



# THE KING'S CHAPEL *of the SAVOY*



Newsletter 2023

## Welcome from the Chaplain



*The Reverend Canon Thomas Woodhouse.*

On Easter Day 2022, a feeling of the familiar swept through the the Chapel as we celebrated the resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ with an enthusiasm we had been denied for two years. It is the vocation of every Christian to follow Jesus to both the cross and the resurrection; to be a witness in the difficult moments and to rejoice in the good; to be agents of change in an unjust and broken world. The mystery and foolishness of the cross highlights that transformation cannot happen without pain, but it is within the pain, anguish and struggle that the unexpected work of God blooms into more than we can imagine. And it was so as we witnessed Her funeral liturgies embrace Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

2022 began with the hope that this would be the year when we emerged from beneath Covid-19's long shadow. There was a confidence that, with the success of the vaccination roll-out in the UK, all would be well and that life would return to normal.

Whilst we remain cautiously optimistic with regard to the pandemic, 2022 has dealt us another body blow. We have watched the heart-rending reports from Ukraine almost in disbelief, witnessing once again a conflict reminiscent of the storms of war from half a century and more ago.

However, as much as we have been deeply saddened by the escalating violence, we have

also been heartened by the strength and resolve of the Ukrainian people. As one of my correspondents, a young person writing from the Ukrainian/Polish border, reminded me:

*"Ukraine is just one place suffering right now. There are many other nations and individuals going through pain and heartache. We pray for ourselves that we would grow more in our desire and ability to care for our fellow humans, whether in a distant land or just next door."*

This balance of light and shade is something we have become very familiar with this year. Addressing her people on 5th February Queen Elizabeth II wrote: *"Tomorrow, 6th February,*



*Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II*

*marks the 70th Anniversary of my Accession in 1952. It is a day that, even after 70 years, I still remember as much for the death of my father, King George VI, as for the start of my reign. As we mark this anniversary, it gives me pleasure to renew to you the pledge I gave in 1947 that my life will always be devoted to your service."* The message was signed *"Your servant Elizabeth"*.

In Her Commonwealth Message in March the late Queen offered more words to inspire: *"Our family of nations continues to be a point of connection, cooperation and friendship. It is a place to come together to pursue common goals and the common good, providing everyone with the opportunity to serve and benefit. In these testing times, it is my hope that you can draw*



*His Majesty King Charles III, Duke of Lancaster*

*strength and inspiration from what we share, as we work together towards a healthy, sustainable and prosperous future for all."*

King Charles III addressed both this nation and all other countries of the Commonwealth when he too pledged his life to the service of His people on 9th September: *"As The Queen herself did with such unswerving devotion, I too now solemnly pledge myself, throughout the remaining time God grants me, to uphold the Constitutional principles at the heart of our nation. And wherever you may live in the United Kingdom, or in the Realms and territories across the world, and whatever may be your background or beliefs, I shall endeavour to serve you with loyalty, respect and love, as I have throughout my life."*

The King's Chapel of the Savoy, both within the Duchy of Lancaster and as the Chapel of the Royal Victorian Order, bears special responsibilities to pray for the King's Most Excellent Majesty and all members of the Royal Family, as well as those who make up the Duchy of Lancaster, the Officers and Members of the Royal Victorian Order and all who live and work within the Manor and Precinct of the Savoy. As we look now to a new future, we commit ourselves anew to these prayers and wish His Majesty King Charles III a long and prosperous reign.

## Fortune Fitzroy, Duchess of Grafton GCVO, Mistress of the Robes (1920 – 2021)

Fortune Fitzroy, Duchess of Grafton is the longest serving Mistress of the Robes in history, serving Queen Elizabeth II in the role from 1967 until her death in 2021. Fortune delighted in the great honour of receiving the GCVO in 1980, a rank she was to hold as the only lady in the Order for 30 years. She was created CVO in 1965, DCVO in 1970 (both as Countess of Euston) and GCVO when Duchess of Grafton. Her daughter, Rose Monson, remembers being thrilled to read the news of her mother's GCVO in the newspaper, as Fortune had not shared the news with members of the family beforehand.

The Duchess travelled all over the world with the late Queen, from Africa to China, Australia to America and beyond. She met almost every president of the United States and France. She was a most devoted and trusted companion and courtier for over 68 years.

After growing up in Sussex and spending a year perfecting her Italian in Florence, Fortune became a nurse at Great Ormond Street during the war. She often said she remembered watching the dogfights overhead when the hospital transferred to Chailey in Sussex after a German bomb fell on the hospital in London.



She was very proud that one of her daughters and a granddaughter followed her as nurses in later years.

Fortune was a wonderful wife to Hugh and much-loved mother to five children: James, Henrietta, Virginia, Charles and Rose. She was also grandmother to 11 grandchildren and great-grandmother to 14 great-grandchildren. First living in Hampstead, then moving to Much Hadham and later to Euston, she was often away on long tours abroad. However, she loved returning home to the countryside and involved herself in many charities, both in London and Suffolk. For 40 years she also served as a local magistrate, having become the country's youngest female JP in 1949.

Fortune was interested in people of all ages and from all walks of life. She had a lively sense of humour and her keen intelligence, quick wit and great kindness were greatly enjoyed by many over her long life.

The Duchess's later days in London were filled with visits from family and friends and her bookcases overloaded with birthday and Christmas cards were a source of great pride. The highlight on her 100th birthday in February 2020 was the immense honour of the delivery of a telegram, in person, from Queen Elizabeth II.

Fortune lived a very long and exceptional life. She will be remembered with great love, respect and admiration by the many people who knew her and whose lives she touched.



## The Model of an MVO

My father, The Reverend Frank Coaldrake, conducted the official Memorial Service in Japan for King George VI in February 1952. The service was attended by members of the Japanese Imperial Household, Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida and my mother Maida, who was seven months pregnant at the time. Thus I can legitimately claim to have been 'in attendance' at the service, albeit in an unofficial capacity, before my physical emergence into the world some seven weeks later.

I was unaware then that I would later be bestowed with Membership of the Royal Victorian Order by Queen Elizabeth II, successor to the King whose memorial service I had once attended. This was for my work restoring the large architectural model of the Taitokuin Mausoleum in the Royal Collection. It was given to Her Majesty's grandfather, King George V, at the end of the Japan-British Exhibition held at Shepherd's Bush in 1910 and had been specially made for the event by 150 of Japan's leading carpenters, sculptors and lacquer artisans.

Remarkably, the King had actually visited the original Taitokuin building in Tokyo as a Royal Navy midshipman in 1881. The Mausoleum



Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2022; Photograph: William H. Coaldrake

was built at Zojoji in 1632 to enshrine the second Tokugawa shogun, Hidetada, known posthumously as Taitokuin. However, it was destroyed during the bombing of Tokyo in 1945. The model therefore became a unique three-dimensional record of this lost national treasure. But the model disappeared shortly afterwards, lost in storage until it was rediscovered by English Heritage in the 1990s. Then, I was asked to confirm the identity of the thousands of dismantled parts and to lead the restoration on behalf of the Royal Collection.

Why me? Because I spent my childhood in Japan with carpenter's tools as my playthings. My father was the first Australian civilian to enter Japan after the war. He was both a priest

and a carpenter, rebuilding Anglican churches that had been destroyed. I myself went on to become an architectural historian and a specialist in restoring Buddhist temples. I even wrote part of my Harvard doctoral dissertation on the Taitokuin Mausoleum, little knowing that I would later help to restore its smaller progeny.

In 1994 when I saw the dismantled model in storage it took me all of 10 minutes to identify it as representing the Taitokuin Mausoleum, so accurately was it made. But it was to take another 20 years to put the parts back together again, in collaboration with Jonathan Marsden at the Royal Collection Trust.

In 2014 the model was returned to Japan on long-term loan to Zojoji, with the gracious permission of Queen Elizabeth II. In 2019, I had the privilege of showing the newly re-assembled model to HRH The Prince of Wales, now His Majesty King Charles III, at the site where his great-grandfather had visited the original building in 1881. This moment spanned four generations of the Royal Family and two of my own.

William H. Coaldrake MVO

*The exhibition 'Japan: Courts and Culture' is at The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, until February 2023.*



## Royal Visit to Lancaster



Their Royal Highnesses The Earl and Countess of Wessex visited Lancaster Castle in September, meeting Duchy staff, Castle tenants, local community groups and businesses during the visit.

Hosted by the Duchy's Head of Rural Development Mrs Lara Thompson and the Constable of the Castle, Mrs Pam Barker, Their Royal Highnesses were welcomed by the Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire The Lord Shuttleworth KG KCVO as well as Lancashire's High Sheriff and the city Mayor.



They visited craft workshops based at the Castle, toured the new Police Museum in the former prison and met with community groups working with refugees and the homeless. They also met with Police cadets and primary schoolchildren from local schools.



## The Origin of the Duchy of Lancaster: The Reeve Piece

The Reeve Piece in Leicestershire is the oldest piece of land continually owned by the Duchy of Lancaster. Originally part of Simon de Montfort's lands, it was confiscated by Henry III following the death of the Earl of Leicester and gifted to his son Edmund in 1265. This ancient inheritance, together with subsequent gifts of land over time became the Duchy of Lancaster which was irrevocably aligned to the English Monarch by Henry IV on his accession to the throne in 1399.

Today the Reeve Piece sits in the small village of Desford, just seven miles west of the city of Leicester. Its 4,000 residents remain fiercely proud of the village's unique heritage and came together to create Desford's first Heritage Festival this year, celebrating its history through the ages, with historical encampments, heraldry and craft workshops, archery demonstrations, vintage transport, a Victorian schoolroom, street food and entertainment. Such was the success of the inaugural event, the local community have decided to make it an annual Festival going forward.



## New Jubilee Stone Unveiled

This year's Platinum Jubilee celebrations also marked 70 years of Queen Elizabeth II's service as Duke of Lancaster. To honour that achievement, the Duchy hosted a service of thanksgiving at Lancaster's Priory Church as well as a beacon lighting ceremony at Lancaster Castle.

We also commissioned a new commemorative datestone from the Castle's resident sculptor, Alan Ward. This stone now sits proudly alongside two others embedded in the walls of the Castle: one for Queen Elizabeth I, dated 1565; and another marking the visit by Queen Victoria in 1871.

Thus, three of the nation's longest serving and most beloved female Monarchs are commemorated in the very fabric of this ancient building.



## Worth Its Weight In.....Lead



An ancient bronze standard dish belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster has been on public exhibition in Derbyshire for the first time in its history. The valuable antiquity forms the centrepiece of a new exhibition on lead mining entitled 'Digging for Grey Gold' at Wirksworth Heritage Centre.

It tells the story of the Barmote Court which was set up in the 13th century to collect taxes on behalf of the Crown and settle disputes

between lead miners and landowners. The Court, which is one of the oldest in the land, still meets annually in the small Derbyshire town of Wirksworth.

Taxes on lead mined in Derbyshire were such an important part of the Royal finances that Henry VIII provided Wirksworth with a standardised measuring dish to help the Court settle disputes and calculate taxes due more quickly and efficiently. The historic dish, which is incredibly heavy even when empty, can hold approximately 85 lbs of lead ore when full. Until 2012 the dish was stored within the town before being moved to Chatsworth where it is now stored on behalf of the Duchy of Lancaster.



## Australia's First Nation Gives Thanks at the Chapel

We are delighted that so many members of the Royal Victorian Order are able to make time to visit the Chapel. One recent visitor was Craig Kitchen MVO who is the Official Secretary to the Administrator of the Northern Territory. Craig, a descendent of the Gurindji people, is Australia's first Aboriginal Official Secretary and the highest-ranking First Nations Person in an Australian Vice-Regal household. He is the only known Aboriginal person sworn as a Clerk of the Executive Council.

Mr Kitchen is passionate and committed to meaningful engagement between the Sovereign's representatives and Australia's First Nations people. In 2019, he introduced

the inclusion of First Nations people in the swearing-in of the 39th Governor of New South Wales, a first in the history of the oldest public office in Australia.

Craig was able to join us for the Chapel's Service of Thanksgiving for the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in June of this year. The service took place in the presence of HRH The Princess Royal, Grand Master of the Royal Victorian Order.



Following the service, Her Royal Highness met members of congregation who were drawn from the strands of Chapel's worshipping life, including staff of the Duchy of Lancaster and members of the Royal Victorian Order.



## Shine as a Light in the World



The importance of the Chapel to the Royal Victorian Order is highlighted every year by the number of members who bring their children here for baptism.

In recent months, we have been delighted to welcome Otto Jackson and Joe Leeper into the family of Christ. Otto's mother Natasha Archer is a Member of the Royal Victorian Order and his father is the photographer, Chris

Jackson. Joe's parents, Jules and Louisa, were married in the Chapel in 2020; Louisa's father, Charles Barnett CVO was Chief Executive of Ascot Racecourse. Both Joe and Otto were joined by family and friends to celebrate the big day.

In the service we make use of the whole Chapel, symbolising the dynamic nature of baptism, moving from the nave to the font and finally to the chancel where a lighted candle, representing the Light of Christ, is given to the newly baptised.

As a congregation we explore the symbols of baptism: holy oil, holy water and the light of a candle. The oil reflects the presence of the Holy Spirit gifted in the moment of baptism; it is used for the anointing at the signing: *'with the cross Christ claims you for his own, receive the sign of his cross and do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.'*

At the font the parents name their infant. This public declaration symbolises that their child is known by God and is a child of God; while the water, blessed and poured three times in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, captures the dynamic, dynamic, refreshing and cleansing nature of a life in communion with Almighty God. Then finally comes the candle and the words: *shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.*

We look forward to watching Otto and Joe's lights shine forth in the world.



## The Kings' Chapel of the Savoy

*Putting People at the Heart of our Christian Witness*

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