

COVID-19 CRISIS

# KEY AIDE'S MEMO REVEALS LIFE AT WINDSOR

## KATE'S NHS TEARS



Charity . . . Duchess

PRINCE William and Kate launched their mental health support scheme, after the Duchess of Cambridge was "moved to tears" by the plight of frontline workers battling Coronavirus.

Kate — who this week launched Our Frontline alongside William — is said to have played a "pivotal" role.

The royals made the announcement this week, months after the Sun on Sunday revealed they were planning the launch. It offers one-to-one support and

EXCLUSIVE by MICHAEL HAMILTON

online resources for any NHS workers, carers, emergency services personnel and key workers whose psychological wellbeing comes under pressure.

A source said: "They have both been incredibly affected by stories they have heard and Kate, in particular, has been moved to tears by some of the stories she has heard about the sacrifices frontline workers are making."



Master of Household . . . Tony Johnstone-Burt

### Living with Uncertainty ~ A Deployment in HMS BUBBLE

I'm at Windsor Castle, in what's been coined as 'The Windsor Royal Bubble' which we have created around the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to keep them safe from the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are 22 Royal Household staff inside the Bubble, and it struck me that our predicament is not dissimilar to my former life in the Royal Navy on a long overseas deployment.

Indeed, the challenges that we are facing, whether self-isolating alone at home, or with our close household and families, have parallels with being at sea away from home for many months, and having to deal with a sense of dislocation, anxiety and uncertainty.

My nearly 40 years in the Navy taught me a great deal about what motivates people and how they deal with stress, which is usually created by uncertainty, ambiguity and pressure, and which also sometimes can be self-generated.

Covid-19 has created the same sense of dislocation and heightened anxiety.

Yet despite all this havoc we are expected to carry on working from home as if it's all 'business as usual'.

....Regardless of the roles we perform we do them to an exceptional standard to enable the Queen and other members to do their duty to the best of their ability too.

Thank you for all your hard work, patience and kindness towards each other, and rest assured that this extraordinary and unsettling time will pass.

I am also sure that we shall emerge as a stronger, more considerate and more resilient team as a result, and able to do our duty for the Queen and the other members of the Royal Family even more effectively in the future.

Master of the Household  
Tony Johnstone-Burt

- Queen's lockdown with Philip
- Joined by 22 hand-picked staff
- Isolation 'like being in Navy'



Stoic . . . Her Majesty is at her beloved Windsor

### THE Queen is locked down at Windsor Castle with 22 members of staff in what a top aide has dubbed "HMS Bubble", The Sun on Sunday can reveal.

The team have said goodbye to their families for the duration of isolation.

The measures have been revealed in an astonishing memo to staff by Master of the Household Tony Johnstone-Burt, a former Royal Navy officer.

Courtiers moved Her Majesty, 94, to Windsor from Buckingham Palace to see out the pandemic in safety with Prince Philip, 98.

Her isolation at Windsor Castle has been compared with a long deployment at sea where sailors are separated from their families for several months.

In his morale-boosting memo to 500 Palace staff, Vice-Admiral Johnstone-Burt called the operation HMS Bubble.

He said teamwork, a regular routine and a clear objective were essential to surviving the lockdown.

He wrote: "I'm sure that we shall emerge as a stronger, more considerate and more resilient Royal Household team as a result and able to do our duty for the Queen."

Prince Philip was flown from Sandring-

By MATT WILKINSON, Royal Correspondent

ham when the lockdown began. The couple, who have been married 72 years, are being looked after by their favourite servants.

An insider said: "Her senior staff, including her private secretary Sir Edward Young, and his assistants have all moved into the castle."

"They won't be seeing their families because no risks can be taken and they can't go in and out."

"The most important thing is to protect the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh from the virus."

"If something happened to them it doesn't bear thinking about."

The source said the Queen and Prince Philip had heard the phrase "HMS Bubble" and found it "amusing".

The Duke thought it was hilarious, especially as he was in the Navy himself and years ago was often called 'Big Bubble'."

In the 1950s and '60s Greece-born Philip had the nickname as bubble and squeak is Cockney rhyming slang for Greek."

The Queen has not seen any members of her family since she started isolating last month, even though sons Prince Andrew and Prince Edward live nearby.

However she has kept in contact by phone and insiders say she has become "a dab

hand" at Skype and Zoom to speak to relatives and friends.

She famously promised "we will meet again" in her four-minute message recorded under strict health conditions and broadcast to the nation on April 5.

Mr Johnstone-Burt, 62, a dad of five and dog lover, is said to be a "favourite" of the Queen who admires his "can-do" attitude.

He was appointed as Master in 2013 and is in charge of a massive team of staff covering catering, housekeeping, entertainment and maintenance.

He is also overseeing a £370million, ten-year refit of Buckingham Palace.

He hit the headlines last September when he was involved with an "eyeball to eyeball" confrontation with Prince Andrew at Buckingham Palace.

Aides said the spat was over a double-booked room which Andrew wanted to use for his Pitch@Palace organisation.

Ironically both Andrew and Johnstone-Burt served as helicopter pilots during the Falklands War in 1982.

A footman who walks the Queen's dogs tested positive for coronavirus last month and was sent home, along with a hundred other workers.

Buckingham Palace said it would not comment on private arrangements.

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Mass burials . . . New York's Hart Island

## 10,000 GRAVES ON 'ISLE OF DEAD'

EXCLUSIVE by JAMES BEAL  
US Editor in New York

SOME 10,000 unclaimed bodies will be buried this year on New York's so-called Island of the Dead.

It is ten times the usual number taken to Hart Island, the grim front line in America's war against coronavirus.

Landscapers in hazmat suits bury pine coffins three deep in mass graves that take 150 to a trench.

Melinda Hunt, president of The Hart Island Project, which catalogues each known victim buried there, said: "I've never seen anything like this — it's a massacre."

Bodies not claimed by a private funeral director within 15 days are eligible to be buried on the island.

A name or "unknown", along with a grave number, is written in permanent marker on coffin lids. Bodies remain unembalmed and are often buried with personal effects they had when they died.

A GPS device is placed at the end of the plot, tracking each body.

The island has been used for burials for 151 years — from the Civil War in the 1860s to the Spanish flu in 1918 and the Aids epidemic of the 1980s.

But now, instead of one burial shift a week, there are five. Undertakers have been overwhelmed in New York, where 15,300 have died and hospitals are using refrigerated trucks to store the dead.

Ms Hunt, 61, anticipates a backlog of up to five years for Covid-19 funerals.

She said: "The city isn't mishandling these bodies. It is actually safer to be in one of these common graves, in terms of knowing where the body is, than if you agree to an individual burial."

"It's not designed as a way of dumping bodies — it is designed as a way of being able to know where everybody is and move them later on."

Restrictions were relaxed to allow crematoriums to operate 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, but there is still a two-week wait.

At the De Riso Funeral Home, in Brooklyn, the parlour is full so it has been forced to store bodies in a reception room with no refrigeration.

The room has a putrid smell — with bodies, in sealed bags, lying in cardboard boxes which are double-stacked on chairs, tables and trolleys.

Even cremated remains must be buried at a minimum cost of £1,450 — leaving some jobless New Yorkers unable to afford to give their loved ones a proper send-off.

I have never seen anything like this, it's a massacre

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