

THE DISTRICT OF WEST KENT

WKRC

WEST KENT ROSE CROIX NEWSLETTER

Issue 1 – Winter/Spring Edition 2025

THE INTERVIEW

The new Inspector General

A profile on V.: Ill.: Bro.: Mark Eyles-Thomas

CONGRATULATIONS

Archbishop Courtenay Chapter
celebrate 100 Years

Honorary member of Kent Chapter
Call to Arms
Inspector General's Achievement Award
Promotions & New MWS's

WKRC

The official newsletter of
the District of West Kent

Issue 1 Winter/Spring Edition

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Council 33° or those of the
District of West Kent Rose Croix.

CONTACT US

Inspector General for West Kent
Mark Eyes-Thomas
ig@met310.com

District Recorder:
Adrian Wagstaff
adrian.wagstaff@sky.com

Website Editor:
Paul Abbott
pa34@jpabbott.uk



WKRC Web Site:
www.rosecroix-westkent.org.uk



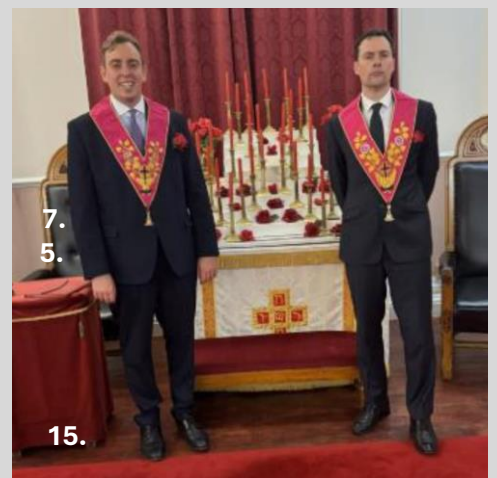
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FROM THE INSPECTOR GENERAL



I am absolutely delighted to welcome you to our inaugural edition of our WKRC Newsletter; the purpose of this newsletter is to provide accurate information that is relative to our Order and to the District of West Kent and in time build an interactive platform for your news and input.

Importantly I wanted a newsletter that you would enjoy reading and be proud to show your family and friends something that showcases our District and the wonderful diversity of our order, I hope you will like what you see.

We are currently working on providing you with an on-line District shop where you can all easily purchase items such as Ritual Books, Intermediate Degree Booklets, Year Books, Supreme Council Rule Books as well as District Lapel Pins. In time we hope to add regalia and other items to our shop.

Also, I wish to hear from you if you are having any issues in visiting your Chapter, for whatever the reason, please let me know via email (in the strictest of confidence at ig@met310.com). I promise to reply and see what we can do to assist you with your enjoyment of our Order.

Finally, I would like to thank Paul Abbott, our website and West Kent Rose Croix Newsletter Editor, for his endeavours in producing not only an outstanding website but also this wonderful and colourful newsletter. I do hope you will enjoy reading it and that some of you will contribute articles in the future.

Please feel free to visit our web site on www.rosecroix-westkent.org.uk for news and events.

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR DISTRICT RECORDER

Since my appointment in September 2022 as District Recorder, I have enjoyed the opportunity to attend almost every meeting of the Chapters in the District of West Kent. I graciously thank V Ill Bro Graham Higgs 33° for identifying me as a possible candidate to take the office and I also readily acknowledge the friendship and professionalism demonstrated by my predecessor in office, Ill Bro Bob Jones 32°.

I was Perfected in to my 'Mother' Chapter, Fidelis ad Finem No. 263 in London on 7th March 2002 and after a somewhat unorthodox progression to the Office of MWS I then served 10 years as the Recorder.

I joined Kent Chapter No. 1071 where I served as Assistant Recorder for 5 years and then Recorder for 5 years. I am currently the Recorder for Weald Chapter No. 842 (in the District of East Kent) and Money Chapter No. 76. I believe that the Recorder is the 'heartbeat' of a Chapter, a role that I relish.

Of course, much has happened since my appointment as DR, the most significant event being the Investiture of V Ill Bro Mark Eyles-Thomas 33° as our new IG and I much enjoyed working collaboratively with Officers of Westwood Chapter to ensure that the meeting was a success and enjoyed by our new Inspector General. I fully support his desire to allow all the brethren the opportunity to learn the various changes now introduced into the 2024 edition of the Rose Croix ritual and so to be confident when participating in ceremonies of Perfection or Enthronement. I currently host the fortnightly Chapter of Improvement evenings held at Oakley House and have been greatly impressed by the commitment of the brethren who attend and have noticed a significant increase in the self-confidence they demonstrate when conducting various sections of the ceremony. Everyone takes part and I am sure there is a 'private challenge' to catch the DR out with some challenging questions or observations!!, I welcome these which demonstrate that the brothers are engaging with all aspects of the ritual - well done. So, as I work with all the Chapter Recorders and their members, I thank you for your support and look forward to working with you and supporting you in the years ahead.



A PROFILE OF V.: III.: BRO MARK ROBERT JASON EYLES-THOMAS 33° INSPECTOR GENERAL - DISTRICT OF WEST KENT

V.: III.: Bro Mark Eyles-Thomas 33° was born in Rochford in 1964 to parents who were both teachers, he attended Leigh Academy, Dartford.



A talented youth athlete, Mark played cricket for Kent, playing two years above his own age group; from U15s he captained the side. Mark was elected a playing member of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) and has represented the MCC in European matches, as well as Kent County



Cricket Club Veterans, touring South Africa, and Barbados.

After O-levels, he joined the Parachute Regiment, aged 16, but soon transferred to the adult Recruit Company to undertake the infamous Pre-Parachute Selection course (P Company).



His platoon passed out in January 1982, and he joined the 3rd Battalion the Parachute Regiment in Tidworth, Wiltshire.

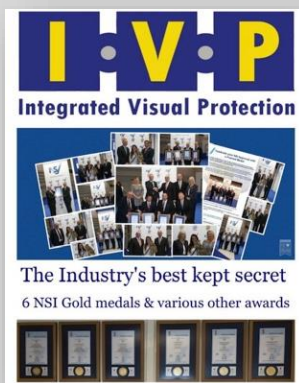
Only two months later, Mark embarked on SS Canberra and was on his way to the Falkland Islands along with four comrades from the same intake.

Three of them fell in battle, and Mark's platoon Sergeant received a posthumous Victoria Cross (VC).

Mark celebrated his 18th birthday on MV Norland on the return voyage.

He was awarded the South Atlantic Medal with Rosette and has received five Freedoms of the City (Gosport, London, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and the Falkland Islands).

After serving a further three years, he left the Army to start a security company which specialises in electronic fire and security systems and holds 6 NSI Gold Medal Awards (the only UK Company to do so).



He remains its Managing Director and is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Security Professionals (WCoSP), he is also a member of the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC).



Mark married Patricia in 1990, and his son and daughter have followed somewhat in his footsteps. Dominic is serving, and Cher-Leigh joined the family firm after a period working at the Imperial War Museum.



Mark was Initiated in Universal Lodge No. 8219 (West Kent) in 1989 (Master in 2000) and is a subscribing member of eight Craft Lodges (six in West Kent and two in London, Regularity No. 91 and Fitzroy No. 569). In 2012, he was appointed Provincial Grand Mentor, was promoted Assistant Provincial Grand Master in 2016 and served as Deputy Provincial Grand Master from 2018-22. VW Bro Mark holds the rank of Past Grand Sword Bearer in UGLE. He is also an honorary member of twenty other craft Lodges.



Mark was Exalted in Universal Chapter in 1997 (Z in 2012, 19, 20 & 23), he is a subscribing member of four Royal Arch Chapters in West Kent and was invested as Past Grand Standard Bearer in Supreme Grand Chapter in 2020. Mark is also currently Z in 2 other Chapters (at the time of writing the profile - Ravensbrook &

Regents Park Meridian). He is also a member of Greenwich Lodge of MMM No, 332 and its associated RAM Lodge.



In the Ancient and Accepted Rite, Mark was Perfected in Westwood Chapter No. 764, West Kent, in 1998 (Most Wise Sovereign in 2015, 18, 19 & 20) he was their Recorder from 2022-2024. Mark is also a member of Kent Chapter No. 1071, Money Chapter No. 76, Sitis Pro Scientia Chapter No.1213 (East Kent) & Suprema Lex Chapter No. 1000 (London).

He was the representative candidate for his 30° ceremony and was promoted to the 31°, 32° and 33° in 2024.

Mark was appointed Inspector General Designate in Charge for West Kent as of the 1st June 2024 and was installed as Inspector General on the 8th July 2024.



Article taken from a presentation by M.: III.: Bro The Revd Dr Simon Thorn 33° Grand Prior

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY CHAPTER No. 246

Congratulations to Archibishop Courtenay Chapter, 100 years ago, on the 14th November 1924 marked the consecration of Archibishop Courtenay Chapter No. 246. The District of West Kent sends many congratulations to all members of the Chapter as it celebrates this tremendous milestone.

Archbishop Courtenay Chapter will be celebrating their centenary in a special chapter meeting to be held on the 13th June 2025. For full details please contact the Chapter Recorder, Ill Bro Peter Chapman (email: pkchapman52@hotmail.com). Please feel free to invite members of the Order to come and join them to celebrate this momentous occasion.

Below are a few photographs of the Chapters precious possessions.



HONORARY MEMBER OF KENT CHAPTER No. 1071

Congratulations to Illustrious Brother Eric Head 31° - At the meeting of Kent Chapter No. 1071 held on the 15th October 2024 at Whitstable Masonic Hall, Illustrious Brother Eric, the only surviving founder member of the Chapter, was made an honorary member in recognition of his services to the Chapter.

Most Wise Sovereign Very Illustrious Brother Roger Waltham 33°, Inspector General for East Kent is seen congratulating him on his election.



THE FIRST RECEIPT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2024



V Ill Bro. Graham Higgs 33° (right) being presented with the very first Inspector General's Award for Achievement Above & Beyond for outstanding service to the District of West Kent by V Ill Bro. Mark Eyes-Thomas 33°, Inspector General for the District of West Kent.

WKRC SUPPORT TEAM – A NOTE FROM OUR INSPECTOR GENERAL

As we all strive to improve in life, so it is in masonry. Hopefully you will have received information regarding not only the KEVII Rose Croix Chapter of Improvement, but also our own Districts' Chapters of Improvement hosted at Oakley House, Bromley on Thursday evenings between 7.30pm and 9.30pm. Details of these can be also found below on this Notice Board.

To support this, we wish to form a WK Rose Croix Support Team. The aim will be to support the West Kent Chapters with primarily their Perfection ceremonies, but which can be expanded to include enthronement meetings and filling Chapter Offices on required/special occasions.

The support team will work in a variety of ways but in the main team members identify certain parts of the ritual that they are proficient with (and/or happy to deliver with notice) and that is recorded against their name. As and when the occasions arise the members of the Support Team will be notified and those available fulfil the requirements in accordance with their listed ritual preferences.

If you are happy to be added to the support team, please click the link below, complete the form and return to contact the [District Recorder, Ill. Bro. Adrian Wagstaff 32°](#). There are presently no scheduled requirements/meetings for the Support Team and should a situation arise in the future members will be given as much notice as possible. Also, if you would like to recommend someone to Adrian for inclusion in the Support Team please do so and he will contact them.

WEST KENT CHAPTER OF IMPROVEMENT OAKLEY HOUSE, BROMLEY



All members of every Chapter in the District now can attend and practice the Perfection and Enthronement ritual of the Rose Croix, especially now as we have new ritual books. The District Recorder has confirmed that an initial series of dates have been booked with the management of Oakley House Bromley to hire a temple on Thursday evenings between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.

The 2025 dates booked so far are: -

- ❖ 6th February
- ❖ 20th February
- ❖ 6th March
- ❖ 20th March

We are pleased to announce that the District of West Kent is financing this initiative, and it is open to any member of the Order to attend and participate, these are practice sessions after all.

We very much look forward to welcoming as many of them who wish to practice and strengthen their ritual.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS ON THEIR PROMOTIONS

On the 21st October 2024 members of the District were honoured by The Supreme Council in receiving the following promotions: -

- Ill Bro Mark Douglas Estaugh 31°
- Ill Bro Christopher John Parker 30°
- Ill Bro Scott James Dunn 30°

On the 18th March 2025 the following members of the District will be honoured by The Supreme Council to promotion to the 30°

- Graham Raven (Sacred Fire Chapter No. 977)
- John D Snowden (John the Baptist Chapter No.1040)
- Michael W Stillwell (John the Baptist Chapter No.1040)
- Robert K Armitage-Walker (Westwood Chapter No. 764)

RECENTLY INSTALLED MOST WISE SOVEREIGNS IN THE DISTRICT

Many congratulations to the following new Sovereigns within the District of West Kent.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ■ 4 th September 2024 | E & P Bro. Keith Widden | Biggin Hill Chapter 936 |
| ■ 13 th September 2024 | E & P Bro. Neville Morris 18° | Archbishop Courtenay Chapter 246 |
| ■ 21 st September 2024 | Ill Bro. Daniel Harvey 30° | Raphael Chapter 555 |
| ■ 5 th October 2024 | E & P Bro. Mark Taylor 18° | Sacred Fire Chapter 977 |
| ■ 10 th October 2024 | E & P Bro. Nicholas Tonge 18° | John the Baptist Chapter 1040 |
| ■ 5 th November 2024 | E & P Bro. Peter Ozua 18° | Oakley Chapter 890 |
| ■ 15 th November 2024 | E & P Bro. Stuart Darby 18° | Westwood Chapter 764 |



THE WAY FORWARD – NEXT STEPS

Princes, as we all know the recent changes introduced by Supreme Council last year has resulted in tremendous changes to our membership profile now that we are able to welcome new members from all religious backgrounds. We all remember the day when we were invited to join this wonderful Order. The pride we felt when our sponsors thought we had the right moral credentials to become members, it was and still is a privilege to call ourselves Princes. Then like now the baton has been passed to us to seek out new members from within our ranks and of the wider community, at the same time reinforcing that our Mantra is and always will be 'High Standards', in everything we do.

Membership is key to our Districts stability and success. In the past, approximately 10% of our Orders membership has flowed from the Provincial Craft and I would initially like to see our numbers return to this level. We currently obtain around 8%, to this end I would like you to consider inviting suitable members from you Craft Lodges to join us here in the District of West Kent.

ACCEPTED AT LAST: MY JOURNEY INTO THE ROSE CROIX

It's official! I'm now a member of the Ancient and Accepted right here in London. This is a moment I've been anticipating for years, and it's even more significant than I could have imagined.

You see, my interest in the A&AR, or Rose Croix as it's often called in England, was sparked long ago by a visit to the House of the Temple in Washington DC (the headquarters of the Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction in America).



I was captivated by their philosophy and commitment to philosophical Masonic exploration and to Freemasonry as a path of truth and virtue. Most of all, I was impressed by the members themselves. In fact, two of my Masonic heroes, Ill Bro. Brent Morris and Ill Bro. Art DeHoyos, are prominent members of the Southern Jurisdiction, and their work has been a source of great inspiration for me. But there was a hurdle. The rules for joining the Rose Croix in England, which traditionally required a specifically worded Trinitarian Christian obligation, prevented me from feeling genuinely comfortable

taking that step. However, exciting changes have recently swept through the Supreme Council 33° for England and Wales. As of March 1st, 2024, the order opened its doors to Master Masons of all faiths, bringing it in line with the global practises of the Ancient and Accepted Rite. This was the catalyst I needed.

A Shared Moment of Joy:

Not only did this change inspire me to finally join, but it also opens the door for my new friend and Brother, Sami Steinbock, who is Jewish. Side-by-side in the Chapter, witnessing him take his obligation on the Torah, was a powerful and

moving experience. It felt like a true testament to the universality of Freemasonry and the inclusive spirit of the reformed Ancient and Accepted Rite.

Why This Matters:

This shift in the Rose Croix is momentous. Flex our broader recognition within freemasonry of the importance of inclusivity and respect for all faiths. It allows brothers from diverse backgrounds to come together, united by their shared love of the Craft and their desire to explore its deeper meanings. While I know not everybody agrees with the new rules for membership, I believe it's

a profoundly positive step forward. It strengthens our fraternity and reflects the true spirit of brotherhood and reflects the rules for this degree in most other countries.

Our Journey Begins:

Sami and I are still in the early stages of our journey through the degrees, but we're already deeply impressed by the richness of the ritual and the depth of the symbolism. The Rose Croix offers a unique perspective on Masonic teachings, delving into philosophical and mystical concepts that expand upon the foundation laid in the Craft degrees. And I have to say I was both completely thrown by but also loved the ritual! It's dramatic and flamboyant, and with its French origins, it has a certain *je ne sais quoi* that sets it apart. The combination of history, symbolism, and theatrical flair creates a truly captivating experience.

What makes the Rose Croix ritual particularly unique is the way it unfolds. With its many changes of scenery, it's quite unlike anything else in freemasonry it's a true spectacle that engages the senses and draws you deeper

into the narrative. I found myself completely immersed in the drama, and I believe that the more contemplated and reverent the approach, the more you will get out of this incredible ritual. In fact, having witnessed the Rose Croix degrees I can't help but wonder if elements of this captivating ritual might have found their way into the SRIA. The similarities are a few props, and routine seems to be more than a coincidence.

More than just a ceremony, joining the Rose Croix has felt like a real adventure that Sami and I have embarked on together. Sharing this experience, witnessing the degrees unfold side-by-side, and discussing our interpretations afterwards have created a bond between us that I truly cherish. It's been an incredible

opportunity to not only learn more about Freemasonry but also to meet others. Sami is a joyous individual, and his response to things complements my deeply meditative one well. I wonder what the next ritual we will witness together at this degree will be?

An Unexpected Inspiration:

Beyond the Masonic lessons, the Rose Croix ritual has made me look at a few things in a different way. It has rekindled my interest in some sections in the New Testament and filled me with a renewed appreciation for the teachings of Jesus. The degree explores themes of Faith, Hope and Charity, and it has inspired me to reflect more deeply on these virtues and how I can better embody them in my own life.



Blog posted by Martin Faulks

King Edward VII

Rose Croix Chapter of Improvement

Under the Authority of the Supreme Council 33° for England and Wales and its Districts & Chapters Overseas

DEMONSTRATION of
4th Degree – SECRET MASTER
and
5th Degree PERFECT MASTER

in

The Grand Temple

Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street,
London. WC2B 5AZ

on

MONDAY, 28th APRIL 2025

1.30pm PREVIEW ONLY @ £20.00

5.00pm DEMONSTRATION ONLY @ £25.00

5.00pm DEMONSTRATION & DINNER @ £74.00

Dining in

The Grand Connaught Rooms

DINNER MENU

“A”

Starter - Hot smoked salmon with apple and pear salad citrus dressing:
Main – Chicken grand mere with sauteed mushrooms and baby vegetables:
Dessert – Blueberry and crème de cassis summer trifle.

OR VEGETARIAN

“B”

Starter – Tricolour salad with sherry vinegar and herb dressing:
Main – Watercress, spinach, nutmeg and chickpea cannelloni with a roasted tomato sauce:
Dessert - Fresh Fruit Salad.

Coffee or Tea & Half a bottle of House Wine (White or Red) per person

DRESS – DARK LOUNGE SUIT AND COLLAR OF THE 18° OR INSIGNIA OF HIGHER DEGREE

Book on-line through our website at www.kevii.org.uk

or

Application forms are available from:

Reception desk at The Supreme Council, 10 Duke Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6BS.

or

Ken Old Esq., 16 Jefferson Close, Ealing, London, W13 9XJ

Tel: Mobile 07912 124048 or e-mail: kevii@ken-old.co.uk

Closing Date for receipt of application – Monday 14th April 2024

CONTACT DETAILS OF CHAPTERS WITHIN THE DISTRICT

Name	Venue	Dates
<u>Money Chapter No. 76</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham TN15 7AN	3rd Thu Sep & Mar, 1st Thu Jun (E)
<u>Archbishop Courtenay Chapter No. 246</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham TN15 7AN	2nd Fri Apr, Jun & Sept (E)
<u>West Kent Chapter No. 512</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common BR2 8HA	1st Fri Feb, Apr (E) & Oct
<u>Raphael Chapter No. 555</u>	Wilmington Masonic Hall, Hawley Road, Wilmington, Dartford DA1 1PA	3rd Sat Jan, Apr & Sept (E)
<u>Blazing Star Chapter No. 759</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham TN15 7AN	4th Sat Jan & 1st Sat Jun (E)
<u>Westwood Chapter No. 764</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common BR2 8HA	2nd Fri Mar, 3rd Fri Jun & Nov (E)
<u>Oakley Chapter No. 890</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common BR2 8HA	1st Tue Apr, Sept & Nov (E)
<u>Biggin Hill Chapter No. 936</u>	Shirley Woolmer Masonic Hall, Church Road, Sidcup DA14 6BX	4th Fri Jan, 3rd Wed Jun & 1st Wed Sept (E)
<u>Shirley Woolmer Chapter No. 948</u>	Shirley Woolmer Masonic Hall, Church Road, Sidcup DA14 6BX	4th Fri Mar, May (E) & Nov
<u>Sacred Fire Chapter No. 977</u>	Welling Masonic Hall Bellegrove Road, Welling DA1 1PA	1st Sat Jan, Apr & Oct (E)

Name	Venue	Dates
<u>Eos Chapter No. 1005</u>	Oakley House Masonic Centre, Oakley House, Bromley Common BR2 8HA	4th Thurs Mar, 1st Thurs May (E) & 4th Thurs Oct
<u>Acorn Chapter No. 1020</u>	Shirley Woolmer Masonic Hall, Church Road, Sidcup DA14 6BX	3rd Wed Jan, 1st Wed May (E) & Nov
<u>John the Baptist Chapter No. 1040</u>	Sevenoaks Masonic Hall, 119a St. John's Hill, Sevenoaks TN13 3PE	2nd Thurs Mar, 4th Thurs May & 2nd Thurs Oct (E)
<u>Kent Chapter No. 1071</u>	Wrotham Masonic Hall, St Mary's Road, Wrotham TN15 7AN	3rd Tue Apr (E) & Oct