

# Provincial Grand Scribe E Report 2018/2019.

The Annual Convocation of Somerset Provincial Grand Chapter held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at the Webbington Hotel was, to all intents and purposes, very much like all recent Annual Convocations. Same venue, similar date, familiar faces, and the usual promotions to deserving Companions.

This year's one was different. Everyone felt it, everyone knew about it. It was the last one at which our Most Excellent Grand Superintendent E.Comp. D. John Bennett would be presiding.

Having announced at the end of 2017 that his tenure of office had expired, and that he would be retiring in October 2018, this Convocation would be his last in charge. I wouldn't go so far as to say it cast a cloud over the proceedings but suffice to say a tinge of nostalgia could be detected, a feeling that all things must come to an end, and nothing, ever, stays the same.

It might have helped had we known at the time who his successor was to be, but Supreme Grand Chapter, in its wisdom, decided not to name said successor for some weeks after.

It was with some sadness that the Companions present bade farewell to E.Comp. John Bennett as Most Excellent Grand Superintendent and thanked him for the last 10 years in which he had led the Province to every success. For my part, I would personally like to thank E.Comp. John for all the help, guidance and leadership he has shown to me, and I'm sure I speak for every Companion in the Province, and indeed our neighbouring Provinces, for all that he has done for the good of Freemasonry in general and the Royal Arch in Somerset in particular.

It was in August 2018 that we heard that E.Comp. Barry Woodside was to be appointed Most Excellent Grand Superintendent in and over the Province of Somerset, the news being well received by all concerned. It was with great regret that we also learned of the resignation of E.Comp. Alan Holton PGSwdB as Deputy Grand Superintendent and E.Comp. Bob Moore PGSwdB as Provincial Webmaster for personal reasons. Both Companions have served Somerset Province with distinction for many years, and both will be sorely missed.

The business of the Province continued, and E.Comp. John Bennett carried out his duties as Most Excellent Grand Superintendent right up to the last, with six visits to differing Chapters in September alone, and three in October.

The Webbington Hotel was the venue again for the Installation of E.Comp. Barry K. Woodside on 18<sup>th</sup> October, and what a success it was. Supreme Grand Chapter carried out the Installation Ceremony with great dignity and aplomb, and all present congratulated the new Most Excellent Grand Superintendent on his preferment and promotion. At the same time, E.Comp. Clive Lambert was installed as Deputy Grand Superintendent, and E.Comp. Ray Beckingham was installed as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Provincial Grand Principal.

A new era was in place, and right away E.Comp. Woodside presided at his first Chapter Installation at King Alfred Chapter No.3169 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Eleven visits to eleven different Chapters in November, and five in December, and that was the end of 2018!

January of the New Year saw five visits to Somerset Chapters, and we were due to visit Devon & Somerset Farmers Chapter No.9250 in Yatton on the 31<sup>st</sup>, but the weather put paid to that! Fortunately the forecast for the evening was spot on, and the Convocation was postponed before anyone found themselves stranded in the snow.

At the beginning of March we heard from Supreme Grand Chapter that three Somerset Companions were to be honoured with Grand Rank at the Supreme Grand Chapter Convocation in April, all first appointments. E.Comp. Clive Lambert Deputy Grand Superintendent will become Past Grand Sword Bearer, E.Comp. Roger Reina Provincial Grand Registrar will become Past Grand Standard Bearer, and E.Comp. Andy Clapp Provincial Charity Steward will become Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies. All three Companions continue to serve the Province in their own way, and all three richly deserve the honour conferred.

The Quadripartite Convocation this year took place in Bournemouth on 27<sup>th</sup> March, with the Grand Superintendents from all four Provinces of Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Dorset, Wiltshire and Somerset present, together with numerous officers and Companions. The candidate who was exalted was overwhelmed by the numbers present, and well over one hundred Companions sat down at the Festive Board!!

As I write this at the beginning of April, the Annual Convocations of our neighbouring Provinces are in full swing, and between now and next November twelve Provinces will receive representation from Somerset, and if past years are anything to go by, we will receive representatives from those twelve at our Convocation in May.

My thanks go to the Scribes E of our twenty eight Somerset Chapters, as without their input and commitment my job would be impossible. Thanks also to everyone who promptly answers my emails, which makes my life so much easier! I would also like to particularly thank the Provincial Grand Registrar E.Comp. Roger Reina who does a great job behind the scenes, and keeps the administrative wheels oiled and running smoothly.

In short, life continues apace at the Province. Many Companions are committed to ensuring that the part they play in the running of the Holy Royal Arch in Somerset, both at Chapter level and Provincial level, is the best that they can achieve, resulting in a happy and successful Province. Long may it continue.

Most Excellent Grand superintendent, I am sure every Companion wishes you every success during your tenure as head of our Province, and that these few short months since your Installation are but a taste of the great times to come.

Most Excellent Grand Superintendent, I submit this my report for your approval.

E.Comp. A. J. Beaumont  
Provincial Grand Scribe Ezra.  
April 2019.

