



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



The Vancouver Commandery NEWSLETTER

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

Spring 2025



Fundraising and Social Evening to Help Reduce Food Insecurity

Vancouver Commandery members gathered with Quest Food Exchange on Thursday, February 20 to help support Quest's mission to reduce food insecurity.

It was a fun and engaging evening and thanks to generous SOSJ donors, the event raised over \$5,000 for food that Quest purchases to meet the needs of clients. (At the March Commandery Council meeting, the Almoner Committee proposed matching donations up to \$10,000 for 60 days so Quest will receive at least another \$5,000.)

"This was a wonderful opportunity to deepen our partnership with Quest. Members have been volunteering at Quest every month for over two years and we are always inspired by the important work they do," said Dame Mary Jordan, who organized the event.

Theo Lamb, the Executive Director of Quest, along with members of her staff, joined over 30 members and friends for a casual dinner and an opportunity to explain how Quest supports the community. They challenged the group with a "Food Trivia Quiz" which was fun, along with a donated prize (thanks to Chevalier Bill MacLagan).

Quest is a non-profit organization aiming to bridge the gap between Food Banks and retail grocery stores. Quest prices its food at roughly one third of the lowest grocery price in the public. Almost all of Quest's food is donated by local food partners from across British Columbia and delivered across five Metro Vancouver markets, located in East Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey, North Vancouver and the Downtown Eastside.

(Continued on Page 10)

IN THIS ISSUE

SOSJ Commitment To Quest Continues

Commander's Corner

**SOSJ member appointed as B.C.'s
Lieutenant Governor**

**Canadian Atlas of Palliative Care B.C.
Officially Launched**

Hospitaller Update

Getting To Know Chevalier Dean Duperron

Introducing Our New Aspirants

St. John The Baptist Day Celebrations

In Memorium

Upcoming Events

Message From The Commander

I want to start by thanking all of you for entrusting me with the role of Vancouver Commander for the next two years. I'm excited and energized to be taking this leadership position at a time when I believe our Commandery is poised to take a great leap forward in our service to benefit the sick and poor in British Columbia by collaborating on even more innovative programs and services.

Why "a great leap forward" you may ask, when we have been collaborating and providing financial support to many innovative programs and services in our province for years?

My answer is that all our previous endeavours have developed an internal skill set and created an opportunity to be more proactive in seeking out and evaluating those innovative programs and services which best meet the objective of enhancing our community impact, as outlined in our 2024-2029 Strategic Plan.

Case in point: our Almoner Committee has developed an expertise in evaluating grant requests submitted by organizations from across our province, annually providing financial support to 20-30 recipients, totalling up to \$250,000. Taken over a decade, it's hundreds of projects and millions of dollars!

Three years ago, one of the grant recipients was Pallium Canada, seeking funds to develop a tool that maps the availability and accessibility of palliative care services across BC. We took the role of lead funder, providing \$100,000 over the three-year development period. By the time you read this, Pallium will have launched the Canadian Atlas of Palliative Care – British Columbia Edition. This tool offers a seminal change in how we may choose to approach our funding in the future, enabling us to identify areas of greatest need in our province and be proactive in seeking out worthy organizations to assist with financial support and sector knowledge sharing in the palliative care sector.

The activity of our Almoner Committee has also generated recognition by way of awards in the healthcare community, creating greater awareness of our organization as a leader in hospice palliative care and other initiatives targeted at the sick and poor. Consequently, through those awards and our own networks, we are seeing a greater number of meaningful project opportunities that, if pursued, will require direct involvement of our Foundation and fundraising. Exciting stuff!

So, yes, I believe we are poised to take a great leap forward and I hope you do as well.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Past Commander Heather Hamilton for her service over the past two years. We all stand on the shoulders of those who have served before us.

I'll wrap up by highlighting an important date to put in your calendar:

Saturday, June 7, 2025 – Investiture and Gala, at which we have the joyful experience of welcoming new Members to our Commandery. In addition, this year we are moving promotions back to the Investiture, so please plan to join us to celebrate our newest Members and those Members receiving promotions in recognition of their work on behalf of the Order.



*Yours in St. John
Vancouver Commander
Chevalier John Jennings, KJSJ*

Our New Commander

Chevalier John Jennings, KJSJ retired at the end of 2023 following a four-decade career in mining, financial services and executive search. His formal education includes a B.Sc. (Chemistry) and an MBA. He also holds the ICD.D designation from the Institute of Corporate Directors and previously held the designation of Chartered Financial Analyst.

Chev. Jennings was invested into the Order in 2007 and has served in the following capacities within the Vancouver Commandery: Herald (2007–2012); Secretary to Council (2012–2014); Co-Chair, Almoner Committee (2018–2022); and Member, Strategic Planning Task Force (2023–2024). He was also a Member of Le Petit Conseil's Leadership Progression Task Group (2023).

Outside the Order, Chev. Jennings served his community at large on the Boards of Directors of St. Paul's Foundation (2000-2008) and BC Cancer Foundation (2008-2012), serving as Board Chair of both organizations. He served as Governance Chair on the Faculty Advisory Board of UBC's Sauder School of Business (2013-2022) and on the BC Chapter Executive of the Institute of Corporate Directors (2019-2023). He also served on the Board of Directors of Capilano Golf & Country Club (2008-2012) and as its President (2011); he continues to serve on Capilano's Standards Committee (2018-Present). He was the recipient of the BC Community Leadership Award in 2011.

Chev. Jennings has been married to Christine for 42 years and together they have raised two strong, independent women, Caitlin and Megan. A keen golfer, Chev. Jennings is still in pursuit of a single digit handicap.

SOSJ member appointed as B.C.'s Lieutenant Governor

All members of our Order were so pleased and extremely proud to hear of the appointment of British Columbia's 31st Lieutenant Governor, The Honourable Wendy Cocchia, CM, OBC, LLD (Hon). Her Honour is joined in her Vice Regal role by her husband, His Honour Sergio Cocchia, OBC, LLD (Hon).

Their Honours are members of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller having been invested into the Vancouver Commandery in June of 2014. Currently, Her Honour holds the rank of Dame Commander of Grace and His Honour holds the rank of Knight Commander of Grace, reflecting promotions for service to the Order that each has received since being invested.

Known for their compassion and philanthropy within the Sovereign Order, Their Honours support a variety of charities for the sick and the poor. They have their own charity, the Pacific Autism Family Network (PAFN), with a 60,000 square foot Centre in Richmond, and two smaller locations in Prince George and Chilliwack. PAFN's national program, the Autism and Intellectual Disability Knowledge Exchange (AIDE), has partner Hubs in Whitehorse, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Its interactive website (aidecanada.ca) provides curated resources for families, first responders and care givers.

Her Honour has been an active member of her community throughout her life. She has served as Governor of the Business Council of British Columbia, as the first female Trustee of the Vancouver Police Foundation, and as the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's fifth and youngest female Chair. She is a Fellow of Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia, and was a founding Director for Destination British Columbia.

In recognition of her leadership and community involvement, Her Honour is a member of the Order of Canada, the Order of British Columbia and has received two honorary doctorates from the Justice Institute of British Columbia and Vancouver Island University. She was inducted into the Hall of Fame for Canada's Most Powerful Women: WXN Top 100 award, she has received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, the King Charles III Coronation Medal, the British Columbia Community Achievement Award and received Variety's International Corporate Fundraiser of the Year.

Her Honour has built a successful career in the hospitality industry. She is the co-founder of the Absolute Spa Group and grew the company from one location to Canada's largest independent spa chain, which sold in 2020. Most recently, she was the Chief Executive Officer of Crew Management Ltd. and the Century Plaza Hotel in Vancouver.

Her Honour holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of British Columbia.

As Lieutenant Governor, Her Honour will continue to champion the transformative power of the meaningful inclusion of all regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, differing abilities, age and neurodiversity for example.



Submitted by:
Senator John E. (Jack) McGee,
CD, KCJSJ, MMSJ



The Role of Lieutenant Governor

The Lieutenant Governor is appointed by the Governor General acting by and with the advice of the King's Privy Council for Canada. Lieutenant Governors are normally appointed for a period of not less than five years.

The Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia directly represents the King of Canada, who is the legal Head of State in British Columbia. As Vice-Regal representative, the Lieutenant Governor acts as chief public representative and has the highest ranking position in the Provincial Government.

The Governor General represents The King in Canada.

Canadian Atlas of Palliative Care B.C. Edition Officially Launched



On March 25, 2025, Pallium Canada officially unveiled the British Columbia Edition of the Canadian Atlas of Palliative Care at a special event in Vancouver, joined by partners, donors, and community leaders.

For the first time in Canada, a comprehensive, province-wide, data-driven overview of palliative care is available—shedding light on both the strengths and opportunities within British Columbia’s healthcare system. The Atlas not only highlights key areas for improvement but also celebrates the progress made in delivering high-quality, compassionate care.

This landmark initiative was made possible through the generous support of donors across British Columbia who recognize the transformative potential of data in advancing health care.

At the forefront of this philanthropic endeavour was the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, Vancouver, whose early and visionary major investment in the development of the British Columbia edition of the Atlas served as a catalyst, inspiring additional donors to contribute.

Commander John Jennings, representing the Order as the lead funder, spoke at the launch event and eloquently underscored why the development of the Atlas marks a seminal moment in the evolution of palliative care in the province.

Jeff Moat, Pallium Canada’s Chief Executive Officer, read a congratulatory letter from the Honourable Wendy Cocchia, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia (and a member of the Order since 2014) praising all those involved in this vital initiative and expressing anticipation for the positive impact that the British Columbia edition of the Canadian Atlas of Palliative Care will have in shaping a stronger healthcare system.

“On behalf of His Majesty King Charles III, please accept my heartfelt congratulations on this important work,” the letter concluded.

Developed by Pallium Canada in partnership with McMaster University and the BC Centre for Palliative Care, the Atlas is a critical step toward ensuring all British Columbians—regardless of where they live—have access to high-quality end-of-life care.

More than just a research report, the Atlas features an interactive online story map that enables users to explore comprehensive data on palliative care services across the province and within each health authority. This dynamic tool empowers policymakers, healthcare leaders, funders, and communities with the insights they need to make evidence-informed decisions and drive improvements in care throughout British Columbia.

The Order is planning a town hall to provide members with an opportunity to share key findings, highlight strengths and gaps, and explore how this resource supports evidence-based decision-making to guide meaningful action and enhance care.

Learn more: www.pallium.ca/BCAtlas

HOSPITALLER UPDATE

Once again the Vancouver Commandery will be serving up a delicious dinner at Ronald McDonald House on Thursday, June 12 from 3 to 7:30 p.m.

We are looking for 10 – 12 volunteers from our membership to volunteer. Priority for volunteers will be given to members who have not yet had the opportunity to volunteer at Ronald McDonald House.

Feedback from members attending our past two sessions is that this is "the best volunteer experience I've had in the Sovereign Order."

Please sign up with Hospitaller Chair Charlie Kiers at charliekiers@gmail.com before June 1.



Hospitaller Chair Charlie Kiers models the new SOSJ Volunteer t-shirts. If you would like to order one, email charliekiers@gmail.com.

VANCOUVER COMMANDERY, HARD AT WORK IN THE QUEST KITCHEN, WITH SOME YOUNGER HELP...



Joining SOSJ Quest volunteers is Aiden Glynn (far right) standing next to his father Martin.

Members might not know that youth categories within the SOSJ exist as Squires and Demoiselles.

In Aiden's instance, a young man between the age of 18 and 23 years may be admitted into the Sovereign Order as a Squire following standard admission procedure for a Knight of Honour.

This is considered a minimum age, but Units of the Sovereign Order may establish a higher minimum age. It is expected that a Squire will transition to full membership as a Knight by no later than age 35, or earlier if so determined by the Commander.

A Squire has no vote on matters of the Sovereign Order.

INVESTITURE COUNTDOWN



Mark Saturday, June 7 on your calendar for the Vancouver Commandery's 2025 Investiture Service and Gala Dinner. The Investiture will once again take place at Christ Church Cathedral (690 Burrard Street) followed by the gala dinner at the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coastal Art (639 Hornby Street).

We will welcome three new aspirants this year – Alexa Loo, Ashley William Meehan and David Plunkett.

Members planning to attend the Investiture should be at the Church by 3:45p.m. to gather for the 4:30 p.m. start. As well, promotions will be part of this year's Investiture. Members receiving a promotion this year have been notified, and if you are among them, we hope you will make every effort to attend both the Investiture and the Gala.

Please let our administrator know if you are able to attend the gala dinner. Established in 2008, the Bill Reid Gallery is a gem of an art gallery that celebrates the diversity of contemporary indigenous Northwest Coast Art.

Getting to Know Chevalier Dean Duperron, KGSJ

We are so pleased to provide you with this issue's "Getting to Know" feature with Chevalier Dean Duperron, KGSJ. Chevalier Hans-Christian Behm, KGSJ had the privilege of interviewing Dean for this issue of the Newsletter.

Hans-Christian Behm (HCB): You have made such an impact on the education (and subsequently the careers) of so many, let's start with your beginnings.

Dean Duperron (DD): I was born in Cold Lake, Alberta into a military family and we eventually ended up in Vancouver. When I was 15, my mother and father separated (and she moved away). I stayed to finish high school. At 18, I was kicked out of the house with just the clothes on my back and a couple of pennies in my pocket. I got a part-time job as a night janitor at McDonald's which soon became full time. McDonald's was great as they hired me and provided one meal for every shift you worked. I also had a part-time job at Mr. Mike's Steakhouse. I call this my "zombie" time as I only managed a couple of hours sleep a night.

About this time, I also answered an ad for a manager trainee at K-Mart. However, when I watched my boss with his long hours, no overtime pay, no free meals and a low salary, I decided that my best bet was to pursue my education.

HCB: Where did you go?

DD: I enrolled at Douglas College (for two years) and also attended a summer session at SFU before transferring to UBC (General Arts and Science). I concentrated on the then fledgling Computer Science program. There I met a young woman with an irresistible smile which I still enjoy today. Sherri became my wife. We have three children and we are also blessed with five grandchildren.

During my third year at UBC (1979), I took a job as a night-time computer instructor at MacKay's Business School – they then offered me a full-time job which helped pay the rent. Around this time, the American super-computer firm Control Data Corporation opened in Vancouver. I was going to apply, however, they called me and when I called back, they offered me a job. So I ended up teaching their course while I was taking the course!

HCB: What year would this have been?

DD: This was still in the early 80s and computers were just coming into their heyday of being accessible to every business and every person.

HCB: How long were you with Control Data?

DD: I was with them for approximately 10 years. I learned a great deal while I worked in a variety of positions (from teaching, to creating the curriculum to sales and management). I also worked for them in the Maritimes but Sherri and I wanted to return to Vancouver. During my time with Control Data, I became more and more aware of the potential in the education field for not only computer-related courses but for education in a number of areas. While many just saw computers as an asset, I realized that the students were equally (if not the most important) asset.

HCB: Tell me how your involvement with Sprott Shaw College came about.

DD: I became aware that Sprott Shaw, founded in Vancouver in 1903, was selling some of its assets. In 1991, I negotiated a license to open three Sprott Shaw schools in the Lower Mainland.

We were successful in getting these licenses and Sherri and I became the major shareholders with a philosophy/methodology built around students. The career college system that we created has since been adopted by many private institutions. Eventually, we had 20 campuses in BC and two in Alberta.



Renowned Canadian artist, James Lumbers created the above painting to celebrate the Sprott Shaw College's 100 years of excellence in education.

The model went international. It was established in the Kingdom of Jordan under the patronage of the Queen, then India and in China. In 2007 we sold the system to another education group. By that time it had upwards of 600 employees.

HCB: Where did you go from there?

DD: We decided to diversify our involvement in a variety of private colleges and focused on applied computer science, ESL Schools, heavy equipment and trades, medicine and health, construction engineering, commerce and business planning, hospitality, culinary and administration – to mention a few. The academic accreditation varies – from a Certificate to a Master's Degree.

HCB: In 2003, Sprott Shaw celebrated its 100th birthday – and over the century there were many students including one of Canada's most famous artists.

DD: Yes, many people don't know that the acclaimed Emily Carr was a graduate of Sprott Shaw. She was already renowned at the time. Her publisher wanted her to write a book but he couldn't read her writing so he insisted she take a typing course. Another fun course the College was teaching "back then" was a bi-plane course. Student's lives actually depended on them getting through the course!

HCB: I've heard about an interesting competition you created – please tell us more.

DD: One of my favorite sayings is "Doing Cool." In 2009, Sherri and I wanted to create something meaningful and original so we committed \$1 million to what we called "Class Act Canada." This internet-based competition was aimed at promoting pluralism in education. 10 winners would get an all-expenses paid course at a Sprott Shaw Campus in Canada. We narrowed it down to 160 entries (who fit the criteria), and then through worldwide online voting, the winners were declared. At the end of the day 7.6 million votes were cast from nearly every country in the world. The champions came from Peru, the Ukraine, India, South Korea, the Philippines and Canada. We were and still are very proud of that program.

HCB: You have been and still are so involved in many areas that benefit the community, can you speak to one that is particularly dear to you.

DD: The Aboriginal Medical Student Acceptance Program is another program of which we are very proud. The goal is to have aboriginal values impacting on the Health Care system in general, and on aboriginals utilizing medical services in particular. As our health care systems fulcrum on the practicing doctors, we strove for a goal of getting 50 practicing doctors in 10 years.

We achieved that goal in year five. I then partnered with one of the aboriginal doctors who graduated from the program and set up a practice in Mission which grew from a single doctor to three or four doctors, a nurse, and a couple of MOA's (Medical Office Assistants). After a couple of years, I sold my interest in this project to the aboriginal doctor.

HCB: What brought SOSJ to your attention?

DD: I was invited to the opening of the St. John Hospice at UBC. The idea, the financial commitment and the care for the "Sick and the Poor" appealed to me.

HCB: Thank you for taking us on the journey through your life, and, what is little known: your outstanding generosity.



In 2003, Sprott Shaw Community College is inducted into the Vancouver Board of Trade's Business Hall of Fame for its 100 years of operation in B.C.



2025 ASPIRANTS

On June 7, the following accomplished individuals will be invested into the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller. A warm welcome and our heartfelt congratulations go to Alexa Loo, Ashley Meehan and David Plunkett.



Alexa Loo

Alexa Loo grew up in Richmond, and completed her Bachelor of Commerce degree at UBC.

Articling for KPMG, Alexa earned her CPA, CA. Not yet ready for a life of debits and credits, Alexa pursued her passion of alpine snowboard racing and competed in two winter Olympics – Torino, Italy in 2006, and right here in Vancouver in 2010.

While racing snowboards, Alexa worked with other athletes to lobby the federal government for a Minister of Sport and then lobbied that Minister of Sport for more funding for athletes, coaches, and indigenous sport. Her efforts helped secure an increase in direct funding to athletes of \$7 million per year for 1,400 athletes. They also improved sport governance by requiring federally funded sports to have a voting athlete representative on its board.

While preparing for the 2006 Olympics, Alexa wrote and passed the Chartered Financial Analyst exams. Passionate about inclusiveness and accessibility, Alexa volunteered with the International Paralympic Committee and at the Athens Paralympic Games in 2004.

She has been a Richmond City Councillor since 2014. For the past three-plus years she also has served as the Honorary Lieutenant Colonel for the 39th Service Battalion and she has been a KidSport Richmond board member for over 10 years.

Alexa and her partner Andrea Battiston have two boys, 13 year old Louie and 12 year old Sacha.

Sponsors: Chevalier Derral G. Moriyama, KGSJ and Chevalier Donald G. Foster, KJSJ.



Ashley William Meehan

Originally from Australia, Ashley attended St. Ignatius College Riverview in New South Wales and later studied Industrial Design at Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver.

Professionally, Ashley has held leadership roles in the security sector for more than a quarter of a century.

He is the CEO and a co-founder of Alliance Security Canada, a full-service international security company. Throughout his career, Ashley has taken on leadership roles and has worked to mentor others in business planning, development, and management.

He continues to offer experience and knowledge to organizations, boards, committees, and non-for-profit entities. He has volunteered with the Delta Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Vancouver Board of Trade LOT Programme, he provides mentorship for the Forum for Women Entrepreneurs, has been a member of the Rotary Club, assisted the Michael Cuccione Foundation in 2024 (Childhood Cancer Research), and the Invictus Games 2025 in Vancouver and Whistler. He now looks forward to working with the Sovereign Order of St. John.

Ashley has lived in several countries around the world, including Australia, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Egypt and now resides in Canada.

He has an abiding interest in personal fitness, golf and martial arts. He currently lives in Ladner with his wife, Heather and three daughters.

Ashley Meehan comes with an understanding of the Sovereign Order of St. John through his father – William Meehan – who worked with the Order in Vancouver (1998-2003), and who still serves for the Australian branch of the Order (2003-present).

Sponsors: HE Bailiff Grand Prior Emeritus John H.G. Dustan, GCSJ, MMSJ and Prior Dan Tidball, KJSJ



David Kent Plunkett

Burnaby born David Plunkett is a lawyer specializing in Construction and Insurance law with his firm, Burrard Law LLP.

He graduated from the University of British Columbia, both for his undergraduate and law degrees. He served as the President of the Construction Lawyers For Canada through the Canadian Bar Association, and has also provided legal services, pro bono, to the underprivileged through the Access to Justice Program.

David also has a long history of giving to his community and to charities including BC Children's Hospital Foundation, YWCA, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, Canuck Place Children's Hospice, Mom2Mom Child Poverty Initiative, Vancouver Food Bank, University of British Columbia, West Point Grey Academy, and the UNHCR.

He is on the Board of the Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club, including serving for the past two years as president.

David lives in Vancouver with his wife, Elizabeth Rennison, and their three children: Clara, Natasha and Daniel.

Sponsors: Chevalier Matthew Shaun Casey, KCSJ and Senator John W. Norton, KCJSJ, MMS



St. John the Baptist Day Celebrations

The Annual Commemoration of the Patron Saint of The Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem (St John the Baptist) will be held on Tuesday, June 24 at 5 pm. The service will be held at St Faith's Church, 7284 Cypress Street, Vancouver (the corner of West 57th Avenue and Cypress Street).

Heather and Kirk Hamilton are inviting everyone who attends the service on June 24th to come back to their home afterwards for dinner (5463 Cypress St at 39th.). If you are planning to attend, please email our administrator, Erin Meyer, at admin@sosjvancouver.org so the Hamiltons know how many to expect.

Inform U Sessions

Bailiff Grand Prior Anne Wolrige introduced the online "Inform U" sessions with the goal of enhancing our members' knowledge pertaining to our Order. Three sessions have occurred and a fourth will be announced in the coming months.

The first Inform U session focused on Charity Taxation and our sincere thanks go out to SOSJ Receiver General Michael Haywood who organized the taxation session and to our excellent guest speaker, Alexi Paish from Thorsteinnsons who provided us with both his slide presentation and materials. These materials will be of great benefit to those in a governance position within our Order or for those who may be involved in charities outside of our Order.

Thank you to Conventual Bailiff Grand Marshall Richard Earthy who led the second session –SOSJ 101 – on March 6th. This session covered a wide variety of topics pertaining to our Order and its structure.

The third session, facilitated by Grand Conservator Grand Prior Brian Raushhuber, titled the How, What, When and Why to Engage in your Commandery focused on leadership progression and promotions within the Sovereign Order.

All seminars are on the website. As well, you can get access to the recordings through Erin, our SOSJ Administrator, at admin@sosjvancouver.org.



Vancouver Commandery Support of Quest

(Continued from page 1)

A considerable amount of Quest's food is donated in bulk and Vancouver Commandery members have volunteered each month to work as a team to help "re-pack" the bulk food into smaller packages to be promptly delivered to the five grocery stores. Volunteer teams have re-packed foods including fruits and vegetables, yogurt, oats and other dried goods.

With the generous donations from this event, Mary Jordan says: "We will now have an opportunity to repackage rice (one of the top three purchased foods) and attach a label which says "Donated and repacked by the Sovereign Order of St John".

This grass-roots, hands-on program is an excellent example of how our work in the community fits within our strategic pillars of Community Impact, Membership and Leadership. If you are interested in learning more about Quest and the volunteer work, please contact Dame Mary Jordan at mbjcanada@gmail.com.

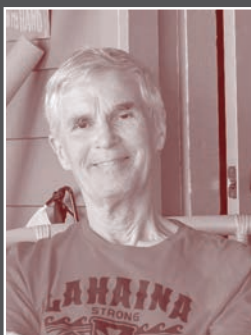


Taking The Oath Of Office

Prelate The Venerable G. Douglas Fenton, KGSJ administers the Oath of Office to Vancouver Commander, Chevalier John Jennings, KJSJ.

Chevalier Jennings was invested into the Order in 2007 and has faithfully served on many committees as well as the Commandery Council for many years.

In Memorium



Remembering Chevalier Nairn (Buz) Knott, KCJSJ

It is with great sadness that we share that Chevalier Nairn (Buz) Knott, KCJSJ passed away on March 21, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. He will be greatly missed by his wife of 35 years, Wendi, sister Jane (George Hungerford), brother Lyall (Susan), nieces, nephews, extended family and many friends. Buz embraced the true meaning of love, compassion and grace.

He was born in Vancouver and after a BA and MBA from UBC, Buz entered the world of banking in Vancouver, Toronto and Chicago. Returning to Vancouver he worked in international finance, government relations and as an entrepreneur with his wife Wendi. He contributed to many organizations including Science World, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens, Export Development Corporation, Sovereign Order of St. John, mentorship programs at UBC and BCIT and several levels of politics.

Buz was invested into the Order of St. John in 1996. One of his main focuses in the Order was the Membership Committee, which he Chaired for many years and continued to serve on for many years thereafter. To quote long time friend Dan Tidball "Buz was adamant that those recruited to the Order had demonstrated a history of community service and much to his credit could be relied on to bring outstanding individuals to the Order. Buz brought more individuals to the Membership Committee's attention than probably anyone else."

Buz was very proud of his Scottish, Gwich'in and English heritage. Many thanks to the medical teams especially at BC Cancer, Pacific Spirit and St. John Hospice.



Remembering Dame Dona Marie Wolverson, Commander of Grace

The Order was recently informed of the passing of Dame Dona Marie Wolverson (1931 – 2024) who passed away last summer (July 7) at the age of 94. The Order was informed that no obituary was published, and no services were held.

Heather and Kirk Hamilton, who would often see Dona out for a walk with her caregiver, said she had been ill for the past few years and had a fulltime caregiver.

Heather remembers Dame Wolverson as a keen gardener. "She loved to be outside in the sunshine and her garden. She would always comment on plants and gardens on her walks. She was a supportive and loyal member and some might remember Dame Wolverson hosting an Aspirant reception in her lovely home on Marguerite Street."

She was invested in 1991 and attained the rank of Dame Commander of Grace.

Dame Susan Scott Gabe, DCJSJ Recipient of B.C. Community Award



The Vancouver Commandery is pleased to announce our very own Dame Susan Scott Gabe, DCJSJ, is a recipient of The BC Achievement Foundation's Community Award in recognition of her outstanding work, as part of the Vancouver Commandery Almoner Committee, in the development of the Pallium BC Atlas project.

The Atlas project will leave an indelible legacy for Vancouver Commandery and the Sovereign Order in identifying resources and gaps in palliative care across British Columbia.

The BC Achievement Foundation Community Award celebrates the spirit of excellence in our province and serves to honour the best of British Columbia by recognizing extraordinary British Columbians who build better, stronger, more resilient communities and shine as examples of dedication and service.

The presentation ceremony is taking place at Government House in Victoria on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, in the presence of the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, Wendy Cocchia, CM, OBC, LLD (Hon).



Remembering Chevalier Robert John Isaac, Knight Commander of Grace

It is with much sadness we report the passing of Chevalier Rob Isaac KCSJ on March 1, 2025. He was invested in 2008.

His many contributions were always behind the scene. Rob did not seek acknowledgement and avoided the limelight.

He personified our motto: Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum – For Faith, For Service to Humanity. Rob was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness a few years ago. He faced his deteriorating health with grace, courage, stoicism and was most fortunate to have received constant love and support throughout his trials from his wife Gloria and their three children Rachel, Conan and Margaret.

Born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, in April 1957, Rob moved to BC with his family in 1960 and ultimately settled in West Vancouver. Rob was a multifaceted individual; a musician, an entrepreneur, a technical geek, a race car driver, a financial advisor, a humourist, but above all, a generous giver of his time and talent to charitable causes including the SOSJ.

Attending Trinity Western University he combined his musical and technical skills to established a business importing and distributing high-end audio equipment throughout Canada. Ultimately, he qualified for his Canadian Securities License and joined his father Russ Isaac's investment firm as an advisor, which was to be his career.

To quote Gloria, "Rob operated in living colour". And could always be counted on to bring laughter wherever he went. He certainly believed in the saying, "Laughter is the Best Medicine".



Remembering Senator David McLean, OBC KJSJ

It was with much sadness we learned of the passing of Senator David McLean OBC KJSJ, one of our longest serving members. Invested in 1991, he immediately began contributing to the work of the Order, resulting in rapid promotion to KJSJ within a decade.

Senator McLean was a larger than life leader in the Vancouver business and philanthropic communities for decades, and his influence extended across Canada. Active in several worthy causes, with a focus on healthcare, conservation and education, his contribution of time, talent and treasure set an exceptionally high standard for others to follow. Other organizations that benefited from his leadership include VGH & UBC Hospital Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, UBC, University of Alberta, and Vancouver Board of Trade, to mention but a few.

Trained as a lawyer, he practiced in the profession for almost two decades before setting out to found The McLean Group in 1972. A half-century later, The McLean Group is comprised of several businesses led by sons Jason and Sasha. In addition to running the family business, he was Chair of CN Rail for almost 20 years.

David was recognized for his leadership and philanthropy with many awards, including the Order of British Columbia, four Honorary Doctor of Law Degrees, inductee into the Business Laureates of British Columbia Hall of Fame, and Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Corporate Directors.

Our thoughts are with Brenda, his wife of 52 years, and the rest of his extended family. A Celebration of Life was held on March 11 at UBC's Chan Centre.



Upcoming Events, Vancouver

June 6 & 7, 2025
Investiture Weekend

June 24, 2025
St. John The Baptist Day

Upcoming Events, Victoria & Okanagan

May 21, 2025
Victoria Commandery AGM & Dinner

June 21, 2025
Okanagan Commandery Summer Solstice Party

October 17 -18, 2025
Victoria Commandery Investiture Weekend

Upcoming Events, Worldwide

May 16 – 18, 2025
Glasgow Commandery Investiture – TBC

September 5 – 6, 2025
Dagmar Commandery Investiture – TBC

September 6, 2025
The Commandery of the Sierras, Social and Fundraiser
for Circle of Life Hospice Foundation

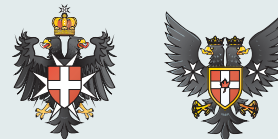
June 11 - 13, 2026
SCM – The Palm Beaches 2026

August 13 – 27, 2028
SCM – Scotland 2028

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Herald - Dame Diana Barkley, DCSJ
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Please send contributions, photos, articles of interest
and story ideas to dianabarkley@icloud.com.



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ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM
Knights Hospitaller c.1048

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