

Ceremonies

Sword Drill is an important part of all Meetings, and Knights can learn this from the start. It is a memorable sight when Knights present their swords in unison and parade with swords drawn, marching in step with each other, no other masonic Order displays ritual in such a formal manner, it is truly an exciting and thought-provoking sight.

There are two distinct and quite different ceremonies for Candidates, one for the Order of the Temple (Knight Templar) and the other for the Order of Malta.

Ceremony of Installation into the Order of the Temple

Modern Masonic association with the medieval defenders of the Christian Holy places is linked by the ceremony of Installation in which the Candidate takes the part of a Pilgrim who, by symbolically embarking on a Crusade, is elevated to Knighthood.

The ceremony is very realistic and the regalia spectacular, based upon that worn by the Medieval Knights.

Ceremony of Installation into the Order of Malta

In Masonic terms, the Malta status is conferred on Candidates who have already been Installed as Knights Templar and is conferred in a Priory rather than a Preceptory.

The ceremony focuses on the history of the Order of the Knights of St John (the Hospitallers) from their time in the Holy Land to when they occupied the Island of Malta.

The regalia and ceremony are quite different from that of Knights Templar Freemasonry.

However, it is not necessary to wear Malta regalia - it is permissible to wear Knight Templar regalia, and many do so.

The Order of Malta is not a separate sovereign body, but rather a progression within the Order of the Knights Templar; hence the full name of the Great Priory being 'The Great Priory of The United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of The Temple and of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta of England and Wales and its Provinces Overseas'.

Annual Church Service

As a Christian Order, the Province has held an Annual Church Service for many years at a Church within the Province.

The service is distinctly Christian with readings from the bible and hymns. As the Knights walk in procession from the adjacent hall into the church, it is a delight for visitors and guest to watch as the Knights parade up the aisle and take their places in the church.

Charity

The St John Of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group is the only charitable provider of expert eye care in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, treating patients regardless of ethnicity, religion, or ability to pay. The Hospital has been operating for 137 years and the Order has been supporting it for more than 100 years. 80% of blindness in this region is curable but most will not have access to eye care without help from Orders such as ours and others.

Swift Appeal: Is a major fund-raising initiative for the Hospital, significant because the swift is in abundance in this part of the middle east and recognises no boundaries.

Children's Hospices: The Province also supports:- Hope House / Ty Gobaith Childrens Hospice in Wrexham, Claire House in Clatterbridge, Wirral and Donna Louise Trust in Stoke

Conclusion

It should be remembered that the Masonic Knights Templar is not just another Degree, and all Royal Arch Masons professing a belief in the Christian trinitarian faith are invited and encouraged to apply to join us on this noble journey. Everyone who joins will enjoy their Knight Templar adventure, impressive regalia and thought-provoking ceremonies which all add up to one of the best experiences of the Masonic family. More information about this wonderful Order can be found on the Provincial Website -

cheshireandnorthwaleskt.org.uk

We look forward to welcoming you into our ranks.

ORDER OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

PROVINCIAL PRIORY OF CHESHIRE AND NORTH WALES



The United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple,
and of Saint John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta
in England and Wales, and its Provinces Overseas.



<http://cheshireandnorthwaleskt.org.uk>

The Masonic Order of Knights Templar

Welcome to our Order.

Knight Templar masonry is a Christian Order, steeped in factual history, and requiring membership of the Royal Arch. The full name of the Order is the 'United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple and of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta in England and Wales and Provinces overseas'.

It provides a unique opportunity for personal growth and development; it is committed to the moral and ethical advancement of its members and fosters a sense of purpose and responsibility in all aspects of life.

In our ranks you will find a diverse group of individuals bound by a shared commitment to fostering friendship, compassion, and understanding. The bonds formed within our Preceptories extend well beyond the confines of our meetings and rituals, creating a network of support and camaraderie which can last a lifetime.

We are the Province of Cheshire and North Wales and meet in 17 Preceptories across the Province, stretching from Menai Preceptory at Bangor in the west to Royal Edward Preceptory at Hyde in the east. Preceptories usually meet three or four times a year, and each Preceptory has its own Banner.

The Order, as now constituted, is governed by Great Priory. The head of the Order is the Grand Master supported by the Great Seneschal, the Great Chancellor and the Great Vice-Chancellor. It is operated from Mark Masons Hall in London.

Origins of the Order

According to legend, the Knights Templar was founded in 1118 AD to protect pilgrims heading for Jerusalem and the Christian Holy places, where the small band of warrior monks established a headquarters. King Baldwin II granted the Templars quarters on the Temple Mount and this forms the link to the Royal Arch.

Many men, of noble birth, joined the ranks of the Templar Order. Those who were unable to join often gifted the Templars with land and other valuables.

Friday the 13th of October 1307 - the original Friday the 13th - marked the suppression of the Order by Pope Clement V, and Philip le Bel, King of France. Nevertheless, all was not lost as the Order of the Knights of St John (the Hospitallers) was strengthened in numbers and enriched by the possessions of the Templars.

Modern Masonic Knight Templar Activity

Commenced in England and Wales after 1750, brought into the country by military lodges.

The earliest surviving English records of the Knights Templar degree (as it then was) are to be found in the minutes dated 21st October 1778 of the Royal Arch 'Chapter of Friendship' meeting in Portsmouth, where it was worked as an Appendant Degree. Commander Thomas Dunckerley had written to the Chapter, giving permission to make Knight Templars and it was resolved to do so.

On 24th June 1791, the Feast Day of St John the Baptist, the First Grand Conclave of Masonic Knights Templar was formed, with Thomas Dunckerley appointed as its first Grand Master with 8 Encampments (as our Preceptories were then known), meeting under his care.

By 1873 'Grand Conclave' was known as 'Great Priory', and 'Encampments' had become known as 'Preceptories'.

Early Activity in Cheshire and North Wales

The first Encampment, as such, in Cheshire, was the Stockport Loyal Volunteers, warranted in 1796. This was followed in 1806 by Royal Edward, in 1808 by St Salem, and in 1809 by Love and Friendship - Royal Edward and St Salem remain the oldest Preceptories in the Province. Several others were founded during the next hundred years, but it took until 1924 for the first Preceptory in North Wales to be founded, namely Menai in Bangor.

Grand Encampment of Cheshire

In 1849 William Courtenay Cruttenden was

appointed as Provincial Grand Commander for Cheshire. In 1850 twenty-seven knights from the three Cheshire Encampments (Royal Edward, St Salem and Love and Friendship) came together at the Vernon Arms Inn in Stockport, to form the Provincial Grand Encampment of Cheshire. Subsequently, it was renamed Provincial Priory of Cheshire, then in 2013 Provincial Priory of Cheshire and North Wales.

Organisation of the Province

The Province is governed by the Provincial Prior, appointed by the Grand Master of the Order, with the Provincial Sub-Prior, Provincial Chancellor and Provincial Vice-Chancellor, all of whom are appointed by the Provincial Prior. Another Principal Officer is the Provincial Marshal (equivalent to the Director of Ceremonies). These Officers and others appointed to active rank accompany the Provincial Prior on Team Visits to Preceptories in the Province.

Also, the Provincial Prior has a Bodyguard drawn from Knights across the Province - they attend upon him at Annual Meetings and accompany him on Team and other visits to Preceptories.

All Knights below the Rank of Great Priory Officer can be appointed to the Bodyguard, and new members are invited and encouraged to take part from the time they join the Order. It is one of the few Orders in Freemasonry where new members may be involved at a Provincial level from the outset.

The Annual Meeting of Provincial Priory takes place each June at Christleton, whilst the Annual Meeting of Provincial Priory of Malta takes place in October at Wrexham.

The Preceptory

Preceptories usually meet 3 times each year. The Officers of the Preceptory are the Preceptor, Chaplain, First and Second Constables, Treasurer, Registrar, Marshal, Almoner, First and Second Heralds, Standard Bearer Beauceant, Standard Bearer Vexillum Belli, Banner Bearer, Captain of the Guard, and Guard.