

ROCK TALK



JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS OF GIBRALTAR
2018 EDITION

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Editorials

Here we go again.....where does time go? Interesting question to start this latest edition of Rock Talk. Interesting in the sense that, as the magazine of Friends of Gibraltar Heritage, we find ourselves in an ever evolving urban landscape, changing at an ever increasing rate. The increasing number of friends we meet, who left the Rock many years ago, who tell us how much Gibraltar has changed is indicative of the times we are living through.

At this point we need to congratulate Sir Joe Bossano on his worthy recognition by the Establishment and in particular Her Majesty the Queen. Sir Joe, a true Socialist, was keen to stress that he accepted the honourable award not for himself but the people of Gibraltar.

Ignoring his political viewpoints (and those of his political opponents), we must recognise that it was during his first tenure of leadership that he led the large reclamation project on the West side – the creation of the first affordable housing schemes on the newly reclaimed land. This baton has been taken up by the present Government, of which Sir Joe still plays an important part. It is true to say that during the previous GSD administration we experienced redevelopment on a much smaller scale.

At present it seems that the only way is up up and away... - building cranes are appearing virtually on a daily basis. New (affordable) housing projects have been identified and given approval. Nine new schools are planned by 2019, with many of them being relocated elsewhere. Bayside School, in much need of refurbishment for the last 30 years is being moved to a new state of the art site where the current customs/Post Office depot is located. Westside School, the girls' comprehensive school, was more fortunate, is also moving next to the new Bayside School – co-education is also being introduced at the same time... I hate to imagine what the traffic will be

like once the 2 schools (with a total pupil population of over 2500 students) are built amidst large residential estates... add to that a couple of ocean liners spewing over 5000 tourists... - interesting times!

Please note, BREXIT has not been mentioned! Perhaps it might be time to build a canal along the present border demarcation and make Gibraltar an island? Just a thought.....

Brian & Liz Gonzalez

The Society has had a busy and successful year, with increased commitments to heritage and educational projects in Gibraltar, and a full range of meetings in the UK. The Annual Seminar was held in a new venue near Oxford, and was a great success, with good attendance and an interesting and varied programme. Additional information on the talks presented is included in this issue of Rock Talk, together with the usual range of reports on activities and subjects of interest to the membership. We hope you find the content of interest. The challenges that face Gibraltar in the near future are becoming more evident, and the Society continues to monitor and contribute to the discussion, ensuring that every opportunity is taken to raise visibility of the issues and wishes of the people of the Rock. This issue includes updates on the various projects that we fund, and from officers of the Society on internal issues to ensure that the membership is kept informed. The journal is somewhat shorter this year, due to increasing costs and the use of available funds rightly focusing on supporting projects in Gibraltar, but I hope that it provides an interesting read and update for those who have not been able to attend Society events over the year.

Vincent Mifsud

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends of Gibraltar,

If we thought we were living in interesting times in 2016, last year, 2017, provided even more surprises! But despite all the national and international excitements, the FOGHS continues to fulfil its charitable objectives in supporting and promoting heritage in Gibraltar.

I said last year that we felt we were in a better position with a rolling 5-year plan for our projects and this has continued to deliver significant results. You'll read more of the detail in the following pages, but I'm delighted to say that our bursary for the University and our Schools' Awards have come to fruition. Both are particularly important initiatives as they support education and engage directly with the community. The completion of the Convent Frescoes was celebrated in style in the Convent cloisters in the summer and a number of minor restoration projects are in hand. So, it is a pleasure to be able to report that the Society is very much doing its job across a broad range of initiatives.



Once again last year, we enjoyed a lively social programme as well as some fascinating talks at Gibraltar House. The traditional June visit to Gibraltar was a great success, thanks to all those who did so much to make it so. Our 2017 AGM and Seminar was held at a new location, the Oxford Belfry Hotel, which not only provided a refreshing change of environment but also proved to be a central and highly suitable venue. We were delighted last year to welcome Claire Montado, Chief Executive of the Gibraltar Heritage Trust. Claire gave an excellent update on the work of the GHT and I am pleased to report that the relationship between the FOGHS and the GHT is going from strength to strength. We have, of course, very similar aims and I hope we will be able to formalise this convergence through a Memorandum of Understanding, which is in the final stages of drafting as I write. Our joint work on the Convent Frescoes proved an exemplary *modus operandi* for us both and I am sure we can build on this for future projects and initiatives.

Finally, for our first social occasions of the new year, we enjoyed an excellent evening, hosted by our President, Baroness Hooper, in the Palace of Westminster where we had an update on the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Gibraltar.

We say sad farewells to a number of Friends who have passed away over the last year (see page 6), including former Governor, Sir Peter Terry, and long standing member and supporter Maurice Xiberras. We send our condolences to the families and friends of all those who have crossed the bar. I would also like to offer my sincere thanks to Andrew McKinley who has now left the Board of Directors, and a warm welcome to Peter Hucker who has joined as Hon Treasurer. I make no apologies for once again using this opportunity to express my appreciation to all those Board and Committee members who work so hard and give up so much time to make the FOGHS a viable and vibrant society. And thanks go to you, our Friends, for your continued support especially the Editors of Rock Talk who have done a great job once again.

In summary, our membership, our funds, and our plans are all in good shape and we are well set for another successful year in 2018.

Sir Adrian Johns

BUMPER YEAR FOR FRIENDS' DONATIONS AND AWARDS

Richard Lord with inputs from Project Leaders

Since our last issue your Board has been increasing the diversity and extent of our awards/donations. The overall aim is to recruit ideas from Members, seek additional information needed and give the Board a selection to choose from. In doing so to make a lasting impact to areas that we support.

Frescoes The year started off with the completion of the restoration of the Frescoes in the Convent and an inauguration event. This was in the presence of the Governor, Chief Minister and other VIPs and took place in Kings Chapel. A video of the restoration is on the Friends' site: <https://friendsofgibraltar.org.uk/projects/>

The Friends have benefitted from a number of high profile press releases; the visit to see them is a popular part of GHT's programme. In the photo are the restorer Ainoa Rodríguez Rueda, Kevin Lane and Richard Lord.



Oral History The vast quantity of information collected for this project has been sifted in order to provide an easy access to key parts of it on both ours and the Imperial War Museum's web sites. Unfortunately, ours ran into technical difficulties and it is planned now to have it up and running by the end of March 2018. We apologise for this delay.

Irish Town Brochure A small contribution was made to this map which is proving useful for those navigating around this historic area.

Awards to Schools The award ceremony was attended by the Friends during the annual visit on 14 June 2017. It gave the Friends there a chance to meet the winners and other schoolchildren. It also gave us a chance to say who we were! The winner at Bayside Comprehensive School David Lester said that "The study of local history has helped me to understand where we come from and why many things are the way that they are". The winner at Westside School for Girls was Lily Alice Fairbank. This educational initiative is fully reported in a separate article in this issue.

University Bursary A second award has now been made and this was presented during the Friends' visit in June 2017. The winner was Sonai Samtini shown here in the photo with Janet Whiteley.



In an interview after the award, Sonai said "My PhD research is based on how a therapeutic day centre for people with Alzheimer's and dementia would impact the quality of life of people with this condition in Gibraltar in terms of their cognition and function in their everyday lives. It is a mixed methods study that takes a social constructivist worldview indicating that everyone forms their own realities. Having worked in building this centre for the last five years and managed it for the last year, it is a pleasure to be able to research the first centre of its kind in Gibraltar. With the bursary very kindly awarded to me by the Friends of Gibraltar Heritage Society, I intend to attend conferences regarding new advances in Alzheimer's and dementia such as the 'International Alzheimer's Conference'. By doing so I hope to not only learn more about the field, but also present a poster with my own research and network with professionals involved in the same area. Thank you so much to the 'Friends' for this very generous award."

Scanner for the GoG Archives In November 2017, a cheque for £3,767 was presented to the Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Joseph Garcia for the Gibraltar National Archives (GNA). Dr Garcia, thanked the Friends of Gibraltar for their kind donation: "This generous donation will assist the team at the Gibraltar National Archives as they continue their historically important Digitisation Project. In the past year alone the project has produced a public exhibition, Mapping Our Past, and contributed key documents and insights to the Referendum 50 celebrations. I am delighted that the project will now expand to allow the public, researchers and schools to easily access important sources for the first time."



We were further informed by the Archivist, Mr Anthony Pitaluga, that the scanner will make key historic cartographic collections, numbering about 5,000 and dating from the 14th Century, readily available via the GNA website to researchers, school children, and those with a general interest. It will ensure that the precious source documents will no longer be handled so often and be preserved for many future generations.

In the photograph are Mr Albert Poggio, Dr Garcia and Mr Anthony Pitaluga.

Holy Trinity Organ Fund Restoration During the Church Service on Sunday 19th November Mr Albert Poggio presented a cheque for £4,000 to Revd Cannon Robin Gill to be used towards the cost of the restoration on the organ. This had been recently completed at a cost of over £40,000 and it was in fine form during the Service.

The Organist, Mr David Gilson said that he was delighted with the restoration programme and was still getting used to all the Keys and Stops working again. Also, how quiet the blower motor and fan are now!

In the photo are Rev Canon Professor Robin Gill and Mr Albert Poggio.

Subsequently, a rededication service by Bishop David Hamid took place on the 13th January 2018.

Maxinne Torrents dels Prats attended the service and said that: "It was a privilege to be asked to represent The Friends of Gibraltar at the Dedication of the newly restored Organ at the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity. I was welcomed by the Church Warden, the clergy and members of the committee, who thanked the Friends for their contribution. The service was conducted by Dr David Hamid, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe. He led the special service in which the organ dating back to 1880 was once again "awoken".

The joint choir of Holy Trinity Cathedral Choir and Phillip Borge's Harmonic Choir was quite beautiful. Adrian Mumford gave the world premiere of Gibraltar March for Organ, commissioned especially for the occasion from French Canadian composer, Denis Bedard.

The dedication was followed by short introduction to the restoration work by organ builder, Mr Andrew Cooper.

An organ recital by Mrs Hamish Dustagheer, Maestro di Cappella oz St John's Co-Cathedral, Malta was wonderfully received.

When mentioning to Adrian Mumford that I attended Farm Street Church, London, he whisked me over to meet Hamish who was pupil of David Gram, the Farm Street organist and we chatted on about that Church and the Friends which made the reception very agreeable. Overall a wonderful experience".

The Future

A donation to the Gibraltar Heritage Trust towards the publishing of a book by Manolo Galliano is currently being considered by the Board.

Next year, as well as the regular donations to the Schools and the University, it is planned to take forward the restoration of some of the graves at Withams Cemetery and make a donation to Calpe House. There are funds available for additional donations/projects. Ideas for donations/projects from Members are always welcome. Please contact the Membership Secretary, Richard Lord, if you have any.

Calpe House Appeal

Albert Poggio OBE GMH gave a brief reminder at the AGM and Seminar of the Calpe House Appeal. The campaign is progressing well, and emerging challenges have been met and overcome as they have arisen.

For individuals wishing to make a lasting contribution, the Trust are inviting them to set up a monthly payment, which will provide the Trust not only with immediate funding for the refurbishment, but also a long term budget to aid them in planning for the future.

Please visit the website www.calpehouse.org and click the DONATE button, where there is an option to select a one off or monthly payment.



Diary of Society Events for 2018

The diary of events is maintained on the Society's web site, and in the frequent e-mail updates or correspondence. This year's programme will be based on the successful format developed over the past few years, and will be updated in due course. Key events are already pencilled in for the membership.

Visit and presentations in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Rooms

The first event of the 2018 calendar has already taken place (see report). This was a very enjoyable and successful visit to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association rooms in Westminster Hall, hosted by Baroness Hooper. The event was fully subscribed, and the members attending enjoyed an update on recent events in

Parliament that affect Gibraltar and the EU, and a briefing on the work of the Society.

Talks at Gibraltar House

Various talks are at the planning stage for quarter one of 2018; details will be confirmed in the Newsletter.

Monday, 26th February at Gibraltar House, 6-8.30pm, Albert Poggio on 'the Gibraltar Referendum 1967'.

Monday 9th April at Gibraltar House, 6-8.30pm, a film and short presentation by Sir Adrian Johns, 'The Case of the Missing Ape'.

Summer Party will be organized for end of June 2018, date tbc.

Friends Annual Visit to Gibraltar – Commencing Monday 4th June 2017

Dates are now confirmed, however the week's programme is at the early stages of planning. Visits should include some or all of – Gibraltar Heritage Trust offices, visit to the University, Queens Birthday Parade at Casemates. Additional suggestions are welcome at this stage to Janet who organises this annual visit.

Email: janet.stockbridge@btinternet.com

All Friends make their own arrangements for travel and accommodation; it is recommended that this is carried out as soon as possible with your airline provider to get the best rates. Most of the group still continue to prefer to stay at the colonial style Rock Hotel, which has been largely refurbished. Other choices include The Sunborn Gibraltar floating hotel at Marina Bay, The O'Callaghan Elliott Hotel, centrally located. The Bristol a 3 star hotel, or The Caleta Hotel located at Catalan Bay. You may wish to check out MyGibraltar.co.uk for rates and bookings.

2017 Seminar, AGM and Dinner

Dates for your diaries - planning guideline for the 2017 Seminar and Dinner is for late October, at the Oxford Belfry Hotel. Accounts will be available at the AGM.

Christmas Party

Probably in late November; details to be confirmed in the near future.

Other Events – will be notified to the membership through the bi-monthly electronic newsletter.

Deceased

The Society notes with regret the death of the following Friends:

Lady Davis

Mr Edward Pryor

Mr Victor M Galliano

Mr Nigel Fordham LVO

Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Terry GCB

Mr Maurice Xiberras GMH

Our condolences are extended to their families and friends on their sad loss.

Reports of Events

Friends' Visit to Gibraltar 2017 *by Janet Whiteley*

As with successive annual visits to Gibraltar, this year offered a varied and interesting Itinerary, which included for the first time a day trip into Spain, featuring historic Italica founded by the Romans & then onwards to Seville. Regular attendees on the annual visit had suggested a trip across the border and we were fortunate in having an excellent narrator and guide in Tito Vallejo on this occasion. Local Gibraltarians joined the day trip, these included GHT members and personal friends who helped cover the hire cost of the coach which was significant.

On Monday, the welcome at GHT was given by Vice Chairman Dr Keith Farrell, and was followed by a visit to the Convent to view the newly restored Franciscan Frescoes, then coffee with his Excellency the Governor. In the afternoon lunch was taken at the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club and in the evening Welcome Drinks, courtesy of the Rock Hotel management, were enjoyed by the Friends group at the Poolside. Mid week activities included visits to Westside Girls and Bayside Boys Comprehensive schools for the launch of the Friends History of Gibraltar Awards - Evacuation Project, which included the prize-giving of the FoGs Shield, Certificates and cash prizes to outstanding chosen students. This was followed in the afternoon by a visit to the University and the announcement of the second Bursary Award candidate for 2017/18 at the University. The Bursary was awarded

to Ms Sonal Samtani whose specialised thesis included local people with Alzheimer's disease, and their recollection of historical aspects of Gibraltar.

A visit to the Tower ensued with an overview of activity and security in the Strait which was explained by acting CBF, Col Frank Green RW, to our interested group of the Friends, followed by refreshments in the Tower arranged through Richard Lord.

On Thursday, we visited the oldest Synagogue in Gibraltar tucked away on Engineers Lane; Share Hashamayim with Mesod Belilio this was particularly educational and fascinating. This was followed by a visit to the recently opened BEHER Delicatessen at Casemates and later the Queen's Birthday Parade in Casemates Square, which was enjoyed by all attending, seating allocation was facilitated through acting CBF.

This year, four invitations were extended to the Friends by his Excellency the Governor and Mrs Davis to attend The Garden Party at the Convent to celebrate HM The Queen's Birthday.

On Friday, at Withams Cemetery, the progress dedication and hard work was explained by Dr Keith Farrell and his colleague which was appreciated by those who attended. Significant improvements have been made in areas where voluntary manpower has been forthcoming. Following this visit, the group went to the recently restored and delightful venue of Sandpits Magazine close to Williams Cemetery where a historical presentation on Spanish wine regions and tasting was hosted by Anglo Hispano. Rates for tickets which were limited for this event was significantly reduced for our group thanks to GHT which was much appreciated.

On Friday evening & for the second year a 'successful farewell supper' on a 'pay as you go basis' was arranged for the first time at Sacarellos in Irish town, Richard Sacarello joined the supper party of twenty six.

Excellent full page press coverage of the Friends visit was gained in June in the Gibraltar Chronicle.



Friends at the Rock Hotel reception



Coverage of the visit in the Gibraltar Chronicle



The visiting Friends with HE the Governor and Mrs Davis

Friends of Gibraltar Seville Trip

Tuesday 13th June 2017

Itálica

The Roman ruins of *Itálica* are one of the places you must go to when visiting Seville. 10 kilometres north from Seville, this city was founded by the Romans in the year 206 BC and was the birthplace of the famous Roman Emperor Trajan (*Traiano* in Spanish).

Here you can still see the remains of the Roman city, an impressive amphitheatre which once held 25,000 people and beautiful mosaic floors.



Cathedral and La Giralda

Sevilla's cathedral is the third largest cathedral in the world, and the largest Gothic building in the world. It contains the tomb of Christopher Columbus (*Cristobal Colón* in Spanish). The cathedral was built over the ruins of an Almohad mosque and some of the elements in its structure are still of Arab style, like the wonderful tower on the back of the cathedral, La Giralda, which is in fact one of the few Almohad minarets surviving in the world.



Reales Alcázares Palace

The Reales Alcázares is an amazing royal palace built by the Christian kings of Castile. This is the oldest occupied royal palace in Europe, meaning that the king and queen of Spain still stay here when they visit Seville.

We advise you to take your time when you visit the Alcázares, since it is not only a palace but several palaces together, you will be astonished at the incredible combination of different architectural styles. Here, Muslim, Mudejar and Christian constructions fuse together. You can also stroll through the gardens of the Alcázares, where fountains, ponds, colourful flowers and the fragrance of aromatic plants will take you to another time.



Views of the impressive palace

GIBRALTAR HOUSE 2017

By Dominique Searle MBE, Gibraltar Representative to the UK

Ineluctably, Brexit dominated 2017 relentlessly, but not always predictably, continuing its course from 2016. This rollercoaster of activity is set to continue as Gibraltar works to protect its core interests.

From the outset of the referendum result it was decided that Gibraltar House should be the hub of activity for HMGoG and that these new times and challenges required a rethink of the role and activities of the representative office.

Following the appointment in July 2017 of former Gibraltar Chronicle editor Dominique Searle as Representative to the UK, the Chief Minister approved the appointment of Ty Duarte, engaged as Deputy Head of Mission. Ty is a former Intelligence Corps officer. He has global experience, and a deep knowledge of the UK's national security structures, which allows him to provide strategic insight and advice on the challenges facing Gibraltar.

Since July 2017 the ground floor offices were re-distributed and the largest room converted to create a secure and functioning office / meeting room for the Chief Minister/ Deputy Chief Minister – (and other visiting ministers should they require) with video and other communications facilities. This creates a fluid working space away from the general public and other activities which has been especially useful during the visits for regular JMCs and strategy meetings taking place with HMG. The effect has been to make 150 Strand an extension of No 6 Convent Place.

But, of course, the finance centre and industry continue to make good and regular use of the building for their meetings and events. The redoubtable and very experienced Tim Haynes, a welcome addition to the team, now spearheads much of this work in London from 150 Strand.

Apart from working with and keeping up regular communication with HMG, the Foreign Office in particular, and Parliament, there has also been a focus on monitoring and participating in the work of Parliamentary committees, think tanks and speaking to policy makers.

This year also saw some 30 MPs/MEPs join us in Gibraltar for a special National Day which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the referendum of 1967 - the reason that September 10 is a Red Letter Day (particular credit to our Freeman Andrew Mackinlay!).

The party conferences remain an important opportunity for Gibraltar to literally set out its stall and we had the addition of the DUP and SNP conferences to the schedule. We were well received at all of them and the Gibraltar Reception – always the best one - was packed out on each occasion with the CM and DCM hearing replies from Boris, Emily Thornberry, Arlene Foster, Jo Swinson and Fiona Hyslop. Just as important were the numerous meetings with senior MPs and ministers as well as the CM's NewStatesman fringe events at both the Conservative and Labour conference which he debated Brexit issues with Dominic Grieve and Hilary Benn.

It was no rest for the wicked in the autumn – winter season with an event or conference almost every week culminating in another successful Gibraltar Day in London where the finance centre filled its sponsored tables to capacity.

The transformation of the evening event from its unwieldy 1,000 guests to a focused high level political event held at the iconic beacon of modernity which is the Gherkin, again proved very successful. It was recognised by all parties that the traditional event had run its course and grown unjustifiably large, but Brexit demanded the occasion be reduced to a size where the Chief Minister and his team could interact with ambassadors, mostly EU and Commonwealth, and senior political figures including three UK ministers who attended.

Politics aside...

But the big day of 2017 for Gibraltar House has to be its first ever Royal visitor with Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and Deputy CM Dr Joseph Garcia having the pleasure of welcoming the Princess Royal on an occasion marking her patronage of the Gibraltar Literary Festival. That was quite a day!

Last but not least visitors to Gibraltar House in February last year seemed quite nonplussed by the snake. This was a small beast winding itself around a stern-faced model amidst the lights and champagne at the Gibraltar House extension to London Fashion week...



Chief Minister Fabian Picardo meets Princess Royal at Gibraltar House



Strategy meeting with the Foreign Office on Brexit

London Talk by Surg Cdre Robin McNeill-Love RN 30 Jan 2017

A fascinating talk on the history of the Royal Naval Hospital Gibraltar was presented to the members in Gibraltar House on the 30th January. Commodore Robin spoke from personal experience of recent years, but expanded his talk to include the broader history of the Hospital, and placed it in both historical and social context. The talk included anecdotes on key members of staff, and interaction with other hospitals in Spain and Morocco, adding much local colour and interest. This interaction generated a lot of interest, as the level of co-operation across the countries was high, and expertise shared for the benefit of all.

The interface with the civilian health services was also discussed, and there were lessons to be learnt for the future. Relations were always cordial and supportive, though the roles of the two services are quite different. RNH Gibraltar had to provide a surge capability in the event of military action, and its focus included this element as well as looking after posted service personnel.

The talk was well attended, and the questions after the presentation indicated the high level of interest in the subject. A variety of relevant photographs were shared during the talk, and included the development of the site to recent days.

Mr Tim Lawson-Cruttenden introduced the speaker and hosted the event, which included drinks before the talk, and an opportunity for members to meet and chat informally. Our thanks to staff at Gibraltar House for their support.



London Talk by Jennifer Scherr 8 May 2017

The Friends were delighted to host a talk by Jennifer Scherr on her research into her family connections with Gibraltar, especially her great grandfather, Thomas Jackson Spencer, who was coal hulk master and port surveyor in the late 19th century. The talk presented the challenges of obtaining the relevant information from archives in Gibraltar and elsewhere, and in distilling the information into a coherent story. As part of this research, a broader picture emerged of the operation of the port in those days of wood and coal fired shipping, and the transition from sail to steam, with many old ships used as hulks in the harbour area.

The talk included many interesting photographs from the era, and served as an introduction to a further expanded contribution as part of the Annual Seminar in Oxford. An article is also included in this issue.



The Spencer family in the 1890s (family photograph)

Visit to Haslar Hospital 16 Sep 2017

by Richard Lord

The Friends were hosted by the Haslar Heritage Group for an informative and fascinating visit on Sat 16 Sep 17. 46 Friends attended – 3 were members of the HHG as well! The picture shows Mark Trasler, member of the Friends and HHG giving the safety brief in St Lukes Church.

The chairman of HHG Eric Birbeck formally welcomed us and then gave a no-notes, no-slides, one hour presentation on the history of the hospital. Fact after fact flowed in a most enjoyable and explanatory style.

Breaking into two groups, Friends toured in turn the outside of the main building, the water tower, pathology lab (the only one not on the overall axis in order to use microscopes with mirrors pointing into the sun), previous asylum buildings and dormitories/messes, and the Paddock and the Memorial Gardens. Grisly stories included the finding of 3 skeletons in the sewer where they had tried to escape (under where Mark is standing!). Hearing about the over 20,000 bodies in the Paddock in un-consecrated ground, the Friends became noticeably quieter.

The Memorial Gardens are beautifully kept.

The lunch was splendid and it was different to be sitting in the pews of St Lukes Church enjoying lunch with a glass of wine. We felt really welcome.

Mark gave a personal account of his time in HMHS UGANDA – the hospital ship in the Falkland's war (an article from Mark is included later in this issue). It was the first time he had done this and he was clearly moved by some of the memories it provoked. As well as highlighting the outstanding work done by all the medical staff on board, he wanted to pay tribute to the fantastic work that had been done in Gibraltar in the conversion from a luxury passenger liner to a hospital ship in the 65 hours allocated. A flight deck was fitted, a large casualty entrance created, wards and theatres fitted out. Vast quantities of stores were embarked.

The Friends are most grateful for the preparation that went into the visit and a most informative day. It is intended to have on-going links with the HHG.



Annual Seminar and Dinner – Oxford

28th October 2017 *by the Editors*

This year saw the use of a new venue for the annual seminar and dinner. A well-attended event was held at the Oxford Belfry Hotel, following the format established last year that combined the seminar with the AGM and Society Annual Dinner. This format makes the AGM more accessible to members, and had received favourable comment last year.

The agenda for the afternoon was as follows:

14.00 Welcome by Sir Adrian Johns and AGM

14.30 – 15.15 Doctor Edward Rose - "Tunnelling through the Rock: the roles of Tunnelling Companies Royal Engineers in the 2nd World War"

15.15 – 15.45 Mrs Claire Montado CEO of Gibraltar



The Oxford Belfry Hotel – new venue for the event

Heritage Trust – Update on the work of GHT 2016 – 2017

15.45 – 16.00 Tea Break

16.00 – 16.40 Ms Jennifer Scherr - A continuation on the role of Gibraltar's First Port Surveyor

16.40 – 16.55 Commodore Richard Lord – An update on FOGHS membership and projects

16.55 – Raffle

17.00 Sir Adrian Johns – Closure of Seminar

The AGM followed the established pattern, with Board members presenting on their areas of responsibility, and the Society's accounts were also made available. The minutes are included in this issue of Rock Talk.

Dr Rose's talk built on his contribution to last year's Rock Talk, and is complemented by a further contribution in this issue. The enormous contribution that tunnelling made to the defence and expansion of facilities in and around the Rock during WW2 provided much food for thought and discussion.

A further update on the work of the GHT is provided as a separate article in this Rock Talk, and builds on the information provided at the Seminar.



Friends relaxing...

There are many changes planned in and around the City of Gibraltar, and the work of the GHT to preserve heritage remains of great importance.

Ms Scherr's talk built on her earlier contribution at Gibraltar House, and there is a further article in this issue.

Sir Adrian summarised the work of the Society and thanked the speakers at the end of the afternoon session, which was followed by a very enjoyable evening meal, preceded by drinks at the bar.

Christmas Party – 30th November 2017

by Tricia Johnson

On the evening of Thursday, 30th November 2017 the Friends of Gibraltar returned, by popular request, to the RAF Club for their annual Christmas Party. As has been the case for the past few years the event was well attended and enjoyed by everyone. It was pleasing to welcome a few new members to the event, plus many regular attendees, friends and family members.

The staff within the RAF Club ensured that our glasses were never empty!! Confirmed by the quantity of sparkling wine and other wines consumed. Plentiful canapes were served and enjoyed. As last year, the level of conversation and laughter provided evidence that everyone was 'having a good time'. The ambiance at the RAF Club is always very much appreciated by all whom attend the events held there.

Our Chair Sir Adrian Johns gave a very short speech thanking everyone, including our President, Baroness Gloria Hooper for attending the party. He highlighted the successful projects that have been completed over the year and thanked members of the Board for their hard work, Harvey and Tricia Johnson for facilitating and organising the party and all members for their continuing support. He concluded by wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.



Our Chairman addressing members



The Membership Secretary in jovial mood

Society Meeting at Westminster, 18th January 2018

By Albert Poggio OBE

The Friends and invited guests met at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association rooms in Westminster Hall, hosted by our President, Baroness Hooper. The event was fully subscribed, and attendees enjoyed the evening, taking the opportunity to discuss topical issues with a distinguished series of guests, including many MPs who are members of the APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group for Gibraltar), guests also included the former Governors of Gibraltar Sir Robert Fulton, The Rt. Hon. The Lord Luce and our Chairman Sir Adrian Johns, and other dignitaries. Drinks flowed freely as members discussed the recent festive season and the challenges of 2018. Attention then switched to an interesting series of speeches that discussed the current political context relating to Gibraltar and Europe, and the Commonwealth. The Chairman of the APPG, Bob Neil MP addressed the gathering and provided an update on the current Brexit bill in the Commons and the Lords. The various ways in which issues relating to Gibraltar had and were being highlighted and brought to the attention of the law makers were explained by Bob Neil.

We are fortunate in having so many friends in Parliament, many of whom were present at this event. The importance of recognising and respecting the wishes of the people of Gibraltar was highlighted, and the sympathetic views expressed in broader political circles were noted in several of the contributions. The challenges facing the UK and Gibraltar in managing the transition from the EU were highlighted, but confidence was expressed that a good compromise agreement would be achieved. There is still much work to be done, and it remains important to take every opportunity to air the wishes of Gibraltarians, said Bob Neil. The Friends can contribute to this work, and there was general agreement that we should do so, within the aims of the Society.

Our Chairman, Sir Adrian Johns, thanked Baroness Hooper and the other speakers, and hoped that the evening had been enjoyed by all. Further informal discussions ensued, with our guests circulating and taking the opportunity to meet members of the Society.

Sir Adrian further thanked all members of the Executive Committee for administering and organising a very successful and informative evening.

NOTE: included in the top photograph, from left to right Sir Graham Brady MP, Eleanor Laing MP (Deputy Speaker), Albert Poggio (Vice-Chairman),



Dignitaries attending the popular event



Three former Governors at the event



An attentive audience filling the CPA room

Baroness Hooper (President), Andrew Rosindell MP, Bob Neil MP (Chairman APPG), Sir Adrian Johns (Chairman), Mike Gapes MP, Col Bob Stewart MP, Dominique Searle (UK Representative)

THE FIRST ANNUAL HISTORY OF GIBRALTAR AWARDS

'It has helped me to understand where we come from and why many things are the way that they are'

That is the value that David Lester, winner of the history of Gibraltar Award at Bayside Comprehensive School, puts on the study of local history. It could hardly be more succinctly expressed.

2017 saw the first annual History of Gibraltar Awards at both Westside School for girls and Bayside Comprehensive School for boys. The events were well supported by the members enjoying the annual visit to the Rock, even though some had been on what must have been a very tiring sightseeing daytrip to Seville on the previous day. The Friends gathered at Westside on the morning of the 14th of June for the first of the award ceremonies. Headteacher, Mrs. Michelle Barabich, greeted us in the school hall, where the Westside girls had prepared a drama performance on the subject chosen by the school for the award - the evacuation of Gibraltar's civilian population during the Second World War. The production, in mime, speech, slide projections and music, showed how deeply the students had identified with those caught up in *la evacuación*, as Gibraltarians have come to call their time in exile.

'...so much horror and change' Lily Alice Fairbank, winner of the History of Gibraltar Award at Westside School.

Having grown up hearing stories about those times - stories which were invariably matter of fact – *we slept at such and such underground station during the bombing... we were housed here...went to school there* – this writer was moved to see the girls give expression to the emotions and uncertainties of that time of separation and danger. Lily Fairbank feels lucky to have had the opportunity to interview someone who had experienced the evacuation. She had also read **'Gibraltar, Honouring a Generation'**, a book published to mark the 75th anniversary of the evacuation. Over 5000 copies of the book were distributed to schools by the Government of Gibraltar in 2015.

The production ended with an expressive performance of Vera Lynn's **'We'll Meet Again'**, sung by Ana Sharma, accompanied at the piano by Ms Christina Bruzon. After the presentation of the shield and certificates we had the opportunity to meet the winners and see the excellent standard of their work. Indeed, Mrs Barabich had told us of the high quality of many of the projects and in addition to the Award, Westside issued its own recognition cards to a further five students.

Winner: Lily Alice Fairbank

Highly commended: Chelsie Victor and Isabella Mcquisten



It is a short walk from Westside School to Bayside Comprehensive – plenty of time for an impromptu coffee and churros group to form along the way.

It was prize giving day at Bayside! There was a positive energy in the busy entrance hall, with its extensive trophy

cabinets, art displays and exhibits of pupils' work. The sixth formers we met there were charming hosts. It was good to hear of their plans for the future and share in their enthusiasm. We took our seats in the school yard for the open air ceremony led by Headteacher, Mr Michael Tavares. There were citations for outstanding achievement in many areas, as well as heart-warming tributes to past students and teachers.

The shield and winner's certificate for the History of Gibraltar Award were presented to David Lester. For his research, David used material provided by the school, the internet and books on local history. He has previously worked on other aspects of Gibraltar's past – Neanderthal man, the Great Siege, the Moors – and his studies for this project have awakened an interest in the Spanish period – a subject he would like to continue researching.

We took our leave of Bayside Comprehensive School, happy in the knowledge that the History of Gibraltar Award was already part of the fabric of the school.

Albert Poggio GMH, OBE, a Director of the Friends and for so many years, Director of Gibraltar House and Gibraltar's representative in the UK, spoke to the gathered assemblies at both the schools. The Awards were presented by fellow Director Janet Whitely, whose efforts in arranging for the presentations to be part of the annual visit, always a tour de force in scheduling, are greatly appreciated.

The Friends look forward to many years of working with the schools and would like to thank Mr Michael Tavares and Mrs Michelle Barabich for their enthusiasm and help in setting up the Award.

Our thanks also go to Darren Grech, Senior Education Advisor at the Department of Education, Gibraltar and Gerrard Olivero, former Assistant Education Advisor, for their support in the initial stages of the project.

Winner: David Lester

Second: Francis Huart

Highly commended: Casey Torres, Oliver Cox, Nathan Anson and Ethan Bocarisa



GIBRALTAR'S HOSPITAL SHIP – HMHS UGANDA - THE CONVERSION

Extract from a presentation given by Friends member Lt Cdr Mark Trasler during September's visit to the former Royal Naval Hospital at Haslar.

On 2 April 1982, Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands. Gibraltar played a major, if not crucial, roll in preparing the fleet for the forthcoming war and subsequent liberation of the islands. Just a few days before the Naval Base had been hosting the warships for Exercise SPRING TRAIN in the Mediterranean. The 40 ships returned to Gibraltar, re-provisioned and re-ammunitioned, and most sailed south on 4 April. Some, sadly, never to return. The Task Force was on its way.

The next major task for the Dockyard was to build the hospital facility for the Task Force. The SS UGANDA was a 17,000 ton educational cruise ship and luxury liner. Launched on the Clyde in 1952,

she wore the insignia of the British India Steam Navigation Company, part of P&O since 1914. On 10 April 1982 UGANDA was in Alexandria, Egypt when she received urgent orders to sail to Naples where she arrived on Easter Sunday, 14 April. On berthing, she was boarded by Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Roger Leicester and other MOD officials. Roger had the unenviable task of informing Captain Brian Biddick that his ship had been requisitioned by the MOD. Some 940 school children and 314 passengers had their cruise abruptly curtailed and they were flown back to the UK. The UGANDA made best speed to Gibraltar, while plans were made to convert the cruise liner into what was to become a 900 bed floating hospital.

Early on the morning of Tuesday 16 April, UGANDA sailed serenely into No 2 Dock. The conversion from a floating hotel and school to a operational acute hospital started immediately. The tight timescale involved meant there were between four to five hundred dockyard workers on the conversion at any one time and the union promised complete co-operation.

The major structural task involved fitting the 40-ton helicopter flight deck, pre-fabricated and awaiting UGANDA's arrival at No 2 Dock, to the stern together with additional structural support in the decks below. Although built to accommodate Sea King helicopters (10-ton load) it later proved strong enough to land the one surviving Chinook helicopter (15-ton load). The original plan called for a lift to transport casualties from the flight deck to the main deck below, but this proved impossible to implement so a large hole was cut in the area of the after swimming pool and a 45 degree wooden ramp built down to casualty reception in the former children's games area. The 23 members of the Royal Marine Band, embarked as stretcher-bearers, became very adept at manhandling patients up and down this ramp, while the ship was pitching and rolling in the South Atlantic seas, without adding to their injuries! It was not an ideal arrangement. Other outside work included fitting satellite communication equipment and a special gantry to enable refuelling at sea.

The Student's Common Room, below the flight deck, became the 44-bed High Dependency Ward with its small kiosk becoming the Pharmacy. Casualty Reception and Triage had eight trestle tables, each with oxygen and suction. Three McVicar operating tables were fitted in the Veranda/Ballroom along with Operating Equipment such as autoclaves. Alongside it, in the Cocktail Bar, was the Pathology Laboratory and blood bank and in the first-class lounge, then known as the 'Smoking Room', was the 20-bed Intensive Care Unit. The elegant walnut panelling and two elephant tusks that had graced this room were boxed in. Low dependency patients used the Student Dormitories in the decks below. The Music Room was originally used as a Wardroom for the ship's and naval officers. Later, when RFAs SIR GALAHAD and SIR TRISTRAM were bombed it was rapidly converted into a 50-bed burns unit with the most serious cases being nursed in the original ship's hospital.

The final job of the conversion was repainting. UGANDA was given the Geneva Convention livery of large red crosses against a white hull and superstructure. Apparently, when painting the large red crosses on either side of her funnel, the red paint ran out and prompted a frantic search of Gibraltar for more supplies!

65 hours later, on the morning of Monday 16th April 1982, UGANDA left Gibraltar's No 2 dry dock for the start of the long voyage south to the Falkland Islands, her sides lined by her embarked 33 Royal Navy medical staff (myself included) and 35 female QARNNS sisters and nurses. It was a bright sunny morning and she looked (outwardly anyway) both pristine and spectacular. It had been a hectic and impressive conversion. HM Dockyard Gibraltar at the time was under threat of closure by the MOD - it was eventually privatised in the summer of 1984 - which makes the dedication and skill of its workers even more remarkable.

In the next 6 months, UGANDA was continuously at sea, performing her essential role in the Falkland's War. 22,709 nautical miles steamed, 730 in-patients (including 159 Argentinians) admitted, 503 surgical operations performed, numerous lives and limbs saved and countless stories of bravery and (sadly) tragedy generated.

The Dockyard's contribution had proved invaluable. Gibraltar should be proud.



HMHS UGANDA in her guise as hospital ship



The author at the time...



UGANDA at the start of the conversion, entering dry dock



View of the changes for a helicopter deck



Modifications complete, the hospital ship prepares to leave



The converted ward in use

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S JOTTINGS

I do hope that you had a very Happy Christmas and New Year, and enjoyed all your celebrations. We especially enjoyed the Christmas Party at the RAF Club on 30th November. We are having increasing numbers attending this event which gets the Christmas Season off to a super start.

Our numbers have now come down to about 500. A comfortable number for me to manage but sadly we lose members each year and if you know of those interested in joining please let me know.

We offer the following in our New Year Sales!



Membership for £15 until Mar 19 as a New Years' gift for a relative or friend. I will write them a welcoming e mail saying that it is from you.

Free Package and Postage for a Friends' Tie for yourself or a relative/friend if ordered by end Mar 18. Only £21.

I would like to remind you of ongoing benefits and offers:

A wide ranging set of events during the year. (Ideas always welcome). A chance to hear interesting presentations and meet friends with Gibraltar in common.

Free membership for those over 80. (Please be sure to let me know – some of you have not so far!). Having informed me please cancel your Bankers Order. I cannot do this.

5 for the price of 4 Family Membership (4x£15). To be paid by Bankers Order.

For those with an appropriate award, a supported application for Membership of the Gibraltar OBE Association, And, of course, your excellent magazine – Rock Talk!

Change to Subscriptions

Chasing late payment from those who do not pay by Bankers Order consumes time which could be better spent, for example, on recruiting.

May I remind you that Membership Subscriptions are due in April each year and those who do not pay by a regular Standing Order will be asked to pay £17.50. HOWEVER, if payment is made in April 18 then a discount of £2.50 will be applied. The payment can be posted to me or by electronic transfer.

Updated Information

Please don't forget to contact me if your Gift Aid situation has changed and you no longer qualify or have moved. The next claim will be in May 18 for the period Apr 17 to Mar 18. Last year our claim raised a most useful £1,339.01. (Up slightly on the previous year).

Also, could I ask if you would let me know if you hear of Members who have not heard from us recently. Members change e-mail and their home addresses and we are not always informed. Sometimes e-mails and letters are returned to us but in all cases.



Membership List

I keep an overall Membership List with just Members names on. If you would like a copy, then I would be pleased to forward you one.

Lost Contact

A few Members have taken advantage of me forwarding e-mails to those they have lost contact with.

Location

I am sometimes asked where Friends are located. I include this again, especially for new Members.

Feedback

We are always grateful for feedback on any issue affecting our Society. If you send one to me as your Membership Secretary, then I can assure you that your Executive Committee will consider it. This is your Society.

Contact Details:

Commodore Richard Lord CBE MSc
Church Cottage, 4 Kingsbury Square WILTON SP2 0BA
richard.lord2@btinternet.com
01722 743173 (Please leave a message if there is no reply)

GIBRALTAR NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM (NMA) – ACT OF REMEMBRANCE 15 OCTOBER 2017

Peter Ferrary

On a beautiful crisp day, on 25 Oct 2017, I represented the Friends of Gibraltar and laid a wreath on their behalf at the service of commemoration held at the Gibraltar memorial at the NMA. HE the Governor of Gibraltar, Lt Gen Edward Davis CB CBE attended the service as did Mr Dominique Searle MBE representing the Government of Gibraltar. Three uniformed service representatives were also present.

The service this year was of particular interest as it was the 100th anniversary of the death of Lt Solomon Benzecry, a Gibraltarian serving with the 10th Battalion, The London Regiment and attached to the 17th Battalion the Royal Fusiliers, who was killed during the battle of Cambrai. During a fierce German counter attack at Bourlon Wood, Lt Benzecry's platoon provided a rear guard to cover their company's withdrawal. Together with their company commander Captain Walter Stone who chose to stay with them, they fought to the last. Captain Stone was awarded a posthumous VC and Lt Benzecry was Mentioned in Dispatches (MID)¹. His body was never recovered. This action at Bourlon Wood received much notice in the national press and of course in Gibraltar².



Mrs Donna Seruya-Sackman and Peter Ferrary

Thirteen members of Benzecry's family, all descended from each of his siblings attended the service. A niece, great niece, various great great nephews and nieces as well as a first cousin twice removed - attended. The latter, a Gibraltarian, Mrs Donna Seruya- Sackman is the eldest daughter of the late Solomon Seruya. Mrs Sarah Cohen, herself a great niece, had coordinated this family presence.

During the service, HE spoke a few words about Gibraltar's contribution to both World Wars including the enforced evacuation of the, non-combatant, civilian population in 1940. Sqn Ldr Wiggins, representing the RAF, also spoke about the role of Gibraltar as an airbase during both World Wars but in particular its role as a launch pad for Operation Torch during the Second World War (WW2). He also paid tribute to 2 Gibraltarians who served in the RAF during WW2 and were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross; Sqn Ldr Gerald Rooney, killed in 1941 and buried at Leuchars and Flying officer Charles Danino³.

¹ At the time and until a review of Gallantry awards was carried out in the aftermath of the First Gulf War, only the VC or the MID could be awarded posthumously.

² As early as 1918, moves were set afoot in Gibraltar to erect a memorial to Lt Benzecry, 'the Hero of Bourlon Wood'. A detailed account, written by Mr Eric Canessa, including the establishment of Gibraltar's War Memorials at the Line Wall and in the lobby of the then Commercial Exchange (now Gibraltar's Parliament building), in 1922 and 1925 respectively, can be found in the Gibraltar Heritage Society Journal No.7 dated 2000.

³ A third Gibraltarian who served in the RAF during WW2 and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal (the equivalent of the DFC) was Flight Sergeant Vincent Borge who served in Bomber Command as a rear gunner in



General view of attendees with Benzecry's relatives standing. Mrs Sarah Cohen on the right.
 In all, this Act of Remembrance was a very special occasion and all credit to Mr Joe Brugada for organising the event and having been the driving force in the erection of the Gibraltar memorial at the NMA 2 years ago⁴. The attendance of a bugler from the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and standard bearers from the Welsh branch of the Royal British Legion also added the right level of military gravitas to the occasion.
 By chance, the week after this event I found myself visiting St Andrews. Remembering that Sqn Ldr Rooney DFC was buried at Leuchars, very nearby, I visited his grave. This is situated in a lovely, well kept, small cemetery on the outskirts of Leuchars which contains a plot dedicated to war graves.



Leuchars cemetery -
 Commonwealth War
 Graves plot

various types of aircraft throughout 1943-45. Borge, who was a Gibraltar evacuee, joined the RAF aged 18 in Sep 1942. He requested and got permission to wear the shoulder flash 'Gibraltar' on his uniform throughout his service. He was demobbed in 1946.

⁴ The NMA is the UK's year round centre of Remembrance. Many regiments, service organisations as well as police have also erected individual memorials to their fallen. It is a lovely and touching place to visit.

CAPTAIN THOMAS JACKSON SPENCER

COAL HULK MASTER AND PORT SURVEYOR

Jennifer Scherr

Shortened and revised version of talks given to FOGHS May 8th and October 28th 2017

Ultimately I owe my connection to Gibraltar to my great grandfather, Thomas Jackson Spencer (1841-1900), a retired master mariner, who sailed the clipper the *Light Brigade* from the United States to the Rock in 1881. This once beautiful ship was destined to end her life as a coal hulk belonging to the British Coal Company, owned by the Irish Town merchant Yomtob Bergel. The Bergels were Moroccan Jews long settled in Andalusia and Gibraltar. Yomtob was also a steam packet agent, a member of the Board of Sanitary Commissioners (precursor of the City Council), a Grand Juror and Assessor, a member of the Managing Board of the Hebrew Community – and the Belgian Consul!

By the end of the 19th century there were 17 coaling companies based in Gibraltar, testimony to its importance as a coaling station, particularly after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the increasing number of steamships making it a port of call. The largest was the London Coal Company, owned by William J Sallust Smith, another Irish Town merchant and pillar of the community. The British Coal Company, importing Welsh coal via Cardiff, was one of the smallest. Welsh coal stocks generally were supplemented by North Country (Newcastle) coals – partly for domestic use – and a small amount of Scottish coal from the Bo'ness mines near Falkirk.

Until a couple of years ago, almost the only clue my mother's family had about our ancestor and his life in Gibraltar was that she knew her father had been born 'on a hulk in the Bay' in 1885! Why this should have been so was a mystery until I discovered the files in the Gibraltar National Archives which covered Coal Hulk Papers and Port Surveyors. In this latter file I found the whole story of Captain Spencer's appointment as Gibraltar's first Shipwright Surveyor, including a personal letter in which he explains how and when he brought the *Light Brigade* to Gibraltar.

The other clue we had was a draft of a letter in which he is responding to an advertisement for surveyors in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* "of the 20th inst"...but which month, and which year? In the Garrison Library I systematically checked the newspapers until I found the relevant page in the Shipping Ordnance supplement to the *Chronicle* for 20th November 1885. So, having been working for a few years as a coal hulk master, and having brought his family to Gibraltar, Captain Spencer was on the look out for an increase to his salary and a more professional post. He was well-qualified for this, as, prior to leaving England, he had had 13 years experience as a master with the National Steamship Company, then time in London as a ship valuer/surveyor for the Admiralty agents, Hogg and Robinson.

Returning to the Archives, I was shown the 'Blue Books' which give details of colonial appointments and civil employees in Gibraltar. Here I found that Thomas Spencer began work on 1st June 1886 and continued in post until his death aged 59 in October 1900. The Port Surveyors file contains a fascinating series of correspondence detailing the controversy over his appointment. As surveyor, he was responsible for inspecting and approving licenses (ultimately granted by the Captain of the Port on behalf of the Governor) to ships needing to berth in the harbour or the bay. This work naturally included the annual granting of licences to the 60-odd coal hulks existing by then. However, the members of the newly-established Chamber of Commerce objected to his appointment during his continuing employment as a coal hulk master, which they felt cast doubt on his impartiality. They put forward their own candidate, Captain Emilio Dalorto.

Letters went to and fro between the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, the Captain of the Port, the Colonial Secretary, the Governor, the Board of Trade in London and the Secretary of State for the Colonies....and back down again. The Attorney General advised the Governor that "it is a matter of great importance that the officer holding the post should be free from any local ties, which is the case with Captain Spencer, as both he and his wife are unconnected with the place in any way whatever." This implies that an English birthright gave him the judgement, independence and impartiality which might be lacking in a local candidate... The winning argument was that of the Colonial Secretary: "it appears to me to be an anomaly that a body of gentlemen engaged in the shipping business should recommend or nominate their own surveyor as the Chamber of Commerce seem to wish to do now".

Captain Spencer assured his employers that he would not inspect any hulks or other vessels where there might be a conflict of interests. And in April 1888, he wrote to thank the Governor personally "for the continuance of my position...which I assure you will be carried out to the best of my ability in an impartial manner". In the end, Captain Dalorto was also given a chance to prove himself, by acting as Port Surveyor during Captain Spencer's annual absences on leave.

The Coal Hulk Papers file could now provide me with some background to Captain Spencer's roles, as a coal hulk master, and as a shipwright surveyor. 'His' hulk, the *Light Brigade*, was Hulk No 11, listed as being in the 'outer anchorage' of the harbour. The hulks were mostly licensed for coal storage, but some stored general merchandise or wine and spirits. In late 1884 a strong complaint was received by the bumboatmen against the coal hulk masters. They stated that the latter were supplying steamers with provisions without being duly licensed as such. "We live entirely upon our business, whilst they have their respective good salary...These captains of hulks sells tobacco, Florida Water, Cigars and all sorts of goods they even not pay a licence [for]...Hulks should be licensed to supply *coals* only" [sic].

The official response from the authorities was that there was "no restriction as to the nature and quantity of goods

sold on board hulks". This seems to contradict the official lists, which record number, name, owner, tonnage, *purpose*, date of first issue and other remarks....However, the complainants were advised to give up if they felt not sufficient profit was being made!

The file also contains some documents written by Captain Spencer in the course of his duties. Coal heavers (day labourers from Spain, and, later, Maltese arrivals to the Rock) were employed to move coal from the hulks to ships which would come alongside. As time went on, competition for the best berths increased, and overcrowding in the port added to the need for a new harbour, naval dockyard and extended commercial and naval moles and wharves. In 1888, Captain Spencer interviewed William J Sallust Smith about his request to move the *True Briton* westwards from her present berth to a location west of the *Java*. Captain Spencer recommended that it would be good "to start a new line of berths, as other coaling companies labouring under similar disadvantages will want the same". He felt it would be a good idea in future to leave the inner anchorage for vessels coming and going to the port. In 1887, Captain Spencer's report on *The Empress* recommends that it should not be licensed as a hulk unless it can be repaired. He noted in his survey that it formerly belonged to Mr Bland – who had got rid of it as being unseaworthy....The Captain of the Port supported his ruling.

One of Captain Spencer's most important duties as port surveyor may have been his membership of the Marine Court of Enquiry into the loss of the SS *Utopia* in March 1891. This accident after a collision with HMS Anson resulted in many deaths – and added to the call for better port facilities. The first time I saw his signature was in the 'Utopia' files in the Archives.

The *Chronicle* for October 22nd 1900 carried a sombre note: "We regret to announce the demise of Captain T Jackson Spencer, who for some years discharged the duties of Port Surveyor. The deceased had been suffering for some time from an affliction of the heart which allowed no hope of recovery. Yesterday he got worse and expired late in the afternoon. The funeral took place this afternoon and was well attended".

A contemporary family photo showed his grave in the North Front Cemetery, with one of his daughters (Daisy) paying her respects on a later visit. From this evidence I was able to track down the location and confirm that it does still survive to this day.

Meanwhile, Captain Spencer and his family *had* come ashore from the coal hulk in the Bay! Street directories (in the Garrison Library) and Census Returns (in the Archives) showed that in 1891 they were at 12 Southport Street (now the southern continuation of Main Street); in 1893 they were in Governor's Street; and from 1897 onwards they were at 19, Irish Town. Thomas's widow and the family continued to live there in Gibraltar for another decade or so, and it was here that my grandfather, the younger Thomas Spencer, met his bride-to-be, Minnie, when her father, gunner subaltern George Clarke Spinks of the Royal Garrison Artillery, was first stationed on the Rock in 1906....and was billeted in Officers' Quarters ...in Irish Town!

With many thanks for their help to Gibraltar Archivists Dennis Beiso and Anthony Pitalugo, and Garrison Librarian Jennifer Ballantine Pereira, and their staff.



Gibraltar Bay in the 1870s (King's Bastion interpretation board)

Report of survey on Hulk 1857

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Answers</i>
Is the water in the hold?	It is perfectly empty - most empty made one inch in five feet
Where the leakage?	Unknown - probably through the bows and all along the bottom
What portion of it is rotten?	Very old and delapidated throughout
Is caulking well - actually along the deck?	No
Whether hull can be placed in a thorough state of repair?	No - not at this Port.
Whether hull is unsoundworthy and incapable of thorough repair?	If loaded, unsoundworthy; incapable of thorough repair unless thoroughly overhauled in some dry dock, where bottom can be examined
Whether any danger of foundering in rough weather owing to unsoundness?	If loaded in full, half loaded, I would not be surprised in the severe weather - particularly not in the sea

7th September 1857
Gibraltar
(Sgd) J. Jackson Spencer
Surveyor of the Port

hulk survey by Captain Spencer (GNA Coal Hulk Papers)



Thomas Jackson Spencer's grave in North Front Cemetery visited by his daughter Daisy in the 1920s (family photograph)



Captain Spencer and his crew (unknown ship) (family photograph)

Tunnelling through the Rock:

The roles of Tunnelling Companies Royal Engineers in the Second World War

Based on a presentation given to the Friends of Gibraltar Heritage Society at its Annual Seminar in October by Dr Edward P F Rose, Honorary Research Fellow, Earth Sciences, Royal Holloway, University of London

The tunnels and chambers which are a well-known feature of the famous Rock (their distribution shown on a map in the previous issue of *Rock Talk*) were mostly excavated in five distinct phases, between 1782 and 1968. The fourth phase, between 1939 and 1945, during the Second World War, was the most intensive. Excavation during this phase was achieved by four Tunnelling Companies of the Royal Engineers (the 'RE'), assisted by two Tunnelling Companies of the Royal Canadian Engineers. From late 1940 until late 1943 up to four of these Companies at a time were united under a single headquarters to form 3rd Tunnelling Engineers Group.

1782-1799	To achieve vantage points for cannon fire upon besieging Spanish and French forces.
1880-1915	To provide ammunition magazines, communications tunnels, or water reservoirs.
1933-1938	To provide reservoirs for water storage, air raid shelters, and underground hospitals.
1939-1945	To provide accommodation for an increased garrison, and storage space.
1956-1968	To improve linking of tunnel systems, and provide additional storage and reservoirs.

Tunnelling Companies RE were an invention of the First World War. Twenty-five were formed, from 1915 onwards, to serve with the British Expeditionary Force on the Western Front: in Belgium and northern France. Their initial role was mining and countermining to breach the enemy's front line and so facilitate infantry assault. Later, as the front became held more by artillery fire power than infantry man power, the role changed: to the excavation of 'dug-outs' to protect troops from artillery and/or aerial bombardment. However, all these units were disbanded when the war and so their purpose came to an end.

On the outbreak of the Second World War, 170 Tunnelling Company RE was re-formed, at Chatham in Kent, and sent to northern France in January 1940 to support the new British Expeditionary Force deployed in that region. Its 18 officers included some veteran tunnellers of the First World War, supplemented by professional tunnelling engineers who had rushed to volunteer their services. Its 576 other ranks were mostly, although not exclusively, recruited from the coal mines of north-east England.

In France, the Company was used to excavate battle headquarters for British troops—so successfully that it was decided in late March to expand this one Company commanded by a Major into a 'Group' of four Companies (numbers 170, 171, 172 and 173), under the overall command of a Lieutenant-Colonel: 1st Tunnelling Engineers Group. Moreover, with plans to expand the British Expeditionary Force from one Army into two, it was planned also to raise four more Companies, to comprise 2nd Tunnelling Engineers, to support the 2nd Army. Meanwhile, German attack on Norway on 9th April stimulated plans to raise another four companies (including 178, 179 and 180), to



*Officers of 170 Tunnelling Company RE, with 2Lt ARO Williams front left, photographed at Chatham in January 1940 prior to deployment to France; from Wilson, AJ (1992) *The Professionals: the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy 1892–1992*, courtesy of the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining*

form 3rd Tunnelling Engineers in support of British forces operational there. Some experienced officers were sent back from France to England to raise the new companies: fortunately, since German attack westwards across France and the Low Countries left many tunnellers as prisoners of war. A R O Williams (known commonly as 'Bill' or from his initials as 'AROW') was one of the fortunate few. He was to raise 180 Tunnelling Company RE, and lead it not to Norway as originally planned but, following Allied defeat there in June, later that year to Gibraltar. There he was to be promoted in 1942 from the rank of Major to Lieutenant-Colonel to command 3rd Tunnelling Engineers during the period of its peak activity. The tunnel 'Arow Street' on Gibraltar is named after him.

Company	Date	Place	Major i/c
170	October 1939	Chatham, Kent	G M Edwards, DSO
171	April 1940	Northern France	A S W Wood, MC
172	April 1940	Northern France	L J Foss
173	April 1940	Northern France	J B Simpson
178	May 1940	Chatham, Kent	G A P Moorhead
179	May 1940	Chatham, Kent	T Pickering
180	June 1940	Chatham, Kent	A R O Williams
183	April 1941	Scarborough, Yorks	B Llewellyn, MC
184	July 1941	Scarborough, Yorks	S V Griffith
185	August 1941	Scarborough, Yorks	W A Smailes

Table of foundation data for Tunnelling Companies RE, 3^d T Group in red: after Rose (in press)



AROW Street name; photo by Tommy Finlayson downloaded from the web

The German attack westwards across France forced evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force, most famously via Dunkirk from the end of May. The four Companies comprising 1st Tunnelling Engineers were re-formed in England at Chester, well away from the south-east counties of England subject to aerial bombardment and threatened with imminent invasion. Re-formed and re-equipped, they were deployed later in 1940 to southern England, primarily to excavate bomb-proof regional headquarters for Army units or underground accommodation safe from bombardment for troops manning batteries of coastal artillery. Between 1941 and 1943 as the German aerial and amphibious threat to England diminished, all four Companies were progressively transferred to the Mediterranean region: to Gibraltar or Malta.

Allied defeat in France in May/June 1940 frustrated plans to form a British 2nd Army at that time, and consequently plans to raise 2nd Tunnelling Engineers. Tunnelling Companies 174, 175, 176 and 177 were never formed. Although Companies 178, 179 and 180 were formed in May/June to create 3rd Tunnelling Engineers for service in Norway, Allied defeat there also in June 1940 frustrated plans for their deployment. Consequently, plans to complete the Group by forming 181 Tunnelling Company were abandoned.

Allied defeats prompted Italy to enter the war in June, on the side of Germany, in the hope of making territorial gains from British and French overseas territories. This brought a threat to Gibraltar from Italian naval forces in the Mediterranean, prompting a major phase of fortification and tunnelling on the Jurassic limestone that formed the main mass of the Rock. 178 Tunnelling Company arrived in August 1940, to begin work in northern areas, 180 arrived in October, to focus on southern areas. (179 remained in England, to be re-trained as a 'special' Tunnelling Company. It was as such to form the nucleus for 4th Tunnelling Engineers, created by the addition of 183, 184 and 185 Tunnelling Companies, without the need to form 182 Tunnelling Company.) An element of 1st Tunnelling Company Royal Canadian Engineers arrived on 22 November, effectively to be replaced by the whole of 2nd Tunnelling Company RCE in March 1941, when 170 Tunnelling Company RE also arrived, bringing the Group up to four Companies in strength. These four units were fully operational for the rest of 1941, and throughout 1942, when tunnelling on Gibraltar was at its peak. The Canadians left in December 1942; 178 in April 1943; 180 in July; 170 in November. 172 Tunnelling Company arrived in May 1943 and was to soldier on alone in the tunnelling role on the Rock for the rest of the war.



2nd Tunnelling Coy, R Canadian Engineers, on Gibraltar; reproduced by permission of The National Archives, Kew
 3rd Tunnelling Engineers ceased to exist on Gibraltar, and within the British Army as a whole, effectively from the end of September 1943. By that time the Companies had excavated tunnels and chambers 41,580 feet in cumulative length—far more than the 26,100 feet excavated in all three tunnelling phases pre-war. Together, according to the records of the Chief Engineer Gibraltar, total length by end September 1943 was 67,680 feet, i.e. 20.63 km. 172 Tunnelling Company was scheduled to complete a further 6,520 feet (1.99 km), to bring the total to 22.62 km by the end of the war.

Client	Pre-war	Wartime to Sep 43	Total
The Navy	12,600	1,510	14,110
The Army	7,470	36,000	43,470
City Council	6,030	4,070	10,100
TOTAL	26,100	41,580	67,680

Table of tunnel lengths, after Rose (in press)

Tunnels and chambers varied in dimensions other than length, so the volume of rock removed is another indication of the amount of work done. Pre-war this achieved 315,250 cubic yards, a total exceeded by the 479,570 cubic yards excavated by the Tunnelling Companies during the war. The combined total of 794,820 cubic yards was equivalent to 607,684 cubic metres. 172 Tunnelling Company was scheduled to excavate a further 123,560 cubic yards (= 94,468 cubic metres), to bring the total to 702,152 cubic metres.

Client	Pre-war	Wartime to Sep 1943	Total
The Navy	166,910	13,040	179,950
The Army	36,470	416,800	453,270
City Council	111,870	49,730	161,600
TOTAL	315,250	479,570	794,820

Table of tunnel volumes, after Rose (in press)

The enormous scale of the work on Gibraltar can be illustrated by reference to Malta, also in the Mediterranean region and an island significantly larger than the peninsula of Gibraltar. Formed by a sequence of Oligo-Miocene

limestones (punctuated by a horizon of 'blue clay') so much younger (and weaker) than the Gibraltar limestone, Malta had suffered intense aerial bombardment during the long siege for which its people's heroic resistance was recognized by the award to the nation of the George Cross, for outstanding gallantry. Only two Tunnelling Companies were to work on the island in contrast to Gibraltar's four: 173 from August 1941, joined by 171 and the headquarters of 1st Tunnelling Engineers in 1943. Together they were to excavate over 50 underground facilities, but only some 66,295 cubic metres of rock—far less than on Gibraltar. However, as the work of 3rd Tunnelling Engineers on Gibraltar drew to a close, its Lieutenant-Colonel 'Bill' Williams visited Malta in February 1943 to advise on stores and equipment for the Maltese tunnelling projects.

4th Tunnelling Engineers was the final 'Group' to be formed, during 1941. Comprised of 'special' Tunnelling Companies trained in specialist techniques by Canadian Engineers, they were not intended to tunnel! Their role was to support anti-invasion measures in the United Kingdom. One such was the installation of 'flame barage' equipment: by which petroleum would be pumped out to sea and ignited along parts of the shore to deter imminent amphibious invasion. Another was the emplacement of 'Canadian pipe mines': pipes filled with explosives in low-angle boreholes that could be detonated to crater airfields, roads and railways to inhibit enemy landings and movement if England became subject to airborne invasion. As the threat of invasion by either means waned, the Group was disbanded (in December 1942) and its constituent units soon converted to Field Companies RE. Only 1st Tunnelling Engineers survived as a Group until the end of the war in Europe, in May 1945: on Malta. By then only one Tunnelling Company was serving on Malta, only one in Gibraltar. It was the Gibraltar unit (172 Tunnelling Company) that preserved tunnelling skills in the Royal Engineers postwar, reduced to a troop within 1st Fortress Squadron RE. Following further reduction in manpower, it was on Gibraltar that the 'Sappers' completed their final tunnel, Molesend Way in 1967, and Sapper 'moles' ceased to exist with abolition of the tunnelling trade in the British Army. The honeycombed Rock of Gibraltar provides their most spectacular legacy.

[The presentation on which this article is based was derived partly from one given by the author as President of the International Association for Military Geosciences, at the 12th International Conference for Military Geosciences (held in South Africa at the University of Stellenbosch in June 2017), partly from a chapter scheduled for publication in *Military Aspects of Geology: Fortification, Excavation and Terrain Evaluation*, edited by E.P.F. Rose, J. Ehlen & U.L. Lawrence. Geological Society, London, Special Publications, volume 473, in press.]

News from The Gibraltar Heritage Trust (GHT)

By Claire Montado and Tasmin Griffith

2017 has been a very exciting year for The Trust, we have more members than ever accessing an increased range of events, a new regular radio feature each month, a committee dedicated to engaging young people with Heritage, increased number of staff at The Main Guard and much more!

Events

Throughout 2017 the Gibraltar Heritage Trust has been working hard bringing a new programme of events to our members – some of you may have been on some of these events or similar during the FoGS annual visit in June. We have specially designed events with other organisations including the Gibraltar National Archives and hosted events at new venues such as The Gibraltar University. This has proved successful in engaging new interest from members of the public as well as different organisations, making Heritage more accessible.

This year (2018) we have also programmed specific events for young people aged between 4 and 24 years old. This was initiated by Gibraltar Cultural Services hosting a Youth Arts Jamboree and inviting different organisations to take part. The Gibraltar Heritage Trust is always keen to engage young people and this was a great extension to the work which the GHT's youth outreach committee are already doing. The first event will take place at Witham's Cemetery, encouraging young people to learn and care for their natural and historic environment. This is an ongoing project which the GHT is leading on and we will catch up with the work going on later in this article.

Our new and regular members have had access to brand new events this year including film nights, tours of the Franciscan Frescoes at The Convent, Night at the Archives, tour of the oldest Synagogue in Gibraltar as well as social events; Christmas gathering and quiz nights. We will be kicking off the New Year with our first tour at The Gibraltar Post Office and their operations. The Post office recently won a Heritage Award for their work on historical pillar boxes in Gibraltar, more on the awards later!

Projects

The Gibraltar Heritage Trust is always keen to be involved in local projects which are focused on conserving and the preservation of Gibraltar's Heritage. Recently the Trust has published the 23rd Journal in the Gibraltar Heritage Journal series, which is now available online. The Journal is published each year and invites authors from all

locations and backgrounds to submit articles about Gibraltar. This year's Journal features articles on Gibraltar's Referendum, Maltese Immigrants and Spanish inhabitants of Gibraltar.

Gibraltar last year celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Referendum. For those who may not be aware, the 10th of September 1967 was a pinnacle day in which Gibraltarians were asked to vote for their future, whether they wished to pass under Spanish sovereignty, keeping their British Citizenship and a special status for within Spain or remain under British Sovereignty. The results were 12,138 to remain British and just 44 votes to become under Spanish sovereignty. Huge celebrations were made last year, The GHT produced a limited edition Referendum Pin badge to mark the occasion, if you are lucky you may still be able to purchase one!

Other publications are also on the horizon, Manolo Galliano and Victor Hermida will be publishing a third book in their historical series. "Of Monks and Nuns" will be published later this year, Manolo looks back to the 1300s, over 700 years ago towards a very different Gibraltar. A Gibraltar of Monasteries and grand historical buildings, many of which we can still see today. Other books in the series include "Under the Shadow of the Crescent and the Cross" and "The Franciscan Monastery of Gibraltar".

The most prominent project in the GHT's calendar last year is Witham's Cemetery and it continues to be this year. The project aims to rejuvenate the old cemetery and engage local communities to take ownership of the site and enjoy its open space and natural beauty. This is a project that anyone can take part in, a regular number of volunteers are on site every week and the Trust has been engaging with nearby contractors and the Government to help with the more demanding tasks of the site. At the moment a lot of the work involves, weeding, basic gardening skills, clearing of paths, and preserving graves and paths. If this is something that you would like to be involved in, please do contact us to find out more! The Trust is very grateful to every volunteer that has or is helping with Witham's cemetery. The main Trustees leading with the project are Keith Farrell and Charlie Lugaro who are both finding their time spent there very rewarding and after some time are seeing a huge improvement of the area and the engagement from the local community.

The Trust is always trying to engage people and make Heritage more accessible, the Trust now has a monthly Saturday morning radio feature on the local GBC radio for purpose of spreading awareness of heritage matters, events and general information. The feature has a monthly competition with a chance to win prizes from our shop!

Heritage Awards

The Heritage Awards continue to be a prestigious annual event where The Trust awards groups and/ or individuals for outstanding contributions towards Gibraltar's Heritage. Therefore it's no surprise the Awards are well talked about amongst developers, writers, architects, business owners etc all year round.

This year nominations for Heritage Awards set a high standard with winners including The Gibraltar Youth Service for their painting of Devil's Gap Steps and The Kasbar, a fresh vibrant new restaurant in Gibraltar which is bringing life into the old town of Gibraltar. The Government of Gibraltar also took home two prizes for work on the newly refurbishment Wellington Front and the historical paths and batteries in the Upper Rock Nature Reserve. The Gibraltar Post office was also awarded for their restoration and standardised setting of historical pillar boxes throughout Gibraltar. In conjunction they also developed a guided walk for enthusiasts to visit these original and unique boxes.

The Heritage Awards are presented annually and the evening celebrates all things Heritage. The presentation of awards is of course the star of the show but The Trust also brings in international speakers to bring a wider aspect of Heritage to Gibraltar. This year the high standard of speakers continued with Neil Redfern from York. Neil is a principal monuments inspector for Historic England, as well as a lecturer at York University. He brought discussion and thoughts about expanding towns and cities with heritage and nature restraints, drawing comparisons between York and Gibraltar.

A day at The Gibraltar Heritage Trust

Work continues to grow at The Trust, membership is increasing and the Trust is in greater demand for advice and consultation on various Heritage matters. Our bookshop is now thriving with new titles and is continuously being updated to bring you the very latest in Gibraltar's history and local knowledge. The shop is now an official stockist of 'Osprey' books with titles including "The Great Siege", "The Fortifications of Gibraltar", "King George's Army" and many more. We have two new members of staff who will welcome you in our reception and shop. Increasing staff has meant we are now able to open the shop Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm and Saturdays 10am to 1pm.

We also have new volunteers at The Trust; we have volunteers that help out weekly at Witham's Cemetery as well as within our administration department. Volunteers are extremely helpful in carrying out tasks which aid the day to day running of The Trust and we welcome anyone who would like to be involved.

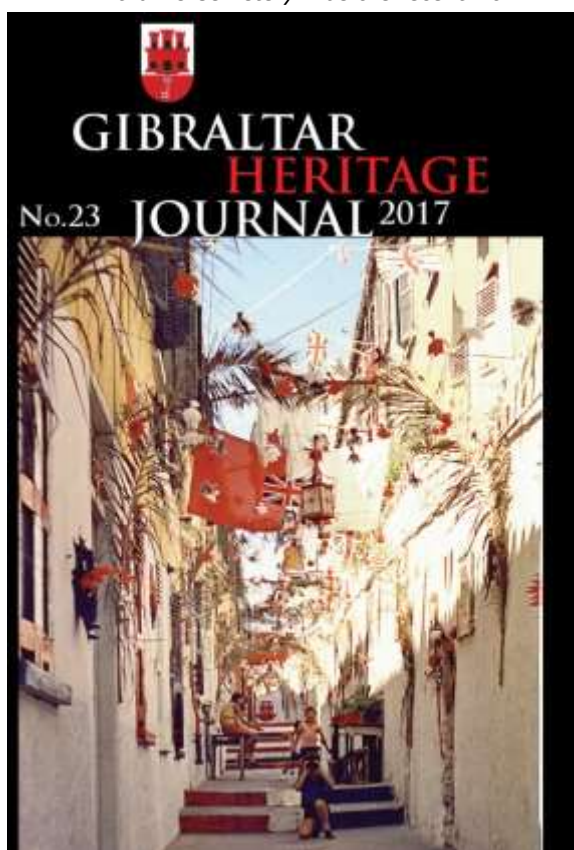
So, when you are next in Gibraltar pop into the shop on the ground floor of the Main Guard and take a look around, or keep up to date with our news via our website www.gibraltarheritagetrust.org.gi or our Facebook, Instagram or Twitter accounts #GibHeritage



Witham's Cemetery – before recent work



And after initial tidying up



Latest issue of the Heritage Journal



The show at Radio Gibraltar



Further work at Witham's Cemetery – ongoing project

Out and about in Gibraltar by the Editors



The new tunnel at the end of the runway approaches completion...



Gibraltar's new tourist attraction, the Windsor Suspension Bridge along the Royal Anglian Way on the Upper Rock



Where is HMS Rooke?



Major changes at the old Police Barracks to provide new housing; retains character of building



Appendix:

Friends of Gibraltar Heritage Society

AGM Minutes

28th October 2017 at 2pm

In the University Suite, The Oxford Belfry Hotel

39 delegates, including the speakers, were present at the meeting.

1. **Welcome** - Sir Adrian Johns (SAJ) welcomed everyone present, once he had 'called them to order', to the AGM and Seminar and thanked them for making the effort to attend. He then requested feedback from members regarding the new venue.
2. **Apologies** – had been received from several members, including a few who had, sadly, had to cancel at the last minute.
3. **Reports from the Board** – SAJ introduced Richard Lord (RL) who gave reports on Membership and Projects.
 - a. **Membership** – RL reported that the membership had peaked in April 2015 with 525 members, the membership has now dropped to 495. Numbers had in the past been maintained through the Gibraltar Day Celebrations when membership forms were sent out from Gibraltar House with the tickets. It has been suggested that members in Gibraltar who have children or relatives in the UK should be contacted to encourage their children or relatives to join. Albert Poggio has said he will write and send out these letters with the hope that the number of members increases to 520 again. Members were being encouraged to pay by Bankers Order or Direct Debit rather than by cheque. There are 33 members who are over 80 years of age whom do not pay and annual subscription. There are 31 overseas members. The income generated from the fees is around £6K + monies from claiming Gift Aid. RL said there were some past copies of Rock Talk available and FOGHS ties for sale.
 - b. **Projects** – RL reported on the projects as Jerry Robinson (JR) was unable to attend. It is hoped that JR will return soon. The Board is hoping to reach out to the membership for ideas for future projects. The spend on projects for the year April 2017 – March 2018 will be £11,700. This is more than our net income, but we are using some of the balance that has built up in recent years.

Oral History Project – RL reported that the last upload had, unfortunately been lost. However, the Board gave outline approval for £1,200 to be spent rework and reload the data gathered through the project.

Other projects that are on-going are: - the **University of Gibraltar** Annual Student Bursary of £1,000; and the **Secondary Schools** Cup and Prize £360.

New projects that have been agreed are: - donation to the refurbishment of **Organ in the Holy Trinity Cathedral** - £4,000. It was explained that the majority of the money has been raised for the refurbishment but there is a shortfall of £8,000. £4,000 to the **Government of Gibraltar Archives Department for a Scanner and Stand**. Paul Blake explained that there is a collection of maps, many of which are unique. The scanner is much needed and will be well used. A member of GHT, Manolo Galliano is writing a **series of books**, GHT has requested a donation of £700 towards the publication costs for this the third book in the series. This sum has been agreed in principle should the other sponsors who have been approached not come forward.

Witham's Cemetery is on-going the donation of £10,000 is to be split over two years, i.e. £5,000 per year, as agreed with GHT. **Calpe House** – the donation will be made when requested.

- c. **Events** – SAJ introduced Tim Lawson-Cruttenden (TLC) who is the events secretary. TLC stated that there are, on average, 7 events each year consisting of 3 evening talks at Gibraltar House, 1 summer event/party, the June visit to Gibraltar, the Autumn AGM and Seminar and the Christmas Party which is this year at the RAF Club – a good venue. If higher end events are to be held, for example at the House of Lords or the Inner Temple at least 90 members are required to attend. Other events require 50 – 60 members to attend. Please send ideas to the Board about events members would like to attend?
 - d. **Rock Talk** – will be published again this year. Several articles for inclusion are already in the pipeline. However, further articles about events and items of interest are always welcome. There is a budget of £2,000 for this publication.
4. **Treasurer's Report** – SAJ introduced Peter Hucker (PH) who has been appointed as the new FOGHS Treasurer and Board Director and that we were very pleased to welcome him today. PH reported that he had been preparing the Accounts for the Year 1st April 2016 through to 31st March 2017. They have not yet been finalised but are well on the way. The bank balance is very healthy. RL reported that PH was going to be the Treasurer and Accountant and another member of the Board is to audit the accounts.
5. Suggestions for future events and projects from members – Paul Blake suggested extending the day for the AGM and Seminar by starting at 11.30 am. SAJ responded saying this will be given consideration, however, for Board members this might be difficult as the Board Meeting already starts at 10.00.
6. AOB – Mr Anthony Airey expressed his pleasure about the donation to the Organ refurbishment in the Holy Trinity Cathedral. He said that the current Dean is stepping down, the Anglican Community is concerned about the move of the Diocese to Brussels and the concerns or influence that this move might have. Baroness Gloria Hooper reported that she had been in contact with a member, Ernie Reading, about a piece of the Rock that commemorates the affinity of Gibraltar with the Royal Marines. ER is asking where it is. SAJ commented that he had been in correspondence with Ernie Reading and was seeking final assurance from the National Museum of the Royal Navy that the piece of Rock would be kept safe at the Royal Marines' Museum in Eastleigh. The Falklands War Yomper and the Rock are planned to remain in or near the Memorial Garden at the Museum.
- RL wished to record his thanks to Mark and Paddy Trasler for facilitating the visit to Haslar. They made everyone feel very welcome and provided a very interesting and enjoyable day.
- SAJ took the opportunity to thank the FOGHS Board and ExCo Members for their time, effort and dedication. On behalf of the Friends – Thank you.
7. Provisional date and time for the next meeting – It has been suggested that a different weekend might prove more popular because this weekend clashes with half term when several members are busy with Grandchildren. October/November 2017 prior to the Annual Seminar and Dinner, date, time and venue tbc

The Meeting closed at 14.30.

TJ 02.11.17

Actions – To consider the format for the Seminar and AGM and to consider the date and venue for the next meeting.



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Front Cover:

PM gives tele-message at National Day at a well-attended meeting in Casemates
(Photograph courtesy of Gibraltar Chronicle)

APPEAL FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS

The Society would welcome additional volunteers from the membership to assist with the organisation of events, with the administration of the Society, and in any other way that might be appropriate.

Members are encouraged to contact any member of the Executive Committee, or to contact Gibraltar House for a telephone number or e-mail address.

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