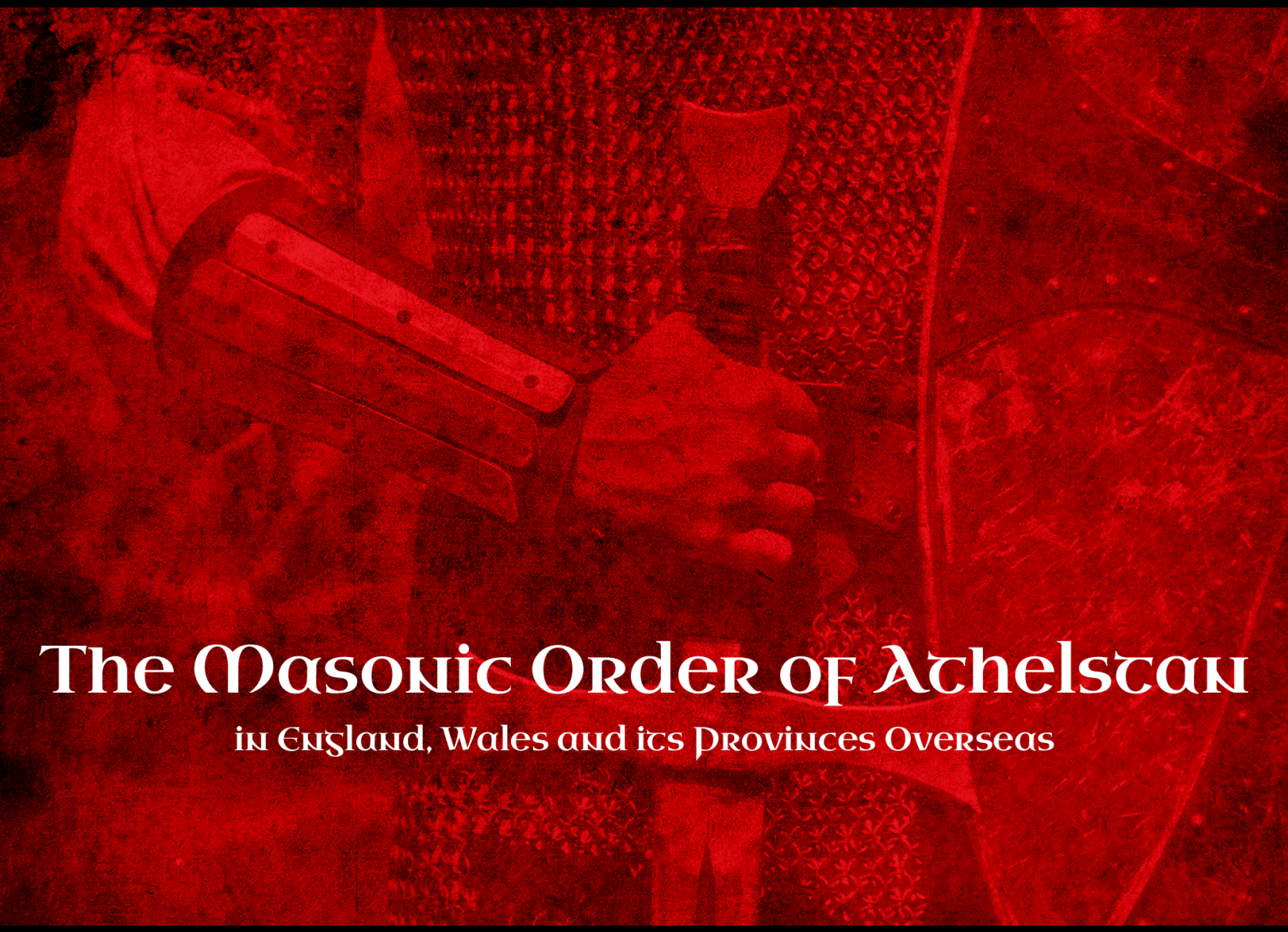
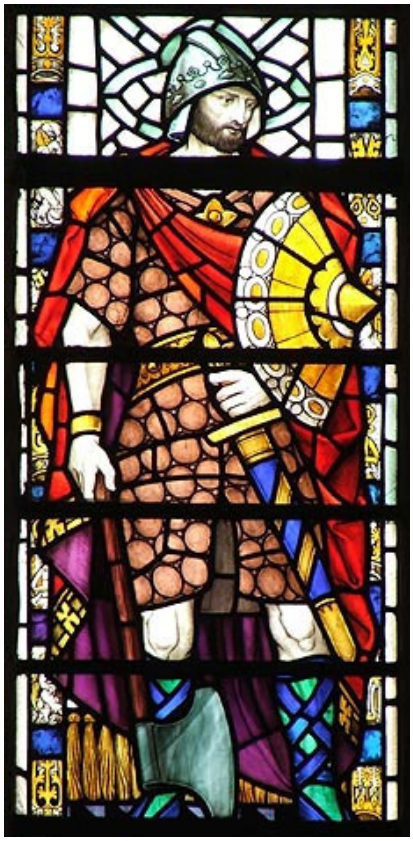


The Masonic Order of Athelstan

in England, Wales and its Provinces Overseas

A History of the Order within Sussex

In July 2006 the Primus Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro Brian J Prevett - who retired on 31st December 2015 after 9 years in Office - was contacted by the founding Sovereign Grand Master of the Masonic Order of Athelstan inviting him to become the first Provincial Grand Master for the Athelstan Province of Sussex. Brian, whilst knowing of the Order, also knew that at that time the Province of Sussex did not yet exist, nor were there any Brethren who were members of the Order within the geographical boundaries that would form the Province! Brian was however, delighted to accept the invitation and after receiving a formal Letter of Appointment the following week, enlisted the support of Bros Glyn Goddard, Alan Trotter, John Hickman and Jack Handford and the challenge to establish the Province began!



On 20th September 2006, Brian, together with these four brethren travelled to Wolverton (in the Province of Hwicce) where they were all 'Instructed' into the Order in The Court of Ætheling, No 10. As Provincial Grand Master, Brian was now a 'Right Worshipful Brother' but he did not as yet have any Courts in his Province. He also realised that the boundaries of his designated Province of Sussex would geographically be one of the largest Provinces of any current Masonic Order in the South of England. It comprised South Middlesex (South of the M4), Hampshire and Isle of Wight, the Channel Islands, Surrey and Sussex. The first Court of his fledgling Province was to be consecrated at Chichester in Sussex and would be called 'The Court of Prince Edmund'.

On 26th May 2007, R W Bro Leo Crossfield, Deputy Grand Master, assisted by Officers of Grand Court, Consecrated the Court of Prince Edmund No 24 with R W Bro Brian Prevett as Primus Master. W Bros Glyn Goddard, Alan Trotter, John Hickman and Jack Handford were all Founders. At the completion of the Consecration proceedings, RW Bro Brian Prevett was Installed as Provincial Grand Master for Sussex. His first Provincial Officers were W Bro John Hickman, Provincial Treasurer; W Bro John (Jack) Handford, Provincial Grand Secretary and W Bro Glyn Goddard Provincial Grand Marshal.

In the months leading up to the Consecration of the Court of Prince Edmund and the Constitution of the Province, R W Bro Brian and his Provincial Officers had been working diligently with a view to expanding the Order. They recruited many duly qualified Brethren who were subscribing members of the Craft and the Royal Arch which resulted in the founding and Consecration of two more Courts later in that same year - The Court of Ælle No 25 and Archbishop Æthelhelm Court No 34.

On 9th June 2007 at Herstmonceux, in the County of Sussex, RW Bro Brian assisted by his Provincial Grand Officers, members of the Court of Prince Edmund and V W Bro David Buxton, Grand Secretary, consecrated The Court of Ælle No 25. The Primus Master was to be Peter Fynmore, but unfortunately Peter suffered a broken leg the day before the consecration and the Founding Immediate Past Master Bill Leach undertook the role and was Installed as Primus Master. The Founding Secretary was W Bro Terry Brown.

A few months later, on 20th December 2007 at Nutfield Masonic Centre in Redhill in the County of Surrey, R W Bro Brian Prevett, assisted by his Provincial Grand Officers, and other members of the Province, Consecrated Archbishop Æthelhelm Court No 34. The Primus Master was W Bro Roy Leavers and the Founding Secretary was W Bro Peter McCarthy.

With the Consecration of Archbishop Æthelhelm Court the Province of Sussex was now established in the Craft Provinces of both Sussex and Surrey.

On 30th November 2009 at Littlehampton, M W Bro Michael Rolfe, Grand Master, assisted by R W Bro Brian Prevett and members of the Province consecrated the Court of South Saxons No 60. The Primus Master was W Bro Ross Everett and the Founding Secretary W Bro Gene Earland.

On 27th April 2012 The Court of King Alfred the Great No 79 was consecrated at Winchester in Hampshire by R W Bro Brian Prevett and his Provincial Team. The Primus Master was W Bro

Alan Paxton and the Founding Secretary W Bro Ron Bentley. The Consecration meant that the Province of Sussex now consisted of 4 Courts and had been established in the 3 Craft Provinces of Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire & Isle of Wight.

On 28th November 2012 at Guildford in Surrey, M W Bro Michael Rolfe, Grand Master, assisted by R W Bro Brian Prevett and members of the Province consecrated The Court of Harrow Way No 88. The Primus Master was W Bro Louis Keats and the Founding Secretary W Bro Roy Leavers.

It was the wish of those involved in the Inauguration of the Masonic Order of Athelstan to have three 'Flagship Courts' that were to represent:

- The Ancient Charges which were delivered at York in AD926
- The Coronation of Athelstan in 925 AD at the site of All Saints Church, Kingston upon Thames
- The burial of King Athelstan at Malmesbury Abbey in AD939

Grand Court determined that these Flagship Courts were to bear the Numbers 1, 50 and 100 respectively.

On 4th August 2007 at York, in the Province of Lindsey, The Court of Eorforwic No 1, was consecrated. This was followed on 31st May 2008 at Malmesbury in the Province of Wessex, when Malmesbury Court No 100 was consecrated. The last of the three Flagships Courts, The Coronation Stone Court No 50, was consecrated on 27th January 2014 at Surbiton in the Province of Sussex by M W Bro Paul Johnson, Grand Master, assisted by R W Bro Brian Prevett Provincial Grand Master for Sussex and members of Grand and Provincial Grand Court - thereby completing the establishment of the three Flagship Courts.

On 11th March 2015 at Sutton in Surrey, The Rood at Sudtone Sari Court No 106 was consecrated by R W Bro John Benjamin Lloyd, Deputy Grand Master, assisted by R W Bro Brian Prevett, Provincial Grand Master, and Officers of Grand and Provincial Grand Court. The Primus Master was W Bro Brian Wareham and the Founding Secretary W Bro Leonard Hayward, thus bringing the number of Courts in the Province to 8.

RW Bro Roy William Leavers who had been appointed Deputy Provincial Grand Master in early 2014, stepped down in May 2015 and W Bro Lionel Broadbent Mee was appointed Deputy by R W Bro Brian Prevett in July 2015.

At the 2016 Annual Assembly of Provincial Grand Court at Chichester Masonic Hall on Saturday, 2nd April 2016, W Bro Lionel Broadbent Mee was Installed as Provincial Grand Master for Sussex by the Most Worshipful Grand Master, M W Bro Paul Weldon Johnston PGHCh, GCSM; he succeeded R W Bro Brian Prevett who had retired as Provincial Grand Master on 31st December 2015 after more than nine years dedicated service. On the same day, R W Bro Lionel appointed W Bro Michael Daniel Ellis as Deputy Provincial Grand Master.

With effect from June 2016, The Ridgeway Court No 7 - which had been Consecrated at Thame in Oxfordshire on 19th May 2006 - was assigned to the Province of Sussex bringing to 9 the number of Courts in the Province.

On Tuesday, 11th October 2016 at the Croydon Masonic Centre, the Sword of Constantine Court No 120 was consecrated by the Most Worshipful Grand Master MW Bro Paul Weldon Johnston PGHCh, GCSM assisted by R W Bro Lionel Mee Provincial Grand Master, and Officers of Grand and Provincial Grand Court. W Bro Ian Clark was Installed Primus Master and W Bro Justin Hollingsworth as Founding Secretary.

With the addition of these two Courts, the number had grown to 10 Courts in the Province by the close of 2016.

However, on 20 January 2017 The Ridgeway Court No 7 which had been assigned to the Province of Sussex in June 2016, was removed from the Roll of Courts on the Register of The Masonic Order of Athelstan as it has not held a regular meeting since May 2013.

The Coronation Stone Court No 50 had been consecrated by the M W Grand Master on 27th January 2014 with 24 Founders and of which Court the Grand Master later became a Joining Member. This Court continued to grow and counted amongst its members, Rulers of Orders Past and Present, Heads of Orders, Deputies, Assistants and Provincial Grand Secretaries. On 1st June 2015 the Brethren of the Court voted unanimously for changes which resulted in: -

- The Grand Master for the time being becoming the permanent Master of the Court
- The Court becoming the Grand Master's private Court within the Order

The membership of the Court continued to expand and at the beginning of January 2017 had grown to almost 50 Brethren which now also included the Deputy Grand Master, the Assistant GrandMaster for the Americas, the Grand High Chancellor of the Scarlet Mantle, 5 Current & Past Rulers in Freemasonry, numerous present and Past Provincial Grand Masters and many other Brethren of distinction.

On 23rd January 2017 after due consideration, the Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Paul W Johnston, PGHCh, GCSM removed the Court from the Province of Sussex and it is now an Unattached Court within the Masonic Order of Athelstan and will be administered directly byGrand Court.

Ten Years of the Order in Sussex

To commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the Order in Sussex in May 2007, a Celebration Dinner & Dance organised by W Bro Ross Everett and his son W Bro Lee Everett - both of Court of the South Saxons No 60 which meets in Worthing - was held at the Chichester Park Hotel on Saturday, 10th June 2017 attended by over 70 Members of the Order their partners and Guests. It was an excellent evening and everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed the occasion.

The Immediate Future

At the end of January 2017 a Founders Meeting was held on the Isle of Wight leading to the submission of a Petition to Grand Court in early June 2017 for a new Court to be named "The Court of Wiht-land" – the Anglos Saxon name for the Isle of Wight - to meet at the Ryde Masonic Hall on the Island. This Petition has been approved by the Grand Master and the number allocated to the new Court is No 123. This new Court will be consecrated later this year and the Primus Master will be Bro Colin Wilson – a resident on the Island and the principal organiser of the Court who is also a member of The Court of King Alfred the Great meeting at Winchester and the Founding Secretary will be Bro Colin Maddison – a new member to the Order.

Later in the same month, on 29th June, a Founders Meeting was held in Twickenham for a further Court to meet at the Cole Court Masonic Centre in Twickenham. This new Court is being organised by Bro Martin Smith who was a Founder and current member of The Rood At Sudtone Sari Court No 106 which meets at Sutton in Surrey. Bro Martin will be the Primus Master, and W Bro David Morgan the Founding Secretary. It is anticipated that the Petition for this new court will be submitted to the Grand Master within the next few months.

Upon consecration of these TWO courts the Province will again have 10 Courts.

There is also the possibility of a further court in Sussex and several Brethren are currently looking at organising another Court and they are currently seeking support for this additional venture.

The future of the Masonic Order of Athelstan in the Province of Sussex looks very positive.

July 2017