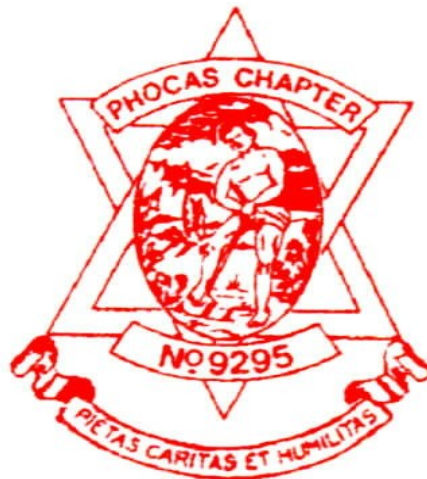


A HISTORY OF PHOCAS CHAPTER

ORIGINS

Phocas Lodge N^o 9295 was Consecrated on 30th November 1988. It had its origins with experienced and enthusiastic Masons living in the Cheshunt area. The name of the Lodge was taken from St Phocas, a Christian martyr who lived on the Black Sea coast at Sinope in what is now Turkey. This was felt to be appropriate as the founders wanted to honour the memory of a Brother Bobby Price who had been a market gardener in Cheshunt and had been a mentor to many of the Founders.



As the Holy Royal Arch is the “completion of pure, antient Freemasonry” it was proper that the Brethren of Phocas Lodge should seek to enhance their Masonry by bringing into being a Royal Arch Chapter. This was the origin of Phocas Chapter N^o 9295.

In the years since, Phocas Lodge has been the main, though not exclusive, source of members for Phocas Chapter, and has supported the Chapter generously.

CONSECRATION

Phocas Chapter N^o 9295 was Consecrated at Halsey Hall, Cheshunt, Herts, on Friday, 13th May 1994. Present were, -

- E Comp Raymond Heskell, Most Excellent Grand Superintendent, (died 2011).
- E Comp Ronald C Steventon, OBE, QPM, Second Provincial Grand Principal, (died 1997).
- E Comp John Cranfield, Third Provincial Grand Principal, (died 1997).
- E Comp E John Day, Provincial Grand Scribe E, (died 2000).
- E Comp William Blackburn, Provincial Grand Scribe N,
- E Comp John Illott, Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies,
- E Comp H Keith Emmerson, Provincial Grand Sword Bearer,
- E Comp Rowland Mecklenburgh, Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies,
- E Comp Brian Blanchard, Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies, (died 2013).
- E Comp Richard W Hayden, Provincial Grand Standard Bearer, (died 2018).
- E Comp Vivian G Brewer, Provincial Grand Organist, (died 2000).
- E Comp Peter D Messingham, Provincial Grand Janitor, (died 2015).

The following Founders were present, -

E Comp J R Gillespie, MEZ, (died 2016).
E Comp P L Goodall, H,
E Comp R G Fidler, J,
E Comp R Watling, Scribe E,
E Comp V A E Britton, Scribe N,
E Comp T G Bates, Treasurer,
E Comp A E Kemp, DC, (died 2015)
Comp P V J White, PS,
E Comp P E Blakemore, 1st Assistant Soj,
Comp L A Sherwood, 2nd Assistant Soj, (died 2004).
E Comp P J Brill, Assistant DC, (died 2012).
E Comp R L Strange, Assistant Scribe E, (died 2014).
E Comp A G Clark, Steward,
E Comp V G Staines, Steward, (died 2013)
E Comp E Ellis, Steward, (died 2013).
Comp Roy Rashbrook, Steward,
Comp Kevin Webb, Steward, (died 2006).
E Comp P R Mitchell, (died 1995).
E Comp W R Harris, (died 2017).
E Comp A R Southall, (died 2010).
E Comp L R F Courtney,
E Comp J Wiggins, (died 2003).
Comp R D Elford,
Comp M A Jones.

The following Founders were unable to be present, -

Comp W Makepeace

In addition there were present E Comp R G H Cook, Janitor, 12 Officers of Supreme Grand Chapter, and 54 visiting Companions.

The Consecrating Officers were invited to become Honorary Members of the Chapter and accepted.

£100.00 was presented to the 1998 Festival.

SECOND REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th July 1994

W Bro Stephen Dance and W Bro John Morrison were Exalted into the Chapter and Comp C P Harvey was admitted as a Joining Member.

THIRD REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st September 1994

Bro D J Lawrence was Exalted into the Chapter.

E Comp S E E Tuck was elected an Honorary Member of the Chapter.

The Chapter had purchased Shares in the Halsey Hall Co to the amount of £200.00.

FOURTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd February 1995

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp P Goodall; H E Comp R G Fidler; J Comp P V J White.

Bros W J Hart and W A Maughan were Exalted into the Chapter.

A letter of Resignation was received from Comp W Makepeace due to ill health.

FIFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th July 1995

The Chapter remembered E Comp P R Mitchell, who died on 21st Feb 1995.

Bro Keith Weatherbee was Exalted into the Chapter.

SIXTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th September 1995

Bros J W Morris and D W Tanfield were Exalted into the Chapter.

SEVENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st February 1996

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp R G Fidler; H E Comp P V J White; J E Comp P Blakemore.

Rule 71 of the Royal Arch Regulations was enacted with regards to Comp M A Jones.

The Chapter resolved to present a J Sceptre to Halsey Hall.

EIGHTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th July 1996

Bro Allan Chapman was Exalted into the Chapter.

NINTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th September 1996

Bro Neil Vyse was Exalted into the Chapter.

TENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th February 1997

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp P V J White; H E Comp P Blakemore; J E Comp A G Clark.

ELEVENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd July 1997

Bro Anthony John Walker was Exalted into the Chapter.

TWELFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd September 1997

Bro S J Wilson was Exalted into the Chapter.

THIRTEENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th February 1998

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp P Blakemore; H E Comp A G Clark; J E Comp V G Staines.

A Resignation had been received from Comp K Weatherbee on personal grounds.

FOURTEENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd July 1998

Bros K Fagan and D P R Edwards were Exalted into the Chapter.

FIFTEENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd September 1998

Routine business only.

SIXTEENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th February 1999

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp A G Clark; H E Comp V G Staines; J Comp L A Sherwood.

E Comp A M Cunningham was welcomed as a Joining Member.

SEVENTEENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st July 1999

Bro Ken Turvey was Exalted into the Chapter.

A Resignation had been received from Comp D Tanfield, who had moved away from the area.

£300.00 had been donated to the Hertfordshire Mark Benevolent Fund 1999 Festival.

EIGHTEENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd September 1999

E Comp Stanley Ripsher was welcomed into the Chapter as a Joining Member.

Bro R L Clark was Exalted into the Chapter.

NINETEENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd February 2000

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp V G Staines; H E Comp L A Sherwood; J E Comp P V J White.

E Comp D H Cox was welcomed into the Chapter as a Joining Member.

It was agreed to donate £500.00 to Ketch Cottage Children's Hospice.

A Resignation had been received from Comp S J Wilson.

Rule 71 of the Royal Arch Regulations was enacted with regards to Comp R Rashbrook.

TWENTIETH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th July 2000

Bro John Ellis was Exalted into the Chapter.

Phocas Lodge 9295 had donated £500 to the Chapter.

A Resignation had been received from E Comp A R Southall.

TWENTY-FIRST REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th September 2000

Bro W R Baxter was Exalted into the Chapter.

A Resignation had been received from E Comp R L Strange.

TWENTY-SECOND REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st February 2001

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp L A Sherwood; H E Comp P V J White; J E Comp S Ripsher.

TWENTY-THIRD REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th July 2001

Bro P R Gillespie was Exalted into the Chapter.

A Resignation had been received from Comp R L Clark, who had moved to Spain.

TWENTY-FOURTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th September 2001

Bro J G Flaum was Exalted into the Chapter.

E Comp Alec Fuller, Most Excellent Grand Superintendent of the Province of Hertfordshire, was elected to Honorary Membership of the Chapter.

TWENTY-FIFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th February 2002

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp P V J White; H E Comp S Ripsher; J E Comp P L Goodall.

The Chapter stood to order in memory of E Comp D Cox.

Bro M E Phelan was Exalted into the Chapter.

The Chapter voted to become a Patron of the Halsey Masonic Hall.

TWENTY-SIXTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th July 2002

Bro R J Bewell was Exalted into the Chapter.

A Resignation had been received from Comp W Maugham.

TWENTY-SEVENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th September 2002

Bro B C Webb was Exalted into the Chapter.

TWENTY-EIGHTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th February 2003

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp S Ripsher; H E Comp P L Goodall; J E Comp J R Gillespie.

Bro B Melton was Exalted into the Chapter.

TWENTY-NINTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd July 2003

The Chapter stood to order in memory of E Comp J Wiggins.

Bro J L Murray was Exalted into the Chapter.

Phocas Lodge 9295 had donated £460.00 to the Chapter Charity Fund.

THIRTIETH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th September 2003

Bro J Dawson was Exalted into the Chapter.

THIRTY-FIRST REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th February 2004

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp P L Goodall; H E Comp J R Gillespie; J E Comp J Morris.

THIRTY-SECOND REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st July 2004

Bro L Brown was Exalted into the Chapter.

THIRTY-THIRD REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd September 2004

Bro Wilf Crooks was Exalted into the Chapter.

THIRTY-FOURTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd February 2005

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp J R Gillespie; H E Comp J Morris; J E Comp P V J White.

THIRTY-FIFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th July 2005

E Comp P Blakemore gave a talk on “The Supremacy of the Royal Arch”, which was well received. Attendance suffered due to the transport system in London being disrupted by bombings.

THIRTY-SIXTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st September 2005

Rule 71 of the Royal Arch Regulations was enacted with regards to Comps J Murray and J Dawson.

THIRTY-SEVENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd February 2006

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp J Morris; H E Comp P V J White; J E Comp A Clark.

THIRTY-EIGHTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th July 2006

Bro D Masters was Exalted into the Chapter.

THIRTY-NINTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th September 2006

E Comp N Jenkins was welcomed to the Chapter as a Joining Member.

FORTIETH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st February 2007

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp P V J White; H E Comp A Clark; J E Comp N Jenkins.

FORTY-FIRST REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th July 2007

Bro M Surtees was Exalted into the Chapter.

FORTY-SECOND REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th September 2007

The Chapter stood to order in memory of Comp K Webb.

E Comp D Blackman was welcomed into the Chapter as a Joining Member.

FORTY-THIRD REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th February 2008

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp A Clark; H E Comp N Jenkins; J E Comp R Bewell.

FORTY-FOURTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd July 2008

Bro E D May was Exalted into the Chapter.

FORTY-FIFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th September 2008

Routine business only.

FORTY-SIXTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th February 2009

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp N Jenkins; H E Comp R Bewell; J E Comp M E Phelan.

FORTY-SEVENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd July 2009

Bro J W Dainty was Exalted into the Chapter.

FORTY-EIGHTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd September 2009

A talk on “The Sojourner’s Tale” was given by E Comp A Ward.

FORTY-NINTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th February 2010

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp R Bewell; H E Comp M E Phelan; J E Comp J R Gillespie.

FIFTIETH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st July 2010

The Chapter stood to order in memory of Comp Tony Walker.
The Ceremony of Exaltation was demonstrated.

FIFTY-FIRST REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd September 2010

A talk was given by E Comp John Paternoster on "Symbolism in the Chapter".
E Comp Ian Clift and E Comp R Watling were made Honorary Members of the Chapter.

FIFTY-SECOND REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd February 2011

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp M E Phelan; H E Comp J R Gillespie; J E Comp D Blackman.

FIFTY-THIRD REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th July 2011

Bro A D Bissell was Exalted to into the Chapter.

FIFTY-FOURTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st September 2011

A talk was given by E Comp John Paternoster on "Royal Arch Symbolism".

FIFTY-FIFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd February 2012

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp J R Gillespie; H E Comp D Blackman; J E Comp N Jenkins.

The Chapter stood to order in memory of E Comp Raymond Heskell, PGSupt.

FIFTY-SIXTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th July 2012

The Chapter stood to order in memory of E Comp Alan Ward, PDGSupt.
E Comp Vernon Elphick was welcomed into the Chapter as a Joining Member.
A talk was given by E Comp Paul Blakemore on "The Sojourners' Tale".

FIFTY-SEVENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th September 2012

A talk was given by E Comp Terry Bates on "The Trip to Jerusalem".

FIFTY-EIGHTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th February 2013

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp D Blackman; H E Comp M E Phelan; E Comp N Jenkins was absent and could not be Inducted as J.

The Chapter stood to order in memory of E Comp Peter Brill.

FIFTY-NINTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th July 2013

The Chapter stood to order in memory of E Comp Vic Staines.
E Comp N Jenkins was Inducted into the J Chair.
A talk was given by E Comp Terry Bates on "The Trip to Jerusalem".

SIXTIETH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th September 2013

A talk was given by E Comp Robin Fagence on "The Temple at Jerusalem".

SIXTY-FIRST REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th February 2014

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp M E Phelan; E Comp N Jenkins was not present and could not be Inducted as H; J E Comp J R Gillespie was Inducted.

The Chapter stood to order in memory of E Comp Elias Ellis.

SIXTY-SECOND REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd July 2014

E Comp was Inducted into the J Chair.
The Ceremony of Exaltation was rehearsed.

SIXTY-THIRD REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th September 2014

The Ceremony of Exaltation was rehearsed.

SIXTY-FOURTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th February 2015

The following were Inducted as Principals – MEZ E Comp N Jenkins; H E Comp J R Gillespie; J E Comp J Morris.

SIXTY-FIFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd July 2015

The Ceremony of Exaltation was demonstrated.

SIXTY-SIXTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 3rd September 2015

E Comp Paul Blakemore gave a talk on “Time”.

SIXTY-SEVENTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 4th February 2016

The following were Inducted as Principals – MEZ E Comp N Jenkins; H E Comp J Morris; J E Comp L Courtney was Installed.

MEGS E Comp James Sharpley was elected as an Honorary Member of the Chapter.

A cheque for £1,000.00 was presented to E Comp David Hampton for the 2019 Craft Festival.

E Comp Bob Gillespie was extremely ill in a London hospital.

A letter of Resignation had been received from Comp John Morison.

SIXTY-EIGHTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th July 2016

The Companions stood to order in memory of E Comp Bob Gillespie.

E Comp Terry Bates was elected an Honorary Member of the Chapter.

E Comp Vernon Elphick was presented with a 50-year Certificate.

E Comp Michael Phelan gave a talk on “Freemasonry in the First World War”.

SIXTY-NINTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st September 2016

E Comp Peter Fotheringham gave a talk on “Some of the Lost Secrets of Freemasonry”.

SEVENTIETH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 2nd February 2017

The following were Inducted as Principals – MEZ E Comp J Morris; H E Comp L Courtney was Installed; J E Comp R Bewell was Inducted.

Minutes of a GP Committee meeting, held on 28th November 2016, had been circulated.

Letters of Resignation had been received from Comps M Surtees and A Bissel.

SEVENTY-FIRST REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th July 2017

The Ceremony of Exaltation was rehearsed, with particular emphasis being placed on use of the “Setting the Scene” material provided by Provincial Chapter.

SEVENTY-SECOND REGULAR CONVOCATION, 7th September 2017

The Companions stood to order in memory of E Comp V Elphick.

E Comp Darren Bending gave a talk on “Variations on the Exaltation Ceremony”.

E Comp Tim Coles introduced himself as our Chapter Liaison Grand Officer, and gave an account of the various initiatives being taken by Provincial Chapter.

A Cheque for £1,000.00 was presented to E Comp Tim Coles for the Craft 2019 Festival.

E Comp Michael Phelan gave an account of the information he had received about the possibility of moving the Chapter to Denmark, at the conclusion of which he asked if any member wished to propose that the Chapter take that decision. No Companion did so, and the matter was closed.

SEVENTY-THIRD REGULAR CONVOCATION, 1st February 2018

The following were Installed as Principals – MEZ E Comp L Courtney; H E Comp R Bewell was unable to attend, so E Comp J Ilott occupied the Chair of 2nd Principle for the duration of the meeting; J E Comp P Goodall was unable to attend and the Chair of 3rd Principal was occupied by E Comp D Williams for the duration of the meeting.

E Comp Michael Phelan gave Notice of Motion that, at the next meeting of the Chapter, he would propose that the affairs of the Chapter would be wound up and the Charter returned, due to lack of members meaning that the Chapter was no longer viable. September would be the last meeting of the Chapter’

E Comp Michael Phelan rose and gave Notice of Motion that, at the next meeting of the Chapter, he would propose that, subject to the proposal to return Charter being passed, the property and assets of the Chapter would be disposed of as agreed by the Companions.

Provincial Grand Lodge of Hertfordshire has recognised the Chapter’s support for the 2019 Festival by issuing us with a “Certificate of Support”.

Minutes of a GP Committee meeting held on 7th December 2017 had been circulated at which those Companions present had reluctantly recognised that the Chapter was no longer viable.

Rule 71 of the Royal Arch Regulations was enacted with regards to E Comp N Jenkins.

SEVENTY-FOURTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 5th July 2018

The Companions stood for a minute of respectful silence in memory of E Comp Martin Wigglesworth, who had served the Chapter as Janitor for many years.

Pursuant to a Notice of Motion given at the February 2018 meeting E Comp M E Phelan rose to propose that, due to a dwindling membership and no immediate prospect of Candidates, the Phocas Chapter 9295 has ceased to be viable and, accordingly, the meeting to be held at Halsey Hall, Cheshunt, on Thursday, 6th September 2018, will be considered as the last meeting of this Chapter, and thereafter the affairs of the Chapter will be finally wound up and the Charter of the Chapter and any such documents and records as are required, be returned to the First Grand Principal, in accordance with Rule 190, Book of Constitutions.

This was seconded by E Comp Paul Blakemore, and carried without dissent.

Pursuant to a Notice of Motion given at the February 2018 meeting E Comp M E Phelan rose to propose that, subject to the proposal to surrender the Charter being carried, the assets of the Chapter be disposed of as agreed by the Companions. This was seconded by E Comp Paul Blakemore, and carried without dissent.

E Comp Vic Britton, Treasurer, proposed that the funds held by the Chapter for Benevolent purposes be donated to the 2019 Festival and the balance of funds held to be passed to Phocas Lodge 9295. This was seconded by E Comp Paul Blakemore, and carried without dissent.

E Comp Tim Coles gave a very enlightening talk on the many initiatives launched by the Provincial Royal Arch Chapter in recent years. E Comp Michael Phelan thanked E Comp Tim Coles for giving such an interesting talk, and urged all Phocas Chapter Companions to use this information in playing an active role in whichever Chapter they transferred their membership to.

SEVENTY-FIFTH REGULAR CONVOCATION, 6th September 2018

The final meeting of Phocas Chapter took place at Halsey Masonic Hall, Cheshunt, on the above date. The Deputy Grand Superintendent, E Comp David Hampton, represented the Provincial

Chapter, and was accompanied by the 2nd Provincial Grand Principal, E Comp Paul Blakemore (also a member of the Chapter), the 3rd Provincial Grand Principal, E Comp Phil Masters, the Provincial Grand Scribe E, E Comp John Linley, accompanied by E Comp Robert Paul Wale, Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies, assisted by E Comp Mark Aitkins, Past Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies. In addition, there were 9 Provincial Grand Officers and 18 Guests and Visitors. E Comp Darren Bending stood in as Director of Ceremonies of the Chapter.

The Chapter stood in silence as a mark of respect for E Comp Ian Clift, **PGSwdB**, and Past Deputy Grand Superintendent, who had died on 23rd August 2018. E Comp Tim Coles delivered the eulogy. The Deputy Grand Superintendent took the Chair, invited his officers to take their places, and addressed the Companions. A very moving Service of Thanksgiving was held, followed by the Return of the Symbols of Harmony and the Surrender of the Chapter Charter.

The Principals, and acting Principals, of the Chapter resumed their Chairs and closed the Chapter for the last time.

During the course of the Chapter's history there have been 33 Exaltations, and 7 Companions became Joining Members. The peak membership came at the meeting on 2nd September 2004, when the summons showed membership at 41.

Death has removed many fine Masons from the ranks of the Chapter. We remember and honour, -

E Comp P R Mitchell, 21st February 1995
E Comp D H Cox, PPGSoj, January 2002
Comp J Wiggins, 12th June 2003
E Comp L A Sherwood, 23rd July 2004
Comp K Webb, 30th December 2006
Comp A J Walker, 7th May 2010
E Comp P J Brill, **PAGDC**, 16th October 2012
E Comp V G Staines, PPGReg, SLGCR, 15th April 2013
E Comp E Ellis, PPGSoj, LGCR, 13th November 2014
E Comp A E Kemp, **PGSN**, 22nd February 2015
E Comp J R Gillespie, **PAGDC**, 16th February 2016
Comp W R Harris, PPGSoj, 20th July 2016
E Comp V H Elphick, **PAGDC**, 23rd July 2017

The Chapter encountered some difficulties. In 2002 E Comp Paul White took the MEZ Chair for a second time and, in 2007, for a third time. In the 24 years of the Chapter's existence, the MEZ Chair was occupied by a member who had previously occupied that Chair in 10 of those years, which suggests that there may have been a reluctance among Companions to graduate through the ranks.

There may have been a problem with recruitment and retention. The last Exaltation was in July 2011, and before that 2009. Of Exaltees during the Chapter's existence, 13 appeared on summonses for, on average, fewer than 14 times. This may emphasise the need for Mentoring and the advisability of putting into action the various initiatives which Provincial Grand Chapter has recently launched.