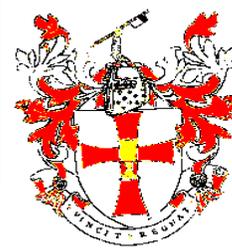


# THE SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM



## *The Priory of St. Vincent*

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Winter 2008/2009 in the Year of Our Order 891

## Region III Joint Convent - A Brilliant Success!

GREENVILLE, S.C. --- In what **Region III Deputy Grand Prior BG Chev. Bill Dreger GTCJ, DG**, called a "great success," the first ever regional convent in the history of American Templars was hosted by the Priory of St. Vincent in Greenville, S.C., on Sept. 6, in conjunction with the priories of St. Andrew, The Holy Rood and St. Thomas a Becket.

"It was a great success," said DGP Bill Dreger. "Many people from all four priories worked seamlessly together and I think it bodes well for future joint convents."

DGP Dreger said the Region III joint convent attracted approximately 180 Templars and an estimated 400 people to Greenville and that, outside of national convents, it was the largest gathering of knights and dames on American soil.

**Grand Prior COL Chev. Wayne McGrath GCTJ, GMTJ**, presided over the ceremony with the help of **Deputy Grand Prior BG Chev. Bill Dreger**.

Both he and DGP Dreger said it went so well that they hope to see more combined convents in the region and around the country.

"The Grand Prior and Grand Chancellor were very complimentary," said DGP Dreger. "They thought it was a marvelous idea and thought they might suggest that other regions do the same thing."

He said he is already thinking about an encore, perhaps in Atlanta or eastern Tennessee because they are centrally located, or even Florida because he hopes to see the Region grow there.

DGP Dreger said the idea for the joint

convent came to him while attending an officers meeting the morning of a St. Vincent convent. "The thought crossed my mind, wouldn't it be great to get together with the other three priories in a joint convent?"

"I asked the people of St. Vincent if they



would sponsor it," DGP Dreger explained. St. Vincent **Prior DR. Chev. Bob Alexander** agreed. "I suggested Greenville because of its location and they appointed **Chev. Mel Sinclair** of Greenville to head it up. Mel just did a super good job; you couldn't have asked anybody to do a better job."

He also commended St. Vincent's **Prior Bob Alexander** and previous St. Vincent **Prior CAPT Chev. George Custodi**. "With Mel they did a lot of leg work, getting the church, getting the hotel and taking care of so many details. Everyone was so cooperative. DGP Dreger presided over two preliminary meetings in Greenville leading up to the joint convent, So everybody had an op-

portunity to put things together. It wasn't something St. Vincent was charged to do on their own. Many people in the other three priories helped with the planning and execution and it turned out great. All four priors were actively involved and each had a principal speaking part. The four priors filled the roles of Prior, Chancellor, Chief of Protocol and Inspector at the joint convent. "Along with Prior Alexander were: **Prior Chev. Bruce Shine, GCTJ**, of St. Andrew, **Prior Chev. Bill Lattimore, GCTJ**, of the Holy Rood and **Prior Chev. Skeets Cahoon, GOTJ**, of St. Thomas a Becket.

DGP Dreger explained that the four priories have more in common than simply being bunched together in the Southeastern region. "The other three of them were all spun off from the Priory of St. Andrew in Nashville; St. Thomas a Becket, The Holy Rood and St. Vincent, as well as the Priory of St. Bernard de Clairvaux in New Orleans, which is not a member of Region III, were all formed that way. Each began as a commanderie and grew into priories of their own."

He said that St. Andrew, the Holy Rood and St. Thomas a Becket are three of the ten largest priories in the United States and that Region III is probably the largest region.

"It was very successful" DGP Dreger said. "Many people renewed old friendships. It made for a much stronger Region III. There were few problems and none that weren't resolved. It just went over great."

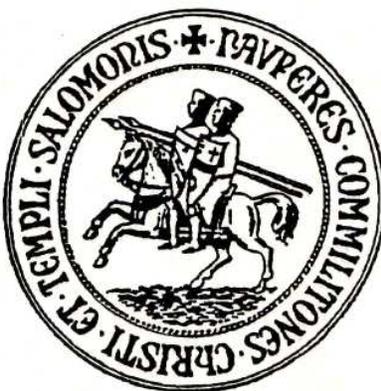
## Prior's Message

At this time of the year when we are still celebrating the birth of the Christ Child and the beginning of another new year I begin to think of the meaning these events have for our own lives. Combine these events with the birth of our good friend and Associate Deputy Grand Prior George Custodi's first grandchild, and we are really challenged to consider the new possibilities that life offers all of us. A new life in our midst underscores how the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ changed the world and the lives of all Believers once and forever. It brought us hope then, now and for the future! The world that was closed and fatalistic was blown wide open and infused with all kinds of opportunity for those who chose to believe. The legalism of the time before Christ was transformed into a world defined by love. This new world affords for all a life filled with infinite possibilities.

As members of the SMOTJ, it is a natural step for us to seek new ways to broaden our base among the community of Believers and invite more of them to become a part of the Order that has as its central purpose to defend the Faith and reach out to our Christen brothers and sisters. Christians daily find themselves in a perilous situation, especially those in the mid-east who are constantly being attacked because of their faith. While increasing the numbers of our Priory is not our ultimate goal, the expansion of our fellowship certainly allows us to come to the aid of more of our fellow Christians who desperately need our assistance.

Just recently through the leadership of our brother Mel Sinclair, a luncheon was held in Greenville to introduce Believers from that area of our Priory to the Templar mission and history. The invitees were friends that Mel knew through other organizations and activities and whom he believed would resonate with our cause. The result was a meeting of more than twenty people who came together to share a meal, fellowship and key elements of our history, both ancient and contemporary. A number of our Templar brothers and sisters who believe in the importance of expanding the reach of the Priory of St. Vincent were present. The outcome was phenomenal. There are already two people who have declared themselves as Postulants with intentions of being dubbed in Columbia on April 25, 2009. At least four

and possibly five members of SMOTJ, who are currently members of other Priors but live in the boundaries of St. Vincent have expressed interest in making it their home Priory. Several more will be coming to the Interim Meeting in Columbia on February 8 at the Fort Jackson Officers' Club as well as the April Convent in order to qualify for membership. This effort in Greenville, organized and implemented by Mel Sinclair, has confirmed for me the possibilities that exist to expand our Order if we will accept the challenge in other geographic areas of our Priory.



There are four more areas in our Priory that have the same possibilities to expand our reach and increase our ability to serve. These are Aiken, Columbia, North Myrtle Beach and Savannah. In each instance there is already a strong base of membership and probably others who are currently members of SMOTJ who have not connected with St. Vincent, as was the case in Greenville. I am challenging all members in each area to follow the example of Greenville. To that end I will be calling individuals in each community and asking them to assume leadership for this effort. You are requested to coordinate the dates and times with me, as I will want to attend each event along with other officers of the Priory.

If we think of this outreach effort in the context of this time of the year, we are offering fellow Christians new possibilities for expressing their faith by moving into a partnership with our Order to help defend the Faith and do good works in the lives of those who are less fortunate than we are. If we do accept the challenge, we will be blessed by our Lord and Savior.

## In Honor of Dame Chevse. Jean McCaleb, DGOTJ

Dames, Knights, Friends and Associates of St. Vincent Priory:

After discussions with several of our Knights and Dames, I would like to propose that we honor our dear friend Chevse. Jean McCaleb, DGOTJ by making memorial gifts in her name and precious memory to the Jerusalem Mite.

The suggestion is that we make our check out to the Jerusalem Mite and put on the lower memo space of the check – In Memory Of Jean McCaleb – Priory of St Vincent.

This seems like a most appropriate memorial in view of her long and faithful service to the Priory of St. Vincent as our Treasurer over so many years and to the importance she held for the Jerusalem Mite.

And, as many of you know, Jean recently made a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land just before she was diagnosed with cancer. She shared with me by phone on more than one occasion how important that Pilgrimage was to her. Our hope is that we can honor her and at the same time help the Christians who are in distress in the Holy Land. This is suggested as an additional option for consideration along with a memorial to her church.

If you choose to honor Jean in this manner, please send your check made out as suggested above to:

Lisa Johnson

12516 King Palm Drive

Savannah, GA 31419-2642.

Lisa will send all of the checks in bulk to the Grand Priory and she will notify the family of your donation. This method will allow you to receive credit at the GPUSA level for your individual donation.

Thank all of you in advance for honoring our dear Sister Jean.

Bob Alexander, Prior V

Priory of St. Vincent

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## Region III Joint Convent- Greenville - September 2008

**Report from Chev. Mel Sinclair, Jr.,  
KCTJ**

### Chair—Planning Committee

Greetings from the Upstate, Sir Knights and Dames:

We had a great time at the recent Joint Convent held in Greenville, SC. Feedback from those attending the first Joint Convent - St. Andrew, St. Thomas a' Becket, The Holy Rood, and St. Vincent – points to a rousing success.

With leadership from our Region III Deputy Grand Prior, Bill Dreger, and the Priors of the four mentioned Priors, how could it have been otherwise? Except for national meetings, I understand that this was the largest gathering of Knights and Dames in the USA.

As the chair of the local planning committee, it was good to have wise counsel and a couple of folks who went beyond the call of duty to assure that things large and small were taken care of. A special thanks to Debra Morse for all of her efforts and for Lisa Johnson's work with the registrations and more.

It was good to meet so many Knights, Dames, Grand Officers, and more especially, our guests. We need to continue our efforts to increase the number of guests at our convents and interims. They are our future.

The recipients of the charitable contributions from the convent were well pleased. As we are all aware, the slow economic conditions have hit these organizations very hard. But Chivalry among our knights and dames is alive and well.

The National/International update given by our Grand Prior, COL Chev. Wayne J. McGrath was very interesting and heart-warming. Making a difference in our local areas, region, nation and internationally helps us all to keep a focus on our mission. Although much remains to be done, progress is certainly being made.

Last but certainly not least, thanks to our Prior, Bob Alexander, for giving us the opportunity to host this event. Bob was always available for assistance and guidance. I may have had an adverse impact on his cell phone bill!

## Officers' Meeting - September 6, 2008

The Meeting Minutes have been passed to members—the following is a brief resume of the more important items covered at the meeting in Greenville.

The meeting was called to order by Prior Bob Alexander at 9.10am.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved, followed by the Treasurer's Report in which it was confirmed that \$2,500 was available for charity contributions.

Chancellor Al Sadowski reported that the Priory had 57 Active Members.

Deputy Grand Prior Bill Dreger praised St. Vincent Priory for the work done in putting together the Joint Convent.

Chev. Mel Sinclair gave a brief report of the preparations for the Joint Convent and thanked his team for their support.

Prior Bob Alexander gave details of the changes proposed by the Grand Priory with regard to future ceremonies.

The Master of Postulants -Chev. Duncan Ely provided an overview of new procedures for future vigils.

New appointments were announced and donor medals were presented to Tom and Nancy Price.

Prior William Sellen of a UN priory made a short presentation on the links between the UN and SMOTJ

The Prior stressed the need to recruit in the area covered by the priory.

Next Convent was confirmed for April 25, 2009, in Columbia. The Fall Convent 2009 to be held in Aiken.

Concern was expressed for Chevse. Jean McCaleb and her fight against cancer. Members were requested to remember Jean in their prayers.

Prior Bob Alexander provided details of correspondence with Grand Priory and the role played by priories

The meeting was adjourned at 10.55 am with the closing prayer by Chaplain Duncan Ely.

**Chev. Bob McClure—Secretary/  
Registrar**

## Chaplain's Challenge

*Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you.*

— St Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

If we agree with St. Augustine, we have our work cut out for us. At the end of our last business meeting, we prayed:

*God of us all,*

*We have gathered here to serve you and our fellow human beings.*

*Give us the strength and perseverance to do your will.*

*Help us accept our responsibilities and act with courage.*

*Instill in us a sense of justice and stewardship.*

*Give us grace to create an atmosphere of loving kindness wherever we are.*

*We especially ask your favor on Jean McCaleb, her family and her friends, that you might make your healing presence known to them.*

*Keep us mindful of our oaths as Knights Templar, and*

*Bless us with charity, enthusiasm, determination, goodwill, love and loyalty as we go forth*

*In the name of Jesus Christ.*

AMEN.

St. Paul's repeatedly uses the term "body of Christ" (Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 3:6, and Colossians 5:23, 1:18 and 1:24). The implication is that the body has many parts such as the head, hands, and feet. As believers and therefore as different parts of the body of Christ we all have different gifts (Ephesians 4) and minister in different ways. What is important is to use those gifts to make the world a better place. What better time of year to think about gifts and how we can give them just as God gave us the gift of a son? And as in the wider body of Christ, working together as Knights and Dames Templar we can leverage our God-given resources and have an even greater impact.

St. Theresa of Avila's summarizes it this way:

*Christ has no body now, but yours.*

*No hands, but yours.*

*No feet, but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion must look out on the world.*

*Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good.*

*Yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.*

During this Christmas season, let's look and see what gifts we have and how we can give them as we begin to think about the New Year.

**Duncan C. Ely, KCTJ**

Chaplain and Master of Postulants

## Christians in Peril:

From **COL Chev. Wayne J. McGrath, GCTJ, GMTJ, Grand Prior XVI**

Brothers and Sisters of the Grand Priory of the United States of America: Times have never been worse for Christians in Iraq and Afghanistan. A few months ago the Archbishop of Mosul was kidnapped and murdered. More recently 10,000 Christians had to leave Iraq due to frequent killings and threats to family members.

Recently a Christian Aid worker was killed because there were rumors that she and other Christians were setting up meetings to preach Christianity. In addition, members of other minorities are also being targeted.

Your Excom has supported our Chev. Robert Marcarelli, who is producing a documentary on this topic. The film is in its final stages. Unfortunately, we must act now.

I urge all members to contact their Congress member and Senators to intervene and compel the government of Iraq and Afghanistan to protect our Brethren. We should also ask that these persecuted people be granted political/religious asylum. We will be contacting the President and the President-elect to speak out on this issue.

I will urge OSMTH to employ our international status in the YN and other appropriate bodies. This is a Holocaust and we can not be silent.

As soon as Robert's work is complete we will share it with all Priors.

## York Place

On December 15th, **Cheves Herb Akroyd and John Graham** presented a check to **John C. Shiflet, Jr.**, president of York Place Episcopal Church Home for Children, York SC. The donation was voted at the Autumnal Convent in Greenville SC by our priory at the suggestion of Chev, Akroyd, whom with his wife Carolyn head the York Place commission at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at North Myrtle Beach SC.

"God, through Christ, calls York Place a ministry of the Episcopal Church to guide children (ages 6-16) and families toward spiritual and emotional wholeness." There are presently 44 children in residence on this campus-like facility with professional staff, and, since 1850, the support of the two Episcopal Dioceses of South Carolina.

**Then, putting on their Santa Claus hats, Herb and John delivered a full van-load of gifts.**



**Chev. Mel Sinclair Presenting a check to the Taylors Free Medical Clinic on behalf of the Priory of St. Vincent.**

## Priory Project Redefines Postulancy

Postulants, according to *Merriam-Webster*, are people admitted to religious orders as probationary candidates for membership. The probationary period was to give the order an opportunity to see whether the postulant would make a good member of the community and to give the postulant a chance to see whether that community was right for him or her. Thus the period of postulancy was full of activities for two-way communication and education. The Priory of St. Vincent has been redesigning its postulancy to be a more effective communicative and educational tool by encouraging education, interaction, introspection and prayer not only for the postulants but also for ourselves as members.

The first group of changes affected the vigil which concludes a postulancy. We instituted the first of these several years ago when we replaced a half-hour period of silent meditation in a hotel meeting room with an interactive meditation on the *Regula Moderna*. That evolved into a longer interactive meditation on the *Regula Moderna* and a silent personal meditation in a church. At the 2008 Autumnal Joint Convent and Investiture in Greenville we separated the vigil from the postulants reception and inaugurated our first three-hour multi-faceted, structured vigil in a church setting with components modeled on medieval vigils but adapted to modern usage:

**5:30 PM** Arrival, Welcome, and Introductions in Parish hall

*Regular Moderna* interactive reading and personal responses in Parish Hall

Knight/Dame in prayer in back of room throughout

All leave Parish Hall in silence and proceed to Church

**7:00 PM** Church Service (Mass/Holy Communion)

All leave Church in silence and return to Parish Hall

**7:45 PM** Silent Monastic Meal (soup, bread and water)

Knight/Dame in prayer in back of room throughout

All leave Parish Hall and return to Church

**8:15 PM** Charge and Silent Meditation

Knight/Dame in prayer in back of Church throughout

**8:45 PM** Prayer, Dismissal and Return to Hotel

The second group of changes will affect the period of postulancy leading up to the vigil. At present, this period consists of the Master of Postulants sending two letters to the postulants. The first suggests reading and websites pertaining to the Knights/Dames Templar historically and today. The second provides information about the impending Convent and Investiture. Some of the changes will make this period more interactive, helpful and informative, such as proving the postulant with a Knight or Dame mentor, a postulant handbook or manual, and perhaps time together.

Our postulancy's evolution is possible because it is a priory project and we have so many of our members involved. Some, such as **Bob Alexander, George Custodi, Jim Jordan and Mike Morse**, have provided brainstorming, ideas and planning. Others, such as **Father Trey Garland**, rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Greenville hosted the vigil. Still others, such as **Debra Morse**, prepared the monastic meal. Postulants themselves gave feedback. It is this input and support that makes these change successful and on-going. All of this is a project of the entire priory and is work-in-progress.

Idea for future vigils include inviting the entire priory to the church service and monastic meal; scheduling the vigil late in the afternoon rather than early in the evening to allow time for a postulants reception afterwards; and involving more priory members.

Since we want the period of postulancy to include activities for two-way communication and education, we need to hear from you! What do you think? Do you have any ideas? How can you help? Let us know (duncanely@hotmail.com or 1-864-415-6338) so we can continue to make this a priory project. After all, it is the entire priory that lifts up postulants as new members and it needs to be input from priory members that provides the basis for the postulancy itself.

**Duncan Ely, KCTJ, Chaplain and Master of Postulants**

## Priory's New Treasurer

The Priory of St. Vincent has been blessed with many dedicated and talented individuals. One of these members is Chevse. Lisa K. Johnson, DCTJ. I have had the pleasure of knowing Lisa for a number of years through our mutual membership and affiliation with several organizations and groups. She has always been totally involved in everything she participates in so it was a pleasure to sponsor her into our Order.

Since becoming a Templar, Lisa served as Lumiere Du Soleil and was asked to take on the duties of Assistant Treasurer when our beloved Jean McCaleb's illness prevented her from fulfilling her duties. Lisa picked up the torch and carried it proudly during an historic and very busy registration for the first ever Joint Regional C & I held within GPUSA. It was Lisa's extensive background in banking and her ability to learn on the job that helped our Priory smoothly handle the extensive paperwork and co-ordination with the Local Planning Committee. After Jean's untimely death, Lisa is now serving as Priory Treasurer.

The Priory is fortunate indeed to have a member of the competency and willingness as Lisa in our sad time of need.

**Harrell C. (Hal) Murray, GOTJ**

**Chief of Protocol/Staff**

## A Club

*Is a haven of refuge and accord*

*In a world torn by strife and discord;*

*Is a place where kindred spirits gather*

*To have fun and make friends;*

*Is a place expressly for camaraderie,*

*Merriment, good will, and good cheer;*

*It humbles the mighty, draws out*

*The timid, and casts out the sorehead;*

*And is one of the noblest*

*Inventions of mankind!*

-Robert H. Dedman, Sr.

When I read the above, I immediately thought of The Priory of St. Vincent. Not only are we a charitable organization, but we are also **A Club**, whose members are invited, by others of like-minds.

**Chev. Albert J. Sadowski, Sr., GOTJ**

**Chancellor - The Priory of St. Vincent**

## The Stuff of Legend

- by Roger Ratcliffe

From: the Yorkshire Post 11 OCT 08

In medieval times, the romantic Knights Templar wore white mantles and red crosses and Yorkshire was their English stronghold.

Two sisters have researched the Templars' local myths and legends in the area rife with bloodthirsty stories since they were forcibly rounded up by Edward II one cold January day in 1308.

What happened to the order's vast wealth? Was it stored at Faxfleet next to the River Humber, as one legend purports?

Was their treasure - most likely gold and silver coins - buried somewhere in the area before the King's men arrived to arrest them? There's certainly no record of their money being impounded. And if it was stolen, by whom? We may never have answers, but we do know that Yorkshire was the largest and wealthiest of all Templar regions in England.

The Knights were formed in 1099, after the First Crusade fought to take back the sacred city of Jerusalem from Islamic rule. As a Christian order, they were soldiers who would protect Christians in the Holy Land. For most of the next two centuries they were also fund-raisers for those who would later go on Crusades and pilgrimages.

To raise the necessary money, they established farming communities called preceptories, and according to the first book on the Knights Templar in Yorkshire, there were 10 of these in the old Ridings. No other English county had as many. The next biggest Templar county was Lincolnshire, with five preceptories. Derbyshire didn't even have one.

Being a determinedly all-male Order it is ironic, then, that the book which traces their two centuries of history in Yorkshire has been researched and written by two women, Diane Holloway of Pudsey, Leeds, and her sister Trish Colton of Huddersfield. The women had long been interested in medieval history and the Templars' legend in particular.

They found plenty of references in books to the Templars in England, but as to their activities in Yorkshire were concerned, the picture was almost non-existent. They set about burrowing through local archaeological archives and following up leads at university libraries across England and as far

way as Austin in Texas, many of them in Latin.

They also traced 10 Templar preceptories in Yorkshire, visiting each site and learning as much as they could about how the Knights operated as farmers and landlords to make money that would help to keep Jerusalem in Christian hands.

The preceptories were mostly in North and East Yorkshire, the land in South Yorkshire at that time being less suitable for cultivation. The remotest of them were at Westerdale on the North York Moors and Penhill in Wensleydale. There were others at Temple Cowton, near Northallerton, Foulbridge, near Scarborough, Ribston, near Wetherby, Copmanthorpe, near York, Temple Newsam, near Leeds, Temple Hirst and Whitley, between Selby and Doncaster, and Faxfleet on the north bank of the Humber.

The Templars' finances depended on the generosity of several great ruling families in Yorkshire, such as the de Mowbrays and the de Lacys. They gifted the Templars a great deal of land, and in return, so immersed in religion was the medieval mind, that these wealthy benefactors expected to spend less time in purgatory during their journey through the afterlife.

Diane says: "The Templars really looked after their farmer tenants, making sure they didn't pay a lot of taxes and tithes."

To that end, their tenants were allowed to display a Knights Templar cross on their houses, which was an early form of tax exemption. However, people who had nothing to do with the Templars cottoned on to this and also put up crosses - an early tax avoidance scam.

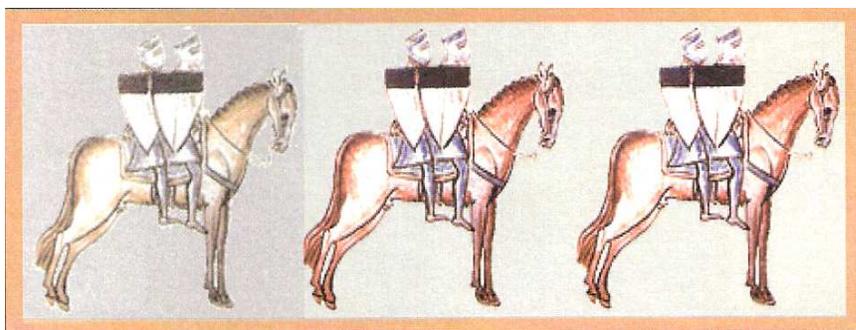
Through their research, Diane and Trish found that a number of these crosses still exist. One is attached to a gable on the Pack Horse pub, off Briggate in Leeds. Another is high on the wall of a house at Cottingley, near Bingley.

But the most interesting and colorful relic of the Templars' past found by the sisters can be seen outside the village of Little Ribston, to the north of Wetherby. Attached to the grand 17th century Ribston Hall is a chapel which, although now privately owned, was originally built for the village of Great Ribston, whose population was wiped out by the Black Death. It contains a remarkable stained glass window showing a Knight

wearing the classic white mantle and red cross.

The Knight also wears a long sword, and it is easy to see why Kings and senior churchmen eventually became wary of the power wielded by the Templars.

They had been long endorsed by the Roman Catholic Church, but when the Holy Land fell to Muslims their power faded. Added to this, rumors surfaced about secret initiation ceremonies, and the King of France, Philip IV - who found himself up to his eyes in debt to the Knights - played on these rumors to persuade Pope Clement V, then living at Avignon in Provence, to take action



against the Order.

The crackdown came in 1307. Philip demanded that a papal bull be sent out ordering the arrest of the Templars. In France, the date was Friday the 13th of September - some believe the origin of the date's unlucky reputation - and, in time, several of the Templars were burned at the stake.

In Yorkshire, says Trish Colton, nobody was put to death. Initially, Edward II was reluctant to act against the Templars, but when faced with the threat of excommunication, he was left with no choice but to round them up.

"He wrote to the Archbishop of York, who was unhappy about having to dissolve the preceptories and kept putting it off. But after two letters from the King, he had to do something, so the Templars were arrested and imprisoned at York Castle."

And what happened to their money?

"It might have been buried, as some people think," Diane says. "But there isn't any evidence that there was anything to take, really. It's all part of the legend. For instance, Faxfleet on the Humber was the wealthiest preceptory, and also the repository for such

things as deeds and papers from the other preceptories in Yorkshire. It was decreed that all this should be packed up when the Templars were arrested, and sent to London."

Which is what happened, Diane and Trish discovered. It was indeed packed up, but it never arrived at its destination.

"After it left Faxfleet," says Diane, "nobody knows what happened to it."

**The Knights Templar in Yorkshire, by Diane Holloway and Trish Colton, is published by The History Press, £12.99.**

**GPUSA**  
**The Grand Convent**  
**& Investiture**  
**2009**

Sovereign Military Order  
of the Temple of Jerusalem

Saint Louis, Missouri  
June 4-7

## Prayers and Help for Ron Boisvert

Ronald Boisvert, son of **Chev. Ron Boisvert** of St. Vincent's and his wife Janice, is resting and receiving medical care in the Fisher House at Brooke Army Medical Center, Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas.

According to Chev. Boisvert, Ronald is doing better. He is up and about in his wheel chair with the help of Janice.

Entering the Fisher House is the next step in his recovery, says Chev. Boisvert. He is taking rehabilitation exercises, meeting with doctors and getting his strength up to get his new leg and to learn to walk again.

Chev. Boisvert says that his son is still with us due to the remarkable and immediate actions of Volunteer Fire Department EMT/Paramedic Chief Brad Baker, who just happened to be on the scene, with his equipment, when the accident happened. Mr. Baker stopped Ron's bleeding, attended to his life support and summoned Life Flight.

Ronald would like any gifts or donations directed to Chief Baker so he can continue to do his life-saving work as part of his volunteer department.

Please send to:

Chief Brad Baker

9101 Hwy. 89

Milton, FL 32570

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers,

Chev. Ron Boisvert

PS: The Air Force has told Ron that, upon his recovery, he can return to active duty and will most likely be able to fly again.



## Post Convent Adventures

by **Steve Kelley**

Sunday morning after the successful Region III Combined Autumnal Convent **Hal Murray** and I were carrying a rebuilt computer and components to his car for **Lisa Johnson** – her old one was not responding. We strolled out into the Hyatt Regency parking garage and paid slight attention to a box sitting on the sidewalk across from the security booth where one of Greenville's Finest was talking earnestly to the parking attendant – and glancing at the box.

We deposited the newer computer in Lisa's car and I took possession of her old one which I transferred to my vehicle.

We returned to the lobby and readied our personal belongings for loading into our cars and the trip home. Once prepared, we headed for the garage to retrieve our vehicles. The way was blocked. Greenville police were stringing yellow crime scene tape across all entrances to the garage.

That eventually spread to all hotel entrances on that side of the building. We asked the bell captain what the deal was. He informed us there was a bomb alert regarding a box on the sidewalk across from the parking attendant's security booth. No one was to enter or leave.

The bomb squad had been called. Some of us ate a second breakfast. Some of us visited for a few more moments with old and new friends.

About 45 minutes into the lock-down I heard a muffled explosion – not a bomb but a shotgun blast probably meant to immobilize the box. A few minutes later I heard another. Hal and I were certain the two shots had handled the situation, so we checked with the Greenville PD sergeant standing guard at the nearest door. He said they weren't effective and they had to

change the bomb squad robot crawler over to water cannon.

More time dragged by. Then a different muffled sound was heard.

Within 5 minutes the officer at the door wore a slight grin as he told us the box was full of papers. Hal went to check and discovered the Priory of Saint Vincent's Secretary's file box in disarray and papers scatter far and wide. All salvageable papers were recovered. Hal took possession of them and he and Lisa were able to return them to **Boom Boom McClure** in Aiken that afternoon before heading home to Savannah.



(Postscript from Boob Boom— my humble apologies for the lapse. Fortunately most of the damaged paperwork was salvaged—although somewhat watermarked and tattered.



## New Qualifications for the Office of Prior

**Grand Prior Col. Wayne McGrath** has instituted a uniform review criteria to approve the elevations to the office of Prior throughout the SMOTJ.

The Grand Prior will carefully screen all future knights or dames whose names are sent to him for approval of Prior. Those nominees should have:

Attended one or more Grand Convents.

Demonstrated leadership qualities.

Acquired access to a computer and have the ability to send and receive e-mails.

Committed themselves to spend the required time and monetary assets in order to perform the duties of Prior.

Each Deputy Grand Prior will be required to send the Grand Prior their comments regarding these qualifications.



## Biography of Grand Prior COL Wayne J McGrath

Born in New York City he attended Manhattan College High School and

## Important Dates for Your Diary

### February 8, 2009

#### **The Winter Interim Meeting**

Ft. Jackson Officers Club—The Jackson

Room 11am to 3pm

Sunday Brunch—\$15.95

### April 25, 2009

#### **The Spring Convent**

Columbia, SC—full details pending

### October 3, 2009

#### **The Fall Convent**

Aiken, SC. All Saints Church

BS in Social Science (Pre Law) and served as Student Body President. Commissioned upon graduation into the USMC he served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions as an artillery officer and battalion staff officer leaving active service as a Captain. Upon return to civilian life he was appointed to the County of Westchester Personnel Department and subsequently was promoted to Assistant Personnel Officer while attending St John's Law School in the evening program. Upon graduation he was admitted to the New York State Bar and later to the Federal Eastern and Southern Districts of New York. After Westchester he was appointed as Personnel Officer for the City of White Plains and later served as the Director of Personnel for the Unified Court System of New York. He later served as Director of Human Resources for Montefiore Medical Center, Einstein Medical College, United Hospital, Julia Dykman Memorial Children's Center and Purchase College.

Upon leaving the Marine Corps he joined the Marine Corps Reserve serving in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 25<sup>th</sup> Marines as Mortar Platoon Commander and then Executive Officer. He was selected to be a Special Staff Officer for the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine District and served as Military Advisor to Readiness Command Region

2 USNR. His last assignment was Commanding Officer of MTU-NY8 NBC which covered all Marine Units east of the Mississippi River. He retired in 1989.

Upon retirement as Lt Colonel he was commissioned by the Governor of New York as a Colonel of Marines for the Naval Militia serving as Commander of Region I (Southern NY). He retired in 1999. While serving in Military assignments he held the Presidencies of the Gen Karl Day Chapter of the Reserve Marine Corps Officer Association, the Militia Association of New York (National Guard and Reserve Forces) and the Naval Militia. He also served as Vice President of the Navy League for the Empire Region. Col McGrath has served as Liaison to the White

Plains' Mayor's Office for Memorial Day and Veteran's Day Celebrations

Col McGrath was inducted into the Templars at the Priory of St Charles the Martyr in 1995. Along with RADM Andrew O'Rourke and Capt Liam Murphy he was a founding member of St Patrick's Priory at West Point.

He served as its first Treasurer, second Chancellor and third Prior. He was appointed Asst Grand Chief of Protocol, served two terms as Grand Inspector and as Grand Chancellor before becoming Grand Prior.

Grand Prior XVI resides in White Plains, New York with his wife of 42 years Rumiko Tamari McGrath and their West Highland White terrier Hunter. While not a Templar Mrs. McGrath has attended numerous Convents, receptions and other events.



## Greenville Luncheon for Prospective Candidates



speaking to the group about the modern Knights Templar and to **Steve Hale** for sending me background information for the historical Knights Templar talk.

Attendees from Priory

**Bob Alexander & wife**  
Leslie Alexander

**Al Sadowski**

**Steve Kelley & wife** Sandra Kelley),

**Mike Morse**

**Debra Morse**

**Mel Sinclair & wife**  
Lynne Sinclair.

By **Chev. Mel Sinclair, KCTJ**

Pictured are Chevs Stephen Kelley, Al Sadowski, Prior Bob Alexander.

Needless to say, the Autumnal Joint Convent in Greenville was a success. Several guests in the Greenville area expressed an interest in joining or learning more about the SMOTJ. A short time after the Joint Convent, **Debra Morse** called me to discuss setting up a luncheon for her too. I also had a few possible candidates. After contacting Prior **Bob Alexander** about having such a luncheon, he kindly gave his permission and subsequently cleared his calendar in order to attend. With the date set for November 22, we settled on a neat little Greek family restaurant where we were the only guests. Seating for a maximum of ten (10) people was requested. As time drew closer, our little list of five (5) guests had grown. When the day arrived for the luncheon, there were twenty-three (23) attendees, six (6) of whom were members of St. Vincent Priory. I believe that I can safely say “mission accomplished”, as this was a truly enjoyable time with good fellowship and good food. My thanks go to Prior Bob Alexander for his continued support and to Debra Morse for making the arrangements. Thanks to **Al Sadowski** for



## Chev. George Custodi Promoted to Assistant Deputy Grand Prior Region III – and Beyond

Our own beloved St. Vincent Prior IV, Capt. Chev. George Custodi, GOTJ, has been elevated to Assistant Deputy Grand Prior Region III, and he looks to be on the fast track for even more extensive duties.

Deputy Grand Prior Region III BG Chev. William Dreger, GCTJ made the recommendation for Chev. Custodi’s promotion which was granted by SMOTJ Grand Prior Col. Chev. Wayne J. McGrath, GCTJ in the fall.

Deputy Grand Prior Dreger said in considering the appointment he was primarily looking for someone who possessed “proven and successful past Prior experience, which George qualified for easily. I was looking for someone who has demonstrated leadership qualities and who was going to be able to get along with other people. You have to be very careful when you put people in these positions. You have to be careful to pick someone who can get along with people, get people to work together and make proper decisions.”

“George fits that description very well,” said Deputy Grand Prior Dreger. “He’s very diplomatic and makes good decisions; he had some serious problems when he took over that priory and he was very successful in the way he took them on and handled them and that was a big plus in my mind.”

Assistant Deputy Grand Prior Custodi’s leading duties will be presiding at convents, starting with St. Vincent’s Spring convent in Columbia. “He will eventually evolve into being the only one in region III. Once that happens he will be getting quite a few responsibilities.”

Those new responsibilities may be coming quickly. Deputy Grand Prior Dreger is being promoted from Region III to be the Deputy Grand Prior for SMOTJ throughout the United States and will have a permanent seat on the national Executive Committee. “George is being groomed to succeed me as Deputy Grand Prior for Region III.”

Congratulations to both of our friends and may God bless their efforts on our behalf.

