

Connecticut

S.K. Paul L. Chello
Grand Commander



Knighly News

S.K. Charles D. O'Neill, KCT, PGC
cdoneill@snet.net

Greetings Sir Knights:

I thought that you might find the following information regarding Rosslyn Chapel of interest.

Rosslyn Chapel, formally known as the Collegiate Chapel of St. Matthew, is a 15th-century chapel located in the village of Roslin, Midlothian, Scotland. The chapel was founded by William Sinclair, 1st Earl of Caithness of the Scoto-Norman Sinclair family. Although the original building was to be cruciform (in the shape of a cross), it was never completed. Only the choir (the upper portion of the cross) was constructed, with the retro-chapel, otherwise called the Lady Chapel (a chapel dedicated to Our Lady, The Virgin Mary), built on a much earlier crypt (Lower Chapel) believed to be part of an earlier castle. The Lower Chapel (also known as the crypt or sacristy) should not be confused with the burial vaults that lie underneath Rosslyn Chapel. After the founder's death, construction of the planned nave and transepts was abandoned – either from lack of funds, lack of interest or a change in liturgical fashion.

Rosslyn Chapel is known for its decorative carvings which were executed over a forty-year period. Among Rosslyn's many intricate carvings are a sequence of 213 cubes or "boxes" protruding from pillars and arches with a selection of patterns on them. It is unknown if these patterns have any particular meaning attached to them. Many people have attempted to find information coded into them, but no interpretation has yet proven conclusive. Unfortunately, many of these 'boxes' are not original, having been replaced in the 19th century after erosion damage.

Since the late 1980s, the chapel has been the subject of speculative theories concerning a connection with the Knights Templar, the Holy Grail, and Freemasonry. Medieval historians say these accounts have no basis in fact. Interestingly, this part of its history was referenced in the 1998 Comic Book entitled Batman: Scottish Connection, in which Batman becomes caught up in an old vendetta between two Scottish clans during a visit to Scotland, this mystery, and the discovery of an ancient treasure trove hidden in Rosslyn. The topic entered mainstream pop culture with Dan Brown's The Da Vinci Code (2003), reinforced by the subsequent film of the same name (2006). Numerous books were published after 2003 to cater to the popular interest in supposed connections between Rosslyn Chapel, Freemasonry, the Templars and the Holy Grail generated by Brown's novel.

The chapel, built 150 years after the dissolution of the Knights Templar, supposedly has many Templar symbols, such as the "Two riders on a single horse" that appears on the Seal. William Sinclair, 3rd Earl of Orkney, Baron of Roslin and 1st Earl of Caithness,
18
november 2018

claimed by novelists to be a hereditary Grand Master of the Scottish stonemasons, built Rosslyn Chapel. It is also claimed that other carvings in the chapel reflect Masonic imagery, such as the way that hands are placed in various figures. One carving which has been so eroded by time and pollution that it is difficult to make out clearly may show a blindfolded man being led forward with a noose around his neck — similar to the way a candidate is prepared for initiation into Freemasonry. A later William Sinclair of Roslin became the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and, subsequently, several other members of the Sinclair family have held this position.

Historian Dr. Louise Yeoman, along with other mediaeval scholars, says the Knights Templar connection is false, and points out that the construction of Rosslyn Chapel was begun by William Sinclair somewhere between 1446 and 1456 so that Mass could be said for the souls of his family. Also, the Chapel was built in the 15th century, and the earliest records of Freemasonic Lodges date back only to the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

Yours in Templary,
Paul L. Chello
Grand Command

Knight Templar Eye Foundation

As we approach the holiday of Thanksgiving, we pause to reflect upon all the blessings in our lives for which we may be thankful. These may include such things as family, friends, jobs, and health. For those of us who have good eyesight, we have a blessing that not everyone can claim. The Knight Templar Eye Foundation is working to improve the eyesight of people around the world. All contributions toward this research are welcome. I am quite sure that those who have benefitted from the Foundation's research are giving thanks to the KTEF and the work that it is doing. Happy Thanksgiving and thank you for your contributions.

Craig R. Nelson, KCT
Grand Captain General

The 40 Miles Project

Knights Templar have vowed to assist poor, distressed, worthy fellow Knights, their wives, widows, and orphans, promising to go the "distance of 40 miles, barefoot and over frozen ground" if necessary to provide that support. Knights also vow to care for the sick, the pilgrim, the destitute, the widow, the orphan, and the Christian religion. However, we have never had a structured way to do this, nor even a way to model it for the individual Knight.

The object of The 40 Mile Project is improve the care and support for Knights Templar wherever dispersed, through a project led by the Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment with the assistance of the Associate Grand Prelates. A long-term goal is the expansion of this program to the several Grand Commanderies, and through them, the individual Commanderies with allegiance to the Grand Encampment.

There is more information about this project on the homepage of the Grand Encampment.

SK Stuart Drost
Past Grand Commander CT
NE Department Commander