



BritClub News

Vol 25 Issue 2



A MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear all,

Thanks again to our stand-in Newsletter Editor Olga for compiling another very interesting edition of news and information for our members and for visitors to our website which I hope will tempt you to join our club ! We have 10 new members already this year and if you are one of them, we look forward to meeting and greeting you at one of our events soon.

We have had a mid-week social evening each month so far this year, as well as our traditional monthly luncheons and all have been well attended. We currently have 117 paid up members and since we typically see 25 to 30 at each event there must be a lot of you who haven't taken the plunge yet this year, so I encourage you to come out and have some fun with us regulars !

We have 2 events scheduled for April so far and the next big one will be on Saturday, May 17th which will be the annual general meeting, followed by a BBQ party at the Turtle Beach pavilion on Midnight Pass Road South, at the southern end of Siesta Key starting at 4:30 PM. Chef Roger will not be available to cook for us this time, but we have 3 volunteers who all want to have a go, so good luck to them and please try not to burn your fingers !

Speaking of the AGM, you can consider this letter to be your second official notice. This is when the new slate of officers and directors will be elected by you paid-up members. The slate of nominees is posted below, and I would like to thank all those folks who served on the board for this current year. Some of them have agreed to continue and we have two new members who have been nominated, so once again I thank you.

Even though several members will seek cooler climes during the dog days of summer (and the hurricane season of course which begins on June 1st) we plan to continue with our two events per month format so keep an eye on your email in-boxes for the invites. As for our 25th anniversary celebrations we are currently thinking of a special dinner party on Saturday, October 18th. That will be followed by our traditional Guy Fawkes party on Sunday, November 2nd and our Christmas party in December. Other ideas are being bandied about and, as always, I welcome your comments and suggestions. Email me at: sarasotabritclub@gmail.com

BTW please order your name tags – see the last page below, because I - for one - cannot remember all the new names ! Thanks for your time and please enjoy the articles and wonderful photos below.

Yours sincerely, Peter Stokes, President

Second Notice of the annual general meeting of the Sarasota British Club, Inc.

Our annual general meeting will be held at the Turtle Beach Pavilion, Midnight Pass Road South, Siesta Key, Sarasota, FL on Saturday, May 17th starting at 4:30 PM.

Agenda:

1. Call to order and welcoming remarks.
2. Chairman and Secretary.
3. Establish a quorum (5% of the membership).
4. Approve minutes of the previous AGM.
5. Election of Board Members and Officers.
6. Adjournment.

Notes:

- Only paid-up members are entitled to vote.
- Under our by-laws nominations to the Board cannot be made from the floor.
- Nominations can be made up to 2 days prior to the meeting.

Nominees to the 2025/2026 Board of the Sarasota British Club:

Peter Stokes	President and Director
David Welch	Vice-President and Membership Director
Christine Green	Secretary and Director
Olga Stokes	Treasurer and Director
Stevan Collins	Website Liaison Director
Brian Clark	Newsletter Editor and Director
Paul Wilkinson	Director-at-Large
Linda Mercurio	Director-at-Large
Bernice Allison	Director-at-Large

Our founder Sandra Cherry is Director Emeritus and does not need to be re-elected

FUTURE EVENTS

April Pub Night:

On Wednesday April 9th, at Shakespeare's English Pub, from 6:00 PM and on...
Address: 3550 South Osprey Ave. Sarasota, FL 34239

April Luncheon:

On Friday 25th, location to be announced ; please check your emails for details.

May Annual General Meeting

On May 17th.
Venue: the Turtle Beach pavilion, Midnight Pass Road South, at the southern end of Siesta Key
starting at 4:30 PM

25th Anniversary celebrations:

we are currently thinking of a special dinner party on Saturday, October 18th.



The following is a contribution from Maya Likar

International Churchill Conference

October 24-27, 2024

The Conference was held at the Mariott Grosvenor House in Mayfair, London. It was a fantastic venue as, were the speakers. Topics included: Churchill and the Gathering Storm, Churchill and his political rivals and Churchill as Wartime Prime Minister. The main theme was Sir Winston and his legacy.

Our lectures were given in the hotel ballroom as well as other venues. One lecture was held at Lancaster House situated close to Buckingham Palace, a magnificent setting and a prestigious central location. It has a wide range of rooms and a large garden. It is used as a conference center for major receptions such as London Fashion Week.

Almost as influential as the visitors, was the décor, which is the backdrop for paintings and objects of art. On entering the house, the hall opens to a sweeping staircase in an echo of Versailles. It was a stunning place. We had fascinating lectures there and then departed for a reception at the Churchill War Room.



Various panelists took part in the presentations



James Cleverly former UK Home Secretary

The next day we went to 61 Whitehall, RUSI's home, whose President is the Duke of Kent. The Royal United Services Institute has been at the heart of military and security thinking for 190 years, with a mission to generate evidence-based and independent debate and questions of security and defense. One of the lectures showed Winston's great talent as a painter and Picasso said he could have been a great painter if he wanted.

On the last night we had a Gala Dinner at the National Gallery which closed for us. It was a fabulous event. The Grosvenor House Hotel was really, impressive, as was the Conference. It was an unforgettable event.



Maya with friends



*...in conversation with Randolph Churchill,
Sir Winston Churchill's great grandson*



*The National Art Gallery
was the venue for a gala dinner closing
the conference.*

'End of an era': Last surviving Battle of Britain pilot dies

18 March 2025

Jessica Lawrence BBC News NI



John 'Paddy' Hemingway died on Monday, the RAF confirmed.

The last surviving Battle of Britain pilot, John "Paddy" Hemingway, has died at the age of 105.

Mr. Hemingway, who was originally from Dublin, joined the Royal Air Force (RAF) as a teenager before World War Two.

At 21, he was a fighter pilot in the Battle of Britain, a three-month period when air force personnel defended the skies against a large-scale assault by the German air force, the Luftwaffe.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer paid tribute to Mr. Hemingway, saying his courage and those of all RAF pilots had "helped end WWII and secure our freedom".

The Prince of Wales also paid tribute, saying that "we owe so much to Paddy and his generation for our freedoms today".

Those who fought in the three-and-a-half-month battle came to be known as "The Few" after a speech by the then Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill.

"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few," he said of their sacrifices in battle.

In a statement, the RAF said that Mr. Hemingway had "passed away peacefully" on Monday.

March luncheon:

There was twenty-nine of us who gathered at “Triple Tail” restaurant at The Landings in Sarasota. Our lunch took place in a patio that had natural light, a fresh breeze and just the right environment for everyone to feel relaxed and in the mood to talk a lot and laugh a lot!



David Welch paying tribute to John Hemingway









Media Matters, By Paul Wilkinson.

Netflix has had a lot of new material but, except for **Adolescence** they were generally disappointing. **Adolescence** is a disturbing tale of modern teenagers, and the challenges parents today face when up against the power of social media. 5 ★



Diana has enjoyed **A Discovery of Witches**, a very tame Vampire and Witches tale that has dragged on (in my opinion) for 3 series. Others may like it, however. 3 ★

The **Electric State** allegedly cost over \$200m to make, and it came over like a \$20m B movie. 3 ★
Rogue Agent, Zero Day, Night Agent were all 3 ★

We watch **Amazon Prime** more than any other streaming app, many of our favorites are on **BritBox** – **Allo Allo; HideH; Porridge; Yes Minister**; all get a solid 4 ★
Ludwig 5 ★ is a new series and it is definitely worthwhile.
Reacher 5 ★ was great fun, and follows the books quite closely



Max: has **The Pitt** 5 ★ a grown-up version of ER, outstanding.

CB Strike was pretty good in the first 2 series, but this 3rd series was a disappointment 3 . You may have heard of

The White Lotus 5 ★ , and it is worth the buzz.

Finally, a word about a movie on **YouTube: Nuclear Now** 4 ★ is a documentary by Oliver Stone about how misunderstood nuclear power has become, and why it is a solution to the Climate Change dilemma.

From your acting editor:

For the love of nature: a visit to The Falkland Islands

It all started in late January when I read a book named: "Mission Penguin", by Ursula Clare Franklin, a wildlife photographer who lives in Somerset and is originally from Yorkshire, England. She embarked on a personal quest from the Galapagos to Antarctica to see and photograph all 18 species of penguins in their natural habitats.

Needless to say; Peter and I felt inspired by the book since penguins always have a special place in our hearts. We decided to visit the one place where we could find five species. Four weeks later, there we were: the Falkland Islands!

The Falkland Islands is an archipelago in the South Atlantic Ocean on the Patagonian Shelf. The principal islands are about 300 miles east of South America's southern Patagonian coast and 752 miles from Cape Dubouzet at the northern tip of the Antarctic Peninsula.

The archipelago, with an area of 4,700 sq miles, comprises East Falkland, West Falkland, and 776 smaller islands. It is a British Overseas Territory although the Falklands have internal self-governance. The capital and largest settlement is Stanley on East Falkland.

The islands lie at the boundary of the subantarctic oceanic and tundra climate zones, and both major islands have mountain ranges reaching 2,300 ft (700 m). They are home to large bird populations, although many no longer breed on the main islands due to predation by introduced species



The Falkland Islands are biogeographically part of the Antarctic zone, with strong connections to the flora and fauna of Patagonia in mainland South America. Land birds make up most of the Falklands' avifauna.

The only endemic bird species on the Falkland Islands are the flightless Falkland steamer duck and Cobb's wren, 63 species breed on the islands. There are also a few of the largest albatross colonies on the planet.

When Peter and I told our friends of our plans to visit the islands many opened their eyes and asked: Why? In the following pages I'd like to show you the reason for our journey to almost the end of the world.



Pebble Island, beauty everywhere even in the rain.



A Gentoo colony

Photo: courtesy of Hilary & David Welch

The Magellanic Penguin

The Magellanic Penguin is a banded penguin and has two black bands visible from the front, the youngsters have no chest bandings.

They nest in deep burrows that protect them from the harsh weather conditions.

Although their total population is estimated at approximately over 2 million adults, they are nowadays in decline. Most of them are found in the coastal southern Patagonia and about ten percent in the Falkland Islands.



Moulting adult taking a quick nap



A juvenile (left) and a moulting adult near the nest



Burrows everywhere near the beach in Pebble Island



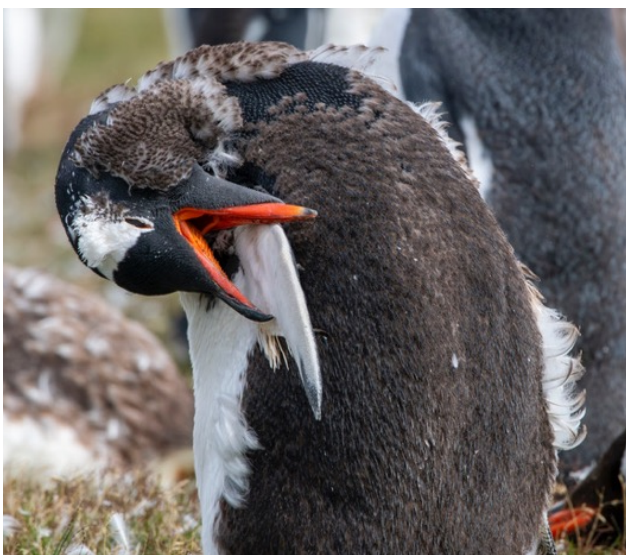
Waiting for the visitors to leave...

The Gentoo Penguin

The Gentoo, the Chinstrap and the Adelie penguins are classified as Brush Tailed Penguins because of their stiff tail feathers resembling a brush. There are thousands of Gentoo penguins in the islands. They have white freckles and a white patch above the eyes and a black head, face and neck. Gentoos make the young run for their meal, a good run on the beach first and then they get fed; all to make sure they grow strong!



Adult Gentoo in Bleaker Island



Moulting time!



A scientific study proposes four different kinds of Gentoo Penguins:
an Antarctic species; a Falkland Islands species; a South Georgia and a Kerguelen Island species.

The global population of Gentoos is considered stable but if they were divided, there would be some that are increasing while others are declining.

The vast majority of Gentoos breed in the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Islands and Antarctica.



Gentoo colony on the rocks; a rainy & windy day in Pebble Island.

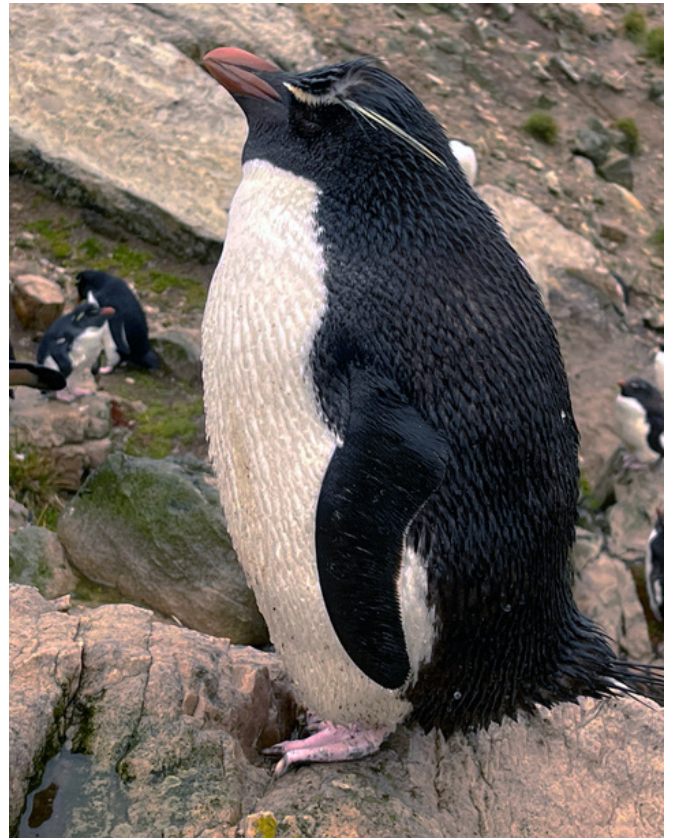
The Crested Penguins: Rockhopper and Macaroni species

The Crested Penguins have a head-crest which varies in the shade of yellow and position on the head.

The most subtle is the Southern Rockhopper whereas the Macaroni has a bright yellow-orange headgear.

They all have red eyes, red-orange beak and pink feet.

The Crested species nest rather inland and go through steep, rugged terrain to access their colonies.



A Rockhopper taking a break on the rocks when the torrential rain stopped for a moment.



Soaking wet but gorgeous with bright red eyes and clean plumage.

The Rockhoppers are famous for jumping and hopping their way up rocks in the cliffs.

They are also known for being monogamous. You could watch them for hours and not get tired because of their colourful personality.

The Macaroni Penguin is supposed to be the most common species in the world but it's rapidly declining. There are large colonies in Indian Ocean and south Atlantic.

In the Falkland Islands, their numbers are very low.

We got to see only two, one in Pebble Island among the Rockhoppers and another one in Bleaker Island, also among the rockhoppers.



Macaroni adult in a colony of rockhoppers



Lonely no more!

In the Falkland Islands some Macaroni interbreed with Rockhoppers, their offspring is called a Hybrid and the locals displayed some of their photographs in a pub.

The photo on the left, shows a pair of adult penguins.

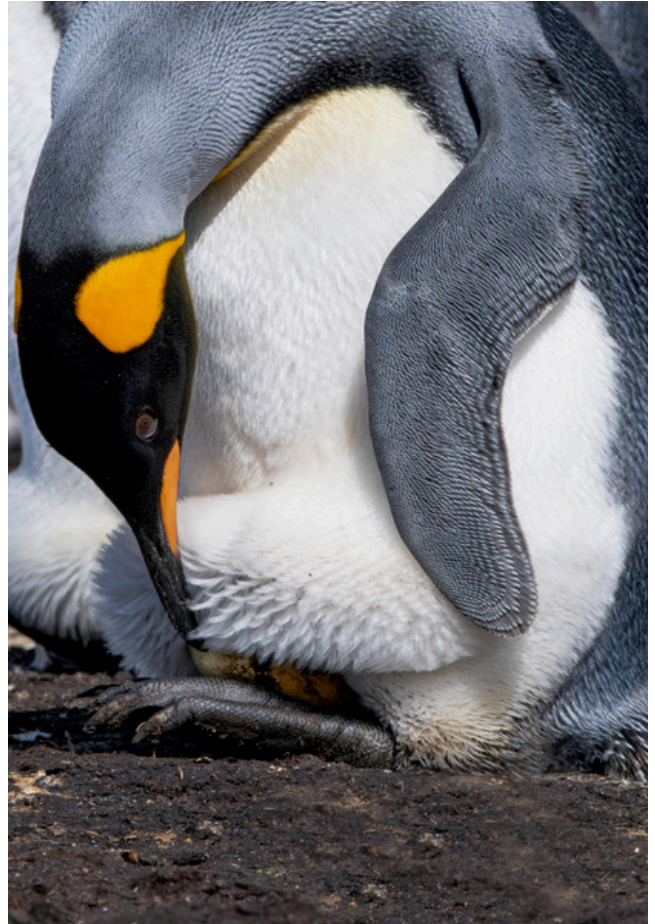
The moulting Macaroni – with striking yellow head crest- is grooming his mate, the Rockhopper.

Our host told us that he had been trying to find a mate within the Rockhoppers for the last few years with no success, until finally, in this season, his wish came through.

The King Penguin



King newborn chick peeking under dad's skin pouch



Incubating the egg on the feet

The King Penguin has the brightest colours among all the 18 species of penguins and is one of the two in the group of the Great Penguins, the other one is the Emperor Penguin.

We were able to see the colony of King Penguins at Volunteer Point in East Falkland. After a two-hour drive in a 4x4 vehicle we got to see them and of course, smell them.

There they were, standing tall with their beautiful colours: grey feathers that look like silver in the back; black head with orange ear patches and the yellow orange colour in the neck. Oblivious to our presence, just minding their own business.

They breed in dense colonies and don't make a nest; they incubate their single egg and later carry the chicks on their feet, under a skin pouch, a feathered fold of skin to protect them from predators and the weather. Both parents work in shifts to look after the egg and young chick.

In 5 weeks, the chick will develop brown downy feathers. The breeding cycle lasts 14-16 months.



King Penguins frantically returning to the beach after spotting a predator in the water.

Like other penguins, the King, go to sea for food, mainly fish, leaving the colony in the morning and returning in the evening.

Sometimes they gather in groups at the beach looking for a good opportunity to go in the water. These opportunities can be cut short due to the presence of a predator patrolling the shallow waters. We saw a group of forty penguins that soon after they went in, they returned in a panic to the beach. We did not see the sea lion but were told, that might have been the case.



I hope you enjoyed them as much as we did.

Photos: by Peter and Olga Stokes

Written material: from the book "Mission Penguin" and from Wikipedia.

Close to home: *A Turtle Dove nest with two chicks on Diana and Paul's yard.*



Photo: courtesy of Paul & Diana Wilkinson

Please visit our website: sarasotabritishclub.com

If you want to contact us, send an email to : sarasotabritclub@gmail.com

Many thanks to all the members who have contributed to this edition!

Your Acting Newsletter Editor, Olga

Sarasota British Club name badges

Please obtain Club badges directly from ***Sarasota Trophy, 6601 Superior Ave, Sarasota, FL 34321.***

Phone 941 921 4339.

- \$15.50 plus tax for badge with magnet
- \$15.50 plus tax for badge with pin (no magnet)

Badges can be collected in person (Mon.– Fri. 8.30 – 5pm, Sat .9 am – noon) or shipped to your home for an additional charge.

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