

The Annual Meeting of the Provincial Grand Conclave of Surrey



The Annual Meeting of the Provincial Grand Conclave of Surrey was held at Surbiton Masonic on Saturday 20th May 2023.

After several Right Worthy Brethren entered the Conclave and took their seats the Acting Director of Ceremonies Wy.Bro. Ian Clark called the Brethren to Order to receive the R.Wy. Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler and members of the Provincial Escort.

The Meeting was then opened by the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, R.Wy.Bro. Colin Beerling, who was then saluted with seven under the direction of the Acting Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies.

The Memoriam to Departed Brethren, V.Wy.Bro. Michael Mullally (*Warlingham Conclave 291*), R.Wy.Bro. Laurie Young, Past Prov GSR of Surrey (*Surbiton 299*) Wy.Bro. Frank Powell (*Hill of Zion 270, Hon Member*) and R.Wy.Bro. Bryan Page, Past Prov GSR SE Counties (*Pride of Surrey 118*), was given by the Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler Wy.Bro. Ian Bloodworth. He then gave a short prayer and afterwards called for a minute's silence which was followed by the Hymn – Immortal Invisible which was sung.

The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler then welcomed the Honoured Guests, and afterwards the Right Worthy Brethren were saluted with seven under the direction of the Acting Director of Ceremonies.



The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler then presented Bro. Arthur Forder and Bro. John Waggott, who were inducted into the Order during the past 12 months with the Bow and Arrow pin badge.



The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, then Re Appointed the Deputy Grand Supreme Ruler before appointing the Provincial Officers for 2023/24. Promotion in the Arch of Steel was given to Bro. Robert Short as Commander and Bro. David Harrison as his Deputy. Two new members were also invested into the Arch of Steel Bro. Bob Woolloff, and Bro. Alan Thompson, both of Surbiton Conclave. ***Sadly, Bro. Bob Woolloff passed away suddenly on the 15th of June 2023. He will be sorely missed by us all as a wonderful man and Mason.***

The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler then gave his address, but unlike in previous years instead of talking about the achievements of the Order over the past twelve months spoke about his plan for the next twelve months, one of which was to get back to our original date of the fourth Saturday in the month of May as the change of dates over the past three years was no doubt having an effect on our numbers for the Provincial meetings.

He also went on to speak about utilising the Provincial Grand Visitors and their duties in the Province, along with membership figures and promotional cards which have been handed out to all Conclaves in the Province.



He went on to congratulate Wy.Bro. Barrie Selway, and Wy.Bro. Steve Harvey who both received the Grand Rank of Past Grand Standard Bearer.

He also thanked the brethren of the Province for their fund-raising efforts in which we were able to donate £1,300 to the Sutton Women's Centre.



After the meeting the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler and the Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler greeted all our honoured guests on their way out of the temple.

After refreshments in the bar the members of the Province, their visitors, and guests sat down to enjoy a most convivial luncheon at the Surbiton Masonic Hall.



Article by Ian Bloodworth and photos by Dave Harrison

A Further Advancement in Masonic Knowledge

As Warringham OSM Conclave had no work to do at their May meeting they asked Wy.Bro. Chris Eley to give a talk on a Masonic subject of his choice. He chose to give talk on The History and Meaning of the Masonic Apron. Wy.Bro. Chris, as a Past Supreme Ruler, was also asked to act as Supreme Ruler for the meeting as the Supreme Ruler was away on family business.



After the Conclave was opened and the regular business completed it was time for the talk.

Chris' talk outlined the development of the Apron from the fig leaves worn by Adam and Eve in Genesis Chapter 3, through those worn in ancient Egypt, China, Central America, and Palestine, and it's adoption by Operative Masons to protect their clothes from being soiled.

In medieval times all Masons, whether Free Masons or Guild Masons, used aprons when at work, and the former also wore white leather gloves to protect their hands from the lime.

This type of apron used by the speculative masons had changed very little in the middle of the 18th century

from those used by the operative counterparts. These aprons were long, coming down to below the knees, with a flap or bib to protect the chest, rather like those work in a Mark Advancement Ceremony.

It was the speculative Masons who at some point in the 1750's began to decorate their aprons with designs, usually painted by the owner's own hand. The Union of the Grand Lodge of England between the Ancient and Modern branches of English Freemasonry in 1813 brought into many effect many changes in dress and ritual which still prevail to this day. Wy.Bro. Chris explained the hidden meanings and symbolism of our present apron, showing that it is not just a piece of regalia we wear simply to distinguish the different grades of Freemasons, or even for cosmetic effect and pomp, but it is a vital part of our ritual, a very honourable garment, one that we should all treasure.



To support his talk Wy.Bro. Chris brought along many aprons from various Orders in England and Overseas which the Brethren wore for a group photograph after the Council was closed.

Afterwards we all drove down to the Everest Spice restaurant in Redhill for a most enjoyable curry meal together.

An Official Visit to Surbiton Conclave



On Thursday the 1st of June a team of Provincial Officers attended the installation meeting of Surbiton Conclave No. 299 at the Masonic Hall, Surbiton. The Conclave was being honoured by a visit from our Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, Wy.Bro. Ian Bloodworth.

After the Conclave was opened by the Supreme Ruler, Wy.Bro. Rev. Derek Williamson, Prov.G.Chap., the Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, accompanied by several Provincial Officers of the year, entered and took the Chair. He said how pleased he was to be visiting Surbiton Conclave, introduced the Provincial team, and took the minutes.

The main item on the agenda was to install Bro. Keith Waller as Supreme Ruler. This was conducted in a very caring manner by the Supreme Ruler and his team in consideration of Bro. Keith's mobility. Wy.Bro. Keith was congratulated by the Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler who wished him a successful and enjoyable year as Supreme Ruler. Keith in turn thanked everyone for their care and understanding during the ceremony.

After Wy.Bro. Keith appointed and installed his Officers for the year Wy.Bro. Jeff Sykes presented the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler with a beautiful Ceremonial Sword on behalf of the Brethren of the Pride of Surrey Conclave. R.Wy.Bro. Colin thanked Wy.Bro. Jeff and the Brethren of the Pride of Surrey Conclave.



The Conclave was closed, and after the usual photographs we retired to the bar for refreshments before sitting down to a most convivial meal at the Surbiton Masonic Hall.

Wy.Bro. Chris Eley said how delighted he was to be present at Wy.Bro. Keith's installation as he has known Keith all his Masonic life and they have been good friends for many years.