



## Grand Commander



**Brandon Penley**

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### **We Need Your Help!**

Please send event news from your local commanderies to us for inclusion in the State News!

- ✦ Submissions must be received by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the upcoming edition. Submissions may be altered to fit.
- ✦ Please send emails with subject line "KT State News" to the editor.

Editor: Larry Aydlett  
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## Grand Commander's Message

Greetings Sir Knights,

I hope you have all had a wonderful month. Your Grand Officers are off to a busy start. We have already completed six of our district visits. The first visit was to Raleigh on April 5, then to Durham on April 6. The next visit was to Rocky Mount on April 18, and then to New Bern on April 25. We visited Salisbury on May 1, and Charlotte on May 2. So far, the district visits have been well attended and I want to thank the brethren of the host bodies for their support and words of encouragement at each visit. I also want to thank them for providing meals at each of the meetings. I also want to encourage Sir Knights to attend as many of the remaining district visits as possible. The upcoming visits will be held in Elizabeth City on May 19, Hickory on June 14, and Asheville on June 20. I hope to see you all in attendance at the upcoming meetings.

I was invited to attend the Order of the Temple in Salisbury on April 3 and was pleased to Knight five new templars into the order. I would like to welcome all our new templars and say thank you for your interest and investment in Templary. On April 8 your Grand Commandery had the opportunity to lay a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier at the Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA. On April 9, we attend the Easter Observance at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. I would like to thank Sir Knights Sam Henline, Mark Alexander, and Matthew Holland for attending both of these events with me. On April 15 the Illustrious Grand Master Billy D. Poteat and I traveled to Oxford, NC to attend the appendant bodies days held by the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford. I would like to

thank Kevin Otis for hosting that great event. We had the chance to visit some of the cottages and take a tour of the campus. It was a great experience, and I would encourage all Sir Knights to continue to support our home in any way possible.

I would like to continue to remind the recorders of each constituent commandery of the importance of keeping our database up to date. Please make sure that you are updating MMS on a regular basis so that your individual bodies are not incurring undue costs on your year-end reports. I know that this can seem to be a tedious process, but if regularly kept up to date, then it becomes much easier to manage. Keeping these records up to date throughout the year will also make it easier to fill out your year-end reports, instead of being overwhelmed by trying to do it all at one time. By updating our records throughout the year, it will also help our Grand Recorder in the performance of his duties to our Grand Commandery, as well as giving us an updated membership count.

Fraternally in Christ,

Brandon Penley  
Grand Commander

## Final 2023 District Meetings

**Raleigh** – The final District meetings are scheduled.

Please note that the Asheville district meeting has been moved out of downtown Asheville due to public safety concerns. The new location for the Asheville meeting is the Cornerstone Restaurant at 102 Tunnel Rd. in Asheville. We will start at 7pm on June 20, and the attire is business casual.

The officers will not open the bodies and will just present the program for the year and enjoy dinner together. RE Rick Patton has reserved a room at the restaurant for 15 to 30 people.

The last three district meetings are as follows:

#	Date	Host	Night	Time	Opening
1	May 18	<a href="#">Elizabeth City</a>	Thu	6pm dinner, 7:30pm meeting	Council
8	June 14	<a href="#">Hickory</a>	Wed	6:30pm dinner, 7:30pm meeting	Commandery
9	June 20	<a href="#">Asheville</a>	Tue	7pm meeting	Council

The Grand Officers of the Grand York Rite Bodies are looking forward to seeing you at these meetings.

### **New Bern York Rite Festival Welcomes 9 New Sir Knights**

**New Bern** – The New Bern York Rite Festival Knighted 9 into the ranks of Commandery on the last weekend in April. Our newly Knighted members are:

- Dwight Sheppard, Orr Lodge #104
- Jonathan Worthington, Widows Son #75
- Todd Cartwright, Currituck #463
- Chad Hansen, Newport #706
- Jerry Dutton, Cherry Point #688
- Douglas Harris, Ayden #498
- Cedric (Jack) Hildreath, Shallotte #727
- Michael Gurkin, St. Patrick's #617
- Riley Hughes, Bern #724



*The new Sir Knights and New Bern Festival Degree Cast*

This Spring's ritualist cast include Sandy Blizzard, Michael Cruise, Chris Jackson, Mike Sutton, Cris Randall, Russ Bauer, Fred Whitty, Arthur Romans, Michael Struempf, Steven Natale, Russell Rainear, Matthew Walters, Charles Phillips, Bill Sanford, Marty Spears, Glen Carpenter, Tom Jackson, Sparkie Travis, and Russell Scull.

The New Bern York Rite is rightly proud of its ritualists but is always searching for additional cast. There are parts in the ritual ranging from non-speaking actors to very elaborate central cast members. All are equally important in the ritual presentation. As with all organizations, one gets out of them what one contributes to them. Our individual Degree and Order Masters would be most appreciative of your willing-

ness to participate as a ritual cast member and take part in our York Rite Festival.

Festivals are held twice a year, once in the spring and again in the fall. The New Bern York Rite is fortunate to have some parts in which one ritualist performs in the spring and another in the fall. We would love the luxury of doing this with every ritual part. If you are interested in any part of the ritual, please contact the following:

- Capitular Degree: Dir. Russ Bauer/Glen Carpenter
- Council Degree: Dir. Warren G. Taylor
- Commandery Degree: Dir. Fred H. Whitty III
- Robing Room: Director Keith Moore

*This article was contributed by SK Russell L. Scull, 1st District Instructor-Inspector*

### **Salisbury York Rite Hosting Table Council**

**Salisbury** – The Salisbury York Rite bodies are once again hosting a Table Council on Monday, August 7, 2023 (the first Monday in August) at the Fulton/Andrew Jackson Masonic Temple in Salisbury NC. This is a FREE, that's right FREE, prime rib dinner, with all the fixings to be served starting at 6:00PM. All that's required to attend is you must bring a minimum of one roll of quarters and let Sam Henline know you are attending so we can have enough food. There will be a raffle for a Mossberg pump shotgun after the meal and also multiple door prizes drawn. All the "fines" (the purpose of the roll of quarters) will be collected and divided to the several York Rite charities. RSVP to SK Sam Henline at [sam.henline4262@gmail.com](mailto:sam.henline4262@gmail.com) or IM on Facebook (the sooner the better). If you have never attended our Table Council, ask around. It is the event of the year...and remember IT'S FREE!!!

*This article was contributed by SK Sam Henline, of Salisbury #13*

### **Arlington Report From the Grand Standard Bearer**

**Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA** – For years now the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of North Carolina has been placing a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington VA. The past couple of years has seen an increased friendship between the Tomb Sentinels and the Knights Templar of North Carolina. The Tomb Sentinels have always been very courteous and helpful to attending Sir Knights and

have always given a tour of their barracks at the Tomb.



SK Sam Henline presents the crusader sword at the Tomb Guard Barracks, October 8, 2022

On October 8, 2022, Sir Knights representing the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of North Carolina went to the Tomb and made a presentation of a crusader sword, plaque, and care package, to show our appreciation for all the Tomb Sentinels have done over the years and how much we support their efforts.

This Easter weekend, Saturday April 8, 2023, a contingent of NC Knights Templar, led by Right Eminent Grand Commander Brandon Penley, Eminent Grand Jr. Warden Mark Alexander, Eminent Standard Bearer Sam Henline, and Sir Knight Matthew Holland went to the Tomb of the Unknowns to place a wreath, and although we arrived late the Sentinels still allowed us to conduct the ceremony.



L-R: SK Matt Holland, SK Sam Henline, REGC Brandon Penley, SK Mark Alexander at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington, VA

As our wreath ceremony was the last of the day, it was our honor to learn that our wreath would be left at the Tomb until after sundown before removal.



REGC Penley and Sir Knights presenting a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA

Afterward the Tomb Sentinels took the assembled Sir Knights, and guest, on a tour inside the underground barracks area, and showed everyone the Crusader Sword and plaque mounted to the wall outside the sleeping quarters.



The crusaders sword and commemorative plaque presented to the Tomb Guards during our October 2022 visit.

A Tomb Sentinel told me that spot was chosen because ALL the Sentinels have to pass by it on their way to duty, and it has been an inspiration, and encouragement to each of them, a Warrior Spirit. I was somewhat amazed that we had had that effect, and I must admit that I was proud that NC Templary was having a positive effect on these young men's lives. I also let them know that another care package had been delivered to the Sgt. of the Guard for distribution on Easter morning.

But an Easter miracle was yet to happen, the Tomb Sentinels had a special gift for us, especially involving my family. Major Ian Campbell Brinkley is the son of one of my Lady Beth's cousins, and Ian passed away at the age of 42, from an illness he contracted during the Gulf War where he was a combat pilot for the USMC. I knew Ian's mother and father could not make it to Ian's grave this Easter, so I asked one of the Tomb Sentinels what they did with the wreaths after removing them from the Tomb. He told me

groundskeepers took care of removing them. I asked if he could possibly do me a favor and place our wreath on Ian's grave, and send me a photo, so I could let Ian's parents know he had not been forgotten for Easter. The young Sentinel told me he would take care of it.

Now here's the miracle: the Sentinel relief Unit arrived early Sunday morning April 9, 2023, and around 4:00am these twelve men went to the Tomb of the Unknowns, took the wreath we placed there, and conducted a private wreath ceremony at Major Ian C. Brinkley's grave, and yes, they sent a picture. What better example of friendship and brotherly love can you find?



*The nighttime wreath laying at Maj. Brinkley's grave, Arlington National Cemetery*

Needless to say, Major Brinkley's parents were overwhelmed with joy, thanking the Templars and the Tomb Sentinels.

I still get misty eyed just thinking about these twelve young men, taking time out of one of their busiest days, to render this service. They didn't have to do this favor; I think they did it because they knew the meaning behind Templary. I know they certainly perk up when they hear the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of North Carolina is on the premises.

On the back of the Tomb Sentinel challenge coin is the phrase, "Silence and Respect", I think they should also include Honor.



*The Tomb Guards Challenge Coin*

Yes, my Brothers, we have some very close friends at the Arlington National Cemetery, who silently carry out their duties, every day, every night, all year long, with Fortitude, Prudence, Justice, and Temperance, each a Templar in their actions and commitment. And we are the better that they have taken us as their friends.

Fraternally,

Sam Henline  
Grand Sword Bearer

### **Important Request From Mark Alexander, Chief Instructor-Inspector**

**North Wilkesboro** – RE Mark Alexander, Chief Instructor-Inspector, requests that all Commandery Certified Instructors please provide the dates they were certified. Certified Instructors can contact SK Alexander at [cenobite13@hotmail.com](mailto:cenobite13@hotmail.com).

### **Important Reminders:**

- May 18:** Elizabeth City York Rite hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> District's meeting, 7:30pm, dinner at 6:00pm
- June 3:** Raleigh #4 conferral of the Order of the Temple, JJ Crowder Lodge, Raleigh, 8:00am.
- June 14:** Hickory York Rite hosting the 8<sup>th</sup> District's meeting, 7:30pm, dinner at 6:30pm
- June 20:** Asheville York Rite hosting the 9<sup>th</sup> District's meeting, 7:00pm, Cornerstone Restaurant