

Friends of Millbank

April 2022 Newsletter



*The George Cross awarded to Malta, 15 April 1942
(National War Museum, Malta GC. Image by David Monniaux, wikipedia.org)*

Dear Friend of Millbank

Today, Good Friday 15 April 2022, is the 80th anniversary of the award of the George Cross to Malta, awarded at the height of the worst month of its two-and-a-half-year siege in the Second World War. I am therefore dedicating this newsletter to the people of Malta GC, and to all those servicemen of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force, and the men of the Merchant Navy, who gave their lives to sustain the Island and to keep it free. The island suffered unrelenting aerial bombardment by the Axis forces, yet it pulled through. Their example is an inspiration to us still, as I hope it will also inspire those sustaining the people of Ukraine in their fight for freedom against a modern aggressor. I would also like to pay tribute to those who cared for the wounded during the siege of Malta, both civilian and military, and to similarly pay tribute to those caring for the wounded in Ukraine, to whose people I dedicated my last newsletter.

In this season of Easter, let us pray for the killed, the wounded, the bereaved and the suffering on both sides of this conflict, and pray that peace will return soon to the continent of Europe.

Friends of Millbank commemorative visit to Malta, April 2022

A group of around ten Friends of Millbank are currently in Malta for the 80th anniversary commemorations of the award of the George Cross, organised by the George Cross Island Association, with some additional military medical history events organised for Friends of Millbank. We shall have reports on this for our next newsletter.

‘Two weeks in April’

Judge Joseph Galea Debono, President of the George Cross Island Association, has written an excellent ten-page article, ‘**Two Weeks in April**’, describing the prelude to the award of Malta’s George Cross, for the current issue of the aviation magazine ‘Flypast’. The issue contains other articles on Malta as well as another excellent article commemorating the Falklands War of 40 years ago, which we shall ourselves be commemorating by a special talk at Millbank on 1 July. This issue is accessible online at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xZ6LX8pjx_mUa_Cn0khFyvS_EpYqivVk/view

Book of the Month

Continuing with the theme of commemorations this April, our new Book of the Month in the Reviews section of our website is a compilation of personal recommendations on Military and Medical History in Malta, see <https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/books/>

Our next talk, Friday 13 May (at Millbank and on Zoom)

Continuing with the Malta theme, our next talk, on 13 May, will be 'Two Heroes of Malta's War', an inspiring tale of love and loss by Group Captain Paul McDonald MBE, author and historian. The flyer is attached, and the link is live on our website. The talk will be delivered live at Millbank and streamed simultaneously on Zoom. Do register now, you will enjoy this.

Remembering our Allies, Sunday 29 May

The Superintendent of the Brookwood American Military Cemetery, Mr. Angelo Munsel, has very kindly extended an invitation to The Friends of Millbank to attend their annual Memorial Day Service and reception, on Sunday 29 May. The invitation is attached. You are welcome to bring guests.

Thanks to our last speaker

I shall end by thanking our last speaker, Jane Orr, who delivered our first talk back at Millbank, as well as on Zoom (so our first hybrid meeting), since proceedings were interrupted by a particular virus in March 2020. Fittingly, Jane delivered a talk comparing two pandemics, the Spanish Flu and COVID-19, which was very well attended. The recording has been uploaded to our Members Area.

Wishing you all a very happy and blessed Easter

David Vassallo

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15 April 2022