View this email in your browser

The Falkland Society

Scottish Registered Charity SC017201
www.falklandsociety.org.uk
www.historicfalkland.scot
news@falklandsociety.org.uk

Falkland Society Newsletter, June 2022

Dear <<First Name>>,

This Newsletter comes to you a little later than usual, as Ross and I are just back home after a hectic time clearing Ross's house in south London, followed by a holiday in Naples and the island of Ischia (more about this below). It's a relief to be back in Falkland after the heat and dust of southern Italy in June.

We were sorry to have mssed the Jubilee garden party, which we hear went off very well, but it was good to see the new Jubilee grove of seven young oaks, near the Memorial Chapel in the designed landscape of the Falkland Estate.

As previously announced, our June Falkland Society meeting next Wednesday will be the last of the season, and will be our first 'in-person' meeting for some time. But we are going to experiment with making this a 'Hybrid' meeting, so that those who are not able to come and hear Marietta in the Stables can view the meeting by Zoom – keeping our fingers crossed that we can get the technology to work seamlessly!

Peter Burman (Chair)

In this issue:

- June Meeting
- Arandora Star commemoration
- Naples round-up

June Meeting

Our next Falkland Society meeting will be on Wednesday 15 June, starting at 7 p.m., when **Marietta Crichton Stuart** will be talking about her great-grandfather, **John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, Third Marquess of Bute**, and his impact on Falkland and St Andrews.

For the first time for many months, this meeting (the last of the present season) will be held in

person at **The Stables, Falkland Estate KY15 7AF,** by kind invitation of the Falkland Stewardship Trust.

We are hoping to make this a 'hybrid' event, so that those unable to get to The Stables will be able to view it remotely. You're invited to join us from 6:45 p.m. onwards at

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84720692434

ready for a prompt start at 7. There's no charge. Please note the meeting will be recorded as usual.

You can also join by phone on **0203 481 5240**, **0131 460 1196**, **0208 080 6591** or **0330 088 5830**, quoting the meeting ID: **847 2069 2434.**

Please DO NOT copy these details to Facebook or other social media.

Peter Burman





Marietta and her great-grandfather

Marietta Crichton Stuart's contributions to our lecture series are much looked forward to. Formerly on the production staff of *The Guardian*, she has devoted her energies since retirement to her work as Archivist to the family and Estate papers and as an historian. She is a trustee of the Falkland Stewardship Trust and has an unparalleled knowledge of the House of Falkland, Falkland Palace, and the nineteenth and twentieth century histories of her family.

John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, third Marquess of Bute (1847–1900) was a man of many talents and many interests, who used his enormous wealth to fund a massive programme of building. Succeeding to the marquessate at six months old, he caused a stir by converting to Roman Catholicism at the age of 21. He purchased the Falkland estate in 1887. Marietta's talk will cover the story of Lord Bute's years as Keeper of Falkland Palace and Rector of the University of St Andrews – his plans, the challenges, what he achieved and his legacy.





Two images of Bute – as Rector of St Andrews (in a monastic-style costume designed by himself) and as Mayor of Cardiff

Arandora Star visit: 2 July 2022

Those of you who remember my talk on 12 January will know that I offered to organise a visit – in effect, a pilgrimage – to Glasgow on Saturday 2 July, for the annual commemoration of the sinking of the Arandora Star. I propose to organise a guided tour by someone extremely knowledgeable but I would need to know who is coming, and especially how many, by 25 June. Please email me at: kallan405@gmail.com.

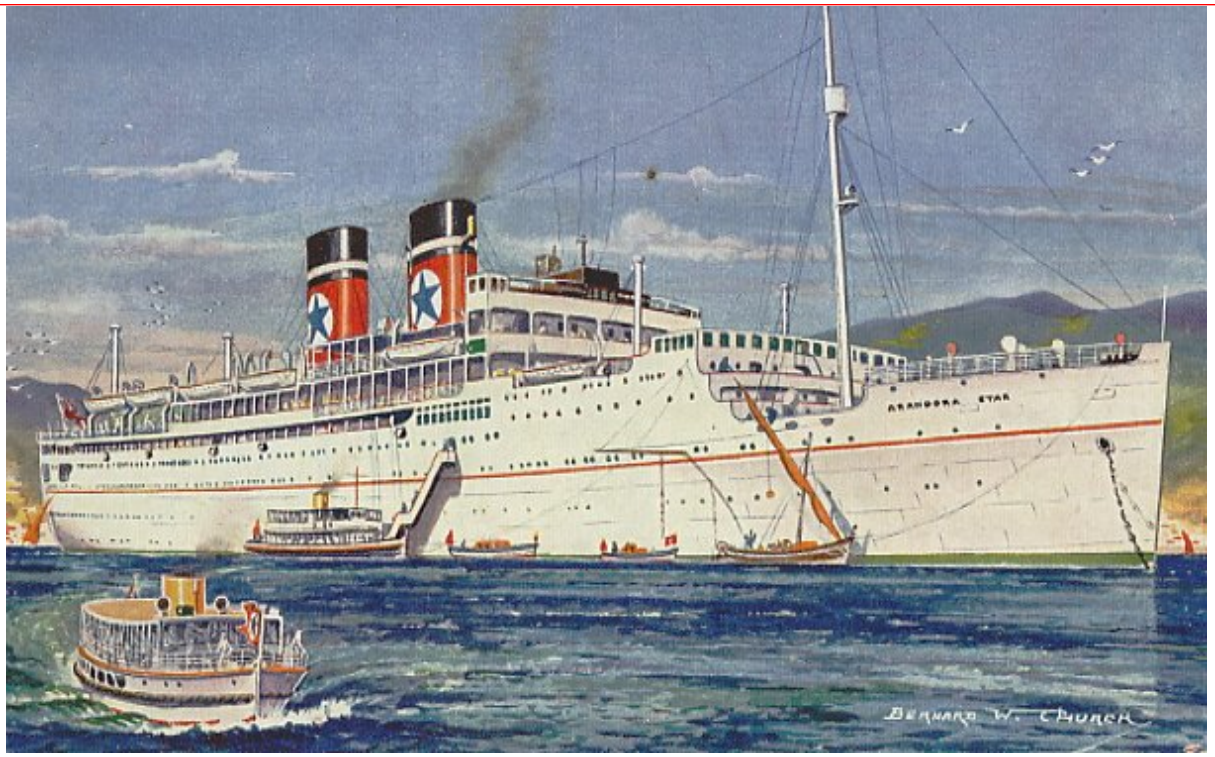
Programme for the day

10:18 train from Markinch, changing at Haymarket, arriving Glasgow Queen Street at 12:06 (the Cathedral is about 15 minutes walk from the station). Please note that train times are subject to change, so you're advised to check before the day.

1. The first part of the ceremony is a Roman Catholic Mass at 1 p.m. offered inside St Andrew's Metropolitan Cathedral, 196 Clyde St, Glasgow G1 4JY. Those who do not wish to participate in the Mass can view the garden or the rest of the cathedral during the service.
2. After Mass, attendees follow the priest outside the cathedral to the adjoining Italian Garden and Arandora Star memorial; the priest will give a brief prayer in Italian and then ask any attendees present with a wreath or floral tribute to lay them at the foot of the memorial.
3. Tour of the Italian Garden by historian/guide Raffaello Gonnella (Raffaello's grandfather was one of those lost in the tragedy).
4. Lunch? or Tea?
5. Return train, via Edinburgh or Haymarket, to Markinch (times to be advised).

Kieran Allan

[If you missed Kieran's talk in January you can view it at https://falklandsociety.org.uk/videos/2022-01-12-Tricolore-and-Saltire.mp4]



The Arandora Star (picture from coastmonkey.ie)

Naples Round-up

Ross and I were away in Italy at the start of June, when we would normally have aimed to send this Newsletter out, but we wanted to share with you some impressions of the rich cultural heritage we encountered in and around Naples.



Naples local colour: a palace façade on the narrow Via Tribunalis

Part of our holiday was to be spent in the lovely island of Ischia, but our flight from Edinburgh arrived too late in the evening to catch the ferry to the island, so we booked an hotel in Naples for two nights, in Via Duomo, literally 'Church Street'. Our first encounter with Neapolitan culture was a late-night pizza, in Via Tribunalis, one of the two parallel Roman streets, or *Decumani*, which articulate the central historic district. This focal area of the old city is rich in reminders of the Roman, and before that Greek, past of this amazing city and the Region of Campania; because of the heat and the crowds we decided to defer visiting the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum and the Greek temples at Paestum, to be savoured perhaps in the Autumn or Spring.



The richness of Roman remains evoked by the sculpture of a Roman river god

Our hotel, the Hotel des Artistes, dates from the widening and reconstruction of the Via Duomo following a devastating Cholera epidemic in 1885. We particularly enjoyed the lift, which seemed to date from about 1900, and was typical of the lifts provided for apartment buildings around that time.



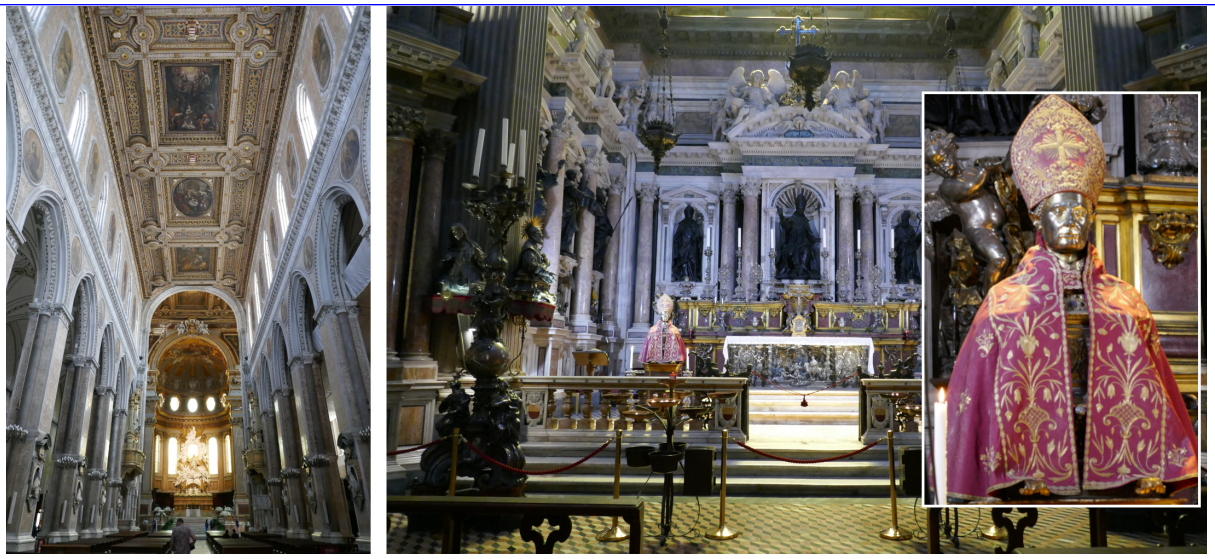

Ross by the lift in the Hotel des Artistes; Peter in an old street in Naples

To the cathedral we went first thing next morning. It has a rather dull late-nineteenth-century Gothic west front facing the street. But the interior is much, much earlier. It incorporates what was originaly a quite separate church, the Basilica of Santa Restituta, dating from the fourth century.




Contrasting images from Santa Restituta: ancient Byzantine-style mosaic wall decoration in the Baptistery; and a felicitously decorated organ case

The main body of the cathedral is a lofty and magnificent space but only just prepares the visitor for the lavishly decorated Chapel of San Gennaro on the south flank of the cathedral. It is one of the most stunning historic spaces we have ever visited, as befits a space where the blood of the saint miraculously still liquefies three times a year at the climax of a frenetic ceremony.



The cathedral: the lofty and magnificent central nave; the lavishly decorated Chapel of San Gennaro, patron saint of Naples, and the mediaeval bust-reliquary of the saint (inset)



The cathedral: frescoed dome by Lanfranco and one of a series of paintings by another great Baroque artist, Domenichino

After two nghts at the hotel we went by boat to the beautiful island of Ischia, for a holiday combined with a week-long wellness seminar led by a former Bededictine monk, staying at the Casa Rosa hotel in the car-free resort of Sant' Angelo.



Our hotel on Ischia

After our stay in Ischia we returned to Naples, this time staying in an apartment near the famous Archaeological Museum.

The historic centre of Naples seems crammed with churches, many still in use as places of worship while others have more complex stories to tell. Of the churches still in use, we were most struck by the monastery and church of Santa Chiara, devastated by bombing in 1943.



Santa Chiara - a poster showing the church in 1943 (rubble and the vestiges of the ornate Baroque interior), and 2013 (the building reconstructed in a simple but dignified Gothic style)

The side chapels of this lofty preaching church, still served by Franciscan monks, must have been well protected because some of them preserve remarkable tombs and works of art, but the knitting together of the building through restoration must have been a work both of love and of great technical mastery.



Santa Chiara: the tomb of Raimondo del Balzo depicts him flanked by six falconers

The buildings of one side of the Great Cloister have been converted into an excellent museum of the site, including excavations of the earliest remains, and many fine works of liturgical and devotional art. The Cloister itself is famed for its benches and columns covered with painted maiolica tiles, one bench (dated 1740) quite clearly showing a game of golf! We take delight in finding works of art on our travels that have some connexion to Scottish or British contexts, but the game of golf was certainly an unexpected find.





Santa Chiara: excavations beneath the museum; golf depicted in maiolica