

Friends of the Violette Szabó GC Society



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2016

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To all the many Friends of The Violette Szabó GC Society 2016

With special good wishes to everyone!

Please Note: My immense problem with the replacement of Violette's Store/Garage and Toilet has still not been undertaken, the hope now is the work will start in late summer. I would like to ask again this year if you could help with an extra donation – this would be wonderful! I have now just received planning permission for this large project, that again cost £173!! It never seems to end!!! The quote I would like to accept is for £27,356.30 + VAT. With God's help and hopefully yours I pray we will achieve it.

Violette's great gathering this year is to be on Sunday the 26th June, her Birthday, starting at 2pm. Had Violette lived, it would have been her 95th anniversary. It is so wonderful to know we are once again to have the special company of Virginia.

May I ask if you would be kind enough to bring items to add to the refreshments – Jam and Spam sandwiches!! maybe! Also garden chairs and a folding table. Mr Paul Oliver, of the South Hereford Hunt, DV will again open his super big field for parking.

An update on the amount received for my two chosen charities, inspired by my Presidential year of the Hereford Soroptimist Club 2013 – Violette's Museum £2,100.00 and the Ross Action Committee's Ambulance £1,001.17. I am so very grateful to everyone who helped me to achieve this wonderful total, it really was my mother's black walnut tree that made all the difference!

I know that many of you, like myself, were very upset to hear of the sale of Violette's special and hard won medals, and I thank you all for your great support. Though at the time of course unknown, the very best outcome happened, and they were bought by Lord Ashcroft. They are now on display in the Imperial War Museum in London, never to leave the country!! I did write and ask if he might donate one or two items to Violette's Museum, but no way!

One important little treasure I would like to share with you – the morning after the above sale I stepped out of my house, only to be met by a great wall and feeling of peace, and I knew then that Violette was making sure I was aware all was well with the outcome! I immediately phoned the auctioneers and I asked that they might tell Lord Ashcroft that the spirit of the real Lady – Violette – was full of great gratitude to him and was now at peace!!

I, as usual in times of stress, lost my appetite, but once again with the help of Sue at The Axe and Cleaver Inn I was soon on the way to recovery! and now as our Queen would say – it is business as usual!!

I would like to mention how very much everyone enjoyed the visit of Thijs Perik and the Hannie Schaft Scouts from Harlem in The Netherlands, when they visited on Violette's great day last year.

It has been drawn to my attention that this year the Royal Artillery are commemorating their 300th birthday (Ubique 300), the 100 anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, where my dear father Frederick John Rigby was fighting with the Regiment, and it is very interesting to know that Violette was also a Gunner!! It is so nice to hear we are to have the company of Major Fred Greenhow MBE who will speak on behalf of the Regiment, and especially for Violette.

A short while ago I opened the Museum specially for the visit of a young Royal Marine named Allan Rose, who was hoping to give a lecture on the life of Violette in the course of his exams. Violette's soul was so very excited by his visit and helped in every way possible! It really was an extraordinary experience!! I must mention that he graduated with flying colours!!! I later had a wonderful letter from his Warrant Officer, Mark Thrift, who wanted to let me know that Allan did her proud! Allan is to be with us all on the 26th June, and will say a few words about his life in the Marines.

Recently I had a 2 hour visit by Ray Mears, I believe known to everyone! He was so fascinated by her story, he has now embarked on a month's tour of our country giving lectures, with Violette having a starring role!! I went to Malvern Theatre to hear him – very good – but as I told him afterwards, it was a funny feeling hearing my talk delivered by someone else!!

Violette over the last few months has sadly lost two very good friends – Derek Smith of Monmouth, who worked so very hard over many years to help to make the gardens and her 23 Red Roses look as beautiful as possible, and I know we will all remember Phylis in our prayers and thank him so very much.

On New Year's Eve the world also lost the wonderful Flight-Lieutenant Bob Large. It was Bob who brought Violette out of France in a little Lysanda plane, after her first mission. What a great deed to have accomplished! I will always remember with pride having Bob, his wife Mary and dog Merlin here on the day of the opening of the Museum, 24th June 2000.

On the 6th November last year 2015, the Residents of the area and the senior children of Much Birch C. of E. Primary School met at the little Liquidambar tree on the Rosemary Rigby Millennium Green and laid wreaths and crosses in grateful memory of Violette and others who lost their lives in the two World Wars.

I am still fighting very hard to get the little tree recognised as a War Memorial – Wormelow not having one!

Please note: by the 26 June I will hope to have available for purchase in aid of the Museum logs of wood – Red Chestnut and Walnut, also a great young lady called Ann from Monmouth is to have many different plants for sale, which she has been very busy growing.

My most special thanks to everyone who helped me in the garden last year to make it as lovely as possible for your visit. Staff at Waitrose store in Monmouth were particularly wonderful. I can only pray they will help again this year!!

As recorded in the Ross Gazette, Violette had a clump of daffodils out on 8th December! How about that!!!

A very special day that I am so looking forward to is Saturday 21st May, when the school I attended in Market Harborough, Leicestershire, *The Willows*, are arranging a day of celebration – through the kindness of several past pupils.

70 years from the time it opened!!

The last time we met was 25 years ago!

Miss Margery Cork was our Headmistress – a wonderful lady, who inspired us all in the good things of life! I enrolled on the first day!! Through one of Violette's great supporters I have made contact with a lady who did likewise. Unfortunately she is too poorly to attend, of which I am very sad. I would have loved to have met her again. Please say a prayer that I may achieve it!!!

Violette's 2017 Memorial Gathering with God's help, should be on Sunday 25th June at 2pm. Please make sure you all come and bring friends!

On behalf of Violette and myself, may I thank everyone for all your wonderful support, so very much appreciated.

Let joy and happiness once more bring us together!

Yours most sincerely

Rosemary E. Rigby.

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