

# THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ST. GEORGE

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH



MAY 2019

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

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

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

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

### *Message from your Chair:*

Dear members and friends,

The season has started for village fetes and garden parties. Kemble, my village had its village fete on May 11th and made a record of over £5000 - all proceeds to the church. I organised and arranged the raffle and made a record too of £670!!! I ask myself where would we be without the generosity of 'some' people who volunteer and give in so many ways????? I know who will give me a prize or a contribution and I think NO. I must ask those who question and ask where do you get all your prizes from????? So this year I pushed my confidence and did get NEW people to contribute; the hard part is just asking.

The fete was held in the grounds of Kemble House and Mr and Mrs Martin Kingston, who own the property, mixed with Royalty on Saturday 18th May when their son married into the Royal family. He married Prince and Princess Michael of Kent's daughter Gabriella in Windsor. She is 57th in line to the throne! Earlier this month the Kingstons, on a visit to Windsor to go through security, were involved in a head on crash (someone on a mobile phone not looking) and their car is a write-off - life can change so quickly but thankfully they were both OK except for some bruised ribs and looked in good form when they hosted the village fete.

Being involved in the village fete for many years I have seen how it has changed. Back in the early days it was held on Thursday mid-afternoon going into early evening, as it was early closing in Cirencester and those workers used to cycle out. Kemble estate 'the village'

was owned by the lord of the manor and workers were given the afternoon off and of course the children at school finished mid-pm. The skittles was bowling for a real live pig! The ladies of the village made aprons and such like and knitted soft toys, socks etc. starting in winter ready for the fete in the summer. White elephant and bric-a-brac stalls had a large following. Nowadays there are Pimms tents, very posh craft stalls and 'new to you' stalls. That said, these gatherings bring communities together and we have to learn to change and embrace all that is around us and join in.

I very much look forward to seeing you at the annual general meeting. Do please come along and support the committee.

With warmest wishes from your Chair,  
Pat

*From Margaret, your Secretary:*

### **MEMBERSHIP NEWS:**

Welcome to new members:

John and Lynn Tryor, Stroud

Harry Turbyfield and Ruth Hatton,  
Brockworth

Charles Malet, near Churcham

We hope you will enjoy your membership.

Sadly Michael Stone of Wotton-under-Edge passed away in January and we extend our sympathy to his wife, Louisa, and all his family. Michael & Louisa Stone joined the Branch in 2005, just after they both attended our St. George's Day Service as Michael was High Sheriff of Gloucestershire. From his obituary in The Telegraph it was clear that he had led a fascinating and extremely busy

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business life and yet also gave much time and support to our County, not only as High Sheriff but also as a Deputy Lieutenant. We are pleased that Louisa has decided to continue her membership.

Too many (indeed just one is too many) members are not well at the moment and we send all of them best wishes for better health in the future.

### **TEA AT THREE – 30 March:**

Thank you to those members and friends who came to Birdlip Hall in March. They heard a fascinating talk from Joe Logan, Training & Events Manager of Severn Freewheelers. The Freewheelers are on call 365 days a year from 1900 hours to 0700 hours, and all day at weekends and on Public Holidays. They deliver other essential medical items between NHS facilities in Gloucestershire, North Wiltshire and Hereford & Worcester.

They have to be trained to the Institute of Advanced Motorists' motorcycle riding standard, and are re-tested every three years (the fee coming out of their own pockets). They are subject to the same rules of the road as the rest of us even when on Emergency Response, i.e. blue lights and siren; they do not have the same leeway with traffic regulations as police and emergency services.



*Joe Logan brought his bike to Birdlip Hall*

They have a fleet of eight motorcycles and in 2018 carried out over 5,000 deliveries, up 25% on the previous year, covering over 179,000 miles. In April this year they have extended their service to assist the Midlands Air Ambulance, for which they will need a couple of 4x4 vehicles and drivers. Their motorcycles come from BMW under a special arrangement whereby they take ex-demonstrator bikes but they still cost them around £15,000 each, all funded by public donations.

Joe is clearly passionate about this wonderful organisation and keen to 'spread the word' about its amazing volunteers. Not only did our generous members and friends support a successful raffle organised by Keith and Lin Bawden which enabled the Branch to give Joe a donation of £75, but they also put another £78 in Joe's collecting tins. The branch has since received a very grateful letter from Joe.



*Pat Ayres presents Joe with a donation*

After tea and lots of lovely cakes baked and donated by members, we were able to watch the Royal British Legion's moving DVD of the Great Pilgrimage 90 in Ypres in August 2018. Roy Roberts, Chairman of Cheltenham RBL and one of our members, and Charles Tippet presented the DVD with a wealth of background information and their own memories of the event. They attended as wreath layers for Cheltenham and Brockworth RBL branches alongside their Standard

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Bearers, Ross Lloyd and Isaac Smith, whom you will remember were sponsored by this Branch and The Royal Society of St. George Charitable Trust. Our Chair, Pat, and her husband Brian were also in Ypres representing RBL Kemble Branch. Incredible organisation resulted in a hugely moving remembrance of the pilgrimage undertaken to the battlefields in 1919 by widows and families of those lost and injured during WW1.

### **ST. GEORGE'S DAY SERVICE 2019:**

First and foremost thank you to all our volunteer ushers, Christina Simmonds and her helpers with the roses at the Cathedral, committee members who fetched and carried during the day, those members who took part in the Branch Procession, Reverend Gary Grady for his part in the Service and his interesting Address, and others helping out where and when they could.

We missed Don Humphreys who has been our Parade Marshal for as long as I can remember (and that's a really long time). He has been very poorly and we send him our very best wishes. Into his shoes stepped Rob Perkins, who usually carries the RBL County Standard, and he did an excellent job.

Sadly this year was the last time Madeleine Bills carried our Branch Standard, as she has decided to 'retire' – from this role at least! Madeleine and her husband Allen, who has deputised sometimes as Branch Standard Bearer when Madeleine was busy elsewhere, have represented the Branch very well over the past eight years and we are very grateful to both of them.

So we are looking for a new Standard Bearer. We have a possible volunteer from outside the Branch, but if there is a Branch member who would like to take on this role, please let me know as soon as possible.

We were blessed with dry weather so that the England's Glory Ladies Morris Dancers could once again entertain the congregation as they arrived for the Service. They have been doing so for many years now and are an important part of our celebration of our national day.

But this year we had St. George himself! Thanks to Eric Freeman's wide connections St. George (aka Phil Pembridge of the Medieval Re-enactment Society) and his extremely well-behaved steed were also on hand to greet everyone coming to the Service.



*'St. George' outside the Cathedral*

The congregation was smaller this year, due in no small measure to 23 April being Easter Tuesday and a lot of people apologised as they were on holiday. However, we were delighted to welcome our National President, Bill Firth and his wife Meg, and Dennis Stinchcombe, National Councillor, also came with his wife Edna to represent the National Chairman. The recently installed High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, Charles Berkeley, and his wife Daisy, were also there.

Mr. Gillespie, H.M. Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, attended the Service and as our new Patron he made sure the evening was a very special occasion for our young Nairac winners.

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Jake Norris, aged 13, has been volunteering and fundraising for the Great Oaks Dean Forest Hospice in the Forest of Dean. On World Hospice Day last year he raised £110 by setting up a cake stall at the Hospice's shop in Lydney and he continues to help at the shop on a regular basis. He has been described as 'an absolute credit to the town of Lydney'. The Hospice was heavily involved in helping to care for Jake's great-grandmother and his family are rightly proud of his hard work and caring nature. Jake donated his Award cheque to The Great Oaks Dean Forest Hospice.



*Jake Norris and  
Major (ret'd) Steve Marcham*

Major Marcham, who served with Captain Nairac, has been coming to the Service over many years, despite living in London.

Grace Taylor is 9 years old and a Brownie from Severn District. Last December Grace was awarded her Charities Badge at Brownies after she raised £150 for The Honey Pot Children's Charity. Grace's older brother is autistic and in June last year the charity gave her a weekend away so that she could just have fun and be herself. Grace has always enjoyed doing Brownie challenges and her amazing weekend inspired her to raise money

for the charity so that another child in a similar position to herself could have the same opportunity. She raised the money by walking and running more than 60 kilometres over 20 days last November. Grace was nominated by her Brownie Guiders and donated her Award cheque to The Honey Pot Children's Charity.



*Grace Taylor receives her certificate from  
H.M. Lord-Lieutenant*

I'm sure you agree that these were two very worthy winners of the 2019 Awards in memory of Captain Nairac. It's not too early to keep an eye open for nominations for the 2020 Awards – let me know if there is anyone you wish to put forward.

On 15 May Sir Mike Penning, M.P. for Hemel Hempstead, with a Point of Order in the House of Commons wished it to be recognised that it was 42 years to the day since Captain Robert Nairac had been kidnapped. He also sought recognition for all those who made the ultimate sacrifice in Northern Ireland.

Sir Mike served in the Grenadier Guards under Captain Nairac and recalled that his nose had been broken for the first time (one of many times apparently!) in a boxing bout with Captain Nairac. Sir Mike has seen the Nairac Window installed by this Branch in St. Mary

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de Lode and is aware that we continue to honour Captain Nairac's memory. We will invite him to visit the Branch when the political scene is quieter than it is at the moment.

As mentioned earlier, the congregation was smaller this year, partly due to Easter holidays but also because some of the organisations who have attended in the past have fewer members or have folded. This includes some of the Royal British Legion branches who have been wonderful supporters of this Service for many years. In addition some of those who have attended regularly for years are now older and unwilling, or even unable, to drive at night. If you know of anyone or belong to an organisation whose members would enjoy the Service, do please let me have contact details so that I can send them an invitation for 2020. We need the congregation to grow again.

### NEW TEWKESBURY TOWN MAYOR:

The Branch was grateful to be invited once again to Tewkesbury Town's Mayor Making on 20 May. Eric Freeman and Keith Boreland represented us and enjoyed the event very much – as you can see from Eric's face as he shakes hand with new Mayor, Terry Walker.



### FOR YOUR DIARY:

#### Wednesday, 12 June 2019:

The Branch Annual General Meeting will be held in St. Mary de Lode Hall at 7.30pm prompt. The Notice of Meeting is enclosed. I also enclose the minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting for reference.

#### Sunday, 21 July 2019:

Summer Lunch at Egypt Mill Restaurant, Stroud Road, Nailsworth. Full details to follow in our next newsletter.

#### Wednesday, 28 August 2019:

Day Trip by coach to the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire. Full details to follow in our next newsletter.

#### Thursday, 14 November 2019:

'Remembrance Poppies', a presentation by Lady Emma Crofton in Kemble Village Hall at 2.30pm. This will be a joint meeting with Kemble RBLWS.

### THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ST GEORGE 125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EVENTS:

On 12 July 927 the English nation was first united under one King – King Athelstan. The Society has organised a celebration of this event on **Saturday, 13 July 2019**, as follows:

**10:30am** - Meet at Moravian Church (SN16 9AX) for tea, coffee and toilets

**11:00am** - Talk on Life of King Athelstan, by Prof. Sarah Foot (Oxford University)

**12:30pm** - 2-course lunch @ Old Bell Hotel in Malmesbury (Garden Room with views)

**2:30pm** - Memorial Service at the tomb of King Athelstan in Malmesbury Abbey

Malmesbury is quite compact and all venues are within 5 minutes' walk of each other. There should be little problem in getting from the talk to lunch and then to the Abbey.

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Tickets are £40 per person, which can be paid to Head Office (NOT this Branch) as follows:-

- By cheque in favour of The Royal Society of St. George, sent to Mrs. Elizabeth Lloyd at The Royal Society of St. George, P.O. BOX 397, LOUGHTON, IG10 9GN
- By phone with debit card: 020 3225 5011
- By PayPal to email address ;  
[info@rssg.org.uk](mailto:info@rssg.org.uk)
- By Bank Transfer to the following account:-  
Bank: National Westminster Bank Plc  
Account Name: The Royal Society of St. George; Account number: 14742497;  
Sort Code: 60-07-29  
Please reference your payment with your surname and 1307.

Once you have paid Head Office will send you the lunch menu, as you must choose by 30 June 2019. If you have any questions about this event please contact Head Office directly by email [info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com](mailto:info@royalsocietyofstgeorge.com) or telephone 020 3225 5011

### 2019 GLOUCESTER EVENTS:

#### ARMED FORCES DAY

Saturday, 29 June - Gloucester will mark Armed Forces Day. I understand the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines will be playing and, weather permitting, there will be a Spitfire flypast.

#### GLOUCESTER DAY

Saturday, 7 September – stalls and entertainment throughout the day. The Mock Mayor of Barton Parade departs Constitution Walk at 11am, with the Mock Mayor Making in Southgate Street at 11.10am. The Gloucester Day Parade leaves Constitution Walk at 2pm.

### CAN WE CONTACT YOU BY EMAIL?

Some Branch members receive this newsletter and other communications by email, including

information (e.g. about national events) that we receive from Head Office.

It would reduce mailing costs if we could use email for more members but Data Protection regulations mean we need your permission. If you agree, please confirm by sending me an email at [rssgglos@woodbro.plus.com](mailto:rssgglos@woodbro.plus.com) (thus ensuring I have your up to date email address, which will not be passed on to anyone, including Head Office, without your permission).

### MoD DISCOUNT SERVICE:

This is a tip from our member Gordon Jones. If you are a member of the armed forces, a veteran, a member of the Cadet Forces (over 16), an MoD Civil Servant, employed by NATO in the UK, a reservist or your spouse or partner is or has been in the armed forces, you should be eligible for the Defence Discount Service which operates online and on the high street. It is free to sign up and to use. For the high street discount members can request a Defence Privilege Card, which is £4.99 for 5 years' membership. More details at [www.defencediscountservice.co.uk](http://www.defencediscountservice.co.uk) or contact Defence Discount Service, PO Box 10180, Loughborough LE11 9HN

*To end with a smile (hopefully!):*

The following items have been spotted in church newsletters/magazines:

- The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
- Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.
- Ladies, don't forget the jumble sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping. Bring your husbands.

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