

THE COMMEMORATION AND LEGACY OF GUERNSEY'S EVACUEES IN 1940 CREATE TWO GUITON GROUP AMBASSADORS OF THE YEAR

News Release

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2010 marked the 70th anniversary of the evacuation of Guernsey, just before its occupation by the Germans. The unstinting efforts over an 18 month period during 2009/2010 to bring about the successful commemoration of the evacuation, has resulted in Joan Ozanne and Gillian Mawson being awarded Guiton Group Ambassador of the Year at the prestigious 2010 Guernsey Awards for Achievement Gala Evening held at Beau Sejour.

Joan Ozanne, herself an evacuee, set up and chaired the 70th anniversary committee working closely with Gillian Mawson who, as a researcher at Manchester University, is currently exploring all aspects of the evacuation from the Channel Islands in 1940. Joan and Gillian's indomitable efforts to reconnect the historical facts of seven decades ago with the present day saw the Bishop of Stockport and seven Mayors of UK regions, where evacuees had been sent during the Occupation, visit Guernsey for its annual Liberation Day on Sunday 9 May 2010. Various events were held in Guernsey around the Liberation Celebrations where former evacuees were re-united and the climax of the evacuee project was the installation and unveiling of a commemorative plaque on the White Rock that is now a permanent tribute to the evacuation.

"Today Guernsey's international reputation may be built on the finance industry" said John Averty, Chairman of the Guiton Group and sponsor of the Ambassador of the Year Award "but the island's history is intrinsic to its present day character. The commemoration and importance of the evacuation of children in 1940, that heralded the commencement of five long years of occupation, must never be forgotten. Joan and Gillian's tireless efforts and remarkable energy to ensure a permanent legacy to evacuees is to be praised. The Guiton Group is proud to be the sponsor of this Award that recognises the efforts of individuals who do so much to promote Guernsey."

The runners up to Ambassador of the Year were Lee Merrien, Guernsey's own international long distance and marathon runner, and Floral St. Peter's Group who received a Gold Award in the 2010 Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom competition. 2010 marked Lee's emergence as a genuine international force on the marathon stage with an excellent 12th place finish in his first ever attempt at the London Marathon and an exceptional 8th place finish in the European Athletics Championship marathon in Barcelona whilst representing Great Britain.

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Entered into the “Large Village” category of Britain in Bloom, Floral St. Peter’s Group represented the smallest region in the competition – itself the largest horticultural campaign of its kind in Europe – and was one of 19 finalists who received a Gold Award. It was only the second time in the competition’s history that a finalist taking part for the first time was awarded Gold.

Commenting on its sponsorship of the Ambassador of the Year Award, the oldest Award in the Guernsey Awards for Achievement programme having been first presented in 1986 to Rodney Collenette, John Averty, Chairman of the Guiton Group said “In today’s world it is becoming increasingly essential that Guernsey continues to grow its international reputation. The Guiton Group is pleased to be able to encourage the promotion of Guernsey and applauds each and every individual who was nominated for this year’s Ambassador of the Year Award.”

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For more information on this news release, please contact Alex Bridle at The Guernsey Event Company on (01481) 728686 or email alex@eventguernsey.com

For more information on the Guernsey Awards for Achievement, please contact Natalie Davidson at The Guernsey Event Company on (01481) 728686 or email natalie@eventguernsey.com