



**St Helena
Government**

- **Remembrance Flag Ceremony held at Plantation House for former military personnel, merchant navy and civilian services**

- **Ceremony held to mark the moment in World War 1 when the guns fell silent on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month and to honour all who have served**

REMEMBRANCE FLAG CEREMONY 2021

A Remembrance Flag Ceremony, to mark the moment in World War 1 when the guns fell silent on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month and to honour all who have served, was held at Plantation House on Thursday, 11 November 2021.

His Excellency Governor Philip Rushbrook welcomed everyone to the Ceremony and gave a message of remembrance [annexed]. Governor Rushbrook said:

"Time is upon us again to remember those who have served and those who have sacrificed. Be that in times of conflict or relative peace; in combat or in the aid of others; in the armed forces or our civilian uniformed services; for Britain and its territories or its allies and in the humility of this moment, our adversaries.

"To each and every one with us here at this flag ceremony we will pay our annual act of respect for those who, through death or incapacity, cannot be with us today. It is that instance, at 11 o'clock each year, when we make our small sacrifice of time to remember those who sacrificed a lifetime of theirs to keep us safe and free."

During the flag ceremony, member of the St Helena Sea Rescue Service, Rawena Delaney, read 'I am standing upon the seashore' by Henry Van Dyke and Prince Andrew School (PAS) student, Hannah Braaf, read her poem 'Standing in our door' (annexed). A speech was delivered by the Hon French Consul, Michel Martineau, the Venerable Allan Williams, Archdeacon of St Helena, delivered a remembrance address and Deacon Edgar Crowie led a prayer. Mr Graeme Beckett played the Last Post on the bugler before the attendees observed a two-minute silence. During the two-minute silence, the Governor's Flag was lowered to half-mast as a mark of respect to all military personnel and civilians, who have died in conflicts. This was followed by the playing of the Reveille by Mr Graeme Beckett and prayers by Envoy Carol Yon MBE. Chairman of the St Helena Veterans Association (SHVA), Mike Durnford, read verse four of 'For the fallen' by Robert Laurence Binyon, and Secretary of the SHVA, Jason Sparks, delivered a veterans address and spoke about six St Helenians who lost their lives during conflict [annexed]. Mrs Sheridan Bowers read a poem 'Sea Fever' by John Edward Masefield, and Governor Philip Rushbrook read the poem 'The Patriarchs – an Elegy' by the poet Laureate, Simon Armitage, in memory of HRH Prince Philip. PAS student, Jamie Peters, read his poem 'Victorious' (annexed). The Ceremony concluded with a prayer and blessing by the Right Reverend Lord Bishop of St Helena Dale Bowers MBE.

Ex-service personnel and attendees were then invited to a reception in Plantation House. During this time, the Governor read messages of remembrance from the Administrator on behalf of Tristan da Cunha and Wing Commander Ian Blake, Commander at Ascension Island Base.

#StHelena #FlagCeremony #RemembranceDay

SHG, 12 November 2021

Continue to page two ...

SHG Press Office | 1st Floor, The Castle | Jamestown | Tel: +290 22470

kerisha.yon@sainthelena.gov.sh | julie.george@sainthelena.gov.sh | jodie.s-constantine@sainthelena.gov.sh





Remembrance Flag Ceremony Attendees



Hannah Braaf reading her poem



The Venerable Allan Williams



Mr Graeme Beckett playing the bugler



The Governor's Flag was lowered to half-mast



Former member of British Army during two-minute silence



Secretary of the St Helena Veterans Association, Jason Sparks



Remembrance Flag Ceremony Attendees



Members of the St Helena Veterans Association



HE Governor Dr Philip Rushbrook

Governor's Message of Remembrance Flag Ceremony, Plantation House

Time is upon us again to remember those who have served and those who have sacrificed. Be that in times of conflict or relative peace; in combat or in the aid of others; in the armed forces or our civilian uniformed services; for Britain and its territories or its allies and in the humility of this moment, our adversaries.

To each and every one with us here at this flag ceremony we will pay our annual act of respect for those who, through death or incapacity, cannot be with us today. It is that instance, at 11 o'clock each year, when we make our small sacrifice of time to remember those who sacrificed a lifetime of theirs to keep us safe and free. This year I welcome the new St Helena Veterans Association to our ceremony and we should remember the passing of His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh. A warrior and pathfinder in his own right.

Today will recall our proud history in answering the call of duty and the important, mutual contribution made by our allies. We remember too, that call to duty continues today. By my count, the British Army is currently deployed to 14 locations from Estonia and Ukraine to the Falklands and Brunei. The Royal Navy has 28 operations and standing tasks. The Royal Air Force has 17, as well as its longstanding activities on Ascension and the new horizons of Space Command.

I am pleased to have received a personal message of remembrance for our ceremony today from the Commodore Jonathan Letts. Commander British Forces in the South Atlantic:

'I and my forces are proud to serve in the South Atlantic where the island populations not only recognise the human cost of the freedoms they so enjoy, but actively work to ensure that those sacrifices are never forgotten. St Helena is clearly no exception with a total of 14 Commonwealth war graves in the grounds of St Paul's Cathedral. Recognising the sacrifices of men from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Artillery, St Helena Volunteer Rifles, St Helena Home Guard and the Merchant Navy. Men ranging in rank from Major to Engineer Officer, from Colour Sergeant to Gunner. Men of ages ranging from 22 to 48, all of them sons, brothers, some of them husbands, fathers.'

I to thank you for taking the time today to recognise the sacrifices of all who have served, not only in both World Wars, not only in conflict since 1945 but all of those who provide our defence and security on a daily basis. As it says on the grave of Gunner Percy Burgess Dungey at St Paul's, they are, 'NOT GONE FROM MEMORY, NOT GONE FROM LOVE.'

Sacrifice is also well known on our sister islands. A remembrance message the Administrator on behalf of Tristan da Cunha:

'Remembrance is an opportunity for quiet contemplation of our joint histories. Not only to remember all those who have fallen in war, but also to recall how the links between countries and peoples have been strengthened, how partnerships and alliances have been forged, and how the history of global conflict has changed the face of the world.'

'Tristan da Cunha and St Helena have long been closely linked, and both have a military history. Let us not forget the first permanent settlement of Tristan da Cunha was to prevent the island from being used to launch an attempt to rescue its famous exile from St Helena. Since then the island has gone through many changes, including the establishment of HMS Atlantic Isle, a Royal Navy listening post during the Second World War, supported by the sixteen-strong Tristan Defence Volunteers. Before and since, many Tristanians have served with the Armed Forces, and returned with skills and expertise to support the Island. And, of course, when Tristan needed vaccines against COVID, it was the Royal Navy.'

'The Flag Ceremony remembers all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, whether in uniform or not. The people of Tristan are proud to stand alongside the community of St Helena to give thanks to them, and to remember them.'

And from Wing Commander Ian Blake, Commander, Ascension Island Base:

'The Great War, the war to end all wars was over, or so it was hoped. History has unfortunately shown that the optimism displayed in 1918, that future war was unthinkable, proved unfounded.'

'Throughout its history, Ascension Island has had a strong military heritage with the United Kingdom. During the

Continue to page four ...

SHG Press Office | 1st Floor, The Castle | Jamestown | Tel: +290 22470

kerisha.yon@sainthelena.gov.sh | julie.george@sainthelena.gov.sh | jodie.s-constantine@sainthelena.gov.sh



Visit us: www.sainthelena.gov.sh



Second World War, Britain and its allies once again found themselves fighting for democracy on a global scale. Although a remote outpost, Ascension Island played an important logistical role by providing air support from operations at Wideawake Airfield to the antisubmarine battle being fought in the Atlantic. In 1982, Ascension Island found itself at the forefront of the Falkland Island conflict as a major air base from which combat and supporting air missions were flown deep into the South Atlantic and over the Falkland Islands themselves. Since then, the United Kingdom has maintained a Royal Air Force presence on the island and that has only been possible with the strong support from so many of you, the people of St Helena.

'So it is right in this centenary year of the Royal British Legion, that we gather as a mark of respect, to remember all those soldiers, sailors, airman and civilians, from all nations, who have paid the ultimate price in the service of their country; their sacrifice enables us to live our lives the way we want today, a luxury that was denied to them during their own all too often short life.'

Thank you.

St Helena Veterans Association Flag Raising Ceremony Address

We are all gathered here in remembrance. To pay homage and respect to those who have died in conflict. To remember the men and women who died to preserve the rights and freedoms that we all hold so dear. With the formation of the St Helena Veterans Association this year it seems appropriate to remember the St Helenians who lost their lives in conflict. During World War II, six St Helenians died, and today we remember their bravery:

Rifleman Sydney Samuel Leo (Known affectionately as "Pugsy"), son of Walter James and Mary Leo. Rifleman Leo drowned on the 10th April 1942 age 35. Rifleman Leo was awarded the WW2 Medal and the WW2 star.

Private Richard Charles Lawrence son of William and Mary Lawrence, of husband of Eva Lawrence. Private Lawrence died on 15th October 1944. Private Lawrence was awarded WW2 Medal and the WW2 star.

Rifleman Joseph Nathaniel Maggott son of Unas and Mary Ann Maggott, of new ground, St. Helena. Died on 6th May 1942 age 22. Rifleman Maggott was awarded WW2 Medal and the WW2 star.

Steward Bertram Charles Benjamin son of David and Elizabeth Sarah Benjamin; husband of Magdalena Christina Benjamin. Steward Benjamin served with the Royal Navy aboard the HMS Afrikander. He was tragically killed in a collision between a military and Naval truck. He died on 7th Jun 1945 aged 36. Steward Benjamin was awarded WW2 Medal and the WW2 star.

Assistant Steward Michael Walker Henry Son of Wilfred Vivian and Laura Mildred Henry, of Jamestown St Helena. Steward Henry served aboard the HMS Neptune. Part of "Force K". Their task was to intercept and destroy convoys supplying Rommel's army in North Africa. On the afternoon of December 18th the squadron was despatched from Malta to intercept an important enemy convoy bound for Tripoli. Unfortunately during this mission the HMS Neptune struck a mine. The Neptune then going full astern hit another mine which wrecked her steering gear and propellers and brought her to a standstill. After many valiant but failed rescue efforts at 0403 she struck another mine which exploded amidships. This was more than her hull could take; she slowly turned over and sank. Steward Henry was awarded WW2 Medal and the WW2 star.

Lieutenant Mervyn Frederik Thomas Mainwaring Son of Thomas C. and Maud E. Mainwaring, of Longwood, St Helena. Mervyn Mainwaring was a Lieutenant in 34 Squadron, a heavy bomber squadron, part of the South African Air Force.

I have an excerpt from the sortie report of Lieutenant Mainwaring's final mission;
The target for the night was Szombathely Marshalling Yards in Hungary which had become increasingly important as a focal point of the enemy supply lines in the Balkans. This raid which deployed a force of 84 aircraft, proved a complete and expensive failure. Route and target marker bombs failed to go down as illuminator aircraft dropped their flares but the marker aircraft failed to identify the target in considerable haze and retained their bombs. 12 aircraft reached the target area, where, despite a great deal of enemy fighter opposition, they orbited waiting for the target marking bombs to go down. Nine aircraft bombed in bomb bursts in the centre of the flares but a number of aircraft were seen to crash in flames in the target area. Lieutenant Mainwaring was awarded WW2 Medal and the WW2 star.

To these six brave servicemen who made the ultimate sacrifice I say on behalf of us all 'thank you, we will not forget.'

Jason Sparks, Secretary of St Helena Veterans Association

Continue to page five...

SHG Press Office | 1st Floor, The Castle | Jamestown | Tel: +290 22470

kerisha.yon@sainthelena.gov.sh | julie.george@sainthelena.gov.sh | jodie.s-constantine@sainthelena.gov.sh



Visit us: www.sainthelena.gov.sh



Standing in our door by Hannah Braaf

Goodbyes.

Fighting to forget who I give them to falling, broken, drifting down landing, sad and silent, landing at our door

Remembering you with those crushed flowers standing in my door

Remembering that kiss, new and rushed and awkward?

An assault of lips and tongues and teeth standing in my door

Love, will your mouth be weary, grieving, dust bombed when I find you standing in our door?

Will your arms be tired and weak when you try to hold me... hold us standing in our door?

Will your heart be loud and hot and beating against its barricades when it tries to beat for me standing in our door?

Will the memory of us be shielded against the ache,
and the struggle, and the bullets of hurt and hope and fear?

Will you still love me then - angry and scared and broken –
as you love me now when you are here standing in our door

Victorious by Jamie Peters

What do you see

When you look at war?

What do you see?

Do you see soldiers in green and grey

Standing proud in the sun?

Or do you see soldiers

Covered in blood, mud and dismay,

Falling face down in the rain?

Horror and glory.

Loss and victory.

A crumbling nation defeated.

A victorious nation standing proud.

God gave us eyes to see

So why do we use them

To aim down a sight?

God gave us hands to build and create

So why destroy and decimate?

We all see the medals and titles,

But those only show us

Our human depravity

Human savagery.

What is the point of advancing technology

If all we advance is another tragedy?

Whatever the time,

Whatever the century,

Whatever the colour, whatever the size,

Families touched by war.

Red eyes full of pain,

Crying their bloodshot tears.

So why, why do we choose

To glorify, objectify and die?

What is the point of recording

Each war, if all we can do is

Repeat our mistakes.

Why can't we learn?

People die from war.

THERE IS NO VICTORY.