



## POLITICS AND FOREIGN POLICY IN OBAMA'S SECOND TERM

Following a distinguished diplomatic career, Sir Nigel Sheinwald was British Ambassador to the USA from 2007 to 2012. On 14 November Pilgrims and guests welcomed him to a dinner in his honour held at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

After an introduction by Sir Peter Bottomley MP, Sir Nigel examined American foreign policy in relationship to grass-roots discontent at home, as manifested by the controversial and confrontational Tea Party. There was a fundamental dislike of establishments all over the world and a feeling in the USA, Britain and elsewhere that nation-building had to start at home and not abroad. As demonstrated by the Arab Spring and the current civil war in Syria, it was very difficult to get foreign policy right.

There was no real appetite on the part of the Western countries for military intervention in Syria and there was a real danger of American disengagement with no other country able to fill the vacuum. Sir Nigel believed that the USA should maintain its global leadership role, especially in Asia and the Middle East, and that a suitable agreement should be reached with the new government in Iran.

Britain was still the USA's most reliable ally across the board. The relationship between Churchill and Roosevelt was not as close as that between today's leaders, despite Britain going through some kind of identity crisis following the economic



recession and doubts about membership of the EU. Working together, Britain and the USA could still achieve a great deal.

At question-time Sir Nigel covered such topics as non-intervention in Syria and its effect on both British and US domestic politics, the Israeli/Arab/Palestinian problem, the role of professional diplomats and their relationship with their political masters and America's attitude to the Middle East. Sir Nigel believed that even with energy self-sufficiency, the USA would still support Israel, but that Asia would be more important in its calculations than any other part of the world.

Sir Nigel received a warm vote of thanks from Sir Stephen Wright and was presented with the customary Pilgrims' tie and official centennial history.



## SAVE MAILING COSTS!

If you have received hard copy of this newsletter but would be content to receive it electronically, please contact the office

[sec@pilgrimsociety.org](mailto:sec@pilgrimsociety.org)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LETTER



Exactly fifty years ago, in the spring of 1964, this member of your Executive Committee flew to New York courtesy of British Universities North America Club - return flight and accommodation in New York exactly £69.00. It was the start of a four-month

pre-university visit to the US – the expression gap year would not arrive for many years – that included many highlights, the most memorable of which was attending the Republican Convention in San Francisco. Governor Bill Scranton of Pennsylvania was the candidate I was supporting, but he was eclipsed by the charismatic Barry Goldwater, who in the course of his acceptance speech uttered the memorable words *Extremism in defence of liberty is no vice*. Goldwater in his turn would suffer a heavy defeat by LBJ in the Presidential election later that year.

I mention this first experience of American politics because surely a key constituent of the role of the Society is the need to explain constantly to Pilgrims on both sides of the Atlantic (and to the wider world), the many differences that exist between our two political systems. Canvassing in the streets of south London is light years away from arriving at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, being handed a bottle of ‘goldwater’ and showered with gold dust! Politics is very, very different on each side of the Atlantic, which is why the Society's panel discussions at the times of elections play a vital role in educating us all.

The arrival of a youthful American Ambassador in London prompts a question that your Executive Committee has wrestled with from time to time as we seek to increase the Society's membership. How can we make membership of the Pilgrims an attractive proposition to the younger generation? Should we put on special events that are tailored towards those with busy working lives, or should we go further and have a separate younger section of the Society with its own events? The latter course is a route that some of the leading St James's Clubs have

followed with success, but it requires a great deal of time and effort. Or perhaps we should just accept that organisations of our kind will attract the profile of membership that we have today. If you have any thoughts on the subject our Chairman Ron Freeman would be pleased to hear from you.

One of the key reasons for the ongoing success of the Society is the attractive and varied series of events and talks that Peter Bottomley and his Programme Committee arrange for Pilgrims each year. This year promises to be no exception, with the reintroduction of the popular Summer Reception at Winfield House, the American Ambassador's official residence in Regent's Park, in August, followed by the Sir Harry Brittain Memorial Lecture in October. This will be given by the well-known journalist and broadcaster Peter Kellner, President of the polling organisation YouGov and husband of Baroness Ashton, the EU Foreign Affairs Representative. It will be particularly interesting to hear his views on the state of the polls ahead of next year's General Election.

Enjoy the sunny spring weather before the busy season of Elections and a Referendum north of the border are upon us.

*Alastair Macpherson of Pitmain*

### NEW MEMBERS, SPRING 2014

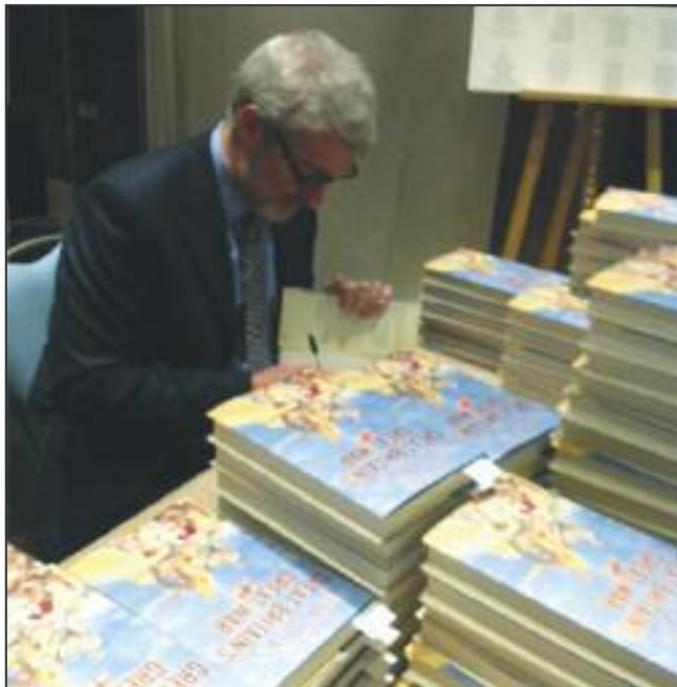
Alexander Anton  
Patrick Burgess MBE  
Robin Etheridge  
Daniel Freedman  
Alistair Galloway  
Alan Houmann  
Professor Neil Kent  
Patrick J Marsland-Roberts TD  
Stephen Maycock  
Donough O'Brien  
David Suratgar  
Ms Emily Landis Walker  
Ms Sarah Jane Walker  
Michael Whittaker  
Nicholas Woolf  
Mrs Delia Wynn Jones CBE

*Membership application forms, and additional copies of the 2014 List of Members, are available from the office*

**[sec@pilgrimsociety.org](mailto:sec@pilgrimsociety.org)**

## GREAT BRITAIN'S GREAT WAR

A capacity Pilgrims' audience gathered for a luncheon at the InterContinental London Westminster hotel on 5 December to hear the celebrated journalist and broadcaster Jeremy Paxman talk about his new book *Great Britain's Great War*.



*Jeremy Paxman signing copies of his book*

The impetus for this book came with the discovery, among the personal effects of Jeremy Paxman's late mother, of material relating to her Uncle Charlie, who had died at Gallipoli in 1915. Jeremy Paxman felt that the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War was time to re-evaluate the picture, presented by left-wing historians in the 1960s, of lions led by donkeys and of a pointless sacrifice of a vast number of lives. He wanted to look at a war which this country won convincingly.

Britain went to war in 1914 to protect Belgium against German aggression and to preserve that country's neutrality guaranteed by a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Treaty. For the previous two centuries Britain's policy had been to prevent any single European Power achieving hegemony on the continent, and we had not been involved in a full-scale European war since 1815. Jeremy Paxman emphasised that a force of only 80,000 was sent to the continent and suffered a reverse against the Germans. Lord Kitchener's subsequent call to arms led to a vast number of volunteers coming forward, with little idea of the terrible suffering and privations they would have to endure.

Conscription, introduced in 1915 to boost the numbers of fighting men, resulted in a number of people becoming conscientious objectors. The concept of trench warfare was new to both sides and there were some good generals and some bad generals. Jeremy Paxman was firmly of the opinion that the great German offensive in 1918 failed because of the poor calibre and low morale of the young German conscripts, and the effect of the Royal Naval blockade on the civilian population of Germany, which led to revolution at home and mutinies in the German army and navy.

The First World War changed Britain for ever and in a whole number of ways, including voting rights, social habits and customs, the rights of the ordinary people and, above all, the relationship between citizen and the State.

Jeremy Paxman then answered questions on the significance of the Zimmermann Telegram, which many people regarded as one of the main factors that brought the USA into the First World War; the British army's overall performance in the war, and Germany's imperial ambitions as evidence of its envy of the British Empire.

Tables were named after World War I battles. Following the lunch, Sir John Allison wrote:

*I was on Hill 60, which could not have been more appropriate for personal reasons, as my father was one of the few survivors of a 24-hour successful defence of the Hill in which his platoon commander, Lieut Woolley, refused to surrender despite suffering 90% casualties. 150 men went up the Hill; 14 came back. Woolley won the VC.*



*Jeremy Paxman and Mrs Deborah Owen*

Deborah Owen gave Jeremy Paxman a very warm and appreciative vote of thanks and presented him with the customary Pilgrims' tie and copy of the centennial history.

## THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS FROM THE SUPREME COURT

Executive Committee Member Lord Clarke of Stone-Cum-Ebony was the guest speaker at a dinner on 27 March at the Carlton Club.



*Mr Ronald M Freeman  
and Lord Clarke of Stone-cum-Ebony*

Lord Clarke has enjoyed a very successful legal career. Called to the Bar in 1965, he was appointed to the High Court Bench in 1993 and to the Court of Appeal in 1998. In 2005 he was appointed Master of the Rolls and Head of Civil Justice, and in October 2009 he became a Justice of the Supreme Court.

After a fulsome introduction by Sir Michael Craig-Cooper, Lord Clarke gave a perceptive and entertaining discourse on the constitutional framework and inner workings of the Supreme Court, the final court of appeal for civil cases in the United Kingdom and for criminal cases from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Supreme Court was established on 1 October 2009 when judicial authority was transferred from the House of Lords.

Lord Clarke emphasised that, unlike the Supreme Court in the USA which deals with a written constitution, the UK Supreme Court was not able to question and strike down legislation. The Court was set up because of the anomalies in the British legal system; formerly an appeal to the House of Lords was to the whole House, which came to be seen as cumbersome and inappropriate. In addition, the position of the Lord Chancellor, as a member of the executive, the judiciary and the legislature, was regarded as being contrary to the concept of the separation of powers. Lord Clarke thought that the location

of the Supreme Court in the former Middlesex Guildhall on Parliament Square, in close proximity to the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and the Treasury, was highly appropriate.

Lord Clarke dealt with a range of questions on the role and effectiveness of the Supreme Court, and received a warm vote of thanks from Ian Barlow.

### FORWARD PROGRAMME

**Tuesday 3 June**

**Professor Sir Richard Trainor's *Reflections***

*The Transformation of British Universities since the 1970s: a mid-Atlantic perspective*

The Athenæum, 107 Pall Mall, SW1Y 5ER

6.30 pm

**Wednesday 23 July**

**Visit to Ditchley Park and Blenheim Palace**

Transport provided from central London

8.30 am departure, returning 7.00 pm

**Wednesday 20 August**

**Reception at Winfield House**

By kind invitation of the Honorable Matthew W Barzun, Ambassador of the United States

6.00-7.30 pm

**Wednesday 1 October**

**Dinner with Kate Adie**

*Fighting on the Home Front: the Legacy of Women in World War One*

Savile Club, 69 Brook Street

Black tie, 7.15 for 7.45 pm

**Monday 6 October**

**Annual Meeting**

**and Sir Harry Brittain Memorial Lecture**

by Peter Kellner, President of YouGov

*Polls and Politics in the USA and UK*

EBRD, One Exchange Square, EC2A 2JN

6.00 pm

**Monday 20 October**

**Talk by Lady Judge**

*Have a life: be in business*

*Little lessons and reflections on mistakes*

To be followed by a reception

Eversheds LLP, 1 Wood Street, EC2V 7WS

6.30 pm

*Members will be sent programme updates by email:*

***please ensure the office has your correct  
email address***

***sec@pilgrimsociety.org***

## WHISTLER IN LONDON EXHIBITION

On 17 December a small group of Pilgrims visited Dulwich Picture Gallery, the oldest public gallery in this country, which opened in 1817, to see the Exhibition *An American in London: Whistler and the Thames*.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler, 1834-1903, was a passionate anglophile who felt very much at home in the environment of Victorian London where he settled in 1859. He established an early reputation as an etcher with a particular fascination with the River Thames, which he also portrayed in early oil paintings such as *Brown and Silver: Old Battersea Bridge*. Whistler also managed to arouse great controversy with a painting such as *Nocturne in Black and Gold: the Falling Rocket*, as reflected in the infamous court case against John Ruskin who accused him of 'charging 200 guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face'.

Whistler's love affair with the Thames was long-lasting. From 1855 until his death he had almost daily contact with the River, sketching it, walking beside it, rowing on it and crossing it. He covered every aspect from the sleazy docklands around the Pool of London to Chelsea Reach, via all the great bridges, especially Battersea Bridge. The exhibition contained such gems as *Wapping*, *Battersea Reach from Lindsey Houses*, *Blue and Gold*, *Old Battersea Bridge* and *The Last of Old Westminster*.



*Wapping (1860-64)*

We were also given a special guided tour of the principal pictures of the superb collection of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century paintings, begun in 1626 by the celebrated actor Edward Alleyn, the founder of Dulwich College.

## CAPTAIN AUGUSTUS AGAR VC DSO Royal Navy *The Mystery VC*

Executive Committee member David Skidmore gave a fascinating talk to Pilgrims and guests at the Caledonian Club on 6 March.



*Captain Augustus Agar  
VC DSO*

Augustus Agar, 1890-1968, was a remarkable naval officer who fought in the Battle of Jutland in 1916 and went on to specialise in motor torpedo boats. After the Armistice of November 1918 Gus Agar served in the campaign against the Bolsheviks who had seized power in the October Revolution of 1917. His successful

attack, using MTBs, on Soviet naval ships at the Krollstadt base in 1919 earned him a VC at the age of 28.

Captain Augustus Agar's subsequent career included setting up the New Zealand Navy in the early 1920s and surviving, after 32 hours in the sea, the sinking of his ship *HMS Dorsetshire* by the Japanese in 1942. Captain Agar ended his career as Commodore of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, 1944-46.



*Commander Rodney Agar, nephew of  
Captain Augustus Agar, with the Earl of Portsmouth*

## MILITARY EXCHANGES PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Lieutenant-General Sir Graeme Lamb was the guest speaker at luncheon on 27 January held at The Rifles Officers' London Club in Davies Street, W1.



Sir Graeme Lamb served as Senior British Military Representative and Deputy Commanding-General of the Multinational Force in Iraq 2006-07, and then as Commander of the Field Army at Land Command 2007-09. He served in Afghanistan as an expert on counter-insurgency, heading a programme designed to persuade insurgents to give up their arms.

After an introduction by Sir Stephen Wright, Sir Graeme looked at the certainties of the great Empires and great alliances which pre-dated the First World War; at the ill-fated League of Nations and its successor the United Nations, created in 1945; at the creation of NATO in 1949, and at the Cold War which lasted until the break-up of the Warsaw Pact in 1991. The events of 11 September 2001 created a new world order in



*Rifleman Pope and Serjeant Sturgess, The Rifles*

which terrorism became the major international threat. General Lamb also spoke of the impact of the Arab Spring, the slow death of the nation state, the dangers of isolationism and the communications race.

Questions covered the supposed shortcomings of the Obama administration; British relationships with Africa; the Middle East; Syria; EU relations; the proper exercise of British influence and the future of Afghanistan.

Pilgrims' President Admiral Lord Boyce moved the vote of thanks and presented Sir Graeme with the customary Pilgrims' tie and official history.

### IN MEMORIAM

The Hon Mrs Hugh Astor  
 Sir William Benyon DL  
 Robert B Browne-Clayton  
 C Barrie Byford CBE  
 Sir Brian Goswell  
 Air Vice-Marshal Peter Harding  
 CB CVO CBE AFC  
 Gurth Hoyer Millar  
 The Right Hon the Lord Kingsdown KG  
 Peter Kirwan Taylor  
 Brian H Pearce CBE DL

### The following announcement appears as an accommodation to its sponsor

***The Margaret Thatcher Conference on Liberty*** will be held at the Guildhall on Wednesday 18 June 2014. Hosted by the Centre for Policy Studies, the think tank founded by Margaret Thatcher when she was Leader of the Opposition, the conference will be chaired by Lord Saatchi. Significant statesmen, businesspeople and academics from around the world have agreed to participate. They include the former Australian Prime Minister John Howard and leading political thinkers such as Dr Art Laffer, Professor Niall Ferguson and Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove MP, as well as the former CIA Director General David Petraeus and leading authors Charles Moore and V S Naipaul.

Complimentary tickets are available for the conference, and tickets for the dinner to follow are available at £1,000 per person. Further information is available from the event team on [Nicole@cps.org.uk](mailto:Nicole@cps.org.uk) or 0207 207 1887.

## THE ASSASSINATION OF THE ARCHDUKE

Fellow-Pilgrim His Honour Judge Sir Gavyn Arthur generously agreed to share his huge knowledge as an historian of fin-de-siècle Central Europe, with particular expertise about Franz Ferdinand, when he spoke before dinner at the Cavalry and Guards Club on 29 April.

We were delighted that HSH Princess Christine von Hohenberg, granddaughter of the Archduke, and her daughter, HSH Princess Marie-Therese von Hohenberg, were among our guests.



Sir Gavyn, who was Lord Mayor of London 2002-03, began by drawing a parallel between the Sarajevo assassination and the murder of the Serbian King Alexander and his wife in June 1903 by the same Serbian terrorist gang, the notorious Black Hand. Alexander had wanted to keep on friendly terms with Austria-Hungary, putting him on a collision course with the fanatical Serbian nationalists and their Russian backers.

Sir Gavyn compared the ill-fated Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand to Mr Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*. He was basically shy, with occasional outbursts of temper, and was also enormously wealthy. Most importantly, he had progressive political ideas on social reform. A devote Catholic, Franz Ferdinand was free of religious intolerance and believed that the domination of the polyglot Empire by Austria and

Hungary could not be maintained. Furthermore, he had made a morganatic marriage with his wife Sophie and had been compelled by Emperor Franz Josef to renounce his succession rights.

Sir Gavyn told in graphic terms of the catalogue of blunders, bad planning, Bosnian obsession with protocol and insubstantial security that surrounded the visit to Sarajevo by Franz Ferdinand and Sophie on 28 June 1914. Their murder by the fanatical Serbian student Gavrilo Princip sparked the sequence of events that led to the outbreak of the First World War on 4 August 1914 - *three shots that changed the world forever*.

Executive Committee Member Air Chief Marshal Lord Stirrup thanked Sir Gavyn for his fascinating and well-researched talk and presented him with the customary Pilgrims' tie and official centennial history.

### NEW DESIGN PILGRIMS' TIES

The new design pure silk Pilgrims' ties are available for sale to members for £22.00 each

The ties, with other items of Pilgrims' merchandise, are featured on the website

– [www.pilgrimsociety.org](http://www.pilgrimsociety.org) –

and are available from the office and at events

There is a small number of silk ties of the earlier design available for £10.00 each

### Friends of Dulwich Picture Gallery

The Friends of Dulwich Picture Gallery is a registered charity formed to support the Gallery's activities which organises a varied programme of social events, including concerts, talks, visits and film screenings. The Friends contribute directly to the Gallery's future: the conservation of the permanent collection of Old Master paintings, the mounting of visiting exhibitions, and the development of the education and community programmes.

Since its formation, the Friends has donated more than £2 million to Dulwich Picture Gallery and now raises around £200,000 each year for the Gallery.

[http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/support\\_us/join\\_us.aspx](http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/support_us/join_us.aspx)

## NEWS FROM THE PILGRIMS OF THE UNITED STATES

André Bishop, Producing Artistic Director of the Lincoln Centre Theatre, addressed US Pilgrims at a reception in his honour on 12 February at the Racquet & Tennis Club.



*Executive Committee member James D Zirin, André Bishop and President Miner H Warner*

John C Whitehead addressed the Pilgrims following the Annual Meeting on 14 April. He is a former Chairman of the Board of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and founding Chairman of the National September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial and Museum.



*John C Whitehead receiving The Pilgrims of the United States Medallion for Service to the Nation from Vice President Hon Paul A Volcker*



*Executive Committee member Governor Thomas H Kean, John C Whitehead and Miner H Warner, President*



The Right Hon David Miliband, President and CEO International Rescue Committee and former UK Foreign Secretary, addressed the Pilgrims of the United States at a reception on 23 April.

### MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

It would be most helpful if anyone could kindly supply postal addresses for the following members:

Michael Biscoe, joined 2004, moved from an address in Norfolk in 2011;

David A Caruth, joined 1997, moved from Wiltshire in 2013, and

William A Kerr, joined 2011, moved from London, apparently to the US, in 2013.

**Please ensure that the office is kept updated with any changes of email or postal address**

The Pilgrims  
PO Box 1289  
Maidstone  
ME18 5WQ



Tel 01622 817780

[sec@pilgrimsociety.org](mailto:sec@pilgrimsociety.org)

Secretary: Mrs T M Wells

Newsletter Editor: Christopher Robson

[www.pilgrimsociety.org](http://www.pilgrimsociety.org)