



THE HOSPITALLER

The annual newsletter of the British Association of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta



Message from the President

THE WORLD has seen many natural disasters over the last year, resulting in tragic loss of life and destruction of property on an immense scale. The Order has been able to offer its support, both practical and financial, to many victims in the afflicted regions.

In reviewing the British Association's work during 2005, I am particularly encouraged by the impressive growth in our Trust Care Homes, whose development over the last year has been exceptional. Our thanks and congratulations are due to all who have worked so hard to make this project the success that it is.

But also, our members quietly go about many charitable activities country-wide – dial-a-journey, visiting the elderly and sick household, organising outings for the handicapped, attending the sick on pilgrimage, as well as performing many other unsung acts of kindness, in the name of our Order, carrying on our 900-year old tradition to help the needy and the sick. In this way, all who contribute are heroes in their own way.

You will read in this newsletter a definition of a hero – a person noted or admired for nobility, for courage, for outstanding achievements – and a commentary on heroes over time.

This year, as every year, many of our members have been on pilgrimage – to Lourdes (the 2005 pilgrimage being the largest subscription ever), Walsingham, Salamanca, Montserrat, and Naples, exemplifying the other key element of our mission: *tuitio fidei*.

Nobility of purpose is truly manifested by all who practise the Order's twin traditions of *obsequium pauperum* and *tuitio fidei*.

For the coming year, we have many projects lined up, both at home and abroad, for our charitable works and our fundraising activities to support them, and I count on your support and your contributions, which as always are so appreciated.

I wish all our members and friends a very happy and peaceful 2006.

Rupert Loewenstein,
President

THANK YOU all for the huge financial support you gave to our hospitaller work during 2005. Your donations enabled us to fund our largest ever pilgrimages to Lourdes and Walsingham, and to send a record amount of financial aid to the Order's relief work throughout the world.

The importance of protection: Hospitaller Ltd

With the substantial growth in our voluntary work, we have created a new charity in Britain, Hospitaller Limited. It controls all the voluntary activities that carry risk and protects our volunteers from litigation. The activities include pilgrimages, the Order of Malta Volunteers and the Companions of the Order. We have also created the BASMOM Foundation, which receives and distributes the donations made on behalf of the Order.

Malteser International – the Order's worldwide relief service

Only by amalgamation of our large NGOs could the Order remain in the same tier as other well known NGOs, and so Malteser International was launched in Cologne. It was immediately in action in the tsunami disaster – within 12 hours teams were on the ground in Thailand, and in weeks over 400 staff were working

New developments in our humanitarian activities

Peter Loyd, the Association's Hospitaller, reviews what has been accomplished in a year of great activity and pays tribute to your generous support, which has made it all possible

throughout the region with a fund of over €30m. We raised €100,000 of this within three weeks, sending it to Cologne by the Emergency fund of the BASMOM Foundation.

Malteser International was accepted in every affected nation in the tsunami-afflicted areas – testimony to the trust given to the oldest Christian charity. Malteser International continues work in the devastated regions, in rebuilding projects and training programmes for local health workers.

Following the October earthquake, Pakistan and India are currently main focus, cooperating in Pakistan with the Turkish-based Blue Crescent to provide tents and blankets to remote areas, and in India with the Catholic Health Association of India to provide medical staff.

Other activities include aid to Niger and Mali, Darfur, Central America and the Katrina-devastated areas of the United States. Wherever the Order is at work it is in close



partnership with the local charities in the area

BASMOM support for the Order's focus projects

We help Malteser International, the Brotherhood of Blessed Gerard's AIDS hospice in South Africa and

the Holy Family Maternity hospital in Bethlehem. Through our Foreign Aid Service, we have contributed to the Romanian Flood Appeal and a soup kitchen in St Petersburg.

During 2005 we donated close on £200,000 to these works. Every penny goes to the needy.

Dizzy activity – stunning statistics

ORDERS OF ST JOHN CARE TRUST – Nigel Stourton sums up the year in statistics: the Trust now has 76 Homes, 3,300 day care facilities for over 1,000 patients, a devoted staff nearly matching the resident population in numbers and an annual turnover now anticipated to top well over £70,000,000

THE YEAR HAS BEEN ONE OF ALMOST DIZZY ACTIVITY, ORDERS OF ST JOHN CARE TRUST – Nigel Stourton sums up the year in statistics: the Trust now has 76 Homes, 3,300 day care facilities for over 1,000 patients, a devoted staff nearly matching the resident population in numbers and an annual turnover now anticipated to top well over £70,000,000

The year has been one of almost dizzy activity, getting off to a busy start when the Board of Trustees met to update the Memorandum and Articles of Association to reflect the current conditions within which the Trust operates. It was agreed with the Venerable Order to

maintain the numbers of Trustees at ten, increasing their trustee representation from two to three.

Spiritual and physical well-being

Neil Weir was appointed Medical Trustee, whilst Archbishop Couve de Murville as the BASMOM Chaplain was joined by the Very Reverend Raymond Furnell, sometime Dean of York Minster, representing the Venerable Order. Together they have begun pastoral visits.

Training and development of staff and residents

Training continues as a constant feature in the Trust, with expanding ISO Accreditation and necessary qualifications achieved at various

staff levels. We made great progress in reducing Agency dependence - a great challenge for the new Gloucestershire operation. With emphasis on providing interest in residents' daily lives, a coordinator has been appointed in each home. As the age group and physical condition of residents advances, outside activity becomes limited and engagement of interest in the homes more necessary.

County expansion

Gloucestershire: 1st May – the Trust assumed responsibility for the former Gloucestershire County Council Homes: 900 residents in 22 homes. This almost doubled the Trust's size.

Oxfordshire: the 68-bed Meadows home in Didcot, commissioned in autumn 2004, was formally opened in spring, whilst Madley Park House, Witney, with 60 beds of up-to-date accommodation was formally opened in December. In Woodstock a replacement home nears completion, to be commissioned early this year. Work has begun in Oxford for the largest home, 80 beds, incorporating extra care accommodation – a first for the Trust.

Wiltshire: a new 60 bed residential care home commissioned in Marlborough.

Lincolnshire: negotiations for a contract to match those in the other three counties began in October; completion due shortly.

A busy and rewarding year for all involved.

Heroism of the death of the martyrs

Fra' Matthew Festing, the Grand Prior, emphasises what the sacrifice meant

WE LIVE DURING A STRANGE PERIOD IN HISTORY when children are taught

'Comparative Religion' and leave school believing it does not matter what religion you profess because we are all going off to Heaven happily together with people of the same sex who are 'married' and with those whose lives in an earlier age would have given rise to great scandal because they breed outside

marriage. No wonder many young people are astonished that anyone could possibly have been prepared to suffer and die for the Faith because they were not prepared to commit grave sin.

Earlier times were different, and there are enough English and Welsh martyrs of the 16th and 17th centuries to fill up our calendar for the whole year. They range from the close relations of the monarch, to

Margaret Clitheroe, the wife of a York butcher, from Nicholas Postgate executed also at York when he was over 80 years old, to those scarcely out of childhood. All of them were prepared to suffer an appalling death rather than do what they knew to be gravely sinful. The Crown of Martyrdom was earned indeed.

The procedure by which you would meet your death was well known in the 16th century.

Those who were prepared to endure it for the Faith were the Bravest of the Brave. We must not allow the memory of what they did to fade.

Papal Inauguration



Rome, 24 April 2005: Our Grand Master, Fra' Andrew Bertie, with Pope Benedict XVI after the Mass for the inauguration of the Pontificate.



Protecting marginalised members of society

The special focus of an Order NGO which cares for victims of leprosy and HIV-positive mothers and infants

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE ORDER OF MALTA (CIOMAL) is an Order Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) based in Geneva. Its humanitarian efforts in the developing world centre on two concerns: leprosy (in Brazil, Cambodia, Cuba, Senegal and Thailand) and HIV-positive mothers and infants (in Argentina and Mexico), to care for marginalised members of society. Its President is our confrere, John de Salis who, as former ambassador of the Order to Thailand and Cambodia, has long standing first hand experience of the work in the field. Even in the 21st century, sufferers of certain diseases are still cast out by society.

Action to face the problem

CIOMAL cares for both the patient and his community, through rehabilitation regimes for patients and training programmes for the community. Cures can be effected in as little as six weeks or up to a year of treatment. The patient can return to his community and learn to support himself, in treatment followup, and in development of small business enterprises. CIOMAL helps with all these stages.

For the HIV-positive pregnant mother, CIOMAL advises on care and treatment to give the best chances of the child not being born HIV positive, and helps look after the infants and the families of those involved.

Publicising and funding the action

The President of the British Association, Rupert Loewenstein, recognising the importance of this specialist international Order work – the outcast figure of the leper is a stereotype from biblical times – has generously financed a film which describes CIOMAL's work. Shot in Cambodia and Thailand by Nick Crean, a professional and a member of the Order, it shows how leprosy patients are identified, treated, rehabilitated and helped to return to their communities.

If you would like a CD of the film, please contact Nick Crean, c/o BASMOM, Tel 020 7286 1414. To continue their work, CIOMAL needs your help. The World Health Organisation has said that leprosy is almost eradicated. But it is estimated that one person is infected every minute of the day.

Please contact Francis Junod, Secretary General, at CIOMAL, Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28A 1209 GENEVA – SWITZERLAND Phone (0041) (0)22/733.22.52; Fax (0041) (0)22/734.00.60; Email ciomal@bluewin.ch

Heroes:

exceptionally gifted, capable of something momentous, or?

Charles Guthrie, whose military life took him into many situations of danger and conflict, is uniquely placed to consider the role of the hero. Below is an extract from a talk he gave some months ago on this fascinating topic

THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY DICTIONARY defines a hero as a person noted or admired for nobility, courage, outstanding achievements, a great warrior. The Greeks believed a hero was a man of superhuman qualities, favoured by the gods.

Today, if we accept the definition, we find that heroes are seldom suitable role models for one's children; they are not always good or nice people. Being brave does not always make you a hero. And a hero to some is a monster to others.

A current example is Osama bin Laden, a hero to tens of thousands around the world. Why? He is fine looking, speaks well, has shared the dangers of his followers. He risks his life. He was once enormously rich and has spent his own money on his beliefs. He is no longer enormously rich. He, like most Arabs, understands history. He uses history. His speeches refer to the shame and humiliation of Muslims whose civilisation came to an end when the Ottoman Empire fell; to the Moors driven out of Spain and the crimes of the Crusaders; to Napoleon slaughtering the Mamelukes, to the creation of Israel and the carve-up of the Islamic countries by the USA, the UK and France. I can understand why to hundreds of thousands he is a hero, whatever we think.

What makes a hero?

Who are our own heroes? What have they in common? Exceptionally gifted, capable of something momentous – the defeat of an enemy, the salvation of a race? In times of emergency heroes are looked for. 'Cometh the hour, cometh the man.' There is some truth in the saying 'It is an unhappy land that looks for heroes'. Only a fortunate land has the confidence to dispense with heroes. Currently it is fashionable to lament the littleness of those who are often referred to as heroes: footballers, pop stars and super

models. But that is one of the privileges of good times. It is desperation which prompts people to crave a champion or protector – real heroes.

Another complication is that history does not always speak the truth. Heroes are often created or vilified for shoddy political reasons during or after the times they lived in.

Historical heroes

A few examples of those we think of as heroes: Achilles, who had to choose between two destinies: huge wealth, his father's kingdom, or as a warrior to win such glory that his name would live in song forever. He bought immortality at the cost of his own life. But he was also a traitor who prayed that his fellow Greeks might be defeated.

Alcibiades was rich, aristocratic, talented, a winner of three events in the Olympic Games. He was beautiful, a bully, arrogant libertine, shrewd diplomat, orator, a traitor many times, with a rare and precious gift (essential to a military commander) for winning his men's love. He deserted Athens – his own country – to serve Sparta.

The Spanish hero El Cid was a never-defeated warrior who rose to be a fabulously wealthy ruler of a great city. He was brutal, cunning, dishonest. His story has been repeatedly rewritten to fit the political agendas of subsequent generations.

Sir Francis Drake was, in his own time, one of England's favourite heroes. A great seaman, fantastically courageous, genuinely devout, who found his religious faith no bar to piracy, murder and slave trading – a scoundrel who caught the nation's imagination. Although Drake is remembered as the victor of the Armada, the victory owed more to Hawkins and Howard.

Heroes in recent times

Who are my special heroes? Certainly Nelson, an astonishing naval commander, venerated as England's saviour and champion. A flawed character, but what we desperately needed when Bonaparte threatened to invade our country.

And Wellington – the greatest soldier who ever led British forces. Wellington's career is unparalleled. His final victory, Waterloo, created the conditions for the British to prosper and achieve an influence not enjoyed before. He did much to remove the fear of French military power, threatening us since 1689. For any army officer he remains a model. He gave Europe peace until the Crimean War and our national survival was not threatened for another hundred years.

Wellington's fame would be even greater if he had been killed at Waterloo, like Nelson at Trafalgar. But he lived long and became immersed in politics, which so often damages reputations.

I cannot view Napoleon as a hero. He was responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands; he was

“We should not confuse heroes with role models or celebrities...”

careless with his soldiers' lives; he disrupted European nations and delayed progress in many fields.

Winston Churchill was a hero and the one hero I have met. Like many great men, people felt very strongly about him. He was not universally admired. He was not easy, not always loyal, but he was the man who had led the nation through the darkest, most difficult, dangerous and frightening time in our history.

Unsung heroes

Today's heroes: I must include Pope John Paul, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela. But I do not think it wrong to stray from the dictionary when we talk of heroes.

We all know people whom we view, rightly, as heroes. They are not famous; they are ordinary people with an acute sense of duty and very often with great compassion – a

mother whose life is taken up with tending a severely handicapped child; a doctor, nurse or an aid worker who devotes their lives to the needy. Not so glamorous but still heroic are those in the work place and factory who protect the vulnerable. These are all heroes, but not in the sense that Achilles or Churchill were heroes.

Heroes in the service of one's country

Another type of hero is the person who is courageous, who risks or sacrifices their life for others. I have been privileged to meet servicemen and women who are this sort of hero and I have witnessed great acts of bravery in battle.

Why do they do it? Colonel H.Jones, whom I knew well, who won his VC in the Falklands, was a very different person to Private Beharry who recently received his from the Queen. H.Jones was a fine leader with a great sense of duty, something of a romantic about soldiering and the way he acted when the need arose should not have surprised anybody. But I do not think he was very typical of those who are brave on the battlefield.

I have close knowledge of soldiers who carry out courageous feats because of their close group, their mates. Private Beharry was such a one. The bonding achieved in a regiment helps. Training helps. But I do not think most battlefield heroes think much about their country, the flag or the Queen when risking their lives. Religious belief may help, but supporting and not letting down your mates seems by far the most important factor.

There is a myth that 'tough nuts' as illustrated by films such as 'The Dirty Dozen' make heroes. They may, on rare occasions. But I have not seen such people. The heroic soldiers I know were decent young men who did what they did because they thought it right.

But the hero who does something in the heat of battle is not the same as the bomb disposal officer who spends many hours defusing a massive bomb in a shopping centre.

We need our heroes. But we should not confuse heroes with role models or celebrities. We should not debunk heroes, and we should accept that heroes can be sinners too – which does not necessarily exclude them from the Hall of Fame.

The Foreign Aid Service

Nicolas Reuttner outlines the range of FAS activities in 2005, from Indonesia to Russia

THIS YEAR WE RAISED £30,000: the FAS dinner at Boodles – almost £20,000; the Carol Concert, organised together with the Parish of St Patrick's, Soho Square – £10,000. Many thanks to all of you who have made these events so successful. During 2005, projects we supported included:

Tsunami in Asia

Worldwide, the Order has collected over £18m in donations to help victims of the December 2004 catastrophe. Over the next five years the money raised will rebuild communities and restore the functionality of the affected areas.

Mostar: a care programme of home visits

We continued to support a local

NGO, Altruist. The project is a care programme offering those in need basic support - medical (with a trained nurse) and socio-psychological (with a social worker). Volunteers do much of the work: home visits for medical care, psychological support for war victims, and lobbying on victims' behalf to support them, through to practical solutions such as finding food and medicines. In the first three months of 2005, the team made 654 home visits. We have been supporting this project for three years. Annual running cost: about £9,000.

Kosovo: specialised training for young mothers

The obliteration of family structures during the recent war led to loss of basic knowledge – for example, a

generation of young mothers did not have their own mothers for advice on pregnancy or baby care.

The Order's response: a training programme for young women in remoter areas of the Balkans on personal and infant healthcare. In 2005, FAS financed this training in the Brod region. For a cost of £3,200, we trained 12 rural communities in Kosovo, including 70 target families.

St Petersburg: a soup kitchen feeds 600 every day

We helped finance a soup kitchen in St Petersburg to feed 600 people a day throughout the winter. Average pensions in Russia are about £30 a month, rent around £20, food the next largest expense, with basic rations not much cheaper than in Western Europe.

Since 1992 the Order has been running the soup kitchen. But demand is significantly larger than the team can provide, and our help is limited by our funds.

The project works closely with the church, and prayers are said regularly at the kitchen. It has also created benefits to the community, as the employees are local and the food and materials are sourced locally. Each meal costs 60p (ingredients, preparation and staff costs).

We also currently reviewing projects in Albania, Sudan and Asia. Donations to FAS projects can be made online, through the Foreign Aid Service (FAS). Please see our website: www.orderofmaltafas.org



Soup kitchen in St Petersburg



Naples and the Grand Tour

An Association group marvels at the baroque splendour of a former kingdom

AS YOU HAVE READ ELSEWHERE in this newsletter, detailed planning is the key to a successful event. Dudley Heathcote's organisation for the October pilgrimage to Naples, dedicated to the memory of his wife, Lesley, was faultless. As it turned out, a malaise kept him away, but his confreres attested to a series of beautiful churches and services as well as warm hospitality at the Grand Priory of Naples and Sicily.

After an opening Mass in honour of Blessed Gerard, founder of the

Order, the group visited the Sanctuary of Montevergine at Mercogliano, built in 1119 in honour of the Virgin Mary by San Guglielmo da Vercelli, a young hermit monk. Thereafter, Mass each morning at a splendid baroque church selected by Dudley honoured the saint of the day – all knights of the Order, distinguished in their service to the faith, some as martyrs. Visits to the monastery of La Certosa, to Gesu Nuovo and to the Duomo of San Gennaro were exceptional highlights among a week filled with them.

Three weeks of care in Mandini: another kind of pilgrimage

Piers Birtwistle joined Lillian Molloy in a deeply affecting experience

THE ORDER'S AIDS HOSPICE and Children's Home in Mandini, South Africa, run by the Brotherhood of the Blessed Gerard, is regularly visited by members of the British Association and volunteers. Lillian Molloy, who goes every year, went in June to teach First Aid Courses to the Zulu volunteers in the Care Centre; Piers Birtwistle went to work as a volunteer in the Hospice and Children's Home. 88% of the local population are HIV positive and there is a long waiting list for the new anti retroviral programme.

After an induction day, Piers began three weeks of tasks, varied and often emotional. He started with the 27 children in the care of the Order, some orphaned, some abandoned, some physically disabled, but most emotionally traumatised, aged from a few months to 10 years.

Extracts from his diary describe some of his experiences:

On the children, who soon had Piers entertaining them with stories, singing and games: 'Much to my amazement, when I asked them what songs they knew, I had 24 Zulu children singing We All Live in a Yellow Submarine...'

On Zulu music: 'At Sunday Mass, the Zulu helpers sang glorious Zulu songs and Christian hymns, all in different descants and perfect pitch. The sound made one's skin tingle.'

On the surrounding countryside:

'We drove through the heart of Zululand. Kraals (the Zulus' homes) dotted the hills as far as the eye could see... children running around outside their huts or tending their cattle, mothers with little ones coming back up the hills with enormous buckets of water perched on their heads to bring home for cooking, washing and drinking. It is a struggle to educate the Zulus on the importance of boiling water before they drink it.'

On the care environment: 'During the day I am torn between crying with emotion, laughing at the absurdity of my situation and being overwhelmed, almost suffocated with this avalanche of love, purity, honesty, decency and selflessness that everyone has here... Simple things are so impressive - such as a tea party today, not just tea and cakes, but the arrival of all the Zulu volunteers, who came in and sang. Each one picked up a child and danced with them, either on their shoulders or in their arms.'

On the end of each day: 'Before I went off duty I had a last look around the wards. Saying goodnight to the patients, I was overwhelmed by the love that is in this hospice. It sends shivers down my spine...'

On befriending a very small dying patient: '...my little friend Menzie, aged 3. Over the last two weeks I had become so fond of him and spent much time with him. He had an AIDS-related illness where he shed one entire layer of skin every



24 hours. I spent half an hour in the morning and then half an hour in the evening peeling off all the loose skin which was irritating him. He was so brave, and never complained. His entire scalp was peeling which then got caught up in the little black curls on his head. I set about covering him in baby oil until he glistened. He loved massages. He would lie there smiling, very quietly, free from scratching, temporarily – a brief respite from a miserable three year life.'

On recognising your help: 'I thank you all, as I am sure would all the people I have helped looked after, if they could. You have helped make their final days comfortable and dignified.'

On the work of the Hospice: 'Every day the Hospice ambulance goes out into the bush to bring in terminally ill patients from the most squalid surroundings; often they have terrible, untreated bedsores. Most are young people coming to the Hospice to have a dignified, clean and loved end to their lives...'

As a professional photographer Piers took over 600 photographs for Fr Gerard to use for fundraising. The Hospice needs support. Please contact Fr Gerard on www.bbg.org.za

THIS YEAR'S PILGRIMAGE to Walsingham was organised by Tim Orchard and Nick Kenney to bring something of the Lourdes pilgrimage atmosphere to the Walsingham weekend.

A host crisis

Setting out from London, the pilgrimage came together in the chapel of Hilborough House, the home of kind hosts Hugh and Emilie van Cutsem. They had gone to great trouble, making their chapel accessible for wheelchairs. Our pilgrimage chaplain, His Grace Archbishop Maurice Couve de Murville, said Mass. But the discovery that there were no unconsecrated hosts meant he had to start with his sermon. Meanwhile, Hugh set off for the church in Swaffham to get supplies – a case of the host dashing out for some hosts, as it were. (Hugh was

Pilgrims for a thousand years

Nick Kenney reports on the June pilgrimage to Walsingham

heard to say the next day that he had driven his car to and from Swaffham "mostly on two wheels"! We hope the patron saint of speed-cameras was looking after him.)

Mass, then a wonderful tea, and it was time to drive the last 30 miles to Walsingham.

Candlelight procession

After supper, Archbishop Maurice led a torchlight Rosary in the gardens of Elmham House. Hymns were led by Fiona MacPherson and her scratch choir. The skies were heavily overcast. But as we prayed amid flickering candles, the clouds parted to reveal the moon. A

beautiful, prayerful silence fell on our group. The presence of Our Lady was palpable. For most, this was the highlight of the weekend.

Sunday morning: Friday Market, Walsingham's central square, and the procession to the Catholic Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, a little over a mile away with in all 60 pilgrims. We took a route through beautiful, flower-filled countryside. The Slipper Chapel's bells rang out as we approached, and, following the example of pilgrims for a thousand years, we paid homage to Our Lady at England's National Shrine.

All those who came did so with a light heart

The pilgrimage was a happy and a holy one. It was also the biggest such gathering for many years and all who came did so with a light heart – for each other and for Our Lady. In that sense, the spirit of Lourdes was indeed replicated in Walsingham. Particular thanks go to our HPs, all of whom showed enormous patience throughout the weekend – even when we discovered that we should have brought towels!

This year's pilgrimage is provisionally scheduled for 8th-9th July, 2006.



On the road to Salamanca

Peter Drummond-Murray describes a touching journey by the Delegation of Scotland and the Northern Marches

Thirty members of the Delegation, which is part of the British Association, stayed at the Scots College, Salamanca, for a study weekend, 2-3 October, led by Fra' Matthew Festing, Grand Prior of England. Salamanca is a beautiful city. The Spaniards certainly spent the wealth of the New World well in the old one. The Cathedral is magnificent, Plaza Mayor quite splendid. We looked at a church façade in the plateresque style, a peculiarly Spanish contribution to architecture. Everywhere were stone-carved coats of arms, the great Spanish contribution to the noble science.

On the Saturday we visited Avila,

a grand medieval walled city, the home of St Teresa, saw the church where she prayed and the convent where she lived. Then on to Alba de Tormes where the Saint is buried. This town gave a title to the Dukes of Berwick, descendants of Marshal Berwick, bastard son of King James VII and II by Arabella Churchill, sister of the Duke of Marlborough. It is understood that the present Duke of Berwick is James Fitzjames Stuart, Duke of Penaranda, the Dukedom of Alba having descended to the last Duke's daughter.

Several of us left speaking Spanish fluently, having added *jamon*, *ternero* and *una botella de el vino de la casa por favor*, to our vocabularies.



"CAN YOU GIVE ME THE SAME TABLETS?"

The importance of ceremonial

Brian Forsyth explains why

ANY COUNTRY, SOCIETY OR ORGANISATION is judged by the perception of its constituent parts. Our own country is a good example, with history, noble traditions, beautiful countryside, fine buildings and still, to a degree, its efficiency.

But perhaps it is most renowned for its great lay occasions such as the State Opening of Parliament, the Trooping the Colour, the Lord Mayor's Procession, as well as the Changing of the Guard, the Ceremony of the Keys, and a range of other ceremonies including the Masses and services in our great cathedrals and Remembrance Day. What do they have in common?

the middle level of events. We are greatly involved in both the spiritual and temporal aspects. The most important event in our calendar is St John's Day. This involves a beautiful and complex Mass and associated ceremonies such as the initiation of new members, presentation of medals, a procession and a social gathering over lunch. The Order's status and quality are judged very much on our performance on this day, as well as at the Papal Anniversary Mass, the inauguration of a new Archbishop, and the Venerable Order of St John's Annual Service in St. Paul's cathedral.

Hence, our dedicated ceremonial staff are always aware of the need to devote much time and effort to achieving as near perfect a display as possible.

Ceremonial shows stability

Any revolution swiftly results in anarchy. Witness the stripping of the altars, part of the church's ceremonial superstructure at the Reformation.

Queen Mary I swiftly restored the old ceremonies, although they were swept away again under her sister's rule. More violent was the immediate aftermath of the French Revolution. But Napoleon quickly restored the rule of law and the self respect of the people by reinstating the old ceremonies - to a peak of excellence which is still admired today.

Long may ceremonial continue to play an important part in the 900-year tradition of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. And we thoroughly enjoy it, too!

Home visits for the lonely

The Dames of London (DOLS) service now in its third year

Loneliness is an affliction often found in big cities, which is why the DOLS have established a visiting service for the lonely, elderly housebound. The service, now in its third year, offers a routine of visits to those who cannot get out and who are on their own, or whose families are far away from them. Please telephone Caroline de la Force in the BASMOM office if you wish to offer your services or to suggest someone who would appreciate a visit.

Chaplain retires

"As I decline into extreme old age, I become more and more conscious of mortality but I also experience the quality of the person, by which I mean the value of every human being. That value comes from our relation to Almighty God, which will never disappear. As God is eternal, so our relation to him is eternal, too; as Christians we know that human beings are soul as well as body. For us Christians, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is our future. If we believe that, our attitude to other people becomes different; if society really meant it, its attitude to human life would be different. It is good to know that the work of our hospital and of our care homes is entirely based on belief in the value of human beings. I hope that every one who visits them feels that; it is something that we should be very proud of." *Extract from his retiring Advent letter as the Order's Principal Chaplain, the Most Reverend Maurice Couve de Murville Archbishop Emeritus of Birmingham*

Activity Report

Revisited and updated in autumn 2005, it is now available online

The digital version of the revised and updated edition of the Activity Report of the Order of Malta is now available in English online. The publication in PDF format can be downloaded from the Activity Reports section of this site.

The Report includes the range of activities undertaken by Order organisations throughout 2004 and up until the end of September 2005. It also carries up to date information for the Order's senior office bearers, all currently appointed ambassadors and all addresses for Order organisations around the world. To download the Report, go to the Activity Report section on the Order's global website: www.orderofmalta.org/rapporti.asp?idlingua=5

Another heroine

In December the British Association moved offices from Brampton House to 58 Grove End Road. The move entailed packing up years of documents, a range of office and computer equipment, pictures, an entire library and an archive. Without the amazing resources, cheerfulness and patience of Caroline de la Force, it could never have been accomplished within the deadline needed. From our hearts we all thank our irreplaceable Caroline.

There is no obstacle – except, perhaps, steps!

Henry Lorimer lauds a local Scottish hero



THERE ARE MANY TYPES OF VOLUNTEER – some are truly heroes and heroines who, in spite of problems of their own, are shining examples to fellow volunteers. Kathleen Welsh MBE is one such person.

The Dial-a-Journey service

The Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey, visits the housebound/disabled throughout the central belt of Scotland. Kathleen, in a wheelchair since birth, first used the service because her dying father was in a hospice and she was unable to visit him. Dial-a-Journey was devised for just such a situation.

Kathleen was so impressed by the service that she immediately became involved in it. With her drive, focus and indomitable personality she heads up the operation, with the able support of manager Duncan Hearnsum. They make a formidable team. Kathleen has been the Chairman of Dial-a-Journey for the past 10 years.

Reverse equality

Duncan says of her: 'Whilst she has a severe disability there is no self pity and she feels that those with disabilities must never take advantage of their affliction over those without disability.' One might

Kathleen Welsh MBE

call this reverse equality. Kathleen also extends her commitment to represent Dial-a-Journey (and therefore the Companions) with numerous disability-related organisations, in particular the Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA). She is also involved in helping and fundraising for a children's Hospice in Kinross.

As an active Companions Council member and Knights Ball Committee member she attends the Ball each year.

If I were to write her epitaph it would be *nihil obstat* (there is no obstacle) except perhaps steps! I can think of no one more deserving of the MBE she was awarded two years ago.

The Companions organisation was established in Scotland to meet the need of those interested in helping the work of the Order. Membership is open to all. For more information: Henry Lorimer Convener, Companions of the Order of Malta Bellevue Cottage, Ferniehaugh, Dolphinton, Peeblesshire EH46 7HJ Tel/Fax 01968 682 625

“...excellence is not achieved without detailed planning, continuity, rehearsal, good old spit and polish...”

Good, in many cases superb, ceremonial.

Such excellence is not achieved without detailed planning, continuity, rehearsal, good old spit and polish and delegation down to the most junior functionary.

Performance and quality

How does this relate to our Order? Almost perfectly, as an example of

St John's Hospice: sale success

The SUPER SALE held at the Hall, Cadogan Street, Chelsea on Saturday 16 July 2005 in aid of St John's Hospice raised £3,328. Anne Jaffray thanks all who helped to make it such a success.

This year, an evening of music and dining, to be held in a Chelsea home, is planned for late September.

For more information about the event, please telephone: the organiser, Anne Jaffray on 020 7584 0249 or the treasurer, Philip Henderson 020 7731 5216

Dates for the Diary, 2006

Association Retreat	10–12 March
Dames Retreat	16–18 March
Worldwide Presidents' Meeting	23–26 April
Lourdes Pilgrimage	28 April–4 May
Corpus Christi	15 June
Venerable Order Service at St Paul's	18 June
St John's Day	23 June
OMV Lourdes Pilgrimage	23–30 July
Annual Dinner	23 November
Northern Day of Recollection	27 November
Chaplains Meeting	23 November
Formation Day	30 November
Annual Requiem	30 November
Douai Day of Recollection	4 December
Council Meetings	26 January 28 April 15 September
Committee Meetings	18 January 27 April 27 September

Lourdes Pilgrimage 2006

Friday 28th April – Thursday 4th May

Booking now.

For more information, or a booking form, please contact:

Hospitaller Ltd,
Mantle Hill
Bellingham, Hexham
Northumberland NE48 2LB

The Knights of Malta Ball

The Assembly Rooms,
George Street, Edinburgh

Friday 17th February 2006 at 7.00 pm

Write to The Ball Secretary Castle Craig,
Blyth Bridge, Peeblesshire EH46 7DH

Tel 01721 725363 Email info@castlecraig.co.uk