

WWII RAF pilot from Princes Risborough thanked by the Queen with Maundy money

A former Second World War RAF pilot has been thanked by the Queen for 'enriching the life' of his neighbours.

Malcolm Cloutt, from Princes Risborough, has given out 1,000 Bibles in his lifetime. He has kept a record of every recipient and prayed over them regularly.

The retired accountant said: "It's a great honour of course, but I didn't really think anything of my work."

Mr Cloutt recently turned 100 years old.

In November (2020) the war veteran completed a walk around Princes Risborough to raise money for the Royal British Legion.

Her Majesty thanked community stalwarts personally in a letter honouring Maundy money recipients.

Usually the Queen would present symbolic coins to the awardees during the Royal Maundy Service. However, due to the ongoing and the restrictions the service was cancelled for the second year in a row.

Instead of the usual ceremony, the monarch has written to the recipients.

In her letter, the Queen wrote: "I am delighted to send you the Maundy gift which I hope you will accept as an expression of my personal thanks to you for all that you have done to enrich the life of your community," the Queen said in her letter.

"Each year, at the Royal Maundy Service, we have an opportunity to recognise, and give thanks for, work done by countless people for the wellbeing of their neighbours; work that has often been taken for granted or hidden."

Under normal circumstances, the Queen would have given Maundy money to 95 men and 95 women who have been invaluable to their community – as she turns 95-years-old this month.

This year, the money was posted to awardees instead, with each awardee receiving two purses – one red and one white.

The tradition dates back thousands of years, and is a reference to Jesus Christ washing the feet of his disciples on Good Friday.

The white purse contains Maundy money – which is totally unique – in silver penny pieces, adding up to 95 pence.

The red purse contains a £5 coin commemorating the monarch's birthday.