



Beaucéant

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KNIGHTS TEMPLAR ENGLAND & WALES



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Grand Prior's Message

Our AGA this year marked the end of my first year as your elected Grand Prior—what a year it has been! Our Order continues to grow and develop, with new members joining regularly.

Elsewhere in this edition you can read of the new Novice and Dame of the Order, both of whom are settling in and participating in the success of our Order. We are always on the lookout for new members, so I encourage you through your work and church activities to seek out interested future knights and dames, or indeed Friends, of our Order. I was fortunate to represent you all at two recent events, our investiture with the Preceptory of Australia and New Zealand and also at the Grand Magistral Council in Tomar, Portugal in the last weeks. You can read more about these events in this edition.

This year we return to a full programme (and more!) for national and preceptory events, the dates of which were sent to you with the last Beauceant, and I hope to see as many of you as possible at these during the year.

nnDnn,
George MacLean
Grand Prior

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Annual General Assembly 2015

This year's Annual General Assembly returned to the two-day format in Rothley, Leics. Attendance numbers were slightly down this year, possibly due to there being nothing major to decide on the Agenda. I hope to see more knights, dames and Friends next year in attendance at this, our most serious event of the year.

The main business is of course carried out on Saturday afternoon, with the announcement of the request from the Commandery of Scotland (Grand Priory of France) to enter into discussions which could lead to a co-joining of our two groups. This announcement was met with enthusiasm among those in attendance, and the Grand Prior asked if the AGA thought this a good idea - a unanimous show of hands confirmed this. Please see elsewhere in this Beauceant for the next stages in this exciting development. Saturday ended with our usual Compline service in the village church, with many members meeting up later in the evening in Leicester for an enjoyable evening meal.

Sunday morning saw a fleet of taxis take us from Leicester centre to Rothley Court Hotel for the second day of the AGA. Our guest speaker, Mrs Ann Aves of the John Aves Educational Project gave an excellent speech on the work of the Project. Mrs Aves had brought along many photographs of the students and university they attend, together with messages of thanks from not only the students who receive help but also from the Palestinian Government, including a wonderful medal.



AGA listening to Ann Aves presentation

Our Grand Priory are happy to support this educational work in the Palestinian Camps at the end of 2014.

AGA continued

Donations to the Project are part of our Order's inter-faith Aims, as from our Order Statutes:4:1

The aims of the Grand Priory are:

- To promote ecumenical Christian charitable and chivalrous behaviour
- To uphold civic virtues and to pursue excellence in the workplace and in daily life to the greater glory of God
- To protect human rights and to promote international peace and justice
- To increase our understanding, as Christians, of other faiths
- To support a Christian presence in the Holy Land
- To assist persons undertaking pilgrimages, both spiritual and physical
- To relieve human suffering by the support of the poor, the sick and all in need
- To assist in the preservation of monuments and sites associated with the medieval Order of Knights Templar
- To maintain archives and foster research into the history of the Knights Templar

Mrs Aves answered a range of excellent questions following her talk, which were sadly cut short due to lack of time. Grand Prior George thanked Mrs Aves for her time and for the work of the Project, and speaking for those in attendance, he noted that the AGA could have listened to her all afternoon.

Please see www.jaep.org.uk for details of the excellent work of the Project.

Service of Investiture, Rothley

Following a quick coffee-break after the Sunday morning AGA Session at Rothley Court Hotel, Deputy Grand Prior John Harcourt marshalled those involved in the lunchtime Investiture to a rehearsal, after which our new novice, Neale Baines was formally made a member of the Order and new Dame Heather Boyle received her accolade. Fr Michael Brain, Chaplain General of KTEW steered the Assembly through the chapel event, which is always a highlight of our AGA and this year was no exception. After retiring, there was plenty of time for photographs to be taken in the wonderful sunshine.



Australia

On Saturday 14th March, the Preceptory of Australia and New Zealand held an investiture service at which Grand Prior George was in attendance. This was held in the lovely St John the Baptist Anglican Church, Ashfield. The service was led by Rev. Andrew Katay who preached a thoughtful sermon before the investitures took place. This is by far the largest preceptory in the world, stretching as it does across five time-zones, equalling the reach of the Grand Priory of the United States with regard to time differences! In Australia, when our fellow Templars say “local” they mean “within a three-hour drive” which for us back in KTEW would be far from local! I was very pleased to be welcomed so warmly by Preceptor Nathan Tyson and Preceptory Chancellor Ken Allen who have done so much to build the foundations of our Order. Two new knights were receiving the accolade that afternoon, Andrew Campbell from Perth and Dave Kelly from Melbourne and on behalf of KTEW I welcomed them into our Grand Priory as our newest knights and into the greater family of OSMTH. After a time for sunburn and photographs, we headed off to the original Government House in Paramatta, New South Wales, www.nationaltrust.org.au/nsw/OldGovernmentHouse for a most enjoyable evening.

Dining in the open air in March is something to be highly recommended. We were entertained by the Sydney Symphony concert in the park, which was very enjoyable as we ate. Our brothers (no dames in the preceptory yet, but I am sure that will change) have completed the initial stages of their domestic website www.osmth.com.au. Please take a look.

Although our ANZ Preceptory are far away, please keep them in your prayers as they continue to grow.



Tomar

The Grand Priory was well represented at the Grand Magistral Council meeting in Tomar, Portugal from 15-19 April, with Grand Prior George, Deputy Grand Prior (and Almoner General of OSMTH) Erika Barty-King, Grand Prior Emeritus (and Chair of OSMTH Organisation Committee) Simon LeFevre, OSMTH Marshal General Anthony Cuthbert and Dame Heather Boyle in attendance.

This was a smaller meeting, but only just, than Bristol GCG which we hosted in October 2014, but there were more Grand Priorities in attendance in Tomar, with GP Argentina and GP Brazil travelling the furthest. Excellent presentations were made, especially a rousing three hour presentation from the Grand Master which enthused everyone. Of particular note was the Grand Master's comments and statements relating to our Christian brothers and sisters at risk. Prior to the meeting, our Annual Submission to OSMTH was sent.

You can request the Annual Submissions document from the Chancellor if you are interested, and see any meeting documents on the Members Section of www.osmth.org In order to view the member's section, please let the Grand Prior know and a password will be generated for you. This is a resource area open to all knights, dames and novices in good standing, not just your representatives to the various OSMTH meetings.



Saturday evening Gala Dinner in Tomar Castle

Upcoming events

It was agreed at Chapter in the morning of the AGA that going forward payment for attending National Events would have to be requested early, as all venues now are requiring substantial early deposits for event bookings.

In order to protect the finances of the Grand Priory, this was agreed to be a good idea, and that those withdrawing after a cut-off period would sadly not have their payments returned. The Charitable work of the Order should not suffer because funds are being used up in payment for National events, such as the History and Heritage, Retreat and Fellowship and AGA weekends. This was announced formally at the AGA. Going forward, Chancellor Anthony Cuthbert will ensure that the cut-off period for various events is clearly shown on all registration documents.

Commandery of Scotland

An approach has been received from the Commandery of Scotland, a mentored entity of the Grand Priory of France, to co-join with KTEW into a new Grand Priory. The knights in Scotland voted unanimously at their AGA on 11th April to progress talks leading to a co-joining of the two groups. At the AGA, the Grand Prior asked for questions to be submitted to enable the FULL membership of KTEW to consider this. Already submitted questions include:

- What will the name of the new Grand Priory be?
- How many members are there in the Commandery?
- Will the new Grand Priory include Northern Ireland?
- What are the charities supported by the Commandery?

Please submit your own questions either by email to the Chancellor or by telephone to the Grand Prior.

At Tomar, it was confirmed by the Grand Commander, Marcel de Picciotto, and by the Grand Prior of France, Jean Pelegrin, that they consider this to be a good idea for the future development of the Commandery, joining two of the English speaking OSMTH entities from Europe.

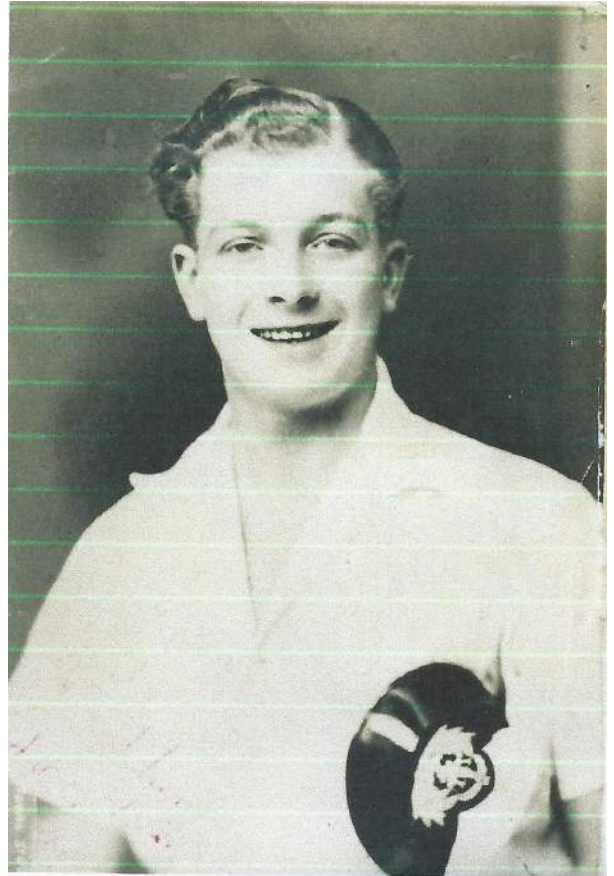
Later in the year, a postal ballot will be taken of the KTEW membership to formally decide on the co-joining of our two groups, which should happen late summer once all the questions have been received and answered.

Colonel Chevalier Keith Barker TD

This year marks 70 years since D-Day, marking the liberation of Europe. Here, one of our long-serving and now honourably retired members Colonel Keith Barker recalls some of his experiences during the Second World War. He speaks to Denys LeFevre:

Keith joined the Royal Navy at the age of 15 and served in both the Mediterranean and Arctic sectors, as well as Europe. Whilst serving in the Mediterranean he was involved in both the famous Malta convoy and the battle for Anzio. He was with the Malta convoy when that island was on the verge of being starved into submission. Had Malta fallen, Germany would have had continued supply lines to Rommel's North African army. The island was later awarded the George Cross by King George VI for the gallantry shown by its people.

The convoy T5 left Gibraltar with 13 merchantmen and an escort of two battleships, HMS Nelson and HMS Rodney, together with four aircraft carriers, heavy and light cruisers, submarines and transports, including the oil tanker MV Ohio. In Keith's own words "the enemy threw everything at us, even the kitchen sink".



A young Keith Barker

Keith's job was Spotter Portside Bofors Gun. They took a hit on the shield and Keith was wounded. He was taken to the sick bay covered in blood and heard the sick bay attendant say "He's dead" and Keith replied "No I'm bloody well not". When he recovered he returned to duty on the Bofors gun, the crew then consisting of one 3-badge AB Gunner and one Ordinary Seaman. Keith was then promoted to acting Sub-Lieutenant.

Many of the "heavies" were turned back and the carrier HMS Furious was sunk. The enemy was after the Ohio for its precious cargo and Keith's ship HMS Ledbury was moved alongside the tanker to give it cover all the way into the harbour at Valetta. Once again Keith was wounded and woke up to the sound of "pipe clean ship" to discover that he was in Malta. Some of his shipmates came to see him and they said "You were right Barker. They did throw the kitchen sink at you and here's a "tap" which was embedded in your shoulder". From then Keith was sent to HMS King Alfred for officer training and then on to the Isle of Man for two weeks before reporting for duty with Russian convoys.

On D-Day, which was his birthday, he was again wounded but volunteered to take charge of a Landing Craft Infantry (LDI) which was sunk. Surviving this he reported to the Beach Master and was directed to follow Lord Lovett's Commandoes to what is now known as the famous Pegasus Bridge, to assess the need for boats to cross the river. On arrival he found the bridge had already been captured and boats were no longer needed.

Colonel Chevalier Keith Barker TD (Continued)

He was ordered to return to the beach with the wounded but on the way they were attacked by Waffen SS troops but managed to get back to the bridge and the Cafe Condree where the wounded were looked after by Madame Condree and her 7 year old daughter, Ariette, who made them coffee.

Some years later on a return visit, Keith was accompanied by his wife, who, when she saw this charming lady who greeted Keith quite warmly, was somewhat surprised when Keith explained that Ariette was only 7 when he first met her.

Keith was eventually invalided out of the navy at the end of the war, being unfit for sea service because of his many wounds. On 6th June 2004 Keith received from France the French Normandy Medal of which he is very proud.

Following his discharge he spent some time in the Territorial Army but later enlisted in the Royal Military Police, rapidly reaching the rank of full Colonel.

This year, on the 70th anniversary of D-Day he was curious enough to write to the French War Department to enquire about what celebrations they were holding on this special occasion, as he was unable to travel to France. Much to his surprise he received a letter from Francois Hollande, the French President, expressing his personal gratitude "...for all those who were not afraid to risk their lives to defend the values of democracy and the failure of barbarism - your courage alone allowed us to recover liberty. We will not forget..."

Chevalier Keith now lives in a quiet residential area of Bromley in Kent as is always pleased to receive his copy of Beauceant and to hear from older Templars who knew him.

St George's Day Lunch, Preceptory of St Augustine

Members of the Preceptory and honoured guests enjoyed another afternoon of much laughter and good company in Dover for the Annual St George's Day Lunch.

This annual event is organised by the preceptory and is an opportunity to renew old friendships and raise some money for local charities which the preceptory supports.

There were cries of "It's a fix" when Grand Prior George won the first prize in the raffle, but he assured the assembled members and guests that this was certainly NOT the case! A fine sum of £90 was raised on the day and several lucky prize-winners headed home in the sunshine very happy indeed.

