



Report to the AGM

From the Vancouver Commandery Herald

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It's been another year of challenges for our province and our nation as the struggle to contain the global pandemic continues.

As with the many changes in daily life brought about by COVID restrictions, it hasn't been exactly 'business as usual' at the Vancouver Commandery. The challenge, of course, is how to ensure the good work of our Sovereign Order continues in times when membership and stakeholder engagement is restricted to mainly 'virtual' means.

You will learn from the reports of other members of the Vancouver Commandery Council that in spite of pandemic constraints, the enthusiastic and innovative leadership of our Commander David Hunt has produced a year to be proud of by our

membership. He is a communicator and his output has made the work of the Herald so much easier when it came to doing our part for our Commandery.

Improved communications tools and systems put in place two years ago, as part of a general modernization program, have coincidentally allowed the Commandery to find a higher gear at a time when communications has become a priority.

Newsletter

In 2018 the newsletter underwent a redesign and expanded to a 12 page format. In 2019, an editorial change took place with a goal to bring more of the work of the Almoner Committee into view to balance out the more social content of past issues. Also in 2019 the Newsletter added regular columns for the various stations with the Commandery and dedicated a story section to the upcoming, (and now postponed), Sovereign Council Meeting.

As the effects of COVID in 2020 took hold, the Herald recognized that person-to-person contact restricted the membership's ability to get to know new Aspirants and Invested members and significantly, those who chose to become part of the Vancouver Commandery Council. To this end the Newsletter added a new section called "Getting To Know..." which features interviews with Council members.

In spite of the rising cost of postage, presently at \$1.94 per issue, the actual production and printing costs are extremely reasonable given the end product. The work flow between the Herald and the printer is such that the completed files are printed and saddle-stitched in just two days. The envelope addresses are now digitally printed from our membership list directly onto the strip-seal envelopes, eliminating label printing and manual application.

It is felt that, in times of digital delivery of news content, the value of our printed newsletter is still high amongst our members and a welcomed package on arrival at your doorstep. That said, if you prefer a digital version we can take you off the printed copy mailing and direct you to a PDF of the newsletter that is posted on the Vancouver Commandery website concurrent with the release of the printed issue as well as to email you a personal copy.

Direct Communications More than ever, direct contact with members via email is key to deliver of need-to-know information. In 2019 we changed from conventional email with attachments to a much more visual format that displays attachment content from within the email. It allows for an easier to use, better display of content to the recipient and has generally been well received.

In future we intend to expand emails to include membership surveys, and more frequent use of ‘hot-links’ that allow the recipient to go to content outside the email, such as when payments are required to websites.

Another feature we are exploring is the option for members to choose to be contacted by text to their mobile devices for items such as reminders and other calls where action is required. We will be surveying members in the future on this option.

Commandery Website

Under the supervision of H E Conventual Bailiff Grand Marshal Richard D. Earthy, GCSJ, MMSJ the process of migrating the Vancouver Commandery website (www.sosjvancouver.org) into the International website is underway.

Although this is not a project of your Herald, its completion will impact and enhance the Vancouver Commandery communications process and will positively impact the Herald’s ability to better communicate to our membership.

More information on this change-over will be available upon completion.

Visual Identity Project

The Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller uses a large variety of letterhead, business card, newsletter, website, presentation, social media, and other designs.

Generally, there is a lack of consistency in terms of design, use of arms, and use of nomenclature.

This lack of consistency brought about the question of how best to standardize these elements within Canada to provide a common appearance. The rationale was that as units of the Sovereign Order experience greater success in their charitable efforts, the Sovereign Order will achieve greater recognition. As such, a consistent “brand” or visual image will aid units in attracting greater recognition, credibility, and membership, and through that greater success in charitable activities.

For oversight purposes of this project, a committee was formed, headed by the Grand Prior of Canada and three members of Vancouver Commandery with expertise in advertising, marketing, design, and communication. Work began. Upon the committee arriving at a consensus on a final Visual Identity, the work was presented to Le Petit Conseil and subsequently at the Sovereign Council Meeting in September 2020 and approved.

Based on the success of the first project, Le Petit Conseil then formed a committee to include members of the Sovereign Order throughout Europe and North America to make recommendations for standardization of Visual Identity of the Sovereign Order and its units internationally, based on the work of the Grand Priory of Canada.

The next stage of the project is application of the Visual Identities to a series of communications products (stationery, electronic forms, website headers, official documents, etc).

The success and acceptance of the Committee's work product has resulted in an International Visual Identity Committee being formed, again led by the Grand Prior of Canada, and comprised of SOSJ members from Finland, Scotland, England and the United States. The design work will be performed by the Vancouver Commandery Herald.

Our Vancouver Commandery should take pride in that we continue to lead by example within the Sovereign Order providing value to our global group.

The Digital Arms of Today's Sovereign Order



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

SOSJ International Visual Identity



Sovereign Order Of
ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM
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Grand Priory of Canada Visual Identity

Yours in St. John,

Vancouver Commandery Herald