

W Bro John William Henry Provincial Senior Grand Warden 2024 -2025

John was born in Durham and was brought up in Witton Gilbert. He attended Fyndoune Comprehensive School where he completed his sixth form studies before joining the army. Whilst serving John has studied for an MBA with Northampton University and an MSc from Portsmouth University. John has been married to Gillian since 1987 and they have two daughters and three grandchildren.

John joined the army in 1984 and initially trained as a Vehicle Mechanic. He has progressed through the ranks and occupied numerous non-commissioned roles until being awarded a Commission in 2005. As an Officer, John has again progressed through the ranks culminating in being given command of his own unit, something he describes as the pinnacle and proudest moment of his career.

As he neared retirement from the Army, he was persuaded to take on a newly created role as the MOD lead for Personnel Recovery looking after the most complex wounded, injured and sick service personnel from across all three services. John is a member of the Team UK Invictus Games Partnership Board and was awarded the Chief of the General Staff's Commendation for Outstanding Service to the British Army in 2015.

In Freemasonry, John was initiated into Sanctuary Lodge in 2010 and was elected Worshipful Master in 2018 and again in 2024. In 2019 John received Provincial preferment to Past Provincial Grand Steward and joined the Durham Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge. He has been Worshipful Master of the Stewards Lodge since 2021 and will install his successor in July 2024. John is a founding member of the Anglers Lodge and a member of Durham Lodge of Installed Masters. In the Holy Royal Arch, John was exalted into Chapter of Concord in 2011 and joined Sportsman's Chapter in 2021.

John is a Trustee and current Chair of the Durham Masonic Hall Management Committee, a member of the Armed Forces Committee and set up the Durham Cornerstone in late 2023. He has also recently revived the Retention and Retrievals Team.

Outside of Freemasonry John enjoys his time being a husband, dad and the brilliant new experience of being a Grandad. He describes his guitars as 'broken' because he still cannot get them to work after over a decade of trying and despite the best efforts of a tutor who he fears, he may also have been broken!

W Bro Ian Speirs Russell Provincial Junior Grand Warden 2024 -2025

Ian was born and bred in Paisley, Renfrewshire. He attended Paisley Grammar school after which he studied Medicine at Glasgow University and graduated in 1985 before moving to the North East in 1986. Following a very enjoyable and rewarding career in General Practice he retired in 2023. was initiated into the Lodge of Freedom No.4027 in December 2008, becoming worshipful Master in 2013 and 2022 and is the current Senior Warden. He Received Provincial Honours in 2021 as Past Provincial Senior Deacon.

In the Royal Arch Ian was Exalted into The Chapter of Freedom No.4027 in January 2010 serving as First Principal in 2014. Following the return of the Chapters warrant he became a joining member of the Chapter of Philanthropy No.940 in February 2024.

He received Provincial Honours in 2021 as Past Provincial Assistant Grand Sojourner. In the companion orders Ian was Perfected into St Cuthbert's Chapter Rose Croix in October 2016 and was recently installed as Most Wise Sovereign.

Outside of Freemasonry Ian enjoys hillwalking, cycling and golf. He is also a keen woodworker and still has all his fingers.

Stronger Together