



Ancient & Accepted Rite - District of South Wales & Monmouthshire



NEWSLETTER

September 2026



Inspector General Faces up to the Order of the Moose!

*V.:Ill.:Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith 33°, Reflects on his adventures as
Inspector General – District of South Wales and Monmouthshire*

Those who follow on X (Facebook) the motorhome adventures of our intrepid Inspector General and his lovely wife, Lesley, will have enjoyed a bumper year!

Every year V.:Ill.: Bro Paul and Lesley travel up to Scotland and in each town they visit, they always manage to find the Masonic Hall.

At Easter they went to the Isle of Arran where, as is described in this edition of the Newsletter, Paul was invited to the Provincial meeting of The Province of Argyle and The Isles.

In the summer he and Lesley's explorations took them through ten countries to the northern tip of Norway at Nord Kapp. Along the way they stood astride the line of the Arctic Circle at midnight in bright sunlight, viewed the fjords, were splashed by the spray from numerous waterfalls

(the volume of whose water was assisted by much rain!), saw herds of wild reindeer, and viewed the solar eclipse from the Swedish coast.

Lesley (for she is the driver) drove on and off countless ferries and through what seemed like a hundred times as many tunnels.

Through all that, the Inspector General continued to manage the District, filing his Annual Report with the Supreme Council, planning for important events in the new Masonic year such as the District Church Service and the sesquicentenary celebration of Morganwg Chapter, keeping on top of the constant mundane

admin and attending to several urgent matters that arose. Paul found no Masonic connections in Norway - but he did come face to face with a member of the Order of the Moose!





District to be Split - Two Inspector Generals Announced

by : Paul Kelvin-Smith

Following my announcement, that on 31 October 2026, I shall step down as the Inspector General for the District of South Wales and Monmouthshire. Anyone who was in St James's in London in the middle of May might have observed white smoke emitting from the chimney at the Grand East at 10 Duke Street - in fact, from two chimneys. The Supreme Council has decided that the present District of South Wales and Monmouthshire is to be split into two Districts.

Split of District

One District, to be known as East Wales, will comprise the five Chapters that meet in Cardiff (St David, Landav, St Dyfrig, St Teilo and St Euddogwy); the five Chapters that meet in Monmouthshire (Ivor Hael in Newport, Priory in Rhymney, Wye Valley in Monmouth, St Mary's Priory in Chepstow and Coed Duon in Risca); Caerffili Chapter, Pontypridd Chapter and the three Chapters that meet in Penarth (Caer-Daf, Powys, and Universities).

The other District will be known as Central and South Wales and will comprise the remaining 14 working Chapters in the present District - Morganwg, Gwyr, and Sketty Hall in Swansea; Neath; Abaty Margam in Port Talbot; Holy Well in Porthcawl; Maesteg in Bridgend; Cowbridge; St Baruc in Barry; Pont-y-Clun; Groeswen in Treorchy; St Maelog in Merthyr; St Alud in Brecon and Maesfyed in Llandrindod Wells. The present District also has two Higher Degree Chapters, upon which is substance for another article.

I firmly believe that the Council's decision to create two smaller Districts is appropriate. It will be for the benefit of each new District, of the Brethren in those Districts and of course also for the Council itself.

Inspectors General Designate

The Council has made consequential appointments of an Inspector General to each of the new Districts.

I give the heartiest of congratulations to Ill.^o Bro. Gabby Hilu and Ill.^o Bro. Jonathan Evans upon their Appointments as Inspectors General for the new East Wales and Central & South Wales Districts respectively. Whatever may be the collective noun for a gathering of Inspectors General (and that debate continues!)

I welcome Gabby and Jonathan to that group and to what is undoubtedly the best job in Freemasonry! I trust that they will have as much happiness in their new offices as I have enjoyed.

Gabby is a member of Wye Valley Chapter No.857 meeting in Monmouth. For the last two years he has held the office of a Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies at the Supreme Council and in that office he has escorted me at many meetings within the District. He is thus well-known in both the District and at the Grand East.

Jonathan is a member of Morganwg Chapter No.70 in Swansea. He also well-known throughout the District, now being a Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies in the Craft Province of South Wales and having previously held that office in the Royal Arch. Morganwg Chapter will commemorate its sesquicentenary on Tuesday, 27 October 2026 when I shall also present a Supreme Council 50 Year Certificate to Ill.^o Bro Rev Desmond Payne-Jeremiah 32^o.



These photographs show: Jonathan (on the left) and Gabby. Below with Mike Eckley, Inspector General for the District of Dyfed, myself and Gabby



The meeting, which will be attended by M.^o Ill.^o Bro Gareth Jones, the Grand Treasurer General H.^o E.^o, will be the first of his own Chapter that Jonathan will attend following the announcement of his Appointment and so will certainly be a great celebration.

I am confident that Gabby and Jonathan will be welcomed and supported in the Chapters within their Districts. For my part, I pledge to each of them the same full encouragement and support that I have received from my own predecessor, V.^o Ill.^o Bro David Edwards.

Initially Gabby and Jonathan will be known as 'Inspector General-Designate' within their new smaller Districts. They will take control of their Districts on 1 November 2026 whereupon they will become 'Inspector General-Designate in Charge' (quite a mouthful for the Sovereign proffering the Baton!). From that date the Sovereign in each Chapter in the relevant new District should proffer the Baton to them. Until then, then Baton should continue to be proffered as usual.

At the time of his Appointment Jonathan held the rank of 30^o, but he was immediately informed by the Supreme Council that he was Promoted to the 32^o by patent. He thus took up that rank without attending a Higher Degree Meeting for either of those ranks. So Jonathan now wears the black collar and red collarette of a Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret 32^o - but only until 29 October 2026 as on that day he and Gabby will receive their Promotions to the 33^o.

District Recorders

In order to provide continuity Gabby has Appointed Ill.^o Bro Graham Evans to be his District Recorder for East Wales. Jonathan has Appointed Ill.^o Bro Mike Flanagan 30^o of Maesteg Chapter No.397 meeting in Bridgend to be his District Recorder in Central and South Wales.



Relevance of the Inspector Generals 33°

The number 33 is of very special importance in the Ancient & Accepted Rite. It is referred to in the Perfection Ceremony on a number of occasions and there are 33 candles on the Altar. The most senior members of the Order (principally, although not exclusively, the members of the Supreme Council and Inspectors General in charge of Districts) attain the 33° which is the highest Degree that a Freemason is capable of attaining.

The relevance of the number 33 is that it is the number of years that Jesus of Nazareth spent upon earth. Formerly exclusively Christian in England and Wales.

In 2023 membership of the Ancient and Accepted Rite here was opened, as in the Craft, to all those who have a belief in a Supreme Being. Despite that change, the Order remains centred upon the Life and Teachings of Jesus of Nazareth which are represented in the Perfection Ceremony of the Eighteenth Degree.

The meeting of Caer-Daf Chapter No.118 in Penarth on Thursday, 19 March 2026 was therefore of particular significance for our Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith 33°, as it was the 33rd meeting of Chapters in the District that he had attended in this Masonic year as well as the 333rd such meeting in the District since he took over as Inspector General of the District on 1 May 2018.



The photograph shows, from the left, Bro Graham Evans, District Recorder; Graham Gonthier, Most Wise Sovereign of Caer-Daf Chapter; the Inspector General; Terry Scarfe, Past District Recorder and Gabby Hilu, Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies at the Supreme Council.

At the meeting the Most Wise Sovereign, Ill. Bro. Graham Gonthier 31°, delivered an interesting and informative talk on the Golden Pelican that hangs on the front of the balcony of the Duke of Kent Temple in Cardiff Masonic Hall.

It was a splendid occasion, although this is a very busy Masonic year in the District, the meeting of Universities Chapter was undoubtedly a highlight.

Provincial Grand Secretary Perfected in Universities Chapter

A goodly number of Brethren attended Universities Chapter No.1012 on Saturday, 4 March 2026 for the Perfection of a distinguished Brother, WBro Ben Gait, the Provincial Grand Secretary and an Assistant Grand Secretary at United Grand Lodge.

E&P Bro Ben received an impressive introduction into the Ancient & Accepted Rite. The Intermediate Degrees were conferred by Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith 33°. The Past Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro David Edwards 33°, conducted the First Point and Ill. Bro Nigel Williams 32° performed the Second Point. The Accolade was conferred by M. Ill. Bro Gareth Jones 33°, the Grand Treasurer General H. E. .

The Emblems and Signs were explained and demonstrated by the First General of the Chapter, E&P Bro Oliver Wannell, in an excellent manner. M. Ill. Bro Gareth Jones then presided over the Third Point.

The members of Universities Chapter and their guests were joined at lunch by their ladies as well as non-members of the Order including the Provincial Grand Master RWBro Robert Payne and the Assistant Provincial Grand Master, WBro Merrick Jones.

The photograph shows the Inspector General for the District of Dyfed, V. Ill. Bro Mike Eckley; our Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith; E&P Bro Terry Mullins, the Most Wise Sovereign of Universities Chapter; E&P Bro Ben Gait; M. Ill. Bro Gareth Jones, Grand Treasurer General and V. Ill. Bro David Edwards, Past Inspector General.





Inspector General Enthroned in another District

A unique meeting was held in Halesowen on Monday, 30 March 2026 when the Inspector General for one District was Enthroned as the Most Wise Sovereign of the Past Sovereigns' Chapter in another District. Worcestershire Chapter No.970 is the eponymous Past Sovereigns' Chapter for that District, but the Inspector General for the District of Warwickshire was Enthroned as its Most Wise Sovereign. V. Ill. Bro Stephen Fowler has been a Member of Worcestershire Chapter since 2013 and has progressed up the Officers' ladder to his present situation.

Despite Worcestershire being a small District with only fourteen Chapters, its Past Sovereign's Chapter is always very well attended. Some 70 Brethren were present to witness this very special occasion.

There is a very close relationship between the Districts in the Midlands, as indeed is illustrated by Stephen's Enthronement in Worcestershire Chapter. He was strongly supported by Brethren from his own District as well as from Worcestershire itself and other Districts. The friendship between Inspectors General and District Records also extends to other Districts, as demonstrated by the kind invitation extended to our own Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith, together with the District Recorder, Ill. Bro Graham Evans and the Past District Recorder, Ill. Bro Terry Scarfe.

The photograph below shows (from the left): V. Ill. Bro Ralph Howarth (IG for Staffordshire and Shropshire); V. Ill. Bro Richard Hoare (Past IG for Worcestershire); Ill. Bro Graham Evans (DR for South Wales and Monmouthshire); V. Ill. Bro Ian Fothergill (IG for Worcestershire); V. Ill. Bro Stephen Fowler (IG for Warwickshire and the MWS of Worcestershire Chapter); V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith (IG for South Wales and Monmouthshire); Ill. Bro Maurice Williams, DR for Staffordshire and Shropshire); V. Ill. Bro David Jarvis (IG for Berkshire); Ill. Bro Roly Shere-Massey (DR for Gloucestershire and Herefordshire); V. Ill. Bro Nigel Bridges (IG for Gloucestershire and Herefordshire); Ill. Bro Terry Scarfe (Past DR for South Wales and Monmouthshire) and Ill. Bro Taff Hill, DR for Worcestershire.



Inspector General receives Memento

by : Terence J Scarfe

Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith attended the Enthronement Meeting of Maesyfed Chapter No.586 in Llandrindod Wells on Wednesday, 6 May 2026.

He was surprised and delighted to be presented after dinner with a Memento to Commemorate his term of office leading the District of South Wales and Monmouthshire. A wooden casket had been beautifully crafted by E&P Bro Dean Lear and inside was a bottle of excellent red wine! Paul was most grateful for such a thoughtful gift and said that he looked forward to sharing the wine with his wife, Lesley!



The meeting that preceeded dinner was also very special. E&P Bro Tony Holt Enthroned E&P Bro Raymond Hanney as Most Wise Sovereign in a sincere Ceremony. The highlight of which was the Address to the new Sovereign delivered by Ray's brother, Ill. Bro Phil Hanney 30°.

It was also a delight to see the senior Past Sovereign of Maesyfed Chapter,



The photograph shows the Inspector General with his presentation, E&P Bro Dean Lear and the new Most Wise Sovereign, E&P Bro Raymond Hanney, and of course the delightful gift.

Ill. Bro Jim Griffiths 31°, attending the Chapter meeting after a period of absence resulting from ill-health. The Inspector General was accompanied by the District Recorder, Ill. Bro Graham Evans, along with myself. We all enjoyed a wonderful evening.



Priory Chapter present 40 Year Certificate

In the Craft, Royal Arch, Mark Degree and many other Orders, Long Service Awards are presented by the Province. However, in the Ancient and Accepted Rite, Certificates for continuous membership of 50 years are issued by the Supreme Council – although the presentation is invariably made by the local Inspector General on behalf of the Council.

It had seemed to our Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith 33°, that 50 years was a long time for a member to have to wait to be acknowledged for his service to the Order, especially having regard to the much older age at which Brethren tend to be perfected. So when the suspension of meetings was lifted after the Covid-19 pandemic the Inspector General introduced the Presentation of Certificates to Brethren within the District to recognise and celebrate 40 years continuous membership.

The controversy caused by the Supreme Council Declaration at the end of 2023 and the issue of the 2024 Ritual Book increased the commitments of the Inspector General, so the issue of 40 year Certificates was paused. After things had settled down the Inspector General resumed the Presentation of these Certificates.

In this the creation of the Supreme Council database, Duke Street Online, has been of great assistance, making it much easier to track the progress of members of the Ancient and Accepted Rite. And so it was that on 9 May 2026 at Priory Chapter No.616 Paul presented District 40 Year Certificates to Ill. Bro Gwynne Clarke 31° and Ill. Bro Alan King 30° who was Enthroned in 1992.

Gwynne was Enthroned as Most Wise Sovereign in 1989. As a result of the delays referred to above, Gwynne had been a member of the Ancient and Accepted Rite for almost 45 years when the presentation was made.

The Inspector General said that he hoped to be present when a Supreme Council 50 Year Certificate was presented to him - when Gwynne replied that he would then be 100 years of age!

Unfortunately Alan's Kings brother, Ill. Bro Viv King 30°, was not well enough to attend the meeting, so Alan took that Certificate to give to his brother. Another intended recipient, Ill. Bro David J Davies 31°, was recovering from cataract operations on both eyes, so he too could not be present. Instead, however, the Inspector General said that he would make that presentation at the meeting of St Alud Chapter in Brecon on 21 May 2026.

The photograph shows Gwynne Clarke and Alan King with their Certificates and (from the left) Ill. Bro Eirian Jones 32°; the District Recorder, Ill. Bro Graham Evans; the Most Wise Sovereign, E&P Bro Philip Beck and the Inspector General.



End of an era at Neath Chapter Enthronement

by: Terry Scarfe

The Enthronement Meeting at Neath Chapter No.941, turned into a very special event, not only a superb Ceremony conducted by Excellent and Perfect Brother Steve Lovett, Enthroning Excellent and Perfect Brother Neil Jenkins, but also marked the last visit to an Enthronement meeting at the Neath Chapter as Inspector General for V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith who received a presentation of a bottle of gin in a lovely engraved presentation box. He also received a Caricature which captured his likeness and sense of humour. District Recorder Ill. Bro Graham Evans also received a bottle for when the District is split, he will no longer be the Neath Chapter District Recorder.

Pauls long suffering wife Lesley received a beautiful bouquet of flowers as a reward for putting up with him this last eight years!





Inspector General's visit to Arran

by : Paul Kelvin-Smith

February, March and early April this year involved many journeys to other Districts. It began with the Installation in Rhyl of V'.Ill'.Bro Rob Vickery as the new Inspector General for the District of North Wales. I then travelled to Swindon for the Installation of V'.Ill'.Bro. Richard Legge as the new Inspector General for the District of Wiltshire. A non-Ancient and Accepted Rite meeting was held in Llanelli to see the Inspector General for Dyfed, V'.Ill'.Mike Eckley, Installed as the First Principal of West Wales Installed Principals' Chapter.

After an invitation to Baldwyn Chapter in Bristol for an extremely interesting meeting (see the article in the previous edition of Y Dalaith) the miles clocked up with visits to Alfred Chapter in Taunton in the District of Somerset; to Worcestershire Chapter, the eponymous Past Principals' Chapter in that District; to Barnstaple to St Bonface of Devonshire Chapter, the Past Sovereigns' Chapter in Devonshire and to Downend on the outskirts of Bristol to St Mary's and St Peter's Chapter, the Past Sovereigns' Chapter in the District of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire and there was also a Higher Degrees Chapter meeting at the Grand East.

Those of you who follow me or my wife, Lesley, on Facebook will know that we greatly enjoy our journeys to Scotland in our motor-home: We have visited Scotland every year since we bought our first van some nine years ago. Invariably I manage to find, or come across, the local Lodge in each town and a photo of me standing outside the building appears on social media. Our motor-home had been off the road since the New Year, so we were greatly looking forward to a trip to Arran in the middle of April.

After the meeting of the Richard William Dicker Chapter in Caerphilly, Lesley and I were telling Ill'.Bro Gerry French and his wife, Avril, of our plans. "I know someone on Arran!", said Gerry. "I'll send you his details."

So on the journey northwards the next day I phoned Ill'.Bro Andy Perrie 30° of Lodge St Molios No.774 at Lamlash. I explained to Andy what our plans were and what Orders and Degrees I was a member of. He said that he would call me once I was on the island.

The next day Andy phoned me back. He arranged to give me and my brother-in-law, who was also visiting the island, a guided tour of Arran from which we learned very much more than we would have done from any guide book.

"Are you doing anything tomorrow night?" he then asked. "Would you like to come to a Royal Arch Chapter Rehearsal?" So on the Tuesday evening I attended that rehearsal when the Lodge room was prepared for a meeting of Arran St Molios Royal Arch Chapter No. 8893. The Chapter furniture was quite different from that which I am used to in South Wales. Large blue, purple and red veils were hung across the room. The ritual that was rehearsed was similar in parts, in others very different.

In England and Wales the Mark Degree is a separate Order that is administered, not by UGLE at Great Queen Street, but separately by The Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons at Mark Masons Hall. There are distinct Provinces each led by its own Provincial Grand Master with his own team of Provincial Officers. However, in Scotland the Mark Degree is a fourth Degree that is conferred in a Craft Lodge. Logically the Mark Degree does stand between the Second and Third Degrees. However, in Scotland, as in England and Wales, a Brother must be a Master Mason before he can be advanced to the Mark Degree.

Accordingly, in an Advancement Ceremony the Lodge is opened in all three Craft Degrees so that the Candidate can prove himself to be a Master Mason and then the Lodge is closed in the Third Degree and resumed in the Second Degree for the Advancement Ceremony to take place.

Thus, in order to be Exalted in a Royal Arch Chapter a Brother must first have been Advanced as a Mark Master Mason. A further difference is that a Candidate to be Exalted must as the first part of the Ceremony make an Obligation of allegiance to the Royal Arch Degree (which as the Candidate in the rehearsal I did, because I am both a Mark Master Mason and a Royal Arch Companion).

There is then a further stage between the Mark and Royal Arch Degrees - that of Excellent Master. As that Degree has not been conferred on me I could not observe or participate in it. A consequential difference is that the Royal Ark Mariner Degree is attached to Royal Arch Chapters as there are no separate Mark Lodges. The evening was extremely interesting and educational as well as enjoyable.

Andy then asked if I was doing anything on the Saturday. He said that he had spoken to the Provincial Grand Master who had invited me to attend the Annual Business and Installation Communication (that is, the equivalent of the Annual Provincial Grand Lodge meeting of his Province). I protested that I did not have any appropriate clothing for a formal meeting. Andy said that I looked to be about the same size as him, so he could lend me a suit of his that was just back from the cleaner as well as a shirt and a tie, an apron could be found for me at the meeting.

Everything fitted well! So appropriately suited and nearly properly booted (my trainers were grey, but had garish orange laces ...) I travelled to Taynuilt for the Regular Communication of the Province of Argyll and the Isles hosted by Lodge St Modan No.985. In numbers, this is not a large Province - only 18 Lodges - but geographically it is huge. The journey on Saturday involved a forty minute car drive to the ferry, arriving about three quarters of an hour before the ferry was due to set sail, in order to ensure that there was sufficient space for us to board; a ferry crossing of thirty minutes. Then another drive on the mainland of two hours to the meeting. Then the same on the way back!

The advantage of the outward journey was that the wait for the ferry allowed the purchase of coffee and bacon rolls at The Sandwich Shop at Locranza. (If you ever go to Arran you must visit The Sandwich Shop - the sandwiches are marvellous!)

I was welcomed very warmly by everyone in Taynuilt. In order to save time, in the light of the length of the journeys that Brethren from all over the Province had to make, the meeting had already been opened when we arrived. That involved opening in all three Degrees and then attending to administrative matters.

The meeting was then adjourned for the arrival of the far-flung Brethren such as us from Arran. There was a buffet including pie and beans before the meeting was resumed.

The Provincial Officers for the year were Appointed and Invested - all the Officers attended. Having been so Appointed and Invested, the Provincial Officers then together took an Obligation to perform the duties of their respective Offices in the appropriate manner.

The Provincial Grand Master, RWBro John Stewart, gave a short address to Provincial Grand Lodge. What I found especially striking was a passage regarding his own position and his relationship with his Lodges. As my term as Inspector General of this District draws to a close I have been thanking Chapters and their Brethren for the support that I have received from them.

Continued over



Ancient & Accepted Rite - District of South Wales & Monmouthshire

My responsibilities as Inspector General, distilled to their essence, are to encourage and enthuse, to guide, direct and support. I have emphasised to Chapters that this must be of a reciprocal nature. John put this so well and I fully endorse his words: "I can say to the Brethren of Tanuilt, as to all Lodges, that when you support the Provincial Grand Lodge and myself, then it is easy for me to return that support to you and your Lodges."

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to the Regular Communication of Argyll and the Isles. I am most grateful to John Stewart for permitting me to attend his meeting. He has asked me to take with me to all Brethren in the Provinces of South Wales and Monmouthshire the warm and fraternal greetings from him and all in his Province.

I am also indebted to WBro Andy Martin, WBro 'Cams' Campbell and WBro Andy Perrie from Lodge St Molios for their company, to 'Cams' for driving – and of course to Andy Perrie for the loan of his suit and shirt! And above all to Gerry French for enabling it all to happen.

Two things impressed me most: The first was the warmth and friendship extended to me by all whom I met. The second was the remarkable commitment and dedication of the Brethren of the Province, which undoubtedly will be replicated in similar sized Provinces throughout Scotland. They travel long distances not only to attend Provincial meetings, but to support each others' Lodges. Arran has only one Craft Lodge and a recently Consecrated Royal Arch Chapter. Brethren wishing to extend their Masonic journeys further must travel to the mainland. For example, Andy Perrie's Rose Croix Chapter, Lennox Chapter of Princes Rose Croix of Heredom No.200 meets in Dumbarton, which involves a ferry journey of one hour and then a drive of another hour.



This photograph shows me at the Regular Communication of the Province of Argyll and the Isles with the Provincial Grand Master, RWBro John Stewart.

The evening meeting involves an overnight stay. His 30° Chapter meets in Glasgow, again requiring an overnight stay. All such attendances are subject to the vagaries of the weather and, for those on the island, to the reliability of the Calmac Ferries.

Higher Degree Meetings April & May 2026

Brethren from South Wales and Monmouthshire attended Supreme Council Higher Degree Meetings at the Grand East of the Order at 10 Duke Street, St James's, London on 28 April and 19 May 2026 when they were Promoted to 30°. At each HDM they were supported by the Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith, the District Recorder, Ill. Bro Graham Evans and a good number of supporters.

The photograph at the dining table shows four Candidates at the HDM on 28 April 2026 with their supporters as well as (standing) Ill. Bro Gabby Hilu, Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies, who had participated in the Ceremony.

At the HDM on 19 May 2026 Ill. Bro Alex Bogdanovs had the great honour of being the representative Candidate, to participate in that capacity, in a 30° Ceremony, is one of the most impressive experiences in Freemasonry. Alex performed that role impeccably. As a representative Candidate he was also privileged to have a seat on the top table at dinner at Mark Masons Hall between M. P. Bro John Boyington, the Sovereign Grand Commander and M. Ill. Bro Rev Dr Simon Thorne, the Grand Prior. As the photograph shows, they obviously enjoyed themselves!





Visit to Baldwyn Chapter, Bristol

Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith 33°, was privileged to attend a meeting of the Baldwyn Chapter in Bristol on Monday, 9 March 2026. He had received an invitation from V. Ill. Bro Allan Rosengren, Inspector General for the District of Baldwyn, or as he is known there, the Grand Superintendent.

Also attending the meeting were two other Heads of Orders in our District, Ill. Bro Ben Dykes 30°, the Provincial Grand Master in the Mark Province of Monmouthshire and Ill. Bro Henry Barnes 30°, the Chief Adept in the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia. Limited space in the Temple for meetings of the Camp of Baldwyn resulted in the number of visitors at meetings being extremely limited, so the Brethren from our District were indeed honoured to be invited.

The visitors witnessed a hugely impressive Ceremony. The ritual was delivered in a faultless manner, with real meaning and no reading. Only the Prelate had a book (which was handwritten) from which to read passages of scripture.

Freemasonry has existed in Bristol from Time Immemorial. The Brethren are implacably resolved to continue their 'Bristol workings' without external interference! Brethren who have attended meetings in Craft Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters in Bristol will have seen that their ceremonies are the same, but different. The Ceremony at the Baldwyn Chapter bears no more than a passing resemblance to our perfection ceremony. Membership of the Baldwyn Chapter is restricted to Royal Arch Brethren and members of Knights Templar. However, visiting members of Rose Croix Chapters without those qualifications are permitted to attend Baldwyn Chapter meetings but are asked to retire for a short period.

In the 19th century unpleasant, even acrimonious, exchanges of correspondence took place between the Supreme Council and the Baldwyn Chapter. The contention was ultimately resolved by Articles of Agreement between the Supreme Council and 'Baldwyn Chapter' dated 10 May 1881, by which the Baldwyn Chapter acknowledged the authority of the Supreme Council but was permitted to regulate its own affairs and to continue its ceremonies in the same way that they had always been performed.

Having existed from Time Immemorial, Baldwyn Chapter has no number and is placed at the top of the list of all Chapters under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Council. Its ceremonies continue now in the same form as they have for over 250 years. If any brother should receive an invitation to attend a meeting of Baldwyn Chapter he is strongly encouraged to not pass up the opportunity.

All visitors receive a very warm welcome. The ceremonies are fascinating and performed impeccably.

The photograph shows Ill. Bro Henry Barnes 30°, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith 33°, and the Inspector General (Grand Superintendent) of Baldwyn Chapter, V. Ill. Bro Allan Rosengren 33°.



Higher Degree Meeting June 2026

The District of South Wales and Monmouthshire was honoured with two promotions to the 32° at the Higher Degree Meeting on 2nd June 2026. Ill. Bros Ednyfed

Morgan and Mike McNiff, who each hold important offices in several Chapters in the District, received their new Degrees in a warm, personal Ceremony at the Grand East. The Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith, who was the senior ruling Inspector General at the meeting and the Past District Recorder, Ill. Bro Terry Scarfe, were present to support Ednyfed and Mike.

The Grand Treasurer General, M. Ill. Bro Gareth Jones, had an important role in the Ceremony, and Ill. Bro Gabby Hilu, Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies and Inspector General-Designate for the new split District of East Wales, also assisted in the Ceremony.



Other supporters from the District were Ill. Bro John Glyn Evans and John Child. Also honoured at the same meeting were two very good friends of the District, Ill. Bro Roly Shere-Massey, the District Recorder for the District of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire and Ill. Bro John Phenix, the Past District Recorder for the District of Worcestershire.

The photograph shows, from the left, Ednyfed Morgan and Terry Scarfe, Paul Kelvin-Smith, Gareth Jones, Gabby Hilu, Mike McNiff, John Glyn Evans and John Child.



Quadruple Celebration at St Alud Chapter

St Alud Chapter No.799 enjoyed a quadruple celebration at its meeting in Brecon on 21 May 2026. Present at the meeting were the Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith; the Past Inspector General, V. Ill. Bro David Edwards; the District Recorder, Ill. Bro Graham Evans and the Past District Recorder, Ill. Bro Terry Scarfe. Guests of the District were V. Ill. Bro Nigel Bridges and Ian Fothergill, the Inspectors General for Gloucestershire & Herefordshire and Worcestershire and their District Recorders, Ill. Bros Roly Shere-Massey and 'Taff' Hill respectively.

It was especially notable that on the day following the Supreme Council announcement of the split of our District and the Appointment of two successors to the Inspector General, both Inspectors General-Designate, Ill. Bros Gabby Hilu and Jonathan Evans, were in attendance and were very warmly welcomed.

Its Warrant being dated 27 November 1975 and the Chapter being Consecrated on Tuesday, 10 February 1976. The first cause for celebration was the Golden Jubilee of St Alud Chapter. Ill. Bro Huw Morgan gave a talk on the life and martyrdom of St Alud, after whom the Chapter is of course named.

The Inspector General presented a 50 Year Certificate from the Supreme Council 33° to Ill. Bro Tony Newman 30°. Tony was one of the first two Candidates of the Chapter being Perfected at the very first meeting after its Consecration on 20 May 1976. The Inspector General paid tribute to the long membership of Tony and thanked him for his service to the Order and his Chapter.

The Inspector General also presented a 40 Year Certificate to Ill. Bro David J Davies 31° who for a health reason had been unable to attend a meeting of his own Priory Chapter two weeks previously. David is noted for having been not only a Founder but also the Primus Most Wise Sovereign of the District's 30° Chapter, Richard William Dicker Chapter.

The fourth reason for celebration was E&P Bro Ceri Rosser Williams becoming the new Most Wise Sovereign of the Chapter, whose very proud father, Ill. Bro Huw Rosser Williams, presented him for Enthronement.

Chapter Recorder, Ill. Bro Glynn Rogers, whose commitment to his Chapter is demonstrated in his travelling to each and every meeting, rehearsal and Committee meeting from his home near Tewkesbury, marked the Golden Jubilee by presenting a delicious cake which was very gratefully received and faithfully applied to its proper purpose!

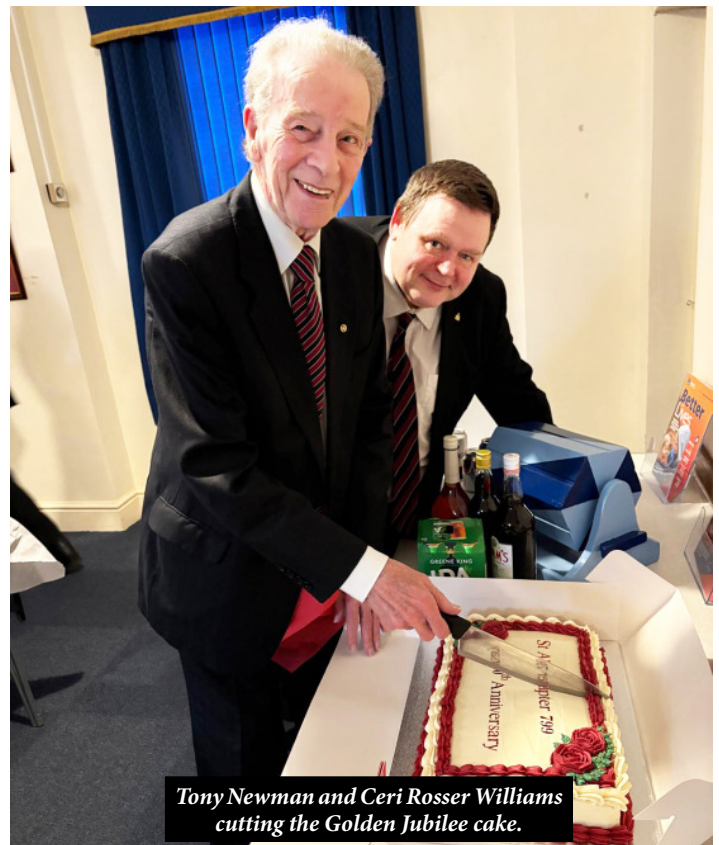
The delightful evening concluded with a dinner which had been prepared by Mrs Kate Cardwell of Piccadilly Catering. This was to the usual excellent standard Brethren have come to expect in Brecon and was greatly enjoyed by all present.



Jonathan Evans, IG Designate for Central and South Wales; Nigel Bridges, IG for Gloucestershire & Herefordshire; our Inspector General, Paul Kelvin-Smith; Ian Fothergill, IG for Worcestershire and Gabby Hilu, Deputy GDC and IG Designate for East Wales.



Paul Kelvin-Smith and Tony Newman with his Supreme Council 50 Year Certificate.



Tony Newman and Ceri Rosser Williams cutting the Golden Jubilee cake.



Paul Kelvin-Smith and David J Davies with his 40 Year Certificate.



50 Year Certificate presented to Ill. ∴ Bro John Wigmore

A splendid evening was enjoyed by many Brethren at Wye Valley Chapter on Tuesday, 31 March 2026 when the Inspector General, V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith, presented a 50 Year Certificate from the Supreme Council 33° to Ill. ∴ Bro John Wigmore 32°.

The beautiful old Temple in Monmouth was full, including representatives of all Chapters connected with Bro John, to honour such a remarkable Member of the Ancient & Accepted Rite.

The visitors included V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Ian Fothergill, Inspector General of the District of Worcestershire; a predecessor of his, V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Richard Hoare; a Past Inspector General of the District of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Ian Crowe and our own Past Inspector General, V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro David Edwards. Everyone was kept in order by the Chapter Director of Ceremonies, Ill. ∴ Bro Gabby Hilu 32°, a Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies at the Supreme Council.

John was Perfected in Sabrina Chapter No.473 in Newnham in the District of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire on 29 March 1976. In 1979 he began his missionary work in the District of South Wales and Monmouthshire (especially Monmouthshire) when in 1979, he was a Founder of Wye Valley Chapter No.857. He was Enthroned as Most Wise Sovereign in 1985 and again in 2005. John is now the only remaining Founder of the Chapter and he is still the Prelate.

He was then a Founder Member of St Mary's Priory Chapter No.1010 in Chepstow in 1990, being the Primus Most Wise Sovereign. He is one of only two remaining Founders, the other being Ill. ∴ Bro Jeff Aylesbury 31°.

He felt a bit guilty about Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, so in 1995 he went to Hereford to become a Founder of Bishop Sara Chapter No.1082.

He was Enthroned as Most Wise Sovereign in 2009 and is now an Honorary Member. Also in 1995, he returned to Monmouthshire to be a Founder of Coed Duon Chapter No.1095 in Blackwood. That Chapter was revitalised by its move to Risca nearly three years ago.

Ill. ∴ Bro John was Enthroned as Sovereign in 1997. He is one of only two continuing Founder members of the Chapter, the other being Ill. ∴ Bro Roy Morris 30°. John is also a Member of the senior Higher Degrees Chapter in the District, Sir Frederick J Alban No.625.

In summary, John has thus been a member of six Rose Croix Chapters, four of which he has been a Founder. He was a Founder and is still a member of and actively involved in, three of the five Chapters meeting in Monmouthshire.

He has indeed given wonderful service to the Ancient & Accepted Rite in both Districts. For this he has been honoured by the Supreme Council by Promotions to the 30° on 17 March 1987; the 31° on 15 October 1990 and the 32° on 15 March 2005.

After the meeting the Brethren adjourned to The Old Court Hotel in Symonds Yat to enjoy a superb meal. John was visibly moved by the Inspector General's presentation, his toast proposed by Ill. ∴ Bro Neil Mounter 31° and all the tributes paid to him.

Particular mention must be made of Ill. ∴ Bro Andrew Crump 31°, the Recorder of Wye Valley Chapter, for his hard work and attention to detail in the arrangements that ensured that everyone did indeed enjoy a splendid evening.

The photograph shows (seated) Ill. ∴ Bro John Wigmore 32° holding his Certificate; E&P Bro Daniel Rosser (Most Wise Sovereign of Wye Valley Chapter) and V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Paul Kelvin-Smith, our Inspector General. Standing; Ill. ∴ Bro Graham Evans 31° (District Recorder); V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Ian Crowe (Past Inspector General for Gloucestershire and Herefordshire); V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Richard Hoare (Past Inspector General for Worcestershire); V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro Ian Fothergill (Inspector General for Worcestershire); V. ∴ Ill. ∴ Bro David Edwards, (Past Inspector General for South Wales and Monmouthshire) and Ill. ∴ Bro Gabby Hilu 32° (Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies of the Supreme Council and a member of Wye Valley Chapter).

