

December 2012
December 2012
Issue No 6

Rock Talk



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Editorials

The challenges we have faced in producing this long overdue issue of Rock Talk reflect the nature of a volunteer and inexperienced editorial team. While there has been a real desire and intent to produce this sixth issue, and no shortage of ideas for content, the balance between supporting other activities within the Society, a full-time job, and changing family realities have resulted in a series of delays that have been frustrating. I appreciate that Society members will have been equally frustrated, and that we have not met our stated ambitions in this area. I hope that the much improved web site has been some consolation for those of you with Internet access, and that the direct communication of forthcoming events has helped. I stepped in to allow Richard Wells to take on other responsibilities in leading the Executive Committee of the Society, but I would urge any member of the Society who might be able to volunteer in any way to offer their services. I am delighted that Elizabeth and Brian have managed to do the bulk of the work in Gibraltar, and they are the real editors of this issue. After retiring from busy and fruitful teaching careers on the Rock, they seem to be busier than ever as international judges for the FCI (dog shows and competitions, ranging from Australia to South Africa to Scandinavia!), so I greatly appreciate their contribution to this edition.

– **Vincent Mifsud**

Well, we managed to get an edition together - at long last, many of you will be thinking. It has been an exceptionally busy year for us since last Rock Talk 5. Retirement seems to bring new challenges and the amount of 'free time' seems to decrease exponentially.

So, our sincere apologies for such a long delay, in such an important year for the Society. Hope this edition makes up for it....Events since the last edition have been many and varied. The Society celebrated its Silver Jubilee - an event we could not, unfortunately, attend for canine-related reasons. We have had a change in Government, with fresh new ideas and commitments to preserving/conserving Gibraltar's heritage at all levels, and we have also been particularly busy celebrating Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee - this has happened across all levels of society both in the UK and here in Gibraltar. One problem which has 'haunted' us in preparing Rock Talk 6 is that of getting contributors. A few people were approached and kindly gave us an item, others unfortunately and understandably are too busy. So, in this edition you will notice that Alice Mascarenhas and the Gibraltar Chronicle have kindly allowed us to 'cannibalise' some of their articles, which we feel you might enjoy. We are VERY grateful for their support and other members of Gibraltar's oldest newspaper. And so, with one final apology, we hope that you enjoy this long-overdue edition and please feel free to send us anything that you would like to share with the Society. You can email us on gonbeor@gibtelecom.net or, if you prefer snail mail, 2 Consulate House, 52 Prince Edward's Road, Gibraltar. You could also contact Vincent Mifsud. Enjoy.....

– **Brian & Elizabeth Gonzalez**

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends of Gibraltar,

It has been a little time since I have been able to write to you in Rock Talk, but we are entirely dependent on volunteer help for its production, and the intervening period has been an exceptionally busy time for them as it has been for the Society. We hope to keep the gaps shorter in future.

In July 2011 we reached the Silver Anniversary of our foundation. The celebration came in February this year, when we held a Silver Jubilee reception at which our Patron His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester did us the honour of joining us. The Duke has known our Society from its beginning twenty-six years ago, for before he became Patron he was our first President. It was extremely good of him to spend time with us again, and he made an already excellent party into an even more memorable one.



More than 120 of us, members and their guests, attended the Silver Jubilee celebration. From Gibraltar came our second Guest of Honour, Fabian Picardo, the new Chief Minister. He spoke to me warmly of his strong support for the Society and of the importance of developing our links with Gibraltar House. He is particularly keen, as we are, for us to reach out to new and younger members. There are now many younger Gibraltarians living in Britain, and the Gibraltar Government and we share an interest in developing contact with them. Obviously they will be vital to the future of the Society.

If I emphasise as I do the need to carry our Society forward, I can assure you at once on two points which some of our longer-standing members have raised with me. First, all new activities will be additional activities, not substitute activities. So no innovations we make for the sake of our younger members will detract from our traditional events. Second, there is no question of our taking sides in party politics, neither in Gibraltar nor in Britain. The only political position we stand on is our firm support for the link between Gibraltar and Britain.

We have enjoyed many other events recently, and they are reported in these pages. I will mention only one, because it symbolised our strengthened institutional relations with Gibraltar. On Her Majesty's birthday in April – and happily it was the one fine day we had this April – the Royal Gibraltar Regiment had the honour of firing the Royal Salute at the Tower of London. By the generous invitation of H. M. Government of Gibraltar, an eighty-strong party from the Friends joined a large gathering of Gibraltarians old and young to witness the ceremony and enjoy an excellent lunch. Sadly I could not be there, but I was lucky enough to be invited subsequently to see the Regiment mount guard at Buckingham Palace – and very smartly they did it.

Since I last wrote to you three long-serving members of our Board have left us, with our thanks and warm good wishes: Maggie Galliano, Andrew Lavarello and Paul Baker. They all made major contributions to the Society in the course of its first twenty-five years. A special tribute is due to Maggie, who was our devoted Secretary for seventeen of those years, from 1989 to 2006. The vacant places on the Board have been taken by Jerry Robinson, Julian Lyne-Pirkis and Nick Vasquez, and all three of them are already taking an active part in Society affairs. Nick is one of our younger, indeed youngest, Gibraltarian members, and not only a solicitor but also a classical guitarist – and if some of you who attended this year's Seminar at Winchester heard lovely sounds in the background as you waited for your dinner, that was Nick practising.

A major landmark for us in April this year was Simon Pack's retirement as Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Executive Committee – though happily not from the main Board. With his leadership, his strong commitment, and his unfailing good humour and wisdom he has been an enormous asset to the Society and a prime mover in its modernisation and reformation in the last five years, and we are all deeply indebted to him. Also in this issue of Rock Talk, you can read Simon's obituary of Joe Gaggero, our distinguished and supportive Vice-President, who sadly died in February just before our Silver Jubilee reception. We miss him.

To strengthen our working links with Gibraltar House, our new Vice-Chairman is Albert Poggio. Richard Wells, our Secretary, is now also chairman of the Executive Committee.

*My best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year — **Francis Richards***

Obituaries

Joe Gaggero, CBE

Joe Gaggero, a proud and dedicated Gibraltarian, successful businessman, family man of great kindness and generosity of spirit, and much loved Vice President and Friend of Gibraltar who died on 10 February 2012 aged 84.

by Simon Pack

The son of Sir George Gaggero, Joseph James Gaggero was born in 1927 in Gibraltar and educated in England at Downside. After leaving school, his father sent him to study the salvage business with Bland Group partners, and also to learn about the aviation industry with British European Airways. In these early post-war years Joe saw aviation, along with the development of travel services and transport, as the future of the Group; and so whilst his father ran the traditional company activities of coal bunkering, ship repair and salvage, Joe started the process of building up the fledgling family airline (Gibraltar Airways) and associated travel businesses. His energy and early influence in Gibraltar's commercial interests led to his appointment as Director of the Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce from 1951-56 (during which period he instigated important tourist attractions on the Rock, including the cable car and the opening to the public of St Michael's Cave and Upper Galleries), and as Head of the Gibraltar Tourist Department from 1955-59. During this time and during the closure of the border, his businesses had to endure immense economic pressures from Spain, and so in the 1960s he developed Cadogan Holidays in the UK to help sell holidays in Gibraltar which represented a first step in the gradual transfer of Bland Group businesses from Gibraltar to the UK in the late 1980s and 1990s. As a result of Joe's entrepreneurial flair and driving spirit, the Bland Group continued to grow and flourish way beyond its Gibraltarian origins; and by 2005, GB Airways (flying under BA colours but using its own aircraft and trained staff) was carrying 1.25 million passengers per year to 18 destinations in 8 countries.

Joe Gaggero's public and professional achievements in Gibraltar, in Morocco and in the UK were innumerable and vastly impressive, and they were recognised and rewarded with the CBE in 1989, as well as a range of other orders and medals from Sweden, Morocco, Gibraltar and elsewhere. But what were the qualities that made him loved by his children and grandchildren, that won him the respect and affection of his friends and business associates, and gained him the admiration of so many citizens in Gibraltar? Alan Clark, biographer and close friend of Joe, believes that the answer can be found in the title Joe chose for his memoirs *Running with the Baton*, because Joe saw life as something of a race. When he gradually took over the leadership of Bland Group from his father, he saw it almost as a sacred trust, a covenant with his family, both alive and long since dead. Bland was his focus, his driving force and his *raison d'être*. At times, the race was long with many hurdles, some of which he soared over with ease, others with more difficulty. Like any

businessman he had to make tough decisions that upset people and sometimes estranged them from him; but it was his tenacity and remarkable resolve which enabled him to find ways forward where others might have failed. It is only right to remember that these same qualities of utter determination also put bread on the table and a roof over the head of the thousands of Gibraltarians he employed for many years.

But Joe Gaggero was so much more than just a wealthy businessman solely concerned with the bottom line of the Bland Group. For all of his life he remained conscious of his roots, and was always eager to help to find ways of reducing tensions arising from the status of the Rock. Particularly during the border closure period, few people did more than Joe, plotting, planning and galvanising the fight to kick-start the growth of the Rock's economy, to keep that food on all those tables. Never mind the problems: 'come on, let's find a way forward' was his creed. There was an almost Churchillian quality – blood, sweat, tears. And his desire to reduce tensions continued in later life as Patron of the Hispanic-British Foundation in Madrid and the Anglo-Spanish Society in London, as well as through active membership of Chatham House.

Thankfully it wasn't all a struggle. As a man of prominence, he sometimes had a glamorous life too; greeting royalty, movie stars and prime ministers on the tarmac at Gibraltar – even Churchill himself on one occasion; racing his speed boat across the bay against the very same Errol Flynn he'd idolised at the local picture house; going camping in Morocco with Princess Alexandra; and attending Barbara Hutton's fabulous parties over in Tangier. More widely, and blessed (as he was) with that inescapable Gaggero charm and essential amiability, he had a large circle of good friends for whom he became an enjoyable, intelligent and stimulating companion – as well as frequent and generous host at the restaurant tables of Gibraltar and the West End.

For many years, Joe was a strong supporter of the Friends of Gibraltar and most kindly hosted a reception at the Rock Hotel each year on the occasion of the Society's annual visit. He was made a Vice President of the Society in December 2010 and assiduously attended meetings. To steal from the Gaggero phrasebook, he was a 'great guy', and he will be greatly missed by all of us in the Society who benefited from his wisdom and were touched by his friendship.

Obituaries

Elizabeth McCutchan *née* Ryan *by Rosie Speer and Donald McCutchan*

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of our mother, Elizabeth McCutchan, on 21 September 2012. She had belonged to the FOGHS for many years and always enjoyed the visits to the Rock and the various social events.

Elizabeth was the younger daughter of Esmond Ryan, Editor of the *Gibraltar Chronicle* from 1942 to 1966. The family lived first at Lamorna, the Cable and Wireless manager's house, which, following Esmond's redundancy in 1933, they ran as a private hotel. Sadly one of the few bombs to fall on Gib during the war destroyed the house.

Alongside the editorship of the *Chronicle* went the post of Secretary to the Garrison Library, so the beautiful building, gardens and Library Lodge became Elizabeth's new home. One weekend she was left in charge of the catering staff. It

was the weekend the Australian troops were returning from taking part in the Victory Parade in London. After availing themselves of the bars in Main Street many of them decided to sleep off the effects under the trees in front of the Library, causing the two Library waiters, Ramon and Andres, to shut themselves in the bar in fear of the seemingly huge Aussies.

After she married the author, Philip McCutchan, Elizabeth made her home in Worthing, raising her family and working as a Hospital Social Worker. When Philip died she determined to return to the Rock as often as possible, and introduced us and our children to its charms and fascinating history. In due course we will be carrying out her wish to return her ashes to the place she always felt was home.

Diary of Society Events for 2013

Society AGM – 27th February 2013 :

The Annual General Meeting of Members will be held at Gibraltar House, 150, Strand, London WC2R 1JA at 5:30 pm on Wednesday 27 February 2013. It will be followed by a Reception for members and their guests. If you are able to attend, please contact the Hon. Secretary, Richard Wells, by e-mail to rhswells@yahoo.co.uk, or telephone 020 8693 1145, no later than 14 January 2013. To cover costs at the Reception, we will be charging members £10, and non-members £14; cheques payable to 'The Friends of Gibraltar', to reach Richard Wells at 7, Tollgate Drive, London SE21 7LS no later than 28 January.

Other events will be announced on the Society's website, by e-mail, and by post to members for whom we still have no e-mail addresses. They will include an Annual Luncheon (with a UK visit); the Visit to Gibraltar in June as usual; and the Annual Seminar and Dinner in Winchester in October as usual. There will also be a visiting speaker from Gibraltar at a meeting at Gibraltar House, and culture and entertainment at a recital of classical guitar music which our committee member Nicholas Vasquez has most kindly offered us.



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From your Membership Secretary.

Our membership continues to grow and we are over 400 strong now. Payment by Bankers Order reduces the administrative load and if you currently pay by cheque then you might wish to consider a Bankers Order. A form is available on the web page or from my address below. Subscriptions are due in April each year.

Please contact me if you have any Membership or general Friends of Gibraltar queries. My details are below:

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Reports of Events

The Annual Gibraltar Heritage Awards

The Friends of Gibraltar Heritage Society was greatly honoured in November 2012 by the bestowal of the Gibraltar Heritage Award.

The Group Heritage Award was presented to the Friends of Gibraltar Society and was received by Tito Benady on their behalf. Mr Benady also received an individual award for his contribution to history locally. The awards were presented by the Heritage Minister Steven Linares who is also in the picture (above) with the Chairman of the Heritage Trust Mario Mosquera and Tito Benady. The Group Heritage Award was awarded to the Friends of Gibraltar Society for their continued and long standing support of Gibraltar's Heritage. Set up in 1987 as a charity devoted to the history and heritage of Gibraltar, it has in more recent years widened its focus to include cultural, business and recreational aspects of Gibraltar, however the Society's interest in Gibraltar's Heritage is undiminished. Mr Benady received the Individual Heritage Award for his life-long dedication to researching and documenting Gibraltar's history and heritage.



Tito Benady receiving the Group Award



..and his Individual Award

(From the Gibraltar Chronicle, 8th Nov 2012)

Annual Seminar and Dinner 2012 - *Richard Wells and Jerry Robinson*

A well-attended and very successful Annual Seminar and Dinner took place in Winchester on the 27th October. A busy agenda was well received by the membership, and included presentations on:

- Environmental Issues, by the Hon Dr John Cortes MP,
- A briefing on an oral history project, by Dr Geraldine Finlayson and Mrs Mary Ingoldby,
- an update on activities of the Gibraltar Heritage Trust and a holistic approach to conservation, by Mrs Delilah Smith and Dr Keith Farrell.

Environmental issues

Dr John Cortes, now Minister for Health and Environment, previously well known to The Friends as Director of the Alameda Botanic Garden, was our first speaker. The Chairman introduced him as a renowned polymath.

Dr Cortes began with ornithology and etymology. Geography made the Rock a favourite staging post for migrating birds; it had even been suggested that its name derived



A well-attended seminar in Winchester

from *jabal ʿā'ir*, Arabic for "bird's mountain", rather than the generally accepted *jabal ʿĀriq*. But now some species no longer came at all. The migration records told their story of a changing environment.

In the distant past the sea level was much lower, as Darren Fa of the Museum had told us at our 2011 seminar (see report on p16). In recent centuries, the environment had been transformed by the cutting of timber

and the erection of buildings. John Cortes showed some striking artist's impressions of changes in the appearance of the Upper Rock, the South District, the Great Sand Slopes and the Isthmus.

By popular request, he also spoke about the "Apes". It was not known when they were first introduced to Gibraltar. Rebutting the hilarious account in Paul Gallico's novel *Scruffy*, he said it was his own great-uncle, serving in the British Consulate at Tetuán, who had been given the job of obtaining wartime reinforcements for the Rock's garrison of Barbary macaques. They came from the Chefchauen area of the then Spanish Protectorate, and were sent to Gibraltar via Algeciras. Now, in 2012, the population was just over 200, and fairly stable.

Among recent environmental problems he mentioned industrial pollution from the neighbours across the frontier, and unsatisfactory methods of waste disposal in Gibraltar itself. In reply to a question about The Mount, he said it was the Government's wish to preserve both the building and its gardens. The new Government attached great importance to environmental improvement, as it did also to the proper conservation of Gibraltar's heritage.

'Of Shoes – and Ships - and Sealing Wax' Oral & Local History

In a team effort, Mr Jerry Robinson, a Board member, described plans to run an oral history project. Enthusiastically endorsed by the Board, the project aimed to conduct a series of interviews of ex-Servicemen and Gibraltarians about their experiences during the latter part of the WW2 through to about 1955. This momentous period, saw the Gibraltarian community evacuated (although a few remained to support the military) and the entire Rock turned into a vast garrison. At the end of the war as the garrison reduced, people returned to rebuild their lives and local communities. Jerry explained how the project sought to capture these events through the personal recollections of those involved. He encouraged volunteers to come forward to be interviewed or to assist.

Mary Ingoldby, a leading expert on oral history, spoke about the value of oral history. She vividly described how each interview provided a unique insight and how very ordinary and mundane events proved fascinating. Mary played a series of audio extracts: including a very early interview of a former black American slave; an emotional wartime account of a seaman's attempt to survive the sinking of his ship; and an amusing account by a gunner of conditions on the 'Mole' in Gibraltar. Mary went on to outline how it was planned to



Dr Cortes exchanging views with Members



Mrs Mary Ingoldby sharing her enthusiasm with an attentive audience



Dr Finlayson briefing the society on exciting activities to share a love of heritage



Mrs Smith and Dr Farrell updating the society on the activities of the GHT

establish an archive at Gibraltar Museum for future academic research, and use in local educational and social projects.

The session culminated with Geraldine Finlayson, Director of the Institute for Gibraltarian Studies, a special friend of the Society, fully endorsing the value of oral history, confirming that the project would be a collaborative effort between the Friends and the Museum, citing a quote '*with every individual that dies, a library burns*'. On a broader theme, she spoke of the importance of local history, and illustrated how Gibraltarians often used past events in their ordinary speech, a fascinating aspect of their evolving cultural identity. She stressed the importance

of passing this heritage on to future generations. The museum therefore staged events where children were encouraged to pick up on the recollections and experiences of their elders, eat the type of food and play the same games they did many years ago.

Oral History Volunteers: contact Mary Ingoldby: mingoldby@blueyonder.co.uk
Quote: '*Of Shoes, and Ships and Sealing Wax*', Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*

Gibraltar House News

The last few months have been very busy for Gibraltar House, starting off with the organisation and staging of the Gibraltar Day in London events. The programme started on Sunday 14th October with a Thanksgiving Mass in Our Lady of Dolours Servite Church in Fulham Road, which was attended by the Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo MP, and the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port, the Hon Neil Costa MP. The following day, the Chief Minister hosted the Finance Centre lunch which this year was held in the Guildhall. This was followed in the evening by the now traditional evening reception, also hosted by the Chief Minister. At this event, the Chief Minister addressed the gathering giving an overview of the current political situation vis-à-vis Spain and outlining the Government's vision for the development of Gibraltar. The Rt Hon Mark Simmonds MP, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office also spoke, once again publicly reaffirming Her Majesty's Government's support for Gibraltar.

On a cultural note, Gibraltar House teamed up with Clarendon Fine Art Gallery in Mayfair to stage an exhibition of works by Gibraltar artists. This is the first time ever that artists from Gibraltar have been given the opportunity to exhibit their work in London. The Private View was held on Tuesday 16th October and was inaugurated by the Chief Minister. Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister inaugurated an art



The Royal Gibraltar Regiment and London Scottish Bands at The Guildhall, Gibraltar Day 2012

installation at Gibraltar House. "Useless Mouths" was staged by Gibraltarian artist Arturo Casciaro and consisted of a collection of artists' books that had been exchanged with fellow artists from around the world. It is hoped that Gibraltar House will be used in the future for more cultural events that will showcase the wide spectrum of artistic talent that the Rock enjoys.

Gibraltar House can now be followed on Facebook www.facebook.com/gibraltarthouse and [Twitter @GibraltarHouse](https://twitter.com/GibraltarHouse). Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter for our latest news.

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Editors of Rock Talk: Dr Vincent Mifsud TD, Brian Gonzalez, Elizabeth Gonzalez

President: The Baroness Hooper CMG

Vice-Chairman: Albert Poggio OBE

Secretary: Richard Wells CBE

Friends Visit to Gibraltar 2012 by *Richard Lord*

As a result of extensive planning by Janet Whiteley (Friends' Board Member, Visit Coordinator) and Richard Labrador (Vice Chairman, Gibraltar Heritage Trust), together with day-to-day support from George Russo, the Friends were once again treated to an excellent visit in Gibraltar from 11th June to 15th June. The local hospitality was once again very generous and the Friends were honoured to be received so favourably.

The new Airport Terminal was a welcoming sight on arrival. On Sunday morning some of the advance party attended King's Chapel and were made most welcome. The evening saw the formal visit get off to a cracking start with a welcoming reception at the Rock Hotel, hosted by Stephen Davenport. This was brought forward to the Sunday evening because of the Earl and Countess of Wessex's visit. Their time in Gibraltar brought an extra sparkle to our visit.

On Monday morning the warmth of the welcome was added to by an ape who decided to come down into Main Street to greet us on our way to the Gibraltar Heritage Trust! There, Richard Labrador outlined the programme and updated us on some heritage issues.

We then made our way to the synagogue where Solomon Levy gave a fascinating review of Jewish history in Gibraltar, which was interspersed with topical and humorous jokes. A memorable visit and tour, it added significantly to our knowledge of this area.

Afterwards we caught our first glimpse of the Earl and Countess. The people of Gibraltar were certainly out in force to greet them!

To the right is a group photo taken during lunchtime at King's Bastion.

After lunch yours truly visited the HM Victualling Yard to see the recent impressive restoration work on the arch funded by the Gibraltar Heritage Trust.

On Tuesday we were provided with a tour of the restoration work at the new Gibraltar Regiment Building at Grand Battery. (It had been the old Post Office). The removal of some of the WW2 fortifications has considerably enhanced the historical perspective. We were fascinated to see the mail boxes used in the construction of the roof! (Photo available).

The evening was the occasion of the very special Queen's Birthday Parade. The Royal Gibraltar Regiment's drill was outstanding. On Wednesday our team were out in force for a visit to the Naval Hospital on Europa Road. We heard about the work underway and were



Arrival at the new Air Terminal



A late addition to the party



Visit to the Flemish Synagogue



Group Photo at King's Bastion

taken on a most informative tour.

We then had a walk down to Europa Point and Harding's Battery, where we were fascinated by the work which had been undertaken on the recently restored gun emplacement. Later in the week and, following advice from the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, a similar gun to the one originally at Harding's battery was found just inside the Commercial Dockyard. Fitting it at Harding's Battery could be a candidate project for the Friends to be involved with! This would further the interest in an increasingly popular visitor attraction. Are there any volunteers wishing to be involved?

Later in the afternoon we visited British Forces Gibraltar. The Command Briefing took place at the new and impressive RAF Gibraltar Headquarters on the south side of the airfield.

A bus then took us to what was the Joint Operations Centre in the East-West Tunnel. Pictures below show the Eisenhower Room, the Operations Room and the fresh water well. A reception in the Tower with Commander British Forces and his Staff provided the opportunity to reflect on what had been seen. On arrival at the Tower it did look as if the Tower had a new appendage!

On Thursday we were kindly invited to a reception at the City Hall and met by the Mayor Julio Alcantara. Gifts were exchanged, the Mayor receiving the new Friends' tie.

In the afternoon a tour of the old Prison in the Moorish Castle gave the opportunity to reflect on its changing use over the years. No photos I am afraid: yours truly and two others failed to master the intricacies of the No.1 Bus Route and went the wrong way. Much banging on the external door, not surprisingly, failed to gain the attention of those inside!

The day, and indeed the last of the organised part of the visit, was beautifully rounded off at the Garrison Library. Janet presented George Russo with a Friends' tie for all his help in the visit.

It's a goodbye for this year then. Are you interested in going next year? Please keep an eye on the Web site <http://friendsofgibraltar.org.uk/> for details. If you would like a particular event/tour to be included then let us know early.

Richard Lord, August 2012

The visiting friends would like to thank again all the hosts and authorities involved in making this a most memorable and informative visit.



Royal Gibraltar Regiment parading at Casemates



Dressed for the occasion...



Memories...

Queen's Birthday Celebrations 2012

A memorable Queen's Birthday at the Tower of London

contributed by Timothy Lawson-Cruttenden, T.D.

The Gibraltar Government and the Royal Gibraltar Regiment are adept at performing ceremonies. The Friends were not therefore surprised when treated to a feast of tradition at the Tower of London on 21 April 2012. The day started with a coffee reception, followed shortly thereafter by a full 61 gun salute. This involved twenty more than the rival salute which was performed in Green Park by Kings Troop the Royal Horse Artillery who only fired forty-one guns. The difference is attributable to the custom that Royal Salutes fired from Royal Palaces constitute 61 guns. Well done to Gun Troop RGR for their excellent gun drills and for a sterling performance.

Lunch and speeches followed with an excellent address by Lieutenant Colonel Colin Risso MC whose relaxed style endeared him to everyone. Sadly, but to his credit, the new Chief Minister was absent. We were informed that he was then on nappy changing duty in his newly acquired role as parent. We wish him well in undertaking his dual responsibilities as both parent and Chief Minister. In his place Mr Gilbert Licudi QC gave an excellent address which was well received. Two other Ministers, Mr Steven Linares and Mr Charles Bruzon, were also present.

The afternoon continued with a "beating the retreat" by the Band whose music and marching was to an extremely high standard. The wonderful performance by the Band brought a memorable day to a great conclusion.



The Salute being fired from the Embankment by the Tower of London



The Battery returning from firing the Salute

The Friends would like to thank the Gibraltar Government and the Royal Gibraltar Regiment for their generous hospitality and for an amazingly memorable day.

Silver Anniversary Champagne Reception 2012

A well-attended, very enjoyable and successful Silver Anniversary event was held in the Oxford and Cambridge Club, Pall Mall, London on 22 February 2012. The event will be remembered particularly for the presence of our Royal Patron, HRH The Duke of Gloucester, KG, GCVO, and the Chief Minister of Gibraltar, the Hon Fabian Picardo MP. The editors hope that the montage of photographs below will serve as a reminder of this special event.





Annual Luncheon 2012

22nd September

A large group of members gathered in good time at Dean's Yard by Westminster Abbey, on a bright but cold morning. There followed a fascinating tour of the Abbey, led by Richard Palmer, who placed the various statues and monuments that we paused at into historical context. Many intriguing details were shared, and we emerged with a much clearer picture of the Abbey and its place in British history. Julian Lyne-Pirkis then took the party into Westminster School and shared some of the background to the buildings and traditions of that establishment.

The group of Friends then walked a little way to the Annual Luncheon in a restaurant on Horseferry Road. This was a splendid event, with an opportunity to enjoy a pre-lunch drink and nibbles, followed by a more formal meal in excellent company. In perhaps typical fashion, the meal went on longer than initially planned, and the afternoon 'Blue Plaque' walk was curtailed somewhat, but still proved very interesting. This short walk focused on more recent events and highlighted buildings that had been used by current political parties and dignitaries. The walk completed the circuit back to Westminster Abbey and, after thanking our guides, we dispersed to enjoy the evening sunshine on the way home.

Our thanks to Julian Lyne-Pirkis for organising a very successful event that was enjoyed by all who were able to attend.

Correction

In an interview with Pepe Forbes published in Issue 3 (October 2009) it was wrongly stated that he knew General Franco's family and condoled with them on his death. Pepe's acquaintance was actually with Franco's personal doctor, who was also president of the Spanish Boxing Federation. It was to him that Pepe spoke appropriately when, after the General's death, they next met. Pepe also asks us to say that he left school at 16 (not 12) and moved to England in 1956 (not 1936). Our apologies to him.

An evening at the Cinema

Gibraltar, by Ana Garcia

A report by Richard Wells

Some Society members will remember Alec Guinness criss-crossing the Strait in *The Captain's Paradise* (1953), and others will know the vertiginous opening sequence of the James Bond spectacular *The Living Daylights* (1987). Rock Talk has reviewed films set in the Gibraltar of the Second World War.

On 18 April members of the Society enjoyed an up-to-date experience, for we were privileged to meet a young Gibraltar director and to watch her new film with her. Her name is Ana Garcia, and the film is called simply 'Gibraltar'. Her professionalism reminded us how wide a range of skills the new generation of Gibraltarians have developed.

The film, a full-length documentary running 83 minutes, has two subtly interwoven themes. First, how the closure of the frontier matured the Gibraltar community, developing its pride, self-reliance and patriotism – so far from what Spain had intended. Second, the way in which the approach of marriage not only forges new links but can also help strengthen one's original roots – which some may not have expected.

Ana's grandfather was Peter Isola, who for much of the frontier closure period was Deputy Chief Minister or Leader of the Opposition. The film neatly cuts between moving newsreel of personal separations and political demonstrations, family archive film with grandfatherly wisdom, and commentary from other leading figures – ranging from Joe Bossano, always pithy and often sharp, to the eloquent and well-chosen words of Dominique Searle. And cleverly interspersed with the political history comes the personal story of Ana herself and her return to her family in Gibraltar to prepare for her wedding. She marries her husband, and at the same time has rediscovered her love for her homeland.

We are deeply indebted to Ana Garcia for the time she so generously spent with us. Those who missed the show can visit the website <www.gibraltarfilm.co.uk>, which includes a short promotional video. And we can all wish Ana well with her next venture. It will demonstrate her versatility, for the scene of the new film is Wigan Pier.

Portsmouth 2011 *by Harvey Johnson*

A group of the Friends visited Portsmouth Dockyard on 16 September 2011. We were met at the main gate at 1020 by Richard Wells, organiser of the event, and were promptly taken by bus to HMS Diamond, the most recently commissioned Type 45 Air Defence Destroyer to formally enter Royal Naval service.

We were welcomed on board HMS Diamond by Commander Ian Clarke, the ship's Captain, and received guided tours around the ship by Lieutenants Barry Pilkington, Julia Allen and Carla Blunt. We learnt that the ship's name, 'Diamond', dates back to the Armada and were honoured to see the cross of nails created from the wreckage of the old Coventry Cathedral destroyed during the Second World War which Diamond carries as part of her affiliation with the city of Coventry. This is the same cross that was recovered by divers from the wreck of HMS Coventry after she was sunk during the Falklands War. The new Diamond is certainly a formidable fighting machine but I think what impressed us most of all was the enthusiasm of the crew, from the Captain down to the most junior rating, and their obvious pride in their ship. By the end of the visit most of us were wishing that we were 40 years younger and had directions to nearest RN recruiting office!

Due largely to the inquisitive nature of the Friends and our inability to run up and down ladders as fast as we used to the tour of Diamond took longer than anticipated. As a result we unfortunately failed to arrive back at the Historic Dockyard in time to catch the Harbour Tour boat. The luncheon venue, The Old Customs House at Gunwharf was, however, only a short walk away and we were soon enjoying a splendid meal and deep in conversation with old and new friends. After lunch, our Chairman Sir Francis Richards told us of donations from the Friends to a number of projects in Gibraltar, including £10,000 for the restoration of Main Guard.

Lunch was followed by a guided tour of HMS Victory. Our tour guide, Simon, entertained us with stories of conditions aboard a man-of-war in Georgian times and we saw the many compartments of the ship including the gun decks and hold. In addition we saw Admiral Lord Nelson's cabin, the position on the deck where he fell when hit with a musket ball and where, on the orlop deck, he subsequently died. At the end of the tour I took the opportunity to present Simon with this photograph from 1928 or 1929 showing my father on the deck of Victory when the ship's knee, against which Nelson is supposed to

have died, was returned to the ship.

Our thanks to the organisers of the event and to the Royal Navy for making it such a memorable day.



The Friends outside HMS Victory



Harvey Johnson making the presentation



The photograph recalling the return of the knee

Annual Seminar and Dinner 2011 *by Richard Wells & Tim Lawson-Cruttenden*

This year's seminar, on 15 October, was again held at Winchester, and in bright sunshine 45 members and guests made the journey. Distinguished speakers joined us from Gibraltar, and our President and our Chairman, Baroness Hooper and Sir Francis Richards, led the audience.

The first speaker was Dr Darren Fa, Deputy Director of the Museum, on "Neanderthals at Gibraltar, Recent Findings from Gorham's and Vanguard Caves". In total, in fact, out of altogether 160 Gibraltar caves, at least ten had been occupied by Neanderthal people: the highest density of Neanderthal population in the world. Moreover they lived in Gibraltar until 26,000 or 24,000 years ago, several thousand years later than there is evidence of Neanderthal survival anywhere else. Their eventual extinction was possibly due to glaciation.

Gibraltar is therefore a site of first importance for Neanderthal studies. Excavations led by the Museum have moreover done much to correct old misconceptions that Neanderthals were brutishly primitive, stupid and ugly. They built themselves shelters, looked after their old people, buried their dead; there is even evidence that some of them had blue eyes and freckles. Certainly some early *Homo sapiens* seem to have found them not unattractive, for DNA analysis now shows that modern humans (other than Africans) carry Neanderthal genes. The implication is that about 60,000 years ago people leaving Africa successfully interbred with Neanderthals they met in Eurasia: in fact, that we and they form a single species.

20 of the 160 Gibraltar caves are now below sea level, but in late Neanderthal times were dry. Darren's fine slide-show was specially enhanced by a clever Canute-like device enabling him to make the shoreline recede to prehistoric positions, showing Gibraltar as our Neanderthal cousins knew it.

Mr Searle, speaking on "The *Chronicle*, History on the Eve of an Election", traced the paper's journey from its foundation in 1801, and its world scoop on the victory at Trafalgar, to the acceleration of breaking news today. The story was not very different from that of Gibraltar itself.

He himself has been at the *Chronicle* for over a quarter of a century, and Editor since 1996.



Darren Fa, Gibraltar Museum, with the organiser of the event, Janet Whiteley.

Soon after that came the long negotiations with the Government which led to the establishment of the independent trust in which ownership of the paper is now vested, the arrangements which guarantee the maintenance of its printing press, and the justiciable Charter which safeguards its essential editorial independence. The Editor's vision is to maintain and develop a newspaper which informs and promotes debate and which, within the limitations of a small circulation, plays a unique role as a hybrid between a national newspaper and a local community one. The online edition now has a strong readership both on and off the Rock.



Dominique Searle, Gibraltar Chronicle

While it is impossible to register appropriate thanks for all who contribute of their own time to the work of the Society, it is worth noting that Janet Whiteley has been organising the Annual Seminar and Dinner for the past ten years – thank you Janet!

So the *Gibraltar Chronicle* is an institution, but a live one: a sounding-board for democracy on the Rock, ensuring that a broad spectrum of opinion finds a home and a voice.

In an age when many small newspapers have found themselves becoming redundant, Dominique's leadership of the *Chronicle* has earned it a secure place as a rock in the lives of the Gibraltarians.

Mr Labrador, Vice-Chairman of the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, spoke on the "Challenges facing Gibraltar's Historic Buildings". The GHT had had some successes: notably at Buena Vista, where their representations had led to a welcome change in the plans for a housing development. The Europa Point refurbishment had gone well, exposing Harding's Battery, now an interpretation centre; and the new Southport car park, making use of the Victorian Magazine, was proceeding well. Other major projects were noticeably slowing as they came to completion: for instance at the Law Courts, and at the ex-BFBS building at South Barracks. At the Royal Naval Hospital and the old St. Bernard's Hospital, works were in progress. Generally historic buildings were being kept and reused for community uses, but in some cases the details of windows, doors and original internal fixtures and fittings were being lost. Meanwhile the transfer of the Garrison Library had been completed, and new trustees just appointed.

Finally Mrs Montado, Chief Executive Officer of the GHT, gave a report on other activities of Trust over the past year. They had assembled a collection of 700 photographs which they would shortly publish under the title *A Year in the Life of Gibraltar*. They had started work on improving the Devil's Gap Battery site. She then described the works to restore and



Watched by Sir Francis Richards, Chairman of the Society, our Treasurer Timothy Lawson-Cruttenden presents to Claire Montado, Chief Executive of the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, the Friends' cheque for the first instalment of our grant towards the refurbishment of the Main Guard

refurbish the interior of the Trust's headquarters, the Main Guard building in John Mackintosh Square. The Friends are contributing £10,000 towards heritage-related parts of the project, as was announced in February 2011. Since then the works had got under way. That very morning the Friends had presented to the Trust the first instalment of their grant: a cheque for £2492. Further cheques will be made available as the refurbishment proceeds (update given to the Society in the 2012 Seminar).

Dinner

A very enjoyable dinner followed.



Friends at Dinner...



Meeting with Lindsay Hoyle, M.P. *by Richard Wells*

On 24 May 2011, at Gibraltar House, The Friends gave a warm welcome to the Hon. Lindsay Hoyle, M.P., one of the most prominent parliamentary champions of Gibraltar and of Gibraltarian self-determination. Mr Hoyle, President of the All-Party Parliamentary Gibraltar Group, was from 2001 to 2009 its Chairman. He is now, as Chairman of Ways and Means, the senior Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons.

The chair of the meeting was taken by Baroness Hooper, President of The Friends, herself a deeply committed parliamentary friend of Gibraltar. The speaker was introduced by Albert Poggio, a long-standing personal friend. Prominent in the audience were Jim Dobbin, M.P., the new Chairman of the All-Party Group, and David Crausby, M.P., its Vice-Chairman. We were also glad to have with us the speaker's father, Lord Hoyle, who is Treasurer of the Group.

Lindsay Hoyle first recalled the affair, early in 1999, which confirmed his personal loyalty to Gibraltar. Following the arrest in Gibraltar of one of their boats, which had been fishing illegally, Spanish fishermen protested by blocking the frontier on the Isthmus. As a result, three elderly constituents of Lindsay's were held up there, on the Spanish side, for thirteen hours. They were unable either to proceed further into Spain, or to return to Gibraltar. And when he wrote to the Spanish Ambassador in London about this deplorable incident, the terms of the reply he received added insult to injury. But while Spain showed its arrogance and discourtesy, the Gibraltarians showed their strength and their solidarity.

Then Lindsay had not been long in the chair of the All-Party Group when, on 12 July 2002, there came the shock of the announcement of "broad agreement" with Spain about sharing sovereignty over Gibraltar.

The Foreign Secretary hoped both to "overcome 300 years of fraught history" and to "build a strategic alliance with Spain to help deliver the EU that we both seek". The reaction in Parliament was

sharp. Despite official pressure, Lindsay and many others mounted a vigorous campaign in both Houses. It was amply matched in the country: Albert Poggio's office was deluged with letters of support for British Gibraltar. But it was the people of Gibraltar themselves who decisively defeated the joint sovereignty proposal, by voting 99% "No" in their referendum on 7 November.



Lindsay Hoyle with Albert Poggio at the Champagne Reception

The lesson for diplomacy was the danger of sending wrong and ill-judged messages. (And before long Spain had a different government, with a different view of the EU.) The lesson for democracy was that Gibraltar is neither Britain's to give nor Spain's to take. It is, as Governor Jackson called it in his book, the Rock of the Gibraltarians.

After Lindsay's talk questions from the audience asked about British Gibraltar territorial waters; about the EU status of Gibraltar, different from that of various French and Spanish territories; about the possible representation of Gibraltar in a reformed House of Lords, if not in the Commons; and about the possibility of a second visit to Gibraltar by The Queen. Our speaker's robust answers on all these subjects were heartily applauded.

After the meeting, Lindsay Hoyle stayed for a buffet reception next door with Friends members and their guests. We all much enjoyed meeting him and were most grateful for the time which so senior a Parliamentarian was able to give to us.

Friends Visit to Gibraltar 2011 *by Richard Lord*

I was part of the advance party, led by Janet Whiteley, which arrived on Saturday 4 June 2011 to help finalise the forthcoming visit by the Friends. We were warmly welcomed in King's Chapel for the Sunday Service and lunch was spent down at Waterfront.

For the main party, their feet had hardly touched the ground when transport whisked them away to the Royal Navy's HMS Portland. She is one of the youngest Type 23s. A ship tour and refreshments on the Bridge were at the kind courtesy of Commander Knott. The individual presentations at various locations around the ship provided a most useful insight to the workings of a modern warship. The visit had got off to a flying start.

On the Monday morning, as is the established practice, the Gibraltar Heritage Trust kindly hosted coffee. Our local friend and co-ordinator, George Russo, provided an overview of the forthcoming events. The opportunity was taken to obtain a better understanding of the restorative work being undertaken in the Main Guard, which is partly funded by the Friends. A tour of King's Chapel then followed with an outstanding overview given by Gibraltarian historian Dennis King. The review of the Governors' Crests in the stained-glass window was particularly fascinating. In the evening a reception, kindly sponsored by the late Joe Gaggero, our Vice President at the Rock Hotel, rounded off an excellent and full first day.

On Tuesday, the Friends took a bus trip around the Upper Rock and visited St Michael's Cave. For some it was the first opportunity to see the splendour of St Michael's Cave, for others it renewed their past memories. Tapas lunch at the Royal Gibraltar Regiment Association Club gave the opportunity to catch up on the local news.

A trip in the cable car - on a crystal-clear day - with the spectacular views from the top of the Rock on Wednesday morning, showed the extent of the rebuilding programme in Gibraltar. In the afternoon the Friends visited the Commander British Forces, Commodore Tom Karsten and his team. Presentations in the Tower, time afloat with the Gibraltar Squadron and Gibraltar Defence Police, visits to the Diving Section and then Windmill Hill gave a clearly nautical flavour. Refreshments in the Tower rounded off another excellent day.

The shocking state of Withams Road Cemetery had been mentioned to the Friends, and so a field trip was arranged. We again visited the



The Author and Friends on the bridge..



An informal lunch in good company!



At the Rock Hotel, organiser and friends



Enjoying the sunshine...

site in 2011, and received an update to the position at this year's Winchester Conference, but it remains a source of concern to members of the Society.

The official Queen's Birthday Parade in Casemates Square on Thursday was as polished as ever, with the Gibraltar Regiment carrying out their new drill faultlessly. The opportunity was taken to renew old acquaintances both there and at the subsequent Garden Party, hosted by His Excellency the Governor and Lady Johns. The Friends felt privileged to be invited to both events and attendance gave the opportunity to explain to others the role of the Friends and their commitment to Gibraltar. It was another memorable day.

In the morning on Friday we had a gentle tour of the Alameda Gardens. This was fascinating and a much better understanding of its history, layout and content was obtained. A radio interview on BFBS was then used to explain the Friends' interests in Gibraltar and to thank those who had made the visit so successful. In the evening we attended the Calentita food festival in Casemates Square. It was as busy as ever and it seemed as if all Gibraltar was there. The spectacular fireworks display rounded off a most popular visit.

The Group would like to thank all those who hosted and supported us; especially Janet Whiteley for making the arrangements for UK, George Russo for all the local coordination and Commodore Jamie Miller for the nautical flavour.

If this or the report for the 2012 visit have whetted your appetite to join in the visit in 2013 then please contact Janet Whiteley, whose details are on the Friends of Gibraltar web site. If you have ideas on what you would like to be included, then please let Janet know soon.

I hope that I will see you there in 2013.

Commodore Richard Lord, Membership Secretary richard.lord2@btinternet.com



Ready for another visit!



Being briefed on the finer points of the Alameda



Pomp and Ceremony – Ceremony of the Keys

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.

WE VALUE WHAT YOU DO, AND WHAT YOU CAN DO'

Former Mayor of Gibraltar welcomed the Friends of Gibraltar in a coffee morning held at the City Hall in June 2012. In his address to the group of visitors he said that he was delighted to be hosting them once more. He stated "You are friends of Gibraltar, and we value what you do, and we also value what you can do".

The Mayor was thanked by Janet Whiteley for his kind words - "It is 25 years since the Friends was originated and we have grown steadily". She continued by saying "The aim of Friends was to continue to further grow the membership and continue the strong relationship with Gibraltar".

The visit coincided with the Royal visit of the Earl and Countess of Wessex and some of the group visiting The Rock were present at the Garden Party held at The Convent.

On welcoming the group, the former Mayor himself had referred to the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the Royal visit, which he hoped the Friends had

enjoyed being part of. He added "My grandad was in the trenches in the First World War, my brothers in the Royal Navy and we lost a cousin in Singapore. These are the little roots that make us British".

There followed an exchange of gifts as His Worship was presented with a Friends tie. Richard Lord, the Membership Secretary, was also in Gibraltar for the visit- "We are always struck by the welcome we always get".....people always wanted to come to the Rock on this annual trip. One of the founder members, Mary Hirst, also formed part of the group. Mary has been to Gibraltar almost every year since the Friends was set up.

Adapted from an article which appeared in the Gibraltar Chronicle (Tuesday 19th June, 2012) by Alice Mascarenhas.

A Gibraltar Heritage Artist

Mr John Stubbs, a member of The Friends and a gifted artist, knows Gibraltar well and has made a speciality of drawing and painting military heritage subjects there. Some have been exhibited at the Royal Academy; others have been accepted by the National Army Museum. To the Gibraltar Government he has donated watercolours of Landport Tunnel and Landport Gate; to British Forces Gibraltar a pen and ink drawing of the Tower; to the Gibraltar Heritage Trust a pastel sketch of Rooke Battery; and to the Garrison Library a pen and ink drawing of one of the Russian guns captured in the Crimea. In 2006 the Gibraltar Heritage Journal carried an article about his life and work.

In his flat in the City of London Mr Stubbs holds between 30 and 40 of his Gibraltar pictures, all framed. He has very kindly offered to show them there to any Society members (but not groups, please). To arrange a convenient time to visit him, please telephone him on 020 7638 5109; he will meet visitors at Barbican underground station nearby.

Mr Stubbs asks us to make clear that these pictures are not for sale.

A Gibraltarian Poet

A recently published book of poems by the Gibraltarian author Francisco Javier Oliva is available for £12.99 from Gibraltar House in London. The title of this 250-page collection is *Imaginary Death of a European Poet*. The book is illustrated by Karl Ullger, a local artist.

Our readers may know Paco Oliva's collection of short stories, 'The Night Gibraltar Disappeared' and Other Stories. In taking now to poetry, he describes it as "a good medium with which to perforate what others have called 'the thin, precarious crust of civilization', to look at the ruins when the idyllic invocations to eternal love, happiness and political ideals crumble".

Imaginary Death opens, the author tells us, with an impassioned exaltation of the excellence of fine wine; and is peppered with references to popular culture, Biblical passages and occasional concessions to his acerbic humour.

Enquiries please to Gibraltar House, telephone 020 7836 0777.

Royal Visit to Gibraltar 2012

THE ROYAL VISIT

"Gibraltar was overwhelmed by the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Earl and Countess of Wessex last June to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The final part of their visit to The Rock was a 'tour' of one of Gibraltar's government housing estates and unveiling of a plaque.

The Royal couple arrived at the Laguna Estate to the chants of the residents. They were accompanied by the Governor Sir Adrian Johns and Lady Johns, Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and other distinguished guests. Everyone was enthralled and captivated by their friendliness, interest and kind words. Mr Picardo described the Royal visit as having gone "tremendously well".

During the final part of their visit, the Chief Minister confirmed that both Laguna and Glacis Estates would also be part of the re-generation programme announced earlier when the couple visited the Moorish Castle Estate."

Adapted from an article which appeared in the Gibraltar Chronicle (Thursday 14th June, 2012) by Alice Mascarenhas.

It is clear that this was a memorable event in the history of the Rock, and that everyone present at the various events was enchanted by the Royal Couple. All public events were very well attended, and everyone took the opportunity to reinforce the message that the population of Gibraltar wish to maintain their links with Britain and the Crown.

An interesting video of the visit can be found on YouTube at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=squo41b58tk>

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Late News

Readers might like to be aware of an eight-minute film "Gibraltar, Much More Than You Can Imagine" at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GESxSsASEIU>, which is an interesting contribution.

We would all also like to congratulate Mr Les Piercy for his 90th birthday in October and wish him well.



Crowds greeted the Royal Couple everywhere



In relaxed mood enjoying the occasion



The Royal Couple



The Royal Standard flying at Casemates, captured during the Friends' Visit

John Mackintosh

By Delilah Mckillop – Smith

The end of February 2012 marked the 72nd anniversary of John Mackintosh's death. He was 75 when he died.

A Gibraltarian first and foremost, he was of mixed heritage in common with most of us who are proud to declare ourselves children of this Rock. He was born in the latter third of the nineteenth Century into the established Merchant Class of Gibraltar. His mother, Adelaide Peacock, was one of twelve siblings born to a British father and a mother born in Gibraltar of Genoese extraction. The family was established ship owners and coal merchants. John Mackintosh Snr., was a native of Scotland who died a few months before John was born in that fateful year of 1865, when cholera and a smallpox epidemic ravaged the population.

John married later in life when he was 44, to Victoria Canepa, 13 years his junior. Together they had one daughter, born in December 1910. Unfortunately she suffered mental illness throughout her adult life. Before his marriage, he had fathered three sons to a Spanish woman.

After making provision in his will for his children, his extended family and staff members, John Mackintosh left his considerable fortune to the people of Gibraltar – his people. He left detailed instructions for the purchase of land and the building of several projects that have since become markers for the development of our collective social conscience.

PROVISION FOR THE ELDERLY

His will stipulated - ***"to found and endow in Gibraltar, suitable almshouses... for the aged poor... to be called "the John Mackintosh Home"***. He indicated that a body of Governors be set up to administer the founding process and the running of the Home, consisting of the leaders of the major religions in Gibraltar (the Roman Catholic Bishop, the Anglican Bishop, the Rabbi) and also the Colonial Secretary. Thus, Mount Alvernia and the Jewish and Anglican Homes for the elderly were built, fitted out and initially run.

On 31st December 1982, all assets held in Trust by the John Mackintosh Trust, in relation to the John Mackintosh Homes, were transferred to the Board of Governors. Also from that date, the Gibraltar Government took on the running of the Homes.

ENDOWMENT TO ST. BERNARD'S HOSPITAL

A new hospital wing was added to St. Bernard's Hospital from his bequest – again built and completely fitted out and equipped. Appropriately named John and Victoria, Male and Female Medical Wards and a Private Ward were



Bust of John Mackintosh – Legislative Building

lodged there, as was the Hospital Laboratory. With the relocation of the Hospital to the Europort site, the Mackintosh Wing on the old hospital site is being refurbished to provide much needed supported living accommodation for the elderly.

CULTURAL CENTRE

The Will also made provision for the Community to be endowed with ***"funds, in perpetuity for educational purposes for the benefit of children whose parents are residents in Gibraltar and in particular for the purpose of promoting the teaching in Gibraltar of the English language and of English History and Literature and generally to promote and strengthen so far as practicable by educational means the ties between England and Gibraltar"***.

Accordingly, the John Mackintosh Hall was built and equipped and opened to the public on 15th. April, 1964. The Mackintosh Hall today houses a Theatre, Meeting and Conference facilities, a Coffee Shop, Library and a private Girl's Secondary School.

It was fitting indeed that a Library, for the use of all the community, was provided. John Mackintosh's father had been instrumental in the running of the Exchange and Library Committee, a body formed in protest at civilian exclusion from the Garrison Library. The Exchange and Library Committee became the foremost civilian body in the then Fortress, and its Committee was instrumental in gaining Gibraltarian Colonial status and establishing the rights of British citizenship to those born in the Colony.

John Mackintosh

EDUCATION

John Mackintosh saw the need to foster educational links with the United Kingdom and to promote the use of the English language: ***"the purposes to which the fund is applied shall include the provision of at least six scholarships.....of not less than the value of £200 per annum"***.

Education and specifically professional qualifications were largely the preserve of the rich; those who, like John Mackintosh's family, could afford to send their children away to Public schools in England or Spain, depending on their family background.

Provision was made in the Will for Bursaries and Grants to be given to children of Gibraltarian parents. Initially, applications were invited to enable parents to educate their children at UK Public Schools. With the advent of established Government Schools, this evolved into support with further and higher education towards the achievement of professional qualifications for Gibraltarians.

Over the years, this has benefited over 350 young Gibraltarians. In total over £1.1 million has been awarded. The Education Trust is still in existence. Since the Government of Gibraltar instituted the Mandatory Grant System, the Trust gives loans to those furthering their education, to the benefit of the community in general.

REMEMBERED

Mrs Mackintosh was fully committed to her husband's ethos of benefiting the community. When John Mackintosh died, she started putting into practice all that her husband had decreed. She did not stint, and took the lead role on the work until her death in 1958. During the Second World War, she donated a Spitfire to the Allied cause. A discreet memorial plaque dedicated to Victoria Mackintosh can be found in the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. Mary the Crowned.

There is a small bust of John Mackintosh at the Parliament building where the adjoining Square bears his name. We did not ask him to, but he gave. He did not know us, but he gifted us in ways in which we, as a community, are still benefiting.

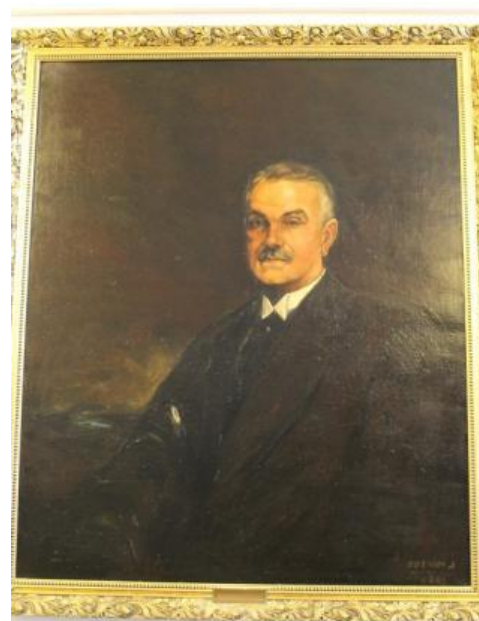
We remember him with eternal gratitude.



The John Mackintosh Centre in Main Street



The Commemorative Plaque at the Centre



Bedenham Remembered

Readers of Rock Talk 5 will remember the interesting article by Paul Baker, an eye-witness, on the explosion of the Bedenham in 1951. On the 27th April 2011 a special commemorative service took place at the exact spot on Gun Wharf where, 60 years earlier, the tragic event happened.

We are grateful to former Mayor of Gibraltar, Anthony Lombard, for allowing us to print in Rock Talk 6 his address to the people assembled to remember the explosion and the victims.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my proud privilege and pleasure to be able today, to pay public tribute and homage, on behalf of the City of Gibraltar and as Mayor of Gibraltar, to all those who fell on the occasion of the explosion of the Naval Armament Vessel: "Bedenham", on the 60th anniversary of that sad event, on the 27th April, 1951.

Throughout its 307 years of British history, Gibraltar has been regularly called to sacrifice, in the interests of Great Britain. This community has faithfully and readily undertaken such service, as a proud and loyal member of the Empire and Commonwealth.

The zenith of those sacrifices, undoubtedly, reached its peak, during the dark days of World War II.

By 1951, the world remained a volatile place, even though the war had ended. Much remained at stake. Risks still abounded.

Accordingly, in my modest submission, the Bedenham fallen must be viewed as a part and parcel of that peak of sacrifice, undertaken in the interests of civilisation and the free world.

To that end, the eventual installation and dedication of this Memorial, some years ago, was long overdue. For far too long, the fallen of the Bedenham had no lasting tribute to their sacrifice. It is the fervent hope of many, the Memorial may be allowed to remain, in the quiet dignity of its current surroundings, a poignant and elegant memory of our ancestor's yesterday, for our today. In particular, it commemorates a very special and unique Gibraltarian sacrifice.

I must confess I speak with special pride and sentiment. My late maternal grandfather, Julius Abudarham, was one of the fallen of the Bedenham. Accordingly, today is a particularly emotional occasion for me, personally.

In the circumstances, you will allow me some personal reflections. However, I am sure they embody what all of the descendants of the fallen feel and cherish.

I never knew my maternal grandfather. However, his absence marked my life from as far back as I



The Mayor addressing the congregation



The Memorial to the Bedenham Explosion

His loss has been my loss. Sixty years ago today, he embarked upon his usual morning constitutional walk. Upon entering Piccadilly Gardens above, to view the Naval operation, he was met with the full blast of the explosion. It killed him instantly. He left a young widow and four infant children. They received paltry compensation. However, my beloved maternal grandmother – a Trojan, if ever there was one – never complained. It was a sacrifice they were called to bear, like so many other War casualties.

The Abudarham family have served Gibraltar since their arrival in 1720. In 1778, they built the Abudarham Synagogue, in honour of the Almighty and as their private House of Prayer. It still serves this community today. During the Great Siege of 1779 to 1783, their merchant vessels provisioned the Garrison. The news of the great victory of Trafalgar, in 1805, was brought to Gibraltar and, thence, the world, upon one of their vessels: the "Flying Fish". The Abudarhams contributed to the building of the Exchange and Commercial Library, in 1817, today our Parliament House. Their names may be viewed upon the Memorial, in the lobby of the building. The Abudarhams discharged international Diplomatic representations to Gibraltar.

can remember. I should have relished knowing him.

Bedenham Remembered

In such honourable circumstances, the fatality brought about by the Bedenham explosion was but another sacrifice, patiently born, in that long bicentennial service to Gibraltar.

I attend this ceremony today carrying in my top breast pocket, close to my heart, my maternal grandfather's early 20th century silver and enamelled cigarette case and, in my waist coat pocket, his mother's diamond and gold Victorian pocket fob watch.

Accordingly, in moving to a conclusion and on behalf of the City of Gibraltar and with an interest in that proud record of family service, I salute all those who rendered the ultimate sacrifice and I do so with emotion and pride.

Long may they continue to live in our memories and in our hearts, and in our speech, and in the annals of our noble and loyal City, from generation to generation, until the end of time.

The ancient Egyptians used to say the dead lived when we spoke about them. I am grateful for the opportunity to proudly and officially speak today, as Mayor of Gibraltar, not only about my maternal grandfather, Julius Abudarham, but also equally about:

*Bartolome Delgado Marin;
Laureano Escriba Rodriguez;
George Henderson;
Albert Indoe;
John Lane;
Francisco Martin Amador;
Juan Moreno Serrano;
Joseph Moss;
Carlos Muiño Postigo;
Leopold Perez;
Florencio Ruiz;
Joseph Zammit.*

The Friends and Trafalgar Cemetery

In 2012 the Gibraltar Heritage Trust embarked on a series of works to improve the condition of the Trafalgar Cemetery.

The Cemetery is a symbol of Gibraltar's connection with the great Battle and with some of the men who fell. It therefore a place of enduring significance for the tie between Gibraltar and the United Kingdom, and that makes it a site of special interest to our Society. It is also a place where many visitors stop to reflect, to pause on the benches, and to walk along the paths. We warmly welcome the Trust's initiative, with which the Friends too will be associated.

The Trust has been responsible for the upkeep of the Cemetery since the late 1990s and has, with support of the Government of Gibraltar, the Ministry of Defence, and voluntary groups, always aimed to keep this important heritage site in a good state of repair. This year they have carried out substantial work on the footpaths, which have been levelled and widened, with ramps to take wheelchairs and mobility scooters so that visitors can use them to reach the upper levels of the site. Service pipes have been tidied up, and surface-mounted ones removed. The flowerbed edgings have also all been replaced with locally sourced limestone to replace the brittle clay tiles that were used as flowerbed edgings previously. The paths have been tinted to mimic the redsands that this area is noted for.

All this work is now complete, but more needs to be done in 2013. At the request of the Trust, the Friends



*Pathways before and after
the Trust's work in 2012*

will finance a further instalment of works at the Cemetery in 2013, to complement what has already been done. Details are under discussion, and we hope to announce them at the Annual General Meeting of Members on 27 February.

Europa Point

Former Chief Minister, Peter Caruana, inaugurated the £4.4m refurbishment and redevelopment of Europa Point last October. The area, as the photographs show, has become one of the Rock's major open-air leisure and recreational zones.

The area has been transformed from barren wasteland into a very attractive paved complex featuring landscaping, greenery, a tourist information point, a cafeteria and children's play area. Harding's Battery, once a rather boring viewing area, has been transformed to include a visitor interpretation centre.

Mr Caruana said that the entire area, incorporating the former MOD playing fields, had been developed in order to maximise its use as a tourist complex and use by the general public. Europa Point is one of Gibraltar's most important physical and historical assets with its fantastic panoramic views of the Strait of Gibraltar, the Spanish and Moroccan coastline. The area has been given a new lease of life and is becoming increasingly popular with both locals and tourists.

Adapted from an article which appeared in the Gibraltar Chronicle (Friday 21st October, 2011) by F. Oliva.

[Will add personal note after recent visit to the Rock, as the area is completely changed now]



Victualling Yard Crest

Gil Podesta and Tony Balban joined forces last June to restore the 200 year old Naval Crest on the arches of Victualling Yard in Rosia. The pair embarked on the mission with the support of the Ministry of Culture and the Heritage Trust.

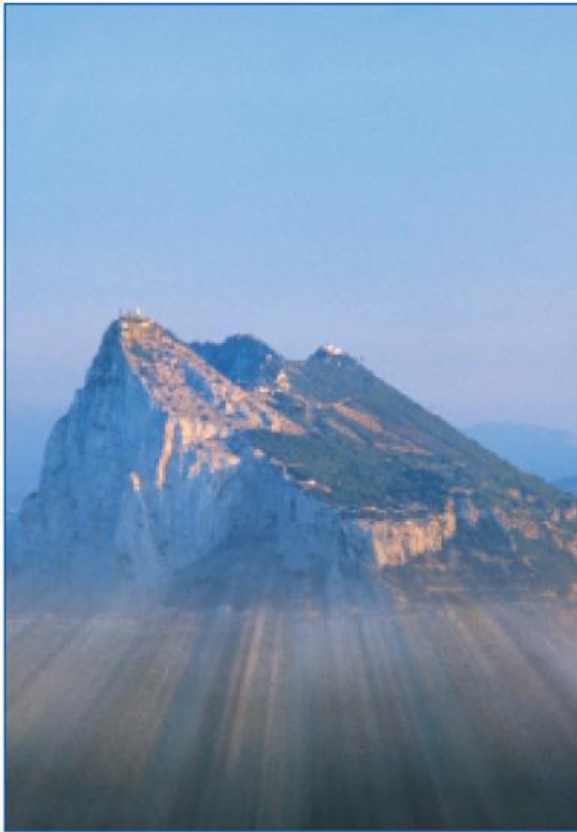
The building dates back 200 years and Gil and Tony wanted to complete the restoration to coincide with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. In its prime, the crest was the symbol of a warehouse used by the Royal Navy in the early nineteenth century. The first stone was laid on 30 June 1808 and completed in 1812.

The crest on this listed heritage site would have been lost if not restored. Gil stated that since they had been at the site, they had drawn people's attention and made them take an interest in the importance in restoration and Gibraltar's heritage.

Adapted from an article which appeared in the Gibraltar Chronicle (Tuesday 1st June, 2012) by Carolina Llamusi Silbermann)



Photographs of crest taken during Friends' Visit to Gibraltar 2012



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