

Overview

The Flag Institute is the UK's leading research and documentation centre for flags and flag information. The Institute is Europe's largest vexillological membership organisation.

The Institute was founded on St. George's Day, 23 April, 1971.

The Flag Institute maintains and manages the national United Kingdom Flag Registry. This is to ensure there is a definitive record of those United Kingdom flags which exist, both nationally and regionally. The flags so listed then become exempt from planning permission as laid out in The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021.

Members receive the journal, Flagmaster, and are entitled to attend the meetings of the Institute. All members resident in the UK can take part in the government of the Institute. The Institute's Library is in the process of digitisation to allow all members an easier, wider and more accessible viewing of documentation for study planned to be viewable via the Members' Area of the web site.

The Institute provides vexillological services to HM Government in the UK and to many other organizations around the world, including the United Nations. These services include advising on the use of flags, designing new flags and collating information on flags of the world.

President

Captain Malcolm Farrow OBE FFI RN

Trustees

Philip Tibbetts	2020-2023
Graham Bartram	2021-2024
John Hall	2021-2024
Lesley Ross	2022-2025
Philip Thompson	2022-2025

Registered Information

The Flag Institute
84 Norwood Grove
Beverley
East Riding of Yorkshire
HU17 9HS

The Flag Institute is an active member of the international vexillological organization, FIAV (Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques).

Registered as an incorporated Charity (CIO) in England and Wales (No. 1152496)

Chairman's Overview: *John Hall*

As we begin the new Carolinian age, the public has, it seems, been intrigued by changes in symbols that had otherwise seemed fixed for an entire lifetime. Bank notes, stamps, even post boxes are changing and flags are no different. There has been a rapid growing public awareness of the power of flags as visible nonverbal expressions of communication and as living and evolving symbols of nations and local communities. The coronation in May and the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine/Russia and Palestine/Israel show the public use flags to express an opinion or show solidarity; which has been remarkable. The continuing process of creating county flags in the United Kingdom and the revision of state flag designs in the United States, point to the importance of good design to inspire; reflect the ideals of the local populations and open the door for vexillological understanding. In many ways the Institute's role to educate, inform and advise is even more required and called upon than it has ever been. We continue that work, through the publication of *Flagmaster*; our website and social media outputs; and by beginning to digitalise the materials of our library to allow greater access to all. Overall, 2023 has been a very good year for flags, vexillology and most importantly the Flag Institute.

William Crampton Library: *Ian Sumner*

The Library was obliged to quit its rented premises in central Hull at the end of August, and is currently in accessible storage, pending a further decision by the Trustees. We continue to index and develop the William Crampton Library collection in support of the Flag Institute and the wider vexillological world. The catalogue, free to view or download in .xls format on the FI website, now indexes over 40,000 items. The digitisation project continues to develop. The first tranche of material to be digitised, largely consisting of personal papers and articles, was sent off to a local Hull company in the middle of September. The second tranche, more personal papers and all the FI correspondence and administrative documents, is currently being prepared. The third tranche will consist of the country files, and any other remaining material.

Website: *Maggie Sumner*

Work continues to develop all aspects of the Flag Institute website: content, structure, accessibility, search ranking and more. 'UK Flag protocol' and 'Union Jack or Union Flag'; remain our most popular pages, while our attention in the past twelve months has focused in particular on three key areas.

- 1 Calendar: updated and extended coverage of official UK flag-flying days:
- 2 *Flagmaster* archive: now fully compatible with text-to-speech and translation software
- 3 Proceedings of the 27th International Congress of Vexillology, edited by Ian and Margaret Sumner (Kingston-upon-Hull: Flag Institute, 2022): 42 illustrated papers, now published and free to view online

Social Media Report: *Bernard Muscat*

The last AGM was the day before the finale of #WorldCupOfFlags2022, so we didn't get to report on the winner: the Welsh flag beat the Brazilian flag very soundly in the final.

We registered 11,083 votes in total, averaging 462 votes/poll. 42% of the total votes were cast in the final.

We raised £42 for the Halo Trust, and made £45.93 for the Flag Institute. We decided to absorb Stripe transfer costs, so when 1 donation came in after we had made the transfer to the Halo Trust, we figured it was ok not to do another transfer of just £4, since we absorbed the transfer costs.

Confirmation of transfer made: <https://twitter.com/FlagInstitute/status/1603353795689332736>

Our ko-fi.com page is still active in case we want to use it for anything else: <https://ko-fi.com/flaginstitute>

Other than that, the usual mischief on Twitter: flag polls, memes, news of when flags appear on tv shows or in popular culture, drooling over flags at Glastonbury, the Eurovision, the Proms, and Historic Counties Day.

As of October 2023 we have 6,477 followers on Twitter, and 1.5k followers on Facebook.

Membership Report: *Kath Kearney*

Three tables are given below:

Table 1: Documents various items pertaining to the current state of the membership in terms of membership numbers in various categories, and changes since October 2017

Table 2: Shows a breakdown of countries in which we have a presence

Table 3: Shows the number of members in different regions within the UK

Table 1									
	Mar 19	Oct 19	Apr 20	Oct 20	Oct 21	Apr 22	Nov 22	Apr 23	Nov 24
Active Members	434	417	390	388	410	428	424	433	417
New Members	24	28	24	28	68	30	32	30	29
Exchange Membership	17	17	17	16	17	17	17	17	17
Complimentary Membership	16	16	16	15	15	15	15	14	13
Life Membership	52	50	50	49	47	46	46	43	42
Group Membership	6	4	6	5	3	1	2	1	1
Classic Membership	284	273	248	241	258	267	246	257	253
Digital Membership	38	36	37	43	54	65	80	84	75
Trade Membership	16	16	12	14	11	13	14	13	14
Register British Flagmakers	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
Overseas Members	148	144	131	130	145	150	153	155	153
UK Members	286	274	259	258	265	278	271	278	265
Countries	32	34	32	32	33	35	35	35	34
Members with Email	376	366	338	344	369	385	382	395	382

- Of the 29 new members joining since 24th November 2023, 7 Digital, 20 Classic and 2 Trade Memberships. 24 are UK members, 3 Europe and 2 from the rest of the world.

- Of the 75 Digital members, 39 are UK members, 9 Europe, 25 World, 1 life member and 1 exchange member.

Table 2		
Country	Members Present	
	April 2023	November 2024
Argentina	1	1
Australia	12	12
Belarus	1	1
Belgium	5	4
Canada	7	8
Chile	1	1
Czech Republic	4	4
Denmark	3	3
Estonia	1	1
Finland	1	1
France	6	6
Georgia	1	1
Germany	10	10
Greece	1	1
Hungary	1	1
Israel	1	1
Italy	7	8
Japan	2	2
Luxembourg	1	1
Malta	1	1
Mexico	1	1
Netherlands	6	8
New Zealand	3	2
Norway	4	4
Poland	1	0
Portugal	1	1
Republic of Ireland	6	6
Russia	1	1
South Africa	2	2
Spain	5	5
Sweden	1	1
Switzerland	5	5
Ukraine	1	1
United Kingdom	278	265
USA	51	47

Table 3: United Kingdom 265	
England	232
Channel Islands	4
Northern Ireland	0
Scotland	21
Wales	8

Flagmaster: *Jos Poels*

In the report year November 2022 – October 2023 Flagmaster has been published twice to deadline: Flagmaster 165 (Winter 2022, 56 pages) and Flagmaster 166 (Summer 2023, 56 pages). The members of the editorial board are: Malcolm Good, Prof. James Floyd, Andrew Kaley, Bernard Muscat, Theun Okkerse (design), Ian Sumner (sub-editor), Jos Poels (chief editor) and Leigh Wetherall. For every issue the editorial board held two zoom conferences where publishing policy was discussed, as well as possible new articles are being discussed. Articles are a mixture of commissioned and unsolicited work. However, most of the work is commissioned work. Since issue 166 the section Speaker's Corner has been abolished due to a lack of flag-minded people who wanted to give an opinion on a flag related topic.

Chief Executive's Report: *Leigh Wetherall*

I am now a year into the role of CEO after a three-year hiatus of the role at FI. My convenery duties continue with delivering the FI Spring 2023 Conference at the Victory Services Club, London. Speakers in London included Military Historian, Mick McTiernan present Choosing a flag for the Cretan State; Dr. Mario Jareb, Croatian historian, scientific advisor from the Croatian Institute of History and vice-president of Matica Hrvatska, deliver a book presentation 'From Checkerboard to Tricolor: Development and Use of the Croatian Coat of Arms and Flag Throughout the Centuries'; and who also donated 50 copies of his book to the FI; Rachel Phelan, Textile Conservator present Flying High at St Patricks. Conservation during Covid; and Erik Nystul of NAVA and the Design Review Subcommittee of the Utah State Flag Task Force present A Beehive Flag for the Beehive State: The Origins of Utah's New State Flag.

The Winter FI Winter 2023 Conference was held in partnership with The Heraldry Society of Scotland. A first time the two organisations had come together in collaboration to deliver a joint conference. Something to be celebrated. Celebrated it was at the Presidents' Dinner. The conference was opened by the Rt. Hon. Lord Provost and Lord Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh, Councillor Robert Aldridge and with speakers Carrick Pursuivant in Ordinary Sheriff George Alexander Way of Plean CSt.J FSA(Scot) FRSA; Gordon Rutter, Officer to the Convenery of the Incorporated Trades of Edinburgh; Sheila Collins, Founder of the Edinburgh Exiles Society and Boxmaster of the Incorporation of Candlemakers of Edinburgh; Fraser Thompson, Trustee of the Scottish Flag Trust; Kevin Greig, Fellow of both The Heraldic Institute and of The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and Associate Craft Member of the Society of Heraldic Arts, Philip Tibbetts OLI OSS 大將軍 MA (St And) FSAScot FFIIV APMP, March Pursuivant Extraordinary, Court of the Lord Lyon and Flag Institute Communities Vexillologist; Alasdair Hutton OBE TD OSTJ, Journalist and broadcaster; and FI Chief Vexillologist, Graham Bartram FFI FVAST.

As CEO I have attended my first Flags & Heraldry APPG and involved in projects with the Government Capital Projects Department and the Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities.

A final word....

The trustees again would like to publicly acknowledge the support and hard work of so many of the Institute's members. It is a result of a lot of hard work by many folk and we are most grateful. Finally we would like to end by paying tribute to our past president Commander Bruce Nicholls OBE RN who passed away in the year, and who did so much to improve the running of the Institute, especially in the years following the death of our founder, Dr William Crampton.

Presented to the AGM of the Institute

Held via zoom 15th November 2023



The Revd Canon John Hall FFI FF BA Hons
Chairman of the Trustees of the Flag Institute



FLAG INSTITUTE

Financial Statement

1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023

Bank Account opening balance £24,722.98

Paypal open Balance £62.21

Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £24,785.19

TRADING STATEMENT

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
		2021-2022			2021-2022
			Admin	£3,132.01	£2,668.45
Income Square	£9,177.41	£8,360.93	Library	£3,268.54	£3,136.79
Bank Income	£4,162.00	£3,764.00	Flagmaster	£5,287.98	£5,358.72
			FI Meetings	£4,728.01	£1,008.34
			FI Refunds	£181.00	£188.66
			FI other cost	£857.17	£799.51
TOTAL INCOME			TOTAL EXPENSES		
	£13,339.41	£12,124.93		£17,454.71	£13,160.47
Difference between Income and Expenses				-£4,115.30	-£1,035.54

Closing Balance of Trade 31st March 2023 £20,669.89

CASH STATEMENT

Bank Account	£20,634.83
Deposit	£0.00
Paypal	£35.06

CASH Balance 31st March 2023 £20,669.89

I certify that to the best of my knowledge these figures represent a true and accurate

PA Thompson
Treasurer