

THE DISTRICT OF WEST KENT

WKRC

WEST KENT ROSE CROIX NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 – Summer/Autumn Edition 2025

THE INTERVIEW

The Inspector General - A year in office

CONGRATULATIONS

Archbishop Courtenay Chapter celebrate 100 Years

STORIES

Reflections – by E & P Bro Pradeep Selhi

History of Money Chapter No. 76

Letter to the editor – by Ill Bro Christopher Parker

Podcast – The Rose Croix Revealed

WKRC

The official newsletter of
the District of West Kent

Issue 2 Summer/Autumn Edition

Cover Image
18° Collar and Jewel

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Rose Croix.

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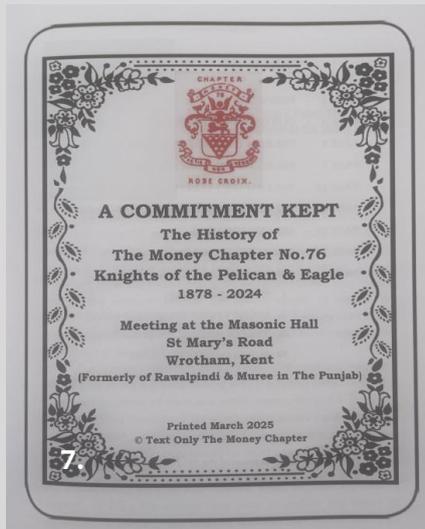
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FROM THE INSPECTOR GENERAL



Welcome to the second edition of the WKRC Newsletter: where we hope to bring you a round-up of what's been happening in the District over the past months.

In this edition, we have included insights, articles and contributions from members of the District that we hope you will find of interest.

My thanks to Ill Bro Paul Abbott 31° for the time spent in compiling, constructing and completing this newsletter, without such enthusiasm and creativity we simply wouldn't be able to do this for you.

On a more personal note, if you have an article or would like to contribute to future newsletters and/or if there is a subject that you would like to see covered why not drop us a line at: pa34@jpabbott.uk. Likewise, if you a penchant for 'putting pen to paper' or technology skills and can assist the WKRC newsletter editorial team, we'd love to hear from you. It's great fun and would require just a little of your time. Please also feel free to share this newsletter and our social media platforms with your friends and family, we are after all the most welcoming, compassionate and benevolent Order.

Lastly make sure you visit the District website from time to time you will be amazed at the information it holds

www.rosecroix-westkent.org.uk

Did you know?

The Ancient & Accepted Rite (Rose Croix) is the only Masonic Order to which The Duke of Kent belongs outside of the Craft & Holy Royal Arch.



REFLECTIONS – Excellent & Perfect Brother Pradeep Selhi 18°

(An interview with the Inspector General for West Kent)

I was first initiated into Freemasonry in October 1985 in Bostall Heath Lodge No 4492 in Welling and have been honoured by being promoted to the office of Past Provincial Junior Grand Warden.

I first became interested in joining the Ancient & Accepted Rite in 1988 when I completed my 3rd degree in Canada. When I returned from Canada in 1993 my interests grew, I was keen to join the 'Scottish Rite' in the UK. Although I could have joined the Scottish Rite in Canada however my circumstances changed, and I returned to the UK. I found the Order intriguing but was initially disappointed that it was a Christian Order and not therefore open to members from other faiths which to me was very disappointing that the UK didn't follow the saying that 'masonry is universal'.



About 12 to 18 months ago I became aware that the Supreme Council had changed the qualification for membership and that the Order was now welcoming members from faiths other than Christianity after talking to V. Ill. Bro Graham Higgs 33° who was the Inspector General for the District of West Kent at that time.

Although my faith is independent of my Masonic journey, I did discuss my thoughts on joining the Order with my family who were all very supportive as they were aware of how much I enjoyed masonry and my decision to join this wonderful Order.

Living in Kent, the natural choice was to seek membership within the district of West Kent and that together with my work patterns, I researched which Chapter met on my work rest days. Consequently, I was Perfected into West Kent Chapter No. 512 on the 7th of March 2025 at Oakley House, Bromley.

I found my Perfection ceremony a very personal experience, A totally new experience, where various members took on differing aspects of the ceremony and showed a real commitment of unity and fraternal happiness.

I shall always be grateful of the way I was welcomed into the Chapter with such warmth and openness. I immediately felt part of the Ancient and Accepted Rite family and I would most certainly recommend any interested masons from faiths other than Christianity to consider joining the Ancient & Accepted Rite and approach it with an open mind, no preconceptions. Prepare to be very pleasantly surprised, it won't compromise your personal beliefs.



My immediate ambitions are learning more about the Order, and I am looking forward to progressing through the Offices.

As stated previously until very recently the Ancient and Accepted Rite was limited to those of the Christian faith, as now this is no longer a restriction I would recommend everyone to join as soon as they can, as the 18° degree

is a beautiful ceremony which demonstrates the spirit of Masonry of oneness in diversity.

Now that all faiths can join (in the UK), the ceremony will certainly expand on the teachings of some Orders within Freemasonry and, even compliment some of the ceremonies of others. It's a beautiful ceremony of inclusivity and fraternity; I can honestly say that I believe I have made the right choice in joining.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS

PROMOTIONS

During the period of March to June 2025 the following members of the District were honoured by The Supreme Council in receiving the following promotions: -

- Ill Bro Graham Raven 30°
- Ill Bro Scott J Dunn 30°
- Ill Bro John D Snowden 30°
- Ill Bro Michael W Stillwell 30°
- Ill Bro Robert K Armitage-Walker 30°
- Ill Bro John E Jerome 30°
- Ill Bro Paul D Lincoln 30°

On the 15th of September 2025 the following members of the District will be honoured by The Supreme Council by promotion to the 30°: -

- Peter Ozua (Oakley Chapter No.890)
- Philip Atkinson (West Kent Chapter No.512)
- Christopher Gogarty (Blazing Star No.759)

On the 3rd December 2025 the following member of the District will be honoured by The Supreme Council by promotion to the 31°: -

- John Perkins (Westwood Chapter No.764)

On the 12th January 2026 the following member of the District will be honoured by The Supreme Council by promotion to the 32°: -

- Peter Chapman (Archbishop Courtenay Chapter No.246)

The Inspector General sends his heartfelt congratulations to the above members on their preferment and looks forward to supporting the members on the dates published.

RECENTLY INSTALLED MOST WISE SOVEREIGNS IN THE DISTRICT

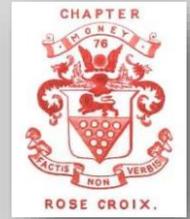
Many congratulations to the following new Sovereigns within the District of West Kent: -

- 4th April 2025 E & P Bro. Rexie Hermano 18° West Kent Chapter 512
- 15th April 2025 Ill Bro. Malcolm Smith 32° Kent Chapter 1071
- 7th May 2025 E & P Bro. Robert Sloper 18° Acorn Chapter 1020
- 23rd May 2025 E & P Bro. Paul Lincoln 18° Woolmer Chapter 948
- 5th June 2025 E & P Bro. Stephen Littler 18° Money Chapter 76
- 7th June 2025 E & P Bro. Mark James 18° Blazing Star Chapter 759

The Inspector General sends his heartfelt congratulations to the above Most Wise Sovereigns and wishes them every success with their year in office.

Forward: by V. Ill. Bro. Mark Eyles-Thomas

History: by Bro. Clive Moore



THE HISTORY OF MONEY CHAPTER No. 76

FORWARD

The history of Money Chapter No. 76 Princes Rose Croix is a long and colourful one; stretching across two continents, it has involved many distinguished Princes. The Chapters founders were predominantly military men, who at the time of the Raj were serving with the British forces in what is now Pakistan.

Many of them saw active service, not just in India and Afghanistan but throughout the world, often in very harsh conditions and under great adversity; and it was to Freemasonry, and the Rose Croix in particular, that they turned for relief and comfort.

THE ROSE CROIX ARRIVES IN INDIA

After Robert Clive's victory at Plassey in 1757, Britain would go on to rule most of India through the Honourable East India Company. Sadly, many of that Company's officers would prove to be inefficient, corrupt, and unfeeling; so, in the late 1850's the British Government decided to take direct control of India, beginning the period known as the British Raj.

The Raj's administrators would encourage closer relationships between the British and Indian communities; this did give native Indians a greater say in their country's affairs, but they still had very little real power. However, an English educated Indian middle class then began to develop, and they were later to play a major role in India's campaign for independence.

Craft Freemasonry was first brought to India in the early 1730's. The first lodge being consecrated in 1730 by members of the East India Company at Fort William in Calcutta. Subsequently many more lodges were formed by British military personnel and civil administrators; initially there were very few native Indian members.

Some other Degrees and Orders, including the Royal Arch, also came to India with Craft Freemasonry. Prior to the Union in 1813 the Ancients Grand Lodge had encouraged their Craft Lodges to work them; and the Excellent Grand & Royal Chapter would issue warrants for Royal Arch Chapters in India. Amongst these other Degrees & Orders would have been those elements of the Ancient & Accepted Rite that were initially worked by some early Craft Lodges but would later become advancements linked to an autonomous Knights Templar Degree.

The Ancient & Accepted Rite as such had originated in the mid-18th century in France, only in 1845 did it become an independent order in England, whose Supreme Council would assume responsibility for the 4° to 33° Degrees in "England, Wales and the Dependencies of the British Crown". In 1857 they gave Bro. Hugh Sandeman, the District Grand Master for Bengal, authority to establish the Ancient & Accepted Rite in India; shortly afterwards they also authorised Bro. Charles Golden to form a Chapter in Bengal for conferring the 18th Degree.

However, there is no evidence that either of those brethren did consecrate any Rose Croix chapters in India at that time. The first English Rose Croix chapter known to have been consecrated in India was the Bombay Chapter No.18 in early 1869.

Their warrant dated 1863 was when it was “drawn out” not when it was issued.

In July 1869 the Mount Calvary Chapter No.26 was opened in Lahore, followed in September by Coromandel Chapter No. 27 in Madras; and in December Bro. James Gibbs 33° was appointed the Supreme Council’s deputy in British India. In total 14 English Rose Croix Chapters were warranted in India during the 19th century, although half had surrendered their warrants by 1905.

FOUNDING MONEY CHAPTER

In 1877 Queen Victoria was made Empress of India: thereby asserting to the world Britain’s control of the Indian sub-continent and its c260 million population. Remarkably this had been achieved by a relative handful of soldiers, administrators and merchants; although not without uprisings and conflicts, the 1857 Indian rebellion was still a recent memory, and the 2nd Afghan War was about to commence.

The city of Rawalpindi, in the Punjab, was an expanding administrative centre and home to the largest British garrison in Northern India. In 1877 a small group of Rose Croix Brethren stationed there, mostly military men decided to seek a warrant to open a chapter for conferring the 18° Degree Rose Croix. The Supreme Council for England issued a warrant for the new chapter in December 1877; and it was consecrated on the 23rd of February in the following year, just six founders and one visitor were at the consecration meeting.

The chapter was named after the then Major General Gerard Money 33°; he was one of its six founders, and as Inspector General was also the Consecrating Officer. The other founders of the Money Chapter were Major Anthony

Stewart (Bengal Staff Corps) who in 1882 became DGM of the Punjab, Walter Lemarchand (Punjab Police), Captain Francis Hutchins (4th Hussars), Jogn Goldney (Extra Assistant Commissioner), and Lieutenant George Blake (Barrack Master) who was the chapter’s first Sovereign.

THE CHAPTER’S YEARS IN INDIA (1878-1969)

The money Chapter’s early members did include clergymen and a brewery manager; but most were military personnel or civil administrators, who might at any time be posted away at short notice. Many of the chapter’s early military candidates came from Lodge Mayo No. 1413, consecrated in 1872 and met in Rawalpindi.

During the chapter’s early years its membership fluctuated between twelve and up into the thirties; at some meetings they might have six candidates, but then at others six or more resignations.

Interestingly you can trace the movements of different military regiments by looking at the chapter’s changing membership; when the Devonshire Regiment left Rawalpindi the chapter had seven resignations, followed soon afterwards by an influx of candidates from the newly arrived Royal Sussex Regiment.

Sometimes it was difficult to hold regular meetings due to a sudden drop in membership numbers, and their uncertain availability; attendance levels rarely exceeded 50%, despite brethren being willing to travel long distances to attend meetings. In addition, filling the chapter offices was also a frequent problem. New members might also progress to the Chair very quickly; one did so at the very next meeting after his Perfection.

Even finding a serving Brother for the office of Outer Guard or “Equerry” as they called him was a problem. One member thought he had the answer, a Colonel in the 2nd Dragoon Guards, he enrolled his batman as “Equerry”, but the Colonel then had to leave to quell a riot and of course his batman went with him.

India would see major social and political changes during the time Money Chapter was in Rawalpindi, such as changes inevitably impacted upon chapter life.

In 1887 the chapter’s membership was down to just 17 when sadly two of its military members, both Captains in the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment were killed in action; and the reigning Sovereign was then unexpectedly posted back to the UK. By 1890 there were just five Princes at the Enthronement meeting, so no officers were appointed. The chapter was not to meet again until August 1892.

In 1892 the Supreme Council was now asking pointed questions about unpaid dues; the last appointed Treasurer had sent 98 rupees to London, but it appears never to have arrived. It was Bro. Henry Josiah Whympere (1845-1893) who would save the chapter.

Taking a firm grip of the situation, he collected three years back subscriptions from its remaining five members. The chapter was then permitted to start meeting again.

By 1893 its membership had risen to twenty, but having not met in 1891 it could not qualify for a centenary Warrant until 1992.

In 1895 the chapter received the sad news of Gerard Money’s death in London from heart failure.

During the first world war many members would have been posted away on active service and the sad news about those wounded or killed was shared at chapter meetings.

The chapter continued to meet throughout the war, but again membership numbers and attendance levels remained low.

Throughout the inter-war years membership numbers fluctuated widely; they did peak at over 90, but many would be unavailable for meetings due to the civil unrest that arose from the growing calls for Indian Independence. In 1938 the chapter would hold a banquet to mark the Diamond Jubilee of its founding, sadly out of its 64 members only 16 could attend.

The make-up of the membership was also changing; whilst still mostly military men fewer came from the line regiments, and more from the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers and Army Medical Corps. There were also more members from the Indian Army, including non-commissioned officers; and an increasing number of civilians, in 1937 a third of the chapter’s 47 members were civilians.

The chapter was to lose some of its financial assets when one of the banks it used went into liquidation; but it still sent 500 rupees to help the family of a deceased brother, and it would also continue to assist other member’s families in distress.

In February 1936, Bro. Major William Alexander Duncan Drummond (1901-1988) was perfected into the Money Chapter. He held the office of Raphael in 1939 but his military duties then took him away. He was to hold no further offices in the chapter until 1972; when he was appointed Recorder and played a key role in organising the move to London that saved the chapter from permanent closure.

During the second world war, despite many members being called away on active service the chapter continued to meet regularly; and there was at times an increase in visitor numbers, due to the many military brethren who transited through India.

After the war initially masonic life returned to its pre-war pattern. The chapter continued to meet regularly and make grants to masonic charities. However, as Indian Independence drew closer the British Army's' presence was being wound down and the political situation became increasingly volatile. These factors had an adverse impact on both chapter recruitment and the availability of existing members; so much so that in the late 1940's an amalgamation with other Rose Croix Chapters was even considered.

THE END OF AN ERA 1947-1969

In August 1947 India was split into two separate independent states, India and Pakistan. The Partition would lead to a terrible human catastrophe; estimates vary but over 15 million peoples were displaced and in the ensuing civil and religious unrest more than one million people lost their lives.

The partition split the Masonic District of the Punjab into two; and this together with the many departing British brethren and widespread civil unrest made it difficult for some lodges and chapters to continue meeting. Freemasonry would continue in the new state of India, where it now flourishes under its own Grand Lodge; but Rawalpindi was in Pakistan, and Freemasonry there would be banned by the government in 1972.

In February 1953 Bro. Trevor Satchwell was Perfected into the chapter. He was an officer in the Royal Engineers and attached to the Pakistan Army as a technical advisor. It took him all day to travel to chapter meetings in Rawalpindi. After the meeting he would roll out his sleeping bag on the temple floor, to get a few hours' sleep before travelling back the next day.

Bro. John Willis, the manager of the Ordnance Factory in Rawalpindi was Perfected in 1955. The following year he became the chapter's Recorder; an office held until the mid-1960's (apart for the year he served the chapter as Sovereign). Bro. Willis has left us a graphic account of chapter life in Rawalpindi during that period.

The Masonic Hall in Rawalpindi had opened in the early 1880's; Bro. Willis described it as a "*large rambling building*", with at its entrance "*two pillars each surmounted by a spherical ball*". As well as meeting and dining rooms it had a library, a bar and accommodation for Major "*Tich*" Dearlove, who appears to have been the club secretary. The toilets were not plumbed in but were just "*a row of pots stood on a raised plank, with one cubicle containing a commode*".

Under Bro. "*Tich's*" supervision the lodge room would be laid out for meetings by the hall's "*chowkidar*" (watchman). In the winter it was so "*bitterly cold*" that electric fires were needed to keep the brethren warm, but in the summer the evening temperature could be "*over 100°F*". To cool the lodge room, it was fitted with six "*punkahs*" (mechanical fans), Bro. Willis said that what "*with the noise (of the fans) and the heat it was difficult to concentrate*" during meetings.

The chapter's membership then was again drawn from the military, the Attock Oil Company, MOD staff, and brethren engaged in the building of a dam on the Kabul River. Full evening dress, sometimes with military medals would be worn at meetings. Some members would travel long distances to attend, and later when travelling home alone in the dark, Bro. Willis said that "*you did not stop once you had started*".

Due to the difficult political situation in Pakistan the chapter had not formally met since 1965; although the remaining members in Pakistan did still gather on a social basis. Bros. Willis and Dearlove were to be the last two Money Chapter members left in Rawalpindi; but then in late 1966, after nearly ten years as the chapter's Recorder, Bro. Willis also returned to the UK.

THE LONDON & KENT YEARS (1970-to date)

The ever-faithful Bro. "Tich" Dearlove 31° was now the last Money Chapter member left in Rawalpindi; and in 1970 he wrote to Bro. John Willis asking him to get in touch with the other members then in the UK, to discuss the chapter's future. Under the inspirational leadership of the now Lt. General Sir Alexander Drummond, they would seek a dispensation for the Chapter to meet in London.

Consequently, on the 29th of June 1972 the Money Chapter's 430th meeting was held at Duke Street in London. Bro. F. W. Sutton took the Chair, Bro. Alexander Drummond (known as "Sir Alex") was Recorder, Bro. John Willis was Prelate and Bro. Trevor Satchwell was Treasurer. At the meeting several distinguished brethren were made joining members, including Major William Terry MC, who was then by special dispensation elected and enthroned as Sovereign. The address to the princes was delivered by Most Ill. Bro. Harold Still 33°, the Supreme Council's Grand Director of Ceremonies.

The chapter met again at Duke Street on the 30th of November 1972, and Perfected two candidates. Shortly afterwards it moved to its present home in Wrotham, Kent; although for a few years it did continue to meet once a year in London, dining afterwards at the Royal Army

Medical Corps Mess on Millbank, under "*the benign but autocratic direction of "Sir Alex"*".

On the 24th of February 1978 the chapter held a special celebratory meeting at Duke Street to mark the 100th anniversary of its founding in Rawalpindi; the chapter having not met at all in 1891 it could not be a centenary event. At the meeting Bro. "Sir Alex" was sovereign, and the candidate for Perfection was Bro. Major General William Hughes CB, CBE. It was not until 1992 that the chapter was able to celebrate its centenary, Bro. Trevor Satchwell having joined nearly 40 years previously was then the father of the chapter, but sadly illness prevented him from attending.

In 2022 the Money Chapter had been at Wrotham for 50 years; its members keeping the commitment first made in distant Rawalpindi 144 years ago.

However, the future was looking uncertain, as despite the chapter's best efforts the membership numbers were again worryingly low, a situation not helped by the COVID pandemic. When dropped to just twelve subscribing and one honorary member, it was sadly felt that there was no alternative but for the chapter to surrender its warrant.

However, the then Inspector General for West Kent, V. Ill. Bro. Graham Higgs 33°, was not prepared to let this very special chapter just disappear. After consulting with the Supreme Council, Bro. Graham took the warrant into his own safe keeping and launching a campaign to save the chapter. The brethren of West Kent rallied to Graham's "*call to arms*"; and thanks to his efforts, and those of his team, the Money Chapter now has over twenty subscribing and seven honorary members. It is once again meeting on a regular basis; and in June 2023, Bro. Graham was himself made Sovereign of the Chapter, a most fitting climax to yet another

remarkable resurgence by this unique chapter.

One cannot but be impressed by the many civil and military honours that have over the years been awarded to Money Chapter members. Including a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire, two Companions of the Order of the Bath, a companion of the Order of St. Michael & St George, a Commander of the British Empire, five Distinguished Service Orders, and most impressively five Military Crosses.



GERARD MONEY



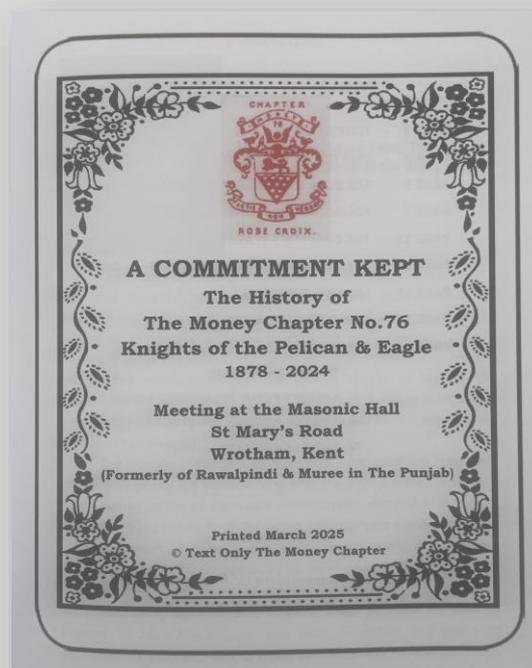
HENRY WHYMPERS



SIR 'ALEX' DRUMMOND



GRAHAM HIGGS

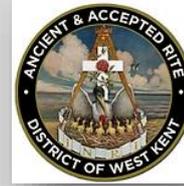


INSPECTOR GENERAL'S ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This Award is given to members of merit within the District for, "Achievement Above & Beyond".

Categories for this Award will include: -

- ❖ Service to the District
- ❖ Ritual
- ❖ Service to Chapter
- ❖ Meritorious Action(s)



SERVICE TO THE DISTRICT

V Ill Bro Graham Higgs 33° John the Baptist 1040

RITUAL

Ill Bro Jack Bailey 30° Westwood 764

Ill Bro Charles Marchant 31° Eos 1005

E & P Bro Paul Lincoln 18° Shirley Woolmer 948

Ill Bro Gregory Dunham 30° Shirley Woolmer 948

SERVICE TO THE CHAPTER

Ill Bro Neal Haslam 30° Eos 1005 (Treasurer 07.05.2009 - to date)

Ill Bro David Viggers 31° Shirley Woolmer 948 (Recorder 01.05.2008 - to date)

Ill Bro Terry Millard 31° Sacred Fire 977 (Recorder 01.10.2007 - to date)

Ill Bro Roger Moye 30° Archbishop Courtenay 246 (Treasurer 11.09.2009 - to date)

Ill Bro Peter Chapman 31° Archbishop Courtenay 246 (Recorder 01.09.2010 - to date)

MERITORIOUS ACTION(S)

Ill Bro Peter Wise 32° Shirley Woolmer 948

THE INTERVIEW

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL - A YEAR IN OFFICE

The summer break is now upon us, as all the Ancient & Accepted Rite meetings of the District of West Kent have been completed for the 24/25 season and there are no meetings held in the months of July and August.

Personally, on reflection, it seems like only yesterday when I became the Inspector General In Charge (Saturday 1st June 2024) and I must ask myself, where has the past 13 months gone?

To me they seem to have come and gone in a flash.

So what's happened in that time?

The Salient points are:

On Monday 8th July 2024 the District of West Kent installed me as its 3rd Inspector General. The meeting was hosted by my Mother Chapter 'Westwood Chapter' No.764 and was held at Bromley with approx. 150 members and guests in attendance, and who witnessed the Installation ceremony being performed by V P Bro David Williamson 33°, Lieutenant Grand Commander, ably assisted by M Ill Bro Dr Giles Shilson 33°, Grand Secretary General, M Ill Bro Revd Simon Thorn 33°, Grand Prior, and other members of the Supreme Council.

An incredible occasion (the likes of which have not been seen for a decade) and a wonderful opportunity for the District of West Kent to show-off its prowess.

Since taking charge, and to the end of June 2025, I can say that I have managed to visit each and every one of our Chapters. I have met most of our members, although there are still some that I am yet to have the pleasure of meeting,

and I have enjoyed great ceremonies, great company and great food.

I have had wonderful and fulfilling discussions with our senior members and interesting and thought-provoking conversations with our newer members.

Two things are evident to me throughout my travels:

(1) that each and every member has a deep-rooted affection for the Order and its incredible ceremonies; and

(2) that we just don't seem to tell people just how special our Order is.

With these points in mind, we have focused our efforts on updating our District website enabling:

- Browsers to find information about our Order and our Chapters: their characteristics, where they meet, when they meet, etc.
- Members to find general information about District events and notices, the various Chapter meetings being held when, where, what time, and the activity of the meeting.
- A repository for administration forms, circulars, guidance notes, and archive material.
- A photo gallery of past Chapter meetings and much, much more.

We have opened a West Kent Rose Croix Facebook page which currently has over 350

followers and keeps a much wider audience abreast of District events: past, present, and future.

If you haven't visited the page yet, please do and don't forget to follow us!

We have introduced an Inspector General's award. This Award is given to members of merit within the District for outstanding "Achievement Above & Beyond".

Categories for this Award include:

- Service to The District of West Kent
- Outstanding Ritual
- Service to the Chapter
- Meritorious Action(s)

I am extremely proud to announce that, since last year, I have made the following awards:

1 x Service to The District of West Kent

4 x Outstanding Ritual

5 x Service to the Chapter

1 x Meritorious Action(s)

In addition we have recommended to Supreme Council 14 members for Higher Degree promotion, all of which have been approved.

Rochester Cathedral - On 11th May 2025 the District of West Kent was invited to support the Craft Provincial Annual Church parade at Rochester Cathedral. Not only did we have an encouraging attendance at the Provincial luncheon but, having gained permission from the Supreme Council for the Ancient & Accepted Rite, the PGM of West Kent, the PGM of East Kent, The Dean's Team at Rochester Cathedral (overseeing the event), the Provincial Event Organiser (and his Team)

and the Inspector General of East Kent, a small number of our WK members (12 chosen to represent the regalia of the 18°, 30°, 31°, 32° & 33° Degrees) wore their respective regalia to the Evensong event.

This was an historic occasion enjoyed by us all.



In June 2025 we again hosted V P Bro David Williamson 33°, Lieutenant Grand Commander and V Ill Bro Nigel Scott-Moncrief 33°, Grand Director of Ceremonies to celebrate the Archbishop Courtenay Chapter's centenary meeting (article included within this Newsletter), an event that will not happen again in the District of West Kent for another 32 years.

We also introduced a District of West Kent - Ancient & Accepted Rite lapel pin that has assisted our District financially to be able to implement many of the above initiatives.



Together we have witnessed changes to the qualification for membership that has enabled us to welcome into our Order/District two fellow Freemasons, of faiths other than Christianity (another historic event within the District), along with the mandatory changes to our Ritual (as of 1st January 2025).

Obviously our 18° members are yet to experience the spectacular Higher Degree ceremonies, the pomp and ceremony that surrounds each occasion and the excellence of the ritual delivered by the nine members of the Supreme Council, all performed with the oversight and guidance of the Grand Director of Ceremonies and his team of Deputies and Assistants. I personally cannot commend these incredible days out to you highly enough, but all that aside there are nevertheless great advancements being made by our Chapters and our 18° members when considering the various changes introduced by the Supreme Council (since January 2024).

We all can appreciate that it takes many hours of practice to deliver, with feeling and compassion, various passages of ritual, whether that be for Craft, Holy Royal Arch or any of the Companion Orders (and some passages, quite frankly, can be daunting from the out-set) and the Ancient and Accepted Rite understands this.

For this very reason the Supreme Council has set out, at the back of the 2024 Ritual Book, a 'Personal Record of Work Conducted', which is a simple and sympathetic method of encouraging members (whether new to the Order or more experienced) to select smaller sections (parcels) of the ritual and deliver them at their own pace. It also allows for increased member participation at meetings as more members have the opportunity of being involved with the ceremony. This in turn will hopefully create a greater enjoyment for: the

spectating members, the participants and (fingers crossed) the Perfectee's; a win, win, win situation, which can only be a good thing.

Encouragement is the key to enjoyment and enjoyment the key to a more fulfilling membership experience and I would ask you all to consider this throughout the coming season.

Enjoyment is key to all we do and will ultimately lead to increased membership, and increased membership can be a positive sign in every Organisation. How do we really measure our success to consider ourselves to be a successful Organisation? Is it as simple as gains over losses? "Definitely not!" I hear you shout, while others proffer, "Metrics don't lie."

On the other hand, falling membership (whether it be as an individual Chapter or as an Order) is a dilemma that cannot be ignored.

Attract, Engage, & Respond are areas for consideration when contemplating an effective 'Plan of Action' however in truth simple discussions on what the Chapter achieved last year (or not) and what it could achieve this year can go a lot further than never getting round to a formalising a documented 'Chapter Plan'.

In short, the greatest danger to our future is apathy if, for example, your numbers have declined, and you haven't held any perfection meetings over the last 12 months then let's do something about it.

My advice is to keep it simple – The basics:

- New members are introduced by simply asking them to join (what's the worst that could happen, they say no?).
- When a Chapter is active it has a positive impact on its members and their membership enjoyment.
- Rotation of Offices and Office progression bring fulfilment to members.

- The more subscribing members a Chapter has the greater is its ability to manage increases in costs.

The basics apply to us all. For example, I personally have a current list of 27 brethren that I am speaking with about joining our beautiful Order.

These individuals are at various stages:

- Some have completed and submitted their applications,
- some have dates for their Perfections,
- and others are yet to join the dots.

If I have a question for you it's – **WHO'S ON YOUR LIST?**

Rose Croix Potential Candidates

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

So, what can you expect over the next 12 months?

- Much of the same as 2024 with a greater emphasis on individual member encouragement and enjoyment.
- The District Recorder and I will be advising our Chapters on how best to maximise their attractiveness to potential members.
- We will provide each of our Chapters with WKRC District leaflets that can be handed to potential members.
- We will introduce a Perfectee's Guide (a booklet welcoming Perfectee's to the District and explaining the basics of the Ceremony and the Ancient & Accepted Rite).
- We will be introducing a member to support the Inspector General in Membership Welfare.
- We will investigate the opportunity of introducing a central Charity that can be supported by each of the West Kent Rose Croix Chapters, to the benefit of our members and their families, and bring a greater awareness of our Order to a much wider community audience.
- We will encourage each individual member to create a personal prospective member list.
- We will introduce another piece of member merchandise that will enable the District to keep costs at a minimum and enable us to afford District initiatives to the benefit of West Kent Rose Croix members.
- We will have another enjoyable and fulfilling year.

The season in figures (1st July 2024 through 30th June 2025):

Membership

Title	Nos
No. of Members as of year-end 30 th June 2025	318

Title	01.07.24 to 31.12.24	01.01.25 to 30.06.25	Year Total
Perfections	9	15	24
(Re)/Joining members			12
			36

Title	Year Total
Resignations	15
Honorary memberships	2
Exclusions	0
Ceased	0
Deaths	7
	24

General

Title	01.07.24 to 31.12.24	01.01.25 to 30.06.25	Year Total
No. of Chapters	14	14	14
No. of meetings	14	27	41
IG in attendance	11	21	32
Installations	7	6*	13*
Most Wise Sovereigns 18°	6	5	11
Most Wise Sovereigns 30°	1	0	1
Most Wise Sovereigns 31°	0	0*	0*
Most Wise Sovereigns 32°	0	1	1
Chapters of Improvement	5	11	16
Promotions 30°	2	6	8
Promotions 31°	1	0	1
Promotions 32°	0	0	0
IG Award (Service to District)	1	0	1
IG Award (Ritual)	0	4	4
IG Award (Service to Chapter)	0	5	5
IG Award (Meritorious Action)	0	1	1

- *One installation postponed due to ill health of ingoing MWS

ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY CHAPTER No. 246

ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY CHAPTER CENTENARY MEETING

By

Ill Bro Peter Chapman 31° & Ill Bro Adrian Wagstaff 32°



Archbishop Courtenay Chapter Rose Croix No 246 was consecrated on the 14th of November 1924 at Freemasons Hall, Bower Terrace, Maidstone Kent.

On Friday the 6th of June 2025, a rather warm Summer's Day, Archbishop Courtenay Rose Croix Chapter No 246 celebrated their Centenary.

Archbishop Courtenay, our namesake, was Archbishop of Canterbury between the years 1381 to 1396 and was recorded as being a great builder and is credited for finishing the

Great Cloister and Southwest Tower of Canterbury Cathedral and donating the equivalent of £150,000 to the Cathedral funds.

Preparation for these celebrations started in 2024 conducting communications with Duke St and Mrs Dawn Boyle the Grand Secretary's personal assistant, forms completed by our recently installed Inspector-General, V. Ill. Bro Mark Eyles-Thomas 33° confirming our continuous meetings since our consecration, and the organising (and payment) of a celebrational centenary warrant. All this in conjunction with the invaluable assistance of our District Recorder Ill Bro Adrian Wagstaff.

Finally, the day arrived, with Very Puissant Brother David Kenneth Williamson 33° Lieutenant Grand Commander, representing the Supreme Council and the Grand Director of Ceremonies Nigel Scott-Moncrieff 33° as his escorting officer. Both gentlemen were a real pleasure to meet and work with.

V. P. Bro David Williamson 33°, Lieutenant Grand Commander and his escort of members of the 33rd degree were greeted warmly by all in attendance. Once these formalities were completed the agenda followed with a Perfection ceremony of Bro Edward "Eddy" Herbert King.



For those who know Wrotham Masonic Hall well, certain things had to change as there were over 60 brethren in attendance. The Intermediate degrees were therefore conferred in the dining room and was followed by the first point, held in its own small room. 17 Brethren braved the heat and darkness while our intrepid District Recorder Adrian Wagstaff performed the first point, this part of the proceedings was very hot but nevertheless a great success with Ill Bro Gordon Scott-Brown: acting as Marshal.

The second point/Red room was performed by our Most Wise Sovereign Nevell “Mo” Morris to a very high standard, who, after V. P. Bro David Williamson conducted the Accolade then explained the Collar, Jewel, signs and words of the degree. Thereafter, Bro Eddie King was proclaimed and took his seat in the chapter.

The consecration minutes were read by our D.C. William Rouse and the Chapter history by the Recorder. The history had been originally compiled by a past member Ill Bro David Brooks 30°, using a booklet of the first 50 years as a starting point. The history included information about Archbishop Courtenay, the consecrating Officers etc and the fact that two of the first perfectee’s were members of Belvedere & Agricola Lodge 4501, and although we did not have members of either Lodges now, it was nice that a Past Master in the Millenium year of Agricola Lodge, a Past Assistant Grand Master for East Kent and now Inspector-General for the District of East Kent, V. Ill. Bro Roger Waltham was present as a guest.



The talk on the history continued, with famous names such as Lord Cornwallis and Guy Rudgard being mentioned. In the 1930s the Chapter agreed that the Enthronement meetings be held at the “Pump room” at the Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells. The Chapter has also met at Bower place, Linton and one or two other centres, our final resting place being at Wrotham since 1974.

More recent history was added by the current Recorder, Peter Chapman, with mentions of Ill Bro Mick Mitchell 30° who was a stalwart of the Chapter prior to his passing in December 2024, through him we have the first Sovereigns/ Founders jewel, found at a Church boot fair, he paid £3.50 for it!

And finally Ill Bro Ray Gulliver 32° who printed off numerous copies of the Intermediate degree shields, and who travelled far and wide, gifting them to any Chapter who required them.

The third point followed allowing everyone to participate and with 4 Chalices and 4 Platters, everything went smoothly (The two bottles of wine went down very well as they had been chilled for a while). The Lieutenant Grand Commander led the third point and with the Grand D.C and William Rouse our own D.C. working quickly and seamlessly, the 60 plus circle was a great success.

After closing there followed a very convivial festive board, consisting of; Chicken Liver Pate starter, three meat salad, Pears poached in red wine with ice cream and a glass of port to celebrate.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

REVITALISING THE ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED RITE AND ITS CHAPTERS

A Chapter's story by Dr. Christopher J Parker 30°
(West Kent Chapter no. 512)

As a Craft Mason, Royal Arch Mason, and as a Knight Kadosh in the Ancient & Accepted Rite (Rose Croix), the one thing that is common to all the units that I belong to is that they are all relatively small.

In all five units that I have been associated with, there has at some point been discussions about recruiting and implementing 'Membership Pathway' strategies, as numbers have declined. In all but one case, the situation had deteriorated to the point that there were discussions about the possibility of handing in a warrant or charter. This was the case with our Rose Croix Chapter: West Kent, No. 512, and I was in the chair at the time as Most Wise Sovereign.

Indeed, in my year, I don't think we held an actual Perfection, as we didn't have a candidate, although we did practise parts of the Perfection ceremony. The dialogue about the future began a few years back as a conversation about the lack of attendance at the meeting and our dwindling numbers. Our District Recorder, who was present, interjected, noting that we hadn't scheduled to do anything at the meeting, and this may be a contributing reason as to the non-attendance – a very valid point indeed!

A long conversation ensued and while I cannot recall anything concrete coming out of it straightaway, minds had certainly been refocused. Around that time, there was a conversation about the Rose Croix being a Christian Order, with a requirement for each member to believe in the Trinitarian faith.

This was a little time before the historic decision by Supreme Council to open the Order to those of other faiths and traditions.

It was also noted at the same meeting that the Order had the added impediment that Christianity itself was on a serious decline, as anyone that is a member of a church, or is interested in such matters, would recognise.

For instance, across denominations more than 3,500 churches have closed across Britain since 2015. In the Church of England, attendance was around 950,000 in 2000, while in 2022 it was 549,000, a decrease of 42%. The statistics for the Methodist Church are not any better, showing a 3.5% year-on-year decline over the past decade. In the Roman Catholic Church, weekly mass attendance in England and Wales fell by 30.7% between 1993 and 2010. Of course, the Christian churches and Freemasonry suffered a significant decline during Covid, a one-off event that could have never been predicted.

Returning to West Kent Chapter, what happened next, remains a little cloudy in my mind, as I am not aware of specific strategies being put in place, but this vocal 'shot across the bows' seemed to have triggered a reaction amongst our existing members. Proposals for new candidates for perfection and joining members began to materialise, to the extent that earlier this year we had to hold an additional meeting to accommodate the demand, our next meeting in October 2025 has a candidate already lined up.

I claim absolutely no credit for any of this.

The Supreme Councils' decision to remove the Trinitarian faith requirement was not universally popular at the time at grassroots level, if 'Facebook' group posts were anything to go by. There was a feeling of a lack of consultation, given that it appeared to affect the whole foundations and precepts of the Order, nor was the rewriting of the ritual unanimously applauded.

I will admit I had my reservations at the time, too!

I don't know what my father, V Ill Bro John Parker 33°, as a Past Inspector General of West Kent would have made of it either. However, as they say, hindsight is sometimes a wonderful thing...

Initiatives from Supreme Council and the District of West Kent, advertising this most beautiful of Companion Orders in ways not seen before, has helped the District's profile, and now seems to be generating many more enquiries.

V Ill Bro Mark Eyles-Thomas 33°, our Inspector General seems to have taken on the mantle of being our leader in the same way that our outgoing PGM in the Craft of West Kent succeeded in doing. There is a 'Facebook' post about every visitation he has made, and one has no excuse for not knowing what is going on within the District of West Kent.

Having been in a position of struggling generally as a Chapter to fill all the Offices for a Perfection, we now find ourselves with a queue of 18° holders waiting to advance. It is just filling the middle order of the progressive offices that still requires some thought!

Of those newer 'Excellent & Perfect' Brothers, we are blessed with several who are keen to advance and take on work. Amongst them, was

the first non-Christian in our Chapter, Excellent & Perfect Brother Deep Selhi, who also holds the distinction of being the first non-Christian to be Perfected into the Order in the District of West Kent earlier this year.

I was, of course, taught to be cautious, and, therefore, whilst the numbers look better now, they are still lower than our historical membership level, so we can't rest on our laurels, as is testified to by the passing in recent days of our much-loved Honorary Member, Ill. Bro. Ron Wilson, 30°, for many years the Prelate of our Chapter.

Editor's Note: Thank you for your letter and we wish the West Kent Chapter No. 512 continued success for the future. Perhaps Christopher, you will be kind enough to let us know how the Chapter is doing throughout the coming season July 25 – June 26?



WEST KENT CHAPTER OF IMPROVEMENT (NEW AUTUMN DATES)

Under the auspices of Money Chapter No 76 and Blazing Star Chapter No 759, the autumn series of dates have been secured to hold Chapters of Improvement at Wrotham Masonic Centre. This venue is of course outside of the ULEZ charging zone and we hope that more members of the District might now be encouraged to attend.

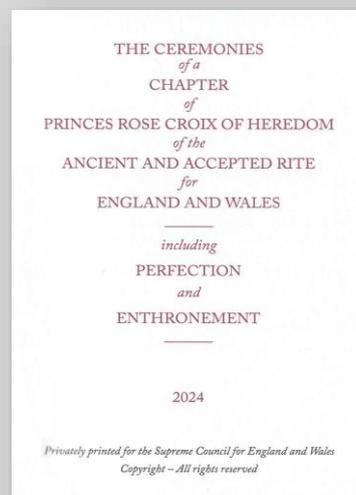
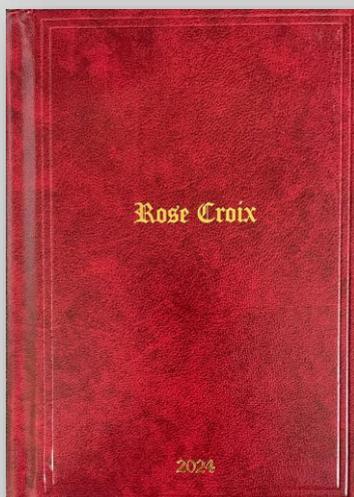
The confirmed 2025 autumn dates are: -

- Wednesday 10th September
- Tuesday 23rd September
- Wednesday 15th October
- Wednesday 29th October
- Wednesday 12th November
- Wednesday 26th November

all commencing at 7.30pm.

We very much look forward to welcoming as many of them who wish to practice and strengthen their ritual.

Please carefully note the dates as these fall on different days of the week so, please ensure that you record the dates accurately in your diaries.



PODCAST - THE ROSE CROIX REVEALED

A JOURNEY BEYOND THE CRAFT



<https://www.ugle.org.uk/discover-freemasonry/resources/podcasts/rose-croix-revealed-journey-beyond-craft>

(Published: 1 May 2025 - Episode: 10)

In this fascinating instalment of Craftcast, Shaun, James, and Stephen are joined by John Boyington, the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council for England and Wales.

Together, they delve into the rich history and evolving landscape of the Rose Croix – one of Freemasonry's most distinctive Companion Orders. From profound ritual and inclusive reform, this episode offers insight into the Order's past, present, and future and discusses the intriguing 33rd Degree.

Whether you're a curious Master Mason or simply curious about the fraternity, this is one you won't want to miss!

NEW DISTRICT OF WEST KENT INFORMATION FLYER



AN EXCITING AND COLOURFUL ORDER

- Over 20,000 active members in England and Wales
- One of freemasonry's oldest rites
- The largest rite worldwide after the Craft
- Open to all
- Inspiring and colourful ceremonies
- Modest annual fees

ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED RITE
Rose Croix

ENHANCE YOUR JOURNEY
Scan the QR code for more information about the Rose Croix and The District of West Kent



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THE DISTRICT OF WEST KENT
WKRC
West Kent Rose Croix





WELCOME TO OUR ORDER

The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, consisting of 33 degrees, is the largest worldwide masonic rite after Craft Freemasonry. In England and Wales, it is often referred to as "Rose Croix" because candidates join at the 18° which has the formal title of "Prince Rose Croix of Heredom"

The 18° ceremony is unlike any other in freemasonry. This colourful masonic ritual builds on the philosophy and the lessons learnt in the three Craft degrees to consider the principles of brotherly love, relief and truth. Many consider it their most profound experience since Initiation.

V. Ill. Bro. Mark Eyles-Thomas 33°
Inspector General for the District of West Kent

THE JOURNEY

Members join the Order in the 18° through the ceremony of Perfection, having had the intermediate degrees from the 4° to the 17° conferred on them, in an abbreviated form. At the end of the ceremony, they are created a Knight of the Pelican and Eagle and are invested as a Prince of the Order of the Rose Croix of Heredom

On completing the journey through the 18° by undertaking all the ritual elements of the ceremony of Perfection and having Enthroned their successor as Most Wise Sovereign, members are eligible for election to the 30°. After receiving the degrees 19° to the 29° (again in an abbreviated form) they immediately go on to receive the 30° in a ceremony conferred in full and in person by Members of the Supreme Council.

CAN I JOIN?

Our Order is open to all Master Masons of at least six month's standing at the date of their Perfection, who are committed to fraternal and personal growth. Camaraderie, inclusion and lifelong connections are all central to the Rose Croix experience.

LET'S TALK

Whether you are an interested in joining, or simply wish to find out more why not visit our web site by scanning the QR code and complete the "Contact Us" page and we will be in touch.



CONTACT DETAILS OF CHAPTERS WITHIN THE DISTRICT

Name	Venue	Dates
<u>Money Chapter No. 76</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham Kent TN15 7AN	3rd Thu Sep & Mar, 1st Thu Jun (E)
<u>Archbishop Courtenay Chapter No. 246</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham Kent TN15 7AN	2nd Fri Apr, Jun & Sept (E)
<u>West Kent Chapter No. 512</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common Kent BR2 8HA	1st Fri Feb, Apr (E) & Oct
<u>Raphael Chapter No. 555</u>	Wilmington Masonic Hall, Hawley Road, Wilmington, Dartford Kent DA1 1PA	3rd Sat Jan, Apr & Sept (E)
<u>Blazing Star Chapter No. 759</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham Kent TN15 7AN	4th Sat Jan & 1st Sat Jun (E)
<u>Westwood Chapter No. 764</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common Kent BR2 8HA	2nd Fri Mar, 3rd Fri Jun & Nov (E)
<u>Oakley Chapter No. 890</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common Kent BR2 8HA	1st Tue Apr, Sept & Nov (E)

Name	Venue	Dates
<u>Biggin Hill Chapter No. 936</u>	Shirley Woolmer Masonic Hall, Church Road, Sidcup Kent DA14 6BX	4th Fri Jan, 3rd Wed Jun & 1st Wed Sept (E)
<u>Shirley Woolmer Chapter No. 948</u>	Shirley Woolmer Masonic Hall, Church Road, Sidcup Kent DA14 6BX	4th Fri Mar, May (E) & Nov
<u>Sacred Fire Chapter No. 977</u>	Welling Masonic Hall Bellegrove Road, Welling Kent DA1 1PA	1st Sat Jan, Apr & Oct (E)
<u>Eos Chapter No. 1005</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common Kent BR2 8HA	4th Thurs Mar, 1st Thurs May (E) & 4th Thurs Oct
<u>Acorn Chapter No. 1020</u>	Shirley Woolmer Masonic Hall, Church Road, Sidcup Kent DA14 6BX	3rd Wed Jan, 1st Wed May (E) & Nov
<u>John the Baptist Chapter No. 1040</u>	Sevenoaks Masonic Hall, 119a St. John's Hill, Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3PE	2nd Thurs Mar, 4th Thurs May & 2nd Thurs Oct (E)
<u>Kent Chapter No. 1071</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham Kent TN15 7AN	3rd Tue Apr (E) & Oct