

45th Annual Levellers Day Commemoration

Reflection · Debate · Song · Radical History

Saturday 11 May 2019

Midday (12.00): Commemoration

In the churchyard, Burford Church, Church Green, Burford OX18 4RY

We will commemorate Levellers Cornet James Thompson, Corporal Perkins, and Private John Church, who were executed in the churchyard, 17 May 1649

The commemoration will be led by the Reverend Andrew Allen, Chaplain and Bishop Radford Official Fellow, Exeter College, Oxford

Flowers will be laid for the Levellers who were executed, and for Tony Benn, who did so much to ensure that they were remembered

The 'Sea Green Singers' choir, and members of the 'Didcot Red Kites' choir, will perform at the beginning and end of the commemoration in the Churchyard

12.30pm: Procession

A short procession through Burford, banners are very welcome

1.30pm: Panel discussion

'In the spirit of the Levellers – Fighting and organising against poverty today'

Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford OX18 4RY

With Ian Hodson, president, the Bakers' Union (BFAWU), Dr Susan Newman and Lee Humber

2.30pm: A historical perspective

'John Lilburne and the Levellers'

Warwick Hall

There will a conversation with Mike Braddick who is the author of a biography of John Lilburne published recently called 'The Common Freedom of the People: John Lilburne and the English Revolution'

4pm: Musical performance – 'Barnstormer 1649' play live their new album about the English revolution

Warwick Hall

The band describes their sound as 'Roundhead Renaissance and Baroque 'n' Roll'. The songs are mostly based around the time at the end of the civil war, after the King was beheaded and when, in the words of a ballad of the time, 'the world turned upside down', and previously marginal ideas of social justice and equality spread across the land

About the Event



Admission free

Trade union banners are welcome

For more information:

www.levellersday.wordpress.com

or follow Twitter @levellers_day

or via Facebook page Levellers' Day

Any queries can be addressed to

TUC: London, East and South East

at lese@tuc.org.uk or 020 7467 1220

The Levellers and their Impact on Democracy and Radical Thinking

Each year people gather in Burford in Oxfordshire to celebrate the ideas and the influence of the Levellers. On the 17 May 1649 over three hundred Leveller soldiers were jailed in the church at Burford. Their 'offence' was to organise and campaign for radical ideas, for the principles of the 'English Revolution', and for taking a stand against what they saw as dictatorship by Oliver Cromwell. The Levellers believed in democracy, religious freedom and human rights and for this they suffered oppression, including the execution of three of their leaders by Cromwell's soldiers in the churchyard in Burford.

The Levellers identified by wearing sea green ribbons on their clothing and bunches of rosemary on their hats.

Consequently, the event that is organised is a respectful commemoration of the commitment and sacrifice that the Levellers made. It is a purposeful reflection on the power, principle and saliency of the ideas they professed and practiced.

It is an opportunity for us to reflect on our ideas and values. And it is a chance to recommit ourselves as activists to education, progressive politics, campaigning and organising, as the pathways to a better world founded upon equality, respect for all, rights for all, trade unionism and socialism.

'The Internationale'

Stand up, all victims of oppression
For the tyrants fear your might
Don't cling so hard to your possessions
For you have nothing, if you have no rights
Let racist ignorance be ended
For respect makes the empires fall
Freedom is merely privilege extended
Unless enjoyed by one and all

Chorus:

So come brothers and sisters
For the struggle carries on
The internationale
Unites the world in song
So comrades come rally
For this is the time and place
The international ideal
Unites the human race

Let no one build walls to divide us
Walls of hatred nor walls of stone
Come greet the dawn and stand beside us
We'll live together or we'll die alone
In our world poisoned by exploitation
Those who have taken, now they must give
And end the vanity of nations
We've but one earth on which to live

And so begins the final drama
In the streets and in the fields
We stand unbowed before their armour
We defy their guns and shields
When we fight, provoked by their aggression
Let us be inspired by like and love
For though they offer us concessions
Change will not come from above

Chains

You ain't got nothing to lose but your chains
yeah, you ain't got nothing to lose but your
chains

Big Society

Big society, beg society, small society, low
society

High society, what society? no society, STOP!

Don't put your trust in those scoundrels,
those scoundrels, those scoundrels

Don't put your trust in those scoundrels,
Rees-Mogg and May

Homelessness and poverty, poverty, poverty
Homelessness and poverty, we can find a
better way

Manchester Rambler

I'm a rambler, I'm a rambler from Manchester
way

I get all my pleasure the hard moorland way

I may be a wage slave on Monday

But I am a free man on Sunday

Power in the Union

The Union forever defending our rights

Stand with the picket, all workers unite

With our brothers and our sisters from many
far-off lands

There is power in a Union

Not gonna give it back

No we're not gonna give it back

We're not gonna give it back

We're not gonna give it back, no fear

We're not gonna give it back

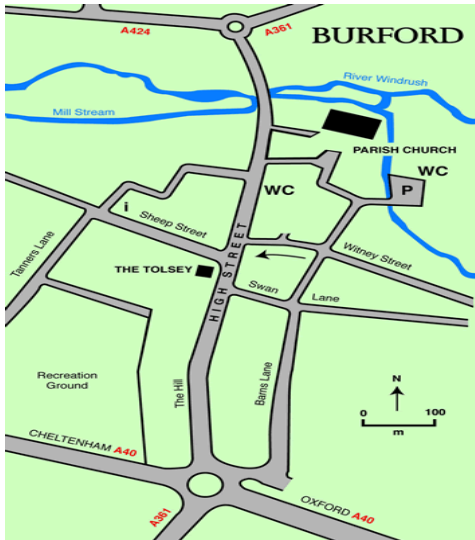
We shall go singing (Envoi of Woodcraft Folk)

We shall go singing, to the fashioning of a
new world

The Sea Green Singers is a political choir based in Oxford. It sings at events supporting peace and social justice around Oxfordshire. The group is named after the colour of the ribbons worn by the Levellers, a radical movement in Cromwell's Model Army. Contact for more information: Mike Cox: 07815 914 776, email mail@seagreensingers.com or see www.seagreensingers.com

The Sea Green Singers will be joined today by singers from 'Didcot Red Kites': for more details contact Marie Walsh 07999 090484 or email marie@riseup.net

Parking. Free parking is available; see <http://www.burfordcotswolds.co.uk/free-car-parking>. Please be careful not to cause a nuisance or an obstruction as we need a good relationship with residents, and Burford Town and Parish Councils, when we organise events in future years.



Getting to Burford by Road

Burford is situated 20 miles west of Oxford at the crossing of the A40 with the A361. London and Birmingham are approximately one and a half hour's drive away. Oxford, Cheltenham, Swindon and Stratford-upon-Avon are all about half an hour. There is a free riverside car park (see map below) and street parking. Please be aware that some parking on the High Street has a two-hour time restriction.



Public Transport

Swanbrook runs a coach service which stops at Burford roundabout on its journeys from Oxford to Gloucester and Cheltenham. Please check the company website for more details as times may change seasonally.
www.swanbrook.co.uk

Stagecoach stops in Burford. Please plan your route using the timetable on their website as connecting changes may be needed.
www.stagecoachbus.com/oxfordshire/

TUC: LESE is the TUC region responsible for London, East and the South East of England, in which nearly 2 million trade unionists live and work

You can contact us at 020 7467 1220 or lese@tuc.org.uk or see <https://www.tuc.org.uk/london-east-and-south-east>

You can sign up for our email **Newsletter** and **Campaign Bulletin** at <https://www.tuc.org.uk/london-east-and-south-east/contact-us-lese>

If you want more information about **joining a union** and getting respect at work please go to

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/find-union-you>