, and the Provincial Marshal E.Kt. Brian Horn took Richard directly to hospital, and stayed with him until he was seen by the medical team. Our grateful thanks go him and all those who helped during this incident and our best wishes go to Richard for a speedy recovery.

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#### CUMBA PRECEPTORY BURNS SUPPER 2025

The Cumba Preceptory No.4876 held its Burns Supper at Cricket St. Thomas Golf Club where Knights, Wives, Friends and Masons assembled.

The event organiser E.Kt. Jim McNally was ably supported by the Brethren Graham Mackenzie-Green and Andrew Gordon who are members of the Prudence and Industry Craft Lodge meeting in Chard. Graham's son Finlay Mackenzie-Green was also enlisted for I.T support.



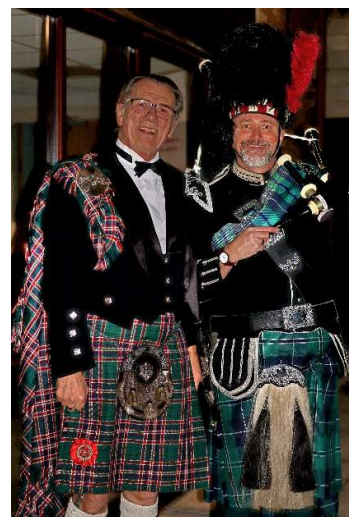
Guests were treated to a fabulous 3 course menu which included the traditional Haggis, which was piped in with an escort, followed by the address to the Haggis.

During proceedings the guests were entertained with a speech to the Immortal Memory of Robbie Burns, The Pipers Melody, and Poems 'My Heart is in the Highlands', Accordionis, and Tam O'Shanter – all of which were translated into English on the big screen!

The Provincial Prior R.E.Kt. Paul Davis gave an 'insight into the work of the St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital and the Swift', which was awarded to the Province for its donations during the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.

The Provincial Sub-Prior E.Kt. Alan McMurray gave an insight into the Charity 'Somerset Sight', that assists people with impaired vision across Somerset.

As a result a spectacular evening was had by all and with the generosity of the guests, raised £2,400.00 which will be donated to the two Charities, the St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital and Somerset Sight.





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#### SOMERSET KT - BLACK TIE EVENT

It is the wish of the Provincial Prior to hold an extra-special evening for Somerset Knights and their Ladies, to thank them for their support throughout the year.

To this end E.Kt. Alan McMurray, the Provincial Sub-Prior, and E.Kt. Ray Beckingham, the Provincial Development Officer, have arranged the following event



#### Menu

##### Starters:

- A. Spring Vegetable Soup
- B. Goats Cheese and Red Onion Tart
- C. Homemade Pate with warm Toast
- D. Beetroot Falafel with Yogurt Dip

##### Mains:

- E. Roast Topside of Beef with Yorkshire Pudding and Roast Potatoes
- F. Chicken Supreme with Tarragon and White Wine Sauce and New Potatoes
- G. Sea Bass on Julienne Vegetables with Lemon Butter Glaze and New Potatoes
- H. Homemade Vegetable Wellington, New Potatoes and Vegetable Gravy

*(all served with Seasonal Vegetables):*

##### Sweets:

- I. Vanilla Cheesecake with Cream
- J. Chocolate and Pear Tartlet with Clotted Cream
- K. Homemade Apple Crumble with Custard
- L. Cheese and Biscuits

*Coffee or Tea*

**Reservations:** Details for making reservations, menu selection and the method of payment can be found on the Booking Form you should have already received from your Preceptory Registrar, or which can be obtained from the Provincial Development Officer.







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#### KING EDWARD VII P oI – WORKSHOP



### King Edward VII Preceptory of Improvement

(Held under the licence and authority of the M. E. & S. Grand Master)



**How well do you know your ritual?**

#### **Coupled with the second Provincial Team Visit of the year**

a Team from the King Edward VII Preceptory of Improvement will be holding a Workshop  
**at the Selwood Preceptory of St John on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June later this year.**

It is an occasion not to be missed, and for ALL Somerset Knights to learn from the  
Grand Master's experienced and "Qualified" Preceptors.

**A large attendance is expected, so make a note in your Diary - Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025**

The Hall can accommodate up to 100 plus a few more with a squeeze.

#### **SOMERSET SWORD OF CHIVALRY**

The Somerset Sword of Chivalry was first accepted on behalf of the Province at the consecration meeting of the Templecombe Preceptory No.686 held on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012 by R.E.Kt. Barry Desmond Burrige, the Provincial Prior for Somerset at the time.

As originally intended the Somerset Sword of Chivalry continues its journey around the province and is currently in the safekeeping of King Ina Preceptory No.211.

The Knights of King Ina are now charged to take the Sword back to the Templecombe Preceptory No.686 at their next meeting to be held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025.





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#### RAYMOND ALAN SHEPPARD Esq. - MEMOIR

Despite his early years of having the ambition of becoming a Geography Teacher, Ray graduated from Oxford University in 1970, and articulated to one of the then "Big 8" international firms of Chartered Accountants, and duly qualified in May 1972.

In 1976, he took a 6-month secondment to the Quito office in San Francisco de Quito – the capital and second-largest city of Ecuador – to manage the audit of a UK-owned oil company, which was being acquired by another UK company. The acquisition did not materialise; however, he was then asked to remain and manage a number of US and UK owned subsidiaries across Ecuador.

After a break in the Galapagos, he returned to London, and in 1978 transferred to Chile to manage the office in Valparaiso, and then in Santiago. He was then asked to transfer to Caracas, where he spent 3 years, before moving to Portugal, to become managing partner.

The Latin and French taught at school had been useful, and enabled him to become fluent in both Spanish and Portuguese, and frequently corrected reports written by staff.

When he returned to the UK, he started his own practice, to be closer to his family, and to give his 4 children a more "mainstream" English education.

When in Portugal, in 1991, Ray was initiated into an English Constitution Craft Lodge, and although he had returned to the UK in late 1992, he travelled to attend all 7 meetings a year, taking the Chair in 1998.

In 1992 he joined a Bristol-working Craft Lodge in Somerset, and became Master in 2002.

Throughout his career in South America and Portugal, he was active in local community charities (including a clinic and an English school in the Lisbon area); and continued to act for local charities, in and around Keynsham and Bristol.

At the time of his passing Ray was a member of 1 Craft Lodge, 3 Chapters, 4 Preceptories, Red Cross Conclave, and 1 Scottish Masters of St Andrews Lodge. He held the rank of Past Provincial Registrar in both Craft and Chapter; Past Great Standard Bearer (Beauceant) and Provincial Sub-Prior in KT; Past Grand Herald in Red Cross of Constantine; and most recently became a Knight Beneficent of the Holy City.

'To live in the hearts we leave behind is never to die'



#### WARDEN OF REGALIA



**Bro.Kt. Richard Hibberd is your**

**Provincial Warden of Regalia**

[richard.hibberd@mbzonline.net](mailto:richard.hibberd@mbzonline.net)

He should be your first port of call when looking for Regalia, and perhaps regalia for other Orders too.

There is a plethora of second-hand regalia of reasonable quality available, and he is finding his feet around the myriads of outlets if it is your preference for new

Profits realised will go to the Province in the first instance and then on to the Jerusalem Eye Hospital, the charity that our Order supports.





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#### NOTICES

##### PROVINCIAL TIES



Should your KT Provincial Tie is looking a bit tired, what better than to ask your loved ones for a new one as a gift. There are plenty in stock & there is no plan at present to alter the design.

For an individual purchase, or Preceptory stock buy, please contact the Provincial Warden of Regalia or a member of the Executive,

##### SOMERSET PROVINCIAL PRECEPTORY OF IMPROVEMENT

Held under the direction of a KEVII qualified Preceptor E.Kt. Adrian Jones **P.Gt.Her.** and Meets at 7.00 p.m. in the **Masonic Hall, Yatton** on the **1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in April** & the **1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in June**.

All Knights are welcome, *(Swords and Belts only are required)*.

##### SWIFT PINS

For those who may not have been able to get their hands on one, the "K.T. £20 for 2020 Appeal Swift Pins" are still available.

Individuals can purchase single pins, by contacting Linda Read, M.M.H. Charities Finance Manager at [L.Read@mmh.org.uk](mailto:L.Read@mmh.org.uk) and Finance Assistant, Millie Pilson, [M.Pilson@mmh.org.uk](mailto:M.Pilson@mmh.org.uk)

Pins are £20 each and funds raised will go to the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital.

##### 175<sup>TH</sup> FIRING SWORDS

Should for whatever reason, any of the Provinces 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Firing Swords be returned please contact the Provincial Warden of Regalia; I'm sure he will be able to find a good home for them.

##### REGALIA

Similarly, should any other surplus regalia, in reasonable condition, become available please contact the Provincial Warden of Regalia.

##### POTENTIAL CANDIDATES



Do you know a Companion who is interested in our  
**ORDER?**

Then speak with your Registrar who has an Introduction Card with details that you can pass on.

##### KING EDWARD VII PRECEPTORY OF IMPROVEMENT

If you are an aspiring Marshal and wish to become a certified practicing Preceptor, or any Knight wishing to improve their KT Ritual, then it may be for you!

Meetings are held monthly at MMH and Life Membership for a Knight is only £2 per annum.

Therefore, all Knights of the Order are cordially invited to attend. Regalia is not required & swords and belts are provided at MMH.

More details can be found on the KEVII Website: [www.kingepoi.org](http://www.kingepoi.org) or in the Liber.



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#### LEST WE FORGET

† E.Kt. Paul Cooper **P.Gt.A.de-C.** received the command of the Great Captain on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024. He was Installed as a Knight of our Order at the Keynsham Preceptory of St. Keyna No.455 on 06/06/1978 and was Eminent Preceptor in 1986. Thirty-five years later, on 27/10/2021, he became an Honorary Member of the Preceptory.

A member of many Orders in Somerset, Bristol, Wiltshire and even the West Midlands where he attained high ranks in each; aspiring to Intendent General in the Red Cross of Constantine for the Division of Somerset & Bristol in 2004 – 2013.

† E.Kt. Raymond Alan Sheppard **P.Gt.Std B.(B)** and Past Provincial Sub-Prior of Somerset, a member of Bladud, Keynsham, Worlebury + Our Lady of Walsingham Preceptories heard and obeyed our Heavenly Captains Command and begun his final journey to the Holy City on the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup> of January at home with his family close by following a period of illness over the New Year.

E.Kt. Ray was a highly respected and consummate Freemason and during an extremely illustrious Masonic career. Although he belonged to several Orders, his passion and commitment to our Knight Templar Order was paramount, culminating in his appointment as the Provincial Sub-Prior of Somerset in 2022 which sadly, through ill health, he relinquished in 2024. He will be sadly missed throughout the Province of Somerset and elsewhere.



*PROVINCIAL WEBSITE* – [www.somersetkt.org.uk](http://www.somersetkt.org.uk)

The focal point of contact regarding this publication is the Provincial Development Officer  
E.Kt. Ray Beckingham P.Gt.Std.B.(B).