

# THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ST. GEORGE

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH

OCTOBER 2022



**Patron:** Mr. Edward Gillespie, O.B.E., Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire

**President:** Councillor Pam Tracey, M.B.E.

**Vice Presidents:** The Rt. Hon. Lord Cope of Berkeley, P.C.; Mr. Mike Smith

**Chairman:** Mrs. Pat Ayres, M.B.E.

### IN MEMORIAM - HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

It was with great sadness we learnt of the passing of our National Patron, a remarkable and much loved lady who had been part of our nation's fabric for most or all of our lives. She was the epitome of graciousness, diplomacy and a symbol of hope and understanding in troubled times.

Although many of you may have sent individual messages of sympathy to the Royal Family, the Branch also posted a message of condolence on the Monarchy website on behalf of all our members.

#### Chairman's Message:

Hello dear members -

I have been up in the loft sorting out the poppy appeal boxes that are stored from one year to the next and they are now down ready to be filled with poppies, pins, etc., to distribute to my volunteer collectors around the Kemble district. Just wondering how the appeal will do as no-one seems to carry or have any cash in the house these days. In fact my local shop keeper said that around 80% pay by card for all their purchases so the collecting box on the counter will have 'no chance' of receiving the odd change as often!!!!

Recently BBC Radio Gloucestershire was featuring 'Villages' and interviewed a friend, who has lived in Kemble for over 30 years, and me, for over 50 years. The question was raised as to why we think Kemble is a good place to live. Obviously we said you have to get involved in the community to enjoy the friendship and togetherness but equally as I know there are lots of people who love the village just because it has the countryside and lots of places to walk dogs and children! We have a pub which is child and dog friendly. The pub recently held a Macmillan coffee

morning and raised well over £1,000. A shop and post office run by a lovely husband and wife with a rota of two assistants; a school, a village hall and a church. The biggest draw is the railway station as it is on the mainline Cheltenham/London route.

Sir Henry Elwes will be coming to Kemble village hall on **Thursday 3 November at 2.30pm** as a speaker for the Royal British Legion Women's Section meeting. His talk will include farming, history of his village Colesbourne and forestry. Do please come along if you feel like an afternoon drive out. Refreshments are served so please let me know so we have enough available!

Looking forward to seeing you at the next event! Meanwhile take care.

Warmest regards,  
Pat

#### From your Secretary:

First and foremost, I appreciate this newsletter will reach you fairly close to Remembrance Sunday, but the committee would be very grateful to any member who would lay a wreath on behalf of the Branch at their local

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**Gloucestershire Branch info at:** [www.rsg.org.uk/branches/uk/southern/gloucestershire](http://www.rsg.org.uk/branches/uk/southern/gloucestershire)





Service or ceremony. Please let me know if you do so. As usual we ask that wreaths are purchased from your local Royal British Legion Branch. If you wish to be reimbursed for the cost, send me your receipt and I will arrange it with Terry, our Treasurer.



As you can see, Pat did carry our Standard in the Gloucester Day Parade. Her husband Brian carried the Standard for Kemble Branch of The Royal British Legion. Whilst just a few members came along to support our presence, the public turned out in numbers and the weather was kind. We didn't know until after the event that at the end of the Parade was St. George on his horse!

If we and St. George take part next year then I hope we will be able to co-ordinate for a higher profile presence.

I know there are a number of members suffering poor health, including Eric Freeman, and send them all our very best wishes.

### **THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY**

As you know, the Branch decided to plant a tree as part of this programme. Sadly the plaque will now have to incorporate In Memoriam wording too.

The date for planting is still to be agreed, as it is dependent on weather and availability of a sturdy oak sapling, but it is likely to be in November. Members will be invited to attend the planting ceremony and I will circulate details as soon as confirmed.

### **CHAVENAGE HOUSE, TETBURY**

Members were treated to a wonderful afternoon at Chavenage House, which has been the home of the Lowsley-Williams

family since 1891. Only two families have lived in the property since Edward Stephens bought the estate in 1564 during the reign of Elizabeth I.

Caroline Lowsley-Williams was a welcoming, warm and entertaining host throughout the tour. She regaled us with many fascinating and interesting stories of both the house and family and there was lots of laughter.

One fascinating story was that in 1970 a family friend made an astonishing discovery in the attics. A portfolio of drawings turned out to be of immense historic and artistic interest, being recognised as designs for the redecoration of the interior and a large number of private apartments at Windsor Castle. They were sold as a private collection at Sotheby's in April 1970 and later proved to be invaluable in the restoration programme at Windsor Castle following the fire in 1992.

If you were a fan of the BBC series Poldark, you would certainly recognise the main entrance and the Great Hall. The guide book has a long list of film and television credits over the years, including Wolf Hall. Caroline says in the guidebook - "It was odd sitting in my office and quite peculiar to see Thomas More walking past, closely followed by Thomas Cromwell".

The finale of our visit was to two Tapestry rooms, where the walls are hung with beautiful coarse weave tapestries and there are several relics from the Civil War on display. General Henry Ireton, a son-in-law of Cromwell, was a relation by marriage to Colonel Nathaniel Stephens, MP and Lord of Chavenage Manor during the Civil War. Cromwell sent Ireton to Chavenage to persuade Colonel Stephens to support the regicide of Charles I. Colonel Stephens very reluctantly acquiesced after sitting up all night talking to Ireton. However, Stephens' daughter Abigail was horrified by his decision and laid a curse on her father for bringing the family name into disrepute. It is said that when Stephens died and all were assembled for his funeral, a hearse drew up at the door of the manor house driven by a headless man. The Colonel was seen to rise from his coffin and enter the hearse after profound reverence to the headless man, who,





as he drove away, assumed the shape of Charles I. (A story to tell your younger family members at Hallowe'en perhaps!)



*Members in the Chapel, much of which was constructed in 1780, although the Nave was rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup> century*

The Vicarage tea was wonderful and much enjoyed by all during a memorable visit.



Thanks once again to Terry Hughes for the photographs.

### **ST. GEORGE'S TIDE SERVICE 2023**

As St. George's Day will fall on a Sunday next year, it is proposed to hold the Service on Monday, 24 April. A venue is being explored and details will be confirmed in the next newsletter.

### **Nairac Awards 2023**

If you have a nomination for next year's Awards, please send it to me as soon as possible. To remind you, nominees must be 21 years of age or under, living in Gloucestershire, and have demonstrated determination, courage, or selflessness in supporting others or their community. I will need name and contact information and, of course, your reason for the nomination.

There are two Awards available - for an individual and for a group of young people. We gave two individual Awards this year as no group nomination was received. It would be lovely to be able to present a Group Award next year.

### **BRANCH EVENTS 2023**

It seems unbelievable that we are hurtling towards 2023. This year has seen some momentous events nationally (especially the last month or so!) and internationally. Let us hope next year will be a little calmer, much more peaceful (particularly for those involved in the conflict in Ukraine) and that it will bring better health for all those who have struggled through this year.

### **New Year Lunch - Sunday, 8 January 2023 - 12 for lunch at 12.30pm:**

We are returning to Bowden Hall and have been able to keep the price for our New Year Lunch the same as this year - £25 per person. We will be in The Lakeside Suite as in previous years. The booking form is enclosed.

**\*\*Please note that I am asking for responses earlier than usual - by no later than Friday 9 December. This is because the hospitality sector is dealing with some supplier issues and shortages of certain food items so Bowden Hall needs more notice to ensure they can fulfil their menus.\*\***

I am sure you have heard about such problems in the media and noticed some recipe items are more difficult to find in the shops at the moment. So if you are free and would like to come to our New Year Lunch, please book sooner rather than later so that we can meet Bowden Hall's order deadline.

### **Evening with Swans at Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust:**

This visit is on hold as Slimbridge has not yet made a decision when to hold this event. They are currently coping with and having to abide by the latest restrictions arising from the Bird Flu epidemic.

**St. George' Tide Service - Monday, 24 April 2023** Details in next newsletter.





Your committee is arranging several events to take place through next year and I will be able to give more information in the next newsletter.

### NATIONAL AGM

As a result of the Queen's death the National Annual General Meeting was postponed and as yet no new date has been fixed. Head Office will no doubt advise us as soon as new arrangements have been made.

### CITY OF LONDON BRANCH CHRISTMAS BANQUET - Friday, 16 December - 6.30 for 7.20pm

The City of London Branch extends an invitation to all RSSG members to its Christmas Banquet. It will be held in the Egyptian Room at Mansion House in the City of London, by kind permission of The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor, and it is hoped a full Civic Party will be in attendance.

There will be a sparkling wine reception, four course meal, music by The London Banqueting Ensemble and the traditional singing of festive carols. Ticket price is £149 per person.

DRESS CODE: Evening dress (white tie) preferred, Dinner jacket (black tie) acceptable, equivalent for ladies. Decorations may be worn.

Closing date for applications is 9 December 2022 after which time no refunds can be given. If you would like to go please contact me (Margaret) for their booking form or you can download it from the National website:

<https://rssg.org.uk/branches/uk/south/city-of-london/> (click on Christmas Flyer 2022)

### MY 'LIBRARY'

I promised myself that after I retired I would read much more, especially many books bought but not yet read. I also promised myself not to buy any more books until I'd read those. Both promises have been broken and my pile of books continues to grow. Perhaps I should stop reading book reviews and listening to authors promoting their latest tomes. My 'library' includes lots of poetry books too. I hope you enjoy this by Forest of

Dean poet F.W. Harvey (who was a POW in the Great War) about our lovely county:

### ***GLOUCESTERSHIRE - FROM ABROAD***

On Dinny Hill the daffodil  
has crowned the years returning.  
The water cool in Placket Pool  
is ruffled up and burning  
in little wings of fluttering fire.  
And all the heart of my desire  
is now to be in Gloucestershire.

The river flows, the blossom blows  
in orchards by the river.  
O now to stand in that, my land,  
and watch the withies shiver!  
The yearning eyes of my desire  
are blinded by a twinkling fire  
of turning leaves in Gloucestershire.

The shadows fleet o'er springing wheat,  
which like green water washes  
the red old earth of Minsterworth  
and ripples in such flashes  
as by their harmless fire  
light the great stack of my desire  
this day to be in Gloucestershire.

### THE CORONATION

You will know that the Coronation of King Charles III and the Queen Consort will take place on Saturday, 6 May 2023. Possibly the May bank holiday will be re-arranged or even added to as a result.

I am sure many of you spotted the many pieces of Gloucestershire music and poetry in the memorial services for the Queen, including choral music by Howells and Parry and words by poet Ivor Gurney. Hopefully there will be more during the Coronation and, despite the forecast paring down, I am sure it will be another momentous 'memorable for a lifetime' occasion.

### **GOD SAVE THE KING!**

*If you wish to opt in to receiving newsletters and/or email communications from the Branch and copies of emails the Branch receives from Head Office, please let me (Margaret) know on [glosrssg@btinternet.com](mailto:glosrssg@btinternet.com)*