

St GEORGE FOR ENGLAND

August 2025

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THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF St GEORGE – The Premier Patriotic Society of England
Founded in 1894. Incorporated by Royal Charter. Patron: His Majesty King Charles III

£5.00





St George – at large in North America

Mark Lanyon

St George's Society Toronto



The Toronto Society not only holds specific events during the year such as the Christmas Dinner and the St George's Day Event, it also holds various events to keep members engaged and to attract potential new members. First quarter events included:

St George's Day on 27 April

On 27 April the Toronto Society not only celebrated St George's Day, but also the founding of the St George's Society of Toronto 191 years ago. There was a service held at St James Cathedral followed by a Sunday roast lunch which consisted of traditional Sunday roast and Yorkshire pudding.

In celebration of St George's Day in Toronto the CN (Canadian National) Tower was lit up in traditional St George's colours.

St George's Society King Charles III Coronation Medal Recipients

On Friday, 28 March, the Society held an investiture ceremony to honor the recipients of the King Charles III Coronation Medal at the Arts and Letters Club. The Coronation Award was created by King Charles III to commemorate His Majesty's Coronation as King of Canada, and to recognize Canadians who have made a difference.

The recipients were Robert Baines, John S. Bishop, Glenn Carter, Kennerth Brian Foxcroft, Lorraine Gladstone, Michele D. McCarthy, and Frances Sommerville. The St George's Society of Toronto medal recipients are being recognized for their major contributions to Ontario.

Pleasant Hour

The second Pleasant Hour of the year was held on 28 February at the Arts and Letters Club. This is an opportunity to meet fellow Society members as well as to invite potential members to come and mingle with current members.

Quiz and Chips' Night

The Honourable Company of Freemen of the City of London of North America cordially invited Society members to be a part of the Quiz and Chips' night held at The National Yacht Club. This event was held on 13 March. Along with the Company, members of the British Canadian Chamber of Trade and Commerce also participated. This is an example of what we call "cross pollination" – various societies and organizations coming together to get to know one another.

Iona Fyfe in Concert

Another example of cross pollination is the

Iona Fyfe concert hosted by the St Andrew's Society of Toronto. This Scottish folk singer is one of Scotland's best. The concert was held on 7 February.

The St George's Society Toronto is creative in how they reach out to potential new members. This also includes their "George Program" which is geared toward younger people. Young members invite their friends to Society-specific events as well as other events such as the ones listed above.

Younger members are the lifeblood of any Society or organization and the Toronto Society is to be commended for the great work they do attracting new, young members.

The Society of St George Philadelphia 253rd St George's Day Dinner

My wife and I attended this wonderful event held on 26 April at the Philadelphia Club. Prior to the dinner was a procession led by a bagpiper. In the procession included officers from other societies:

- President, The British Officer's Club of Philadelphia (1925)
- President, Daughters of the British Empire in PA (1920)
- President, The English-Speaking Union of the United States (1920)
- President, The Friendly Sons and Daughters of St Patrick, Philadelphia (1771)
- Treasurer, The German Society of Pennsylvania (1764)
- President, The St Andrew's Society of Philadelphia (1747)
- President, The Welsh Society of Philadelphia (1729)

This is a great example of what I call



A Caledonian welcome



Mark Lanyon, left, with Frank, now the head of Philadelphia's St George's chapter

cross-pollination – inviting other Societies to join in Philadelphia Society's events.

The Society of St George Philadelphia supports a variety of charitable causes one of which is the Outward Bound Philadelphia, as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Frank O'Donnell was inducted as the new President of the Philadelphia Society.

A Salute to Oliver

A salute to Oliver was held to honour Oliver St Clair Franklin, CBE – the Honorary British Consul for Greater Philadelphia. Oliver is retiring from this position after



A social whirl ... Oliver, pictured with Mark

almost thirty years. This wonderful event was held at the Overbrook Golf Club in Villanova, PA. Many people contributed speeches, including his son.

This event was organized by Debbie Webster of the English-Speaking Union, and Judith Francis the Executive Director of The Society of St George Philadelphia.

The highlight of the evening was a video that was produced featuring Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Mr. Gates was unable to attend in person but wanted to make sure to wish Oliver well and thank him for all his great work.

Proceeds from the evening went to benefit The Duke of Edinburgh International Award USA.

The St George's Society of Baltimore

The Baltimore Society had a busy first quarter.

The Prince of Wales Brunch

This year's topic was "Churchill at 150: Reflections on the Life and Afterlife of the Great Statesman." This was presented by Michael Bishop who is a leading expert on Winston Churchill. One of his many achievements includes having worked closely with the cast and producers of **Darkest Hour** – a movie about Winston Churchill.

Members are encouraged to invite guests to this event. This is another example of cross-pollination and a way to introduce people to the Society and its members.

157th Annual St George's Day Dinner

Mark and his wife, Beth, attended the dinner. After the invocation toasts were made. First, to the United States of America followed by the singing of the **Star Spangled Banner**. Next the toast to His Majesty the King, followed by the singing of **God Save the King**. Then toasts were made to the Royal Family, St George, and the Dragon.

The two guests from the British Embassy were introduced: Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Brooks, MBE; and Commander Lyndsey Netherwood. In keeping with the theme of cross-pollination, two additional guests were introduced: Mr. Stephen Harper, President, The German Society of Maryland; and, Mr. Stevenson Grant, President, The St Andrew's Society of Baltimore.

The Baltimore Society has worked hard to revive the Society following the Covid shutdown. Past presidents Harry Aycock, Daniel Fisher and current president Zachary Dixon have all provided dedicated service to ensure the Society becomes and remains a vibrant and thriving Society. Their hard work and dedication was evident at this year's Dinner when eleven new members were inducted into the Society.



President Zachary Dixon (in front) with the eleven new members

75 Clay Shoot

Once again showing their creative side, the Baltimore Society held a clay shoot on 29 March. Along with the clay shoot, there was a lunch and cocktails. This is an example of holding events that can attract new members. Another event that will be held on 29 June is the annual Polo Match.

Evensong Honouring HM King Charles III's Coronation

The Baltimore Society sponsored a special Evensong Service to commemorate the anniversary of His Majesty's coronation. The service took place on Sunday, 4 May at 5pm at Grace and St Peter's Church. A reception followed in the church rectory.



President Shawn Wade presenting the Portrait

Royal Society of St George California

The California Branch held their St George's Day Celebration at the Hollywood Museum. This consisted of an Awards Presentation Dinner and Luxury Black Tie Gala. Princess Karen Cantrell has submitted an article about this event which covers the gala in great detail.

Royal Society of St George Carolinian Branch

The Carolinian Branch held a festive event to celebrate and commemorate St George's Day. This was held on 23 April at the Carolina Yacht Club. There were cocktails and hors d'oeuvres.

Traditional toasts were made to the King, St George, and to England. Along with the toasts, both **Jerusalem** and **God Save the King** were sung.

This Branch, like many others, suffered greatly from the Covid lockdown. Through hard work and dedication on the part of the officers of the Branch as well as loyal members, the Branch is coming back. It showed wisdom on the part of the leadership to begin with a modest event (cocktails and hors d'oeuvres) rather than planning an extensive dinner event. Over time the events can become more robust.

Royal Society of St George, British Columbia Branch

The RSSG British Columbia Branch held a St George's Day Church Service and Reception on Sunday, 27 April. The service and reception were held at All Saints Anglican Church in Burnaby.

Shawn Wade, President of the British Columbia Branch, attended the opening gala of the Asian Heritage Month Society. While there, Shawn was able to present a portrait of His Majesty King Charles III, King of



Shawn Wade addressing the audience

Canada and Head of the Commonwealth. Shawn also gave a presentation on the Constitutional Monarchy, the system of government, and the Commonwealth. Shawn also discussed the importance of remembering VE day and its eightieth anniversary

Visit to the United States by HRH Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh

Oliver St Clair Franklin coordinated HRH Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh's visit to the United States. Prince Edward visited Philadelphia, amongst other events, to dedicate the Benjamin Rush Garden and Bicentennial Bell. The bell was presented to Philadelphia in 1976 by HM Queen Elizabeth II. The bell was recently placed in the newly designed and built garden.

The Bicentennial Bell was cast at the Whitechapel Foundry in London, the same foundry that cast the original Liberty Bell. On the Bicentennial Bell is written "For the People of the United States of America from the People of Britain, 4 July 1976, Let Freedom Ring."

Prior to the Prince's visit, Mark told Oliver St. Clair Franklin (Honorary British Consul for Greater Philadelphia) the work he was doing for RSSG and how RSSG was growing in North America. Oliver told Mark he wanted Mark to meet with HRH to share with HRH what Mark's role was and how RSSG was growing.

Mark and his wife, Beth, attended the dedication service. After the service, per Oliver's invitation, Mark met with HRH Prince Edward to explain Mark's role as The RSSG Representative for the US and Canadian Branches and Affiliated Societies. Mark shared there were currently four locations in Canada and six in the US and how we are in the process of establishing one new location in Canada and four in the US

Mark then shared with HRH Prince Edward that one of the Royal Society's



Mark Lanyon, with HRH Prince Edward.

objectives was to promote and celebrate England and Englishness. With a smile and a twinkle in his eyes the Prince paused and then said: "Well . . . good luck with that one."

Order of St George Royal Society of St George of Atlanta Branch:

Robert Soderstrom (Grand Prior of the Order of St George the Americas) and Jerry Vogler, Jr. (Commander, Georgia Commandery, Priory of the United States,



Mark and Beth (Mark's wife) in front of the Bicentennial Bell



Beth, Mark, and Debbie Webster (ESU) at the dinner

The Order of St George) and working tirelessly to revive the Royal Society of St George Atlanta Branch.

They established a Facebook Page careful to note that this is for the Branch still in formation.

From the Facebook page they have received a number of inquiries about the Branch. This is an example of a creative way to build a Branch.

Tanzania

The Order of St George Educational Scholarship Fund Tanzania, East Africa fights Gender-Based Violence by providing the means to rescue young girls from this devastating pandemic. It provides the opportunity to rise above these debilitating issues, allowing individuals to receive a quality vocational education, secure a job and live a dignified and productive life as a Tanzanian citizen.

Dr Thomas Smith, a member of the Order of St George, spearheads this initiative. Dr Smith said this programme is the only one in Tanzania. Along with the Hospitality School (where girls learn the basics of hotel and restaurant work), this year there will be an agricultural component where the girls will grow produce and sell it at the local market.

Every girl completing the program in 2024 was gainfully employed, thus saving them from the horrors of slave trafficking

To conclude: a time of steady progress and success across North America.