



GPvD KNIGHTS HOLD HISTORIC MEETING IN HAMBURG OF BOTH TEMPLAR AND MALTA ON SAME DAY

The magnificent Lodge house in Hamburg played host to five meetings of the Great Priory between 12th and 13th July. Unusually, the GPvD held both annual musters of Knights Templar and Malta on the same day.

Following the movement and positioning up of all the fittings on Friday, the first of the five meetings was conducted. The Order of St Andrew was opened by the Grand Master, Most Eminent and Supreme Roddy McKenzie GCT. The degree is notable only conferred by Scotland and Germany only when required, making it truly prestigious. This degree also being a requirement for being invested the KCT (Knight Commander of the Temple). In attendance were Grand Masters from Greece, Netherland, Finland and Switzerland, some of whom, have never seen the ceremony performed. At this meeting, The Grand Master conferred the degree of St Andrew, part of the Teutonic Order on VE Norbert Schoen, RE Marcus Winter and RE Kt Chris Bilson.



Following the degree all GPvD Knights re-assembled for a routine, thought essential business meeting where VE Kt Deam Thompson was voted in as the Grand Treasurer. Being a treasurer in multiple Orders and a successful businessman, managing accounts comes very naturally to him, making this a really good fit for the GPvD.

Continuing the theme of Templar activity remaining with the Lodge House, the Grand Master reception and dinner was held in an elegant banquet toom, where over 40 sat down to a sumptuous hot buffet. Throughout the evening, attendees were privileged to have the service from very polite, courteous and discreet staff from the Lodge. All too soon, the evening came to a delightful close.

Following a 3 minute walk from the hotel, with sunshining and skies blue, Saturday's meeting had all the hall marks of being a success for everyone. Many arrived early, with short rehearsals for those





the Temple before leaving was for all to see. A symbol to all that our light endures as does our life's pilgrimage.

With great pomp and style, the annual Muster of the GPvD got underway. Processions were admitted under a well drilled Arch of Steel, with overseas Grand Masters returning the compliment with batons held high. With banners rested and the Grand Sword placed on it's adorned stand, the Grand Master individually warmly



welcomed overseas visitors who are now wonderfully close friends of the GPvD.

Appointments within GPvD were made with a number continuing in office. To the Grand Master's delight he promoted several for the first time and others to higher office. Of note is the new Grand High Prelate, RE Kt Christopher Bilson, Grand Marshal, RE Kt Lt Col (Retd) Marcus Winter and Assistant Grand Secretary, VE Kt Lt Col (Retd) Wolfgang Mann. KCTs were conferred on RE Kt Norbert Schoen KCT GMA and RE Kt Lt Col (Retd) Marcus Winter both pledging to be the Grand Master liege men. The Grand Master's Award was conferred upon RE Kt Lt Col (Retd) Ian Harper KCT GMA, working with RE Kt Shiny McKinnon GCT had worked tirelessly to prepare all the furnishings and regalia for the weekend. RE Kt Harper was also appointed to oversee all the activities of GPvD to better coordinate and deliver supporting activities. It is noteworthy that beautiful certificates, more accurately "Letters of Patent," were presented for signature. Although he was not present, the creative and exceptionally elegant design was by VE Kt. Thomas Bylicki, who was promoted from Assi. Grand Secretary to Grand Registrar this year.

undertaking roles on day. All were happy and ready to go. The first part of the day's agenda was to hold a Service of Remembrance for the departed. A service attended by several wives and partners.

With Mantle, cap and sword laid on the ground below an unlit candle, a guard, led by RE Thomas Litz held vigil, swords lowered and heads bowed whilst RE Kt Marcus Winter gave a wonderfully moving eulogy. On conclusion, regalia was reverently removed and the candle lit. The poignancy of the lit candle being walked the full length of



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During the more informal part of the Grand Master's routine business he mentioned his Body Guard would now present itself with one uniform, that of the white mantle, bright red cross and a very distinctly, and red collar. The Grand Master intent being to raise a Body Guard of initially 10 Knights

led by an experienced Commander and Deputy.



The Grand Master went on to approve the standing up of a team of Knights to plan and deliver the next GPvD meeting with the aim to improve the levels of attendance and access for Knights both within and out with the GPvD.

With the meeting concluded, the Grand Master, his principal officers and Grand Masters from sister Constitutions processed out under and Arch of Steel, expertly commanded by VE Kt Lt Col

(Retd) Wolfgang Mann retiring to an excellent luncheon, much to everyone's delight.

Following a quick change over of banners and fittings, the Temple seamlessly dressed in preparation for the annual GPvD Malta meeting. Conducting this meeting on the same day has never been tried before creating a sense of drama and expectation. With all tables fully manned, banner guards in position and the Arch of Steel completed, the meeting was opened by the Grand Sub Prior, RE Kt Lt Col (Retd) Ian Harper KCT GMA. The Grand Master and VIPs from sister Constitutions were welcomed.



Permission sought from and granted by the Grand Master, the ceremony to install four Knights was initiated. With signs and words confirmed, the aspirants undertook the passing degree quickly followed up by entering the main temple.



Led by Marasalle, RE Kt Lt Col (Retd) Marcus Winter, the candidates were made the symbolic journey from the Holy Land to Malta. It was at this stage the ceremony was momentarily paused as the Grand Sub Prior explained a major change in the ceremony during the conferring of the honour of Knighthood. With four Grand Master from sister Constitutions attending, it was agreed each would separately be ushered to personally knight one knight each. This had never been done before, and marked a new high in the warmth and closeness of ties between Constitutions.

The ceremony over, the Grand Master took time to make a further announcement, to confer the Grand Master's Award on RE Kt Shiny MacKinnon GCT for the extensive and selfless work and support she has given the Great Priory.

All business being completed, all Principals and VIPs processed out under an arch of steel leaving the Sub Prior to formally close the Great Priory. The meeting complete, all assembled for a truly memorable Festive Board to finish off what all agreed was an ambitious but deeply rewarding and happy Annual Muster. The next Merry Meeting is pencilled in for October 2025, when the same formula may again be adopted.

