The Vancouver Commandery
NEWSLETTER
Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller
Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum
For Faith, For Service to Humanity
Summer 2020

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Out of Pandemic Adversity Comes Innovation For The SCM

Recently, Le Petit Conseil (LPC) reviewed the Sovereign Order's options for September's Vancouver 2020 Sovereign Council Meeting, given the challenges caused by the coronavirus. The global gathering of our 2020 Sovereign Council Meeting will now be an electronic meeting using Zoom or a comparable technology.

The meeting dates will be September 17 and 18 with a possibility of extending into Saturday, September 19th. Every effort will be taken to shorten the Agenda within the Rules. Given the various time zones involved, we expect to start the meetings at 8:00 am and end them at 1:00 PM or earlier.

This decision was made as it is very unlikely the two week self quarantine rule will be eliminated in time for people to sensibly plan to travel and the reluctance of many of our members to take unnecessary risks. We rejected the idea of having a physical meeting in 2021 because the government has explicitly said there is not going to be a relaxation of the current maximum 50 people in a gathering rule until there is a vaccine. Although a vaccine is probable, there can be no certainty.

There will be a Special Meeting of the Sovereign Council using Zoom on July 16, 2020. This will be to approve a series of one time changes to the Rules that will allow us to proceed with such a meeting. The formal notices and material will have been distributed. The next physical Sovereign Council Meeting will be in Vancouver, likely in September 2022. Once we have the office administrative capacity, we will offer those who have sent deposits for the 2020 meeting the choice of a refund or having their deposits applied to the 2022 Meeting. This information is being communicated to all Members of the Sovereign Order who were planning to attend.

Yours in St. John,
Conventual Bailiff Grand Commander Ian Reid, GCSJ, MMSJ
and Bar For Le Petit Conseil

A Grant of Arms in Canada

The Grand Priory of Canada has formed a committee to address our visual identity, under the direction of HE Grand Prior Stewart Johnson KJSJ. Visual identity is a system that identifies and standardizes wordmarks, typefaces, colour palettes and all graphic elements for use on web pages, letterheads and stationary, presentation material and all other communication material. This system must include our Arms and other symbols.

As part of this process, we have engaged the services of a noted heraldic artist who works in vector illustration software, Lt. Cdr. (ret) Steve Cowan, CD, EUL, FRSC. Steve's task was to redraw the Arms as depicted in the Canadian Grant of Arms in 1998. While the original grant artistry was hand painted by an artist employed by the Canadian Heraldic Authority, these images do not work well in modern digital reproduction. We needed a digital artist who is also a heraldic artist and we are fortunate to have Steve Cowan available to us for this project. The new artwork Steve has provided is completely faithful to the high standard of heraldic art in the Canadian Grant.

Alongside of Steve's artistic career, Steve he is also the President of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada, BC Yukon Branch. Connections between this Royal Society and the Canadian branch of the Sovereign Order have occurred before.

The Royal Heraldry Society of Canada was founded in 1966 by Lt. Cdr Allan Beddoe, OC, OBE, HFHS, FHSC, with a group of other distinguished Canadians with a passion for heraldry. The mission of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada and its branches is to promote the art and science of heraldry, particularly Canadian Heraldry and to encourage an interest in the subject in Canadians.

During its first twenty five years the Society was also the driving force toward the establishment of Canada's own body for the granting of arms. This objective was obtained on June 4th, 1988 when Prince Edward proclaimed at Rideau Hall Letters Patent from the Queen empowering the Governor General to exercise Her Majesty's powers as Queen of Canada in respect of the granting of armorial bearings in Canada. From this event was born the Canadian Heraldic Authority. The first Chief Herald of Canada was Robert Watt, at that time President of the Society. Canada was the first and is so far the only Commonwealth country outside the UK permitted to grant arms in Her Majesty's name.

In 1989, the Sovereign Order in Canada formed a corporation established as a charitable body. Members of our Order in Canada, including Ray Addington, Robert Brodie, Al Wagner, Sir Robert Cave-Browne-Cave and Roger Lindsay made a petition that the corporation be granted armorial bearings by lawful authority. Robert CBC and Roger Lindsay were also members of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada.

Our members were successful and a Warrant dated the 8th of September 1998 was issued by Lieutenant-General James Gervais, Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Deputy Herald Chancellor of the Canadian Heraldic Authority authorizing the Chief Herald of Canada to grant and assign to the body corporate known as the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller armorial bearings. The Grant included Arms, heraldic badges for members and officers and a Banner of Arms in flag form.

Today, the inaugural and former Chief herald of Canada, Robert D. Watt, LVO, OStJ, AIH, FRSHC, continues his distinguished heraldic accomplishments in the office of Rideau Herald Emeritus. Our former member Roger Lindsay, Baron of Craighall, KStJ, FSA Scot, FRCGS, FRSHC, continues his in the office of Rouge Herald Extraordinary. Both of these gentlemen continue their membership in the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada. It should be noted that Roger Lindsay also provided valuable research for our history "900 Years of Chivalry" and his timeline of all the intertwined Orders of St. John is a valuable reference for us today.

Membership in the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada provides a connection to the Canadian heraldic community, the Vice-Regal patrons of the various branches and the Canadian Heraldic Authority. I maintain membership in several branches and serve as Vice President, Vancouver.

In Canada, our Heraldic Authority is easily accessible and it is inclusive of all the symbolism that represents the rich fabric of our Canadian society, more so than any other national jurisdiction. Our Canadian members are encouraged to consider their own petition for a grant of arms, an honour for them and for all their children in perpetuity.

Yours in St. John,
Chev. Sir John R. C. Cave-Browne-Cave, Bt., KJSJ
Judge of Arms & Master of Regalia

From Our Commander

It has been a busy spring. So here we go!

At the outset, I want to thank all members, but especially our Commandery Council, our Prior Anne Rowland and our Bailiff Grand Marshall Richard Earthy for the very warm and supportive welcome I have received since becoming Commander.

I am truly blessed because I have great people to work with and a great cause to champion…assisting the Lord's sick and poor.

I send best wishes to you all, but especially to members or their families who may be coping with illness or other difficulties. Covid-19 unfortunately has impacted many of us creating complications, financial stress, threatening health and creating great uncertainty.

If this is your situation, I urge you to reach out to me or other members for assistance, counsel companionship or friendship. Remember, in order to help others, we must also strengthen our Commandery by helping our members who may be struggling. Reach out to your Aspirant Class and fellow members to see if anyone needs assistance.

CURRENT EVENTS

Chev Jack McGee was acknowledged for his service as SCM Chair and his position on the CC since the SCM was created. He will remain on the Commandery Council (CC) and be a Director, even after his duties as SCM Chair cease. Owing to his wisdom, knowledge and commitment he will be invited to continue on the CC as a Member at Large.

Congratulations to Dame Tamara Vrooman who has been appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of the Airport Authority (YVR). She is assuming a very challenging job specially with Covid-19 and its huge negative impact on the airline industry. Tamara, we wish you every success.

THE AGM AND CHAPTER GENERAL MEETING

Thanks to Prior Anne Rowland for advice and help. Thanks also to Bailiff Grand Marshal Richard Earthy for a superb job as ZOOM Master. We had excellent attendance upward of 90 attendees counting some screens with two attendees. All the necessary business was conducted.

During the General Chapter Meeting, promoted members were acknowledged. These include Justice George Hungerford, Dame Susan Tufts, Chev John Rogers, Chev George Higgins, Chev Terry Holland and Former Commander Judith Trowbridge

Almoner Co-chairs Dame Susan Scott Gabe and Chev John Jennings presented a very polished visual summary on the many areas where the Vancouver Commandery is contributing and providing leadership to a large number of worthwhile projects.

At the Chapter General Meeting, the New Mission Statement was presented, together with an Executive Summary, by the Almoner's subcommittee. The New Mission Statement was unanimously approved by the Council and circulated to the members prior to the meeting. No members present at the meeting raised concerns with respect to the New Mission Statement.

The Almoner Committee has accomplished a great deal on the past two years. Susan, John and their committee were warmly acknowledged for their hard work by the Council at the May 27 meeting.

VIRTUAL ASPIRANT ORIENTATION-April 21, 2020

This ZOOM meeting chaired by our Marshall Chev Sir John Cave-Brown Cave went very well. We have an outstanding 2020 Class of Aspirants.

A follow up ZOOM meeting with the Aspirants occurred on Sunday, May 31 at 7:00 PM to discuss possible events coming up which directly affect them.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A draft document, based on principles which have been adopted by other organizations, large and small, was presented to the Governance Committee which consists of Dame Anna Nyarady and Chev John Norton, our Solicitor General. With the approval of Prior Anne Rowland, it was presented to and unanimously endorsed by the Commander Council.

The Code of Conduct provisions will be added to the existing Revised Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest document and the new title will be Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest.

The International SOSJ does not have a Code of Conduct per se, as part of its Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest. On the advice of Prior Rowland and Bailiff Grand Marshall Richard Earthy this new portion will be forwarded to Senior SOSJ Officers for consideration of possible inclusion in the International Document.

(Continued on p.4)

From Our Commander (cont.)

A PROPOSAL FOR THE LIAISON GROUP MANDATE

Several conversations have occurred with different Aspirant Classes to help formulate this Mandate. The purpose of the Liaison Group is to enhance communication and engagement in the Vancouver Commandery. The establishment of the Liaison Group has now been approved by the Commandery Council. It was approved unanimously.

As Commander, I plan to connect with all of the past Aspirant Classes via ZOOM meetings to seek their opinions and to encourage them to discuss suggestions and concerns and stay up to date with activities and new developments by engaging regularly with their Class Representative and each other.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VANCOUVER COMMANDERY POSITION PAPER AND STATEMENT WITH RESPECT TO MAiD

As indicated in my Opening Remarks at our AGM, it is essential we begin work on the development of a position paper that reflects our position on Medical Assistance in Dying being performed in the Hospices that we build and support.

To this end, a distinguished panel of expert contributors from relevant disciplines have been approached and have agreed to be contributors to provide in depth objective information to enhance our members' understanding of this complex issue. Members of our Commandery, who have identified they are opposed to MAiD being performed in any of Hospices we have built or support, have also agreed to be contributors. The establishment of this task force has been approved by the Commandery Council.

NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE

We are asking each Committee Chair to select a committee member to provide updates on their committee activities and to report newsworthy content to Steve Simpson shortly after each committee meeting. Additionally, if any members-at-large come across information they would like to share through the newsletter I ask that you contact our Herald, who is always looking for a good story.

The Almoner Content on the Vancouver Commandery Website is being been updated. Current material has been forwarded by Co-chair Susan Scott Gabe to our web technician. Thank you Susan.

FINANCE/FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

Several potential members have been identified for their experience and knowledge in this field. The Fund Raising Committee with a Chair or possibly Co-chairs will hopefully be struck by early July. Various methods for Fund Raising and how these can be implemented through to organizing and monitoring the actual events will be a major responsibility of this committee.

A number of issues will be addressed such as the use of STRIPE, an automatic billing service which safely holds credit card information. This system could be used for automatic payments for annual oblations and annual voluntary donations with the proviso that members are notified well in advance of the funds being billed. Due diligence concerning this program will be the responsibility of this committee. This billing system has not been accepted yet, but if it is found to be safe and secure, it would save a lot of our Administrator's time.

Unfortunately, it has been noted that Donations to the Vancouver Commandery from friends, families or estates on behalf of Hospice Care provided at the St John Hospice have fallen dramatically over the past three years. The reasons for this will be investigated and recommendations will hopefully be forthcoming.

HOSPITALLER

The re-establishment of this position and a functioning committee is a high priority. Three excellent candidates have been sequentially approached. They all felt the position might be too busy for them to do a focused job. Each of them would like to be on the committee. As a consequence, a four-page summary of the job of Hospitaller was researched and created. To my knowledge, no full "job description" existed for the Vancouver Commandery.

(Continued on p.5)

From Our Commander (cont.)

I am having ongoing meetings with a highly qualified and interested candidate for Hospitaller. Hopefully, this candidate will end my search. We will strive to have a new Hospitaller by early July.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

This position remains vacant. I will be discussing this position with the existing members to see if I can recruit from them, otherwise a candidate will be sought from the membership.

Although we need to get this position filled, it is important to have "a good fit".

If any member would like to be considered for the Membership Chair position, would he/she please notify me at their earliest convenience. I can readily provide the committee's "Policy and Procedures" outlining the MC rules governing its composition and conduct.

Fortunately, there are currently nine candidates fully vetted and approved by the Membership Committee and the Council. There is also one 2020 candidate who delayed joining, making ten potential aspirants for 2021.

ADOPTION OF THE NEW MISSION STATEMENT

At a recent Council Meeting, some members of the Council noted that the current language may not be clear enough with respect to support for projects which are not related to Hospice and Palliative Care, but do assist the Lord's sick and poor.

Jack McGee, Susan Scott Gabe, John Jennings and possibly Peter Elliott have been asked to revisit the terminology around the terms "other services".

When the work has been completed, I will circulate the New Mission Statement, with any changes that have been recommended, and request written comments from all members regarding the New Mission Statement.

Warm regards to all. Stay safe, be well, and have an awesome family-centred summer.

Yours in St. John,
Commander David Hunt
KJSJ

Investiture and Gala Cancellation

As per the information letter you will have received from Grand Commander Ian Reid and the reprint of his communiqué on the front of this edition of our newsletter, the Sovereign Council Meeting in September 2020 has been postponed to 2022, with a Special Meeting of the Sovereign Council using Zoom on July 16, 2020.

With this decision the Vancouver Commandery Marshal, Social and Events Chair, and our Commander have decided, on the basis of Covid- 19 and the information from Dr. Bonnie Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix, *(requirements for social distancing, 6 feet separation in all directions, inability to sing, have bagpipes, gathering limited to 50 people, hence no family or friends, and the vulnerability of senior members including some of the 2020 Aspirants eg. hypertension, chronic cardiac and respiratory disease, reconditioning, and some being on immunosuppressive drugs)* that we do not want anyone getting ill, or worse.

Consequently the September 2020 Investiture and Gala will be cancelled for this year and hopefully will take place in 2021. A meeting was recently held with the 2020 aspirant class and they unanimously supported this decision. A small reception, under 50 people, with appropriate social distancing is planned to be held at Dame Heather Hamilton's for the 2020 Aspirants at the end of June.

All registration payments made to date will be refunded by 31 August 2020. Please have patience as there are many facets to the refund process and procedures. Each member will be notified by the Receiver General, via email, with details of their specific refund amount(s) and method of payment.

Some members have expressed an interest in having their payment(s) retained by the International office to be applied toward the 2022 SCM. If you would like to do so as well, please email the Receiver General and copy the International Office at the following two email addresses: Send to: stufts@rolfebenson.com and with a copy sent to registrar@sosjinternational.org.

The Rich Hospitaller History of Our Sovereign Order and Our Role Today

HISTORY

The Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem's tradition as charitable organization began with the Hospitallers. These were monks in the 9th and 10th Century who had been serving the poor and sick. They developed knowledge and experience in medical and nursing skills as well as ministering to the spirit. Their work was all volunteer in nature.

Their work was pivotal in developing hospitals to serve the sick regardless of race, religion, creed or status, responding to the matter of human illness both by caring for and healing the sick and by expressing concern for them. They ministered to both the physically and mentally ill.

The earliest hospital was in Jerusalem founded in the 11th Century by Brother Gerard and funded by the merchants of Amalfi. They initiated advanced medical practices for the day that have persisted to modern times such as good ventilation, separate beds, personal dishes and eating utensils. Infected patients were separated from the rest. All which improved survival rates of the sick.

The Sovereign Order is directly descended from close collaboration of the crusader knights and the Hospitallers. In more modern times, it ceased to be involved in military activities but continues to minister to the physical, psychological and spiritual needs of the "Lord's sick and poor."

The Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller continues its humanitarian tasks in most parts of Europe, North America and Australasia. Other branches of the Original Military Order of the Knights of Malta exist under several slightly different names and jurisdictions. For example St. John Ambulance, or The Knights of Malta, a Catholic Order with its headquarters in Rome.

OUR MODERN HOSPITALLER

Vancouver Commandery's chosen path to helping the sick and poor is by improving Hospice and Palliative Care.

Our recently Revised Mission Statement has broadened our role to also providing services other than just Bricks and Mortar. The new hospice and palliative care model in BC is centred on the belief that care should focus on Quality of Life from diagnosis with a life limiting illness through the course of the illness to the person's death but also extending beyond the death and providing support of grieving and bereaved families including children and loved ones.

This new model is much more community based with the aim of helping patients be supported in their homes not just in hospices and other facilities. Most Canadians wish to die in their homes not in the ER, on a hospital ward, or in long term care. Admission to a hospice is peoples' second choice if pain and other symptoms cannot be managed at home.

How You Can Help

With this expanded role comes much more opportunity for Volunteer Involvement. Hands on assistance, doing errands and small chores, attending to comfort and visitation, and also greeting visitors etc. These services provided by appropriately trained volunteers can greatly assist care not only in the Hospice but also in the Community.

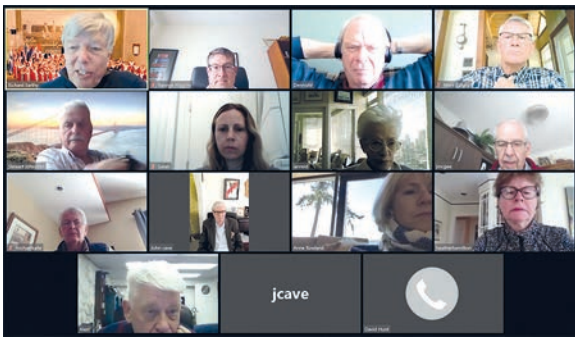
Fundraising activities by volunteers can expand our reach with new programs for helping the sick and the poor. Two shining examples of this exist in BC. At the Victoria Hospice which has a very large volunteer base (300 active members—with paid educator/ trainer coordinators) supports patients throughout Victoria. They work with the Home Palliative Care Program consisting of home care workers, nurse, nurse practitioners and palliative care physicians.

Another example of a very robust Hospital, Hospice and Home support Volunteer program is in the Lower Mainland's North Shore Communities where trained volunteers help in the Lions Gate Hospital Palliative Care Unit, the North Shore Hospice, the Every Day Counts Centre and the North Shore Palliative Community Care Program.

Note: Our Commander Dr. David Hunt had a working relationship in this community based program for five years as a full time Palliative Care Physician and has many good contacts if any of this type of work interests you.

On The Social Scene

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic your Social Committee is trying to be creative in keeping Members of the SOSJ engaged. Although at this time we are unable to gather in person with our usual social events, we can gather virtually via video conference. Here's a screen capture of a recent Commandery Committee meeting that proves that while we may be a nearly 1,000 year old organization, we are up-to-date with the latest technology to get our business done. Stay tuned for more social event announcements!



Past Event

Vancouver Commandery had a Zoom Party!

Members who attended were able to sit back (some with libations in hand) and enjoy Commander David Hunt's presentation entitled "Laughter Is Still The Best Medicine" - a tongue-in-cheek, somewhat factual but honestly researched presentation which tickled everyone's funny bone and provided a good laugh almost every minute.

After 50 years of medical practice as a Specialist in Emergency Medicine and Pain Medicine and a Consultant in Palliative Care over the past 5 years, David has concluded that humour and laughter are powerful adjuncts in healing of body, mind and spirit. David designed his hilarious this presentation to entertain while setting out to proves his theory that laughter is the best medicine.

If you would like him to make his presentation to other groups you may know David will happy to do so. All he asks is for a donation to the SOSJ Vancouver Commandery towards a Hospice in the Down Town East Side. A charitable receipt will be provided.

Upcoming Event

HISTORY OF THE SOVEREIGN ORDER - presented by Dame Dr. Robyn Woodward
Wednesday, July 15th, 4:00 PM PST (on Zoom)

Dame Dr. Robyn Woodward is an amazing, knowledgeable, and entertaining lecturer on "The History of The Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller"

With her vast knowledge of medieval history and archaeology (for which she earned her Doctorate Degree), her wealth of picturesque slides, and her clear and entertaining lecture style, you are bound to be captivated. She has presented in academic venues as well as informally as a lecturer for the Cruise Ship Industry.

While many of the membership are knowledgeable regarding the history of our Order, this presentation will provide you with an opportunity to develop a cohesive, all encompassing view of our rich history. You will also have ample opportunity to ask Dame Woodward questions.

This presentation is scheduled to begin at 4:00 PM Pacific time in order that it can be viewed at a reasonable hour internationally as well as Commanderies across Canada and the United States. We are very pleased to host our fellow International Knights and Dames to the first of such events.

NOTE (To register online for the Zoom presentation please refer to the June 12th email invitation sent out to our membership or email: admin@sosjvancouver and a new link will be sent to you.

Yours in St. John,
Dame Heather Hamilton,
DCSJ

Spotlight on the Okanagan Commandery

Both Okanagan Commander Joy Zsombor and Webmaster Grand Marshal Richard Earthy thought members of the Vancouver Commandery might be interested in having an update on the Okanagan Commandery, that is now posted on the International Website. We do not presently have a Herald, or a Newsletter, but we remain small although active, and you will see we are anxious to grow our membership as well as our activities.

We are just now undertaking a small joint project with the Vancouver Commandery which is certainly achievable for us at our present size. We hope to be even more effective but admittedly we need and want more Aspirants.

I hope all is well with you and the Vancouver Commandery - certainly different times than we thought we would have this year.

Stay happy, stay safe and stay socially distant!

Yours in St. John,
Chevalier Randall Fairey, KSJ
Secretary, Okanagan Commandery

Our Mission

The Okanagan Commandery of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem is committed to serving the Lord's Sick and Poor by supporting local organizations across the Okanagan Valley and Interior of British Columbia. It resides in the Priory of Mainland British Columbia as one of four Commanderies in the Grand Priory of Canada.

History

In 2013, Prior Robert Trowbridge, KCJSJ, Prior of Canada appointed Dame Lynda-May O'Brien (Vexo) as Deputy Prior and given a mandate to found new Commanderies across Canada. Work was begun to establish the Okanagan Commandery as the first new Commandery-in-Formation. Planning for the administrative infrastructure of a Commandery Council and a charitable foundation was begun with researching, profiling, vetting and interviewing a number of individuals. These persons were not only making significant contributions to their communities through their professional and philanthropic activities, but also they were identified as willing to embrace the history, mission, and core values of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller.

In January 2014, three Knights and three Dames transferred their memberships in the Vancouver Commandery to become the first members. These included Dame Lynda-May O'Brien (Vexo), our first Commander, who has now moved to Europe to establish a new Commandery in Copenhagen, and Chevalier, the Rev. Trevor Fisher, KCSJ our longest invested Okanagan Commandery member, and current Prelate of the Commandery. At an Investiture in Vancouver in 2014, four Dames and two Knights were added and the Commandery was fully recognized. In 2016 two Knights and one Dame joined and at the first Investiture held in Kelowna BC in 2017, two Knights and three Dames were invested. Two Dames and one Knight were invested in Vancouver in 2018. Through resignations, and transfers to other Commanderies, our membership in 2020 includes nine (9) Dames and four (4) Knights, five of whom we recognize as Founding Members. Sadly, we lost Chevalier Harry McWatters, KGSJ, one of the legends of the Canadian wine industry, to an untimely death in 2019. Dame Joy Zsombor (2014), DCSJ, was elected Commander in 2017 and was enthusiastically re-elected to a second term in 2019.

Completed Major Projects

Thanks in part to a generous matching grant for raised funds from Dame Lynda-May Vexo, the Commandery has been able to complete two very substantial projects first identified in 2018. This has been all the more remarkable given the small size of the Commandery. Key to our fund raising have been two Wine and Art auctions which reflected the environment of the Okanagan. Significant efforts in these were made by all members, but Dame Lisa Lalonde and her husband Chevalier Harry McWatters, and Dame Debra Martin were especially key to their success.

Joe-Anna's House – Kelowna

Every year families from across the Interior of British Columbia travel to Kelowna General Hospital to receive life-saving specialist care. However, the lack of affordable short-term accommodation, combined with the proven healing value of having loved ones present during serious illness, created the great need in Kelowna for an adjacent support facility. Named for key donors, Joe and Anna Huber, the concept of Joe-Anna's House as a place of warm and reassuring support was born. Partnering with the Kelowna General Hospital Foundation and many generous donors, the Okanagan Commandery pledged and raised over $50,000 to furnish a St. John Family/Consultation Room in this multi-million-dollar facility.

Moog And Friends Hospice House – Penticton

Members of the Okanagan Commandery became aware of the aging kitchen facilities at Moog and Friends Hospice House. The 19-year-old kitchen served in-patients, families, staff, and volunteers but was in serious need of re-design and refurbishment. Additionally, there was a desire for a second kitchen area for families and volunteers wishing a simple snack. Accordingly, the Okanagan Commandery raised $80,000 to permit the Penticton and District Hospice Society to complete work on these badly needed facilities.

Earlier this year the Okanagan Commandery raised $80,000 for the Penticton and Dsitrict Hopsice Society

Future Projects

1. Growing Membership

Notwithstanding the success of past projects, the Okanagan Commandery recognizes the size of the Commandery limits the ability to pursue and complete larger philanthropic activities. Accordingly, the Commandery Council is looking to increase the representation of the Okanagan from Osoyoos in the south to Vernon in the north. We invite fellow Knights and Dames from other Commanderies with acquaintances or family residing in these or nearby areas to forward names of potential Aspirants to our Membership Director, Dame Debra Martin.

2. Kalein Hospice Society – A Nav-Care Site for Nelson B.C.

In 2020, the Commandery is joining with the Vancouver Commandery in a one-third/two thirds shared funding to gift $10,000 to establish a Nav-Care Canada© site in Nelson BC to be managed by the Kalein Hospice Society. There is also an opportunity when the COVID-19 crisis permits of further co-sponsoring a Hospice Conference in the Kootenays.

3. BC Cancer COVID Emergency Relief Fund

Prior to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Patient and Family Counselling Department of the Sindi Ahluwalia Hawkins Cancer Centre in Kelowna frequently needed to access non-budgeted funds from a Patient Emergency Relief Fund. These consisted of grants of up to $2000 to support needy patients and their families required to attend in Kelowna for specialized oncology care and potentially life-saving treatment. The need remains and the Okanagan Commandery is planning to increase the support of this Fund now known as the BC Cancer COVID-19 Relief Fund. A planned Commandery Foundation grant of $11,000 we hope will be matched by government funds thereby leveraging our financial support.

Hospice Care in British Columbia - The Path Forward

An extensive report on Hospice Care has been prepared by a group of health care professionals and industry experts who formed the Provincial Hospice Working Group (PHWG) in the spring of 2019. This group spearheaded a year-long project that included extensive research, input from 71 BC hospice societies, and culminated in a roundtable event attended by 38 key stakeholders.

The Almoner of our Vancouver Commandery has played a lead role in this working group of health care professionals from across British Columbia. Their report entitled Hospice Care in British Columbia: The Path Forward, is scheduled for release in this July. The recommendations in the report were developed in consultation with stakeholders and hospice care experts. The purpose of the Report is to identify opportunities to improve, leverage, and sustain hospice care in BC.

The founding members of the PHWG are representatives of the British Columbia Centre for Palliative Care (BCCPC), British Columbia Hospice Palliative Care Association (BCHCPA), Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller (SOSJ), Victoria Hospice, and Vancouver Island Federation of Hospices (VIFoH).

What Are The 10-Steps of the Path Forward?

1. Design a strong, integrated, governance structure for the Alliance.
2. Secure reliable funding for hospice organizations.
3. Advocate for a provincial policy and strategy for hospice care in BC.
4. Establish a common definition for hospice care in BC.
5. Establish provincial standards and an accreditation program for hospice care.
6. Raise public awareness of the importance of person-centered care and advance care planning education provided by hospice organizations in BC.
7. Establish core competencies and a provincial training program for hospice staff and volunteers.
8. Ensure an effective volunteer engagement strategy.
9. Leverage technology to facilitate networking, training, and knowledge exchange among the Alliance and its members.
10. Explore and facilitate opportunities for meaningful partnerships between hospice organizations with underserved communities in the province.

What is the vision for hospice care in BC?

A future where hospice organizations are meaningful and recognized partners in the provision of accessible, adaptable, accountable, and sustainable hospice care that improves the quality of living and dying for individuals with serious illnesses across British Columbia.

What are the proposed guiding principles for hospice care in BC?

- Hospice care services must be accessible to all British Columbians impacted by a serious or life-limiting illness
- Hospice care services must adopt upstream or preventative interventions that enable person- centered care and improve quality of life
- Hospice care services must be culturally competent and culturally safe
- Hospice organizations must demonstrate accountability for the quality of their hospice care services
- Hospice care services must be sustainable
- Hospice care services must be fully integrated into the health care system

More information on the Project and a full copy of the Report will be posted on the Vancouver Commandery website in the weeks to come.

Yours in St. John,
Dame Susan Scott Gabe
DCSJ

Yours in St. John,
Chevalier John Jennings
KCSJ

Getting To Know Our New Commander

In April of this year, we came under the new leadership of David Hunt; and what a treasure of talents he brings to our Vancouver Commandery. We thank former Commander Judith Trowbridge for her leadership and tireless work and inspiration in being our Commander these past few years. It is a role that requires a great deal of time and attention to detail.

For starters, Dr. David Hunt, is a consultant in pain medicine and palliative care. He is also a great communicator with a wicked sense of humour. Although it's not part of standard medical procedure, David knows that sometimes a prescription of laughter can be the best medicine.

"Humour is important to all of us. The average four-year-old laughs 400 times a day. The average adult laughs 15 times a day. For good health, you need to laugh at least 50 times a day."

He is also a go-getter. Since being invested in 2009, David has been constantly supporting the work of his commandery. From the outset, he was an active member of the Orientation of aspirants and new members. He organized a series of monthly informal dinners with different Committee Chairs as invited guests to describe their committee's activities.

He rose to Vice Marshall assisting the Marshall on Investiture activities. He sat on the Almoner Committee for 7 years and rose to Almoner in 2016. He worked closely with Prior Anne Rowland and other senior members on several worthwhile projects. As Almoner he gave major presentations at Town Hall Meetings for the membership.

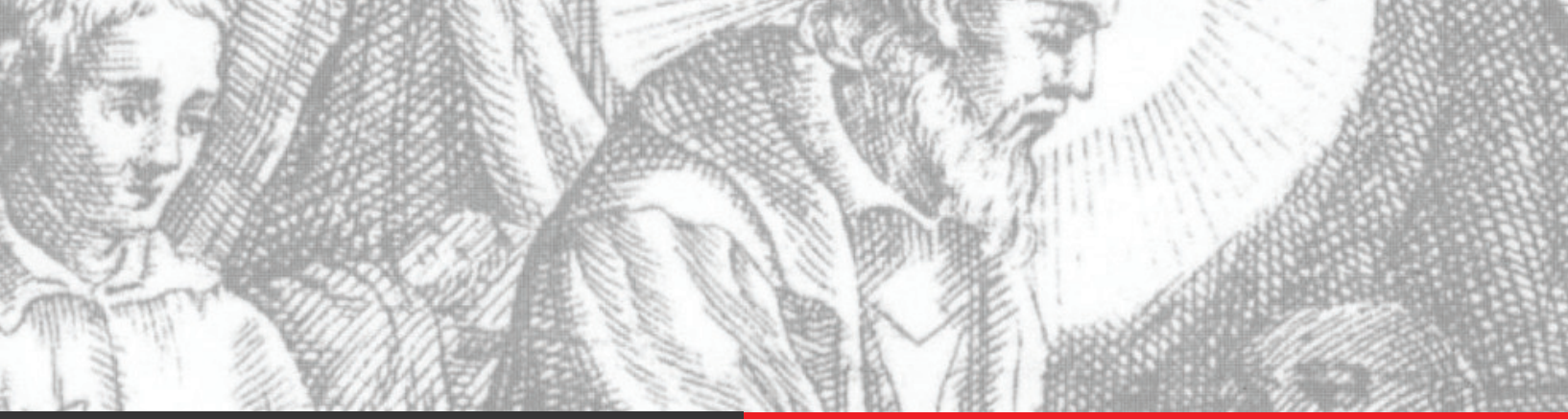
He also sat on the Hospitaller Committee while Almoner to ensure good cross communication between the two committees. He assisted Chair Anna Nyarady in producing two day long "Bucket List Festivals" in subsequent years. Topics were presented to assist people with life threatening illnesses and their families.

David was the SOSJ "ambassador" to the BC Hospice and Palliative Care Association - an umbrella organization representing most of the Hospices and Palliative Care programs in BC. He presented on several occasions at their annual general meetings. He worked closely with their Executive Director in streamlining a process for evaluating and providing "seed money" grants for the BCHPCA member organizations.

He has worked diligently to attract excellent aspirants to our commandery. He has presented several evening lectures to the membership on Palliative Care at a layman's level of understanding to help promote and gain support for the work of the Commandery in helping the Lord's Sick and Poor.

He has championed the development and hopefully the building of a Hospice in Vancouver's Downtown East Side- the poorest postal code in Canada. He and his wife Carol Kerfoot made a significant donation to the building of the St. John Hospice at UBC. He attends most Commandery functions. And ever the great communicator David has been tasked with Master of Ceremonies duties for our annual Investiture Galas.

Please join your Vancouver Commandery Council in welcoming David into this leading role in our organization.



Upcoming Events, Vancouver, Victoria & Okanagan

July 15,2020
Vancouver Commandery 'History of the Sovereign Order' - Virtual Presentation

September 19,2020
Vancouver Commandery Investiture - CANCELLED

October 16,2020 - October 17,2020
Victoria Commandery Investiture

November 5,2020
Victoria Commandery Town Hall Meeting

December 2, 2020
Vancouver Commandery Christmas Lunch at RVYC

December 4,2020
Victoria Commandery Christmas Lunch and General Meeting

June 25,2021 - June 26,2021
Vancouver Commandery Investiture

Upcoming Events, Worldwide

June 26,2020 - June 27,2020
Commandery of the Sierras Investiture - POSTPONED

July 9,2020
St, Joseph Commandery Virtual (Zoom) Bingo Night

July 16,2020
Special Meeting of Sovereign Council - VIRTUAL

September 17,2020 - September 19,2020
Sovereign Council Meeting - Vancouver 2020 - VIRTUAL

September 26,2020
St. Joseph Commandery Summer Garden Party

October 3,2020
Ontario Commandery Fun Run

October 9,2020 - October 11,2020
Priory of Brittany Investiture - (Subject to LPC Approval)

October 16,2020
Grand Priory of Canada Council Meeting

October 30,2020 - October 31,2020
Dagmar Commandery of Denmark Inaugural Investiture - (Subject to LPC Approval)

November 20,2020 - November 21,2020
Commandery of Central Finland Investiture

November 28,2020
London Commandery Investiture

Vancouver Commandery Council

Commander
Commander David Hunt, KJSJ
Almoner
Chevalier John Jennings, KCSJ
Dame Susan Scott Gabe, DCSJ
Events & Social
Dame Heather Hamilton, DCSJ
Foundation
Chevalier Howard Charters, KCJSJ, MMSJ
Herald
Chevalier Steve Simpson, KGSJ
Hospitaller
Vacant
Marshal
Chevalier John Cave-Browne-Cave, Bt., KJSJ
Membership
Vacant
Receiver General
Chevalier Terry Holland, KGSJ
Solicitor General/ Governance
Chevalier John Norton, KCJSJ, MMSJ
Secretary
Chevalier Glen Mitchell, KSJ

The Vancouver Commandery
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Knights Hospitaller
Vancouver Commandery
6389 Stadium Road, Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada, V6T 1Z4
sosjvancouver.org 604-682-2938

Herald - Chevalier Stephen Simpson KGSJ
(Please send contributions, articles of interest and story ideas to steve@beachgrove.ca)