

JUNE 2014 NEWSLETTER



Chancellor Announces £1,000,000 grant for Magna Carta Commemorations

The big news of the past month is the Chancellor George Osborne's announcement of a grant of £1,000,000 to the work of the 800th Anniversary Committee.

This will provide core funding to support anniversary activities across the world, including to help the Committee increase our social media impact over the next 18 months.

The bulk of the funding will go towards grants to support the activities of organisations affiliated to the Trust and the 800th Committee, as well as other associated organisations, for events and activities to be delivered in 2014/15. Each grant will be of no more than £20,000 inclusive of VAT.

Grant decisions will be made by a committee made up of the executives of the Magna Carta 800th Committee and HM Government representatives, with particular emphasis on bids which:

- Promote the objectives of the Trust and of the 800th Committee.
- Give emphasis on legacy and education, over one-time events or "celebrations".
- Support activities in Commonwealth countries, as HM the Queen, the Trust's Patron, requested when she became Patron.

We are tremendously pleased at this outcome. This grant is a true game-changer for the 800th Committee, for our partner organisations, and for the commemoration of Magna Carta globally. We are grateful to the Chancellor and HM Government for their support.

More information on the UK Grant is available at:
<http://magnacarta800th.com/magna-carta-today/uk-governments-grant/>

The St Albans parchment

In August of last year, Rosemary Stevens worked with the residents of St Albans to create a modern-day charter, marking eight-hundred years since the council meeting at St Albans Abbey that ultimately led to Magna Carta. Below, Rosemary describes this wonderful document and the colourful characters who put their names to it.

On 4th August 1213 a Council was held in St Albans Abbey to discuss and draw up the laws to form what eventually became known as Magna Carta.

In August 2013 St Albans commemorates the 800th anniversary of that meeting and its heritage as a Magna Carta Charter Town.

Representing Fairness, Justice, Equality and Human Rights, Magna Carta is the foundation stone supporting freedoms enjoyed today by millions of people across the world. As historical witness, members of the community sign their names below.

This is the heading, written on parchment (approx 2' x 3'), which is followed by 106 signatures of people representing the St Albans community today.

We begin with the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire (as one might expect) who signs along the first line, together with her husband, Lord Verulam. The second line is taken by Lord and Lady Salisbury.

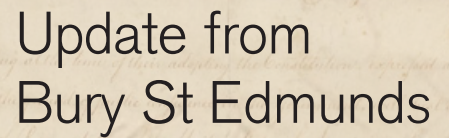
The ensuing lines each have three signatures, and the three resulting columns are an eclectic mix of willing citizenry in no particular order. The Dean and Clergy with volunteers; Bishops; the High Sheriff; Minister of State for Justice; Member of Parliament and Mayor; a street sweeper; a street musician; the police, schools, fire station; local newspaper, radio, societies and organisations and the City & District



Council are represented. Butchers, bakers, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, milkmen, market stallholders also. The tailor, the goldsmith, pub landlord - all well-known members of the community – together with a bank manager, a supermarket store manager, also some Crown Court judges and members of political parties have signed. Today's most cutting-edge technological invention has not escaped mention. We may be intrigued today by the ability to "scroll down pages by eye movement" but in 200 years' time this will doubtless seem rather quaint!

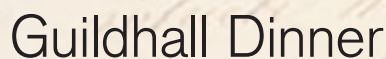
At first everybody just signed their name, leaving job description to be added in tiny print later in another hand. However, as time went on, it became natural to add a little colour, occasionally with some kind of explanatory illustration. This all began by the joining of the Bowman with his wife by means of an arrow, with regal red fletching. So then, other couples were joined together; choristers shown as male and female; icons, badges, etc. (even a slogan), crept into the design – thereby hopefully separating the names and making it more readable and interesting. The result is not a reconstruction of a medieval Parchment - it is a document of the present day.

Sir Robert commented that "This is a great idea that should be a challenge for all Magna Carta towns so by 15th June 2015 all Towns have a comparable modern day Charter.



The document was on display at St Edmundsbury Cathedral until the end of May. The arrival was featured in a segment on BBC Look East, which can be found on the BBC's website: magnacarta800.org.uk/

April also saw the launch of Bury St Edmunds' Magna Carta 800th celebrations website, which can be found at magnacarta800.org.uk This launch follows the announcement of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant for the town's Magna Carta 800th anniversary celebrations.



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Educational resources

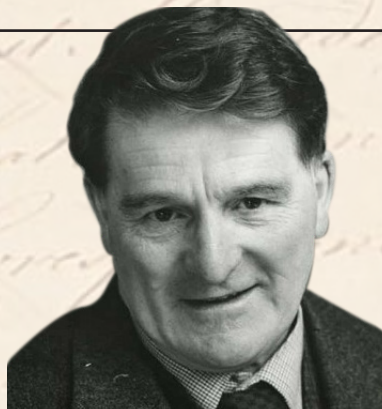
Two of our core objectives as a Committee are to increase understanding of Magna Carta's impact on all our lives and to leave a legacy following the 800th anniversary. One of the main ways in which we are trying to achieve this is through the schools page on our website: magnacarta800th.com/schools

This page is fast becoming the leading tool for educational resources on Magna Carta. Recent additions include:

- A series of eight Teaching Ideas for Key Stage 2 children designed by a primary school teacher across a range of key National Curriculum themes, including history, art, computing and English.
- Comprehensive bibliographies for those wanting to read more about Magna Carta aimed at both the intermediary and advanced levels of study.
- Further uploads in our series of short biographies of the 25 Magna Carta Barons.
- The first two essays by educators for Political Studies Association. These essays have been written to instigate and provoke discussion in classes. The first two cover Magna Carta's relevance today and Magna Carta & the Human Rights Act.
- To mark the 750th anniversary of the Battle of Lewes the Houses of Parliament launched an online educational resource presenting the story of the formation of the 1265 De Montfort Parliament.

Sir James Holt (1922-2014)

We would like to take this opportunity to pay our respects to Sir James Holt who died recently. Sir James' book "Magna Carta" published in 1965 to commemorate the 750th anniversary of Magna Carta is still considered one of the most authoritative books on the document. It was revised and re-issued in 1992. Sir James was President of the Royal Historical Society between 1981 and 1985, and in 1990 was knighted.



You can read a full obituary in the 12th May edition of The Telegraph here.
www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/10825256/Sir-James-Holt-obituary.html

International update

Sir Robert recently attended a meeting of the World Values Survey Association in Doha, Qatar.

He used this opportunity to raise awareness of the 800th anniversary and to gain the commitment of a number of countries to host their own academic symposiums based on Magna Carta. These include Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Qatar, Australia and Thailand.

Sir Robert will also soon be writing to Attorney Generals across the world to ask them to organise proclamations of Magna Carta in their countries. This will support the effort of Steve Zack from the American Bar Association who, as a delegate member of the UN General Assembly, is leading the call for the UN's General Assembly to support a resolution on Magna Carta.

The ABA's Magna Carta 800th commemoration plans are moving ahead, with a wide range of events and activities being planned. You can find more information here:

www.americanbar.org/groups/leadership/office_of_the_president/magnacarta.html

Tourism Trail: Focus on Hereford Cathedral



In each issue of our newsletter, we'll be focusing on one of the Magna Carta locations featured in the Magna Carta Tourism Trail

The diocese of Hereford traditionally dates from 676AD and with the current cathedral dating from the early 12th century. It is home to the Mappa Mundi, the oldest surviving complete map of the world (circa 1300) and the Chained Library, the world's largest collection of chained books which was founded in 1611 but contains mediaeval manuscripts and some of the earliest books. The oldest book in the collection is the Hereford Gospels from the 8th century.

The archives also contain a number of other treasures including a 1217 exemplar of the Magna Carta* and the King's Writ*, dated 1215 and the only known document to have survived which was issued from Runnymede, and a Beckett Reliquary, possibly the only example still in Ecclesiastical ownership (the V&A used an image of their exemplar when they re-opened their new medieval galleries).

The cathedral choir, which still sings eight choral services each week, is regarded as one of the finest in the country. In addition to its normal cycle of services it also sings a number of special services and concerts, along with being part of the annual Three Choirs Festival and coordinating the cathedral's wider musical programme:

- Palace Art-fest: Saturday 24 May -- Sunday 1 June 2014 (coinciding with Hay Festival). An exhibition of 40 artists and sculptures based in Herefordshire and the surrounding counties. (Bishop's Palace adjacent to the cathedral)
- Jazz in the Garden (Fridays in August)
- Festival of Flowers: 4-6 September 2014. Over 120 stunning arrangements filling the cathedral and with a programme of music and other entertainment.
- Advent in London: our annual Advent service, sung by the cathedral choir, in the Guards' Chapel, Welling Barracks, London. Tuesday 2 December 2014. Further information 01432 374261
- Hereford Three Choirs Festival 2015: 25 July -- 1 August (2014 Worcester Cathedral: 26 July -- 2 August)

*Hereford's Magna Carta & King's Writ are currently on display at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Texas (<http://www.hmns.org>). The Magna Carta will be on display in Hereford for much of the first eight months of 2015 (exact dates TBC).

Herefordshire is a rural county and has a rich heritage ranging from its scenery and built environment (one of the largest numbers of mediaeval churches) through to wonderful food and drink, not least typified by the Tyrrells brand and specialist cider producer Westons, which were recently profiled as part of the 'Business is Great' promotion.

Tourism Trail: Focus on Hereford Cathedral continued...

The county is also a place of festivals: walking, food, music, literature (Hay), poetry and much more besides.

- **Mappa Mundi & Chained Library Exhibition:** temporary exhibition*
- **Fabulous creatures:** the bestiary lore of the Mappa Mundi in books and manuscripts from the Chained Library.

About 40 animals and birds are depicted on the Hereford Mappa Mundi. The majority of them, from lands in Asia, Africa and the far north and east of Europe, would never have been seen by the people who created the map. They had to rely for information on descriptions which had been passed down for centuries and collected together in bestiaries: books about beasts, interpreted in the moral context of Christianity. Many of the animals included in bestiaries - and on mappae mundi - are known today to have been mythological, but, to the medieval person, there was no difference between an exotic animal and a mythological one.



Eight of these creatures, plus Noah's Ark, are explored through books and images from the Chained Library.

Visitors will discover more about the deadly tactics employed by the bonnacon and the basilisk (definitely to be avoided) and the characteristics of the more friendly and useful elephant and camel. Dragons, lions and unicorns

emerge from books and documents ranging from the 12th to the 20th centuries.

Displayed within the Hereford Mappa Mundi and Chained Library Exhibition, from Saturday 12 April to Saturday 6 September 2014. Normal opening times and admission charges apply.

Update from Parliament

The Magna Carta All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) is in the process of being re-established. The Group will act as a key forum for encouraging parliamentary interest in the 800th anniversary events. All Members of Parliament and the House of Lords are welcome to join. The APPG is now chaired by David Ruffley MP as Eleanor Laing MP has now been elected a Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons.

Upcoming Events

Interfaith conference, 7th June

The Temple Church, in association with the Institute of Contemporary British History, the Dickson Poon School of Law and the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at King's College, London, invites you to this international conference in preparation for the 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta, 2015.



The Temple Church, London

The international conference will take place at the Temple, London on Saturday 7th June 2014.

For more information visit

magnacarta800th.com/events/magna-carta-religion-and-the-rule-of-law/



Runnymede, 15th June

Surrey County Council in partnership with the National Trust invite you to a celebration of the 799 year anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta at Runnymede Meadowson 15 June, 2014 at 2.30pm.

Bring a Father's Day picnic and join our eight Magna Carta giants, created by students from Thorpe-Lea, Churchmead, Magna Carta and The Hythe schools for a parade, live music and cake at the Magna Carta memorial at Runnymede.

RHUL Magna Carta Lecture, 17th June

Magna Carta in British History: Memory, Inventions and Forgetting.



2015 will witness celebrations of the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. Yet how this iconic text has been understood, used and commemorated has changed markedly over the centuries, not just in England, but throughout the British Isles and in the one-time British Empire. This lecture explores some of these shifts over time, and discusses how - and how far - the cult that evolved around this text can be related to the UK's lack of a written constitution.

All welcome, admission free. The lecture will be followed by a reception in the Windsor Building Foyer. For more information visit www.royalholloway.ac.uk

800th Commemorative Merchandise



We have a wide range of Magna Carta 800th commemorative products available for sale at our exclusive online shop www.magnacarta800th.com/shop

You are able to purchase single items or large quantities and our production partners are happy to discuss trade supplies and co-branding opportunities. A proportion of the sale from every purchase goes to the Magna Carta Trust to support the 800th commemoration activities.

Magna Carta: Foundation of Freedom

Third Millennium International are producing a richly illustrated volume edited by Nicholas Vincent, Professor of Medieval History at the University of East Anglia, with contributions from a range of leading experts on Magna Carta from across the world to reflect on the circumstances of its genesis and its enduring importance through subsequent centuries. As well as special editions for some of our core partners a general edition will soon be published.

For more information visit www.magna-carta-book.com

