



## *email Communiqué*

**Society of King Charles the Martyr - American Region**  
***Restoration Day, 29 May 1660***

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## **Restoration Day (also called Oak Apple or Royal Oak Day)**

**T**oday we remember The Restoration of King Charles II of Scotland, England and Ireland, on his 30th birthday, May 29, 1660 ("Oak Apple Day").

Oak Apple Day or Royal Oak Day was a formal public holiday celebrated in England on 29 May to commemorate the restoration of the English monarchy, in May 1660. In some parts of the country the day is still celebrated and has also been known as Shick Shack Day, Oak and Nettle Day, or Arbor Tree Day.

In 1660, Parliament declared 29 May a public holiday, "to be for ever kept as a day of thanksgiving for our redemption from tyranny and the King's return to his Government, he entering London that day."

The public holiday, **Oak Apple Day**, was formally abolished in 1859, but the date retains some significance in local or institutional customs. It is, for example, kept as Founder's Day in the Royal Hospital Chelsea (founded by Charles II in 1681).

Since time immemorial, the oak tree has towered in our national consciousness as a symbol of what it means to be British, an embodiment of the redoubtable spirit that enabled a small archipelago just west of mainland Europe to secure its premier position on the world's stage. The oak tree exemplifies strength, patience and resilience, single-minded in its slow and steady goal to be the biggest, oldest and most beautiful tree in the wood.

But there is one major event in this tree's ancient history that bestowed upon the oak its status as **the tree of kings**—it was in the boughs of an oak tree, a short distance away from Boscobel House in Shropshire, that a young Charles II hid from his Roundhead pursuers after the Battle of Worcester in 1651. Nine years later,



the restored Charles II rode triumphantly into London on his birthday, May 29, to take his place on the throne.

Four or five generations ago, every British man, woman and child would have known the story of this turning point in our history. From 1660, the Restoration was celebrated as a national holiday, until the Victorians abolished it in 1859.

The oak became the symbol of Royalist sympathisers and, each year on May 29, known as Oak Apple Day or Royal Oak Day, it became customary for subjects to show support for their king by wearing a sprig of oak leaves or an oak apple. Some ardent Royalists even went so far as to cover their oak leaves with gold leaf.

**T**he day was full of celebrations, with villages and communities maintaining their own individual traditions. Many of these, like other spring festivities such as May Day, had pagan roots and were rebranded after being outlawed by the Puritans. Maypole dancing, Morris dancing and feasting were commonplace. Tradition also dictated that those who didn't wear sprigs of oak on Oak Apple Day should be thrashed with stinging nettles for being anti-Royalist or Cromwellian.



Sadly, over the past 150 years, many of the traditional Oak Apple Day celebrations have gradually been consigned to history. These festivities, and the story they mark, are all but forgotten in most parts of the country. This week, many will have no idea as to why The Royal Oak is the third most popular pub name or why multiple Royal Navy warships have been called Royal Oak. In a few places, however, commemorations continue with gusto.

### Places where Oak Apple Day is still celebrated:

- ❖ Historically, a member of the Royal Family visits the **Royal Hospital Chelsea in London** close to May 29—also the hospital's founder's day—to review the pensioners, who wear sprigs of oak leaves. In addition, a statue of Charles II, in Figure Court, is partly covered with oak leaves for the day.
- ❖ In **Great Wishford, Wiltshire**, villagers claim their ancient right to collect wood from Grovely Wood on Oak Apple Day. Residents take an oak bough, which is then decorated and hung from the parish church tower. In order to maintain their charter, villagers proclaim their right at a ceremony in Salisbury Cathedral in which they repeat the refrain: 'Grovely, Grovely and all Grovely.' Although the charter requires just three 'Grovelys', there are usually four—'Three for the charter and one for us'.
- ❖ In the **Peak District, Castleton Garland Day**, held on May 29, sees the Garland King (a Jack in the Green figure) covered in flowers and leaves and led on horseback through the town, followed by maypole and Morris dancing.
- ❖ In the centre of **Northampton**, the statue of Charles II at All Saints' Church is garlanded with oak leaves at noon.
- ❖ At **St Neot in Cornwall**, events include the mounting of an oak branch on the church tower to symbolise allegiance to the Crown.
- ❖ **Upton-upon-Severn (Worcestershire), Aston on Clun (Shropshire)** and **Marsh Gibbon (Buckinghamshire)** also mark the day.

- *The above is courtesy of our member Dr Adrian M. K. Thomas, FRCP, FRCR, FBIR, OL. From [www.countrylife.co.uk](http://www.countrylife.co.uk).*

**M**ore to our devotional point, Restoration Day is one of the three major events of our **Mother Society in the UK**, the other two being Royal Martyr Day and the Nativity of the Royal Martyr. The Collect of the Day follows:

Almighty God, who art a strong tower of defense unto thy servants against the face of their enemies: we yield thee praise and thanksgiving for the wonderful deliverance of the[se] Kingdoms [of England, Scotland, and Ireland] from The Great Rebellion, and all the miseries and oppressions consequent thereupon, under which they had so long groaned. We acknowledge it thy goodness, that we [they] were not utterly delivered over as a prey unto them; beseeching thee still to continue such thy mercies [towards us], that all the world may know that thou art our Savior and mighty Deliverer; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

**More Caroline observances upcoming:** 10 June, *White Rose Day* ... 13 June, *Marriage of King Charles I at Canterbury* ... 18 June, *Coronation of King Charles I at Holyrood*.

### ***Bust of S. Charles added to Society Goods - Update***

**L**ast month the Society Goods Department were pleased to announce the addition of a bust of S. Charles. Standing at 5" in height, it is surmounted on various motifs of the Civil War and the apothegm "*Fear Not Death.*" The King is depicted wearing his familiar lace collar.

This quality hand made plaster bust is sculpted by Charlotte Hern and hand-crafted by Modern Souvenir, imported from the United Kingdom. Shipped in a sturdy box with quality packing material, you can purchase your bust for \$40.00 including shipping.

Within a few days of announcement, all 20 busts from our order had been spoken for. Thus, we have acquired 40 more busts – and one-third of them already have been sent to their new homes!

**To order your copy**, just go to the SKCM-AR website, located at [www.skcm-usa.org](http://www.skcm-usa.org), proceed to Purchase Goods, select L-81, and use our PayPal account for your purchase. If you prefer to pay by check, a copy of our order form is attached to this edition and you are welcome to proceed accordingly.



**Remember!**

## Membership Update: An Ideal Time to Join

As we close in on the 2/3 mark in our membership year, here is where we are:

- + We reached a record **501 members** on 31 March ... half again where we were ten years ago
- + With **18 new Life Members** having joined since 1 October 2020, we are now at an all-time high of 100 ... a decade ago, we were around a dozen
- + This year we have already enrolled **47 new members** ... at this time last year, we had brought in 35 newcomers, with 50 being the final total
- + **Two new chapters** are forming in the Greater Atlanta area

**This is an ideal time to join the Society.** Since we are so close to the end of the membership year, any new memberships now are being credited through the next fiscal year. So, do not be shy about giving the attached flyer to a friend and/or getting it copied and put into the tract rack of your local church!

In related news, we must report the passing from this life on 6 May of **Helen Woodward**, a faithful Society member from Boynton Beach, FL USA. *May her soul and the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace and may light perpetual shine upon them. Amen.* The names and dates of death of all Society members, when known, are inscribed in the Society Necrology and thus all are included in the prayers at our Annual Mass.



### ***S.K.C.M. (AMERICAN REGION)***

*PRESIDENT (THE REV'D STEVEN C. RICE, OBL.S.B., D.MIN.): [PRESIDENT@SKCM-USA.ORG](mailto:PRESIDENT@SKCM-USA.ORG);  
TO SUBMIT ARTICLES & INQUIRIES TO THE **SKCM NEWS**, PLEASE CONTACT [EDITORS@SKCM-USA.ORG](mailto:EDITORS@SKCM-USA.ORG);  
OTHER INQUIRIES: [MEMBERSHIP@SKCM-USA.ORG](mailto:MEMBERSHIP@SKCM-USA.ORG).*

***OUR SURFACE MAILING ADDRESS:***  
*SOCIETY OF KING CHARLES THE MARTYR  
C/O DAVID LEWIS, TREASURER/ADMINISTRATOR  
1001 WILSON BLVD #609, ARLINGTON VA 22209-2262 USA*