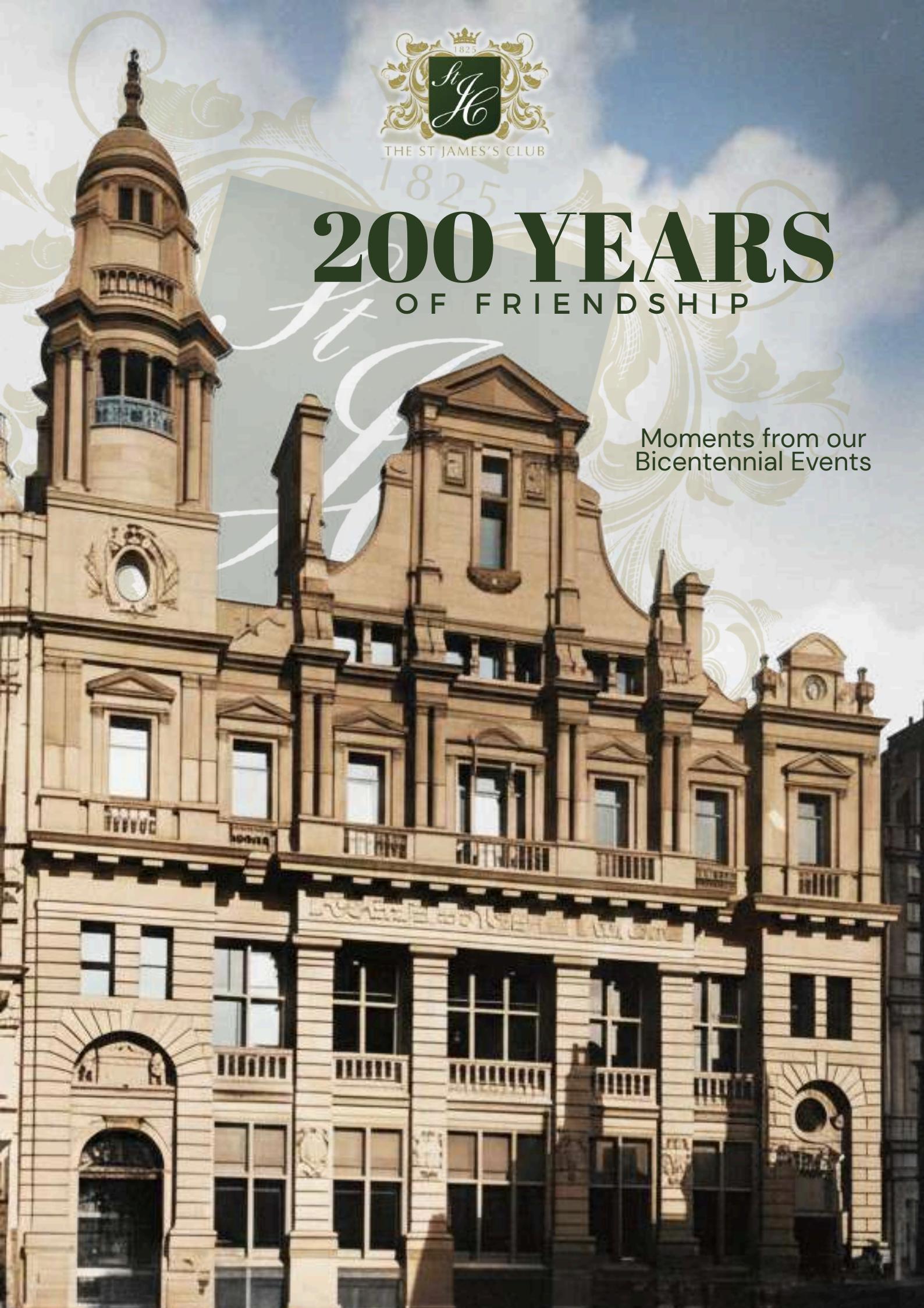




200 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

Moments from our
Bicentennial Events







THE ST JAMES'S CLUB



If it's ok, I would like to indulge you all with a few words about 2025- It's been a great year for the Club as it held its Bicentennial celebrations. Including today's event, over 370 people attended celebratory events, including a champagne reception and party, the Midlands dinner, the Club dinner, and today's luncheon. I hope you managed to attend one of these events. I believe they did the Club and its heritage due credit and create a springboard for the club to build on and thrive in its next chapter.

I would like to thank the staff today; I am sure you would agree that the staff have been excellent today, as they have been throughout the whole year. I would like to thank Michael and Rod for creating an interesting and tasty menu for today's event, looking to emulate Christmas menus of the past, I hope you all enjoyed it and of course Lynn and Luke for the entertainment and organisation. And finally, I would like to thank you, the members, as without you, there would not be a St James's Club.

- Delivered by Rowan Stone, Chairman





THE ST JAMES'S CLUB



In 1825, Manchester's mill owners built fortunes on cotton and founded our Club. They were dreamers, yes, but they were also doers. They worked hard, brought others with them, and found common ground. They knew that big ideas only matter if you can share them, talk them through, and then damn well get them done.

We don't all have to share the same dreams. Rowan once told me one of his dreams... I'm not going there again!

In their manifesto they promised that members would be supplied with provisions, wines, etcetera. I can report that the wines are still excellent, and the etcetera is holding up remarkably well.

Two hundred years is a long time. Though not quite as long as it feels when the Committee starts discussing the dress code.

They say a long-lasting club is like a long-lasting marriage. Best when you only meet once a week and do your talking when you're drunk.

The Club has changed a great deal over two centuries. Except, of course, for those members who insist it hasn't.

But humour aside, what our founders built was not just a Club; it was a sanctuary. A home from home. A place where entry came not from wealth or title, but through friendship.

And our Club has endured not because it hid from the world, but because it faced it. We talk, and by talking we get ideas. Ideas that help us, our families, our communities, and even our country.

That is why places like this matter. Because ideas born here do not stay here. They shape what comes next.

It is not just the fine wines or the good food or even the walls of Spring Gardens that make this place special. It is the simple, timeless act of conversation, of sitting across from one another, of listening, debating, agreeing and disagreeing, and then leaving the table with a clearer path forward. That has been our true strength.

Manchester in those days was Cottonopolis. It made men rich.

It was a city of invention. The computer, the co-operative movement, the suffragettes. And drizzle. We don't always invent useful things.

And just as Manchester was bold and inventive, so too was our Club, daring to create a space that has lasted, and lasted well.

It would be wrong tonight not to pause and recognise those members, not only our lifers, but so many others who have carried our Club through the decades.

Those who have held office, steered committees, donated generously, and in many cases quite literally rejuvenated and transformed our Club.

It is because of you. Your time, your generosity, your vision, that we stand here tonight, celebrating not only 200 years of history, but a vibrant and thriving Club today. To you, our deepest thanks.

- Delivered by Howard Spargo, President





THE ST JAMES'S CLUB





As Mayor of the City of Manchester, along with the Lady Mayoress, it is an honour and a pleasure to join the Members and Guests of the St James's Club in commemorating its bicentennial milestone. Established in 1825, this esteemed institution has been a pillar of the Manchester business community for over two centuries.

With a rich history and a diverse membership spanning various sectors such as law, finance, banking, accountancy, investment, property development, entertainment, media, and technology, the St James's Club continues to flourish. The visionary professionals within its ranks not only contribute to the city's economic prosperity but also drive innovation and growth in the Greater Manchester region, following in the footsteps of the Club's founders from 1825.

This Club plays a crucial role in the ongoing revitalization and progress of the city, with each member actively contributing to its continued success and evolution.

So, here's to the enduring achievements and prosperity of the St James's Club, a true catalyst for the advancement and transformation of the city of Manchester.

- Delivered by Carmine Grimshaw, Lord Mayor





THE ST JAMES'S CLUB