



22 August 2012

Dear Companion,

SUMMER 2012 NEWSLETTER

‘By their fruits ye shall know them’ Mat 7:20

CHAIRMAN’S MESSAGE

Far be it from me opportunistically to speak about the Olympic spirit, the surge of goodwill, the enthusiasm for volunteering. This is nothing new of course to Companions of Malta, but it should encourage all of us in the charitable work we do as Companions, in faith (who can forget Katie Taylor’s interview), and give us courage to spread the word to friends and colleagues that if they want to volunteer they need look no further than the CoM.

Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that these are difficult times for the British Association of the Order of Malta, so it is all the more important that we Companions do everything in our power to ‘keep the flame alive’. The present problems will be resolved, but in the meantime let the traditions of service of the Order to the poor and sick be upheld through our work.

In this spirit can I remind everyone of our commitment to the Hospital Pilgrims who come with us to Lourdes. It is never too late to pick up the Red Book and stay in touch, particularly with someone who is local to you. I hope also that you will be pleased to read something below of the things Companions have been doing since our Spring Newsletter, and will be able to join in with on-going and future activities, whether in person or through your prayers.

Birmingham & West Midlands: Adrian de Redman
[blue.candle2@hotmail.com – 07799 188 628]

Once again our Birmingham Companions led by Adrian de Redman have done us proud, leading the way on 09 June 2012 in the Newman Pilgrimage at the Birmingham Oratory, and afterwards hosting a lunch attended by the Mayor of Birmingham amongst other honoured and welcome guests.

It is great to see such an active and expanding group in Birmingham, and particularly their commitment to prayer and the essential spiritual dimension of the CoM, including weekly Rosary.

Thank you to all Companions and Members of the Order in Birmingham and the Midlands for their support. Please be in touch with Adrian to obtain details of the next monthly meeting and other Birmingham activities; he already has a date for the Newman Pilgrimage next year!

Scotland: Liam Devlin [liam@liamdevlin.co.uk – 07968 119 895]

Many thanks indeed to Gordon Brankin, who is taking a lead in the East of Scotland, for organising a group of Companions to attend the annual celebration of the Scalan Seminary on 01 July 2012. This is not just a great celebration, but like every endeavour of this kind raises awareness of the Companions, both with the Clergy and the wider public.

Gordon is a trained and active street pastor, and if you are based near or in Aberdeenshire and would be interested in supporting him in this or other projects please be in touch on gordonibrankin@btinternet.com (note the extra 'i').

Thanks also to Susan MacGregor and her husband for their Garden Opening in aid of the Companions; it was very generous of them and we are very grateful for their continued support.

From Glasgow, Liam reports that a good number of Companions and members of the Order lent their support to two of our Companions, Margaret Ann and Peter McCann, who held another of their spectacular Gala Days at Castle Craig, where many disabled people were entertained with riding, shooting, drumming, karaoke and a wonderful barbecue.

Further, Scottish Companions and members of the Order will want to note the following future events:

1. Friday September 14th September, 7pm. Pollokshields Church, Glasgow: the Osiligi Warriors from Kenya will perform in aid of Maasai Poverty relief. Tickets £5 from Liam Devlin. liam@liamdevlin.co.uk

2. Friday 26th - Sunday 28th October: Activity Weekend for people with Special Needs, Whithaugh Park, Newcastleton, Scottish Borders. Companions who wish to help should contact Liam Devlin. liam@liamdevlin.co.uk Liam notes that if you cannot come for the whole weekend, you are welcome to join up for Mass on Saturday evening at 6 p.m. followed by supper and a social evening.

3. Friday 2nd November, Order Requiem, St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh. All welcome. Details from philip.scrope@smithsgore.co.uk

4. Friday 30th November, Ceilidh for Kibera, Christ the King Church Hall, Glasgow: a St Andrew's Night Dance in aid of the Companions Projects in Nairobi. Tickets £10 from Liam Devlin. liam@liamdevlin.co.uk

5. Monday 10th December: Christmas Soirée, Dundas Castle, South Queensferry, by kind invitation of Companion Lady Stewart-Clark. Tickets £40 from Liam Devlin liam@liamdevlin.co.uk

Looking further in to the future, between Thursday 7th - Monday 18th February 2013, there will be the 7th Volunteer Week in Nairobi. Another party of Companions will spend a week or so working in schools and medical centres in Kibera Slum, Kibera. There will also be an opportunity to see at first-hand some of the work of Malteser International. The approximate cost is £450 plus flights. All Companions are welcome and should contact Liam Devlin for details. liam@liamdevlin.co.uk

The Northern Marches: Fred Wyrley-Birch
f.wyrley-birch@andersonandgarland.com – 07790 132 834]

Thanks to Fred for his offer of help with the Companions website, which we are labouring to repair and re-launch after it was attacked by a virus. As you know Fred is working on pulling

together the Companions and the Members of the Order in his area and pursuing various initiatives.

Please be in touch with Fred and give him all the support you can. In particular if you have any friends, relatives or contacts in the Newcastle area whom you think may be interested in getting involved point them in Fred's direction.

Gloucestershire & Wiltshire: Sarah Cornell
[sarahcornell@sky.com - 07817 499 829]

Both OSJCT Homes in Malmesbury and Cirencester were highly delighted to each receive a Jubilee Bench from the Companions. They were delivered in time for the late arrival of the summer. Letters of appreciation have been received.

Led enthusiastically by Sarah, the G&W Companions continue to organise many outings for our elderly friends in the Care Homes. The sort of grassroots work that is at the heart of being a Companion, and immensely appreciated by those we can help. We in turn are grateful to those who kindly invite us to their homes and gardens.

The G&W Companions are holding their annual Coffee Morning at Athelstan House, Malmesbury, on Thursday 4th October 2012. Any Companion will be most welcome. It is a great opportunity to see one of the excellent OSJCT homes.

Oxford University CoM: John Eidinow OM
[john.eidinow@stb.ox.ac.uk]

John Eidinow is working on the development of the Companions in Oxford University. Plans for the Retreat/Day of Recollection for Companions and possibly OSJCHT care homes at Merton College mentioned in the last newsletter remain live, and this will take place in due course.

Perhaps more pressing though with a new academic year approaching John would very much like to receive information from Companions about any sons, daughters, God-children, etc., and (ex-)OMV who are students at the University whom he might enlist.

South East: Jamie O'Meara
[jamie.omeara@btinternet.com - 07771 566 100]

On Saturday 26 May 2012 an eager group of Companions led by Jamie gathered in Arundel to assist in putting on a Jubilee Tea Party at the St. Wilfrid's OSJ Care Home in Arundel. The sun shone, the bunting streamed, red white and blue cakes heaped high on red white and blue paper plates. It was a great day, much appreciated I think by residents, and we are very grateful to Jean and her wonderful team for making us so welcome.

This was a marvellous initiative, and again showed how much we as Companions can contribute by simply lending a hand in the OSJCT care homes, making cups of tea and chatting with residents. Indeed I hope we can repeat this success more widely (see below).

London: Peter Allingham
[peter@ancient.co.uk - 07973 550 319]

You will recall reading in our last Newsletter that our CoM Open House on Tuesday evenings at St. Patrick's, Soho Square, feeding the 'forgotten' homeless particularly from Eastern Europe was in full swing, with a pool of over 200 volunteers serving at least 60 hot meals a week to the homeless and hungry as well as providing many take-away meals.

Unfortunately though, despite the tremendous success of this project, Fr Alexander Sherbrooke decided at the end of June that he wanted to take over Tuesday evenings for the parish. This is obviously a huge disappointment for us given the time, love, effort and funds that we devoted to this project.

Fear not, however, none of this is wasted, since then we have been looking at a number of different options to re-establish our own 'Welcome House' project in the West End. Although this has not been as easy as might have been expected, we are working on a new proposal, details of which we expect to announce shortly.

Peter also has a number of other projects in the offing for London, of which more in due course.

South West: Duncan McKechnie
[\[dajmck@tiscali.co.uk\]](mailto:dajmck@tiscali.co.uk)

Once again thanks to your subscriptions the severely disabled children of the St. Rose RC School and their carers enjoyed a fantastic week's Summer Camp at the Calvert Trust Exmoor from 09 July 2012.

Our involvement in this great venture began with Michael Festing, but thanks this year to Duncan for his organisation, not least in ensuring that the week's camp opened with Mass for the children, their helpers and those Companions who were able to attend.

I was sorry not to be there myself to enjoy a bit of abseiling or boating, but look forward to getting there next year, when I hope this can be repeated. The timing will be similar, so again bear this in mind for younger Companions or children or God children who may be on a gap year or might simply fit this into their Summer holiday.

Again, thank you for your support, without which this fantastic week may well not happen at all.

Kenya

Sadly I must begin my report on Kenya with news of the tragic death of Gianfranco Cicogna Mozzoni, the Order's Ambassador to Kenya, who died in a plane crash on 30 June 2012. He was devoted to the Order's charitable endeavours in Kenya, a country he loved, and was a huge supporter of Alice Murphy, the CoM main point of contact in Nairobi.

Gianfranco's memorial mass will be held at 12pm at the Little Oratory, Knightsbridge, London, and his widow has made it clear that any members of the Order and Companions who are able to attend will be most welcome.

Given Gianfranco's support for Alice, it is fitting that Alice is about to launch a new project in Kenya that I am sure we Companions will also want to support. The project is a handwashing and sanitary towel programme. It has 2 aims. Firstly, to install handbasins and soap in primary schools to prevent the avoidable spread of diarrheal pathogens and consequent disease. Secondly, to supply sanitary towel kits to adolescent girls in areas of poverty to stop unsafe improvisation, which is prevalent, and enable girls to complete their school education.

The proposal is for a 3 year programme, implemented through the Order of Malta Embassy in Nairobi, and starting with the Gitiba Primary School, Dagoretti, Nairobi. As soon as Alice's detailed proposal is finalised I will post it to Companions.

Please see the latest issue of Drumbeat (the Order's Newsletter from Africa) for a further tribute to Gianfranco and a fuller details of the Order's work in Kenya.

Other Key Events

Firstly, and fast approaching, is the annual pilgrimage to Walsingham. This is a great opportunity for Companions, OMV and members of the Order to come together in prayer.

Please note though that because of limited medical cover, only the OMV are bringing HP's. But all Companions who do not need nor are likely to need medical attention over the weekend are absolutely welcome to attend. The weekend promises to be a great Maltese get together, and I look forward to seeing you there (subject to the following).

Saturday 15 September 2012, 'Westminster to Walsingham' Chairman's 100 Mile Sponsored Cycle. Just a little fundraiser by your Chairman and anyone who is mad enough to join me, to raise money for our new Welcome House. The geographically minded will realise Walsingham is actually 156miles avoiding Mways and dual carriageway, but we shall leave London by train to finish in the day. Email me on pletman@3harecourt.com for more details. When I have sorted out a Just Giving page or similar, I will let you know.

Finally, impossible though it seems it is not too early to start planning for Christmas! Following on from the success of our Jubilee Tea Party in Arundel, it would be great if we could all link up and help in our nearest OSJ Care Home. The contacts established in this way will also provide a platform for the further development of Companions.com, our befriend a resident scheme. Again if you would like to get involved in this contact me (pletman@3harecourt.com or hletman@aol.com) or your regional coordinator or convener.

Also on the Christmas front, the proposed date for our Carol Concert is 10 December 2012 which this year we are planning to host jointly with the OMV.

KEY DATES

14 September	7pm. Pollokshields Church, Glasgow: the Osiligi Warriors from Kenya will perform in aid of Maasai Poverty relief. Tickets £5 from Liam Devlin.
14-16 September	Walsingham Pilgrimage. Contact Joe Daly [Pilgrimage@Walsingham2012.org.uk]
15 September	'Westminster to Walsingham' Chairman's Sponsored Cycle. Contact Paul Letman
29 September	Memorial Mass for Gianfranco Cicogna Mozzoni, Noon, Little Oratory
26-28 October	Activity Weekend for people with Special Needs, Whithaugh Park, Newcastleton, including Mass on Saturday evening at 6 p.m. followed by supper and a social evening.

- 2 November Order Requiem, St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh. All welcome. Details from philip.scrope@smithsgore.co.uk
- 30 November Ceilidh for Kibera, Christ the King Church Hall, Glasgow: a St Andrew's Night Dance in aid of the Companions Projects in Nairobi. Tickets £10 from Liam Devlin. liam@liamdevlin.co.uk
- 10 December Christmas Soirée in Scotland (see above) and Carol Concert in London

Website

The website is nearly mended - to find this Newsletter and keep in touch with the activities of the CoM there will shortly be a new, we trust all singing all dancing, internet destination. In the meantime you are welcome to join the (closed) Facebook groups in London and Scotland which are live.

Yours as ever,

Paul Letman
CHAIR CoM