



## **In this edition**

**Celebrate St George's Day and the Coronation**

**Spring gardens and recipes**

**Richard Dove heads to sunny Bournemouth**

**In praise of an Elizabethan seafarer: we bang Drake's Drum!**

**Plus, news from the Charitable Trust and our national and international branches**

# **St GEORGE FOR ENGLAND**

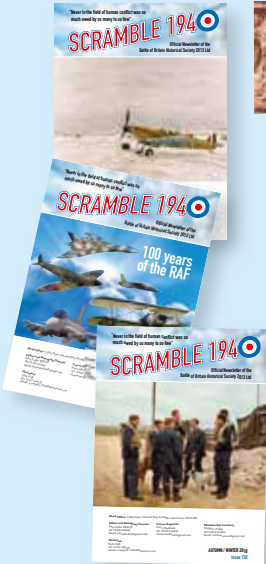


**April 2023**

**THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF St GEORGE – The Premier Patriotic Society of England  
Founded in 1894. Incorporated by Royal Charter. Patron: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**

**£1.00**

## BATTLE OF BRITAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



*Always Remembered ... Never forgotten*

**We are now recruiting new members to join the Battle of Britain Historical Society 2013 Ltd. Members will receive bi-annual 24 page colour newsletters.**

**The Society has four main aims...**

- To ensure the Battle of Britain is never forgotten •
- To erect plaques in places where the “few” were educated •
- To look after the final resting places of the “few” •
- To erect granite memorials to the “few” •



### **LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

UK Life members - GB £400  
Overseas Life membership - GB £500

### **STANDARD MEMBERSHIP**

UK members under 18 Years - GB £12 Annual Membership  
UK members over 18 - GB £24 Annual Membership  
Overseas members all ages - GB £36 Annual Membership

### **CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP**

Corporate Members - GB £500  
Corporate Sponsor - GB £1500

## **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

**Margaret Pulfer Email: [bobhsmemsec@gmail.com](mailto:bobhsmemsec@gmail.com) Tel: 01424 814866  
Web address: [www.battleofbritain1940.net](http://www.battleofbritain1940.net)**



**THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY** is a Registered Charity, whose members represent a wide diversity of background, tradition and churchmanship, united by a determination to promote and preserve the use and understanding of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

We work to ensure that the historic Prayer Book continues to be available to future generations, and we seek to introduce it to young people, ordinands and PCCs throughout the Church of England. Our many activities include:

- ◆ Forging links with and between clergy and churches having a particular commitment to the Book of Common Prayer;
- ◆ Running training projects for ordinands and clergy;
- ◆ Publishing books on relevant topics, sold through our mail order book service and elsewhere;
- ◆ Producing high quality magazines and journals;
- ◆ Promoting the prestigious Cranmer Awards for young people.

Every member receives five magazines a year, plus invitations to a variety of local and national events, including an annual residential conference where members are addressed by quality speakers from religion, the arts and broadcasting.

### **Interested in joining us?**

For more information, please contact 0118 984 2582, or visit [www.pbs.org.uk](http://www.pbs.org.uk)

The Prayer Book Society is a company limited by guarantee registered in England: Company No. 4786973 and Registered Charity No. 1099295  
Registered Office and address for correspondence: The Studio, Copyhold Farm, Lady Grove, Goring Heath, Reading RG8 7RT

# Contents

Vol 21. No. 1 – April 2023

- 4** From the Chairman
- 5** Editorial
- 7** My England
- 9** Commonwealth Echoes
- 10** Trust Reports
- 11** Home Counties England
- 12** Branch News
- 18** Overseas Reports



**St George for England**  
The Official Journal of  
The Royal Society of St George

## The Society stands for:

- Respect for the Monarchy; Duty to our Sovereign and our Country;
- The cause of England and Englishness.

In accordance with our Constitution, the Objects of the Society are:

### One

To foster the love of England and to strengthen England and the Commonwealth by spreading the knowledge of English history, traditions and ideals.

### Two

To keep fresh the memory of those, in all walks of life, who have served England or the Commonwealth in the past in order to inspire leadership in the future.

### Three

To combat all activities likely to undermine the strength of England or the Commonwealth.

### Four

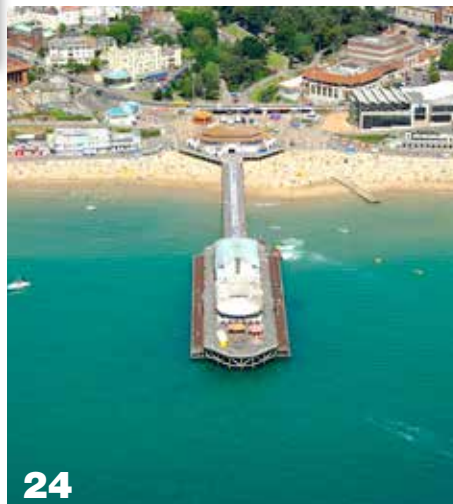
To further English interests everywhere to ensure that St. George's Day is properly celebrated and to provide focal points the world over where English men and women may gather together.

- 32** Obituary
- 33** Letters to the Editor
- 34** Wildlife in England
- 36** Airmen of England
- 38** Soldiers of England
- 41** Heroes of England



**34**

- 19** News
- 22** Ecology of England
- 23** Jeffrey Long
- 24** Coastal England
- 27** Springtime in England
- 28** Lincolnshire Life
- 32** Roots of England



**24**



**28**



**36**



**42**

- 42** This Realm, This England
- 44** We'll Meet Again
- 45** English Place Names
- 47** Membership Affiliations
- 48** Our Branches
- 50** Shop Window

# FROM THE CHAIRMAN

## THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF St GEORGE The Premier Patriotic Society of England Founded in 1894.

### Incorporated by Royal Charter.

Forever honouring the memory of our late, great Patron,  
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (1926-2022)

**Chairman:** Nick Dutt

**Published at:** The Royal Society of St George, RSSG, P.O.  
BOX 397, Loughton, IG10 9GN, England  
Telephone: 020 3225 5011

E-mail: [info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com)

Opening times: Monday to Thursday, 10.30 am to 3.30 pm

Website: [www.rssg.org.uk](http://www.rssg.org.uk)

Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofStGeorge](http://www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofStGeorge)

RoyalSocietyofStGeorge Twitter: @RSSStGeorge

LinkedIn – the Royal Society of StGeorge Official Group

**Editor:** Stuart Millson

**Editorial Address**

The Royal Society of St George, PO Box 397, Loughton,  
IG10 9GN, England

Telephone: 020 3225 5011

E-mail: [info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com)

### Vice Presidents

The Earl of Aylesford, JP

The Lord Cope of Berkeley, PC

The Lord Butler of Brockwell, KG, GCB, CVO

Clifford James Trowse – Past Chairman

Mr C P Fairweather

Mrs Esme Robinson

Sir Henry Paston-Bedingfeld, Bt

Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, GCB, RAF (ret'd)

Mrs Peaches Golding, OBE CStJ

### Past Presidents

William R Firth

John Clemence, QPM

### Immediate Past Chairman

Joanna Cadman

### Members of Council

Chairman – Nick Dutt

Deputy Chairman – Dr Chris Houghton

Vice Chairman – Cdr James Nisbet, VR

Hon Treasurer – Alastair Clement, FFA, FTA

Hon Secretary – Michael Riley

Hon Registrar – Andy Settle

Chaplain to the Society – Revd. Roderick Leece

Council Member – Alan Broomhead, TD

Council Member – David Burns, MBE

Council Member – Les Chapman

Council Member – Jane Dorrington

Council Member – Nick Hinchliffe

Council Member – Lloyd James

Council Member – Rob Kendrick

Council Member – Andy Smith

Council Member – Dennis Stinchcombe, MBE

Council Member – Dr Jennifer Yates- Rowe, PhD

Chairman Charitable Trust (Ex-Officio) – Bob Smith

General Secretary – Liz Lloyd

Minutes Secretary – Edna Stinchcombe, MBE

### Administration Centre staff

General Secretary – Elizabeth Lloyd

Membership Secretary – Jade King

### Charitable Trust Members

Chairman – Bob Smith

Vice Chairman – Michael Riley

Grants Secretary – Shirley Hankers

Trustee – Joanna Cadman

Trustee – Nick Hinchliffe

Trustee – Chris Houghton

Trustee – Andy Settle

Trustee – Dennis Stinchcombe, MBE

Ex-Officio Trustee – Nick Dutt

Minutes Secretary – Edna Stinchcombe, MBE

Hon Treasurer – Lloyd James

### Special Responsibilities

Standard Bearer – Frank Holland

Deputy Standard Bearer – Vacant

Yachting Association – Bob Smith

Athelstan 1100th Anniversary Events Co-ordinator –

Joanna Cadman

Photography – Fred Pearson and Georgina Burges

This Journal is sent free to all full members and is available

for purchase at £5.00. Opinions expressed in articles or

advertisements are those of the authors and advertisers

and the contents do not necessarily reflect editorial or

official RSSG views. This Journal may not be reproduced

in whole or in part without the permission of the Editor.

Opinions expressed in articles or advertisements are those

of the authors and advertisers and the contents do not

necessarily reflect editorial or official RSSG views. We

reserve the right to refuse any advertisement or article

without giving a reason. E&O.E.

Design and Reprographics: Jim Duggan

Tel: 01233 632969. Mob: 07714451952

Printed by: The Gemini Print Group, Shoreham-by-Sea

Tel: 01273 464884

ISSN Number: ISSN 2046-8369



**W**ELCOME TO THIS LATEST edition of the Society's Journal. Many thanks to all those who have contributed their time and effort in producing so many excellent articles. I hope you enjoy reading them. We are always looking for more articles and information that would be of interest to our readers so please feel free to forward them to our fabulous editor, Stuart Millson.

I hope you all had a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year and with winter (hopefully) waning, we can look forward to warmer weather and longer days soon.

It's certainly been an interesting few months since taking over as your Chairman. Whilst in some ways it's been fairly quiet, it has given us the chance to start planning for an exciting year ahead. We held our first Zoom call for Branch Chairmen in January, to share some of the new Council's plans and ideas. I hope to hold these meetings – as well as sending out newsletters – every quarter so that we can keep everyone informed about what we are planning and, hopefully, to hear back from you so we can gain a better understanding the concerns of the members.

We recently launched our new website, which I hope you agree has a cleaner and

more modern look and feel. There is more to do to make our processes more streamlined and efficient, but I do think it's a great start. We our extending our links with youth and cadet groups to raise awareness of the Society among younger people and will be focusing on a new membership drive. Your feedback and suggestions will always be welcome.

### Anthem for England

One of the things we spoke about on the Chairman's call was the desire to have an English Anthem or Song. The National Anthem is just that – the anthem of the United Kingdom and the oldest National Anthem in the world – but the singing of it as the English Anthem at international sporting events, particularly when playing against the other Home Nations, can devalue it and makes it divisive. This is a work in progress and something that needs careful thought about the messaging. It is not about dis-respecting the National Anthem, which is absolutely not the case, but actually strengthens it while helping to develop our English identity.

I am still keen to find someone who can join the Council to be an England Branch representative, to help us build closer ties with the branches across England – if anyone is interested, or you know of someone who might be interested, please let me know.

We are all frustrated with the constant stream of reports about school, universities and others doing their best to rewrite and/or cancel our great history, because it doesn't fit with the moral standards of some. If you disagree, you are labelled an extremist and yourself cancelled! We should and will do our utmost to stand up for what we believe is right and represent that silent majority. I saw a comment recently that I think sums it up, something along the lines of "history is not for you to like or dislike (or be offended by), it is what it is. What you can do is to learn from it, so we don't make the same mistakes in the future".



*Wreath laying ceremony and cadet parade at the Cenotaph*

### Coronation celebrations

The Coronation of His Majesty will certainly be something to look forward to, where the vast majority of the country can come together and celebrate one of the main factors that sets us apart from so many other countries. I am sure that all the celebrations will be very special – the ceremony itself, a something that will be the envy of the world. As a Society we are looking to hold an event in London around this time, but I'd encourage all branches to do something to commemorate this special event.

The King and Queen Consort, along with the Prince and Princess of Wales have done a great job since taking on their new roles. Long may they continue to demonstrate what loyalty and duty really mean.

Before we get to the Coronation, we have of course the little matter of the most important date in the Society's calendar, St George's Day. The Society will be holding its usual wreath laying ceremony and cadet parade at the Cenotaph, followed by the laying of a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey on 22 April, which I hope many branches will join us for. I am sure many branches around

the world will also be organising events to commemorate this special day and I would encourage you to get as many people from outside the Society involved as possible. The more people that know about it and us the better. Hopefully we might even get

some press coverage about St. George's Day into the bargain!

I wish all of you a very Happy St George's Day, when it comes. **God Save The King!**

Best Wishes *Nick Dutt*

### CALLING ALL SUPPORTERS . . . (in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Eire!)

The Royal Society of St George is fortunate in having branches in every part of the world, from California to Borneo! However, across our own home-islands, we only have branches in England. Logical, you might think, given that St George is the English Patron Saint. But in years gone by, our Society had a strong British presence – South Wales, for example, fielding a prominent RSSStG branch during the 1930s.

The spirit of St George – his bravery and legacy of martyrdom – has transcended national boundaries, inspiring Portuguese, Georgians, Russians, Bohemians, Venetians and Ethiopians. Surely the time is right to create a presence for this fourth-century Roman Christian and soldier-hero, across the whole of the King's Realm – and British Isles?

So if you are a member in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, or Eire, why not think about creating a branch in your country? If you would like to hold a preliminary event, or just talk to us at HQ about the prospect of creating an association, please get in touch!

## EDITORIAL

### Kind hearts and coronations

THERE IS CERTAINLY a great deal to celebrate this springtime. Having folded away the flags after our St George's Day celebrations on 23 April, it won't be long before the bunting is again draped across houses, pubs and community halls for May's Coronation; a chance for England, the Kingdom and Commonwealth (and our many friends and allies across the world) to unite behind our new King – Good King Charles III. Now, dear reader, His Majesty is not officially known as 'Good King Charles', but I would like to start the ball rolling!

Passionately in favour of conservation, both at home and abroad; dedicated to helping others through many charitable initiatives (not least his famous, Prince's Trust); and keen to shake hands with as many people across these islands as possible, our new King provides us with an example of how to live and what to do with our lives.

In recent years, our country has been experiencing a bumpy ride. There is much political clamour, indecision and

background noise ~ with increasingly embittered and strident factionalism, grievances and disputes. Many of us (particularly the older generations) shake our heads in disbelief at some of the attitudes and intolerance in society – and at the way in which things seem to be going. Can it really be true, for example, that a programme such as *Dad's Army* is introduced with a warning about "discriminatory language"? We seem to have lost a sense of proportion and common-sense, especially as the aforementioned show never made a virtue of casual swearing, the hallmark of many shows today.

It is easy to look back with nostalgia at previous decades and ages, but could it be that our land was a kinder, nicer place in the not-so-distant past? If we have lost many of the qualities once associated with England, then now is the time to rekindle them. As we cheer our new monarch, it is time to dream of a new country; of fellowship, unity, pride in our achievements – and to make those qualities a reality

*Stuart Millson*

### Guide for contributors

*St George for England* welcomes articles and pictures from RSSStG members and from general contributors. Articles should be presented either as Word documents (or typed into emails) and should, ideally, be no longer than 1,500 words. We can accept letters by post, but (generally) not articles, unless short and to the point.

The Editor thanks everyone for their interest, but asks those submitting material to be patient, as we deal with a large amount of incoming material each month. Articles may sometimes be 'held over' until space becomes available. The Editor cannot always enter into correspondence with contributors.

Finally, it must be understood that although we run a publication respectful of free speech, the views expressed by article- and letter-writers are not necessarily those of The Royal Society of St. George (which, due to its Royal Charter cannot comment on any party-political matter); and that advertisements or any financial advice which appear on our pages do not necessarily carry an endorsement from us.

*The RSSG would like to thank Maxine and James English for their musical assistance during the festive season*

### Corrections and clarifications

We endeavour to check the contents of our magazine thoroughly. Occasionally, however, a fielder (in this case, the Editor) may drop a catch, or even leave his aircraft recognition guide at home . . .

Our apologies to contributor and Battle of Britain historian,

Geoff Simpson, for an error on page 34 of the last edition: the aircraft shown in the main photograph was in fact a Hurricane. The aircraft shown on page 32 was correctly labelled, but did not fly in the Battle of Britain.

# *The Beauty of England*



## *The Canal at Hebden Bridge*



# My England

**Carl Portman**

carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk

**A**NTONIO VIVALDI COMPOSED *The Four Seasons* sometime between 1718–1720, when he was the court chapel master in Mantua. These violin concertos are sublime of course, and they demonstrate the power and beauty of music. The actual seasons – nature’s seasons – go back a little further than the eighteenth century of course, and they each have their own inherent beauty. They are a form of music in their own way, you just need to listen and be receptive. What sounds do each season make here in England?

E. B. White said of spring ‘The first day of spring was once the time for taking the young virgins into the fields, there in dalliance to set an example in fertility for nature to follow. Now we just set the clocks an hour ahead and change the oil in the crankcase.’ What sounds can be heard – I (CP) think immediately of the birdsong as they prepare to build nests, find a mate and continue their genetic line.

Summertime is full of the sounds of bees, lawnmowers, and children playing outdoors.

Ada Louise Huxtable wrote that ‘Summer is the time when one sheds one’s tensions with one’s clothes, and the right kind of day is jeweled balm for the battered spirit. A few of those days and you can become

drunk with the belief that all’s right with the world.’

England’s own Samuel Taylor Coleridge encapsulated my own thoughts of autumn when he remarked ‘The one red leaf, the last of its clan, that dances as often as dance it can, hanging so light, and hanging so high, On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.’ For me the sound of chestnuts falling from the trees and the rain auditioning at my window reflect autumn music. And what of England’s oldest and most castigated friend, winter? This time I must share what Ruth Stout thinks of this time of year when she says ‘There is a privacy about it which no other season gives you. In spring, summer and fall (autumn) people sort of have an open season on each other; only in the winter, in the country, can you have longer, quiet stretches when you can savour belonging to yourself.’

The simple dandelion is a simple example of how life has a moment for everything. We cannot blossom all year round as people, flowers or even countries. I can draw a strange analogy with the little dandelion seeds as they parachute their way on winds of change to far away areas to engage in new experiences in the undiminished hope of growing anew the following year.



*The dandelion clock represents both an end and a new beginning*

Why can RSSG members not represent those seeds, carrying themselves to new destinations, meeting new people and delivering the message of hope and renewal and growth for this still great country of England? Go on – be like the dandelion. After all, the purpose of life, is to have a life of purpose.



*Carpe diem*



## Chess Puzzle

**Carl Portman (chess coach and author)**

If you like the idea of a chess puzzle, please do let the editor know. The assumption is that you already know the rules of the game. I shall test the water with this first one, where it is White to play and checkmate Black in two moves. That is to say White moves, then Black moves then White moves, giving checkmate! This is a position devised by Otto Dehler in 1928.

**Answer given on page 46**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Saturday, 22 April** – Annual Service of Remembrance and Wreath-Laying Ceremony, Cadets’ Parade at the Cenotaph, London. Wreath-Laying Ceremony at Westminster Abbey Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. Cellarium Lunch.

**Wednesday, 10 May** – Evening cruise on the Thames to mark the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III

TBC – AGM

**Friday, 15 September** – Battle of Britain Luncheon

**Sunday, 29 October** – Annual Parade of the Standards, St. George’s Church, Hanover Square, Mayfair, London.



# Celebrate the Coronation in Style



Join us as we mark the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III with a prosecco welcome drink and canapes reception as we take an evening cruise along the historic River Thames aboard the luxurious MV Erasmus. Cash bar and music. Members' guests most welcome - an occasion not to be missed.

Date: 10th May 2023

Departs: Tower Millennium Pier

Time: 18:45-22:45

Tickets: £65.00

## BOOKING INFORMATION

Please book through Elizabeth Lloyd at Administration Office.

Email: [info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com)

Payment may be made as follows:-

By card over the Phone : 020 3225 5011

PayPal to [info@rssg.org.uk](mailto:info@rssg.org.uk)

Bank Transfer: The Royal Society of St. George – A/C No: 14742497

Sort Code: 60-07-29 Reference: Surname & Coronation

By cheque in favour of the Royal Society of St. George sent to

P.O. BOX 397, LOUGHTON, IG10 9GN

Booking deadline Friday 21st April 2023





## COMMONWEALTH ECHOES



**One of the AEC Regent buses in the Transport Museum in Derbyshire Road, Leichhardt, Sydney.**

**As with London Transport, these were used in Sydney from just after WWII until at least 1970.**

**Little wonder that they often referred to Australia as "Britain, overseas!"**

**G.M.S. Lauder-Frost**



## The Waterside Centre, Newbury

On 30 January last, the RSSG Hon Grant Secretary, Shirley Hankers, had

great pleasure in presenting the RSSG Charitable Trust grant Certificate to Sarah Emery, of Berkshire Youth Trust and

Kelly Leach, of The Waterside Centre. The grant, of £500.00, had been awarded to the Berkshire Youth Trust who now joint own The Waterside Centre with Newbury Council. The grant had helped with the renovation of the grounds for this Community Centre. Various activities take place throughout each day: sports (rock climbing/basketball/indoor cricket/boxing/etc), including river activities, the Centre overlooks and adjacent to the River Kennet, wonderful location. Children's play groups; dance groups; singing groups; yoga/Pilates are also a feature. A food bank/larder is also held once a week. A café, which provides daily 'specials' of lunches apart from sandwiches/salads/jacket-potatoes, etc, cakes (all homemade). A room is also available for hire for parties and Conferences.

Kelly Leach also provides a mentoring service for young people, this in conjunction with the local schools.

The people of Newbury and surrounding areas, particularly the young, are very fortunate to have such a Community Centre.

One of The Waterside Centre's ongoing fund raising projects is to collect 'spent ink cartridges' the funds raised via this project assist with some of the upkeep, so should you not know what to do with your 'spent ink cartridges', The Waterside Centre would be more than willing to accept these.



## The Royal Society of St George

*The Premier Patriotic Society of England – Founded 1894*

Incorporated by Royal Charter • Patron: THE LATE HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II  
Chairman: Mr Nick Dutt

### Battle of Britain Remembrance Luncheon

Friday, 15 September 2023 – Time: 12.15 pm for 1 pm



Venue: The Royal Air Force Club, 128 Piccadilly, London, W1J 7PY

Price – TBC

Please note this is not a ticketed event, guests to register their name(s) at the RAF Club reception on the day

Sparkling wine reception, followed by an excellent three-course meal  
fine wines served throughout, coffee and petit fours

Guest Speaker – TBC

Please come and join us at our Annual Luncheon

Dress: Men – lounge suits – Ladies – smart attire – Medals may be worn

Please contact Elizabeth Lloyd at:

The Royal Society of St George, Administration Centre,  
P.O. BOX 397, Loughton, Essex, IG10 9GN, England

Telephone: 020 3225 5011

Email: [info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com) – Website: [www.rssg.org.uk](http://www.rssg.org.uk)

Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofStGeorge](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofStGeorge) – Twitter account – @RSStGeorge

## In praise of suburbia

By Andy Smith

AT THE END OF FEBRUARY an amazing piece of television history returned to our TV screens, exactly fifty years after it was first broadcast. Originally shown on the BBC half a century ago, on 26 February 1973, *Metro-Land* was a fifty-minute documentary, written and presented by the journalist, poet and broadcaster Sir John Betjeman. It was destined to be an ‘instant classic’.

Betjeman intended it to be a hymn of praise to outer-London suburbia – at a time when ‘suburban’ was something of a dirty word, the people and places of such areas generally sneered at in the media. But for the Poet Laureate, the ‘mock-Tudor’ semi-detached houses and neatly trimmed privet hedges on the edge of our capital city were something to be celebrated, not derided.

In *Metro-Land* he takes us on a tour of various locations along the old Metropolitan Railway route (now the London Underground Metropolitan Line) from Baker Street station through Wembley, Pinner and Chorleywood (“essential Metro-Land” in Betjeman’s words) and ending at the abandoned Verney Junction in Buckinghamshire, a long-closed station now reclaimed by nature. Throughout the film, Betjeman provides succinct and entertaining commentary – some of it in verse – and the

1970s scenes are interwoven with black-and-white film shot from a Metropolitan Railway train in 1910.

*Metro-Land* was conceived from the outset to be unashamedly pro-suburbia. The film’s title harks back to the advertising slogan used by property developers in the 1920s to promote the middle-class villas they were building in the towns along the Metropolitan Line. According to *Metro-Land*’s director, Edward Mirzoeff, the film was partly inspired by Betjeman’s recollections of his excursions to outer-London cinemas in the 1930s when he was a young journalist and film critic. Interestingly, as early as 1934, in a film review he wrote for the *Evening Standard*, Betjeman had deplored the lack of good films about London.

However, in the 1970s a televisual celebration of green-and-pleasant English suburbia was a ‘hard sell’ for Betjeman and Mirzoeff when they pitched the idea to the BBC – and it took some while before the Corporation agreed to commission the film. This was only after the Controller of BBC2 received a pleading letter from the Poet Laureate in which the recently knighted Sir John wrote: “Most people are suburban and won’t admit it. What trim gardens we could show, what shopping arcades, front halls,



In the 1920s the Metropolitan Railway Company used images like this to encourage people to move to suburbia

churches, human-scale paths and bicycle tracks and open spaces. I see it as a thanksgiving for traffic-free privacy . . .”

Betjeman used *Metro-Land* to highlight ‘everyday’ English suburban life – but in a hugely engaging way, thanks to Mirzoeff’s skilful direction and Betjeman’s memorable narration. In the film, communities in such places as St John’s Wood, Neasden, Harrow, Rickmansworth and Amersham are the stars of the show. As the reviewer Richard Last wrote in the *Daily Telegraph*, Betjeman “takes you to Chorleywood and leaves you feeling you have voyaged up the Orinoco.”

Simon Jenkins, in his review of the film for the *Evening Standard*, even broke into Betjeman-style verse: “For an hour he held enraptured / Pinner, Moor Park, Chorley Wood. / ‘Well, I’m blowned,’ they said. ‘He likes us. / Knew one day that someone should.’” Clive James in *The Observer* predicted correctly that “they’ll be repeating it until the millennium.”

The Betjeman Society and the Chartered Institute of Journalists are holding various events during 2023 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of *Metro-Land*, including a special excursion on the Metropolitan Line from Baker Street, alighting at key locations featured in the 1973 film. If you would like to learn more about fifty years of *Metro-Land*, go to [www.betjemansociety.com](http://www.betjemansociety.com).

Andy Smith is a writer and historian. He serves on the Council of the Royal Society of St George.



Sir John Betjeman

## BATH

On Friday, 9 December, our Christmas Lunch was held at the home of Committee Member, Mary Campbell Hill. She was ably assisted by fellow Committee Member, Paul Swift and Mary's good friend and neighbour, Lesley. We sat down to a delicious roast-beef meal. On behalf of those of us who attended I wish to thank them for making it so special. It was truly appreciated.

If you happen to come across Philip Thicknesse on the Internet you will see him described as an author and an eccentric. You may wonder why you are unfamiliar with his writings. That is because they mainly consist of travel guides and something entitled, *Male-midwifery*. Hardly a best seller I should have thought. As for eccentricity, in his will he requested that on his death his right hand be cut off and sent to his son, George to remind him that he had been a less than dutiful son to his loving parent. The reason for my interest in Captain Thicknesse is that he was the man who encouraged Thomas Gainsborough to come to Bath. Thicknesse became especially friendly and recognised the artist's talent when he commissioned Gainsborough to paint a view of Landguard Fort, near Harwich, to which he had been appointed Governor. Thicknesse had a house in Bath and initially put up the artist and his family before finding them accommodation of their own and introducing Gainsborough to the wealthier citizens who were likely to want and could afford to have their portraits painted. Being the man he was, Thicknesse probably expected a cut of whatever was charged for a sitting. It is a matter well documented that he and Mrs Gainsborough, who kept a tight hold on the family's purse-strings, loathed each other.

Philip Thicknesse was married three times. In 1742, aged about twenty-two,

he eloped with Maria Lennox, a wealthy heiress, whom he abducted from a street in Southampton; though why a wealthy young woman would be wandering the streets unprotected, I can't think. The newly-weds moved to Bath and entered into the social whirl. In 1749, Maria and two of their three children died from diphtheria. When Maria's parents died, he spent a lot of time trying to claim their fortune. I am sure it was for his surviving daughter, Anne rather than himself. Within a year of Maria's death, Thicknesse married Lady Elizabeth Tucket, daughter of James Tucket, sixth Earl of Castlehaven and the Hon. Elizabeth Arundel. Elizabeth bore Thicknesse a son, George but by 1762 she had died, in childbirth. Never one to hang about in matrimonial matters, a few months later he was married again. This time to his late wife's good friend, Ann Ford. Ann was beautiful and talented. She spoke five languages, had a lovely singing voice and could play a variety of stringed instruments to a professional standard. She also had a strict father who threatened her with arrest if she performed in public but, she defied him, and did so anyway. It was rumoured that Lord Jersey wanted her as his mistress but, instead she opted for marriage. I can well imagine her father's reaction to that Not, of course, to marriage but to his daughter's choice. They had a son, John, then set out for Europe travelling about in almost nomadic fashion. Maybe Bath society had



Thomas Gainsborough portrait of Ann Ford (later Mrs. Philip Thicknesse), 1760, Cincinnati Art Museum

turned its back on them. They were near Boulogne when Philip Thicknesse died and was buried there. It was at the height of the French Revolution, so Ann was arrested and put into prison, as a foreigner. When things quietened down, she was released and returned to England where she took to writing, mainly about the joys of rural life.



Philip Thicknesse



Thomas Gainsborough, Self-portrait (1759)

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE

*Patron: Mr. Edward Gillespie, OBE,  
His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for  
Gloucestershire*

*President: Councillor Pam Tracey, MBE  
Chairman: Mrs. Pat Ayres, MBE*

The planting of an oak tree in at the Queen's Green Canopy site at Horsbere Brook Nature Reserve, Gloucester, took place on a sunny but chilly day in December (pictured below). The tree planting, initially suggested to mark the Platinum Jubilee, was in memory of our wonderful Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh.

The planting was a co-ordinated effort by several committee members and marked by a plaque arranged and donated by Branch President Pam Tracey. The site of the tree has now been uploaded to the QGC map and it has been awarded a QGC virtual plaque too.

Branch members were saddened to

learn of the sudden death of Lady Carolyn Elwes two days before Christmas. Lady Carolyn's husband, Sir Henry, was Patron of Gloucestershire Branch throughout his term as HM Lord-Lieutenant for Gloucestershire and they had both supported and continued to support our Branch over many years. Lady Carolyn was actively involved with many county organisations and local and national charities. She was an expert needlewoman, including jointly working on an altar frontal in Westminster Abbey, and keen artist but primarily she was a countrywoman. She was instrumental in nurturing and building the snowdrop collection started by her husband's grandfather, Henry John Elwes, at their home at Colesbourne Park and one of the cultivars discovered at Colesbourne is named *G. elwesii* 'Carolyn Elwes', believed to be the first snowdrop with yellow markings. There are so many people in the county and beyond whose lives



were enhanced by meeting Lady Carolyn and undoubtedly her Memorial Service in Gloucester Cathedral in March will be extremely well attended.

At the beginning of January members enjoyed a lovely lunch at Bowden Hall, Upton St. Leonards, to welcome in the New Year.

Towards the end of last year we had booked a members' tour of the snowdrop gardens at Colesbourne Park for mid-February. The loss of Lady Carolyn threw this event into doubt temporarily but Sir Henry wished the tours to go ahead in her memory. He led our tour himself and was a wonderfully interesting and informative guide. The weather was kind and the visit was thoroughly enjoyed by all. After the tour everyone moved to the nearby Colesbourne Inn for a very enjoyable and warming lunch.

Preparations for our Annual Service are in full swing. This year it will be held on Monday, 24 April, as St George's Day will fall on a Sunday, at Holy Trinity Church, Longlevens, Gloucester. Once again Mr. Gillespie has kindly agreed to present the 2023 Nairac Youth Awards during the Service and we will be selecting the winners from several worthy nominations in the next few weeks.

For further information about the Branch and its activities contact Margaret Fuller, Branch Secretary, by email: [glosrsg@btinternet.com](mailto:glosrsg@btinternet.com), by telephone 01291 625059 or see the Branch's page on the National website.



## A thought from yesterday, for the England of tomorrow . . .

*'If an individual or a people ceases to believe in itself, its aims, and ideals, others with firmer aims and beliefs will climb into the saddle. . . . The decline and fall of England, which will rejoice her enemies, will not be England's decline and fall only, but for all for which she stood, and not till then shall we know the extent of our miseries. I, at least, am not of the opinion that humanity, justice, freedom, no, nor Christianity, will be gainers in that fall.'*

Professor William Macneile Dixon, Gifford Lectures, 1937.

[From *The Human Situation* (Pelican 1958), pp.107-108]



## HASLEMERE

*Martin Coakley, Branch Treasurer*

### Chairman's drinks report

The traditional post-Christmas Chairman's drinks party for the Haslemere branch of the Royal Society of St George was held on 26 February. This year it was held at Humphrey's Café at Camelsdale School by kind permission of the head teacher, Mrs Sarah Palmer. Mrs Jacqui Keen, Mayor of Haslemere, and her consort John Robini were in attendance as guests of honour, joined by Ken Griffiths of Gourmet Geezers' fame.

It was the first time the branch had met properly in 2023, hopefully the first of many such get-togethers. After a welcome

from branch chairman Nick Hinchliffe the members and guests were entertained by those doyennes of the Haslemere dramatic and musical societies of many years and Haslemere branch members, Mrs Pamela Depledge and Mrs Fay Foster. The programme was a selection of songs and poems by that so very English of Englishmen of letters, Noel Coward, all to commemorate the imminent fiftieth anniversary of his death on 26 March 1973. The question "What was Noel Coward's last film?" was successfully answered by branch member Mrs Sheila Checkley, on the ball as ever. The selection of songs and poems from The Master, familiar and not so, were delivered with panache, pose and poise under the watchful eye of Miss Verity Foster on the keyboard. The

interlude was well received by all, some even sang along at the right moments!

After the more formal parts of the afternoon, when chairman Nick Hinchliffe outlined a programme of branch events for the year, branch treasurer Martin Coakley, in his capacity as a trustee of The Commonwealth Resounds!, made a presentation of certificates issued by the late Queen Elizabeth's pageant master, Bruno Peek, LVO, OBE, OPR, to Nick Hinchliffe, as a National Council member of the Society, and Mrs Shirley Hankers, branch Life President. These were given to acknowledge the help and assistance Shirley and the Society had given towards a competition for a song which was sung around the Commonwealth for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons. The winning song is called *A Life lived with Grace* and it was sung by Gregory Porter as part of the celebrations in The Mall on Jubilee Day. It has otherwise been heard around the world sung by choirs, individuals and orchestras of all shapes and sizes, to include the choir at Haslemere's own beacon event at Woolmer Hill last summer.

Many thanks to Camelsdale school for the use of Humphrey's Café – the folding tables to be found there are a wonder of engineering and ingenuity.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Royal Society of St George Haslemere branch please see the national website [rssg.org.uk](http://rssg.org.uk) or contact our chairman Nick Hinchliffe, his email is [nbhconsulting@btinternet.com](mailto:nbhconsulting@btinternet.com).

If you would like to know more about The Commonwealth Resounds! please see [www.commonwealthresounds.com](http://www.commonwealthresounds.com)



*Martin Coakley, trustee, The Commonwealth Resounds!, Shirley Hankers, Life President, Haslemere branch, Nick Hinchliffe, Chairman, Haslemere branch and National Council Member Royal Society of St George*

## LEEDS

The President of the Leeds Branch, Cllr Bob Gettings MBE JP has become the 128th Lord Mayor of Leeds

Leeds is the second largest city outside London and our President is the first citizen of its 828,000 people

In the first part of his year he has completed over 300 events covering a large variety of the City's diverse community events

Welcoming our new King to the city and last week welcoming the Princess of Wales.

Visiting Dortmund to celebrate fifty years of Twinning and visiting Auschwitz and Krakow were memorable visits. January saw the Lord Mayor appointing fourteen new Aldermen and granting the Freedom of the City to Rob Burrows and Kevin Sinfield

What is really impressive is not only the city's diversity but the community cohesion that exists that makes Leeds a wonderful

Place in which to live, Leeds is certainly thriving. The sky line changing every day. The St George's Day parade is all set to break all records. We are expecting wellover a thousand scouts, etc.



*Armed Forces Day High Sherriff and Lord Mayor*



*Leeds President becomes Lord Mayor and greets the King*

## NORTH DOWNS

President: Group Captain  
Patrick Tootal, OBE

Kent (our district) is often referred to as 'The Garden of England'. To satisfy local demand for plants and shrubs, the North

Downs branch operates its very own mobile gardens centre! Run by our Deputy Chairman, Mike Sutton, and his wife, Linda, the stall sells plants to raise money for local charities ~ which range from the Heart of Kent Hospice to the Kent Wildlife Trust. Once again, we give our thanks to



Mike and Linda Sutton greet local folk at the North Downs Branch plant stand, during last December's East Malling Church Craft Fair. (Picture: S. Millson)



Mike Sutton delivers a food bank donation from the branch, to the East Malling Centre. Former Borough Councillor, Mrs. Liz Simpson (LibDem) who runs food distribution to some 200 families was there for the presentation

Mr. Jeff Wheeler, a top market gardener based in Lingfield, Surrey, who kindly donates the plants and bulbs from his own establishment.

The Branch also takes a keen interest in matters affecting the local countryside and ecology. Cllr. David Thornewell (LibDem) has led a campaign for local residents, urging them to send their views to the local authority; a process which will help to shape the Tonbridge and Malling Borough's Local Plan, a measure which must be agreed in order to guide policy for the future. As readers will know, the countryside of S.E. England is under pressure from developers and so it is vital that local people tell the powers-that-be their hopes and fears. Some 2,000 residents responded to David's call, a superb total.

With branch social events, such as fundraising quiz nights, our long-standing support for the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust and our usual celebration of the Feast of St George, North Downs holds a steady course. But new members are needed! We hope that our message of "loyalty, duty and service to England" – and indeed, to the whole Kingdom ~ will inspire people to join our ranks.

## HELP YOUR SOCIETY – BY MAKING A DONATION IN YOUR WILL

The Society and our Charitable Trust are helped greatly if there are Legacies and Bequests. By making a posthumous gift of money or property you may also reduced your Estates inheritance tax liability.

The options for a donation, in your Will, are:

- A Legacy of a specific sum;
- A Bequest of specific property;
- A Bequest of the residue of your Estate or a Share of it with other charities or individuals.

### What to do to help us in your Will:

If you wish to include a donation in your WILL please consult your Solicitor.

A simple form of Legacy might include the following words:

*"I hereby bequeath, free of tax, the sum of £ ..... to The Royal Society of St George (P.O. BOX 397, Loughton, IG10 9GN, England).*

*OR to The Royal Society of St George Charitable Trust (Registered Charity No.: 263706)*

*and the receipt of the Hon Treasurer or other proper Officer for the time being of The Royal Society of St George shall be a complete discharge of such Legacy"*

This wording can easily be adapted to cover the Bequest of a Property or of All, or Part of, the residue of your Estate.

In any case of doubt please ask your Solicitor or get in touch with the Society's Administration. This is especially appreciated if you intend to lay down conditions as to how the Bequest should be used.

## SEAHAVEN

The Branch has been extremely busy during the Autumn months with various events. Most importantly the Branch, together with many other organisations, honoured the fallen on Remembrance Sunday at the local War Memorial.

On the Tuesday after Remembrance, as has been the custom for many years, the Branch organised a Service of Remembrance at Seaford Cemetry to honour the War Graves of Canadians, West Indians and Irish personnel. The Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Andrew Blackman, led the Wreath-laying followed by the Deputy Mayor of Seaford Town Council, The Canadian Armed Forces, The Irish Veterans Association, the West Indian Association of



Services Personnel and other Service and non-Service personnel.

Our local historian, Kevin Gordan, placed a Poppy Cross on the grave of Benjamin Van Groningen. Kevin had been contacted by email by Shola Bishop of Guyana, South America, who requested that her relative be especially remembered. It was a poignant reminder that although 100 years have elapsed, the fallen are not forgotten but still honoured.

In December, the Branch gifted a set of tables to Newhaven Mencap. We were given a warm welcome and spent a happy evening laughing and chatting with the members.



December also saw our Christmas lunch when we let our hair down by wearing Christmas jumpers, ties and even Christmas waistcoats.

Our AGM started the year of 2023. The Committee reported to the Members, of the work done in 2022 and then were re-elected by the Members in accordance with the Society's Rules.



## The Royal Society of St George

*Incorporated by Royal Charter Patron: The Late Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II  
Chairman: Nick Dutt*

### WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AND CADETS' PARADE THE CENOTAPH, WHITEHALL, LONDON

**SATURDAY, 22 APRIL 2023**

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

We are pleased to confirm the details of our Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Cenotaph  
This year the event will be taking place on Saturday, 22 April 2023

We, the members of The Royal Society of St George and guests, will meet at 10.15 am at King Charles Street, prior to the Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying Ceremony scheduled for 11 am, (nearest underground station Westminster). Around 500 Members of three Cadet Forces, accompanied by music from their band, will be on Parade and the Salute will take place immediately afterwards

At approximately 11.30 am our official party will move on to Westminster Abbey for a wreath-laying service at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior which will take place at around 12 noon

**A luncheon will take place at the Cellarium in Westminster Abbey at 1 pm. Price per person TBA**

**Please contact Liz at the Administration Centre for further information and to book your lunch place(s)**

**Please tell your family and friends and join us in London on this spectacular occasion which is held annually to remember all those who have served our country and the Commonwealth as part of our Society's St George's Day Celebrations**



**Please contact Liz to order your RSSG red rose wreath by Thursday, 6 April, Poppy Factory Price this year is £42.00**

RSSG, PO Box 397 Loughton IG10 9GN • Telephone: 020 3225 5011

Email: [info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com) • Website: [www.rssg.org.uk](http://www.rssg.org.uk) • Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofStGeorge](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofStGeorge) • Twitter account: [@RSSStGeorge](https://twitter.com/RSSStGeorge)  
Join us on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-royal-society-of-st-george-official-group): The Royal Society of St George Official Group



## WATERLOO

Jane Dorrington – Chairman

It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of Linda Day and Roy Keating. They will be sorely missed, may they rest in peace.

## AGM

At the Annual General Meeting of the Waterloo branch, held at the Civil Service Club on 15 February, Bob Smith stepped down as Chairman. Ken Baggott praised Bob's considerable contribution over the past seven years and thanked him for his many achievements. In appreciation of his sterling service the branch presented him with a St George Medal and a trophy featuring St George along with a thank you card signed by all those present. The committee presented Bob with a voucher for Bob and Kathy to enjoy a meal at one of their favourite haunts.

The AGM was attended by forty-seven members (approximately fifty per cent of our total membership). Jane Dorrington was voted our new Chairman, Mike Green was elected Membership Secretary. After the meeting members enjoyed a very substantial meal.

## Grant

In July 2022, Bob Smith had pleasure in



presenting an RSSG charitable Trust Grant Certificate to Alice O'Neil, who will be representing the Herne Bay Rangers at the



Twenty-fifth World Scout Jamboree in South Korea during August 2023.

## Re-enactment

On Sunday, 29 January, eight members and two guests assembled near the rear entrance to St James's Palace in readiness to follow the English Civil War Society's re-enactment of the journey to Horse Guards Parade taken by King Charles I to his execution on 30 January 1649. Led by five horses, muffled drums beat out a slow and solemn march. A short service of remembrance took place with the laying of a wreath. The weather was kind, unlike the day in 1649 which was extremely cold. The entire event was watched by a huge crowd. Afterwards the members and their guests adjourned to the Army and Navy Club for refreshments, followed by lunch.

## The Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch

Thursday, 30 March 2023

Get your tickets for the City's hottest event – raising funds to meet the current urgent need to support veterans of HM Armed Forces into employment

<https://events.soldierscharity.org/event/lmbcl-2023/home>

**Be a part of one of the most hotly-anticipated events in the City's annual calendar**

Join us at Guildhall and indulge in delicious curries with unlimited beer and wine • Rub shoulders with senior officers of the Armed Forces of the Crown • Bid on money-can't-buy prizes in our silent auction or try your luck with our prize draw • Visit the stalls run by the Livery Companies of the City of London

Buy a glass or bottle of Pol Roger Champagne to win a diamond and gold pendant • Buy a cocktail with a chance to win a bespoke watch.

Check out our Authors' Room where several well-known authors will be selling and signing their latest books

### Who you're supporting

The Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch is one of the City of London's biggest fundraisers supporting the veterans of His Majesty's Armed Forces.

The particular focus of the Lunch is on helping veterans into employment. Our current commitment is to fund veterans through the King Edward VII Hospital's Centre for Veterans' Health and its Pain Management Programme, and Lifeworks programmes. In addition, we support other employment-related initiatives through the three single service charities

## FOR SALE



Extensive library, with many titles (excellent condition) available for sale

**WW2 • CHURCHILL •  
GEORGE ORWELL • BRITISH HISTORY  
• BIOGRAPHIES • FOLIO TITLES**

**A COLLECTOR'S OPPORTUNITY**

For further details contact: F. Millson  
Telephone: 07714 846785

# OVERSEAS BRANCH NEWS

## CALIFORNIA

Santa Monica, California, USA, 11 December, 2022. The Royal Society of St George (RSSG), California Branch, and the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA/USA), Inland Empire Chapter, co-hosted an awards ceremony and luncheon at the Upper West Restaurant in Santa Monica, California. The awardees included Lena Evans, Maryanne Parker, James L. P. Jackson II, Sir Laurent Khaiat, Judith Flex Helle, Professor Michael Atar, Christopher Loverro, Marquis John Andrew Blakemore, and Miranda Kramer who received awards for their volunteerism and humanitarian work. A special award was given to LABA Blue-chip artist Jiannan Huang, who received the RSSG American Culture Award.

### Guests

Princess Karen Cantrell, Chairman of the RSSG, California Branch, and Ike M. I. Khamisani, President of the UNA/USA, Inland Empire Chapter, welcomed the guests and award recipients. The guests included Sandro Monetti, Vice-Chairman and Trustee of the RSSG, Philippe Milgrom, US



Princess Karen Cantrell, Chairman of The RSSG, California Branch



Philippe Milgrom, Princess Karen Cantrell, present LABA Blue-chip artist Jiannan Huang (by video conference) with his award, Joey Zhou

Ambassador for Confrérie du Sabre d'Or, Dr. Jeanne Ruderman, Maître du Protocole for Confrérie du Sabre d'Or, Harrison Engle, Co-Chairman of LABA International Art Festival and filmmaker, Julie Shen, President of M3/JMK Modelling Media Academy, Laura Angelini, Honorary RSSG member and music artist, Brenda Yang, Honorary RSSG member and President of the JinGuo Committee, Sons Excellence

Enrico Viconte Melson de St. Luke, Joey Zhou, Honorary RSSG member, international TV host, and Founder of the LABA International Art Festival, Chevalier Peter L. Eckert, Dr. William Martin, and Donna Jett.

Mr. Huang, who was unable to attend the event was contacted by video conference at his art studio in Beijing and stated, "I am very excited to receive this award and wish to thank the board members of the RSSG."

Jiannan Huang is one of the world's finest artists, specializing in Western oil painting and Chinese ink. He is ranked third on the 2020 Hurun China Art List and 19th on the Hurun Global List with sales of \$29 million. Jiannan holds several positions - Director of the Chinese Traditional Culture Promotion Association, member of the French National Artists Committee, art consultant for the World Low Carbon Cities Alliance, and France Jiny City Gold Medal Honorary Citizen. He was awarded the title of "Earl" by the Indonesian Royal Family. In 2021, he was given an honorary membership into the Royal Society of St. George

(RSSG), California Branch, and received the RSSG "Master of Arts" Award and the LABA Most Influential and Most Valuable Artist Award in 2022.

### Presidential Lifetime Achievement Awards

Princess Karen Cantrell stated, "Today, excitement galore! We are experiencing award celebrations for humanitarian awards in the world, and also the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Awards from the White House. We have beautiful recipients who have put in 2,000 hours this past year of service to their fellow man, and we're so excited and so proud of them. The Royal Society of St George keeps to its mission, and we are so thankful for dedicated people who care about others in a very true way."

Mr. Khamisani stated, "The reason the United Nations was created was because of the scourge of war, and to save the world from war and to do the best for the people of the world. From hunger, human rights, education, and from any aspect of human society that was needed to be dealt with at a ground level."

Lena Evans received the Presidential Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award and stated: "When you volunteer and you know that helping others is your life, you don't expect to be recognized for it. You don't expect any compensation or recognition. But it's wonderful to be recognized for your volunteerism because then you become a beacon and a symbol for others, and inspire them to help also."

Mr. Zhou stated, "In the past two years, the LABA International Art Festival and The Royal Society of Saint George, California have participated in over fifteen activities together. The LABA International Art Festival is proud to be one of the sponsors of the RSSG, California Branch."



Ike M.I. Khamisani, President of the UNA/USA, Inland Empire Chapter, presents Lena Evans with her awards

**Charles III, The Ranger of Windsor Great Park**

Following in the footsteps of his father, Prince Philip, King Charles III has taken on the historic role of The Ranger

of Windsor Great Park. The Ranger is tasked with offering guidance to the park's Deputy Ranger and his team in the day-to-day stewardship of one of the country's oldest landed estates.



**Spitfire in Kent!**

Knitted by members of the East Malling Women's Institute, one of 'The Few' prepares to reach for the sky. This fine

village display, with the bus stop garlanded in poppies, formed part of East Malling's Remembrance week. (Picture by Stuart Millson.)



**Kent footballers score with new clubhouse**

The name, Larkfield Football Club (founded in 1961), may not be that well known to sports fans across the land, but it is one of those vital and growing organisations that give so much to sport and the community.

Over the years, the club and its generations of players have become a real fixture in the locality, with crowds into the hundreds now flocking to the

matches. Back in January, the team's loyal followers enjoyed an afternoon of food, drink, socialising and celebration, as the district's MP, Tracey Crouch MBE, cut the ribbon for the brand-new clubhouse and bar ~ the result of much hard work and serious fundraising by the committee.

Congratulations to all involved.

**Cobham Hall has new lease of life**

Cobham Hall, near Gravesend, Kent, was once the seat of the Darnley family. Dating from the sixteenth-century, the Hall stands in attractive parkland, close to a remote segment of local countryside – generating a feeling for the visitor of travelling back in time.

The most famous Darnley, the eighth Earl, was the Hon. Ivor Bligh, captain of the 1883 England cricket team, but as a local history society heard at a talk given at the end of January, the Darnley family's links to

land ownership in Ireland gave rise to a great many Irish street names in the nearby town of Gravesend.

The local history society in question is known as the Friends of Cobham Hall and meets regularly there, sometimes using the magnificent Versailles-like 'state room' for its luncheons. Cobham Hall, today, is actually a boarding school, a use which ensures the survival of this magnificent English country house.

The magnificent decoration in the interior of Cobham Hall. (Picture. S. Millson.)



**The thespians are revolting!**

The *Guardian* newspaper reports (28 January) that Scottish-born actor Alan Cumming (pictured on the left) has handed back the OBE awarded to him fourteen years ago.

Now no longer a UK citizen, Mr. Cumming said he

had "opened my eyes" to the "toxicity" of the British Empire. Meanwhile, Welsh fellow actor, Michael Sheen (pictured on the right), also returned his state honour, after "reading up on Welsh history and his country's relationship with the British state."

*(I wonder if Mr. Sheen read the chapter on the Tudors, who originated in Wales? – Ed.)*





### St Ives School Pupils Celebrate Children's Mental Health Week

This week the pupils at St Ives School in Haslemere celebrated Children's Mental Health Week with a number of initiatives both on and off curriculum around this year's theme of 'Let's Connect' in association with Place 2 Be and BAFTA Kids.

The week began with the children being allowed to 'Dress to Express' where they could wear whatever clothes they liked to express their unique personalities. There was a huge array of different outfits on display. This was followed with a whole school assembly, led by St Ives' Wellbeing Champion, Mrs Cooper, who encouraged the children to think about how they all connect with the

people around them and the communities they're part of. She challenged the children to explore the different ways they can connect with different people throughout the week and to share their ideas in assembly on Friday.

St Ives has always had a very strong pastoral provision. It is a small school, where every child is known as an individual and kindness is the most revered characteristic. Last year, St Ives launched its Wellbeing strategy, known as 'With Wellbeing at Heart' to ensure that pastoral care is at the centre of every decision made. Part of this strategy included the appointment of a Wellbeing Champion, Mrs Cooper, who

has introduced a Wellbeing Club, as well as Wellbeing Drop-ins for any children that need them. In addition to the school's established friendship bench and worry box, she has introduced a 'gratitude' box where children can post messages of gratitude and appreciation, which are read out in Friday's assemblies.

Children's Mental Health week ended with an Awards Party, to celebrate the school's recent Small Independent School of the Year Award win. The children enjoyed an afternoon of traditional party games and much deserved 'awards' cupcakes!

Head Teacher, Mrs Kay Goldsworthy, said "Children's

Mental Health Week is a fantastic initiative and one we always support. However, we are fully aware that looking after our children's mental health is something we have to do every day, not just during Children's Mental Health Week. Our wellbeing strategy, 'With Wellbeing at Heart' ensures the children's happiness is the primary consideration in every decision we make. We never forget our school motto 'Happy children make the best learners' and this is evident not only in our excellent academic results, but more importantly, in the way we turn out kind, caring, bright and community-spirited individuals."

### HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bristol, Mrs Peaches Golding, OBE, CStJ, RNR

Mrs Peaches Golding, a great supporter of the Bristol branch of the RSSG for many years, has been appointed as a Vice President of the Society.

She was appointed HM Lord-Lieutenant of the County and City of Bristol in 2017 and will retire on her seventy-fifth birthday.

Mrs Golding is the independent chair of the Bristol Water Customer Challenge Panel, non-executive consultant of Moon Consulting Ltd, and a Trustee of the SS *Great Britain* and of Bristol Zoological Society.

Mrs Golding's board experience spans the health, media, utilities and education sectors.

She was awarded the OBE in 2009 for services to minority ethnic people in the South West and awarded an honorary MBA by the University of the West of England (UWE) in 2010, a Doctorate of the University by UWE in 2017 and a Doctorate of Letters by the University of Bristol in 2018.

She is an Honorary Captain of the Royal Naval Reserves and President of the affiliation between Bristol and HMS *Prince of Wales*.

She was graduated from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA with a Biology degree. She is the widow of Bob Golding and has an adult son, Charles.



## Frontline England

Two South-East communities are battling for their identities against unimaginative over-development.

Readers may like to know how the communities of East Malling and Ditton in mid-Kent are bracing themselves for a major housing onslaught (principally four- to five-bedroom properties, and town-houses) which threatens to eradicate the rural character of an entire district ~ with no appreciable gain, in terms of housing provision or facilities, for local people.

Not only do villagers face the potential of 900 new houses to the south of East Malling, but the management at the historic, world-famous horticultural Research station (founded at East Malling on

the eve of the First World War) has unveiled proposals to sell off a substantial part of its land to the east, for a staggering 1,600 houses – accompanied by the creation of a new main road, destined to cause further intolerable congestion on already clogged rural lanes and village high streets.

An exhibition held on Thursday 9 February by the East Malling Trust, the governing body of the Research Station, saw nearly 500 dismayed villagers hear plans for the building of an almost Docklands or M4-corridor-style development on extremely valuable agricultural land. Despite asking for the views of local people, the Trust has indicated that it will press on with a planning application, regardless.



The diagrams above provide a clear view of the irrevocable landscape loss for the area; marking the certain end of the locality as residents currently know it.

Representations are being made to MPs, Tom Tugendhat and Tracey Crouch, and it is hoped that a major campaign of opposition to the proposals will soon be underway.

## Tree planting at Camelsdale Primary School

**Sarah Palmer – Headteacher**

Camelsdale Primary School marked the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II with the planting of a special tree in its school grounds. The chosen tree was a wild cherry to remember the lovely colours the Queen used to wear. The tree was planted with the help of the youngest and oldest pupils in the school with the whole school present. The National Anthem was sung and the union flag raised on the school's flag pole.

The school also saw His Majesty's soldiers appear in the



Christmas Play as well as lots of England flags waved with its show theme of 'Christmas Around the World (Cup!)'. Each

class visited a country in the World Cup.

A further highlight saw members of The Royal Society of St George attend a Community Christmas Lunch hosted by its thirty-two Year Six pupils. A delicious Christmas lunch and a rendition of *The Wizard of Oz* saw guests well cared for and entertained by the children. The school was delighted to receive a wonderful St George carved box from Mrs Shirley Hankers – a very kind and generous present for the school to treasure.

Camelsdale School is now planning its King Charles III coronation celebrations. One



idea from the children is to plant another tree next to the Queen's . . . this time for the King! What a great idea!

## Book Briefings

by Anglofile



*Englishness* (OUP 2022) by Ailsa Henderson and Richard Wyn Jones, respectively Scottish and Welsh professors of politics, is recommended an evidence-based analysis of public feelings about both English and British self-hood.

It touches only marginally on ethnic minority attachment to these and other identities, though current questions of devolution, separatism and internationalism could be overshadowed if increasing diversity of mass-immigration jeopardises national stability.



*Colonialism* (Collins 2023) by Nigel Biggar, Regius Professor of Moral Theology at Oxford, takes a balanced view of the facts and ethics associated with “western imperialism” and the British Empire in

particular, thereby annoying so-called “anti”-racists who belittle achievements by “white” people. We are responsible only for individual actions, whatever the circumstances bequeathed by others, but remain entitled to “keep fresh the memory” of those “who have served England or the

Commonwealth in order to inspire leadership in the future”.



*An English Tradition?* (OUP 2023) by Jonathan Duke-Evans examines the concept of “fair play”. Although national characters develop, and values and even icons have parallels elsewhere, the prominence of “fairness” and importance of decent behaviour in our own cultural history is extensively demonstrated.

## The Friends of Bilbrook

Keri Lloyd

SOME YEARS AGO, I moved back home to South Staffordshire having spent twenty-six years in the British Army moving my family all over the UK and Europe. Being in the Army gave me a great sense of duty to my country but also my community. During my travels around the world, it was when I was in Belize in 1994 that I saw first-hand deforestation, habitat destruction and serious biodiversity loss on a landscape scale and it was awful to see. Unfortunately this was to become a theme on all my travels including Iraq and Afghanistan where nature had almost disappeared. I also realised that I needed to change my ways so I didn't contribute to this destruction, but I always felt I could and should do more; not just give something up, I should give something back. I've always been a "tree hugger" giving regularly to the Friends of the Earth, RSPB, Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust and other conservation bodies, so when I finally put down roots in South Staffordshire, I wanted to do something to help reverse biodiversity loss, increase wildlife habitat but also get the community involved, raising awareness of the plight which nature is in.

In Christmas 2009, whilst walking back from a village carol concert I got speaking to a neighbour of mine called Dave about my desire to do something for the community, which he shared, so we agreed to form The Friends of Bilbrook, under the umbrella of the local district council. Dave, took on the role of chairman as I was still in the Army at the time and as he had retired it made sense for Dave to take the lead. We were joining a network of other Friends groups in the area, all promoting nature recovery and creating green spaces for nature and their communities. A couple of years later, having retired from the Army I took over the role as Chairman and Dave left the group due to ill health.

In the twelve years we have been in

existence, we have achieved a great deal and I will list some of our accomplishments below:

We planted a community woodland in 2012 to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. This was truly a community activity involving local nursery and school children, cubs, scouts, RAF Cadets as well as villagers. Over 4000 trees have now been planted, including a community orchard and it's a haven for wildlife as well as being a beautiful, tranquil, peaceful place and somewhere for the community to take time away from the travails of life. This became particularly relevant during the Covid lockdowns, where Jubilee Wood was a very popular place to visit.

We fund raised over £54,000 to build a Multi-Use Games Arena on local playing fields. The MUGA is in use every day and has facilities to play football, basketball and cricket.

### Tree project

As part of an annual project, we have planted over forty street trees along the road verges of the village to help mitigate against the effects of our warming climate, vehicle and chimney pollution and flood risk as well as creating wildlife habitats.

With funding from the Tesco Bags of Help Fund, we built a community forest classroom / picnic area in the Jubilee Wood for schools, community groups and the public to use.

We have carried out two river restoration projects on our brook, which borders the Jubilee Wood, helping to reduce flood risk downstream, creating habitats for aquatic invertebrates, fish, birds, bats and mammals.

We regularly hold community events such as small mammal surveys, bat walks, bird ringing, dawn chorus walks, bird box making and litter picking.

We also work with our local schools,



The volunteers get to grips with the daily task

conducting regular litter picks and hosting the children in the Jubilee Wood teaching them about nature so they learn to understand and respect their natural surroundings. This includes pond dipping, bug hunting and tree recognition and other fun activities.

Unlike our beleaguered wildlife and climate, the future looks good for the Friends of Bilbrook and we have just embarked on our most ambitious project working with National Highways, Bilbrook Parish Council, the Forest of Mercia and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to restore about 300m of straightened brook. Potentially costing hundreds of thousands of pounds, this will result in a natural, dynamic water course, creating new woodland and wetland areas and new habitats for wildlife as well as reducing flood risk and pollution downstream.

### More to do

We are extremely proud of what we have achieved, but there is much more for us to do. We have found that getting people to volunteer with us is difficult, and after a brief period during covid lockdown where everyone started to take notice of their natural surroundings, we have all returned to normal life and nature isn't so much of a priority for people again.

We really struggle to get volunteers and have come to the conclusion that because we don't help people directly, and nature can't say thank you, there are only a few out there who are willing to give up their spare time to help us. However, we get our rewards in other ways; spending time outdoors in nature is enormously rewarding and when we record a new species in our wood, well that's all the thanks we need! We won't be deterred and will continue to raise awareness of the plight our wildlife is in and we will continue to do all we can to address this problem, mother nature needs us more than ever and we will do all we can to help her.





## Life member, Jeffrey Long, completes another charity walk

**R**OYAL SOCIETY OF ST GEORGE life member, and great-grandfather, Jeffrey Long, MBE (91), a former paratrooper and veteran fund raiser completed a forty-mile charity walk in December 2022, to raise money for two armed forces charities – the Royal British Legion and Support Our Paras (the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity).

Since 2007 Jeffrey has raised over £300,000 for good causes. He served with the Parachute Regiment between 1952 and 1957. In 1954 he suffered a back injury as a result of a parachute malfunction, which limits his mobility.

The forty-mile charity walk was completed over a two-month period finishing in Bradford city centre in mid-December in very cold weather during which he endured daily chemotherapy sessions.

He said: “This walk has been challenging given the cold weather, and I’m not getting any younger, but in spite of some physical problems I’ve managed to keep going. I have a bad back and an ankle injury from my days as a para so I’ve had to push

myself. I’ve been lucky with the weather although we’ve had some bitterly cold days, and I have met some lovely, encouraging people and had so much support from motorists driving past”. Jeffrey clocked up the miles for his challenge hiking around the hills close to his home in Bingley

Tina Pringle, the Royal British Legion Community Fund-raising Manager, said Mr Long is a remarkable person. She said: “Jeffrey is one of our most remarkable fundraisers, and we are delighted to have his support. He has dedicated his retirement to raising money for our armed forces community and this has been a fantastic effort. His commitment to our armed forces community is second to none.”

His fund-raising began in 2007, when he marched 650 miles from London to Lausanne, in Switzerland, carrying a thirty kilogram backpack to raise money for the Royal British Legion, an organisation for which he has completed many charity walks since, including a 100-mile hike along the south coast. In June last year he completed a ninety-six mile walk to mark the Queen’s ninety-sixth birthday (*St George for England*, August, 2022, p.27) raising money

for the Alzheimer’s Society and Dementia UK.

His efforts went viral in 2017 thanks to comedians Jason Manford and Iain Lee who tweeted their support of his fund-raising efforts which boosted the total raised.



Jeffrey Long served with the 12th (Yorkshire) Parachute Battalion © Royal British Legion/SWNS



# The Bournemouth identity

*From Hardy to hen parties, from Tolkien to town-centre planning, Richard Dove finds literary and historical gems in a sometimes overlooked south-coast town*



**F**ORTY LEAGUES IT STRETCHED from the Far Downs to Brandywine Bridge, and fifty from the northern moors to the marshes in the south, the Hobbits named it the Shire, as the region of the authority of their Thain, and a district of well-ordered business; and there in that pleasant corner of the world they plied their well ordered business of living.'

Tolkien sets the scene in the opening chapter of *Lord of the Rings*. He is probably sitting in room 205 at the Hotel Miramar in Bournemouth, his home for thirty summer holidays. Clearly, the view and the town are on his mind. It is a very pleasant corner for the business of living.

The hotel's receptionist is only too happy to tell the story of their distinguished regular visitor and a blue plaque on a wall facing the wonderful sea view informs us that John Ronald Reuel Tolkien stayed at the hotel from the 1950s to 1972 when he retired and died a year later at a house he bought in Bournemouth. Middle Earth, Middle England, Bournemouth.

#### Plaques for Parry – and Granger

Just down the road from the Miramar Hotel is another blue plaque commemorating the home of the British actor James Stewart, aka Stewart Granger. You may recall his films *Scaramouche* and *Beau Brummel*. Keep your eyes peeled and blue plaques are evident across the town. Walk up the high street and head up towards the former *Bournemouth Echo* newspaper office and you will see above a building called Richmond Chambers another plaque noting the site as the birthplace of the composer Hubert Parry whose hymn *My soul, there is a country* was sung in Westminster Abbey at the Queen's funeral.

I could find no obvious evidence that the singer and entertainer Max Bygraves was born and lived here, probably for the best.



Stewart Granger, lived at 57 Grove Road now called East Cliff Cottage Hotel



(Apologies to fans of the great Max!) But gaze across at the *Bournemouth Echo*'s faded grandeur of an HQ (it moved some years ago) and imagine a young, sprightly Bill Bryson heading into the office for another day of births, deaths and marriages or to cover yet another town council multi-storey car park debate. Let's pause for a Bill Bryson reflection:

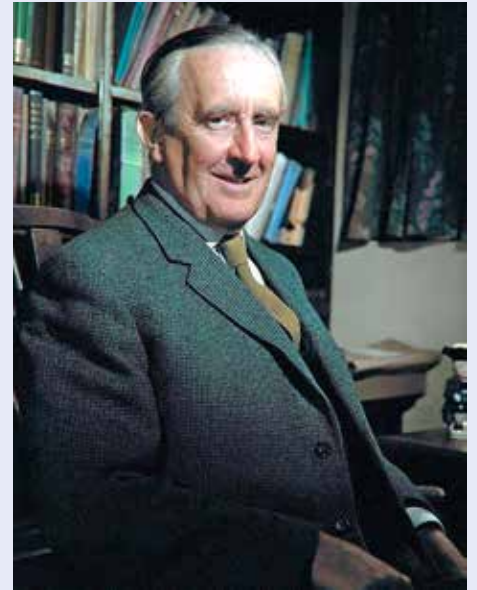
"The parks used to be described on maps as the Upper Pleasure Gardens and Lower Pleasure Gardens, but some councilor or other force for good realised the profound and unhealthy implications of placing Lower and Pleasure in such immediate proximity and successfully lobbied to have Lower removed from the title."

(Notes from a Small Island). The gardens are oases of tropical planting and greenery. You could be in Puerto Rico or Guatemala but for an earnest chap with a guitar singing Simon and Garfunkel and a couple of raucous hen party festivities.

#### Town-centre closures

Head up into the town which has seen the closure of M&S, House of Fraser, Beales (the town's own regal department store), H&M and even Lidl, and hunt out St Peter's Church where at the top of a small hill in the graveyard is the tomb of Mary Shelley buried with the heart of her husband Percy Bysshe Shelley. Pause to consider the author of *Frankenstein* being buried with such a vital organ.

Lower down the graveyard are buried two notables in the town's history. If you have a grand palm court, you must have an orchestra and Sir David Eyres Godfrey, a hugely ambitious musician founded the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra in 1893 at the age of twenty-five. This became the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra now known worldwide. He wanted to attract the crowds so included variety acts and



John Ronald Reuel Tolkien

light music amongst serious new works. Perhaps a trapeze act at the next Proms? To demonstrate his pioneering work his graveside epitaph points out that in 1927 he devoted his Easter Festival to the music of British female composers.

#### Wings for an orchestra

Next to Eyres Godfrey is the grave of 'The Maestro', Constantin Silvestri who through 'extensive and taxing rehearsals' raised the orchestra to international standards. An anonymous musician is quoted as saying: 'He gave us wings and inspiration and took us on a path we never thought to take'.

The church was consecrated as the Mother Church of Bournemouth in 1845 and its vicar for thirty-five years was the excellently-named Alexander Morden Bennett. He was a very persuasive fundraiser and with the construction of the tower, completed in 1874, his plans were realised. Unfortunately, Morden Bennett died one month after conducting a service of thanksgiving for the church completion. He was laid to rest on the southern side of churchyard.

#### Splash on the shoreline

The sandy beach is spectacular and makes up for some of the empty retail outlets. The daily manicured and cleaned beach stretches for miles and miles. One of those beguiling beaches where you can walk forever and never get weary. Take off your shoes and socks and splash on the shore. You can easily imagine a young Bryson kicking the white foam as he unwound from a *Bournemouth Echo* leader on the new one-way-system or controversial plans for a new housing development.

Pop up to the pier and pay your £1.40 entrance fee (you can use the ticket multiple times) and perch on a bench and look back at the town. To your left is the ancient



The Royal Bath Hotel

funicular railway that was built in 1908 to propel genteel hordes back to their hotels. The tram-like carriage is actually on rails so if more accurately described as a light or cliff railway. To your right is an odd Normandy-like turreted building perched high with a panoramic view of the bay. This mansion was built by a Bournemouth guiding light, Merton Russell-Cotes. He bought and considerably enlarged the Bath Hotel renaming it the Royal Bath Hotel because the Prince of Wales did an overnight there in 1856.

### Grand designs

Merton had grand ambitions and designs for his hotel. He became Mayor of Bournemouth in 1894 and delivered two free libraries as well as schools of art. He presented the house to his wife as a birthday present and then it was bequeathed to the town council on her death. His one aim in building the house was to demonstrate his wealth and status whether his wife liked the present or not. Walk up from the pier and visit the house and gallery. It is gloriously

over the top in Victoriana and anything else he came across on his extensive travels.

He particularly loved Japan and persuaded the government that he could take a Buddhist shrine back to Bournemouth. The bay rooms present stunning views as the sun drips. You can even see the Isle of Wight Needles on a clear day. Sir Merton was a devoted fan of the actor-manager, Sir Henry Irving and there is a room dedicated to the many roles Irving played. In a surprise twist of history, Irving's loyal manager was Bram Stoker. The creators of Frankenstein and Dracula may have skipped through the waves on Bournemouth beach. It is also said that Robert Louis Stevenson wrote *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* during a stay in the town. There must be something in the water.

### Pavilioned in splendour

How about a relaxing hour away from literary giants? Pop along to a lunchtime organ recital at the historic Pavilion Theatre. It was built in 1929 in the Lower Gardens and billed itself as the town's centre for entertainment. Michael Wooldridge takes

us through a tuneful tour of the United Kingdom on the magnificent Compton Organ and pleasingly rounds off and resounds – and descends! – with a final few chords of *Land of Hope and Glory*. His Steinway piano also slips out of sight.

### An 'Inspector of Nuisances'

Today's Bournemouth is ethnically diverse. A university town that attracts students from across the world. Cars were being unloaded on our visit for the start of a new term. Anxious but proud parents waving goodbye to their offspring, perhaps for the first time. They enliven the place and challenge the lazy stereotype of white, retired gentefolk inhabitants. If they sometimes get a little rowdy and the hen parties spiral out of control, I would suggest a new person in the role of Christopher Crabb Creeke who from 1820 to 1886 was the town's Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances. His portrait is on the side of the Pavilion Theatre. Perhaps it should be a Ministerial post in these troubled times.

Let me leave the last word with Thomas Hardy who loved the town. He called it Sandbourne in his novel *The Hand of Ethelbeta*. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is also a resident.

*'This fashionable watering place, with its eastern and western stations, its piers (there is another down the coast at Boscombe), its groves of pines, its promenades and its covered gardens, was . . . like a fairy place suddenly created by the stroke of a wand, and allowed to get a little dusty. An outlying eastern tract of the enormous Egdon Waste was close at hand, yet on the very verge of that tawny piece of antiquity such a glittering novelty as this pleasure city had chosen to spring up.'*

Richard Dove is a writer, broadcaster and podcaster. He writes novels and appears on BBC Radio Four's *From Our Own Correspondent*.



Christopher Crabb Creeke



The Pavilion Theatre

## A Host of Dancing Daffodils

*Elaine Gordon*

**A**FTER ALL THE GREY DAYS OF winter, by the time March comes around it's such a cheery sight to see daffodils nodding in the garden.

They have been with us in our gardens and the woodlands for a long time but no one knows for sure where the name comes from. The English name 'daffodil' appears to be derived from 'asphodel, a flower that was often to be found near tombs in Ancient Greece. However, it's not clear why the initial letter 'd' was added to create the common name for the flower we love to see in the spring. Indeed, one of its many English names is 'Lenten Lily'. Equally, no one knows exactly where the Latin name – *narcissus* – comes from but it has been linked both to a Greek word for intoxicated and one for hell. And, of course, there is the myth of Narcissus, the youth who fell in love with his own reflection and who stared at it until he died. A narcissus is also one of the flowers that Persephone was gathering before she was abducted into the underworld by Hades and in many Eastern cultures narcissi, particularly those with white flowers, are especially associated with death. So, perhaps it is quite understandable that such a jaunty flower which nevertheless has strong links to death and tombs has come to be associated with Easter with its sadness of Good Friday followed by the joy of Easter Sunday.

Despite being so common in our gardens, daffodils are not native to these islands. They are believed to come originally from the meadows and woods of southwest Europe and North Africa although they were common in English gardens by the sixteenth century. Probably one of the reasons for this rapid spread and popularity is that they are tolerant of most soil conditions and position. You can find them under trees as well as in lawns, though you have to be careful to mow around them until after the leaves have died down in order to give the bulbs a chance to recover from the flowering season

and get ready for the next year. They also grow well in perennial borders particularly when they are partnered with plants such as hemerocallis, which hide the dying leaves of the daffodils.

Despite their beauty, daffodils do come with a bit of a health warning. Their sap can be an irritant (it is also difficult to get off clothes as I have found to my cost when picking them in the garden). In addition there is a poison, lycorine, which lurks mainly in the bulb but can also be found in the leaves – hence the fuss in the supermarkets a few years ago over where to put the bunches of daffodils. Maybe this was not as daft as it sounded: in 2009 a number of school children fell ill when a daffodil bulb made its way into the soup during a cookery class. The teacher was obviously not a gardener! However, daffodils should not just reside on the dangerous plant list as they also have a medicinal use and the flowers are grown commercially on a farm in Wales to produce galamantine, a drug used to combat Alzheimer's disease.

For me though, it matters not whether the daffodil is a plant to be wary of for its poisonous properties or admired for its medicinal virtues, it will always be a sign that winter is losing its grip on the world. It is also a sign that work in the garden needs to step up a gear!

Weeding, seed-sewing, pruning are all demanding attention round about now and it will probably stay like that until we can all take a breather in the autumn.

### Chocolate

Spring is also a time when chocolate comes to the fore (it may never have left it in some households!) so I thought I would round off with a recipe for a chocolate fudge cake that can be enjoyed at any time of day, but particularly after several hours working in the garden, when you might feel as if you have earned a treat!

### Chocolate Fudge Cake

125g spreadable butter + extra for greasing  
250 ml milk  
1 tbsp white wine vinegar  
125g plain chocolate (at least 50% cocoa solids), broken up  
350g self-raising flour, sifted  
15g cocoa powder, sifted  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
250g caster sugar  
2 medium eggs beaten  
Fudge icing:  
185g plain chocolate (at least 50% cocoa solids), broken up  
100g butter, diced  
100ml double cream

### Method:

Preheat the oven to 160/fan 140/gas 3. Grease and base-line a deep 20 cm round cake tin with baking paper. Put the milk in a jug and add the vinegar – it will curdle. Melt the chocolate in a large bowl set over a pan of simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir until smooth.

Add the butter and remaining cake ingredients plus the milk mixture to the chocolate. Beat until smooth, then tip into the tin. Bake for 1¼–1½ hours or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin for ten minutes, then turn out on to a wire rack and cool completely. When cold, cut the cake in half horizontally.

### Decoration:

Melt the chocolate and butter in a pan over a low heat. Stir until smooth, then remove from the heat. Cool for a few minutes, then beat in the cream. Set aside to thicken slightly.

To finish, use a quarter of the icing to sandwich the two cake halves together. Spread the remaining icing over the top and sides of cake.

*Enjoy!*

# A Lincolnshire life

*Writer, Derek Turner, has long been on a quest, in search of England. In an overlooked county of fens, fields, marsh and mystery, has he found something of the essence of our land?*

*Lincoln Cathedral at dusk*

## Finding a forgotten county – making landfall in Lincolnshire

I FIRST SAW LINCOLNSHIRE in the late 1990s. Although born in Ireland, my brothers and I had often visited England as children, and because of our Anglo-Irish Protestant upbringing, we probably knew more about English history than other Irish people. But if you had asked me before the 1990s what the word ‘Lincolnshire’ conveyed, I’d have found it hard to answer.

A Cathedral, of course. Level landscapes. Caravans. Floods. Cabbages. Margaret Thatcher. I might have remembered vaguely that Isaac Newton was from somewhere in the county – but then again, perhaps not, as I have always hated maths! And that would have been about it.

In the late 1980s, when I lived in London, my idea of fun was to wander in a kind of trance around the capital’s obscurest postcodes, with a London A-Z, and a list of historic sites to find. I would often walk twenty-five miles in a day. I often had sore feet. I clearly didn’t have very many friends!

### Imaginary meanderings

When I got back to my cramped flat in Deptford, I would often bury my nose in some old hardcover book, and go wandering around England again – this time in imagination, with medieval pilgrims, or Tudor scholars, or eighteenth-century antiquarians, or John Betjeman. To borrow the title of a still-famous 1927 travel book by H V Morton, I was *In Search of England*.

But I started to notice that very few of these books ever mentioned Lincolnshire. On the rare occasions they did, the references were fleeting, dismissive, even slightly contemptuous – even in the old hardback books that littered the floor of my flat – and now litter the floor of my house.

In fact, no-one ever seemed to mention Lincolnshire. It never seemed to be on the nightly news, or to feature in the newspaper culture supplements, or even the property pages. The way London was at the time, that in itself made Lincolnshire sound attractive.

### A fever-struck swamp

Country people have of course historically often been ignored or even sneered at by the kind of people who write books – or make radio, TV or YouTube programmes. But Lincolnshire seemed to occupy a space – or non-space – all of its own. Culture-makers from Shakespeare on rarely noticed Lincolnshire, but whenever they did they referred or alluded to the county as a fever-struck swamp – a boringly flat plain – a place lacking in charm – a place lacking in culture. For some of today’s newspaper writers and stand-up comedians, the county seems hopelessly stuck in the past – a place of inbred hicks who all voted Brexit out of fear of foreigners, and probably played Duelling Banjos at home.

These were clearly gross caricatures. This was a huge county, after all, and it had given England many of its most remarkable individuals – a tally all the more remarkable for a county with a relatively low population.

### Lincolnshire luminaries

As well as Margaret Thatcher – whom of course the stand-up comedians said ‘everyone’ should despise! – and the incomprehensible Isaac Newton, there were medieval saints famous across western Europe, from the demon-haunted Mercian nobleman, Guthlac of Crowland, to Hugh of Lincoln, whose reputation for purity and saintliness was symbolised by his tame swan.

There were great Churchmen, from Bishop of Lincoln Robert Grosseteste, one of the greatest intellectuals of the thirteenth century, whose writings about light and optics helped found modern science – and who even helped invent the index.

Gilbert of Sempringham evolved from being a legendarily ugly boy, whose idea of a childhood game was to “baptise” his playmates in the nearest river, to become the only Englishman ever to found a monastic order.

Bishop William Waynflete – who was born where his surname suggests, in the characterful little town near Skegness – would become founder of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Lord Chancellor of England.

John Wycliffe, the dislikeable fanatic without whom the whole Reformation might never have happened, was rector at Fillingham in the 1360s.



*Portrait of Isaac Newton at forty-six, by Godfrey Kneller, 1689*



Thomas Linley, by Gainsborough (1771)

The Elizabethan mystic Dr John Dee held the living at Leadenham in the 1570s, despite being regarded by the Bishop of Lincoln as “vehemently suspected in religion; an astronomer, not a theologian”.

John Cotton was for a long time the charismatic vicar of Boston before he went to Massachusetts, taking many of his parishioners with him.

Yet another John, John Wesley, leader of one of the greatest ever Protestant revival movements, was born and brought up in the poltergeist-haunted rectory at Epworth.

There were monarchs with Lincolnshire connections – Edward IV, brought up in Bolingbroke, and the less well-disposed Henry VIII, whose reign could have been ended by the Lincolnshire Rising initiated by the vicar of Louth.

There were musicians of European note – William Byrd, possibly born in the Fens, who played the organ at Lincoln, and became one of the greatest composers of the Renaissance.

John Taverner was put in prison for his Reforming activities, and later made money selling looted church furnishings, but his music is now regarded as the epitome of Anglican good taste and stateliness.

Thomas Linley was a childhood friend of Mozart’s, and regarded as his musical equal, but drowned in the lake at Grimsthorpe at just twenty-two years old, after his boat overturned, and he tried to swim for the shore wearing his coat and boots.

There was the eighteenth century antiquarian William Stukeley, from Holbeach, whose romantic writings on British and English history, and studies of Stonehenge, are still hugely influential on the way the British and the English see themselves.

There was Alfred, Lord Tennyson, poetic expression of the Victorian age, born at Somersby in the Wolds, whose first poems were published in Louth, and who holidayed in Mablethorpe and Skegness.

As if Isaac Newton wasn’t enough of an

adornment to a county’s scientific reputation, Barrow upon Humber boy John Harrison solved the long-vexed problem of longitude, vastly improving navigation and saving countless sailors’ lives.

Revesby was home to Sir Joseph Banks – who funded global scientific expeditions, became a renowned botanist, and as President of the Royal Society helped shape the course of European science for generations.

Lincoln threw up George Boole, the quietly religious son of a shoemaker whose ‘Boolean logic’ underpinned the early science of computing – without whom, in fact, there might never have been Google, or people on Twitter exchanging insults!

### Explorers

Then there were explorers – Captain John Smith of Willoughby, who once beheaded three Turks in a battle in Hungary, and escaped from slavery by killing his captor – then got so bored with this quiet life that he went to America instead, to found Jamestown and have his life spared by Pocahontas.

George Bass of Aswarby and Matthew Flinders of Donington surveyed the coast of Australia, and established that Tasmania was an island – before Bass disappeared at sea, and Flinders got buried under the future route of London Crossrail.

### Northwest passage

Sir John Franklin from Spilsby was so obsessed by finding the Northwest Passage to Asia around the top of America that he quite overlooked old dangers. He had been nicknamed “the man who ate his own shoes” after severe privations on an earlier voyage. In his sixties, overweight and unhealthy, he insisted on leading a brilliantly equipped new expedition, with all the latest technology in preserved food, navigational aids and even new-fangled cameras. All went well – except that they never came back.

And these were just the most famous people connected to the county. More and more, I found unexpected links between Lincolnshire and the rest of England, from the earliest times until today. “Yellowbellies”, whether native-born or naturalised, covered the whole gamut of human possibility.

### Heretics

There were stiff-necked, plain-speaking “heretics” like Anne Askew of Stallingborough, tortured so severely by the Lord Chancellor that she had to be carried in a chair to the stake to be burned.

Not content with having bitter religious arguments in England, Anne Hutchinson of Alford went to the New World to fall out with her fellow Puritans there, and was only silenced when she was tomahawked to death by plainly unappreciative Native Americans.

### Visionaries

There were driven visionaries like the

artist George Stubbs, who retired to a freezing farmhouse at Horkstow, where he cut the throats of horses to bleed them to death, flayed their skins slowly, and made Leonardo-like drawings of their anatomies.

There were splendid eccentrics – like Henry Welby of Goxhill, who nagged his dissolute younger brother so annoyingly that eventually he tried to kill him. Henry survived, but gave up talking to anybody at all, and retired to a house in London, where he lived in complete isolation for forty-four years.

There was Colonel Sibthorp, longtime Conservative MP for Lincoln who earned the hatred of Queen Victoria by opposing an extra grant of public money for her husband, Albert, on the grounds that he was German. He also earned the delight of the House of Commons and the scorn of the popular press, by opposing all innovations on diehard principle – from barrel organs to water closets, the Great Exhibition to the National Gallery, and free trade. “I hate reform” he said, “as I hate the devil”. He disapproved of all foreigners, and called the new House of Commons a “harem”. He hated public libraries too, and even reading, which, he informed fellow MPs, he had never enjoyed when studying at Oxford!

All these people, and many others, had lived out their lives, or parts of their lives, against an extraordinary and little-visited landscape. I started to explore this enormous new world in spare time, travelling up from inner-city London, to find first the Fens, then Lincoln, then gradually starting to fill in some of the gaps between. The roads were luckily bad, the railways almost non-existent; I realised this was one of the reasons Lincolnshire had been spared.

### Huge space

My first impressions were of big skies – fresh air – and huge space. Far from being boring



A self-portrait by George Stubbs



*Lincolnshire big skies*

and depressing, as many people assumed, I found the endless horizons of the Fens liberating, at times almost intoxicating. I found they were much more varied than reading had led me to believe, and they weren't even as flat as I had thought. They had a particular beauty all of their own.

I became gradually aware of the enormity and ingenuity of the centuries of engineering that had gone into creating and maintaining these places, although I wished, and still wish, that more of the Fens could have been left in their original, undrained state. The farmers who cultivated these acres looked tiny in these great and brooding backdrops, but their smallness only made their daily achievements all the more impressive.

The Fens were not always beautiful, obviously, but even their worst prospects were often redeemed by some of the most wonderful churches I had ever seen – medieval masterpieces, roadside art galleries filled with historical interest. Heckington, Gedney, Whaplode, Moulton, to name just a few. And who couldn't like a place which had names like Sots Hole, Tumby Woodside, and Wasp's Nest?

And then of course, the majesty of Boston Stump, like a scene from a Delft tile, or a dream of the Dutch Golden Age, towering over a characterful town remembering ancient glory as one of the great ports of medieval England. This was a place from where ships had departed to fight the French, and the Scots, and crusade against the pagans of Lithuania – whose crest of three crowns alludes to long-time trading links with Cologne, where the Three Wise Men of the Bible were traditionally buried.

### **Spalding**

Then there was Spalding, of course – gracious houses along the riverfront, handsome public buildings, and the beauty of the church, as wide as it is tall – magnificent testaments of faith in the future by a town whose name is sometimes said to mean “the dwellers by the gulf”.

Spalding's distinctions were not just

architectural, because the town was also home to the Gentlemen's Society, the second-oldest learned institution in England, a fantastic old-style museum and library and hub of intellectual activity, which even now keeps the town's name alive across a huge range of twenty-first century scientific disciplines.

And what about hosting the UK's first rock festival in 1967, where Jimi Hendrix couldn't tune his guitar, people laughed at Pink Floyd, and Eric Clapton got bombarded with toilet rolls?

### **Lincoln Cathedral**

Moving north, what can be said about the Cathedral that isn't a cliché? This is Lincolnshire's only world-famous building, but even it is not admired as much as it should be. I first saw it on a snowy evening, and since then have seen it in every kind of weather. I have by now plumbed most of its recesses and viewed the world from the bell tower, and even now it astounds. It is one of the statement buildings of an otherwise irretrievable past. It rides above the ages as a symbol of what human beings can achieve.

And the Cathedral is just part of an assemblage redolent of history, from the Newport Arch to the Roman cart tracks preserved in the basement of a medieval guildhall, and the Saxon script on a reused Roman gravestone on the tower of St Mary le Wigford. The Magna Carta at the Castle, and memories of seventy-year-old warrior, William Marshall, who was so excited to join in the second Battle of Lincoln that he galloped off without his helmet. Less dashing military history extended into the twentieth century, with the first tanks tested in the city's parks, before going off to terrify the Germans in September 1916.

### **Towns of the south**

And what about the towns of the south? Grantham, where Newton went to school and bought glass prisms in the market, in the shadow of the spire of St Wulfram's

– a spire so impressive John Ruskin was said to have fainted when he first saw it. The church also has a chained library, the first public reference library in England, a suitable possession for a town committed to knowledge and non-conformism. As well as being home town to Margaret Thatcher, it was also home to the actor Richard Todd, Nicholas Parsons, and Holly Humberstone.

Bourne – home of the near-legendary Hereward the Wake, who led English resistance to the Normans. It later became renowned for scholarship, as the residence of Orm, author of the twelfth century *Ormulum*, and Robert Mannyng, whose *Handling Synne*, which he began in 1303, were hugely influential on the development of the English language.

Bourne, with its striking abbey front, and connections to both haute couture, in the shape of Charles Frederick Worth, whose clothes were worn by empresses – and high-speed motor racing, in the charismatic personality of Raymond Mays, daredevil driver turned designer of champion cars.

And of course Stamford, one of the most elegant towns in England, and an unforgettable stop on the old Great North Road. A town crammed with memories of everyone from the alchemist-philosopher Roger Bacon, to Daniel Lambert, England's fattest man, and the dynamic Elizabethan dynasty of the Cecils – who have served monarchs from Elizabeth I to Elizabeth II, and saved the town in the nineteenth century by preserving old buildings and keeping the East Coast mainline away.

### **Everything inbetween**

And then there was everything in between.

The Wolds – with their silent rolling fields and empty roads and surprisingly steep valleys. Little hills of chalk and flint, and small manor houses and streams creeping with crayfish, racing hares, and overflying buzzards – legends of wild men, big cats, and deserted villages.

Louth's St James's – one of the tallest spires in England, and at its feet the handsome town that Tennyson knew, and Trollope would have loved. The little redbrick town haunted by the Green Lady of Thorpe Hall, one of England's best known ghost stories.



*High Bridge, Spalding*

Horncastle – sun-drugged streets full of antique shops, half-awake heritage of horse fairs, and on a wall in the church, sickles and scythes supposedly carried by the doomed peasant rebels of the Lincolnshire Rising. Later, at nearby Winceby, Cromwell was nearly killed, with incalculable consequences for seventeenth century and subsequent history – and Slash Hollow in an unremarkable-looking field recalls a day of terrible bloodshed, Royalists slashed to death while they were trapped against a hedge.

Then there was the Humber, a hugely characterful and sometimes menacing river draining a quarter of England, and traversed by its magnificent Bridge – another miracle of engineering, offering unlimited views west into the heart of the Midlands, and east to a blue illimitability far beyond the toughness of Immingham and Grimsby.

Around the river, long walks, and little towns and villages full of history, from the Saxon church at Barton, to the echoes of the most beautiful of all English folk songs at Brigg Fair, and the ancient-symbolled, myth-trod turf-maze at Alkborough, from where sometimes you can see York Minster.

Around the bend, the Humber becomes the stately Trent – a fact of great significance to Vikings who sailed boldly up here, and briefly made Gainsborough the capital of Viking England. Even still, both banks boast pocket-sized ports still sometimes plied by coasting vessels, and on the west bank the idiosyncratic Isle of Axholme, a little outpost of Lincolnshire, remote even by the standards of the rest of the county. This is the country of the Haxey Hood, a seven centuries-old game that may be England's oldest folk custom – and the homeland of Methodism, whose westernmost village of Wroot is said even by other Isleonians to be 'out of England'.

But even given such a choice of places to live, I settled ultimately in the Marsh, in a cottage near the sea – so near the sea that on nights I can often hear the waves rolling and breaking on the beach, rolling and breaking forever as they rolled over and overwhelmed Doggerland thousands of years ago, making Britain an island. The stumps of trees can sometimes be seen at the lowest tides, and the skeletons of ships, and sands and saltmarsh stretch seemingly forever.

### Seals and porpoises

I have seen the beach in heatwaves, while



Stamford

swimming off the shore among seals and porpoises, when the sand shines and shimmers like the sands of the Kalahari, and tricks of light cut off the land completely and make walkers seem to float in air.

I have raced across the beach in rain, and trying to escape from lightning flashing from sudden storm fronts. I have tried to find my way in fog, where all directions become one and none – and at night, when the only light is from the moon, or far off ships riding out 'til morning.

I have hauled dirty, heavy driftwood along it with freezing hands and aching back, on still blustery mornings after northeasterly gales, between washed up coal, dead birds, old lifebelts, and fish crates from the Faroes. I have seen it under crisp and creaking snow, when everything is grey and white straight lines, except for twenty-foot-long ice-floes that could have floated in from Greenland. And I have seen it – or not seen it – under tidal surges, when the great plain becomes a battlefield of waters, like speeded-up geography, or a Gustave Dore illustration of *Paradise Lost*.

### Creeks of crabs and curlews

And just inshore, coppery slimy creeks of crabs and curlews and springy vegetation, the alarm-call of the redshank, and the trumpeting of thousands of geese. Dunes raised in the seventh century, sometimes topped by war defences, alive with rare insects, and toads, and birds, and endangered flowers. Tiny villages that were once important ports, with churches always too big for their populations, and now suffused with melancholic longing – leaning towers, monuments to the once-important, unvisited graveyards, unexpected grandeurs, touching survivals, and bat droppings on brasses.

And all of this – and much more than this – was hardly known about. It was a revelation to me, who had always taken an interest in such things. Might it not also be a revelation to others? Shouldn't it be written about, in fact – for my own gratification, of course, but also because the county seemed to be terrifyingly taken for granted. And places taken for granted are often abused – and precious things can be lost before people even realise they exist.

### Dangers

Everywhere I looked, I seemed to see dangers – from insensitive development, increasing population, and the demands of the energy industry. The caravans were spreading. The burger chains were sprouting. Estates of ugly houses were being thrown up everywhere. The family shops were starting to go. The accent was becoming less common. Every day there seemed to be slightly less character, slightly less individualism – a death of a thousand cuts. This extraordinary country was losing its extra – and if it did, all England would be the poorer.



Louth

I sought out obscure, sometimes expensive, books on the internet, and ravaged the resources of my own and others' book collections. I immersed myself in often tedious trivia, trying to unearth interesting anecdotes. And above all I started to walk – to the unbounded delight of my Jack Russell, Boston, who quickly marked out what must have been the biggest dog territory in the county!

I hunted down historians and church keyholders, and filled notebooks with recherche information, odd impressions and turns of phrase, and leaves of unknown plants to be taken home for identification.

I burrowed under stones to find spiders, peered into ponds in quest of newts, and stared up to see marsh harriers. I saw the sun coming up from quicksilver seas, and die in lurid splendour behind hills. As all those years ago in London, I would often walk twenty-five miles in a day. I often had sore feet. I clearly didn't have many friends! And eventually, I started to write some of this down.

I am painfully conscious that my book is a wholly inadequate reflection of reality. I am not completely happy with the structure, although I still can't think of an alternative. It certainly contains infelicities, and very likely it contains mistakes – although not, I hope, major ones. It is after all written from the outside, the view of an incomer rather than a native. However well-disposed I may be, and whatever research pains I may have taken, when it comes down to it I am not a real Yellowbelly – nor even a real historian.

However, I very much hope what I have written may have some merit maybe even lasting value – as a deeply personal history and – much more importantly than that – as a long overdue tribute to a truly magical place.

Derek Turner writes for the *Irish Times* and *Spectator*. His book on Lincolnshire, *Edge of England*, is available in all good bookshops.

## English identity

*Our territorial estate and home of a rooted identity needs strong defence, says David Ashton*

As a Royal Society we uphold the Crown in the United Kingdom and Realms, and our Mission statement encourages active loyalty to our paramount Chartered Aims and Objects.

So what about those republicans who blatantly disparage England or, more cunningly, muddle notions of “Englishness” for their subversive ends? “People are going through our history looking for things to be offended by. It is not about genuine pain,” observes the savvy sociologist Professor Emeritus Frank Furedi. “It is about distancing England from its traditions” [*Mail on Sunday*, 19 June 2022].

The word “England” has sometimes been used, albeit affectionately, for Great Britain, just as “Russia” stood for the wartime USSR. This regional link, however, also highlights our weakened island defences, currently deplored by military experts like Lord Dannatt [LBC online, 30 January 2023]. This predicament concerns us all.

### Distinctive people

England is the territorial home of a people no less distinct than (say) Ukrainians or

Tibetans. As *Wikipedia* quite correctly explains, its native inhabitants constitute “an ethnic group and nation” who “speak the English language” and “share a common history and culture”. Endorsement from our own Bibliography is corroborated by anthropologists from Geoffrey Gorer to A. D. Smith and historians from G. M. Trevelyan to Jeremy Black. Our continuous identity, which flourished before, during, and after the Empire that expired six decades after this Society was founded, has not evaporated.

In recent years, of course, the English have shared urban areas of their ancestral motherland with many thousands, who introduced mother-tongue profusion and religious incongruity. Do all these diverse minorities see themselves as “English”? Some actually refuse to assimilate. Surely it insults Somalis, Samoans, or St Lucians, for instance, to pretend they are Anglo-Saxons in disguise?

### English, a common language

We welcome culinary variety and health-care contributions from overseas, while

also opposing transnational crime, imported foreign friction, and terrorism. In return, we are entitled to advocate English as the common language for public communication, urge respect for our past inheritance, and manage migration to fortify future cohesion. To these positive ends, branches or individuals can legitimately approach the media, and even politely petition parliament above and aside from party-politics.

Our Mission Statement wisely recognises the difference between our indigenous customs and those of newcomers, who possess their own community organisations, representatives, and general taxpayer support. Our Society, which rightly has neither colour bar nor sectarian criteria, is nevertheless virtually the only charitable institution that lawfully protects and promotes the specific interests of the so-called “ethnic majority”.

As well as people from other lands who share our values, shouldn’t patriots make it a priority now to recruit substantially from the relatively subdued English community itself?

## OBITUARY

### In Memoriam: the journalist who spoke for England



The eminent journalist, historian, anthologist, biographer, artist and landscape-lover, Paul Johnson, CBE, sadly passed away in January this year. An Oxford graduate, earning an Army commission, he was a massively prolific writer, author of widely varied but almost always brilliant, often originally researched books, including *Offshore Islanders: A History of the English People*, *Modern Times*, *Intellectuals*, *Quest for God*, *Wake Up, Britain!* and fiction like *Merrie England*.

In grateful tribute to this Englishman, who wrote about other great Englishmen, and their achievements from science to architecture, we republish a timely extract from his prophetic article from *The Spectator* (December, 2005), reprinted in a previous issue of the Society journal. Instead of his term “politically correct” (PC) we now use the synonym “woke”, but the dangers he outlined still face our country today. Let us learn not only from his erudite analysis but from his civic courage.

‘... PC is an army without visible leaders, and this makes it peculiarly difficult to attack. It is both nowhere and everywhere, infiltrating all the corners and interstices of the vast bureaucratic state, hydra-headed but not obviously ferocious like the dragon, more serpentine and stealthy, ant-like in intensity, industrious, fuelled from bottomless reservoirs of self-righteousness. In some ways it is a bigger threat to our well-being than its progenitor, Marxism. . . . Its weapon is not tanks or the H-bomb, but mind decay.’

D. L. W. Ashton



## English Clergy Association

*Patron:* The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally, DBE, Bishop of London;

*President:* Professor Sir Anthony Milnes Coates, Bt, BSc, MD, FRCP

*Chairman:* Dr Peter M. Smith, LLB, PhD, FRHistS

36 High Street, Silverton, Exeter EX5 4JD

Telephone: 01392 860 284

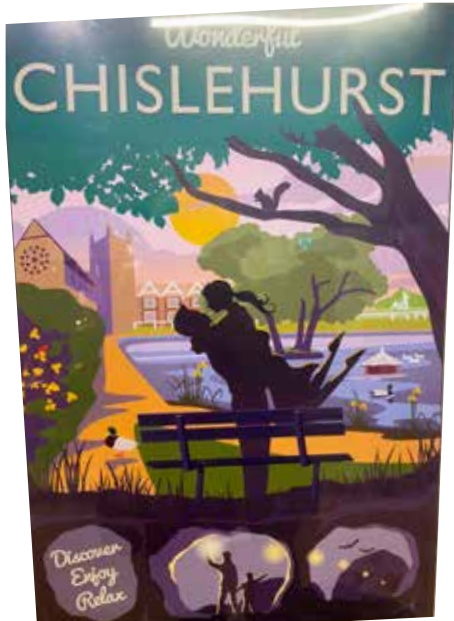
Email: P.M.Smith@exeter.ac.uk

- **Holiday Grants for Clergy and families**
- **Information and perspectives**
- **Members’ Magazine**



*Thou also shalt light my candle:  
the Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light  
St Giles-in-the-Fields, Holborn, London WC2H 8LG*





## Caves of discovery

Dear Editor,

I recently visited Chislehurst caves, the man-made labyrinth on the suburban and greenbelt border of South-East London and North-West Kent. I'd like to recommend this attraction to other readers. Not only can you enjoy a guided tour of caves that were variously used as hideaways for Cavaliers in the English Civil War, a storage space for WW1 munitions and a shelter from the Blitz, but also catch up on the history of British TV sci-fi and pop music!

The BBC in 1972 filmed a Dr. Who episode deep in the caverns; and pop musicians such as Mick Jagger and The Who gave underground concerts way back in their heyday. There were also appearances by skiffle bands and the great Lonnie Donegan.

I took the pictures (above), one of the Dr. Who stills and a travel poster advertising the many delights of Chislehurst. Apologies for the slightly wonky angles!

**Peter Gibbs**  
Kent

## King – and country

*The following letter was sent to Country Life magazine by Life Member of The Royal Society of St George, Mr. David Ashton. We would like to congratulate David on his great efforts in contributing*



*letters and comment on the theme of Englishness to a wide range of publications.*

Thank you for an excellent article on the active support from King Charles III for our farmland and scenery, as both a nationwide environmentalist and a hands-on gardener.

As a young friend poetically phrased it, "He loves our lanes and our lambs, our little hedgerows and our lovely homes." God save our gracious King.

**David Ashton**  
Sheringham, Norfolk

## Prayers for His Majesty in Wales

On my recent visit to St Davids Cathedral, Pembrokeshire, I was privileged to take part in the annual First of March pilgrimage from the holy well of St Non (St Non being the mother of the Welsh Patron Saint) to the great cathedral.

As the bells rang out on St David's Day, the pilgrims gathered in the town to hear an address by the Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Rev. Dr. Sarah Rowland Jones. Blessings were given to all and a prayer said for His Majesty the King.

A moving occasion, attended by folk from across these islands and from many parts of the world.

**The Editor**



## Lowestoft Branch

### St George's Day Lunch

**23 April 2023**

**12.30 for 13.00**

**The Hotel Victoria, Kirkley Cliff Road, Lowestoft NR33 0BZ**

Two courses £21.50,  
Three courses £22.50

For more details, please contact

**Brian Caton – email:  
b.caton3@btinternet.com**



## DO YOU HAVE A FACEBOOK PAGE?

If you do, please do search for the Royal Society of St George in the Facebook search bar and 'like' our page. Please post updates on our page about your branch activities and events. Please also add photos and relevant links if appropriate. If you like a link on our page, then please do 'share' it to your own profile page and this helps to promote our Society to potential new members.



## WE ARE ALSO ON TWITTER

So please do follow us on @RSStGeorge and help widen the reach of our updates by retweeting them to your followers.



## FINALLY, WE NOW HAVE A GROUP SET UP ON LINKEDIN

Where members and non-members can join and connect to potentially do business with each other, or share helpful business hints and tips. If you have a profile on LinkedIn, please do request to join our group. You will find it by searching for 'Royal Society of St George Official Group' in the search bar within LinkedIn.

# The return of Large Blue butterflies to Rodborough Common in Gloucestershire

*Jim Duggan*



**The largest reintroduction of a rare butterfly that was once extinct in Britain is a success after the insects bred in the first year at a site in the Cotswolds. The globally-endangered Large Blue butterfly was introduced to Rodborough Common in Gloucestershire in August 2019**

**T**HE LARGE BLUE BUTTERFLY, the largest and rarest of all nine British blue butterflies was declared extinct in Britain in 1979.

In 2019, after five years of landscape preparation the globally endangered Large Blue butterfly was introduced to Rodborough Common in Gloucestershire, an 867-acre site owned by the National Trust.

Large Blue butterflies have a remarkable life cycle, which involves the larvae tricking a particular species of red ant. In summer, the butterfly larvae deceive the ants into thinking they are their own young carrying them into their nest and caring for them where they feed on ant grubs before emerging the next year as butterflies.

### Preparation

Some of the grassy slopes had become overgrown which had a severe impact on the red ant's habitat. The long grass and scrub had caused the soil to cool which made it difficult for the ants to survive. As the ant population dwindled in the late nineteenth century, so did the numbers of Large Blues. The preparation of the site involved creating the right conditions for the ant. It also encouraged the growth of wild thyme and marjoram, which the butterfly feeds and lays its eggs on.

### Cows on Rodborough Common

Cows were introduced to the common to keep the grass down so sunlight can reach the soil, warming it to create perfect conditions for the red ants.

A number of organisations came together to do the preparation work, controlling scrub and creating grazing areas for the Commons cows to provide ideal conditions for those crucial red ants. Those who helped were: National Trust; Butterfly Conservation; Limestone's Living Legacies Back from the Brink project; Natural



*The Common's cows keep the grass down so sunlight can reach the soil, warming it to create perfect conditions for the red ants*

England; Royal Entomological Society (RES); Minchinhampton and Rodborough Committees of Commoners.

Around 1,100 caterpillars or larvae were released in August 2019. An estimated 750 butterflies successfully emerged at the site over the summer of 2020.

The Large Blues have been recorded mating and laying eggs and have also been spotted away from the release site.

### Rodborough Common

Rodborough Common is of international importance for its flora and fauna. A site of special scientific interest, it is also designated a European Special Area of Conservation for its flora and fauna, in particular its flowers, herbs and invertebrates. It is the most extensive area of semi-natural dry limestone grassland surviving in the Cotswolds.

It hosts a variety of orchid species and butterflies. Visitors can easily see species of both from the main paths that criss-cross the common. Walkers during the summer

months may see a number of species of orchid – Early Purple, Fragrant, Pyramidal, Common and Spotted. Bee, Musk and Frog Orchid are not so easy to find.

The rare Pasque-Flower grows on one of the south-west facing slopes. Wild Thyme and Milkwort grow where the grass is thin or eroded. Other species include Common Rock Rose, Harebell, Field Scabious, Knapweed and Wild Marjoram. Juniper bushes can be found on the slopes around the south western edge of the common.

### Diverse species

As well as the Large Blue other rarer species of butterfly, such as The Duke of Burgundy and Adonis Blue can be found at Rodborough, along with the more common Green Hairstreak, Brown Argos, Dingy Skipper, Small Blue, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Common Blue and Chalk-hill Blue.

Although the common is classed as a limestone grassland, it has a number of different habitats, which increases the number of invertebrate species to be found there. Some of the scrubbiest slopes, where the grass is longer and dotted with saplings of oak and birch, are home to grasshoppers and crickets.

### Bird life

Kestrels hover over the slopes, Skylark are here most summers, along with Meadow Pipit. The trees and scrub provide food, shelter and homes for Great Spotted Woodpecker, Jay and Goldcrest.

### Views

Rodborough Common has some of the greatest views – west over Doverow Hill to the Severn Vale to the Forest of Dean and beyond, the Welsh mountains, east along the Golden Valley towards Brimscombe. The view to the north takes in the town of Stroud and the Slad and Painswick Valleys.



*The Large Blue larvae trick a species of red ant into carrying them into their nest and caring for them while they feed on ant grubs*



On Operation Chastise, the attack on the Dams, McCarthy's crew consisted of, apart from Johnson: Sergeant Bill Radcliffe (a Canadian in the RAF) who was the flight engineer, Flight Sergeant Don MacLean, RCAF, (navigator), Flight Sergeant Len Eaton (wireless operator), Sergeant Ronald Batson (front gunner) and Flying Officer Dave Rodger, RCAF (rear gunner). At thirty-seven, Eaton, Manchester born, was the oldest man to set off for the dams.

At the Sorpe the plan did not involve the "bouncing bomb" skimming across the water. Instead it was to be dropped directly on to the dam. Hills and a church steeple were the big difficulties. Despite the efforts of T-Tommy's crew and another Lancaster, later in the night, the dam was damaged but not destroyed. Two dams were breached by 617.

A list of thirty-four "immediate" decorations was announced for Chastise,



The King and Queen came to the base of No 617 Squadron, RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire, to congratulate the Dam Busters. Here Joe McCarthy is presented to His Majesty. Wing Commander Gibson is on the right.



Johnny Johnson married Gwyneth Morgan shortly before the Dams operation. He was given four days of leave for the occasion by his CO, Wing Commander Guy Gibson

a remarkably high number for a relatively small operation. McCarthy received the Distinguished Service Order and MacLean and Johnson the Distinguished Flying Medal. At the head of the list was a Victoria Cross for Wing Commander Guy Gibson who had established 617 and led the operation.

Johnny Johnson continued flying with McCarthy and stayed in the RAF after the war, becoming a navigator and leaving as a Squadron Leader in 1962. He took up school teaching, moving on to posts concerned with mental health patients.

Following retirement Johnny Johnson and his wife Gwyneth lived in Torquay, where he was a local councillor and Conservative Association chairman. After Gwyneth died he moved to Bristol.

Johnny Johnson received an honorary doctorate from the University of Lincoln and was made MBE. He died on 7 December 2022 aged 101. He was the last of the Dam Busters.

Pictured left, ED825 was one of the twenty-four aircraft selected and prepared for Operation Chastise, the night-time attack on the German dams on 16–17 May 1943, now better known as the Dam Busters raid.

She was the final prototype of the Lancaster Type 464 (the designation given to those aircraft built specifically for Operation Chastise) and was built by A.V. Roe & Co at Newton Heath, Manchester who at the time were producing over 125 aircraft per month.

After final assembly at Woodford, Cheshire, and the conversion to what is known as 'Provisioning' at RAE Farnborough, the aircraft was delivered to 617 Squadron RAF A&A EE at Boscombe Down on 22 April 1943. She was allocated to Flight Trials rather than weapons testing as all of the aircraft modifications needed to be checked during take off and landing, as well as the more dramatic power dives and stalls.

## The Monarch and the Dustman

### The story of Edward Foster, VC

Paul Hooley, MBE

THE DAY AFTER St George's Day this year marks the 106th anniversary of an act of outstanding World War One bravery that touched the hearts of King and Country and set off a chain of events that not only lifted the nation's spirits, but also led to acts of enormous generosity and kindness that pump-primed the rebuilding of a devastated community of Northern France.

Corporal Edward (Ted) Foster, the soldier who carried out the courageous act, was six foot two inches tall, weighed over twenty stone and was affectionately known as 'Tiny'.

He had been born in Tooting on 4 February 1886 and prior to volunteering for service in the Great War had been employed as a refuse collector by Wandsworth Council. Married to his childhood sweetheart Alice and a father, Ted was twenty-nine years old when he heeded Lord Kitchener's and the Mayor of Wandsworth's call to arms and enlisted in the 13th Service Battalion (Wandsworth) – a Division of the East Surrey Regiment that was made up of mainly local men who became known as the 'Wandsworth Regulars'.

#### Hindenburg line

Following an initial period of training in England the Battalion was posted to France



Corporal Edward 'Tiny' Foster

in June 1916 where Tiny was involved in many of the great battles including Lens and The Somme and he was in the front line when the Germans were pushed back to the Hindenburg line in the Spring of 1917.

At daybreak on 24 April during the Battle of Arras, near to the village of Villers Plouich some eight miles south west of Cambrai, Corporal Foster's Battalion was held up by two German machine guns which were entrenched and strongly protected by wire entanglements. Further progress seemed impossible under the enemy's constant 'hail of death'.

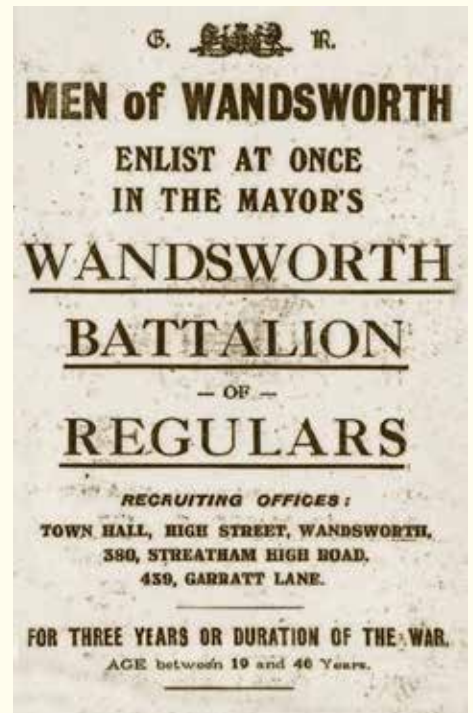
Without a thought as to their own safety, Corporal Foster and an unnamed Lance Corporal volunteered to charge the German machine gun nests. Each armed with a Lewis machine gun and as many bombs as they could carry, and under a storm of machine gun fire, the two Wandsworth Regulars somehow forced their way through the barbed wire and jumped down into the trench amongst the Germans.

#### Outnumbered

Lieutenant James Price Lloyd of the Welsh Regiment, serving with Military Intelligence, recorded what happened next:

*'Hopelessly outnumbered as they were, the two Englishmen proved more than a match for their enemies. Luck was not with them at first, as the Lance Corporal's gun jammed and before he could free the stoppage the Germans were upon him. They swarmed like bees down the trench, thinking to have an easy victory. The Lewis gun was wrenched out of his hands, but he did not lose it for long. Before they could do him further mischief, Corporal Foster had come to his rescue. A few Mills bombs quickly changed the Germans' ideas on the rights of property and they fled along the trench, leaving their dead behind them. Corporal Foster lost no time in following up his success. He led the way towards the first machine-gun emplacement, and, opening fire with his Lewis gun from the distance of a few yards, wiped out the gun's crew and the whole of its infantry escort. The second machine-gun fared no better, and in a few*

*Hopelessly outnumbered  
as they were, the two  
Englishmen proved more than  
a match for their enemies*



The recruitment poster that encouraged Tiny Foster and many other local men of his area to enlist in the Great war and form the 'Wandsworth Regulars'

*minutes the Corporal had captured the whole trench, and killed every man of its garrison. Now that this obstacle had been removed from its path, the Company went forward once more, and swept through the village to its objective on the further side. Meanwhile Corporal Foster had rejoined his platoon, and remained with it throughout a day of heavy fighting. By his splendid bravery and absolute disregard for his own safety he set a shining example to every man in his Company'.*

#### Victoria Cross

For his act of 'Most conspicuous bravery and initiative' Corporal Foster was awarded the Victoria Cross, the nation's supreme and most coveted gallantry honour, which is presented only to members of the British and Commonwealth armed forces and civilians under military command who 'In the presence of the enemy, shall have performed some single act of valour or devotion to their country'. In reporting the award the *Daily Mirror*, under photographs of the hero and his wife and daughter, wrote:

*'Corporal Edward Foster (East Surrey Regiment), one of the new V.C.s, was*



Corporal Foster receiving his VC from King George V

*formerly a dustman in the employ of Wandsworth Borough Council. He displayed reckless courage, first in bombing the enemy and then in killing a gun team and capturing their weapons, this heroic deed enabling an advance to be continued successfully. He is a man of great stature’.*

Tiny’s gallantry was similarly recognised by the French who awarded him the Médaille Militaire – that Country’s most senior entirely military decoration.

As outstanding as his selfless act of courage was, it wasn’t just the winning of the VC that set Ted Foster apart and ensured this modest man’s achievement became etched forever in the annals of two communities – who until that fateful day had not the slightest connection but who were forever after bound together in friendship. For the events that followed the news of Corporal Foster’s heroism firstly touched the nation and then led to the people of Wandsworth showing remarkable acts of generosity that blessed those who gave as well as those who received. These actions elevated Ted Foster, albeit reluctantly, to celebrity status for the rest of his life and ensured that

the deeds that he inspired are to this day remembered with gratitude and affection.

Tiny’s VC was gazetted on 27 June 1917 and the local feeling of intense pride was picked up and expanded upon by the national press. As one chronicler put it *‘In a bleak period of food shortages and attacks from the air the public needed a hero and they found one in Tiny Foster’*. The following month, on learning of his impending period of leave, crowds gathered in the flag bedecked streets around Tiny’s house and he was cheered home after having spent more than a year on the Western Front.

In those days refuse collecting was seen to be the most plebeian of positions. However to the citizens of Wandsworth the fact that the heroism of ‘one of their own’ should have been so universally recognised and that the actions of a local dustman should be thought worthy of being awarded the highest of all honours lifted the spirits of not only the community but also the nation and raised the profile of refuse collectors everywhere.

#### Special meeting

To mark Tiny’s return to ‘Blighty’ Wandsworth Council convened a special meeting in honour of their now most famous employee at which, following a standing ovation, speaker after speaker expressed their and their community’s pride and admiration for this shy and unassuming local hero. A few days later, on 21 July, Corporal Foster attended Buckingham Palace to receive his Victoria Cross. In a moment of sheer inspiration, and no doubt picking up on the wave of public pride and affection, King George V decided against presenting the award in the

state rooms where these ceremonies were usually conducted and instead walked Corporal Foster onto the Palace forecourt in front of the main gates

so that the huge crowd that had gathered could see with their own eyes the Supreme Ruler of the British Empire, upon which at that time it was said the sun never set, paying tribute to a humble dustman from South London. To add to the poignancy of the moment Queen Mary emerged on to the balcony so that she too could witness the award of the nation’s highest honour.

#### Honour

There was a sequel to this event when on 28 July 1923 the Monarch officially opened what was to become known as King George’s Park in Wandsworth. Amongst the large gathering that day was Ted Foster, who because of his towering stature and



King George V, on spotting Tiny amongst the crowd at the opening of King George’s Park in 1923, stopped his procession and went amongst the large gathering to ‘Honour Corporal Foster with an individual greeting’

the VC upon his chest stood out from the rest. He was quickly spotted by the King who halted the official proceedings to go into the crowd to, as the *Wandsworth Borough News* put it, ‘Honour Corporal Foster with an individual greeting’.

These gestures did much to endear the King to his subjects and raised Tiny’s profile to iconic status with journalists always presenting him as modest and unassuming.



The war memorial at Villers Plouich. Photograph René Hourdry



The plaque marking Foster's Way that is sited in King George's Park, Wandsworth



Edward's VC award was announced in *The London Gazette* on June 27, 1917 for his outstanding bravery. Edward's medal group amongst others are on public display at London's Imperial War Museum (above)

Following the end of the Great War, in which 947,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers lost their lives, communities were urged to support the British League of Help – an organisation that encouraged towns and villages to adopt a locality in northern Europe to help ease immediate suffering as well as assist in any way possible to provide funds for the rebuilding of those communities affected by the kind of total destruction Britain had, mercifully, been spared.

In October 1920 The Mayor of Wandsworth visited Villers Plouich, which had through Corporal Foster's act of bravery become synonymously linked with Wandsworth, and the dreadful sights he encountered appalled him. Not one building had survived the war and the population of 600 were living in shacks

*Within ten years Villers Plouich had been completely rebuilt including the local school*

made from anything they had been able to salvage from the debris. On his return to England the Mayor gave an impassioned speech urging support for this devastated community – which at first met with resistance on the grounds that the needs of Wandsworth and its thousands of returning servicemen should be put first. However it was the enduring memory of Tiny Foster's valour that decided the point and a motion was carried that Wandsworth should 'adopt' the community of Villers Plouich.

**Local hero**

The citizens of Wandsworth, inspired by daily sightings of the local hero in their midst, responded magnificently donating whatever clothes and other commodities they could and they raised £1,250 in cash – the equivalent of £150,000 in labour earnings of today. Within ten years Villers Plouich had been completely rebuilt including the local school, paid for largely from surplus funds from Wandsworth's generosity, and a square in the village was renamed Rue de Wandsworth.

Following the presentation of his VC Ted Foster had returned to the Western Front and was discharged in October 1918. On Armistice Day 1920 he was chosen to be one of the 'Bodyguard of Heroes' who formed the Guard of Honour as the Unknown Warrior, exhumed from a

battlefield of the Western Front, was laid to rest amongst Kings in Westminster Abbey.

Following his demob Wandsworth Borough Council appointed Tiny to be 'Dusting Inspector' a position he held for twenty-six years and which he believed had been specially created for him for winning the VC. He remained in the national spotlight and in 1937 the *Daily Express* affectionately observed 'Sunshine oozes from this twenty stone of good nature' whilst in reply to yet another question about his achievement Tiny would only say 'My VC? I want to forget it. But it did me a bit of good all the same. I was made a dustman before the war and the VC made me an Inspector, so I'm glad I got it. I'm quite happy in my job with bit o' gardening, bit o' pictures and bit o' football'.

Tiny Foster died suddenly on 22 January 1946, aged fifty-nine. However, his name, his deeds and the enthusiasm he generated live on to this day and in the 1990s Wandsworth Borough Council officially linked the Monarch and the Dustman by naming a footpath after their local hero in King George's Park near to where two men from the extreme opposite ends of the social scale had once so warmly and so publicly greeted each other.

Corporal Foster's act of outstanding bravery seems to have touched every citizen of his time and encouraged by an enlightened and caring King George V brought out the very best in a community that has endured long after Tiny's act of heroism and since he passed out of the sight of men. All this was well described by Neil Robson of the Wandsworth Historical Society who on the ninetieth anniversary of Tiny Foster's act of heroism wrote:

*'The story of the Battle of Villers Plouich and of Corporal Foster's VC acts as a model of how a community responds to a brave act by one of its members. It provides an example for younger people and, in an era that honours celebrity whilst heroes are out of fashion, its anniversary encourages a borough to reflect on the value of its heritage'.*



## Remembering Drake

By Andy Smith

**S**IR FRANCIS DRAKE, the famous Elizabethan seafarer and hero of England's victory over the Spanish Armada, is the latest victim of 'woke' attempts to rewrite our nation's history and tear down monuments to great Englishmen of the past.

Books about Drake are being removed from school libraries, and institutions named after the sixteenth century sea-captain – such as the Sir Francis Drake Primary School in south-east London – are changing their names. (It is now Twin Oaks Primary.)

So why, after more than 400 years of celebrity status in England, is Drake now a villain rather than a hero? And is his relegation to baddie status justified?

Not only did Drake lead the English navy to ultimate triumph in the battle against the Spanish Armada in 1588 – saving England from subjugation and the 'Spanish Inquisition' – but he thoroughly deserves his reputation as a brilliant sailor, having guaranteed his place in history by circumnavigating the globe justified?

Quite literally 'a legend in his own

lifetime' he became national icon for the next four centuries, symbolising valour, a lust for adventure, and British naval power.

It is, however, highly likely that Francis Drake, as a young man learning his trade, had been a crew member aboard ships that carried slaves across the Atlantic (though so too did virtually every English and European sailor of the period!).

The woke culture warriors have cottoned on to this, and rather than accepting that people in the past did things that nowadays seem appalling, when measured by today's standards, they vilify Drake as nothing more than a grubby slave trader. Is this fair?

Historical context is everything. Drake was in his teens and early twenties when he served aboard slave ships. He had no authority whatever at that time over where he sailed or what he did.

Although he later became a wealthy and powerful man, he was never involved in organising or financing slave trading activities or voyages, and never captained a slave ship. Indeed, his role in the transatlantic slave trade – though shocking

to us now – could only be described as miniscule, and, in any case, accidental.

We must also remember that, for centuries, throughout history, countless millions of African people had been enslaved and traded, mostly by their own African chiefs and Arab slave-dealers. Slavery was common practice on the continent of Africa.

What is more: while Britain abolished the slave trade more than two hundred years ago, and went on to wage a long war against slavery for most of the nineteenth century – with the West Africa Squadron of the Royal Navy fighting against the slave-traders and liberating hundreds of thousands of slaves, at enormous cost in British lives (and vast expense to the British taxpayer) – it is a sad fact that 'modern slavery' still exists in many parts of the world, and many cultures are rather less conscientious in ridding themselves of this system for exploiting human beings than we have been.

The British Empire's war against slavery in the nineteenth century is unique. Indeed, despite England having been involved in the transatlantic slave trade, on balance one would have to say that our record is far better than that of most other countries.

Yes, Drake and other Englishmen were participants in the slave trade. But can we really judge these figures from the past on the basis of a modern-day perspective? And was Drake, at the time little more than a boy, and just a very tiny cog in a big wheel, really be held in any way responsible?

William Wilberforce and the others who campaigned against slavery in the eighteenth century, and eventually succeeded in having the iniquitous trade banned by the British Parliament, did not feel the need to pull down the statues of Elizabethan seafarers or change the names of institutions named after them as part of their campaign.

They were concerned with righting the wrongs of the era in which they lived, not with erasing the past.

To target Sir Francis Drake now, in 2023, by dismissing him a no more than a slave-trader is a travesty, when in fact his actual involvement with the slave trade was tiny, and when his achievements as a sea-captain and naval commander have been rightly celebrated in this country for more than four centuries.

We still need our heroes in this country – and in my view Sir Francis Drake's name should still be honoured by all Englishmen and Englishwomen for the hero that he was. A flawed hero, perhaps (like all heroes), but one whose achievements far outweigh the errors that he was compelled to make by the circumstances of the age in which he lived.



Portrait of Sir Francis Drake by Marcus Gheeraerts, 1591



Bassenthwaite Lake

## Life in our country

**Stephen Garnett**

**In what we hope will be a regular feature, Stephen Garnett, the former editor of *This England* magazine keeps a watchful eye (and a wry smile) on the many challenging aspects of life in our country today . . .**

**P**ATRIOTIC FOLK WHO ENJOY a glass of wine will be delighted to learn that an English winemaker, Woodchester Valley Vineyard, based in the South Cotswolds, recently came first in the unoaked £20-£30 category at the Global Sauvignon Blanc Masters Awards, a prestigious competition organised by *The Drinks Business Industry* magazine. The winery, which is run by Fiona and Niall Shiner and their daughter Chloe, is a popular destination for visitors to this beautiful part of England, with pre-booked tours and wine-tastings available. The victory was particularly sweet because the judges tasted the entries “blind”, with no knowledge of the wines’ origins. Among those competitors who were “drunk under the table”, were vineyards from areas with warmer climates such as California and the Loire Valley, more traditional growers of sauvignon blanc

grapes. Well done Woodchester! It’s always good to beat the French!

### **Pandemic**

Many years ago I set about warning people of a pandemic that was about to sweep the nation. I had already heard the first tell-tale sounds from people suffering from the complaint, but when I questioned them about it they were either offended, didn’t care, or, most worryingly, were completely unaware that they had a problem. In order to try and emphasise the seriousness of the situation I gave the illness a name – RVS – but it continued to infect people at an alarming rate. No one seems to know where it came from but now Rising Voice Syndrome (people speaking as if they are asking a question) can be heard everywhere.

The battle to prevent the spread of RVS has now been lost and a cure seems unlikely,

but it might not be too late to stop another affliction, still mercifully in its early stages, before it sweeps the country. It seems illogical and, again, a mystery as to how it began, but I have noticed that more and more people are beginning their sentences with “So”.

“What do you do for a living?”

“So . . . I’m at university at the moment.”

“What do you do when you aren’t studying?”

“So . . . I enjoy running, amateur dramatics, listening to music . . .”

It’s important that whenever someone commits this offence their mistake is pointed out to them in no uncertain terms. Also, we all need to strictly police ourselves as it is all too easy to fall into bad habits. Let’s put a stop to this so-annoying trend – now!

### **Lake District hero**

We have a local hero in the Lake District. In 2022, beginning on 1 January, Gary McKee, from Cleator Moor, ran a marathon – every day! Running in all weathers, often in the morning before starting his shift at Sellafeld



Gary McKee

nuclear site, and supported by wife Susan and children Alfie, Beau and Minnie, Gary (53), raised over £1 million for Macmillan Cancer Support and Hospice At Home West Cumbria. During his 365, twenty-six-mile runs, Gary got through twenty-two pairs of trainers. Throughout 2022 Gary also gave up alcohol, a pledge he did finally break when, as crowds cheered him home, he crossed the line for the final time on New Year's Eve 2022. Cheers Gary!

### Lakes in the Lake District

When it cropped up in a pub quiz I once watched, the question "How many lakes are there in the Lake District?" had those who know England's largest National Park – or thought that they did – picturing a map in their minds, scratching their heads and, amidst various tales of daring adventures on various fells, slowly counting out the stretches of water that splash its 900 square miles: "Windermere, Grasmere, Wast Water, Derwentwater . . ." When the smug question-master then greeted their answers with a knowing smile, a shake of the head, and announced that they were all wrong and that there is only one lake in the Lake District, his verdict was met with derision and angry shouts of "Thirlmere! Haweswater!" and other expressions of disgust.

In fact the question-master was quite correct. I had grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles from that part of northwest England – which I still think of as Cumberland, Lancashire and Westmorland (but that's another story) – so "the secret" was imparted to me at an early age. Having recently moved to what most people now refer to as "Cumbria" I'm glad that it was, because a number of long-time residents, recognising a newcomer, have winked at one another before trying to catch me out. Of course, all those listed by the quizzers were "meres" or "waters" and it is only Bassenthwaite near Keswick that has "lake" in its title.

Those who are not from the area might

think it's a trick question and that it doesn't really matter. Well, a few years ago, when I heard a television presenter refer to "Lake Coniston" I very nearly put my foot through the screen. Not matter? It does to some of us.

### National heroes

When I was at junior school in the sixties, I remember how proud we all were to live in a country that had contributed so much to the world. Back then, our lives weren't only peopled with family and friends, but great national heroes and heroines were also part of our rich hinterland, figures such as Alfred the Great, Isambard Kingdom Brunel (whose name alone was enough to excite a small boy), Florence Nightingale, Captain Scott, Sir Isaac Newton, Admiral Lord Nelson and numerous others whose stories we learnt almost as soon as we could read.

The figure who stirred my blood most was the swashbuckling Elizabethan seaman, Sir Francis Drake. This was the Englishman who, in his ship, the *Golden Hind*, circumnavigated the globe, and in 1588, after first finishing a game of bowls, sailed from Plymouth to defeat the Spanish Armada and save England from invasion. Drake also, we were told, singed the King of Spain's beard. To us boys and girls this sounded like an astonishing act of daring. Our towering headmaster, Mr. Grey, had a very handsome beard of which he was extremely proud and the consequences that would have befallen any of us reckless

enough to set fire to his facial hair didn't bear thinking about, so to do it to the King of Spain. . . Golly, that must have taken real courage!

### Slavery

Sadly, it seems that schoolchildren no longer learn about Drake's exploits as an explorer, adventurer and naval hero. Instead, it is the voyages he made with Sir John Hawkins, a slave trader, that are now seen as most important when considering his reputation. As a result of this, in January 2023 the Sir Francis Drake Primary School in Deptford, south-east London, became Twin Oaks Primary School, the headmistress explaining that the change was made because of the "slave trade links associated with the current name". And so another beacon of English history has been extinguished.

One person who will welcome the move is Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury. At around the same time as Sir Francis was being expelled from the school, he announced that the Church of England had set up a £100 million fund to atone "for the past wrongs of slavery". I was under the impression that the Church of England was short of money but clearly this is not the case. Who will receive the millions? I think the Archbishop will find that those who were affected by historic slavery have long since passed away. Are there no charities or deserving causes closer to home, with present-day needs, to which the money could be sent?



Sir John Hawkins (left) with Sir Francis Drake (centre) and Sir Thomas Cavendish

## We'll Meet Again

**Hayley Wicker-Bradbury**

Fundraising and Business Development Manager, DVLCC



**O**UR STORY BEGAN in late 2000 with the announcement by the national charity Scope that it would no longer be able to fund its network of School for Parents, facilities providing early intervention services based on the principles of Conductive Education to support parents in raising a pre-school aged child with cerebral palsy or other neurological condition.

Determined not to see the School for

Parents close, Dame Vera together with her friends launched the 'Bluebird Appeal' and raised enough awareness and considerable funds to save the school. If it were not for her efforts, so many children would have lost out on an amazing start.

Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity continued to provide for the early intervention service in collaboration with Scope, until late 2016. The Charity then took a number of decisions to ensure a more sustainable future by ending the collaboration and delivering all of its own services.

### Support

Since moving to Cuckfield in 2017 we have supported more than 174 families from across the South East who have children with cerebral palsy and other motor-learning impairments.

In the last year alone we have provided 1,320 hours of hands-on support to our families, seventy-four swimming sessions, 251 home play sessions, and 252 music therapy sessions, all free of charge.

Cerebral Palsy is a physical disability that affects movement, balance and posture as well as cognitive, social and communication skills often caused by an injury to the brain at birth. Early intervention is vital to enable children to learn and develop physically,



socially and emotionally, forming the bedrock of the independence that they can achieve later in life. By supporting the very youngest of children we are able to help their brain to develop new neuropathways, enabling them to learn life skills such as movement and communication.

Our aim for 2023 is the same as our vision – to support children and their families creating possibilities and enhancing lives.

It is often a misconception that given our name, financially we must be secure. This sadly is not the case and our core costs, like so many in our community are rising. We rely almost entirely on Trusts, Corporates, Legacies and our Community to support our families.

### Costs

Our costs are set to rise in 2023 from an average of £1,250 a day to £1,400, we strive to ensure that all our services are provided free of charge to families, for many they are a life-line of networking, guidance, signposting and a safe haven in a storm of uncertainty.

*"I feel so lucky to have found a community of other parents going through similar things too. Within Ted's small group, we're able to share experiences, knowledge and advice, which has been a lifeline!"* Fiona and Ted

Dame Vera, our late President, said: *"Early intervention is key to helping young children with cerebral palsy and other motor-learning conditions gain a solid base from which they can develop their independence and self-esteem in later life. This is why I was determined to ensure this service could continue in my home county of West Sussex and support families from across the South East."*



## The Origins of English Place Names

Jim Duggan

**T**HE ORIGIN OF MANY place names is forgotten. However, their construction can still be deciphered to reveal their original meaning.

With the knowledge of a few prefixes and suffixes you may be able to interpret the names

Without going into too much detail, these affixes originate from and are the result of various linguistic influences including Brythonic, Cumbric, Cornish, Pictish, (all four of which are ancient Celtic languages) then Irish, Latin, Middle English, Norman French, Old English, Old Norse, Scots Gaelic and Welsh.

The most common affixes you will come across in your travels are:



### Avon, Afon

Welsh, Scots Gaelic, Cornish and Irish. *Meaning* – River. *For example:* Stratford-upon-Avon. The name is a combination of the Old English *stræt*, meaning “street”, and *ford*, – a site at which a road forded a river.



### Beck

Old English and Old Norse. *Meaning* – Stream. *For example:* Beckenham, meaning “homestead by the stream”.

### Berg, Berry

Old English and Old Norse origin. *Meaning* – Hill or mountain. *For example:* Roseberry Topping, Berkhamsted



### Bourne, Burn

Old English. *Meaning* – Large stream or small river. *For example:* Bournemouth, Bourne, Eastbourne, Ashbourne, Blackburn

### Bury, Borough, Brough, Burgh

Old English. *Meaning* – Fortified enclosure. *For example:* Bamburgh, Peterborough, Scarborough, Jedburgh,



### By

Old Norse. *Meaning* – Farm. *For example:* Derby, Crosby, Rugby.



### Caster, Chester, Cester, Ceter

Old English, Latin. *Meaning* – Camp, fortification (of Roman). *For example:* Doncaster, Manchester, Leicester



### Cheap, Chipping

Old English. *Meaning* – Market. *For example:* Chipping Norton, Chepstow



### Combe

Brythonic. *Meaning* – Valley. *For example:* Barcombe literally means “Valley of the Britons”, Castle Combe.



### Ford

Old English. *Meaning* – Ford or crossing (of a river). *For example:* Ashford, Oxford, literally means ‘where the oxen cross’. There is also the village of Burford, in the Cotswolds, where *burh* means ‘fortified town’ or ‘hilltown’, it literally means ‘the fortified town at the crossing of a river’.



### Gate

Brythonic. *Meaning* – Road. *For example:* Harrogate. Gate has its roots in Old Norse, and in Norwegian still means road. For example, Karl Johans Gate is the name of the main commercial road in Oslo.



### Ing

Old English. *Meaning* – People of. *For example:* Hastings, Reading



### Ham

Old English. *Meaning* – Homestead. *For example:* Nottingham.



### Minster

Old English. *Meaning* – large church, monastery. *For example:* Westminster, Leominster



### Mouth

Middle English. *Meaning* – Mouth of a river or bay. *For example:* Plymouth, Bournemouth.



### Pool, Port

Old English and Middle English. *Meaning* – Harbour. *For example:* Blackpool, Newport.



### Stead

Old English. *Meaning* – Enclosed pasture. *For example:* Hampstead, Berkhamsted



### Thorp or Thorpe

Old Norse. *Meaning* – Secondary settlement. *For example:* Thorpeness, Scunthorpe, .

### Thwaite, Twatt

Old Norse. *Meaning* – Secondary settlement. *For example:* Twatt, Braithwaite



### Tun, Ton

Old English. *Meaning* – Enclosure, estate or homestead. *For example:* Wigston, Kensington, meaning “people of the Ken estate”

**Omni Lifetime Planning Ltd specialise in Wills, Trusts, Asset Protection, Probate, Powers of Attorney and Funeral Plans.**

**We offer a 50% discount to members bringing the cost of a single will down to £75 and a pair of mirror wills down to £125.**

www.omni-lifetimeplanning.co.uk  
 Tel: 01727 220053  
 mail: info@omni-lifetimeplanning.co.uk

**Copy date for the August 2023 edition of**

***St George for England***

**30 June 2023**

**To submit copy contact Stuart Millson  
 Tel: 07956 035821  
 email: info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com**

## DO YOU SHOP ONLINE?

**If your answer is yes, then you are in an ideal position to help raise funds for our Charitable Trust – and at no cost to you. Read on . . .**

If you buy goods online or participate in grocery home shopping, then please check out the “**easy fundraising**” scheme below, as our Charitable Trust can get a donation every time a purchase is made through it by you.

**Simply go to:**

**[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/royalsocietyofstgeorgecharitabletrust](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/royalsocietyofstgeorgecharitabletrust)**

If you then wish to participate, sign up with the **Royal Society of St George Charitable Trust** as your chosen charity and continue shopping online as normal using this site as your portal.

There are over 2000 participating stores which include; **John Lewis, Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Amazon, etc.** It’s absolutely free to you and our Charitable Trust can gain donations from the participating retailers of up to 2.5% or more of the value of your shopping when you use it.

What’s more, they will send you a confirmatory email once the participating retailer has processed your transaction, letting you know how much has been donated to the Royal Society’s Charitable Trust on your behalf.

With the end of the 2022/23 tax year, I thought it might help to compare the tax allowances for 2022/23 and 2023/24. On the basis that income generally increases over time, the Government aims to receive more tax by keeping most of the allowances the same. I have also highlighted those allowances that will be reduced, allowing even more tax to be liable.

	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Income tax</b>		
Starting rate for savings (non-taxpayer)*	0% up to £5,000	0% up to £5,000
Personal savings allowance (basic rate taxpayer)	£1000	£1000
Personal savings allowance (higher rate taxpayer)	£500	£500
Personal allowance†	£12,570	£12,570
Basic rate (income between £12,571 and £50,270)	20%	20%
Higher rate (income between £50,271 and £150,000)	40%	40%
Additional rate (income over £150,000)	45%	45%
<b>Dividend tax</b>		
Dividend tax free allowance	<b>£2,000</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
Basic rate	8.75%	8.75%
Higher rate	33.75%	33.75%
Additional rate	39.35%	39.35%
<b>Capital gains tax (CGT)</b>		
CGT free allowance	<b>£12,300</b>	<b>£6,000</b>
Basic rate	10%	10%
(Gains on residential property)	18%	18%
Higher rate and above	20%	20%
(gains on residential property)	28%	28%

\*Does not apply if your non-savings taxable income exceeds the starting rate limit.

†Your personal allowance is reduced by £1 for every £2 of income over £100,000.

If you have a particular query regarding tax please email me at [stgeorgestax@gmail.com](mailto:stgeorgestax@gmail.com) or write to me at 36 Weedon Road, Stratton-St-Margaret, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 4EG. If there are any common questions I will address them in the next edition of this journal or reply to you directly.

*Lloyd James*



**English Eccentricities** – The Society is putting together a catalogue of items and events that are definitively English. Cheese Rolling, Nettle Eating, Bog Snorkeling, Morris Dancing, Battle Enactments, etc. Any information you may have of events in your area please send to: [david.burns@rssg.org.uk](mailto:david.burns@rssg.org.uk)

**Chess puzzle Answer: 1.Qe4 to h7 is the first move. Now if Ka8 2.e7-e8=Q (or rook) checkmate. The same if the king went to b8. However, the king goes to b7 then we still play the pawn to e8 and promote to a queen with checkmate. The check from the queen on h7 is catastrophic.**

## MEMBERSHIP AFFILIATIONS – DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE

### **NEW 20% discount for RSSG members, on all books, limited edition prints and recordings produced by RAILWAY CAT CREATIONS**

All our items can be viewed on the website: [www.railway-cat.co.uk](http://www.railway-cat.co.uk), but please contact us directly either by e-mail on [railwaycat@clara.co.uk](mailto:railwaycat@clara.co.uk) or by phone on 01708 557288, to order at this special members' discount.

### **OMNI LIFETIME PLANNING LTD 50% DISCOUNT ON WILL WRITING**

Bringing the cost of a single will down to £75 and a pair of mirror wills to £125 for Society members

[www.omni-lifetimeplanning.co.uk](http://www.omni-lifetimeplanning.co.uk)

Tel: 01727 220053

email: [info@omni-lifetimeplanning.co.uk](mailto:info@omni-lifetimeplanning.co.uk)

### **10% DISCOUNT FROM OF CABBAGES & KINGS**

a source of design-led gifts and homeware by British based artists, designers and crafts people. Please visit [www.ofcabbagesandkings.co.uk](http://www.ofcabbagesandkings.co.uk) and enter code "ST GEORGE" when checking out.

### **15% DISCOUNT OFF THE ENGLISH TOASTMASTERS ASSOCIATION TRAINING COURSE**

The courses are being offered at

**15% LESS AT £2,082.50 – A SAVING OF £367.50**

Training includes three full days after which further training is available on demand within the annual membership fee.

Meetings are held throughout the year with two special meetings including breakfast and luncheon. These two special meetings are held in April close to St George's Day and in October around Trafalgar Day at the County Hotel in Chelmsford, Essex close to the Association's HQ in Danbury.

Further training is available on demand and included in the annual fees covering such subjects as marketing as a Toastmaster, Masonic Ladies Festivals and Corporate Functions.

With prices charged by Toastmasters generally ranging from £250.00 to £750.00 per event, this is wonderful work for the right person and is greatly rewarding regardless of the type of work that is undertaken.

Please see [www.englishtoastmasters.co.uk](http://www.englishtoastmasters.co.uk) for full details.

Email [info@englishtoastmasters.co.uk](mailto:info@englishtoastmasters.co.uk)

Telephone (01245) 222392 or 07971 409977.

### **10% DISCOUNT ON TAX RETURNS.**

Benefit from many years of experience in tax and the same high standard of service expected from the best Accountancy firms but at a much lower price **FROM £100 PER TAX RETURN plus A FREE REVIEW and 10% DISCOUNT.** Please email [phoenixreturns.tax@gmail.com](mailto:phoenixreturns.tax@gmail.com) or telephone (01793) 827620.

### **MRFLAG.COM Ltd 15% DISCOUNT**

on all products except sewn flags. Telephone Kath the Sales Manager on (01792) 650044 or email Kath at [sales@mrflag.com](mailto:sales@mrflag.com) and state that you are a member of The Royal Society of St George.

### **10% DISCOUNT FROM KNIT WITH ATTITUDE**

a small independent yarn shop that specialises in eco-friendly and ethically produced yarn and accessories for hand knitting and crochet. To receive a 10% discount please visit: [www.knitwithattitude.com](http://www.knitwithattitude.com) and enter discount code "St George" in your shopping cart before checking out. Alternatively please quote this code when visiting the shop at 127 Stoke Newington High Street, London N16 0PH.

### **HOTEL AND CAR HIRE DISCOUNTS:**

- 20%–30% discount on hotel accommodation below similar offers available on public websites.
- 20% discount on car hire through Alamo and National
- Your Society also benefits by receiving 2.5% on every booking made with no extra cost to you.

Please visit: [www.membertravelspecials.com/RSSTG.aspx](http://www.membertravelspecials.com/RSSTG.aspx) and help your Society by making this your preferred means of saving money when booking hotels or car hire.

### **JOHNSONS STEAK HOUSE OFFER A 10% DISCOUNT OFF YOUR MEAL TO MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ST GEORGE AND THE MILITARY FROM TUESDAY TO THURSDAY**

The newly built Steakhouse and Bar at Church Farm, Church Street, Old Hurst, Huntingdon, PE28 3AF serves home grown produce reared on the farm. Lunch is served Tuesday to Saturday from 12 pm to 3 pm and dinner from 5.30 pm to 9.30 pm with a Sunday Carvery available from 12 pm to 3 pm. For reservations please telephone: 01487 824658 option 3, Email: [info@johnsonssteakhouse.co.uk](mailto:info@johnsonssteakhouse.co.uk) or contact through Facebook [@johnsonsfarmshop](https://www.facebook.com/johnsonsfarmshop).

Please do not hesitate to contact Lloyd James with suggestions of other discounts or reciprocal arrangements with other organisations by email at [ldjstg@gmail.com](mailto:ldjstg@gmail.com) or telephone (01793) 827620

## 50/50 CLUB

### **Support the Royal Society of St George**

Support the Royal Society of St George and win yourself cash prizes by joining the Society's own lottery – the 50-50 Club. The 50-50 Club was launched in January 2011 and by the end of 2015 had raised more than £5000 in much needed funds to assist with projects to promote the Society and its objectives.

More participants will ensure more income for the Society and larger prizes.

Details of the Lottery are as follows:

The 50-50 Club takes the form of a monthly Lottery.

To enter you can pledge to sponsor individual numbers between 1 and 1000 for £5.00 each, per calendar month.

There is no limit to how many numbers one person can sponsor but numbers will be allocated

on a strictly first-come – first-served basis. If number/s selected by members have already been purchased the next nearest number will be allocated.

On the first Monday of each calendar month three numbers will be drawn from those numbers sponsored during the previous month.

Fifty per cent of monies collected from those sponsored numbers will be given in prize money, with the other fifty per cent going to the Society to achieve its four stated objectives and contribute to the Charitable Trust.

The prize money will be split into three prizes as follows: First Prize: Sixty per cent; Second Prize: Thirty per cent; and Third Prize: Ten per cent.

Entries do not have to be purchased by individuals. Maybe your Branch could sponsor some numbers?

# BRANCHES LIST

## BRANCHES IN ENGLAND

**The All-Party Parliamentary Group  
The House of Commons**  
(Membership is only open to Lords, MPs  
and staff of the Palace of Westminster)

### Bath & District

Nick Lennard, Chairman  
Email: nicklennard@gmail.com

### Bolton

Mr. Chris Houghton, Chairman  
Email: chris.houghton@rsg.org.uk

### City & County of Bristol

Mr D Stinchcombe,  
Email: dennismbe@riversideyp.org

### City of Liverpool

Mr B K Boumphrey,  
Email: brian.boumphrey@btinternet.com

### City of London

Deborah R.J. Black, Honorary Secretary  
Email: honsecrets@gbtinternet.com

### City of Westminster

Mr. Alan Broomhead, Chairman,  
Email: alansco@btinternet.com

### Danbury

Mr. Richard Palmer FMETA C.Inst.S.M.M.  
President The English Toastmasters  
Association,  
Mobile: 07971 409 977  
Email: info@englishtoastmasters.co.uk  
Website: www.englishtoastmasters.co.uk

### East Anglia

Mr. John Stannard, President  
Tel: 01502 512 734  
Email: johnr.stannard@talktalk.net

### Fenland

Mr. Brian Kierman, Chairman  
Email: brian@kierman.co.uk  
Telephone: 01945 463 774

### Furness

Mr. Paul Broom, Chairman  
Email: paul@bridgefield.co.uk

### Gloucestershire

Mrs Margaret Fuller  
Email: glosrsg@btinternet.com

### Greater Manchester

Mr. M. J. Riley,  
Email: michaeljriley@btinternet.com

### Halifax

Geraldine Carter, Hon Secretary  
Email: gmcarter.rsg@gmail.com

### Haslemere

Nick Hinchliffe, Chairman  
Email: nbhconsulting@btinternet.com  
Mrs S Hankers,  
E.mail: shirt.berley@gmail.com

### Huntingdon

David Neal Treasurer/Membership  
Secretary  
Email: davehjneal@aol.co.uk

### Leeds

Cllr Wyn Kidger, Chairman  
Email: Wyn.Kidger@leeds.gov.uk

### Leicestershire

Mr Stephen A. Warden, JP, President  
Email: stephen.warden@virginmedia.com

### Lowestoft

Mr Brian Caton  
Email: b.caton3@btinternet.com

### North Downs

Mr. S. Millson, Chairman,  
Email: stuartmillson@yahoo.com

### North Surrey

Robert Freeman JP, Chairman  
Email: robertfreeman\_uk@yahoo.co.uk

### Northumbria Branch

Mr. A. J. Nicholls, Chairman,  
Email: tonymicholls23@btinternet.com

### Radford

Mr Phil J Harwood,  
Email: philjamesharwood@hotmail.com

### Rushmoor

Lt. Col Leslie G.A. Clarke  
Telephone: 01483 810 492  
Mobile: 07710 230 379  
Email: Leslie.larkfield@btinternet.com

### St Neots

Mr B Chapman,  
Email: barry.chapman@live.co.uk

### Seahaven

Linda Wallraven, Chairman  
Email: lindawallraven@gmail.com

### Seven Hills

Mrs. Christine Hirst, Chairman  
Telephone 0113 253 5647  
Email: hirjo43@hotmail.com

### Sheffield

Mrs Margaret Jennifer Clark, Secretary  
Telephone: 0114 264 0524  
Email: jenniferclark16@btinternet.com

### Shropshire

Mr. David Knott, Chairman  
Tel: 01743 368 552  
Email: daveknott42@hotmail.com

### Southend-on-Sea

Mrs V Weaver,  
Email: verinaweaver@gmail.com  
Tel: 01702 748 702

### Swale

Susan Thomas, Treasurer  
Email: susanthomas2609@hotmail.co.uk

### Taunton and Exmoor **NEW BRANCH**

Mr Martin Straus, Chairman  
Email: martingstraus1@gmail.com

### The Tower Of London

(Membership only open to Yeomen and  
employees of the Tower of London)

### Warwickshire

Mr. A. Clive Benfield,  
Email: clive.benfield@benfieldgroup.co.uk

### Waterloo

Mrs. Jane Dorrington, Chairman  
Email: jane@chiefexec.co.uk

### Wiltshire

Mr. Lloyd James, Chairman  
Email: ldjstg@gmail.com



## OVERSEAS BRANCHES

### Abu Dhabi

Mr Stephen Owens, Chairman  
Email: rsggauh@gmail.com

### Adelaide

Mrs D Bone,  
Email: saintgeorge@adam.com.au

### Brisbane

Mrs V Skinner,  
Email: roystonskinner@optusnet.com.au

### British Columbia

Mr. Shawn Wade, President  
Email: shawnwade@hotmail.com

### California

Princess Karen Cantrell, Chairman  
Email:  
royalsocietysaintgeorge.ca@gmail.com

### Carolinian

Mr. John M. Shannon  
Email: john.m.shannon@gmail.com

### Costa Blanca

Mr. R. G. T. Hunt MBE, Chairman,  
Email: roberthunt@hotmail.com  
Email: admin@stgeorgecostablanca.com

### Dar Es Salaam

Mark Golding – President  
Email: mark.p.golding@gmail.com

### Delaware (USA)

Mr. Andrew A. Lundgren, Secretary  
Email: andrew.a.lundgren@gmail.com

### Denmark

Mr. Simon C Mears, President  
Email: rsgdenmark@gmail.com



**Devonport**  
Mrs Elizabeth Page,  
Email: cageypagey@gmail.com

**Gold Coast**  
Mr. Graham Rumble  
Email: gprumble@yahoo.com

**Halifax & Nova Scotia**  
Carol Dodds, President  
Email: colin.dodds@ns.sympatico.ca

**Kuala Lumpur & Selangor,**  
Ray Bolland, President  
Email: president@stgeorgesmalaysia.com  
Website: www.stgeorgesmalaysia.com

**Lisbon**  
Michael Simpson, Interim Committee,  
Email: simpport1963@gmail.com

**Madrid**  
Dr F. E. F. Price MBE  
Email: freddie.price@live.co.uk

**Manila** **NEW BRANCH**  
Matthew Pajares-Yngson, GCPS, KCR,  
FRSA, Chairman  
Email: mattyingson@freckenham.org.uk

**Nairobi**  
Mrs Janet Barlow (Secretary)  
Email: janmac85@gmail.com  
sallyvj@coralwave.com

**Paris**  
Andrew M.G. Simpkin, President  
Email: andrew.simpkin1@gmail.com

**Port Elizabeth Women's Branch**  
Sandra Strang, Secretary/Scribe  
Email: bruce\_sandra@telkomsa.net

**Sabah**  
Mr M Steel, President,  
Email: mjsteel63@gmail.com

**South Florida**  
Roy Yates, President  
Email: president@baccbroward.org

**Sydney**  
Mr P M Cavanagh,  
Email: E11r@bigpond.net.au

**Texas**  
Cheryl Rios, Honorary Secretary  
Email: cheryldar@hotmail.com

**Toowoomba**  
Mr. Bob Anderton, President,  
Email: paulmunson53@gmail.com

**Victoria Branch (formerly Melbourne)**  
James McCarthy OAM, JP, President  
Email: rsstgmelbourne@gmail.com

**Warwick**  
Mr P Munson,  
Email: paulmunson53@gmail.com

**Zimbabwe (Harare)**  
Mr. Brian Heathcote, President,  
Email: bheathcote@zol.co.zw

## UK AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS

**English Toastmasters Association**  
Mr. Richard Palmer FMETA C.Inst.S.M.M.  
Mobile 07971 409 977  
Email: info@englishtoastmasters.co.uk  
Website: www.englishtoastmasters.co.uk

**Shropshire War Memorials Association**  
**Mr Clive I Blakeway**  
Email: clive@cblakeway.plus.com  
Tel: 01952 550 205

**Stourbridge Society of St George**  
Mr Keith Harris,  
Email: keith.harris4@gmail.com.  
Mobile 07973 266 842

**Victoria Cross and George Cross Association**  
Mrs Rebecca Charlotte Maciejewska,  
Email: secretary@vcandgc.org

**The Countess Mountbatten's own Legion of Frontiersmen**  
TBA

**The Order of St. George**  
Stuart A. Notholt, Grand Scrivener  
Email: scrivener@orderofstgeorge.co.uk  
Phone Number: 01892 871 662



## OVERSEAS AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS

**St George's Society Of Toronto**  
Robert Baines, President  
Tel: 416 597 0220  
Email: admin@stgeorgesto.org  
Website www.stgeorgesto.org

**The Society of St George, Philadelphia**  
Mr. William B. Thompson, President  
Email: wthompson1204@comcast.net

**The St George's Society Of Baltimore Limited**  
Mr. Harry T Aycock, President,  
Email: htaycock@verizon.net

**The St George's Benevolent Society of Hamilton**  
Mr John W.S.Naismith, President, Email:  
st.georgesbenevolentsocietyham@gmail.com

## AFFILIATED SCHOOLS

**Staff and children of Camelsdale Primary School**  
Camelsdale Primary School, School Road,  
Camelsdale, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 3RN  
School Tel No: 01428 642177  
School email:  
office@camelsdale.w-sussex.sch.uk  
Head Teacher: Sarah Palmer

**St George's Primary School, Wallasey**  
St George's Road, Wallasey, Merseyside  
CH45 3NF  
Tel: 0151 638 6014  
Email: schooloffice@stgeorges.wirral.sch.uk  
Headteacher: Mr. Bernard Cassidy

**St Ives School**  
Three Gates Lane, Haslemere, Surrey  
GU27 2ES  
School Tel No: 01428 643734  
School Email: office@stiveshaslemere.com  
Head Teacher: Kay Goldsworthy

**Gildersome Primary School**  
Town Street, Leeds LS27 7AB  
Tel: 0113 201 2450  
Head Teacher: Mrs C M Hoyle  
Email: info@gildersomeprimary.org.uk

**Chavagnes International College**  
96 Rue du Calvaire  
Chavagnes-en-Pailliers  
France 85250  
Mr. Ferdi McDermott, MA (Hons), PGCE,  
MEd, FCCCT, FRSA, FSA Scot  
Email: headmaster@chavagnes.org

## AFFILIATED UNIVERSITIES

**University of Bolton**  
Mr. Aris F. Mattheou  
Email: A.F.Mattheou@bolton.ac.uk  
Executive Director, External Relations  
University of Bolton Deane Road Bolton  
BL3 5AB  
Tel: 01204 900 600 www.bolton.ac.uk

## AFFILIATED CADET GROUPS

**Staines and Egham Sea Cadets**  
The Lammas Park, Wraysbury Road,  
Staines, Middlesex TW18 4TT  
Telephone: 01784 469064  
Commanding Officer: S/Lt (SCC)  
Louis Seex RNR – Unit OIC Mobile:  
07808 029 631.  
Email: co@stainesseacadets.org

**Wisbech Sea Cadets T.S. Falcon 373**  
Officer in Charge: P.O. (SCC) Sharon Emery  
Mobile: 07534 907 306  
Email: oic@wisbechseacadets.org.uk

Over recent years, we have witnessed the loss of some branches. We would like to maintain our strength as a society, so if there is anyone in those districts who might like to come forward with fresh proposals for rekindling a branch, please contact our Administration Centre

# SHOP WINDOW

**All items are available to order on our website [www.rssg.org.uk](http://www.rssg.org.uk)**

Payment may be made via PayPal to our email address, [info@rssg.org.uk](mailto:info@rssg.org.uk)

If you don't have a PayPal account please type [paypal.me/rssg](https://www.paypal.me/rssg) into your internet browser and click to take you to payments, by cheque or please call us on 020 3225 5011 to place your order over the phone

All major credit or debit cards are accepted

For branch officers' regalia, please contact the office



**Ref: RSSG003**  
Miniature medal with presentation pouch. Medal to be worn on the right breast.  
23mm x 80mm  
**£48.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG05A**  
Metal Gilt Enamel Pin Badge Butterfly Clutch Fastener  
23mm x 25mm  
**£8.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



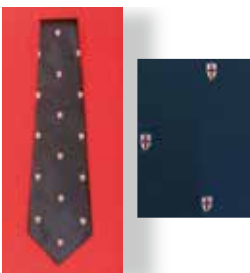
**Ref: RSSG05B**  
Metal Gilt Enamel Pin Badge Screw Back Fastener  
23mm x 25mm  
**£8.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG05C**  
Metal Gilt Enamel Pin Badge Bar Pin Fastener  
23mm x 25mm  
**£8.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG006**  
Metal Gilt Enamel Bar Brooch  
38mm x 27mm  
**£12.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG13**  
Multi-Motif Shield Tie – Polyester  
**£17.00**



**Ref: RSSG012**  
Navy Polyester Members Tie with Armorial Bearings  
**£17.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG014**  
Tie Slide in Presentation Box  
53mm x 28mm  
**£17.50**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG010**  
Black Embroidered blazer badge with gold coloured wire  
100mm x 114mm  
**£19.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG011**  
Navy Blue Embroidered blazer badge with gold coloured wire  
100mm x 114mm  
**£19.00**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG029**  
Large Blazer Button  
20mm diameter  
**£4.50**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG030**  
Small Blazer Button  
15mm diameter  
**£3.50**  
**MEMBERS ONLY**

**ALL CARD PACKS 3 FOR THE PRICE OF TWO 3 FOR £10**

The Royal Society of St. George is the Premier Patriotic Society of England whose objects are:

(i) To foster the love of England and to strengthen England and the Commonwealth by spreading the knowledge of English history, traditions and ideals.

(ii) To keep fresh the memory of those in all walks of life who have served England or the Commonwealth in the past, in order to inspire leadership in the future.

(iii) To combat all activities likely to undermine the strength of England or the Commonwealth.

(iv) To further English interests everywhere to ensure that St. George's Day is properly celebrated and to provide focal points all the world over where English men and women may gather together.

The Royal Society of St. George  
P.O. BOX 397, Loughton, Essex, IG10 9GN, England  
Telephone 020 3225 5011  
Email: info@roysocietyofstgeorge.com  
Website: www.rssg.org.uk  
Facebook page - www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofStGeorge  
Twitter account - @RSSGGeorge  
LinkedIn - The Royal Society of St. George Official Group



**The Royal Society of St. George**  
Founded in 1894  
Incorporated by Royal Charter  
Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
*Season's Greetings*

**RSSG 15 C**

5 RSSG "Season's Greetings" Christmas Cards with envelopes.  
150mm x 150mm  
**£5.00 MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG15A**  
5 Blank RSSG Cards with Envelopes  
150mm x 150mm  
**£5.00 MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG15B**  
5 St George's Day Greetings Cards with Envelopes  
150mm x 150mm  
**£5.00 MEMBERS ONLY**

**3 FOR £10 ALL CARD PACKS 3 FOR THE PRICE OF TWO**



**Ref: RSSG009**  
Red Enamel Cuff Links  
in Presentation Box  
18mm diameter  
**£19.50**



**Ref: RSSG031**  
2ft by 3ft St George's flag  
with eyelets  
**£6.00**



**Ref: RSSG032**  
3ft by 5ft St George's flag  
with eyelets  
**£7.50**



**Ref: RSSG007**  
Hand Painted Heraldic Plaque  
(Armorial Bearings) 45mm x180mm  
**£59.50 MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG022**  
St George's Day Envelope Stickers  
2 A4 pages - 130 stickers  
**£2.50**



**Ref: RSSG017**  
Full Membership Certificate  
**£5.00 MEMBERS ONLY**



**Ref: RSSG018**  
A5 Menu Covers with Armorial Bearings  
Packs of 10  
**MEMBERS ONLY £6.00**



**Ref: RSSG024**  
Past copy of the *St George for England*  
Journal  
Please contact the office for availability  
**£5.00**

**UK Shop Window Order Form**

Please complete the order form and return it with your payment to:

**RSSG, P.O. BOX 397 LOUGHTON IG10 9GN. Please make your cheques payable to "The Royal Society of St. George".**

Ref No.	Description	Qty	Size	Colour	Price	Total Price

**ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE AND PACKAGING FOR UK ORDERS. INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMERS PLEASE ORDER VIA OUR WEBSITE OR EMAIL YOUR ORDER TO US AT [info@rssg.org.uk](mailto:info@rssg.org.uk) FOR PRICES, POSTAGE AND PACKAGING**

International Customers are responsible to pay for any additional costs such as duties, local taxes or custom clearance fees which may be imposed in their country of residence

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

..... COUNTY..... POSTCODE .....

EMAIL ..... TEL: ..... DATE .....

Total amount of Cheque £.....

If you require any further information, please phone 020 3225 5011 or Email: [info@roysocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@roysocietyofstgeorge.com)

Payment may be made via PayPal to [info@rssg.org.uk](mailto:info@rssg.org.uk), by cheque or please call us on 020 3225 5011 to place your order over the phone.

All major credit or debit cards are accepted  
For branch officer's regalia, please contact the office



# The Royal Society of St George

Established in 1894 | Incorporated by Royal Charter | Patron: The Late Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



The Royal Society of St George is partnering with Harney & Sons Tea Company to produce, market, and sell the Imperial Windsor Blend Tea, in support of the Royal Society's educational programmes for young people.

The Royal Society of St George (RSSG), a charitable organisation, was founded in England in 1894 with the goal of fostering English values and the English way of life. From its inception, it has enjoyed the support of prominent public figures in England and throughout the British Empire. Its first Royal Patron was Queen Victoria; since then the society has enjoyed the patronage of every reigning monarch, including the current British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II. The Society's Charitable Trust actively provides financial support to help young people fulfill their scholastic and career potential.

Harney & Sons is a celebrated gourmet tea company located in Millerton, New York. Founded in 1983 by John Harney, it has grown from a hands-on cottage industry into one of the leading gourmet tea companies in the USA. It is still a hands-on family business now headed by John's sons, Mike and Paul Harney.

Harney & Sons has produced The Imperial Windsor Blend exclusively for The RSSG. The Imperial Windsor Blend is a medium bodied tea with briskness and a wonderful aroma, containing black teas with rose petals.

The partnership will produce, market, and sell the Imperial Windsor Blend tea globally, with particular emphasis on promoting the tea to its direct, branch, and affiliate members throughout the world. In return for the exclusive right to market and sell this RSSG-supporting blend, RSSG will receive a quarterly royalty of 10% of gross sales, allowing The RSSG to build its support programmes and assist more young people, needed now more than ever.

## About The Royal Society of St George

The objectives of The Society as laid down in its Royal Charter are to:

- Foster the love of England and to strengthen England and the Commonwealth by spreading the knowledge of English history, traditions and ideals;
- Keep fresh the memory of those in all walks of life who have served England or the Commonwealth in the past, to inspire leadership in the future;
- Combat all activities likely to undermine the strength of England or the Commonwealth; and
- Further English interest everywhere to ensure that St. George's Day is properly celebrated and to provide focal points all the world over where English men and women may gather together.

**USA, CANADA, INTERNATIONAL AND BULK ORDERS** – please contact Harney & Son's distribution agent,

Mark Cooper via telephone - +164 65 29 93 11 - or via email – markcooperltd@verizon.net

## The Royal Society of St George Mission Statement

**"To promote the character and true diversity of England and its people"**

We achieve this by:

- Supporting the Monarchy, our Charter and our democracy
- Being proud of English values and character
- Protecting English Heritage, Faiths, History and Traditions through education, practice and culture
- Celebrating and embracing the social and cultural diversity within England – Past, Present and looking to the Future
- Recognising and supporting local and regional identities, eccentricities, customs and products
- Uniting the nation and encouraging the celebration of St George's Day
- Challenging doctrines that threaten to undermine our objectives and mission, whilst upholding the right to free thought, speech and movement
- Championing campaigns and supporting like-minded (non-political) groups with an English focus
- Supporting England's role in maintaining the unity of the United Kingdom and of the Commonwealth

### Journal Advertising:

Full Page Colour £400  
Half Page Colour £250  
Quarter Page Colour £150  
Eighth Page Colour £100

### Extra insertions:

1–3 insertions 5% discount  
4–6 insertions 10% discount  
7–12 insertions 15% discount

### Mechanical Data

Full Page: 267 x 190 mm  
Full Bleed: 303 x 216 mm  
Half Page: 130 x 190 mm  
Quarter Page: 130 x 92.5 mm  
Eighth Page 62.5 x 92 mm

*Vital matter 6 mm from edge of page on all sides*

### Publication Dates

April 28 February  
August 30 June  
December 31 October

### Contact: Elizabeth Lloyd

Tel: 020 3225 5011

Email: [info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com)

Website: [www.rssg.org.uk](http://www.rssg.org.uk)

The Royal Society of St George,  
PO Box 397, Loughton, IG10 9GN,  
England

Are you interested in the Royal  
Society of St George?

Would you like to join us?

Application form on our website at  
[www.rssg.org.uk](http://www.rssg.org.uk)

Or telephone the office on  
020 3225 5011

## The Royal Society of St George

### Vision

To be widely recognised as the premier English patriotic society; attracting members from all walks of life; celebrating important dates in English history; supporting and encouraging the young; sharing and maintaining our Culture; Heritage and traditions; having a voice on issues that affect our country; and supporting charitable causes.