



NEWS for October 2023
SK Bryan D. Bechler, REGC
Web Site: www.yorkritewa.org/gckt/

SK Bryan D. Bechler, PC, IKT, COH, KCT
Editor: bry.kat@frontier.com

Greetings Sir Knights!

The next Grand Encampment Triennial will take place in 2024 in Salt Lake City, UT. This is a great opportunity for all Sir Knights to come together to discuss and vote on legislation, see a part of the country you may not have been to, and to talk to other Sir Knights from around the world. There's a tremendous amount of work that goes into organizing a Triennial session. Anyone who has attended a Grand Encampment, General Grand Chapter or General Grand Council Triennial knows it takes dozens of people to make it happen. There's a lot of "behind the scenes" work that most people never see.

But did you know that the 36th Grand Encampment Triennial was held in Seattle from July 27th to July 31st, 1925? This is the one and only time it's ever been held in Washington state. Several years ago, SK Herbert Miller, REPGC, gave me a video tape which had originated on an 8mm film. The film, which runs about 20 minutes, shows hundreds if not thousands of Knights Templar on parade marching, on horseback and in automobiles. The streets are lined with bleachers, filled with a huge amount of spectators.

There are a lot of things we take for granted today. As I was reading the history of this Triennial, what amazed me was the dedication the Sir Knights put forth in the overall planning. Before they could even start, they had to convince dozens of Grand Commanderies that Seattle was a viable option. Unlike today, where we have electronic devices to aid in our work, these Sir Knights in the late teens, utilized telegrams, telephones and in-person meetings to plan and organize.

Eminent Sir and Reverend Mark A. Matthews of Seattle, Grand Prelate, was the one who first suggested a Triennial session of Grand Encampment should be held in Seattle in 1922. It was thought best to have it in Seattle in 1925, and it was suggested that the Grand Encampment should be held, not where Templarism is strongest, but where it can best promote Templarism. In 1925 the Sovereign Great Priory of Canada was also scheduled to meet in Victoria, British Columbia, presenting a rare opportunity to an international exchange of

Knighly courtesies. The World's Fair was also scheduled to take place in Portland, OR.

The delegation left Seattle by train for New Orleans (site of the 1922 Grand Encampment Triennial) with 115 Sir Knights and their ladies. After much debate at the Triennial, Seattle was chosen for the 1925 Grand Encampment. Knowing there would be a large number of people attending, I found it fascinating that rooms were being reserved in a hotel that hadn't even been built. The Sir Knights were confident in what they were doing.

From all accounts, the 1925 Triennial was a tremendous success. I've been fortunate enough to have obtained some items from this event, including jewels (a number of Washington Commanderies had special jewels made for their members), lapel pins and even a pot iron chapeau that was given to each person attending the banquet.

Wouldn't it be great to have the numbers of Sir Knights who traveled to New Orleans attend our annual Grand Commandery sessions? I would encourage each of you to read through "A History of the Activities of the 36th Triennial Committee, Knights Templar". It is filled with historical anecdotes from the Grand Commandery of Washington as well as some amazing photographs. I believe every Sir Knight will get to not only learn about our Grand Commandery of Washington, but what these Sir Knights did to bring the only-ever Grand Encampment Triennial to Washington state.

Here are a couple of links for some historical information I found:

<https://pauldorpat.com/2018/08/18/seattle-now-then-the-knights-templar-take-seattle-1925/>

<https://archive.org/details/kt1merged>

And with the 69th Grand Encampment Triennial taking place in less than a year, all Sir Knights have the opportunity to participate in something quite amazing.

**Sincerely and fraternally,
SK Bryan D. Bechler, REGC
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Washington**