

THE Bulletin

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE GRAND PRIORY OF AUSTRALASIA Edition 9 December 2022

Grand Prior's Report to the Bulletin # 9 December 2022



Grand Prior – HE Grand Marshal
Conventual Bailiff David Wilckens OSJ

Welcome to the Ninth Edition of the Grand Priory Bulletin which has been designed to keep the Members of the Order informed on matters before the Grand Priory Council.

The events for our Order in the latter part of the Calendar year were the Petit Conseil meeting held last month followed by the Sovereign Council in Malta. A total of fourteen Australians visited Malta this year, consisting of the Australian Members of the Sovereign Council, registered observers, and partners.

Sovereign Council attendance was less than the previous meetings but was successful. A reason for the low attendance was that many members of the Grand Priory of Benelux that would have normally attended had committed to a pilgrimage in Bath (UK). Generally, the fear of Covid impacted the attendance as well. Overall, the tours and proceedings were better organised than previous years.

The Sovereign Council approved the Petit Conseils recommendation of appointing your Grand Prior as Grand Marshal Conventual Bailiff. This is not only a great honour for him, but indeed is an honour for every member of our Order in Australasia. This appointment reflects a very professional Grand Priory Council, Priory Administration Councils and other Members of the Order who constantly contribute to the Order.

You will note by my attached report to the Sovereign Council, that since the last meeting in Malta, 83 new Knights and Dames have been invested into the Aus-

tralasian Grand Priory and \$198,509 were distributed by the Company and the Foundation to a variety of charities which is most pleasing.

The Petit Conseil Meeting held on the Thursday before the Saturday Sovereign Council was attended by the 3 Conventual Bailiffs and 6 Lieutenants. Although Lt Grand Master Paul Borg (at right) is not a member of the Petit Conseil, he is always in attendance and all major decisions made by the PC requires his ratification.

Items of interest are as follows:

- ◆ The total Membership of the International Order is 826
- ◆ An Investiture in Florida of 6 Knights and Dames was held this month, and Malta will have their second Investiture in December, with two Aspirants. Traditionally the Malta Priory have two annually.
- ◆ International Oblations had not been reviewed for 22 years. The Petit Conseil Members agreed to an increase commencing in 2023
- ◆ The Constitution and Malta Rules will be reviewed by Lieutenant Grand Master Paul Borg.
- ◆ The European Union Intellectual Property Office approved the OSJ crest without any objection. World IPO has presently an objection from the USA, but is being dealt with, no objection from Australia or Canada.
- ◆ The draft International Web page was reviewed. This webpage has been produced in South Australia at the request of Paul Borg, and when finalized will be handed to the Grand Commander Joseph Grech for continual updates.





Total International Donations from the Order since the last Sovereign Council was Euro 2,436,926 (A\$3,760,000) which did not include a final amount from the USA.

Every year the Petit Conseil selects an International Charity and contributes Euro 10,000. I have asked Dame Jan Synot to prepare a paper in support of the New Guinea Cancer Centre, to see if we are able to attract a donation to this side of the world.

The London Order has shifted their HQ to Norway which is strange.

The Norfolk UK Commandery will be part of the Russian Grand Priory of Malta.

Australasian Nomination of Membership form will now be used Internationally. Similarly, our Promotion Documentation has already been approved for international distribution.

The Constitution and Malta Rules were changed on retirement age from 'attaining the age of 80' to 'end of his/her eightieth year'.

The next Sovereign Council will be held in April 2024. It was agreed the format will change to include a workshop for members' feedback on the direction of the Order

The Petit Conseil in the future to be conducted more as a business with good governance and transparency.

The Grand Priory Council in November was originally scheduled to be held in Adelaide but was instead conducted by Zoom due to unexceptional increases in airfare cost for members attending.

A special welcome was given to the recently elected Councillor Chevalier Richard Dennis (please see CV attached) who I know will contribute greatly to the Grand Priory Council.

It was an important meeting with Treasurer Chevalier John Emmerson in conjunction with Chevalier Peter Robertson presenting the next year's budget and the recommended oblation for 2023.

Archivist Chevalier Baden Teague attended by invitation to update the Council of our annual history of events since Dame Mary Lewis's retirement.

Chevalier Peter Summers also attended by invitation to answer questions on Share Point which is a management system



Petit Conseil Members during Sovereign Council Meeting



A zoom meeting of the Directors of the OSJ Foundation and the Annual General Meeting of the Foundation were both held in October. The Meeting of Directors approved the admission of the existing Directors as Members which will require changes to the Constitution

The meeting of the Directors at the Annual General Meeting was presented with the draft unaudited accounts and subject to any manifest errors being identified, the Audited Accounts will be presented to a reconvened Annual General Meeting.

It is pleasing to report that the extension of New Zealand has taken a positive step with a Nomination for Admission being received from an applicant the Prelate interviewed when in Auckland. The Prelate is planning another trip in February 2023 as well as Dame Rosemary Brooks perusing other potential Aspirants.

Chevalier Professor Robert Love will be visiting Auckland soon to arrange bank signatures with Chevalier Ross Blair.

I wish to again thank Prior Dame Barbara Abley for being the Editor of the ninth publication of 'The Bulletin'. This is an important instrument to allow the members of the Order to be updated on Grand Priory matters.

In closing, I would like to thank the three Priors and Deputy Grand Prior Richard Trigg for establishing constant and valuable communication with the Grand Prior.

Conventual Bailiff

David

David Wilckens OSJ

Grand Prior Australasia



Photographs taken at the Sovereign Council in Malta.

At right: Conventual Bailiffs with Lt Grand Master

Below: Conventual Bailiffs with Lieutenants and the Lt Grand Master.



Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller

Grand Priory of Australasia

HE Bailiff David Wilckens OSJ
Grand Prior
Grand Priory of Australasia

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From the Office of the Grand Prior, Grand Priory of Australasia

REPORT TO THE SOVEREIGN COUNCIL MALTA 29TH OCTOBER 2022

The Grand Priory in Australia commenced 53 years ago and was originally part of the Sovereign London Order. In 2010 we became a Member of the Malta Order and have enjoyed immensely our close relationship with our Brothers and Sister of this International Order which consists of 43 Grand Priors, Priors and Commanderies throughout Europe, the Americas, and the Pacific.

The Grand Priory Australasia is a Limited Liability Company in accordance with the Australian Securities Commission, and consists of Priors in Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania, as well as two Commanderies in Victoria. Members are also located in NSW, Western Australia, Queensland, and New Zealand.

The Grand Priory Council consists of the Grand Prior, a Deputy Grand Prior and 12 Officers and Councillors who meet 3 times a year.

This Council adheres to four guidelines consisting of Unity, Harmony, Good Governance, and Transparency with complex items being discussed that bring out better outcomes for the future of the Order in Australia.

The Prelate attends these meeting by invitation only. During Covid, Council meetings were still held by electronic means and were well attended.

Senior retirements and appointments. Bailiff Emeritus Peter Wiltshire retired in November 2019 due to ill health He was a Lieutenant of the Petit Conseil and during his time as Grand Prior demonstrated great leadership with results still seen today. Bailiff Emeritus Brian North retired in June of this year, and he was the Grand Priory Chancellor for the last 11 years, as well as serving on the OSJ Charitable Foundation

Membership: The Grand Priory is growing and in a very healthy state. Since the last Sovereign Council 83 new knights and dames have been Invested giving a nett total membership in Australasia of 279. Covid restricted the timing of Investitures, but a catch up was completed during this calendar year with 29 new members in 2022. Investitures in Victoria and South Australia are planned next June, and the Tasmanian Priory in July 2023. We are hopeful we will have our first Investiture in New Zealand next year with forward planning showing a new Commandery early 2023 followed by an additional two in 2024.

Promotions are important to recognize members who have contributed to the Order who have been elevated in rank because of meritorious conduct and service to the Order. It was an Honour to present both Bailiff Peter Wiltshire and Bailiff Brian North the Cross of Merit with Crown which was a personal award by the Lieutenant Grand Master who he considers having served the Order, exceptionally well and over a long period and considered to be above what could be expected. Other senior promotion were a Dame and three Knights of Grand Cross who were past Priors and a Priory Commander. A total of 93 promotions have been awarded since the last Sovereign Council.

Charitable Donations During the last financial year, A\$55,301.00 was distributed by the Company and the Foundation to the ultimate beneficiaries. The total donations since the last Sovereign Council was A\$198,509 (Euro 140,000).

The main charities that have been supported over the past year consist of Winter Appeals for Homeless, Flu Vaccinations for those in need, support for violence sufferers and support for sick and destitute people, care, and resettlement of Offenders, providing respite for first respondents suffering PTSD, and end of life palliative care and their families.

The Priors of Australasia will give more detail of their fundraising in their reports to follow.

Bailiff David Wilckens OSJ

Grand Prior of Australasia



**Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Hospitaller - Australasia
&
Papua New Guinea Cancer Relief Society, Lae, New Guinea.**



A relationship between the Order of St John - Australasia and the PNG Cancer Relief Society was established in 2021 via email and zoom meetings. Introductions between the Board members of CRS and Grand Prior David Wilckens, Secretary Graeme Gatley and Hospitaller Jan Synot, an informative brief history of the Cancer Relief Society and its mission was given. The CRS was founded in the 1950's and continues to administer care for cancer affected people of Lae and out lying villages in the highlands. By providing specialised food, some limited medical supplies and treatment, the Society offers comfort on a daily basis.

OSJ Australasia has been supporting the Nutrition Program which enables the purchase of foods suitable for the patients. The society has a 36 bed ward attached to the Lae Hospital, their own kitchen and a cook to provide the special liquified food for throat and mouth cancer patients. The CRS is supported by donations and fund raising from the Lae community and business people. No Government assistance is available. Essentially the CRS can only provide palliative care through nutrition and medicines they are able to

buy. The team at CRS is led by John Clarke (Chair), Dr Alfred Mel and other volunteer members working tirelessly directly with the cancer patients. The CRS are very grateful for the assistance that OSJ Australasia is offering, and a strong relationship has been formed.



The contributions being made are making a very real difference in so many under privileged people's lives.

**Dame Jan Synot OAM CJSJ
Grand Priory of Australasia Hospitaller**





Introducing Chevalier Richard Dennis AM, PSM, KGSJ, LLB (Hons), Grad Dip Bus Admin GRAND PRIORY COUNCILLOR

Richard was born in Adelaide in 1958. He attended school at Prince Alfred College and then the University of Adelaide, graduating with an Honours Degree in Law.

He also holds a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration from the University of South Australia.

Richard commenced work in a legal firm in Adelaide in 1979 and after approximately 3 years joined the South Australian Parliamentary Counsel's Office.

In 2006 Richard was appointed as South Australian Parliamentary Counsel, a position he held until December 2015.

In January 2016 Richard commenced work as a contract legislative drafter, consultant and sole legal practitioner. He now works for a number of State and interstate government agencies and instrumentalities, and is also currently working on a major water law reform for the Government of Vietnam.

He has also worked as a consultant drafter for the Commonwealth Office of Parliamentary Counsel and as a consultant to the New Zealand Parliamentary Counsel's Office.

Richard is a Governor of The Wyatt Trust (a philanthropic trust based in Adelaide) and a Director of the South Australian Superannuation Board and the Southern Select Super Corporation.

He is also a member of a Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee and a former Governor of Walford Anglican School for Girls.

Richard has held a number of positions in the Anglican Church, including as a member of the National Church Law Commission (2003 – 2014), the Adelaide Diocesan Synod (2004 – 2017), and the Adelaide Diocesan Council (most recently until the end of 2017).

He also held the position of Chancellor in 2016 – 2017 and is the current Chair of the Adelaide Diocese Drafting Committee.

Richard has previously been involved as a board or executive committee member in a number of other organisations, including the Australian Institute of Administrative Law (AIAL), and the Arthritis Foundation of SA and the Arthritis Foundation of Australia.

Richard is currently a member of the Law Society of South Australia, the AIAL, the Australian Association of Constitutional Law, the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel, and Clarity International.

Richard was awarded a Public Service Medal in 2010 and as appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia in 2018. [For significant service to the community of South Australia through a range of voluntary organisations, and to the Anglican Church of Australia.]

Richard was invested as a member of the South Australian Priory in 2019.

Since becoming a member of the Priory, Richard has been the Master of Ceremonies at a couple of Priory functions, been appointed as a member of the Functions and Fundraising Committee and as the Priory's Assistant Secretary, and become the convenor of the Priory's annual wine sales fundraising initiative.

Richard is married to Andrea and they have twin daughters (Maddy, who is a contract manager for the Collins Class Submarine Program in Adelaide, and Alex who is the manager of a gym (and runs an associated business) in Seymour, Victoria).

His interests include snow skiing, golf (as a member of Glenelg Golf Club), travel and the Sturt Football Club.



The OSJ's Two Centuries Living on the Island of Rhodes, 1310-1522

Written by Chev Dr Baden Teague KGSJ, Archivist, on 9.11.2022



THE GRAND MASTERS HOME ON RHODES

This year marks 500 years since the Order of St John left Rhodes. The decisive siege was in the months of 1522 but 1 January 1523 was the actual departure day.

It was two hundred years earlier, in 1310, that the Order of St John conquered Rhodes, a large Greek island in the southern part of the Aegean Sea and close to the Anatolia mainland (now modern Turkey). The Knights needed a new home because they had become refugees not only from Palestine but also, after their brief stay, from Cyprus.

Their conquest of Rhodes was resisted for four years by the entrenched army there of the declining Byzantine Emperor, based in Constantinople. The invading Knights had been given resources by both the Pope and by the King of France. Indeed, a fleet of Italian ships had brought European "crusaders" to help the OSJ win Rhodes.

Rhodes was the main victory, but the Knights also gained control of several substantial islands nearby and the mainland port of Halicarnassus, which they later went on to strongly fortify.

From the very beginning in Jerusalem, the OSJ had always been a Hospitaller Order of Knights, but, early on, it had become essential that they be armed to defend not only their hospices but also their pilgrim and crusader patients. Now, in Rhodes, two more significant changes became necessary: first, the OSJ became a temporal power, a sovereign government; and, second, to survive attacks from both Barbary pirates

and from Muslim Turks, they established an OSJ Navy with all the naval skills and resources necessary to survive enormous military challenges. For two centuries the Order flourished on Rhodes and in the adjacent region, not only maintaining a Hospital but also equipped as a sovereign naval power, backed up by fortified castles.

However, the relative peace in the Aegean Sea was viciously disturbed by the military strength of the growing Ottoman Empire. This Empire was led by Turks and encompassed most of the land and the sea in the eastern Mediterranean, from Egypt to Macedonia.

It was in 1453 that the Turks captured Constantinople, the Byzantine capital, but now, sixty years later, the Ottoman navy and army (with huge numbers) were sent by the Emperor, Suleiman the Magnificent, to win Rhodes. Four hundred ships arrived with 100,000 well-trained Muslim soldiers. The OSJ on Rhodes had 600 Knights and 6000 armed local citizens to defend the forts. The siege lasted six months but by then the situation had become hopeless.

The OSJ Grand Master acknowledged defeat but wisely negotiated for the Knights to withdraw peaceably, with all their personal assets and the centuries-old assets of the Order as well. On New Year's Day 1523 they all sailed to Crete on their way to Sicily. It was from Sicily (and later in Nice) that the Grand Master negotiated with the European Emperor, Charles 5th, to be given, from November 1530, the Order's new home in Malta. continues overpage



Continued from pervious page

For these two centuries at Rhodes, the OSJ faithfully kept the Order's objectives and disciplines. Their Hospital was a central activity. Their prayer, their vows, their values and their service to those in need all continued. Their organisation as 'Langues', their Grand 'Bailli', their Knights with various ranks and responsibilities, all continued.

Also, their Rhodes experience added new areas to their governance. The OSJ acquired a new Naval Command and, secondly, acquired the apparatus of a sovereign government, including civilian courts, organised labour, taxation policy and so on, with (of course) appointments of ambassadors to attend the courts of the big powers. As it turned out, from 1530 onwards, all the Rhodes qualities of the OSJ became fully needed for the next two and a half centuries as the sovereign government of Malta.

Footnote: The 44th Grand Master of the OSJ Hospitaller was a great leader, Philippe Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, 1521-34. He led the Order during the siege and the withdrawal from Rhodes and at the arrival in Malta eight years later. Everyone recognised his valour and his wise negotiations with Suleiman and later with Charles 5th. The Pope in 1522 awarded him the title, 'Defender of the Faith' in recognition of how the OSJ in Rhodes had been defending the Christian faith over against the same Muslim aggressor who was then also challenging Austria and Hungary. Just one year earlier in a quite different context, the preceding Pope had awarded this same title, 'Defender of the Faith' in 1521 to King Henry 8th of England for defending the then Roman church from the new and powerful reformation teachings of Luther.

Chevalier Dr Baden Teague KGSJ, OSJ Archivist

INFORMAL PHOTOGRAPHS CAPTURED AT MALTA AND RHODES OCTOBER 2022





*Greetings of Peace and Joy to
Our Members and families
from*

*H.E. Conventual Bailiff David Wilckens OSJ
and
Grand Priory Councillors.*

***MERRY CHRISTMAS
& HAPPY NEW YEAR***



**Order of Saint John of Jerusalem
Knights Hospitaller Australasia
Grand Priory Council 28/11/2022**

Grand Prior:

H.E. Grand Marshal Conventual Bailiff David Wilckens OSJ

**Deputy Grand Prior,
Internal Governance Advisor**
Chevalier Richard Trigg CJSJ

**Chancellor,
Secretary**
Chevalier Graeme Gatley JP KJSJ

Treasurer:
Chevalier John Emerson AM KGSJ

Treasurer: Charitable Foundation
Chevalier Peter Robertson KJSJ

Prior of SA:
Chevalier Anthony Woods CJSJ

Prior of Victoria:
Dame Barbara Abley AM GCSJ

Prior of Tasmania
Chevalier Edward Gauden OAM KJSJ

Hospitaller:
Dame Jan Synot OAM CJSJ

Chamberlain:
Dame Leonie Clyne OAM CGSJ

Minute Secretary: Extension Co-ordinator
Dame Rosemary H S Brooks OAM JP DJSJ

Councillor:
Dame Elida Brereton CGSJ

Councillor
Chevalier Richard Dennis AM, PSM, KGSJ

Prelate (ex officio)
Chevalier the Reverend Canon David O'Neill KJSJ

BY INVITATION OF THE GRAND PRIOR

Archivist:
Chevalier Baden Teague KGSJ

Judge of the Supreme Court of the Order
HE Chevalier Peter Herriman RFD CGSJ

SharePoint Administrator:
Chevalier Peter Summers OAM, KJSJ