



# Pilgrims Society

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The **Pilgrims Society**, founded on 16 July 1902<sup>[1]</sup> by Sir Harry Brittain KBE CMG, is a British-American society established, in the words of American diplomat Joseph Choate, 'to promote goodwill, good-fellowship, and everlasting peace between the United States and Great Britain'. It is not to be confused with the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth, Massachusetts.

## Membership

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Over the years it has boasted an elite membership of politicians, diplomats, businessmen, and writers who have included Henry Kissinger, Margaret Thatcher, Caspar Weinberger, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Henry Luce, Lord Carrington, Alexander Haig, Paul Volcker, Thomas Kean, George Shultz, and Walter Cronkite among many others. Members of the immediate Royal Family, United States secretaries of state and United States ambassadors to the Court of St. James's are customarily admitted *ex officio* to membership in the Society.

## Activities

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The Society is notable for holding dinners to welcome into office each successive U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom. The patron of the society is King Charles III.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered a speech to the Society on March 18, 1941.<sup>[2]</sup>

## History

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The first informal meeting of the Pilgrims of Great Britain included General Joseph Wheeler, Colonel (later General Sir) Bryan Mahon, the Hon Charles Rolls and Harry Brittain.

The first meeting of the Pilgrims of the United States was at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York on 13 January, 1903.

The Pilgrims of Great Britain and the Pilgrims of the United States have reciprocal membership.

Executive Committee members are and have included:

- Marshal of the Royal Air Force the Lord Stirrup KG GCB AFC (President)
- Mrs Diane Simpson (Chairman)
- Mr Piers Coleman (Honorary Secretary)
- Mr Mark Seligman (Honorary Treasurer)
- Mr Abdul Bhanji
- Sir Peter Bottomley, MP
- Mr Peter Cadbury
- Mrs Kweilen Hatleskog
- Air Marshal Sir David Walker KCVO OBE

- Ms Xenia Wickett
- George Zambellas|Admiral Sir George Michael Zambellas, GCB, DSC, ADC, DL, FRAeS
- Mr Mark Fox
- Mrs Fionuala Goritas
- Mr Charles V Anson, Esq CVO
- Mr Cristopher Box
- Professor Kathleen Burk
- Sir Peter Westmacott GCMG LVO

Mrs Amy Thompson is the Executive Secretary, successor to Mrs Tessa Wells

## Notable members

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- Queen Elizabeth II
- King Charles III
- Senator Nelson W. Aldrich
- Ambassador Winthrop W. Aldrich
- Philanthropist John Nicholas Brown II
- Columbia University President Nicholas Murray Butler
- NATO Secretary General Lord Carrington
- Ambassador John W. Davis
- Vice President Charles G. Dawes
- Admiral William J. Crowe
- Senator Chauncey Depew
- CIA Director Allen W. Dulles
- Secretary of State John Foster Dulles
- Ambassador James W. Gerard
- General Alexander Haig
- Ambassador to the United States Edward Wood, 1st Earl of Halifax
- Ambassador W. Averell Harriman
- Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy
- Ambassador Henry R. Luce
- Financier John Pierpont Morgan Sr.
- Congressman Ogden Reid
- Ambassador Whitelaw Reid
- Publisher Ogden Mills Reid
- Publisher Whitelaw Reid (journalist)
- Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor
- Secretary of State Henry Kissinger
- Attorney General Elliot Richardson
- General of the Army George C. Marshall
- Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon
- Oil Refiner John D. Rockefeller
- Banker David Rockefeller
- Secretary of State Elihu Root

- Banker Jacob Schiff
- Ambassador John Hay Whitney
- Theologian Robin Ward

## References

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1. Bowman, Stephen. "The Pilgrims Society and Public Diplomacy, 1895–1945" (<https://edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-the-pilgrims-society-and-public-diplomacy-1895-1945.html>). *Edinburgh University Press Books*. Retrieved 27 February 2019.
2. Churchill, Winston S. Speech by the Prime Minister Mr. Winston Churchill to the Pilgrim Society, March 18, 1941. New York: The British Library of Information (1941).

## Further reading

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- Baker, Anne Pimlott (2002). *The Pilgrims of Great Britain: A Centennial History*. London: Profile Books. ISBN 1-86197-290-3.
- Baker, Anne Pimlott (2003). *The Pilgrims of the United States: A Centennial History*. London: Profile Books. ISBN 1-86197-726-3.

## External links

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- "The Pilgrims" (<http://www.pilgrimsociety.org/>). Retrieved 19 April 2013.
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