



Sovereign Order Of
ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM
Knights Hospitaller c.1048



Victoria Commandery

VICTORIA COMMANDERY NEWSLETTER

JULY 2025 EDITION

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MEET OUR NEW COMMANDER

Chevalier J. Parker MacCarthy, K.C., KJSJ assumed the role as Commander of the Victoria Commandery of the SOSJ on May 21, 2025, from outgoing Commander Dame Shannon Baillie, DJSJ, upon completion of her highly successful two-year term.

Parker was invested into the Order in 2012. Since then, he has been an active member and participant in the numerous activities of the Victoria Commandery. These activities have included attending all Annual General Meetings and several town hall meetings and fund-raising events, volunteer participation in the Backpack Buddies program, delivery of seniors' gift cards and grant cheques, and with his wife, Dame Virginia MacCarthy, DJSJ representing the Commandery at the Remembrance Day Ceremonies, near their home at Cobble Hill on numerous occasions.

Chevalier MacCarthy has been an active participant and has attended every Commandery Investiture since his own. He has served in several roles including as a flag bearer and usher, the sword bearer on two occasions, Deputy-Marshall for two years and most recently, as Investiture Assistant to Mistress of Regalia, Dame Penny Johnston, DJSJ.

Parker attributes much of his knowledge about the governance of the Victoria Commandery to Virginia who has served for several years on Commandry Council and has held offices as the Secretary, Hospitaller, Co-Mistress of Regalia and at present Marshall.

Parker served on the International SOSJ Rules Update Committee in 2019 - 2020 and was appointed the International SOSJ Parliamentarian in 2020. He and Virginia have attended several International SOSJ Meetings, most recently in 2024 at Brisbane.

Parker was asked in 2021 by then Commander Chevalier Bob Plecas, KCSJ to lead the Victoria Commandery's Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness Working Group which produced a comprehensive report in November of 2023.

Professionally, Parker practiced as a lawyer on Vancouver Island for nearly 35 years with a broad-based general practice servicing a wide range of clients, including everything from a major publicly traded forest company to family businesses in several sectors and to numerous non-profit organizations. Parker was active in the affairs of the legal profession having served as the President of the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association in 1993-1994 and as the National CBA President in 2006-2007, during which time he represented the Canadian legal profession both nationally and internationally. He was appointed Queens Counsel, (now Kings Counsel) in 1997 and received the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 2003 for his distinguished service to the legal community in Canada.



Chevalier J. Parker MacCarthy, K.C. KJSJ

Chevalier MacCarthy was appointed a Judge of the Provincial Court of British Columbia in October of 2010 and presided in all areas of the Court's jurisdiction throughout Vancouver Island and in other regions of the Province. He formally retired from the bench on November 30, 2024, after 14 years of service.

He is honoured to assume his new role as Commander and looks forward to working with the Commandery Council and its membership in fulfilling the Commandery's goals set out in the updated Strategic Plan.

OUR MISSION IN ACTION

PARTNERSHIP WITH TIMES COLONIST CHRISTMAS FUND

As previously reported, in just four years, the Victoria Commandery has expanded its support from awarding 10 grants totaling \$129,500 in 2020 to an impressive 69 grants amounting to \$847,860 in 2024. [A complete list of grant recipients is listed in the Almoner's Report.](#) However, the need remains, and it continues to grow. It is anticipated that in 2025 the Victoria Commandery will be administering close to one million dollars from the Times Colonist Fund and the Commandery itself, including Gaming Grants to distribute to applying and vetted charitable organizations located from Victoria to Campbell River on Vancouver Island. The Commandery itself in 2025 is budgeting to raise and distribute to these charitable organizations approximately another \$200,000, including Gaming Grant proceeds that have been received by the Commandery Foundation. As previously reported, in 2024, cumulative funding requests exceeded \$1.3 million, thus highlighting the increasing demand for our assistance.

JUNE 11, 2025, SOCIAL PROFIT (CHARITY) FORUM

On November 7, 2024, the Victoria Commandery had the opportunity to meet with 39 non-profit organizations who support our communities located from Victoria to the Cowichan Valley and also representatives from the Times Colonist. We shared the results of our 2024 environmental scan, which identified gaps in the human and social services sector and what these organizations saw as priorities for our communities. We also talked about how we can jointly collaborate to better serve those in need. The November 2024 Forum was so successful and the feedback so positive that on June 11, 2025, the Victoria Commandery hosted another Social Profit (Charity) Forum which brought together 50 Vancouver Island charities, located from Victoria up to Campbell River, to discuss nonprofit challenges and opportunities, with particular attention to food security and back-office support services. The previously identified concerns about senior services, volunteer recruitment, and funding challenges, was the focus of these discussions and there was a practical exchange of ideas on various solutions including expanded food distribution centers and mobile pantries.

MEMBER NEWS

ELECTION OF COMMANDERY COUNCIL

Position	Proposed 2025-2026
1. Commander	<i>Parker MacCarthy *</i>
2. Vice Commander	Richard Crow
3. Receiver General	Angus Izard
4. Secretary/Governance	Gordon Gunn
5. Fundraising	<i>Christine Ryan*</i>
6. Almoner	Maria Dominelli
7. Hospitaller	<i>Ian Batey *</i>
8. Membership	Bernie Beck
9. Events	Hazel Braithwaite
10. Marshal	Virginia MacCarthy
11. Director at Large	Penny Johnston
12. Herald/Communications	<i>Kelly Somogyi *</i>
13. Director at Large	Bruce Hallsor

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS OF THE FOUNDATION

Position	Proposed 2025-2026
1. Commander	<i>Parker MacCarthy</i>
2. Vice Commander	Richard Crow
3. Receiver General	Angus Izard
4. Secretary/Governance	Gordon Gunn
5. Fundraising	<i>Christine Ryan</i>
6. Almoner	Maria Dominelli
7. Membership	Bernie Beck
8. Director at Large	Lori McLeod
9. Director at Large	<i>Margaret Rose</i>
10. Director at Large	<i>Frank Bourree</i>
11. Director at Large	<i>Robert Peterson</i>

PROMOTIONS

KNIGHT OR DAME OF HONOUR TO KNIGHT OR DAME OF GRACE

Lori McLeod, Ian Batey, Ian Robertson, Bruce Hallsor, Jamie Poll, Nigel Brown

KNIGHT OR DAME COMMANDER OF GRACE TO KNIGHT OR DAME OF JUSTICE

Gordon Gunn, Hazel Braithwaite

ROCKIN' IN THE VINES CELEBRATION

Members of the Victoria Commandery recently travelled to Kelowna to attend the Summer Solstice: Rockin' in the Vines celebration. We're proud to share that this incredible event raised over \$73,000 in support of Elevation Outdoors, a remarkable achievement that will have a lasting impact. Our sincere thanks and appreciation go to the Kelowna Commandery for their warm hospitality and outstanding efforts in organizing such a successful and meaningful evening.



UPCOMING EVENTS

POOLSIDE BBQ – JULY 12, 2025

Hosted by: Chevalier Marty and Dame Donna

Time: 2:30-6:30 pm

Location: Marty and Donna's home – 2251 Cooperage Dr. Saanich, BC

Registration Link: <https://hibid.ca/register/sosj-connection-poolside-bbq>

TEA IN THE GARDEN AND EXCLUSIVE READING IN BEAUTIFUL COWICHAN VALLEY (GUESTS FROM THE VANCOUVER COMMANDERY WILL ALSO BE ATTENDING) – JULY 19, 2025

Hosted by: Chevalier Tim Wyman and Dame Susan Scott Gabe

Time: 2:00pm - 5:00pm

Location: Tim and Susan's beautiful home - 6685 Norcross Rd. Cowichan Valley, BC

Registration Link: <https://hibid.ca/register/sosj-connect-tea-and-reading-in-cowichan>

VICTORIA COMMANDERY INVESTITURE – OCTOBER 17 - 18, 2025

Details to Follow

SOVEREIGN COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 11 – 13, 2026

Hosted by: The Palm Beach Commander

Location: West Palm Beach, Florida USA

SOVEREIGN COUNCIL MEETING – AUGUST 13 – 27, 2028

Location: Scotland

CALL FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We're inviting passionate and engaged individuals to contribute their time and expertise by joining one of our internal committees. Whether your strengths lie in fundraising, event planning, granting, communications, or governance, your perspective and voice are essential to our continued success.

INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED?

Please contact Commander **J. Parker MacCarthy** - jpmacCarthy@shaw.ca.

Help shape the future of our organization from within.

FROM THE HERALD

CHEVALIER KELLY SOMOGYI, KSJ

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to the very first edition of the SOSJ Victoria Commandery Newsletter. Your stories, photos, and insights helped bring this publication to life. We're excited to announce that this will now be a quarterly newsletter, and we welcome your continued involvement. If you have a story idea, article, photo, or update you'd like to share in a future issue, please don't hesitate to reach out. Submissions can be sent to sosjherald@gmail.com, or feel free to call me directly at 250.884.7984. We are always seeking meaningful content to inform, engage, and inspire our members, your voice matters.

STAY CONNECTED

Follow us on social media for updates, events, and stories from the Commandery:

Facebook: Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller – Victoria

Instagram: @sosj.victoria

Yours in St. John,

Knight Kelly Somogyi, KSJ, Herald and Editor of the Victoria Commandery Newsletter

Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate, Pro Minimo
For Faith, For Service to Humanity

Editor: Chevalier Kelly Somogyi, KSJ

This newsletter is a publication of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller

VICTORIA OFFICE

www.sosjinternational.org

Thank you to all who have contributed to this newsletter.