



Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees



On Tuesday the 24th of October Brethren from across the Constitution and the worldwide A.M.D. community could not be deterred from going 'on tramp' to Freemasons' Hall, London, despite severe flooding in parts of the UK and bomb threats in French airports.

The annual meeting of Grand Council was presided over by M.W.Bro. Thomas Firth Jackson, Grand Master, in his usual warm and welcoming manner. He was delighted to confer appointment to, or Promotion in, Grand Rank on 114 Brethren and invest those present, including W.Bros. Simon Polkinghorne and Mark Guzam, Appointment to Past Grand Standard Bearers, and W.Bro. Alan Brockwell, Promotion to Past Grand Junior Deacon.



The Grand Master was also extremely pleased to welcome representatives from around the World, including Spain, South and East Caribbean, America, India, France, South East Asia, and Bolivia.



Congratulations to all Brethren receiving the Grand Ranks.

Article by Dan Heath and photos by Bob Tuthill

A Candidate's View

My first Allied encounter. What am I doing this for? This should be my last foray into things Masonic. Or will it be?

So off I went on the day before the storm to Farnham Masonic Centre. The weather was not good, it was not summer any longer but a proper autumn. I had given my latest idea a lot of thought and wondered, as I walked, whether this was the right sort of thing to embark on. I am in my eighties and was about to join another order in Freemasonry. Shouldn't I be resting on my laurels? I had just been informed that I had been offered a promotion in Mark in Surrey, a degree which I thoroughly enjoy and where the guys are very welcoming, helpful and always encouraging. I had even been offered a promotion in Hants Isle of Wight Craft after many a year. My result for falling out with two unreasonable demands from local top brass. That is another story.



Back to the present. I reached the door where I found two men whom I knew, and they greeted me as I helped gain entrance to our newly refurbished and smart looking centre. We have a lift akin to "Beam me up, Scotty".



My somewhat negative concerns soon gave way to meeting many friends and acquaintances from my favourite degree. Right Worshipful Brother John French, the District Grand Prefect, greeted me with his usual huge smile and warm handshake. He looked fine but he must take it easy before his op in a few weeks' time. His bonhomie was infectious and all around where in equally good spirits.

I had not researched, through *Stitching Argus* or any other format, what was about to happen to me in terms of a ceremony. I had recently enjoyed coming into Knights Templar and one other order and they had



both made me feel that there was no need to read up about what I would be experiencing.

The many familiar faces all kept saying that I would enjoy the evening and I trusted their comments. These men were much more in tune with Freemasonry than I. They had been in this amazing organisation for many a year and I value their views. I was after all amongst friends.

I trotted upstairs (rather than being beamed up) and paid my dues to the man. I went outside and, for what appeared to be serious amount of time, I sat, thought and waited. My keeper was very positive with regard to what I would soon be experiencing

but I was still somewhat concerned or curious.

The event was soon upon me and I was accompanied by a joining member and another candidate. Yes, I did know my fellow candidate. We are old pals from Hants & IOW and he had just been advanced in St Andrews Mark No. 806. That was reassuring.



The ceremony of the first part, the Degree of St Lawrence the Martyr, was interesting and many things were explained to us both.

Our Worshipful Master, V.W.Bro. Brian Howlett, very kindly and ably led us through the ceremony assisted by many a well-known face. At this point I must ask you a question. Who is the patron saint of comedians? Do you know why?

W.Bro. Tony Connor had us new boys under his wing and very capably led us through the remainder of the ceremony where I was presented with a tie a napkin, books etc. and a pen!!!



We, as the new chaps, were up for another degree, that of the Knights of Constantinople.



W.Bro. Tony was in great acting form and brought a smile to many an onlooker. This was a briefer ceremony and was superbly expedited under the expert guidance of W.Bro. George Deacon....the man in charge of Hants and IOW Mark. What a small world! He and I had met concerning George Portal, buried at Burghfield.

I must add too that my dear buddy, W.Bro. Barrie Selway, also took part in our ceremonies. He has just recovered from a serious illness, and it was good to see him in top form. So that was it.



Well no, not really. We had a presentation of Grand Council Certificates to Brothers Andrew Banks and Jeremy Neave. There are three more degrees to enjoy, and I hope that two may take place in Farnham and one in Surbiton.



What did I do this for? The answer is because I was among good acquaintances, good friends and much respected pals. I was advised to enjoy the event and I did. I can't wait to accomplish the remaining three chapters of this fascinating part of Freemasonry.



Article by Michael Fenech and photos by Bob Tuthill and Michael Fenech

The 2023 Annual Meeting of District Grand Council

The 2023 Annual Meeting of the District Grand Council of Surrey will be held on Saturday the 2nd of December 2023 at the Croydon Masonic Hall.

The meeting will commence at 11.00 a.m. and will be followed by lunch at 1.00 p.m.

Brethren should be seated by 10.45.

