

Minutes of the Convocation of the Provincial Grand Conclave of Cheshire and North Wales of the Order of the Secret Monitor held at Freemasons' Hall, Cheshire View, Plough Lane, Christleton, Chester, on Wednesday 21st June 2023

Distinguished guests and Right Worthy Brethren entered in procession under the direction of the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies.

The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, R.Wy.Bro. William Anthony Stringer, accompanied by Wy.Bro. Paul Morrison Burton, P.D.G.D.C. Deputy Grand Supreme Ruler, and Provincial Officers entered in procession, to the acclaim of the brethren.

Before proceeding, R.Wy.Bro. William Anthony Stringer welcomed all brethren present.

1. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler opened Provincial Grand Conclave in due form at 11.00 a.m. There were 89 Brethren present whose names are recorded in the register attached to these minutes.
2. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler stated that the minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday the 15th June 2022 had been distributed to members by email, published on the website & had been available for members to read outside the Lodge Room since 09.00 hrs. and on proposition of Wy.Bro. Derek Gaskell Prov.G.Coun. and seconded by Wy.Bro. John Owens Prov.G.G. the minutes were approved by the brethren.
3. The Provincial Grand Recorder called the muster roll of Conclaves all of whom were well represented by a good attendance of their members.
4. The Provincial Grand Recorder reported that he had received two apologies from outgoing Provincial Grand Officers who had previously arranged family commitments, other than those all Provincial Grand Officers were present.
5. The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies called the brethren to order and R.Wy.Bro. William Anthony Stringer, Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler was saluted with 7 PDP, for which he thanked those present.
6. The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies called the brethren to order and Wy.Bro. Paul Morrison Burton P.A.G.D.C. Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler was saluted with 5 PDP, for which he thanked those present.
7. The Deputy Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies called the Brethren to order and R.Wy.Bro's Samuel Keery and David Littlewood Past Provincial Grand Supreme Rulers were saluted with 7 PDP, for which R.Wy.Bro. Sam thanked those present.
8. The Provincial Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies called the brethren to order and R.Wy.Bro. John Stafford Stevens, Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler for the Province of Staffordshire & Shropshire, and other R.Wy. Brethren were saluted with 7 PDP, for which he thanked those present on their behalf.
9. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler delivered a eulogy in respect of R.Wy.Bro. James McKeeman who was a close friend and who had proposed him into the Order of the Secret Monitor before handing over to the Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler who completed the eulogy for the following Brethren who had passed to the Grand Conclave above since our last meeting:-

R.Wy.Bro. John Brian Haslam. PGG. Passed away 8th August 2022 aged 91. An Honorary member of Semper Fidelis No. 261.

Wy.Bro. Arthur Graham Parry. PPGV. Passed away 21st November 2022 aged 95. Member of Chester Conclave No. 155.

R.Wy.Bro. James McKeeman. PPGSR. Passed away 30th November 2022 aged 84. A member of Norton Priory Conclave No. 226 & Vale of Weaver Conclave No.278.

Heartfelt condolences were, and had been, offered to the bereaved. At the request of the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, the Provincial Grand Chaplain, Wy.Bro. Malcolm Orr P.A.G.D.C. offered a prayer for these worthy brothers and called the brethren to stand in silence in respect of departed merit.

The Provincial Grand Organist then lead the brethren in the Hymn "The day thou gave them".

10. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler then introduced R.Wy. Provincial Grand Supreme Rulers and Brethren from other Provinces and also Brethren of other Orders within the Province. He thanked them for their attendance and their support at this meeting. The Brethren were acclaimed with enthusiasm by the members present.
11. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler announced that the Annual Statement of Accounts had been distributed to members by email, published on the website & had been available for members to read outside the Lodge Room since 09.00 hrs. and on proposition of Wy.Bro. Derek Gaskell Prov.G.Counc. and seconded by Wy.Bro. John Owens Prov.G.G. the accounts were approved by the brethren.
12. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler reported that the only nomination for Treasurer was for Wy.Bro. Ronald Glyn Hewitt and in the absence of any other nomination or any brother requiring a ballot he declared Wy.Bro. Hewitt duly elected.
13. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler also reported that the only nominations for Account Examiners was for Wy.Bro.'s Keith Butterworth & David Meacher Jones and in the absence of any other nominations or any brother requiring a ballot he declared them both duly elected.
14. The Provincial Grand Guide, Wy.Bro. John Owens, addressed the meeting and presented his annual report, a copy of which is attached to and forms part of these minutes. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler thanked the Provincial Grand Guide for his comprehensive report and for his work throughout the year.
15. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler then rose and stated he had the greatest pleasure in re-appointing his Deputy, Wy.Bro. Paul Morrison Burton P.A.G.D.C., and thanked him for his support throughout the year.
16. The Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler then appointed/re-appointed and invested Provincial Officers for the ensuing year, including two promotions to Past Provincial Grand Rank, as per the attached List of appointments which forms part of these minutes.
17. The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies called the Provincial Grand Supreme Rulers' Arch of Steel to order and presented the Commander of the Arch of Steel, Bro. Philip Rose to the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, Bro. Rose then individually presented each member of the Arch of Steel to the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler and his Deputy. New members were invested, and current members were thanked for their continued support of the Arch of Steel by the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler.
18. Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, R.Wy.Bro. William Anthony Stringer then addressed Provincial Grand Conclave. He said how delighted and honoured he was to welcome so many Distinguished Guests to the meeting, especially the long distances some of the visitors had travelled.

A full copy of his address is attached to these minutes.

19. Alms were collected in the sum of £325.86.
20. The Provincial Grand Recorder reported he had no other business to be transacted.
21. Provincial Grand Conclave was closed by the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler at 12.20 p.m. after which the Welsh National Anthem and first verse of the National Anthem were sung.

The recession of the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, accompanied by the Deputy Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, Provincial Officers, Provincial Grand Supreme Rulers from other Provinces, R.Wy. Brethren and Distinguished Guests, was acclaimed by the Brethren.