



Rose Croix | District of Buckinghamshire

INSPECTOR GENERALS' FORUM – 3 NOVEMBER 2021



Another unusual IG Forum Princes, this time because although a meeting would be legally permissible, we have had to abandon the meeting of 1176 at which I would normally address you because of insufficient numbers being available. Although Craft and Royal Arch chapters are gradually resuming meetings, there is no doubt that the recently increasing number of infections has made our Rose Croix assemblies more of a risk for the clinically vulnerable amongst our members, even if almost all of us are now double jabbed. Supreme Council has issued very useful guidance on how to conduct our ceremonies when held and DCs particularly should ensure that the junior officers are aware of how careful we wish to be.

This first Wednesday of November is not only our normal 1176 meeting date but also always coincides with a higher degrees meeting at which Supreme Council conduct the ceremony to confer the 32° on those worthies who have excelled for many years in administering and promoting the Order. I shall be attending that meeting and there are 46 candidates today from the 47 Districts in England and Wales, the 5 Groups in London, the 18 Overseas jurisdictions

and the 13 unattached Chapters around the world. Numbers of 32° awards are strictly limited throughout the Order but this year we have Ill. Bro Peter Cole of Cygnet Chapter receiving that accolade. It is 5 years since we received our last 32°. That was Paul Cawte on 2nd November 2016 and the ceremony was held that year in Rugby. I chauffeured Paul up to the ceremony and although I already knew that V. Ill. Bro David Sawyer was to announce at 1176 that evening that I was to succeed him, it was something of a surprise shortly after getting to Rugby to be quietly whisked away to the VIP room to be introduced to, and congratulated by, members of Supreme Council. As most of you will know, I have been offered (and of course accepted) a second 5-year term as Inspector General which started 2 days ago on 1st November.

The last year has of course rather dragged with 2 lockdowns and no meetings for month after month. I would normally have attended over 40 Rose Croix meetings during the year (as well as many, many more in other orders) and we will all now be rusty at performing the beautiful ceremonies we have missed so much. The Rose Croix Chapters of Instruction have re-started at Winslow and Beaconsfield on the second Mondays and second Tuesdays respectively and I urge you all, whatever regalia you are proud to wear in your chapters, to attend these invaluable rehearsal evenings so that we may regain our former proficiency and once again mount ceremonies which we and our candidates will enjoy. Several chapters have candidates in the pipeline and, having lost around 7% of our members from deaths and resignations in the last 18 months, we must apply ourselves to extending the privilege of membership to more Christian men whose company in the Order we know we will enjoy and who will enjoy being with us. I will end this note on membership to encourage all Bucks Rose Croix masons to consider attending our Buckinghamshire Higher Degrees chapter meetings in March and November. Actual

membership is of course only available to those elected to 30° and above but each new Sovereign, on taking the chair, is expected to deliver a talk related to the Rose Croix and these talks will undoubtedly be interesting to members of all levels of experience. I very much enjoy proof-reading the talks beforehand and applying my mark of approval for their delivery.

After such a lean year for meetings, there is no specific ritual detail I would wish to comment on as we get back into our various tasks in the chapter. However, even as some of us return to our chapters, I would urge almoners, recorders and DCs to make contact with those who do not yet feel ready to venture out with us. A friendly call improves the spirit of even the most comfortable and confident non-attender and while we must not pressure our members to join us at meetings, we can ensure they know that we miss them.

I would normally wind down the forum by inviting questions but with this meeting having been abandoned, I shall simply offer to try and resolve queries should anyone care to email me. I thank District Recorder Peter Moody for his support throughout the year and all those who responded to the 61 weekly quizzes I issued from Easter 2020 to Ascension Day 2021. Finally, I have already heard someone wish me a Happy Christmas at a meeting and I would wish you all an enjoyable, healthy, and reflective period as we celebrate our Saviour's birth next month. May we ever be followers of his example of tolerance and love and enjoy the company of families and friends in the world outside freemasonry as much as we care for each other within it.

May our Faith continue to inspire us, may our Hope in Salvation support us and may we live in Charity with all.

Best Wishes
Peter Harborne 33°