



Friends of St Cross Hospital Winchester

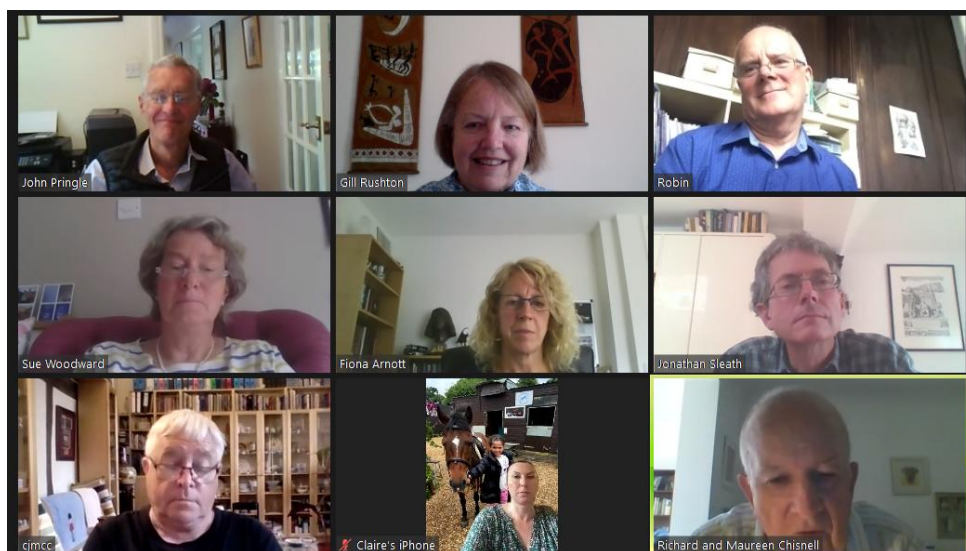
Celebrate its Past – Support its Future

‘Retrospective’ Annual Newsletter

2020 is probably a year that most of us would rather forget! However despite the pandemic, the Friends were able to meet, whether in person or ‘virtually’, throughout the year and were pleased to hear regular updates from and about the Hospital of St Cross on these occasions.

At the beginning of the year, it was very much ‘business as usual’, but gradually it became apparent that we should not be in close proximity to one another and by March, we had to cancel some of our events altogether, including the St George’s Dinner, the Summer Party and all our outings. Our planned AGM was postponed from May to November, when it was held ‘virtually’, and sadly without the usual talk, tea and Evensong which usually feature on Friends’ Day.

Your Trustees continued to meet, starting their ‘virtual’ experience with a telephone conference call - a slightly strange experience as our various connections were not as clear as we had hoped. But by the time of the next meeting, and like much of the rest of the country, we had moved onto our computers, which proved much more satisfactory. Despite the cancellations, your Trustees continued to plan for online events for the rest of the year and these are reported in this publication, with, of necessity, an unusual number of screen-prints to illustrate them. But we all look forward to meeting again in person as soon as it is safe to do so and especially as 2021 is our tenth anniversary year.



A ‘virtual’ Board meeting in progress!

Foreword by our Chairman, John Pringle



Almshouses have a long and distinguished history in the social welfare of our nation. Long before politicians talked of housing benefits and affordable housing, community-conscious individuals were building accommodation for the disadvantaged. Their motives for such charitable acts may have been partly as penance for their sins, thus reducing time to be spent in purgatory, but the good they achieved continues to be felt today by many grateful residents.

The Hospital of St Cross is a shining example. On the Friends' website, we avoid the claim of being the oldest almshouse, but, as John Crook says in the foreword to his erudite history,

'St Cross retains the essentials of its 12th century charitable foundation, together with the later concept of "noble poverty", both still enshrined in the Brothers who occupy its rooms'.

Its survival through good times and bad in the past gives us confidence that the Hospital will ride through the storm of the pandemic, painful though it is proving to be for all concerned. It is gratifying that the Friends continue to play a small part in that ability to stand as a beacon of compassion and beauty.

Thank you for your generosity.

Introducing two new Trustees

The Friends' Board was delighted to elect two new Trustees at its meeting on 22nd October 2020.



Claire McDonnell (left) has already proved to be a great asset to the Board as she has contributed to Marketing Committee meetings, set up the Friends' YouTube channel, regularly posts on our social media and has obligingly taken the minutes of our Board meetings for some time. Claire lives in St Cross with her family and will already be well-known to many Friends.

Fiona Bunnage (right) will also be a familiar face to many, as she has lived in St Cross for almost three decades, been a Friend for several years, during which she has helped with preparations for the Summer Party, and has served as a Governor of St Faith's School. She has recently retired from a career as a primary school teacher. Fiona has strong personal links with the Hospital, as her father has been a Brother for the past eight years.



The Board welcomed both new Trustees to the team with enthusiasm and looks forward to working with them.

Promotional Activities

Fiona, our Administrator, continued to keep Friends updated throughout the year with regular e-bulletins, informing us about the situation at the Hospital, and also about those Friends' events which could take place. Jonathan Sleath and Claire McDonnell also posted on about these matters on our social media. Below are two of the photographs of the Hospital which were posted during the first lockdown.



Cathy and Les, taking a socially-distanced tea-break; and Brothers enjoying the sunshine and a quiet Hospital.

We continued to maintain our website with news of forthcoming events. But sadly we did not have the opportunity to promote the Friends in 2020 as much as we had been able to do in previous years – for obvious reasons – and as most Friends will know, both the St Cross Parish Fête and the Michaelmas Fair were unsurprisingly cancelled in 2020 so that we could not promote the Friends at our regular stands.

Our website address may be found on the back page. For those of you who have not yet joined us on social media, we can be found at:

Facebook: Friends of St Cross Winchester

Twitter: @friends_cross

Instagram: friendsofstcross

YouTube: www.youtube.com/friendsofstcross

The Friends are however now able to boast a YouTube channel, which our new Trustee, Claire McDonnell, has set up for us, and we hope to add more videos to this in the future. We have also added our charity to AmazonSmile which enables anyone shopping at Amazon to donate to the charity of their choice with every purchase – at no extra cost to themselves. We have also set up a JustGiving page which we hope will attract donations both generally, and in appreciation for the events we have held 'virtually'.



BIG MALLET
MAKE IT HAPPEN



YouTube



2020 At A Glance



St Cross Chapel, with flag flying for St George's Day, and in gratitude for all carers.

New Year Reception

Our 2020 New Year reception was a bit special, as we took the opportunity to bid farewell to the newly-retired Master of St Cross Hospital, Reverend Reg Sweet, who attended with his daughter Lynette. The Brethren's Hall was packed for the event as we regaled each other with special memories of Reg's time as Master.



There was a raffle during the evening which was generously supported by those present and was drawn by our local Member of Parliament, Steve Brine. Our Chairman updated Friends on plans for the year ahead and following this, Past Chairman Richard Chisnell gave a memorable tribute to Reg, including a personalised verse from HMS Pinafore which he sang for us. He said that the audience would have been bored by more verses but the assembled Friends strongly disagreed! Appropriately Richard made several naval references in his speech, adding that he hoped Reg might arrange a visit for the Friends to Gosport and Portsmouth at some future date.





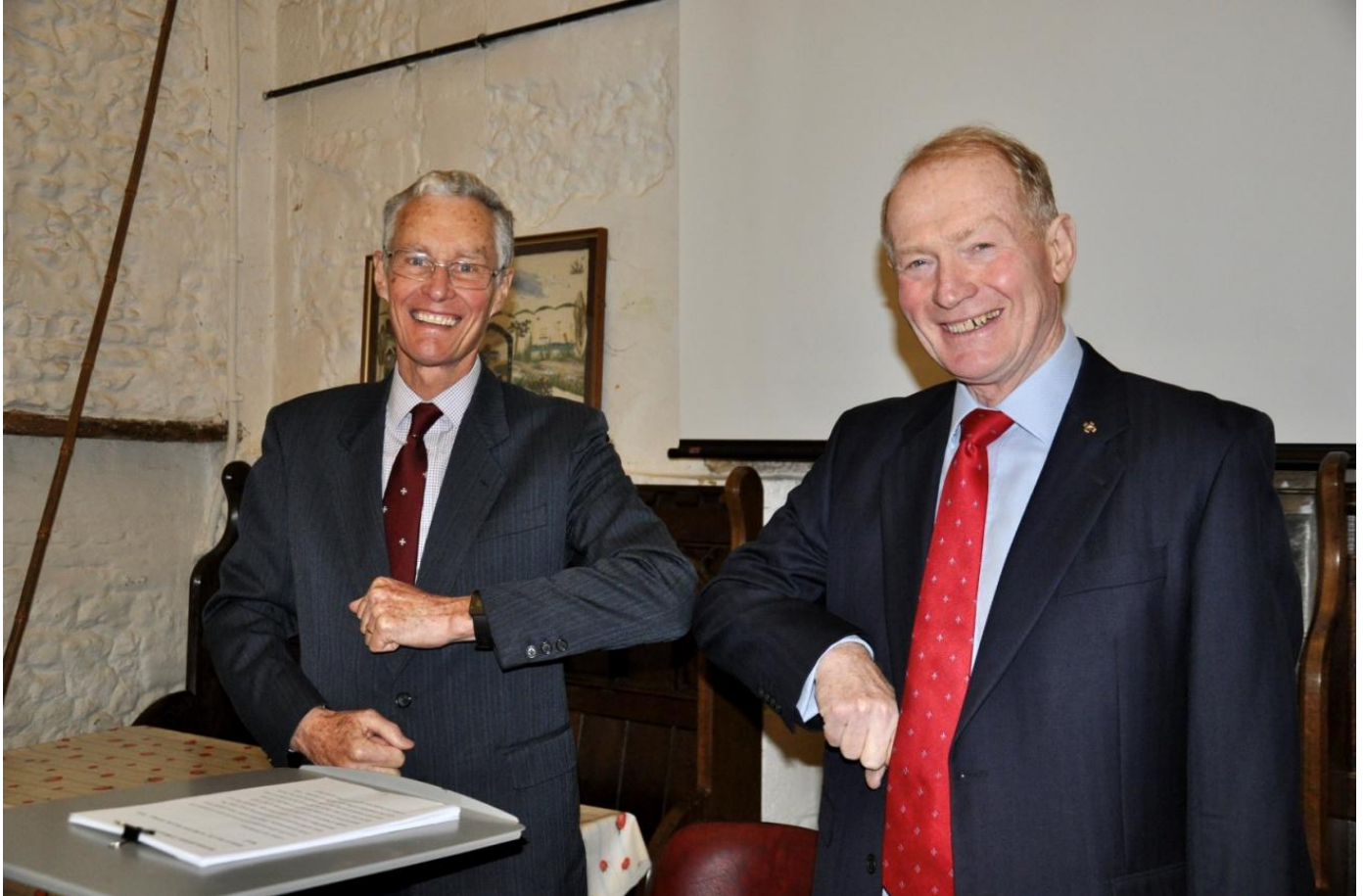
Chairman John then thanked Reg for all he had achieved in his long period as Master, and presented him with a card and gifts from the Friends; he also announced that Reg had been made an Honorary Life Friend. Reg responded to these words with sincere appreciation both for his farewell presents, and for the work of the Friends in supporting the Hospital of St Cross. He looked forward to seeing us all again at forthcoming Friends' events.

Spring Lunches

In January and March, Friends enjoyed two lunches in the Hundred Men's Hall. Unfortunately the lunches planned for the autumn had to be cancelled due to the pandemic but these popular occasions will continue in the future when circumstances permit and in a newly-refurbished Hall.



The Annual Spring Lecture



Above: Our Chairman and our speaker greeting one another elbow-to-elbow (just before 'social distancing' was introduced). This was our last face-to-face meeting before the first lockdown began two weeks later.

About 42 Friends met in the Hundred Men's Hall on 6th March 2020 for an enthralling 2020 annual lecture, delivered by Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Montgomery, KBE, ADC, former Director General of the Border Force. He was well-known to his audience as a Friend and a resident of the parish of St Cross. His title was 'Britain's Maritime Strategy - Where Next?'

Sir Charles started with the simple statement 'The sea really matters' and then proceeded to explain statistically why the oceans, which cover 4/5^{ths} of the world's surface are of prime importance to the world, not only in terms of the food, energy and minerals they supply, but also in terms of the trade and communications (for example through underwater cabling), which they facilitate, and crucially in our national defence strategy.

He then focussed on security, explaining that the only way to manage the oceans was through international agreement. However there were constant difficulties in policing the seas with the ever-present threats of terrorism and criminality. He told us how distant incidents at pinch-points such as the Straits of Hormuz or the Horn of Africa can disrupt UK trade and the balance of worldwide power to a huge extent and at great cost. He strongly believed that maritime security needs to be a much higher government priority than it currently is, as lack of strategic thinking in this area will cost our society (and ultimately our budgets) dear. Although it may seem expensive to police the oceans, it is even costlier not to do so.

Our speaker then moved on to some of the major international threats the world is facing. These range from an expansionist China, seeking to dominate a super-region and flagrantly disregarding international law in south-east Asia, to a resurgent Russia 'flexing its hostile muscles' in, for example, Ukraine (as well as more locally down the road in Salisbury), and an unpredictable Iran, extending its influence in the Middle and Near East.



Although the last ten years have seen the end of conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and we have commemorated the centenary of the end of the ‘war to end all wars’, there has also been a dramatic reduction in defence budgets, with even some western European countries, such as France and Germany, failing to fulfil their financial commitments to NATO.

Sir Charles was encouraged that the new UK government is undertaking a defence review, although pessimistic to learn that it was due for completion within a mere six months, which would probably mean that it could not be as extensive as he thought was necessary. He demonstrated that containment has failed as a strategy and explained that in his opinion, the UK should not in the future be forced into a defensive position but take a more assertive, albeit proportionate, role, whilst recognising and working with the greater military capacity of the USA. The UK could however be an important enabler in deterrence, if its maritime capability were to be strengthened.

His belief is that we are already engaged in a cold war with China, which has arrived almost unnoticed. Although subtler than the 20th century world war between east and west, Sir Charles suggested that the present cold war could in the end be more damaging, as the major world powers of China, the USA and Russia are less strategically balanced. The government needs to raise awareness of the threat in the UK, and commit its budget to enable us to act more effectively in preventing major conflict. The importance of the new aircraft carriers and their ability to travel quickly to hotspots across the world to coerce and to influence, cannot be overstated. They may be ‘monstrously expensive’ but they are the only means by which we can project power.

At the conclusion of this rigorous and thoughtful lecture, the interested audience asked many questions. These ranged from how the government would be able to manage a larger maritime defence role whilst also facing other major issues such as delivering Brexit and dealing with a pandemic; how the UK’s defence relationship with France, and with a possibly-independent Scotland, might develop; and whether the UK had the capacity to equip and protect its merchant navy in the event of another war.

This was a fascinating lecture and we were very privileged that a man with such immense experience in maritime strategy at the most senior level was able to speak to us. After the questions, the newly-retired Master of St Cross, and Honorary Friend, Reverend Reg Sweet, gave a suitably enthusiastic vote of thanks to Sir Charles on behalf of us all.



Installation of the new Master, Reverend Terry Hemming

The installation of the new Master in March 2020 was not of course a Friends' event but is worthy of inclusion here as many Friends attended the service and subsequent tea, and were delighted to meet Terry and welcome him to St Cross.



Terry is no stranger to the Hospital of St Cross as he attended St Faith's School and has lived in Hampshire, including in Winchester, for many years before becoming Master, as he explained in his address. At the time of his installation, we thought we would be hearing more about Terry's life on Friends' Day, when he had agreed to speak to us, but that event was another casualty of the pandemic. So we were very pleased that Terry agreed to be our first speaker in the new winter lecture series, which is reported elsewhere in this issue.

St George's Dinner, Friends' Day, Summer Party and Outings

Sadly, for reasons all too familiar, our St George's Dinner, Friends' Day with AGM, annual summer party and outings to the Isle of Wight and Crofton Beam Engine and Wadworth's Brewery had to be cancelled or postponed in 2020. We were also unlucky that our bid for a group outing to Highgrove was unsuccessful, but as it turned out, we would not have been able to go there in 2020 anyway because of the health restrictions. Our alternative expedition to Highclere Castle aka Downton Abbey, also fell the way of these other events and had to be cancelled.

Online Chats

However, from June and throughout the rest of the year, the Friends enjoyed three 'virtual' coffee mornings and three 'virtual' tea parties.



Although attendance at these get-togethers was modest, ranging from four to twelve Friends on any given occasion, the conversations were most enjoyable and we were particularly pleased to be able to speak with Friends who live further afield and who are not, even in a more normal year, able to come to our regular events. It was interesting to talk to a Friend who lives in an almshouse in central Manchester, and to hear about the similarities and differences between his organisation and the Hospital of St Cross. We also welcomed Friends from the Isle of Wight, Yorkshire and Canada, and on one occasion our Administrator joined us from France. The December get-together (shown below) was enlivened with some very festive hats and Christmas jumpers!



Open Gardens

By August 2020, conditions became safe enough for St Cross Hospital to welcome Friends to the shop and the gardens on a bookable basis on two days a week. This opportunity was enjoyed by several Friends during the good weather of the summer months and our photographer, Brother Clive, was able to capture the enjoyment of one couple, as shown below.



Winter Lectures

As summer moved into autumn, and further restrictions applied, we decided to host a series of monthly talks for the Friends on Zoom. Fittingly the first of these lectures, on 13th October 2020, was delivered by the new Master, Reverend Terry Hemming, with the title 'The Invention of the Cross'.



Terry explained how the cross has not always been the symbol of Christianity. He had deliberately used the word 'invention' in his title: the word has the Latin root 'invenire' meaning 'to come upon' or 'to find', and it was not until the 4th century AD that Christians found the 'True Cross'. He outlined the history of this momentous event: as more and more pilgrims visited Jerusalem, there grew a desire to find the place where Jesus had been crucified and buried and the Emperor Constantine, who had converted to Christianity in 312AD, sent his mother Helena to Jerusalem to observe the investigations. Whilst she was there, she witnessed the discovery of three crosses near a tomb in the old city and also the healing of a lady in this same place. These events supported the widespread belief that this was indeed the site where Jesus had been crucified. As a consequence, Constantine ordered the construction of the first Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which was dedicated in 335AD.



Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem.

The subsequent history of the site, and of the three crosses which were found there, has been turbulent. Even modern excavations in Jerusalem have been sadly marred by violence at times. But the Church of the Holy Sepulchre remains a focus of pilgrimage to this day; and the discovery of the three crosses and Helena's transportation of parts of them home to Rome started a cult of relics, based upon the belief that anything which Christ had touched was holy. Many icons around the world claim to contain slivers of the True Cross within

them and are thus revered as holy objects. Terry noted that the Hospital of St Cross was founded at a time when belief in the Holy Cross (translated by the Normans as ‘Saint Cross’ rather than ‘the Sainted Cross’) was very strong. As a result of this devotion, the cross became the principal symbol of Christianity.

Terry showed many lovely slides during his talk, explaining their association with the True Cross. These ranged from peacocks and fish, which were the earliest symbols of Christianity depicted in the Roman catacombs, to icons and reliquaries, representations of Constantine and Helena, views of monasteries dedicated to the Holy Cross, and photographs of pilgrims at the modern Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. A few of these images are shown below.



Moving neatly on through the centuries, showing how the Cross has been represented in many ways including the hymnody – Isaac Watts may even have written ‘When I Survey The Wondrous Cross’ in the water-meadows of St Cross in the 18th century - Terry brought us back to the local, and ended his talk by explaining his own association with St Cross from boyhood. We were privileged to hear about his memories of the coronation celebrations at St Faith’s school in 1953, and his recollections of former Masters of St Cross and his schoolteachers from those days. After ordination in the Free Church ministry and travels abroad, Terry returned to Winchester in the late 1980s and has known all the subsequent Masters of St Cross and parish priests in St Faith’s since that time. His talk fittingly ended with a prayer for the Holy Cross, after which there was an opportunity to ask questions, and we were pleased to be introduced to Terry’s wife, Ruth. This was a fascinating talk, an excellent start to our series, and it was clearly appreciated by the ‘virtual’ audience of over 30 people.



Coronation tea at St Faith’s School, 1953.

Our second winter lecture was given by our Patron, Major General Alastair Bruce of Crionaich OBE VR DL on 19th November 2020. Known to many Friends also as Sky television's religious, royal and national events correspondent, as well as the historical adviser to blockbuster films and television series, Alastair was appointed Governor of Edinburgh Castle in June 2019 and appropriately he took as his title for our lecture 'Governing Edinburgh Castle'.



At our AGM last year, Alastair had explained to the Friends that he would be moving into this role for a four, or possibly five, year term from June 2019 and in this lecture he explained how he had settled into his new responsibilities, although some events, notably the Edinburgh Tattoo and the Edinburgh Festival, had unfortunately not been allowed to happen in 2020 due to the pandemic. But it was enthralling to hear how many highlights there had already been in only a few months, and Alastair spoke about these with great panache and humour and accompanied by superb slides.

He explained how his family roots in the Scottish crown could be traced right back to the very beginning when his ancestor Robert the Bruce, one of the most brilliant commanders of his generation and now a national hero, had become King of the Scots after the Battle of Bannockburn in 1306. Alastair had chosen 24th June - the anniversary of the battle - for the date of his inauguration as Governor. He showed us an image of the statue of his ancestor at the Castle, and charmingly recounted how he always salutes this when he passes by in military dress.

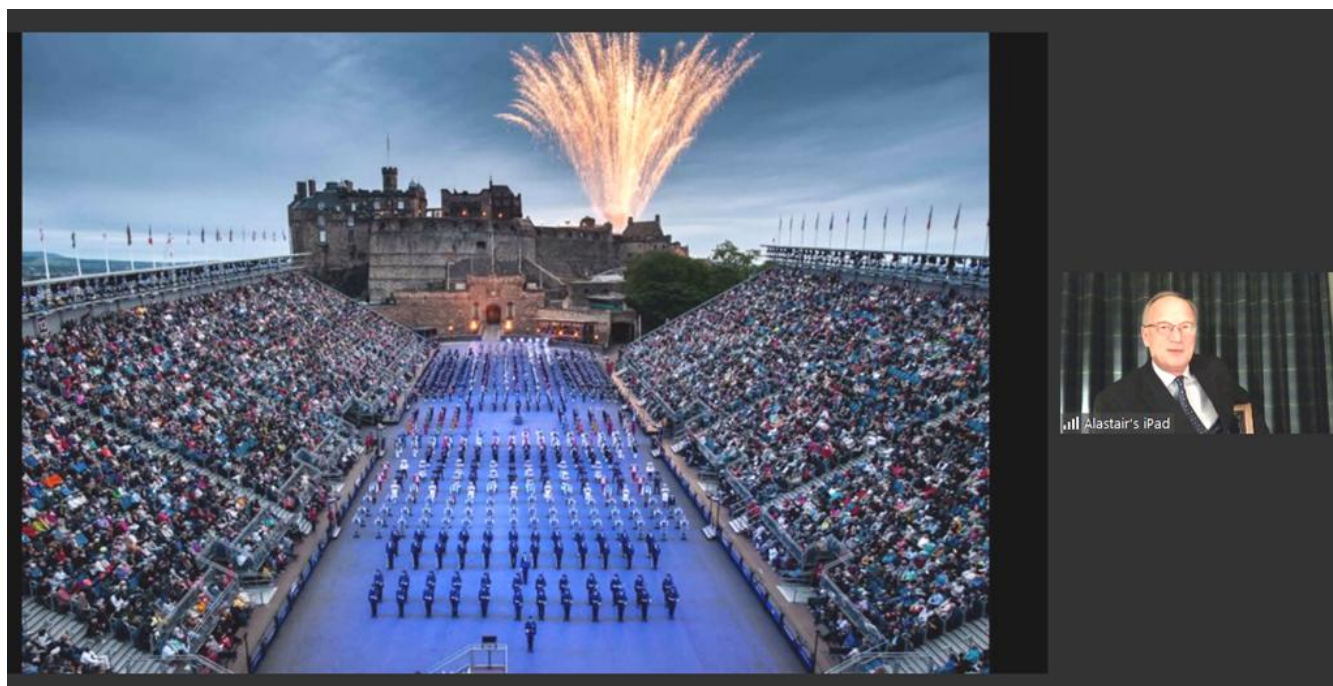


Only four days after taking up his duties as the Queen's representative in Scotland, Alastair was honoured to receive Her Majesty at Edinburgh Castle and he proudly showed us pictures of this occasion including one of the historic Scottish Crown, which always precedes the Queen into the Castle. He outlined the fascinating history of 'The Honours Three' (the crown, sceptre and sword of Scotland), relating how Robert the Bruce secured the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320 allowing him the right of unction as King of the Scots. He also

explained the subtle distinction between the English and the Scots Crown and some of the sensibilities around their differences.

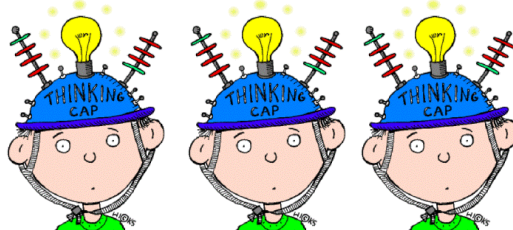


With great self-deprecation, Alastair told us that despite the significance of his role, he had been designated a 'non-essential worker' and he is only permitted, as a Reservist, albeit the most senior Reservist in Scotland, to spend 95 days a year as Governor of Edinburgh Castle. Nevertheless his wonderful tales of the many interesting events he had hosted as the Queen's representative in Scotland, showed us that he makes the absolute most of every day and even in a pandemic year. He gave us a virtual tour of his splendid accommodation in the Castle, and regaled us with humorous anecdotes, ranging from ghostly occurrences on his first night there, to watching can-can dancers from the Governor's Residence with the head of the Iraqi military forces! This was a wonderfully entertaining lecture given by a proud Scot.



Quiz

The ubiquitous Zoom was also the platform for our Friends' Quiz on 17th October 2020, which was attended by about 19 people. Although this event had originally been planned to take place in St Faith's Parish Hall, we were forced to resort to our computers because of the Covid-19 restrictions, and luckily the platform lent itself very well to this event and thankfully there were no technical disasters on the night!



This was always intended as a social rather than an overly-competitive occasion, in keeping with the spirit of all our Friends' events, so plenty of time was allowed for us to chat to each other, and the evening turned out to be rather a jolly occasion, thanks to an excellent mix of participants. Jonathan Sleath and Gill Rushton had prepared the questions in advance, and Jonathan ably took on the role of quizmaster during the evening. Fortunately nobody took it too seriously and there was pleasant chatter throughout the evening.




Jonathan, our quizmaster for the evening.

The questions were grouped into ten broad subject areas and all were illustrated with appropriate photographs, some of which formed the clue itself. In keeping with the Friends' emphasis on hospitality and conviviality, a section on Food and Drink was included!


Sport 8

- What was the name of the music played to the winning ice-skating dance by Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean at the Sarajevo Olympics in 1984?



Food & Drink 2

- Which spirit is used to make a classic pina coloda cocktail?



There was a little friendly banter about one or two answers but our generous quizmaster liberally awarded points as appropriate, and in the end the quiz was won by Karen and Richard Dagwell, whilst a strong team comprising Clare and Murray Dixon and Cheryl Irons came a close second. The prize was delivered electronically, in keeping with our continued need to social distance at that time.



Some of the quiz contestants with the winners shown in the bottom left thumbnail.

Membership News

Grants to the Hospital of St Cross

Discussions are under way to put the Friends' 2019 grant of £17,000 to the Hospital towards a draft-excluding curtain for the Chapel; and a further sum of £872 was used to fund a water-softener in the Hundred Men's Hall. In 2020, a grant of £25,000 was made towards the refurbishment of the Hundred Men's Hall. Work on this started in late 2020, as shown below, and it is hoped that the Hall will re-open as a tea-room as soon as the regulations allow.



For details of all our grants, please visit our website at www.friendsofstcross.com/ways-we-help

**By the end of December 2020, our membership numbered 701.
Our thanks to all the Friends for their continuing support throughout
this most difficult of years!**

With sincere apologies, two names were inadvertently omitted from last year's roll-call of new Friends, so they are included below with the year (2019) in brackets after their names.

New Friends, Jan-Dec 2020

Margaret and Helen Bingham
Stephen and Catherine Brill
Lois Brown
Brother Graham Davies
Constance Freer-Smith and Robin
Mackworth-Young
Nicolas and Emma Galloway
Katy Harrington and Nicholas
Rowland

Reverend Terry and Ruth Hemming
Katherine Hughes
Mike and Kathie Killingley
Robert and Lesley Loughridge
Matthew and Claire McDonnell
David Roberts (2019)
Brian Rogles (2019)
Christopher Rowen

WE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING FRIENDS WHO DIED IN 2020

George Bowyer, George Brown, Paul Maxlow-Tomlinson, Brother Derek Pryce-Jones, Barry Richardson, Brother Julian Sturdy, G Lewing F Ward, Elizabeth Wheatley and Laurie Wilson.

News from the Brothers - our Honorary Friends

Welcomes and Farewells

On 8th March 2020 and as reported above, the Brothers welcomed the new Master, The Reverend Terry Hemming and his wife Ruth to the Hospital. They are shown below centre.



In September, they welcomed a new Brother, Graham Davies, who was gowned to the Hospital Foundation in the chapel by the Master.



Graham writes 'The twists and turns of life are often surprising! Having been brought up in nearby Eastleigh, I now find myself in retirement at The Hospital of St. Cross, a place very familiar indeed. I spent my professional life in full-time employment as a buyer of goods and services; in parallel I served as a church musician and organist for over 55 years. Organ studies in my early twenties with Clement Mc William (a former Brother at St Cross) and



Martin Neary at the Cathedral are treasured memories and how wonderful it was to serve as organist at St Cross Chapel in the early 1970s. Opportunities to perform recitals at many of the UK's great churches and cathedrals has been exciting and a privilege, as well as holding positions at Great Malvern Priory and Bath Abbey. However I can honestly say I feel blessed to be here at St Cross where I can once again make music in the wonderful surroundings where it all began'.

Brother David MacGeorge left St Cross for a care home during the year and sadly there have been two deaths amongst the Brothers: Brother Derek Pryce-Jones, who had also moved to a care home, died during the first lockdown and Brother Julian Sturdy died on Boxing Day 2020 after a short illness.



The Brothers in 2020 – masked and unmasked!

Brothers' Activities

During this extraordinary year of Covid-19, with the Hospital closed to protect the residents, some elements of the Brothers' life continued. The Brothers met each other at coffee after Matins on most days (see photo below left) and they have enjoyed the occasional game of croquet (see photo below right). They have watched films in the Brothers' Library on the big screen using the hi-tech equipment, and this has also managed Zoom lectures and Friends' evenings. There have been recitals in Chapel – Brother Kevin on guitar and Brother Graham on the organ - and the Master organised a 'Desert Island Discs' afternoon featuring several Brothers and their five best tunes!



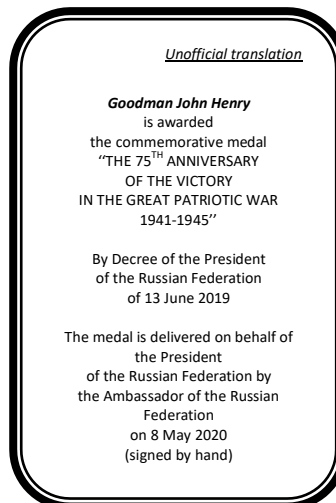
The Brothers celebrated with Brother Bevis (shown with the Master below) as he launched his new book 'Elgarado' about Edward Elgar's 'Enigma Variations', in which, he argues, the tune of the Welsh song 'Men of Harlech' is encoded.



They also commemorated the 75th Anniversary of VE Day in the first lockdown in May, and the Armistice in the second lockdown in November. Their wreath, usually laid at the War Memorial outside the Cathedral, is shown in the Chapel in the photographs below.



In May 2020, Brother John Goodman received a special award from the Russian Federation for his service in the Arctic Convoys during the Second World War. He is shown below with his medal, and beside his photo is a transcript of the accompanying 'Certificate of Commemorative Award' which came with it.



The Brothers enjoyed their Christmas lunch in the Brethren's Hall - socially distanced of course - as illustrated in the photographs below!



Finally the Brothers would like to record their thanks to all their volunteer helpers including Janet Rowland-White and her team of shoppers (right); they also thank the staff (left) for keeping them safe and their Cook, Paddy, (above left) for keeping them fed and watered!



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