

THE CHURCHILLIAN

A black and white photograph of Winston Churchill speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a dark bow tie with white polka dots. He has glasses and is looking slightly to his right. In front of him are several microphones on stands, each with a label: CBS, NBC, and MBS. Behind him, two other men are seated. The man on the left is older, with white hair, wearing a dark suit and a patterned tie. The man on the right is younger, with dark hair, wearing a dark suit and a dark tie. They are both looking towards the camera. The background is a plain wall with a flag partially visible.

Churchill Society of Tennessee
Fall/Winter 2022

THE CHURCHILL SOCIETY OF TENNESSEE



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The Churchillian

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Inside this Issue of *The Churchillian*



On The Cover:

Winston Churchill delivering his historic speech to a joint session of Congress on December 26, 1941. Unusually, the speech was given in the Senate chambers and not in the traditional location of the House of Representatives. This because it was the US Senate that invited Churchill and so many congressmen from the House Representatives were away for Christmas.

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From the President



Dear Members,

The Churchill Society of Tennessee (CSOT) held its annual formal dinner on Saturday, November 19, 2022, at the Belle Meade Country Club in Nashville. The sold-out event was a great success.

The evening began with a cocktail reception. Guests were then piped into dinner. Following opening remarks from the CSOT President, a toast to Sir Winston Churchill was offered by Don Cusic.

We then moved on to our guest speaker Justin Reash, Executive Director of the International Churchill Society (ICS) who was introduced by Michael Shane Neal. During his opening remarks, Mr Reash announced that CSOT member Jack Bovender has been appointed to the Board of Directors of ICS.

Jason Reash delivered an entertaining talk on Churchill's 1941 Christmas visit to Washington DC. His speech was well received and was followed by a lively round of questions from the audience.

Next, as is our tradition, came video clips of Churchill delivering parts of some of his most iconic speeches. This year's theme was how Churchill was said to have 'weaponize' the English language in defense of freedom. The first clip was 'The Few' speech in which he honored the Royal Air Force for their 1940 victory in the Battle of Britain. He concludes the speech with that most memorable line 'Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few'. The second video was of his now immortal 'Finest Hour' speech delivered to Parliament on June 18, 1940.

At the conclusion of the evening, CSOT offered its official tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The tribute was presented by Robin Sinclair. A slide presentation representing the life of the Queen was accompanied by bagpipes playing 'Sleep Dearie, Sleep' as it was performed at her funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Special thanks goes out to Lynne Siesser who's help was invaluable in creating a very successful evening for our Society. We also wish to thank Mattie Ree Neal for setting up the slide presentations, Martin Fisher for the videography and Beth Fisher for acting as greeter and settling in our members.

The CSOT will hold its next annual dinner on Friday, November 3, 2023, in the ballroom at the Belle Mead Country Club. I hope to see you all there.

Finally, on behalf of myself and the board of Directors we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years.

Warmest Regards,
Jim Drury
President, CSOT

Christmas Greetings

2022!



"Winston Churchill as a Young Man" by Edwin Arthur Ward (1859 - 1933)

The Churchill Society of Tennessee
wishes you

Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year



2022



*"Let the children have their night of fun and laughter.
Let the gifts of Father Christmas delight their play...
And so, in God's mercy, a happy Christmas to you all."*

- From Churchill's Christmas address at the White House in 1941



**The Churchill Society of Tennessee
Pays Tribute to
HRH Queen Elizabeth II
November 19, 2022
Nashville, TN
(Click image to view)**



21 April, 1926 - 8 September, 2022

**Photos from our annual CSOT dinner at the
Belle Meade Country Club on 19 November, 2022**







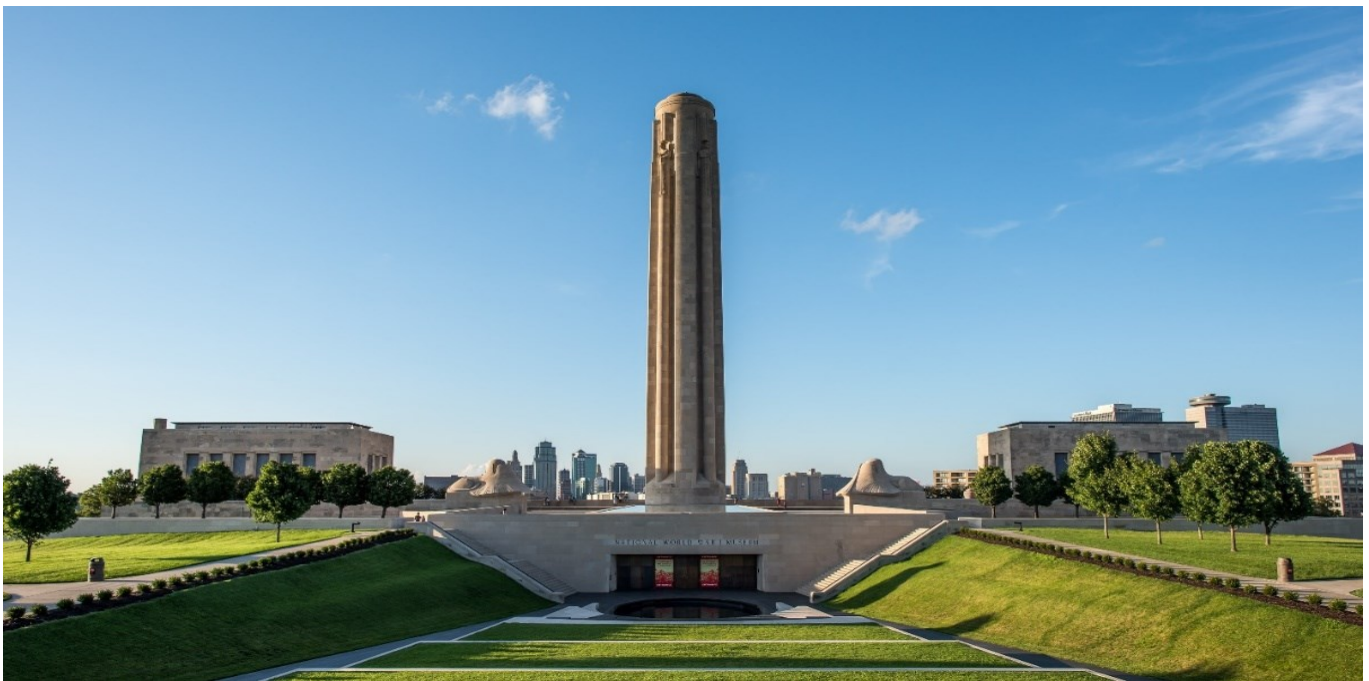
**The 'Glow Worms' gathered in Nashville
on November 30th, 2022 to celebrate
Sir Winston Churchill's birthday.**



39th International Churchill Society Conference: Churchill in War and Peace



Paul E. Forte PhD is an independent scholar with an interest in western intellectual, political, religious, and political history, 1500-1800. He is a long-time member of the International Churchill Society.



Liberty Memorial and National World War I Museum, Kansas City

This year's ICS conference, the 39th, took place in Kansas City, Missouri, from October 5-8. Its theme was *Churchill: In War and Peace*. Its subtext was the rise of authoritarianism around the world, with particular focus on revanchist regimes like Russia, whose frontal assault on democracy reminds us, if we had need of it, that as we take on what we see as the challenges of the 21st century the causes of conflict that roiled the 20th century remain unresolved.

The conference was held at the National World War I Museum, the official WWI museum of the United States and an international repository of WWI munitions, uniforms, letters, papers, posters, and other artifacts. The Museum is part of a larger complex called the Liberty Memorial, an imposing structure raised in the 1920s from mostly private funds to commemorate those who served in The Great War.

The Memorial complex sits on a hill overlooking the city. The Museum entrance is approached from the south via a handsome tree-lined boulevard surrounded by an open lawn and park. But it was the approach from the north, a long walk up many stone stairs, that I found most impressive. On this side you see a frieze almost 150 feet in length and richly adorned with symbols, depicting the progression of mankind from war to peace. On top sits a large plaza of Indiana limestone, from which rises the 217-foot Liberty Tower, a noted Kansas City landmark that offers 360-degree views of the entire city, an Exhibit Hall, and Memory Hall. The latter exhibits uniforms, helmets, and insignia from WWI belligerents as well as a reduced section of the famous *Pantheon de la Guerre* (*Panorama of the Great War*), a canvas showing thousands of full-sized WWI figures that once filled a cyclorama the size of a football field.



James Montgomery Flagg 1918, Library of Congress

The Churchill Center at Westminster College and St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury Church, Fulton, MO

Kansas City proved an ideal site for the conference. In addition to its architectural and historical attractions and excellent restaurants, and the National WWI Museum, it is only a two-hour drive to Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, where in March 1946 Churchill gave the most memorable of his post-war speeches. Westminster is now the site of the Churchill Museum, a remarkable venue housing Churchill manuscripts, collections, and paintings. Attendees were transported by coach to the site, so that they could tour the Churchill Museum and hear a speech by former World Chess Champion and human rights activist Garry Kasparov before lunch in the very gymnasium in which Churchill spoke 66 years before. More about Kasparov's speech in a moment, but first a word about the remarkable venue in which Kasparov delivered his speech.

That venue was the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury, a remarkable edifice and a story in itself. St. Mary was built in London in the 11th or 12th century and served its parishioners until September of 1666, when it was destroyed in the Great Fire of London. The medieval church was completely rebuilt after the fire using a design by the noted Enlightenment architect Sir Christopher Wren. The second St. Mary stood in its place until 1941, when it was again destroyed by fire, this time by German incendiary bombs. After the war, a group of Americans proposed to remove and relocate some 650 tons of blocks from the ruined second church to Westminster College, where a new third church would be built using materials from the old. The blocks were sent by ship to Virginia, where they were transported by rail. The current St. Mary is a beautiful granite structure, a classic example of Wren design, with its many large clear glass windows letting in light from all sides.

In front of the Church, facing the street, are six huge pieces of the Berlin Wall, secured by Churchill's granddaughter, the artist Edwina Sandys, who has transformed them into a sculpture entitled *Breakthrough*.



Westminster College, Fulton, MO

Churchill gave his Westminster speech at the invitation of President Harry S. Truman, who travelled to Fulton personally to introduce him. Originally entitled the *Sinews of Peace*, it is better known today as the *Iron Curtain* speech because in it Churchill warned of a serious threat being posed to Europe by the Soviet Union, which was bent on pulling into its orbit such historic eastern European capitals as Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Sofia, all of which it eventually absorbed in the second half of the 20th century. Churchill urged his listeners, who had survived the most destructive war in history, to focus on the risks posed to freedom and self-government by totalitarian governments like the Soviet Union.

Speech by Garry Kasparov

Garry Kasparov spoke under the auspices of the Enid and R. Crosby Kemper lecture. In it he touched on several themes familiar to readers of his 2015 book *Winter is Coming: Why Vladimir Putin and the Enemies of the Free World Must Be Stopped*. In that book, Kasparov warned the world about Putin's intentions



St Mary Aldermanbury, Fulton MO

and strategies. Putin has pursued the "twin evils" about which Churchill warned in 1946: war and tyranny. In Churchill's view, These evils were rooted in negative ideologies and cultural repression. Unfortunately, said Kasparov, the same evils plague us today. The United Nations, says Kasparov, has become a club of dictators: Iran sits on the committee for women's rights; Venezuela on the committee for human rights; Russia has a veto as a member of the UN Security Council, making concerted effort a problem for the other members. "The

world order has rules,” he writes in *Winter*, “but they are mostly based on the honor system and are infrequently tested.”

A key moment took place in 2008 with the Russian invasion of Georgia, which the UN did nothing to stop, apart from scolding. Kasparov sees the present crisis in Ukraine as stemming directly from that moment. He accepts no rationalization for Russia’s conduct: all of Ukraine’s territory must be restored, not just some of it, and there must be accountability for war crimes. Here he echoes Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky, who has resisted concessions that would jeopardize Ukraine’s prospects for freedom. For Kasparov, as for Zelensky, such overreach by Russia will not stop unless western powers exert themselves to maintain the balance of power, something that in recent decades they have unwilling or unable to do. “As in chess,” Kasparov says, “you must take the initiative—and then you must press. If you don’t press, the initiative goes to the other side.” Kasparov’s favorite leaders were all those who took the initiative: Churchill, Truman, Reagan. Kasparov is critical of more recent U.S. Presidents for allowing the initiative to slip away.

Kasparov acknowledged the political decisions affecting unity here and abroad. He concluded his remarks by urging that we be confident enough to accept disagreements with our fellow citizens. “Disagreements are a part of democracy,” he says, “while tyranny says there can be no disagreement,” which is why millions are oppressed in Russia, China, and other unfree countries today. And Kasparov reminds us of the importance of listening to dissidents: “They warn us of the threats that target minorities first and inevitably spread to the majority...Listen to them now, because they speak of what is to come.”

Other Conference Lectures and Black-Tie Dinner

Other conference lectures were held back in Kansas City at the WWI Museum in its comfortable auditorium. I cannot comment on all of them but would like to note a few high points.



Garry Kasparov, St. Mary Aldermanbury, Fulton, MO

Sean McMeekin, Professor of European History at Bard College, gave a stimulating talk entitled *Churchill and Stalin at War, 1939-1945*.



The author of *Stalin’s War: A New History of World War II* (2021), McMeekin has done research in the important and again largely inaccessible archives of the old Eastern bloc, including ones in Poland and the Balkans. His aim is to reexamine the whole conflict in Europe and Asia that was long overshadowed by what he terms “German-centric literature.” McMeekin argues that far more attention must be paid to Stalin, the man who from 1931 (before Hitler’s rise to power) until 1945 (after Hitler’s death) was

Hitler's cobelligerent, masterminding numerous moves that would reshape the map of Europe and actually favor the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) after the war, although the price it paid was heavy.

McMeekin reminds us that the Soviet Union, "the world's first proletarian government," was from the beginning a revolutionary entity that set itself up against the entire international order, defying the latter's shopworn "bourgeois" treaties and rule of law. In McMeekin's view, the Communist disdain for western values and institutions of government never really changed.

From the time of the Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin and his followers had waged implicit if not explicit war against Tsarist Russia's former allies, the Western Capitalist Powers to whom Russia was heavily indebted and who now called in their loans. Nor was the Bolshevik treatment of the Central Powers much better. Lenin's signing of a treaty at Brest-Litovsk with the Germans upon their victory in 1918 was to buy time for the revolution to consolidate; it was abandoned as soon as Germany's fortunes sank on the Western front. This pattern of outlaw behavior continued through the 1930's and WWII. McMeekin observes that Stalin's initial plan was to build up armaments with the help of German manufacturers, but German companies soured on the Soviet Union's unreliability in financial transactions, and relations went south after the Reichstag Fire in 1933, which Germans blamed on German Communists. Hence the Soviet turn to America, a place of last resort. McMeekin establishes convincingly that the Roosevelt Administration's alliance with "Uncle Joe" brought hundreds of Soviet agents into federal agencies, where they exerted much influence, not to mention U.S. factories where Soviet representatives toured and purchased aircraft and other advanced weapons. On the other side of the Atlantic, Russians managed to charm even a skeptical Churchill, who was persuaded by Soviet agitprop of the help Soviet armies would render to stop the German *Wehrmacht*.

Since WWII, McMeekin argues, generations

of western political leaders have been manipulated by Russian officials and diplomats. This was to have serious repercussions during the Cold War, when it became evident just how intent the USSR was on building a Communist empire. One fact that surprised me was the extent of aid—in the form of lend-lease—the Roosevelt Administration eventually gave to Moscow, particularly so that it could secure aluminum. The re-direction of critical supplies and munitions away from Britain and toward the Soviet Union caused the former hardship and anguish. Details surrounding this aid have never been so fully or so well told until McMeekin's book. It is hard not to conclude with McMeekin that, in the end, Stalin was an equal partner with Adolph Hitler in actions that prompted the outbreak of WWII and yielded such a difficult aftermath.

Tim Bouverie, British historian and political journalist, gave the 2022 Stephen and Jane Poss Distinguished Churchill Lecture titled *The Gathering Storm: Churchill, Appeasement, and the Lessons of History*. Bouverie is the author of the bestseller *Appeasement: Chamberlain, Hitler, Churchill, and the Road to War* (2019). Bouverie, who makes use of numerous collections of personal papers and newspaper articles from the years before the outbreak of hostilities, debunks the mythmaking of pro-appeasement writers of recent years, who have maintained that WWII could have been avoided with greater sagacity and finesse. He shows more particularly that appeasement of Germany did not come about suddenly but was rather the result of years of indecision and hesitation, far earlier than Neville Chamberlain's infamous trip to Berlin in 1938. Indeed, as early as 1932, Chamberlain had argued that Germany deserved to be granted full powers and armaments. Churchill opposed wholesale such rearmament, especially in the air. This was because he grasped the true nature of the Nazi regime, which politicians such as Lord Halifax (Edward Wood), Arnold J. Toynbee, and Neville Chamberlain, clinging desperately to hope of avoiding war, could not or would not recognize until it was too late.

Charlie Laderman, Senior Lecturer in International History at King's College in London, gave a talk entitled *Sleep the Sleep of the Saved? Churchill, Pearl Harbor, and Hitler's Gamble*. Laderman is the author with Brendan Simms of *Hitler's American Gamble: Pearl Harbor and Germany's March to Global War* (2021). Laderman's book focuses on the five crucial days of December 7-11, 1941, in which the global war actually took shape. These were the compressed period that began with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and ended with Hitler's declaration of war on America. Laderman challenges the conventional narrative that the entry of the U.S. into the war was an inevitability after Pearl Harbor. Rather, U.S. isolationism was still strong, based on the sense of protection offered by two great oceans and other factors. It was Hitler who pushed the agenda, though he had no real strategic plan to defeat the United States and never really issued a revised global war strategy after Pearl Harbor, which would have included coordination with the Japanese. But Hitler did understand the value of time, and especially of moving fast. He had shown this since the first days of the war in Europe. If you've ever wondered why, after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Hitler declared war on America, not the other way around, you should read this book.

Two other presentations deserve mention. One was the reception's keynote address by Angela Stent, entitled *Putin's War: Russia Against the West and With the Rest*. Stent is one of the leading experts on Russia and its foreign policy. A former professor of Government at Georgetown University, where she directed the Center on Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies, and also a former National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council and the Office of Policy Planning at the U.S. State Department, Stent brings to her subject a very wide lens through which to view Russia's actions over recent decades.

Stent explained how Russia, which many had written off as a failed state after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991—regained a place in the world as a global

power. This was driven by Putin's assertion that the dismantling of the Soviet Union was "illegal," and that it has been necessary to reverse its consequences, something he has been working to do since coming to power on the very last day of 1999. Under Putin's leadership Russia has been able to project its influence into places it had been driven out of, thwart the interests of the US and the European Union, and advance its own interests with relative impunity. Stent sees Putin, a master of Judo, as having taken advantage of America's lack of balance after 9/11 as well as its indecisiveness. She advises that going forward the U.S. expect the unexpected, as Putin brokers deals with Iran, China, and other western adversaries to keep us off balance and to gain tactical if not strategic advantage.

The other noteworthy presentation was one by the distinguished British stage and screen actor Christian McKay. McKay has appeared in numerous films, including *Me and Orson Welles* (2009), *Florence Foster Jenkins* (2016), *The Leisure Seeker* (2017), and *Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris* (2022). His remarks on actors like Welles and those who played Churchill in film were very entertaining. This February McKay will appear in a new special film on the History Channel portraying Franklin Roosevelt. The film depicts the special wartime relationship between Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill.

Attendees enjoyed a fine concluding dinner at a black-tie reception and gala in the atrium of the National WWI Museum. The atrium is itself special as it is covered with a glass roof with a view of the tower above and a glass floor that allows the viewer to look down on 9,000 red poppies, each one representing 1,000 soldiers killed in the Great War.

The 39th conference will be memorable for its several venues and distinguished presenters. Certainly its theme was timely, and the viewpoints presented fresh. It cannot be doubted that the 39th has laid the foundation for much productive reflection about how freedom has been lost in the past and how it could be lost in the present. We may expect future conferences to build on it, such as the 2023 ICS conference, which will be held in Edinburgh.



The author (right), with accomplished piper and CSOT President Jim Drury (left)

Up Coming Events In 2023

March 25, 2023

**Winston Churchill Symposium
Scarritt Bennett Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville**

Guest speakers:

André L. Churchwell MD, David Freeman PhD, Gary Stiles MD

This is a daytime event with Luncheon included.

Tickets go on sale in January



November 3, 2023

CSOT Annual Dinner

**To Be held in the ballroom at
The Belle Meade Country Club, Nashville**

Guest speakers to be announced.

Mark your calendars now!

***Additional events will be announced in the coming weeks...**

The Bookshelf

Holiday Book and CD Gift ideas

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