

Goring Gap News

EVENTS, PEOPLE, BUSINESS, ARTS AND SPORT IN GORING AND STREATLEY

Long-term residents celebrate Coronation



See P24-26 for further photos of the Coronation celebrations

Photo: Chris Rickards

George Michael's birthday fundraising

The article below is a shortened version of one written by The George Michael Legacy Project (GMLP) from New Jersey in the States. For the last three years this wonderful charity has had a permanent shelf in my shop, Barbara's, where they sell all kinds of George Michael memorabilia, with all proceeds initially going to the St Thomas' Church Organ fund and now to The Hub by Q1 Foundation in the Arcade in Goring. Recently they have been temporarily funding an extra shelf for The Hub, which is stocked from local residents' donations (please call [01491 525637](tel:01491525637) before taking new donations to The Hub). George Michael related GGNs are sold for the charity, especially the rare January 2017 copy of GGN.

I do not think all Goring residents are aware of the thousands of pounds of fundraising that happens on the special weekend of George's birthday every year, not just by GMLP but also by The Catherine Wheel, a sold-out village hall concert and many other George Michael Facebook fundraising groups. The GMLP article below explains it all little more clearly.

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A pilgrimage to celebrate your birthday and carry on with your legacy of charity

On 25 June, 2023, Lovelies (George's fans) from around the UK and far corners of the world will gather in Goring to celebrate what would have been George's 60th birthday. Since his passing in 2016, many have made their way annually to Goring. At the invitation of Nicole at Barbara's, the George Michael Legacy Project (GMLP) join with the Lovelies to pay their respects and help raise funds for charity in George's name.

These annual gatherings primarily celebrate George's legacy of generosity by fundraising for many British charities, including the Terrence Higgins Trust, Mayhew Animal Welfare, Swan Lifeline, St Thomas' Organ Fund, ReThink mental illness and The Hub. Since 2018 GMLP has raised and donated thousands of pounds in support of the crucial work conducted by these animal rescue and social charities. Fundraising efforts for St Thomas' to refurbish its organ raised over \$4,394 between 2020-2021

(virtually, in a New Jersey dining room). Additionally, GMLP retains a small space in Barbara's shop for visitors to Goring seeking George-related treasures. GMLP returned in 2022 and raised \$2,120 for The Hub during the June event and from items sold in the shop.

June 2023 will be GMLP's 4th pilgrimage to Goring to celebrate George's music, compassion and philanthropic spirit. This year somehow feels different. There is more emotion as George's 60th birthday approaches. For this celebration, GMLP have germinated the concept of *Partners in Hope*, which encourages a collective partnership by Lovelies to donate their personal creative gifts for George's legacy. For 2023 the donation recipients

will be Terrence Higgins Trust for their continuing fight to eliminate AIDS/HIV and The Hub, for friendship, assistance and information. GMLP will also raise funds for all of its UK based charity partners using donation boxes.

Although long overdue, it is no surprise that George was finally nominated and inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame class for 2023. With fan votes cast through 28 April, George secured the top spot within the group of nominees, finishing at 1,044,288 votes, the highest vote count for any solo artist ever. His inclusion values him as a prominent creative force in pop music, who championed respect for pop as a viable music genre, and his influence in the careers of many of today's pop artists. GMLP plans to present something special in the States to commemorate

his formal induction in NYC on 3 November. Another birthday gift of love, hope and respect.

Since the coming Goring celebration is anticipated to be well attended, GMLP is holding a raffle that will include five prizes of George memorabilia and a grand prize of an original oil painting, worth €3,000, painted by Dutch artist and George fan, Dorus Brekelmans. The painting can be viewed and tickets purchased at Barbara's Antique and Bric-a-Brac shop on 25-26 June. The draw will be made on the 26th following the concert at The Catherine Wheel.

