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**A Unique Concert for Wiltshire will be held at the historic Salisbury Cathedral on Thursday 8 February 2024 to raise vital funds for key Wiltshire charities.**

The event will see award-winning concert pianist Rupert Egerton-Smith as special guest artist, in performance with The Band of The Grenadier Guards and The Band and Bugles of The Rifles.

The Band of The Grenadier Guards represent the most senior infantry regiment of the British Army, while the Band and Bugles of The Rifles represent the largest sole rifle regiment in the British Army.

This event not only marks one of the rare occasions that the two Bands will perform together in a concert, but it is also Egerton-Smith’s debut performance alongside them, just prior to the start of his East Coast recital tour of the United States of America.

The concert itself will take the audience on an exciting and unique musical journey; celebrating the rich histories of the two regiments, as well as paying homage to the local Wiltshire area.

All profits from this wonderful evening will go towards supporting the work of The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust, Wiltshire Air Ambulance and Youth Action Wiltshire, along with the military charities, all of whom are honoured to share a close association with Her Majesty The Queen.

The Unique Concert is being held in Salisbury Cathedral, famous for its iconic Spire, which is the tallest in the country, and home to one of four remaining 1215 Magna Carta. The Cathedral has close ties with The Rifles; the Royal Berkshire and Wiltshire Regimental Museum is sited in the Cathedral Close and their colour are laid up in the North West Nave Aisle.

Mr Egerton-Smith said: “As a musician it is truly a rare and wonderful privilege to be a part of an event which is so clearly historic by its very nature, and also having the opportunity to perform in such a famous cathedral.

“In addition, being asked to perform with bands that are intrinsically connected to key parts of English history is similarly a distinction of the highest kind, and one for which I am extremely grateful.”

Wiltshire Air Ambulance deputy chief executive Barbara Gray said: “It promises to be a fantastic event in the stunning setting of Salisbury Cathedral, all aimed at raising vital funds and awareness for our charity, The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust and Youth Action Wiltshire.”

Jennie Shaw, director of The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust, said: “I am so proud of the difference these three charities make to the wellbeing of our county. I am confident the music we will hear will make for a truly memorable evening in the historic Salisbury Cathedral. Your support will enable us to continue this important work and for that we are all extremely grateful.”

Youth Action Wiltshire Community First chief executive Lynn Gibson said: “Community First is delighted to be represented as a charity partner alongside The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust and Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Through our youth work arm, Youth Action Wiltshire, we are committed to supporting some of the most vulnerable young people in the county at a time of increased demand for complex support, including mental health and financial challenges for the young people and families we work with. We hope that you will join us at this very special event and your support is much appreciated.”

The Very Revd Nicholas Papadopulos, Dean of Salisbury, said: “We are delighted to be the venue for what promises to be a marvellous evening of music, in support of three remarkable local charities that contribute so much to Wiltshire and its communities, in particularly young people.”

Tickets go on sale from Monday 20 November 2023 at 10am, with prices starting from £15. Seats can be booked online from [**https://tinyurl.com/uniquewiltshire**](https://tinyurl.com/uniquewiltshire) or by calling the Salisbury Cathedral box office on 01722 555128.

A limited number of wheelchair/accessibility tickets are available for this event, which can be secured directly from the box office.

*ENDS*

**PHOTOGRAPHIC ATTACHMENTS**

Award-winning pianist Rupert Egerton-Smith
The Band of The Grenadier Guards
Salisbury Cathedral, please credit Finnbarr Webster

**INTERVIEW REQUESTS**

Please contact Adam Baker on 07803 252711 or email to adam@wiltshireairambulance.co.uk.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

* **The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust** was established in 1998 to work in partnership with Wiltshire Police to provide a home security service. The mission of the charity is to help elderly or vulnerable people who have been victims of, or are considered to be at risk of, house crime, hate crime, domestic abuse or fire. The charity also works with Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, as well as several other agencies, to ensure that the most effective use is made of facilities and support available and those in need of help receive it promptly. The charity launched *Stay Safe Online* in 2016 to support older people to recognise computer fraud and what to do if they have been scammed. Seven volunteers across the county offer one-to-one home visits to provide advice on how to stay safe online.
* **Wiltshire Air Ambulance** provides Helicopter Emergency Medical Services across Wiltshire, Bath and surrounding areas. The charity has been saving lives since 1990, operating up to 19 hours a day, 365 days a year. The aircrew, consisting of pilots, critical care paramedics and doctors, attend on average three potentially lifesaving missions each day in the charity’s Bell 429 helicopter or one of two critical care cars. The charity needs to raise £4m each year to continue saving lives and receives no regular direct Government funding or National Lottery grants.
* **Youth Action Wiltshire**, based in Devizes, is an award-winning charity and a ‘Youth Arm’ of Community First, which has supported people and places across Wiltshire and Swindon for over 50 years. They champion community causes and manage multi-million pound projects, supporting vibrant communities and brighter futures for local people. All their programmes and services aim to meet our objectives: connecting communities, tackling disadvantage, encouraging enterprise and inspiring ideas through innovation.
* **Rupert Egerton-Smith** is an award-winning pianist and concert artist who continues to be praised for the “rich sensitivity and superb musicianship” that has become synonymous with his performances. Combining an innate musicality with solid grounding in technique, style and composition, his abilities continue to trademark him as one of the finest classical pianists on the musical scene.
* **The Band of the Grenadier Guards** is one of the oldest and most iconic military bands in the world. It has a vast and illustrious history dating back over 335 years, having been formed under the reign King Charles II as part of the 'First Regiment of Foot Guards'. The band is present at all major UK royal occasions and has witnessed many of the nation's significant historic events. In recent times, they have played pivotal roles in the State Funeral of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. The Regimental Quick March, 'British Grenadiers' is one of the most recognisable and memorable tunes in the world.
* **The Band and Bugles of The Rifles** are renowned for their fast ‘light’ pace when marching. They are part of the Royal Corps of Army Music and represent the largest infantry regiment in the UK Army, The Rifles. The Band and Bugles of The Rifles have been part of significant events in the UK including the funerals of the late Duke of Edinburgh, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. They can be found regularly performing around the UK and abroad throughout the year and are based in Winchester.