

Templars of the Plains

A Publication of the Grand Commandery of Kansas

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Robert D. McClarty, REGC 2022-2023

The Templary Experience

Sir Knight William P. Leonard (Bill), Eminent Grand Generalissimo

The Right Eminent Grand Commander has asked his subordinate officers to write articles for the insert, and this month's article was written by our E Grand Generalissimo.

The roads of the Knight Templars were long and dangerous and steeped in historical lore. The Knights of yesteryear were the escorts and body guards of pilgrims who, for one reason or another, moved from place to place with most of them traveling a long and dangerous route to Jerusalem.

My story of Templary begins as a 14 year old boy who was groomed from birth to become a DeMolay. The Order of DeMolay is part of the "family" of Masons and associated organizations. DeMolay is the Masonic youth group for young men. It was founded in 1919 by Frank S. Land in Kansas City, Missouri and named for Jacques DeMolay. Jacques deMolay was the 23rd and last grand master of Knights Templar, leading the order from 1298 until it was dissolved by order of Pope Clement V in 1312. Jacques de Molay, along with another Knight Templars, were burned at the stake.

The modern day Order of DeMolay introduces young men to that saga of Knight Templars beginning with the history of the Order which ended with the death of Jacques deMolay. The DeMolay ritual and teachings are based on that ancient Knight Templar saga. The DeMolay cardinal virtues of Filial Love, Reverence, Courtesy, Comradeship, Fidelity, Cleanliness and Patriotism are those of the Knight Templars in the 13th and 14th Centuries. Does this sound familiar to you, Sir Knights?

My Knight Templar experience and journey began as a DeMolay. Since then, It may have been long but was certainly not dangerous. I returned to the lore of the Knight Templars in 1972 by joining the York Rite and Al Hassa Commandery # 1, in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. The middle east location caused moments of realization that I was in the neighborhood of Knight Templary historical sites.

The opportunity to travel and seek those sites caused much excitement. Little did I know that the road ahead would actually lead me to many of those ancient sites. My travels throughout the Middle East and Europe would become most enlightening by seeking Knight

Templar historical sites. Traveling along the routes of those ancient Pilgrims, I imagined their trial and tribulations along their travels were incredible experiences.

Fast forward to 2015 and my returning to active participation in the York Rite and Knight Templary in Kansas at Leavenworth Commandery #1. It eminded me of the significance of the Knight Templar lessons I had learned as a DeMolay, in my Commandery initiation, and through many years of travels. My education continued by advancing through the ranks to Commander, and now I am continuing my Knight Templar experiences and education by advancing in the Grand Commandery of Kansas as the Grand Generalissimo.

Sir Knights, you may not know or understand that the Order of DeMolay is also all about Templary. I suggest that you visit a DeMolay chapter meeting or better yet, find a DeMolay Chapter degree night and attend. It is about connecting the Masonic dots throughout. You will be happy to know that the Templary lessons we experience in our Commandery work are also paramount in the DeMolay ritual work.

Update on the KT Honor Guard

Sir Knight Justin Crippen, Grand Junior Warden and Captain of the Honor Guard

The first inaugural Templar Feast was a success. The event was held at the Strataca salt mine, 650 feet underground, with awesome food, and great company! It was a wonderful evening, and Sir Knights and their Ladies from all over the Midwest were in attendance. These included Grand Encampment Officers and several of our newest Knights in Kansas. The Grand Commander of Knights Templar of Kansas, Sir Knight Robert McClarty, planned an incredible event and it was executed flawlessly.



In 2021, our Current Grand Commander, who was Deputy Grand Commander at the time, approached myself and Sir Knight Patrick Carr with a task to hand pick an Honor Guard Team to represent Kansas Knight Templary and Post the Colors of our Nations Flags at the Templar Feast. With the two of us firmly on board, we selected 6 others to join the team. Sir Knights Robert Haynes, Fred Kemp, Gary Mason, REPGC Michael Smith, SK Bill Koonce, and REPGC Kent L Needham were invited and accepted the appointment to come. Two of these Sir Knights were located on both sides of the Guard, wearing cap and mantles along with a baldrick to support their sword. We had two additional Sir Knights between them,

with two more supporting the United States flag and the Templar Beauceant for the Kansas Grand Commandery. When it was time to start the event, the Honor Guard presented and posted the colors. They received many compliments for their work. I was so very proud.

I wish to commend this team. I never in a million years thought I would be involved with something like this. I am not a veteran or law enforcement, so the honor I have in leading these men iis off the charts. Thank you to REGC Robert McClarty for the faith in the team. Thank you to Sir Knight Patrick Carr for being my Co-Captain on this journey and mentoring me. Also thank you to the rest of the team. We represented our Nation's flag with the highest respect. Look for us to do more events soon!