

# OVERSEAS

Journal of the Royal Over-Seas League

Issue 2, June–August 2009



## The Cyprus issue

How does the divide affect art and serious crime, and can a solution be found?

## Seeds of success

How famine-hit Malawi achieved a crop surplus by ignoring its donors' advice

## Capital savings

Tips on how to enjoy London's top sights and summer shows on a budget

## Young at art

Meet ROSL's second Young Artist of Thailand and view her winning work



## OVERSEAS

ISSUE 2 June-August 2009

The Royal Over-Seas League is a self-funded Commonwealth organisation that offers clubhouse facilities to members, organises Commonwealth art and music competitions and develops joint welfare projects with specific countries.

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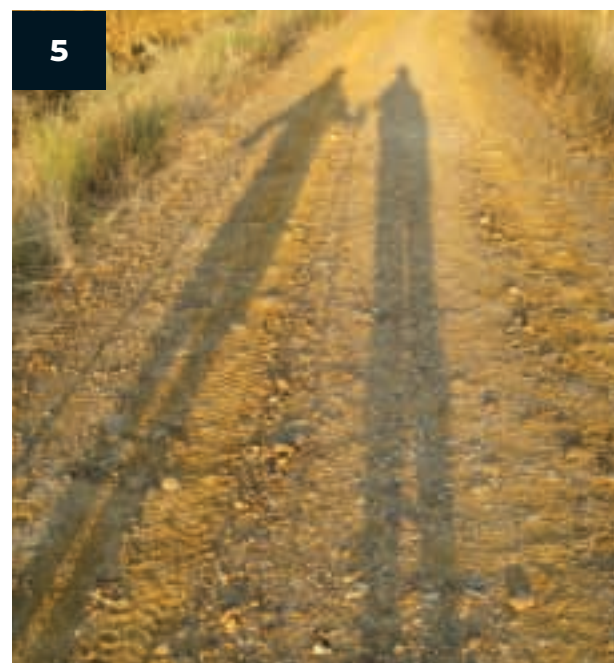
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Front cover: Art vendor near Mangochi, Malawi. © Suree Pritchard



## From the Director-general

**A**long with 70 ROSL members, I attended the multi-faith Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey on 9 March. It was a splendid occasion, featuring performances by a steel band, the baritone Njabula Madlala and an i-Kiribati dance group, and readings by representatives of all the main faiths. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were present, as were the Prime Minister and Mrs Sarah Brown. Our Chairman, Mr Stanley Martin, and his wife processed with the chairmen of other loyal societies.

In her Commonwealth Day message, The Queen spoke about the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the Commonwealth, all it has achieved over this time, and how the original eight countries have become 53. Her Majesty said: "As we reflect upon our long association, we should recognise the challenges that lie ahead. Nearly one billion people of today's Commonwealth are under 25 years of age. These are the people that this association must continue to serve in the future. It is they who can help shape the Commonwealth of today, and whose children will inherit the Commonwealth of tomorrow."

"To help them make the best of their opportunities, our young men and women therefore need the opportunity to become active and responsible members of the communities in which they live. I am pleased that the Commonwealth recognises this, and is determined to continue to put young people at its centre." In conclusion, The Queen said: "Together, we should continue to work hard to deal with today's challenges so that the young people of today's Commonwealth can realise their aspirations. In that way, we can look to the future with confidence." For the full text, contact our PR department or visit [www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk).

In March, the ROSL President, Chairman and I hosted a lunch for the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth and Commonwealth High Commissioners in London to celebrate the organisation's 60th anniversary. It was a happy success, with a delicious meal provided by our caterers.

The ROSL 2008 Annual Report is now available on request from the PR department. It contains the news that 2008 was a good year for ROSL, both financially and in respect of the fulfilment of its objectives. See page 18 for a short report.

**Robert Newell**



## Editor's letter

**T**he opening of Ledra Street in the capital of Cyprus last April



passed with little fanfare in the UK. But, although the demolition of part of the wall that divides North from South could hardly be equated with the tearing down of other great barriers, such as the Berlin Wall, the largely symbolic move has had a significant impact. A year on, we look at the prospects of a speedy end to the conflict (page 10), the affect of increasing collaboration between the Turkish and Greek communities on art and culture (page 14), and the implications of the division on people trafficking, which continues to blight the island (page 12).

There is now hope, too, for peace to return to Iraq, and in one of two fascinating members' articles in this issue, Alan Swan looks at the obstacles to free and fair elections in December (page 6). Perhaps the greatest challenge will be to register and protect the thousands of people who have been displaced from their homes.

With summer finally upon us, ROSL has a packed programme of events (pages 29-34). I'm looking forward to visiting the London Wetland Centre, which offers a countryside retreat for the capital's birds and wetland animals (page 23). I might even manage to see some of the season's top plays and exhibitions, using Judith Steiner's money-saving tips (page 25). However, as I am now going on maternity leave, I may have to put such outings on hold. I will leave *Overseas* in the capable hands of acting editor Jessica Moore, who has eight years' experience as an editor at *The Independent* and *The Guardian*.

**Miranda Moore**

**CELEBRATING 60 YEARS:** In March, a lunch was held at Over-Seas House, London for the Commonwealth Secretary-General and Commonwealth High Commissioners in London to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Commonwealth. Pictured are (l-r): Mr Stanley Martin (ROSL Chairman), HE Mr Laleshwar Singh (High Commissioner for Guyana and Senior High Commissioner), Lord Luce (ROSL President), HE Mr Kamallesh Sharma (Commonwealth Secretary-General) and Mr Robert Newell (ROSL director-general)

# A pilgrim's progress

**Peter Blackie** finds himself a reluctant pilgrim as he walks in the footsteps of millions of worshippers along the Chemin de Saint Jacques from France to Spain

Martine had felt a call to do the Chemin de Saint Jacques from France to Spain for some years and, after doing the first 450km from Le Puy en Velay to Lectour in two short trips, we decided to walk the remaining 1,150km last year. Also known as the Way of Saint James and the Camino Frances, the pilgrimage has existed for more than a thousand years and was one of the most important Christian pilgrimages during medieval times. It ends at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, northwest Spain, where the remains of the apostle Saint James are said to be buried.

It may sound pompous to talk of the 'magic of the Way', but walking 25km a day for seven weeks has a wonderfully calming effect. There are few decisions to be made, the short-term goal of reaching your daily destination is easily attainable – and each day brings you closer to Santiago.

Most walkers tie a scallop shell to their backpack, like the medieval pilgrims, yet many of them (myself included) do not set out to treat the Chemin as a pilgrimage. Even so, restaurants along the route offer special 'pilgrim' prices, and as we walked into Saint Jean Pied du Port, the driver of a tourist train pointed us out as "typical pilgrims". So there we were, 'pilgrims' in spite of ourselves.

Interestingly, both the 20th-century Spanish government and Sancho the Strong of 11th-century Navarre decided to promote the pilgrimage for economic reasons. Sancho built towns every 20–25km to welcome pilgrims and populate his kingdom, while the current Spanish government encourages local governments to build *albergues* on the route. Many little villages have a café or village shop only because of the pilgrim trade.

Neither southwest France nor northern Spain can be described as flat, and not a day goes by without its hill. However, there are only two days when this presents a real challenge: the climb from Saint Jean Pied de Port over the Pyrenees to Roncesvalles in Spain, and the climb up to O Cebreiro. We began the journey

across the Pyrenees in brilliant sunshine, climbing to a refuge one third of the way up. As we always walked towards the west, the sun was behind us in the morning, and our long shadows stretched out in front of us.

The next day, the weather quickly turned to fog and rain as we climbed up into the clouds. The climb from St Jean to the pass is 1,270m, and as the route veered off on to vague cart tracks in the grass, we began to fear that we might fall off a precipice – or get so lost we couldn't find the pass at all.

Once over the pass and across the border, we walked down into Roncesvalles to the great monastery. I had been looking forward to it, having studied the Chanson de Roland nearly half a century earlier, but was a little disappointed.

The scenery of Spain's Navarre region is often grandiose, particularly the Meseta – a stretch of country of high plateaux and devoid of habitation, which was originally sheep country and is now used to grow wheat. The villages made a great impression on me, reminding me of the dusty Mexican towns of old Westerns. Beside the white churches and public buildings are houses of the nobility, which are mostly very narrow, but with enormous coats of arms. Most of the medieval churches in Spain have retained their original statuary, tomb furniture and altars, and Burgos Cathedral – a quite extraordinarily rich gothic pile of chapels – is an archetype.

Leon Cathedral is also a wonder, as is the church of Saint Isidore, with its statue of the good saint charging along on horseback, wearing his mitre and slaughtering moors. The church has fine medieval frescos in mint condition and a set of tombs of the kings of Castille and Leon, which Napoleon's army desecrated in 1808.

Some of the *albergues* were special. One was located in a church building. Entry was by the lower parts of the church tower, and we did our laundry in the attic space between the church roof and the ceiling of the choir. In the morning, we woke to the sight of two volunteer *hospitales* dancing salsa below. In another, run by the English Confraternity of Saint James, we



**SPANISH VISTAS:** Peter poses for a photo in the Meseta (top) while Martine approaches the Ermita de la Virgen del Rio in Palencia Province (above)

were welcomed by an Australian *hospitalero* who offered us a fine cup of English tea and then made everyone sing *God Save The Queen*.

Everybody does the Chemin in their own way: on foot, bicycle, horseback, or as part of a 'hop on, hop off' tour. Some carry their own backpacks; others have their luggage delivered every day. Some start in Belgium or Germany; others walk only the last hundred kilometres. There's no right or wrong way of doing it. But however you do it, and whatever your reasons, it is a time of great emotion when you finally reach Santiago.

**Peter Blackie is a ROSL member.**

# Moving towards democracy in Iraq

Part of a monitoring team in the recent provincial elections, **Alan Swan** explains the obstacles to free and fair parliamentary elections this year



**MARK OF HOPE:** An Iraqi man displays his purple finger after voting in Yusifiyah during the provincial elections in January

From the gates of the St. Hormizo Monastery it is possible to look out over an Iraqi landscape that appears as timeless as it is endless. But the steep, snaking road and seclusion of the monastery reflect times when its inhabitants felt safer keeping a guarded low profile.

The instability that followed the invasion of Iraq in 2003 spelt a return to such turbulent times, not only for Christians but also for other minorities – from Turkmen to Yazidis. But today, stability and confidence appear to be returning, and in December Iraqis will go to the polls to select their national representatives from what are likely to be long lists of eager candidates.

The elections will take place against the backdrop of coalition troop withdrawals, new uncertainties, and an increasingly expectant Iraqi public. A lot is riding on the outcome and

management of the election.

Iraq's minorities are divided between placing their faith in a Baghdad-centred state with a degree of decentralisation or supporting a stronger, more assertive Kurdistan region in which they would be a more visible and

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*Electoral officials are rising to the challenges, ranging from vote manipulation to A3 ballot papers*

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proportionally greater group. Both visions have their merits and limits, and both are part of a wider geopolitical game being played out over the future shape of Iraq.

The result will have a major impact on Iraq's minorities, and this is reflected in many of the existing political divisions, although debates are now less about narrow sectarian concerns and more about the delivery of local services and the probity of elected officials. In part, this is a response to the fact that Iraqis form a rapidly maturing electorate that has been targeted by pervasive public information programmes, but is keen to exercise its new democratic rights. Consequently, political parties are developing their platforms, tailoring campaigns to their natural constituencies, and even recruiting celebrities from diaspora communities as far away as the United States.

Electoral officials are rising to new and existing challenges. In January, these ranged from continued attempts at vote manipulation to unwieldy, A3 ballot papers, large numbers of voters in small voting centres, and a bewildering number of competing candidates and parties. But if Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) can retain its dedicated personnel, it will be able to build an important foundation for future elections.

While the progress made to date is tangible for millions of Iraqis, the same fears that led the builders of St. Hormizo to nestle their sanctuary in the hills is leading thousands of Assyrians, Turkmen and Yazidis to retreat to Nineveh Province. Iraq's recent history has left it with one of the world's largest populations of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The victims of



**GOOD TURN-OUT:** Voters at a polling station during January's local elections



targeted intimidation, they leave behind their homes and livelihoods in cities such as Mosul to seek refuge in the relative security of the north. Such intimidation appears to be lessening as security improves, but many remain reluctant to return to their homes and the number of returnees from other countries is negligible.

The true impact of the internal displacement suffered since 2003 will only become known later this year, when the government embarks on what will be a landmark census. However, it is clear that the displacement of the country's ethnic minorities will continue to have an effect on the elections for years to come, and affect the claims to contested areas such as Kirkuk and Khanaqin.

IDPs can face several hurdles when they try to vote. For those displaced from their homes, often without complete documentation, proving their identity can be a challenge. The process is made more difficult by those who see in IDPs a vehicle for electoral fraud. This can involve the buying of votes, threats to employment, or even the provision of transport to polling centres.

Accounts of such intimidation were heard in

the run-up to the provincial elections on 31 January and, even if unsubstantiated, they reflect the nervousness of minority voters and their belief that the electoral process remains open to manipulation by political parties and voters in the Nineveh Plain and elsewhere.

These fears are not groundless. During the provincial elections it became clear that communication between polling centres was poor in some cases. In one area, this meant that two polling stations had to share a single ballot paper stamp – a shortcoming that told of deficiencies within the senior administration.

At the local level there were also concerns. Accredited individuals working as polling station observers for political parties rarely challenged electoral officials when voters were turned away from polling stations, and voter complaint forms – intended to be visibly available – were frequently found in desk drawers.

Taken together, these weaknesses impact on IDPs and risk discrediting the electoral process. It is important that the success of January's elections does not lead to complacency that could cloud the

forthcoming parliamentary elections. If anything, December's voting will be even more important because, if successful, it will represent a solid step towards consolidating democracy in Iraq.

The most serious failing in the Nineveh Plain lies not with Iraqi electoral staff or political parties desperate to win votes, but with the international community. There were no international electoral observation missions in the province, except the small observation team of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation and Assyrian Council in Europe (UNPO-ACE), which I was a part of. Independent, international election observation missions must continue to support Iraq's democratisation and show that the international community is not complacent about the progress made to date. Iraq's democracy is young and fragile, but its people are its strongest advocates. To fail them would be to fail us all.

**ROSL member Alan Swan is project coordinator of UNPO. He was part of a small team monitoring the Iraqi provincial elections in January.**



## Will power.

Douglas Bader was legendary for his dogged determination and will power, refusing to let the loss of both his legs prevent him from flying Spitfires in the Second World War.

These qualities of determination and will power are shared by the men and women, past and present, of the Royal Air Force family who secured and maintain our freedom today. Qualities that, sadly, are often needed to fight different battles such as disability, age, accident, illness and poverty. The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund has a duty to assist such family members. You have the power to help by remembering the RAF family as you remember your family in your will.

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# How to feed a nation

Four years ago, a famine left 50% of Malawians dependent on food aid, says **Chris Pritchard**. So how is it that this poor nation can now feed itself?

Malawi's economy has its roots firmly in the African soil. This is evident as much on intercity highways as dusty village paths. Trudging home are people stooped beneath burdens carried on their heads, while heavily laden, smoke-belching trucks struggle to market with maize, sugar cane, tobacco and other crops.

Life is tough. The country endured a terrible drought four years ago, forcing five million people – about half the population – to survive on foreign food aid. Village elders reported starvation deaths. But the drought was a watershed. It changed Malawi's reputation. The disaster story became a success – and Malawi became a role model for Africa.

Termed the 'warm heart of Africa' on tourism posters, this tranquil country has experienced a village-level revolution. Ignoring the advice of its foreign benefactors, Malawi introduced subsidies for farmers in 2006 and boosted agricultural production dramatically. Exhorting the populace to grow more, President Bingu wa Mutharika (also his country's agriculture minister) declared: "I don't want to go to other capitals begging for

food." Frank Mwenifumbo, deputy minister of agriculture, justified the country's rebellion against "the development community, led by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund [who regard us as] prodigal sons" by claiming that Malawians understand their problems better than others and are best-placed to find solutions.

The United Nations classifies Malawi as a Least Developed Country. Agriculture accounts for 37% of gross domestic product and 85% of export revenues. Nine tenths of the population live in rural villages. Densely populated and small compared to its neighbours, it covers only 188,428km sq, and one-fifth of that is water. Lake Malawi is of major agricultural importance, but tobacco is by far the main export, followed by tea and sugar. Unlike many African countries, Malawi has minimal mineral deposits, and although tourism is growing, agriculture remains a mainstay.

The terrain changes strikingly as you drive the length of the country. But there's one constant: crop-planted farmland. It is everywhere: alongside roads, adjoining wilderness game parks, on flat plains shared with grazing cattle, and sloping down rolling grassland and mountains. Even the forested high-altitude plateaux, where fly-fishing for trout lures visitors, boast croplands.

Agricultural production climbed pitifully in the wake of the 2005 drought. The outlook was bleak. Local agricultural experts feared that, like many other developing countries, Malawi would continue to go cap in hand to developed countries. Agriculturalists reported that cash-strapped farmers could afford only cheap, disease-prone seeds. Fertiliser use was far below recommended levels.

Officials in the capital of Lilongwe were aware that government subsidies to the agricultural sector are commonplace in Europe and the



United States, so Dr Mutharika and his senior aides decided to do what developed nations practise – rather than what they preach. For two decades, foreign donors had urged Malawi to adopt sink-or-swim free-market policies and spurn subsidies. But as Patrick Kabambe, permanent secretary to the agriculture ministry, put it so

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*The UN diverted three tonnes of powdered milk to Uganda after Malawi declared: 'We won't need to use it'*

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succinctly: "We must invest in agriculture."

Staring down foreign criticism, the government bit the bullet. It initiated a subsidy system under which farmers use coupons to buy subsidised fertilisers and crop (mostly maize) seeds. Coupons entitle farmers to pay only 30 kwacha (15p), rather than 600, for a 2kg bag of high-quality maize seeds, and 600 kwacha



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**BASIC NEEDS:** The UN classifies Malawi as a Least Developed Nation, but many villages do now have a water pump, such as this one on the shores of Lake Malawi (bottom left). The sight of women carrying stacks of firewood longer than they are tall is common (left)

(£2.95), instead of 6,500, for a bag of fertiliser.

All farmers/farming families are eligible for subsidies, which has led to criticism that the small minority of comparatively rich farmers are not excluded. There have also been reports of other problems with the system, including forged coupons, the selling of coupons and villages not receiving expected supplies of coupons, causing village chiefs to allocate the available coupons to the neediest households. However, while the system isn't perfect, the results indicate that it works well overall.

Yet the introduction of subsidies sparked disagreements with donor nations – including Britain, other European countries and the United States – as well as with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Considering Malawi's dependence on aid from donor countries, this was no small matter, but subsidies have turned Malawi from supplicant to exporter. Maize production soared – to donors' disbelief – and as the success of the changed agricultural strategies became evident, opposition withered. Malawi has not lost any aid providers.

Needing 2.2 million tonnes of maize annually to be self-sufficient, Malawi produced only 1.2 million tonnes in 2005. By 2007, production was 3.2 million tonnes and has stayed high – enabling exports to neighbouring countries,

particularly Zambia. Enthusiasts credit subsidies with the turnaround. "We're an agricultural country but farmers are poor, so subsidies give them a leg up," says Nicholas Dumba, general manager of Club Makokola, the country's top resort. Opponents counter that money could be better spent on education and infrastructure.

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*President Mutharika decided to do what developed nations practise – rather than what they preach*

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Although Malawi officials agree that the development of infrastructure would improve the situation further, they point out that, even with its recent agricultural successes, Malawi remains a cash-strapped developing country without the resources to undergo grand-scale development measures.

And the results speak for themselves.

Serious child hunger has declined. The United Nations Children's Fund diverted three tonnes of powdered milk (used as a food for seriously malnourished children) to Uganda after its deputy representative in Malawi declared: "We won't need to use it."

This isn't surprising considering that Malawi's National Food Reserve Agency felt able to export 286,589 tonnes of maize to Zimbabwe in 2007 (the latest year for which figures are available). What's more, the World Food Programme trucked another 32,363 tonnes of Malawian maize to Zimbabwe in the same year. Malawi was also able to donate maize to drought-hit Lesotho and Swaziland.

The Malawi government's agriculture experts maintain that there is one key ingredient in this extraordinary turnaround, with implications for food production in other African countries: fertilizer. The system is now being studied, and several African governments are showing an interest, particularly neighbours such as Zambia. Malawi sees itself remaining a food exporter, and according to Nicholas Dumba: "Growing prosperity will be linked to agriculture and development of tourism."

**A Sydney-based journalist and ROSL member, Chris Pritchard is a frequent visitor to Africa.**



## FOCUS

# Time for a new year's solution

Can Cyprus's leaders bring peace and unity to the island after 35 years of division? A willingness to reach a deal on both sides is reason to be optimistic, says **Helena Smith**, but time is running out

In the long, complex and turbulent history of Cyprus, a year seems like a very short time. Considering that Greeks and Turks have lived on either side of a UN-patrolled 'dead zone' since 1974, their respective troops facing each other down the barrel of a gun, a year seems shorter still. And yet, in 12 short months, more has happened on the strategic Mediterranean island than at any other time in the past four decades.

In Nicosia, the last divided capital on the continent of Europe, the change started on Ledra Street. A year ago, the cobbled boulevard was Cyprus's most potent symbol of division, a mass of barricades at its lower end bisecting the heart of the medieval-walled city. Then, no one could traverse the no-man's land that connected north with south, Greek with Turk. It was conscripts, buried behind bullet-ridden sandbags and rusty gunports, who manned the checkpoint – young men who preferred to hurl abuse or fire the occasional gunshot at each other.

Today, the street known as Murder Mile under British rule, is a crossing point like no other on the island, embellished by pot-plants and brightly-painted hoardings and traversed with the aid of well-mannered police officers and customs officials.

Instead of an inhospitable, weed-infested dead zone cutting the capital in two, it is newly restored buildings and pristine pathways that greet visitors. "Being able to walk from one side of Nicosia to the other has definitely helped inter-communal contact," says Yannis Papadakis, an anthropologist and political analyst. "Every

day you see people crossing over.

Psychologically, it has removed a huge scar."

Nearly 35 years have elapsed since the Turkish army, responding to a short-lived coup aimed at uniting Cyprus with Greece, staged a full-scale invasion of the island, seizing its northern third. In Turkey, it was seen as Ankara's greatest modern military success. Some 200,000 Greek Cypriots – a third of the

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*Cypriots understand that with each passing year the festering dead zone becomes ever more permanent*

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former crown colony's majority population – were forcibly displaced in the process. Around 40,000 Turks, who had lived in the south, were made to move the other way – an exchange of populations that was reinforced when the self-styled Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus proclaimed independence in 1983.

For the army of politicians and peacemakers who have tried, and failed, to reunite the two estranged communities ever since, Cyprus – in gentler times the 'island of love' for thousands

of tourists – is the Rubik's Cube of diplomacy: impenetrable and seemingly impossible to solve. But the ascent to power of two men with moderate views, leftist ideologies and a shared desire to see their homeland reunited, has injected new momentum into the bid to put this fractured corner of the Levant together again.

After five years of deadlock under the late nationalist firebrand Tassos Papadopoulos, steps have been taken that have heralded a new spirit of reconciliation. The opening of Ledra Street, announced within weeks of the February 2008 election of the veteran communist Demetris Christofias as Cyprus's sixth president, paved the way. Seen as a 'goodwill gesture' it was soon followed by the cancelling of military exercises, the de-mining of the dead zone, and unprecedented bi-communal (Greek-Turkish) cooperation on cultural and environmental issues. "For the first time we have an ideal combination of leaders for a solution," says Papadakis. "If they can't do it, nobody can."

Hopes for a settlement were heightened further when talks were resumed last September, more than four years after Greek Cypriots rejected a UN-brokered peace deal – a 3000-page settlement plan widely viewed as the most sophisticated yet – a week before the island joined the EU.

Calling the Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat "my comrade and friend" as he inaugurated the negotiations, President Christofias declared: "The time has come for us to take joint action and to respond to the call of history; to realise

the vision of a reunified homeland, belonging to its people.” More than ever, Greek Cypriots understand that time is against them; that with each passing year the festering, bullet-pocked dead zone becomes ever more permanent – a grim reminder of a war lost and land taken.

Now, for perhaps the first time in Cyprus’s post-invasion history, a sitting Greek Cypriot president has the support of the political opposition in the quest to reunify the two sides in a loose, Swiss-style ‘bi-zonal, bi-communal’ federation. “The situation on this island is an anachronism,” says former President George Vassiliou, who as chief EU negotiator navigated the island’s entry to the EU. “90% of the problem has already been solved... Every day that passes, people’s memories of co-existence fade. But I am quite sure that we will have a solution and we will have one soon.”

In a speech before a packed room of Greek and Turkish Cypriots at the London School of Economics recently, Britain’s Europe Minister, Caroline Flint, outlined the wide-ranging social, economic and political benefits that a settlement would bring. “A solution, and the guarantee of long-term security... will end the ever-present anxiety of all Cypriots,” she said to rapturous applause. “It is in everyone’s interest that the next generation do not grow up knowing only division, buffer zones and peacekeepers.”

Nearly 50 years after ethnic strife sent Turkish Cypriots scuttling into enclaves, and four years after they voted in favour of reunification by accepting the 2004 UN blueprint, they are the first to agree that a solution would have its benefits. With the isolated minority worn down by worsening economic meltdown – the benefits of EU membership do not extend to the internationally unrecognised rump state – Mehmet Ali Talat announced in March: “My aim is to achieve a settlement in 2009.”

But although Turkey’s own EU aspirations rest on finding a resolution to the problem – the Cypriot government has said it will not consent to Ankara joining the bloc unless there is a peace deal – he also warned: “The procedure is moving at a very slow pace. If the hope of settlement vanishes, then my mission will come to an end.”

Despite the initial optimism, expectations have been lowered by continued wrangling over the thorny issues that have long bedevilled talks: property, power-sharing, the fate of thousands of Anatolian settlers in the north, and the controversial presence of an estimated 35,000 Turkish mainland troops there.

The prospect of moderates being dislodged by nationalist hardliners in the pariah state’s forthcoming parliamentary elections has further



© AFP/Getty

**ACROSS THE DIVIDE:** At the opening of Ledra Street in April, people cross the Green Line (marked in red on the map of the capital, inset), which continues to separate North from South



dampened spirits, with analysts predicting stalemate if that happens. “Christofias started from square one when he should have negotiated on the basis of the Annan plan [the deal rejected in 2004],” said Michalis Papapetrou, a former minister and prominent voice of dissent. “Our differences now are too many. Worse still, there is an evident shift in public opinion among Turkish Cypriots with 70% wanting a two-state solution, ie permanent partition.”

With hardliners prospering from the anger that increased isolation has brought, few are willing to bet that they won’t take Cyprus’s Turkish-controlled sector by storm – and in doing so place immense pressure on the concession-minded Talat.

“But nobody wants to be blamed for the collapse of talks,” says Dr James Ker-Lindsay, a political scientist and expert on Cyprus. “The fear factor may well keep these negotiations going. The consequences, for either side, of walking away from the table are simply too immense.”

Helena Smith is *The Guardian’s* correspondent in Greece, Turkey and Cyprus.



## FOCUS

# Caught in the slave trade

Cyprus is known as the worst offender for trafficking women in Europe, but what is being done to tackle the problem, asks **Tabitha Morgan**

When a planeload of Russians disembarked at Larnaca airport in Cyprus recently after a flight from Moscow, the majority boarded coaches bound for the island's coastal resorts. But one passenger separated himself from the group and took a taxi to the capital, Nicosia. Nikolai Rantsev had not come to Cyprus for the Mediterranean sunshine but to seek information about the fate of his daughter. Like thousands of Russians and East Europeans, Oxana Rantseva came to Cyprus with the promise of legitimate job opportunities but found herself trapped in an illegal exploitation racket.

Cyprus has the undesirable reputation of being the worst offender in the European Union when it comes to the trafficking of women. It is estimated that as many as 4,000 women enter Cyprus each year to work in the island's cabarets. Once there, the majority are deprived of their passports, incarcerated and forced to work as prostitutes. For the third consecutive year, Cyprus has been criticised in the US State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons report for failing to comply with 'even minimal standards for the prevention of trafficking'.

Initially, Oxana's experience was typical. She was approached by a recruiter in Russia and told that a translator's job awaited her in

Cyprus. But on arrival she learnt that she was expected to work at the Zigos Cabaret in Limassol, one of more than a hundred nightspots that provide a cover for prostitution.

Most young women like her, stranded in a foreign country without their passports or knowledge of the language, have no choice but to comply with the demands of the traffickers and pimps. But Oxana attempted to escape, leaving a note that said, 'I'm tired, I'm leaving for Russia.' After a tip-off from another cabaret worker, Oxana was eventually tracked down and taken to a police station. Little more than an hour after being released into the custody of her employer, the young woman's body was found. She had fallen to her death from a fifth floor apartment, apparently while trying to escape.

Nikolai Rantsev claims that the circumstances

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*Most young women stranded in a foreign country have no choice but to comply with the demands of traffickers*

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surrounding his daughter's death have been deliberately obscured and he has appealed to the European Court of Human Rights for help. "The police handed Oxana over to the cabaret owner like a lamb to a wolf," he told reporters in Nicosia, after contacting the Cypriot authorities.

While declining to comment on this particular case, Inspector Rita Superman of the Anti-Trafficking Unit of the Cyprus police, acknowledges that the trade in women is a major problem. In 2006, 60 police investigations resulted in just eight convictions. "It is true that the number of successful prosecutions is very small," she says, "but our resources are limited. Our unit consists of just three officers." For their part, non-governmental organisations claim that police corruption has obstructed the implementation of government anti-trafficking policies. Last year, seven police officers were prosecuted for their involvement in trafficking-related cases.

"Trafficking has become a lucrative business for all those involved and is now an institutionalised activity," says the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies in Nicosia. "The government is not prepared to take the necessary steps to eradicate it." But Interior Minister Neoklis Sylikiotis denies these accusations and questions his country's poor ranking in the State Department report. He argues that his government introduced



© AP/GETTY



**PRISON STRIP:** Many trafficked women are forced to work in the 'nightclubs' that line the roads out of Nicosia in the Turkey-controlled North

comprehensive legislation to combat the problem in July 2007.

In addition, he points out that the authorities are in the process of abolishing the system of visas for 'artistes' – a euphemism for prostitutes – under which most of the victims are brought into the country. Women coming to Cyprus to work in cabarets and bars will instead be issued with employment visas by the Labour Department, a change in procedure that will entitle them to protection under labour legislation. Sylkiotis argues that "practical measures against the problem should have a holistic approach and cannot be dealt with in isolation".

The signs are that government measures are having some effect. The most telling indication of this came when more than a hundred cabaret owners protested outside the presidential palace in Nicosia. "Cyprus will become one of a handful of countries in the world where strip joints are banned," said one man. The protesters also claimed that new legislation would make it impossible to find waitresses and barmaids.

The problem of women-trafficking in Cyprus is complicated by the fact that the island is divided, and while legislation passed by the government of the Cyprus Republic can be enforced in the south, there is no way of doing so in the north. There, the unrecognised Turkish Cypriot authorities have done virtually

nothing to curb illegal trafficking. It is impossible to obtain reliable statistics for the number of women trafficked into northern Cyprus, but a short drive along one of the arterial roads into Nicosia indicates the scale of the problem. The road is peppered with nightclubs – windowless, concrete buildings with sexually alluring names.

Mine Yucel, who works with NGOs tackling the problem in the north of the island, claims "there is a huge problem with trafficking and a lack of legislation". According to the State Department report, awareness of the issue is so poor that the Turkish Cypriot authorities make no clear distinction between smuggling and the trafficking of persons. As a result, the penalties enforced under existing legislation

*Cyprus has been criticised by the US for failing to comply with minimal standards of trafficking prevention*

are inadequate, resulting in no more than two years imprisonment.

The continuing political division of Cyprus is bound to complicate the application of effective measures to combat people-trafficking on the island. Even in the south, where further legislation is being introduced, evidence suggests that neither the demand for cabarets nor the supply of vulnerable young women from Russia and Eastern Europe has diminished.

State Department officials and foreign diplomats based in Cyprus will be waiting to see if the number of prosecutions rises in the coming months before deciding whether the island can cast off the label of being Europe's biggest hub for the trafficking of women. They will also want evidence that cases such as the mysterious death of Oxana Rantseva are being investigated with more diligence than they have been in the past.

The view of Oxana's father, as he prepares to return to Moscow, is that the Cyprus authorities still have much work to do. "The Cyprus government bears responsibility for tolerating the activities of human traffickers like those who contributed to the death of my daughter," he says.

**A freelance journalist based in Cyprus, Tabitha Morgan has written articles for the *Financial Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *BBC News*.**



## FOCUS

# The beating art of a divided island

Over the last decade, the Nicosia arts scene has been developing rapidly, says **Achilleas Kentonis**. And the opening of the Ledra Street checkpoint last year is encouraging further cultural collaboration between Greek and Turkish artists

An open wound for Cypriots, the division line in Nicosia – known as the Green Line or buffer zone – is a point of interest for visitors, artists and politicians. Artistic action in this area began in 2005, with Leaps of Faith, an international arts project for the Green Line and Nicosia, curated by Katerina Gregos and Erden Kosova.

After that, many followed, including the Art Attack bi-communal (ie Greek/Turkish) visual art competition and exhibition, bi-communal poetry nights and plays, and 'Memory Box' – in which citizens were invited to define what 'home' meant for them. The international project 'Go Ganesha Go!' is the latest. Initiated in Berlin, it aims to bring people from both sides of the divide together via artistic representations of elephants, as a symbol of reconciliation.

Although the buffer zone is controlled by UN soldiers, art projects and events are happening around it in the Ledra Palace Hotel and other venues. And the opening of the Ledra Street checkpoint last year has greatly benefited initiatives such as Open Studios Week, in which artists who have their studios within the old city on both sides of the Green Line open their studios so that people can visit, meet them and see their work.

Given the history of Cyprus, which is wrought by conquerors who have occupied the island, it

should be no surprise that Cypriots understand modes of communication from both East and West. This part of their cultural make-up is often evident in their artistic work. Take, for example, the work of Aggelos Makrides, whose micro-sculptures based on the area's stone idols, which date back to 3000BC, speak of the unspoken stories of Cyprus's past.

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*The budget for arts increased but cultural events multiplied, so funds were spread more thinly*

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As you would expect, the majority of the island's artistic and cultural production takes place in Nicosia. Although it is a small place, anything can be found there. Or almost anything. It is the things that you would expect to see that are missing – such as an archaeological museum or a museum of contemporary art. Even so, for the last 10–15 years, contemporary arts and architecture have

been thriving, with the establishment of the Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre in 1994, the ArtOs Foundation in 2004, and the Pharos Centre for Contemporary Art in 2005.

Contemporary arts and architecture are the cultural barometers of a city, and in Nicosia contemporary architecture is involved in a cultural dialogue with the area's rich architectural heritage, both challenging and complementing traditional aesthetics, forms and materials. This is evident in buildings such as the Olympic Committee building, with its elongated structure and contemporary sculpture park, and the Electricity Authority of Cyprus, which responds to the urban bioclimate by blending modern and traditional materials. Further towards the centre of the city, you can see modernist buildings that work in harmony with the traditional architecture.

Areas considered to have special, traditional architectural value are protected by law, and there are incentives for home owners to renovate their houses. Ay Omoloyites, near the presidential palace, has transformed itself into a tiny village within the city since it started a slow but steady renovation process in 1990. The best of Nicosia arts, music and cultural heritage can be found there – all thanks to private initiatives. It is no coincidence that the Palace of Culture is currently being built in Ay,

close to the National Theatre.

A lot of renovation work has also taken place in the old centre of Nicosia in the past 20 years. When the University of Cyprus opened its Department of Architecture in the area in 2004, entrepreneurs started renovating buildings and turning them into shops, cafés and bars. This year, the university will produce its first architecture graduates, which is likely to have an impact on building design and development on the island in the coming years.

Despite the global economic crisis, the regeneration process continues but there are many beautiful houses that have not yet been renovated. A simplification of the bureaucratic procedures would speed up the process by enabling owners to make a more daring contribution to the regeneration drive. Of course, a solution to the Cyprus issue would make a more comprehensive and integrated regeneration possible for the first time.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for formulating and implementing the government's cultural policy. Over the last five years, the budget for the arts was increased substantially, but at the same time cultural events, institutions and associations multiplied, so funding was spread more thinly. The government's current policy is to support all forms of creativity, infrastructure, bi-communal activities and efforts to decentralise cultural actions for the benefit of the whole island. However, this year there was no increase in budget.

Since many individuals and institutions are

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*Areas of special architectural value are protected by law and there are incentives to renovate houses*

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still waiting to see if their application for funding has been successful, it is difficult to assess what the artistic output will be this year. Unfortunately, there is little private investment in the arts to top up funds where government support is not available. The lack of tax incentives for funding cultural projects is one reason.

Dance in Cyprus has had the biggest growth in the last eight years, not only

**COUNTRY OF CULTURE:** The cultural landscape of Cyprus is changing, and there are now many modern sculptures dotted around the capital, including this one near to the Ledra Street checkpoint (below). One of several art and culture projects set up in Nicosia in the last 10 years, the ArtOs Foundation has a full programme of dance performances (top) and art exhibitions (centre)

because professional choreographers and dancers have worked hard to secure their future, but also because of the establishment of the Dance Platform in 2001. Now adopted by the Ministry of Culture, the institution gives dance ensembles the opportunity to present their work within the framework of an organised programme.

In March, the ninth Dance Platform was held with exciting new choreographers, such as Marina Kyriakidou, whose work uses acrobatic moves on the ground and in the air, and Photini Perdikaki and Maria Mavromichali, whose use of traditional Cretan music hints at their Greek island culture and heritage. The productions are also given a platform at festivals abroad, thereby increasing the notoriety of Cypriot choreographers around the world.

Though the cultural industry, and especially contemporary arts, is a high-risk industry to be in, there are a lot of private initiatives, plus a few from the local authorities in cooperation with the private sector. The Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre ([www.nimac.com.cy](http://www.nimac.com.cy)), associated with the Dimitris Pierides Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens, has been concentrating on showcasing local artistic production, including bi-communal projects, such as the recent '1960-1974 Young Cypriot Artists at the Dawn of the Republic' exhibition.

The ArtOs Foundation ([www.artosfoundation.org](http://www.artosfoundation.org)), which I fund with fellow media artist Maria Papacharalambous, is an NGO dealing with contemporary arts and science. Located in a renovated bakery in Ay, it is a contemporary arts and science centre dedicated to research and creativity. Its premise is to inspire contemporary artists and scientists alike, offering them a platform and promoting them at a local and international level.

ArtOs has established initiatives such as the Cultural Observatory for the Contemporary Arts in the Middle East, which involves research trips and exhibitions, and works as a bridge between East and West; the Kids University, which aims to stimulate children's







**ART AND REGENERATION:** There are sculptures in many parts of Nicosia, from squares in the city centre (left) to touristy bays (right)

creativity and logic in a multidisciplinary and innovative way; and a scientific lab for research into electromagnetics and the human body, which is shared by artists. The most recent four-day Kids University invited children to create a video documentary about the dwarf elephants that once inhabited the island, including set design, sculpture making, animation and editing. ArtOs also organises events in the fields of international power management, art and architecture, and socio-political art, including a recent video project about immigration.

Founded by ROSL member Garo Keheyian, the Pharos Arts Foundation ([www.thepharostrust.org](http://www.thepharostrust.org)) offers an exceptional programme of classical and contemporary music. A non-profit cultural and educational foundation dedicated to the promotion of the arts and humanities, it aims to foster artistic excellence by presenting audiences in Cyprus with some of the most exciting and talented musicians and artists on the Cypriot and international scene.

Thanks to the foundation, Cypriot composers at the beginning of their careers have been given an international platform, with the world premiere of Vassos Nicolaou's *Kimata* being performed by the London Sinfonietta in 2003, followed by the world premiere of Evis Sammouris's *Echopraxia* in May 2006 by the Ensemble Modern. Since 2005, Keheyian has also been supporting the visual arts through the Pharos Centre for Contemporary Art ([www.pharosart.org](http://www.pharosart.org)).

In Limassol, the Rialto has been pivotal in

changing the cultural landscape ([www.rialto.com.cy](http://www.rialto.com.cy)). The old 1930s theatre, situated in the former red light district, has brought a new cultural breeze to the area since it was renovated in 1991. Now, anyone in Limassol can enjoy performing arts of high quality. Another private foundation – the Evagoras and Kathleen Lanitis Foundation ([www.lanitisfoundation.org](http://www.lanitisfoundation.org)) – was founded nearby in 2001. It organises and sponsors cultural and educational events that promote 'human achievements', including an exhibition by 20 Greek and Turkish Cypriot artists entitled 'Hyperlinks' and 'Modern Cypriot Art', which focused on works by the first generations of Modern Cypriot artists.

The newest player on the arts scene is the recently established Technological University, which has already had a real social impact on Limassol. More young people have moved to the area, strengthening the economy, and there has been an increase in cultural activities. The university's exhibitions and arts events are always packed with enthusiastic youngsters.

Given the division of the country, it has never been more important or challenging for Cypriot artists to express a sense of identity. Artists in all disciplines are feeling their way between globalisation, Western neo-colonialism and localisation, but that is what makes the Cyprus art scene such an exciting and adventurous place.

**Architect and multimedia artist Achilleas Kentonis is co-founder and director of the ArtOs Cultural and Research Foundation.**

## CYPRUS FACTS

### LOCATION

**Eastern Mediterranean**

### CAPITAL

**Nicosia (Lefkosia)**

### POPULATION

**796,740 (July 2009 est.)**

### GOVERNMENT

**Cyprus is a Commonwealth republic and a member of the European Union. Greek Cypriots control the only internationally recognised government, and President Demetris Christofias is its chief of state and head of government (since 28 February 2008). Mehmet Ali Talat is 'president' of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which is recognised only by Turkey. The post of vice president is vacant; under the 1960 constitution, it is reserved for a Turkish Cypriot**

### RELIGION

**Greek Orthodox 78%, Muslim 18%, other (includes Maronite and Armenian Apostolic) 4%**

### CURRENCY

**Euro (since January 2008)**

# Grog's notebook

News from the London clubhouse



▲ The guest of honour and speaker at the January Central Council lunch was Councillor Robert Davis (Lord Mayor Locum Tenens of Westminster and Deputy Leader of Westminster Council). He is pictured, 2nd from right, with (l-r) Sir Stephen Lamport (Chapter Clerk and Receiver General of Westminster Abbey), Mrs Hanni Martin and Mr Stanley Martin (ROSL Chairman)



▲ In March, a painting of the West Front of Kensington Palace was presented to Kensington Palace as a gift from ROSL. Pictured are (l-r) Mr Jonathan Scott (of Kensington Palace, winner of the competition to identify the painting by Denys Wells), Miss Samantha Whitaker (PR assistant), Mr Stanley Martin (ROSL Chairman), Mr Nigel Arch (director of Kensington Palace and Kew Palace) and Mr David Starkie (the ROSL member who alerted us to the sale of the paintings – see issue 3, 2008)



▲ Among the 10 musicians from overseas who were awarded prizes in the ROSL Annual Music Competition are (l-r) pianists Shuenda Wong (Malaysia) and Ben Schoeman (South Africa), flautist Alison Murphy (Ireland), pianists Carlisle Anderson-Frank (Canada) and Jayson Gilham (Australia), cellist Yelien He (Australia), and sopranos Madeleine Pierard (New Zealand) and Sarah Power (Ireland)



▲ Buttery cook Ariaratnam Kugeswaran (Ganesh), left, celebrated 25 years with ROSL in January and was presented with a gift by sous chef des cuisines Dubravka Gojkovic

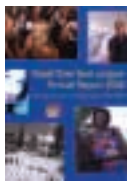


◀ Renée Jones joins the ROSL ARTS team as marketing assistant. An arts management graduate from Sydney, Australia, she has a background in music and performance studies

▶ The High Commissioner for Canada, HE Mr James Wright, was the guest of honour and speaker at the Central Council lunch in March. He is pictured, 2nd from left, with (l-r) Sir Roger Hervey, Mr Stanley Martin and Mr Robert Middleton







## Annual report highlights

### Increase in membership

Despite the gathering recession, ROSL had the highest number of members for 10 years in 2008, and the highest ever revenue from joining fees and subscriptions. The increase was 553 with 1,881 new members enrolled. Worldwide subscribing membership is now 17,557 and the total membership is 21,465. In the director-general's report, Robert Newell puts this down to the loyalty of members, the good value for money that membership represents, and aggressive marketing, which has brought ROSL to a wider audience.

### Financial stability

Simon Ward, the honorary treasurer, reports that ROSL 'had another successful financial year in 2008, recording a marginally increased surplus over 2007'. In view of the economic downturn 'we have budgeted accordingly and are keeping an even closer than normal eye on expenditure.' He added: 'The League is well placed to cope with the anticipated difficulties and I believe we can look forward to our centenary year in 2010 and the years ahead with confidence.'

### Noteworthy events

Due to the generosity of members it was possible to purchase a new Steinway model D concert piano and to continue support for the ROSL/Namibia educational project. ROSL ARTS presented 28 concerts in 12 days during the Edinburgh Fringe. Prizewinners' concerts were held in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, the UK and Zimbabwe. Events programme highlights included a ball for the younger members and a visit to Highgrove.

### Centenary preparations

The Chairman, Mr Stanley Martin, reports that preparations for the 2010 centenary were a permanent item on the Executive Committee and Central Council agendas, and that The Queen has agreed to attend a reception for members at St James's Palace.

*Copies of the report, which was designed and produced by Sarah Glossop, are available from the PR department, Over-Seas House, London.*

# Sound of laughter

Younger members started the year with a comedy night and curry buffet, says **Alexandra Debarge**

### January

The first event of the year kicked off with a delicious curry buffet hosted by the Oriental Club in their magnificent clubhouse, and it was said that it was "even better than last year". In fact, it was such a success that the fun continued into the evening with after parties ending in the early hours.

### March

The Oxford and Cambridge Club was filled with laughter as various comedians took to the stage for Comedy Night. Charlie Talbot was an excellent MC, raising the polite applause to a near standing ovation of cheering for each comedian.

'Portuguese' Philberto expertly abused the audience while explaining his frustration with Londoners' escalator etiquette. Nat Luurtsema regaled the audience with embarrassing public transport incidents, and Imran Yusuf performed the first rap the O&C has ever heard. The night was rounded off by the highly acclaimed Kent Valentine, who simply stole the show.

**Pictures: James Scott**



YOUNG NEW MEMBERS' NIGHT

## Forthcoming events

### Saturday 6 June

Swing Summer Ball at the Army & Navy Club

### Friday 24 July

Summer Garden Party at the Travellers Club

### Thursday 6 August

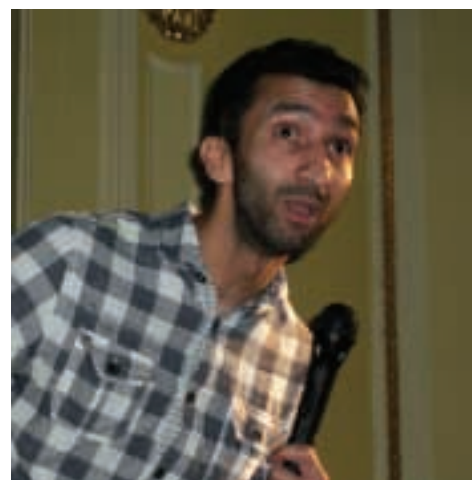
Club Crawl organised by the Farmers Club

### Sunday 23 August

Tennis Drinks/Barbecue at the Queen's Club

For more information on events, visit [www.inter-club.co.uk](http://www.inter-club.co.uk). To join ROSL's young members network, email [richard.white@axicom.com](mailto:richard.white@axicom.com).

**TOP COMEDY:** Younger members enjoyed funny man Imran Yusuf's humorous rap





# Prize for Thailand's top art talent

**Roger Willbourn** reports on ROSL's second Young Artist of Thailand competition

Each year, ROSL in Thailand arranges two major artistic contests for young people: the Young Musician and Young Artist competitions, which are open to students in Thailand between the ages of 14 and 20. The second Young Artist of the Year competition was even more successful than last year's inaugural event, with more than twice the number of entries (377 compared with 140). Entries were received from a wide variety of schools and colleges, and executed in many different mediums, including oil, watercolour, acrylic and charcoal.

With great difficulty, they were whittled down to 60 semi-finalists, whose works were displayed for a week in a prime location within Central Department Store in Bangkok's main shopping district. The panel of judges, led by George Baloghy, a distinguished professional artist from New Zealand, then selected 12 finalists, whose artworks were displayed in the

exhibition area of Zen department store during the gala reception in January, which coincided with the prize-giving ceremony.

Many of Thailand's well-known supporters of the arts, together with Privy Councillor HE Air Chief Marshal Kamthorn Sindhvananda and many Commonwealth and European ambassadors, enjoyed an excellent cocktail party, serenaded by musicians from both Harrow and Shrewsbury International Schools of Bangkok.

Towards the end of the evening, the overall winner was announced. Patcharaporn Arunsirichok from Silpakorn University International College was awarded the winner's trophy by ROSL Thailand's Royal vice-patron, Mom Ratchawong Sarisdiguna Kitiyakara. Miss Patcharaporn also receives a substantial cheque and two air tickets to London, where she will stay at Over-Seas House, London while

her painting, and those of the other finalists, are displayed there. The paintings will subsequently be displayed in the Edinburgh clubhouse, so that a large number of ROSL members will be able to see the high standard of artwork produced by young Thai students.

None of ROSL Thailand's artistic competitions could be staged without significant financial support from a range of Thai companies, and we owe them a great debt of gratitude. Pre-eminent among them has been Raimon Land – the major sponsor for this year's competition. I would like to say a big 'thank you' to Raimon Land, and to all our sponsors, on behalf of ROSL and the many aspiring young artists in Thailand.

**YOUNG TALENT:** All 12 finalists with, on either side of prizewinner Patcharaporn Arunsirichok, the CEO of Raimon Land and the ROSL Thailand vice-patron, who gave out the prizes, and the ROSL Thailand Council chairman, Mr Jim Napier (back row, 2nd from right)



**WINNING WORK:** Patcharaporn Arunsirichok with her winning painting, 'Residence'

# ROSL WORLD

## The latest from the global branches



**AWARDS AND ACTIVITIES:** Michael Bell presents the Eva Johnson Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 to University of Alberta Commonwealth Scholar, Ikenna Ijeke; Paul Surtees, Hong Kong Branch president, at the launch of the ROSL Riyadh Committee's activities on Commonwealth Day; (r-l) Lady Mary Holborow, Lord-Lieutenant of Cornwall, talks to the West Cornwall Branch chairman Mrs Betty Bell, Dr David Young and Mrs Cynthia Young at the branch's annual lunch in Penzance

### Australia

In **New South Wales**, ROSL members, along with members of the Australia-Britain Society, Royal Commonwealth Society and the English-Speaking Union, celebrated the 60th Commonwealth Day at a lunch at Parliament House, Sydney. The patron of the Commonwealth Day Council, Her Excellency the Governor of NSW Marie Bashir, was greeted by pipers and an honour guard from the Scots College.

Professor Bashir read The Queen's inspiring Commonwealth Day message. Her majesty's sentiments were shared by the distinguished guest speaker, Sir Ian Turbott, chairman of the Foundation for Young Australians, who spoke about his early life in the Colonial Office and appointments as The Queen's Representative in the Caribbean. An award was presented to 25-year-old Clary Castrission, the founder of the 40k Home Foundation, which builds schools for disadvantaged children in Bangalore, India.

The **Western Australia** Branch Committee sponsored its secretary Anna Dean's bike ride in support of the ROSL Namibia project. She cycled more than 500km over eight days down the southwest of the state in

March in a ride that attracts more than 1,500 participants. The speaker for the branch's February social evening was Yolanda Vurens Van Es from World Vision, who gave an interesting talk on the organisation's work in Africa, with particular reference to Zimbabwe and its political problems.

In March, the branch participated in the Commonwealth Day Multifaith Service at St George's Anglican Cathedral, organised by the Joint Commonwealth Societies Council. The service is based on the observance at Westminster Abbey, and the Queen's message was read by His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia, Ken Michael. The following day, the Annual Youth Rally was held at Government House in the presence of Dr Michael, beginning with the presentation of the Commonwealth flags by Scouts Australia. Entertainment was then provided by the Scotch College pipe band, Perth College/Guildford Grammar School concert bands, and the 80-strong Wembley Primary School choir.

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**Victoria:** Coral Strahan, +61 (0)3 9654 8338

**Western Australia:** Jeff Turner, +61 9381 2600

### Canada

Members in **Alberta** held their AGM at the Royal Glenora Club in Edmonton in March, preceded by a lunch buffet. After singing the National Anthem, they discussed plans for a project to celebrate the ROSL centenary in 2010. The treasurer, Michael Bell, presented the Eva Johnson Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 to the University of Alberta Commonwealth Scholar, Ikenna Ijeke, a fourth-year chemistry student from Nigeria. Branch president Cynthia Cordery read The Queen's message to the Commonwealth and proposed the loyal toast.

**Alberta:** Cynthia Cordery,

+1 780 477 0001, [ccordery@shaw.ca](mailto:ccordery@shaw.ca)

**British Columbia:** Pamela Ducommun,

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**Ontario:** Ishrani Jaikaran,

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### Hong Kong

In December, Hong Kong Branch members and guests gathered at the China Club for mulled wine and mince pies, and the branch arranged a boat trip for a group from the Hong Kong Federation of the Blind. In February, ROSL members joined with members of the New Zealand Association for an evening of New Zealand wines and cheeses, and in March,



branch members celebrated Commonwealth Day at a joint reception held at the Hong Kong Club.  
**Hong Kong:** Paul Surtees,  
[president@rosl.org.hk](mailto:president@rosl.org.hk), [www.rosl.org.hk](http://www.rosl.org.hk)

## New Zealand

ROSL NZ director Lyn Milne visited branches in Invercargill, Timaru, Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch, and was heartened to see many familiar faces and meet prospective members. Recommendations from existing members continue to act as a catalyst for new membership.  
**New Zealand:** Lyn Milne, [royalo-s@xtra.co.nz](mailto:royalo-s@xtra.co.nz),  
[www.roslnz.org.nz](http://www.roslnz.org.nz)

## Saudi Arabia

A new ROSL Committee (not a branch) has been created in Riyadh to promote ROSL membership and Commonwealth activities. In March, a gathering was held to mark Commonwealth Day in Saudi Arabia and to launch the ROSL Riyadh Committee. Hosted by the British Ambassador, Sir William Patey, the lunch was attended by ROSL Founder Committee members and the ambassadors of Commonwealth countries to Saudi Arabia. The British Ambassador read out The Queen's Commonwealth Day message and Paul Surtees, president of the Hong Kong Branch, who set up the Riyadh Committee, spoke on the importance of arranging gatherings at which the citizens from various Commonwealth countries could meet each other.

**Riyadh:** [rosliyahd@hotmail.com](mailto:rosliyahd@hotmail.com)

## United Kingdom

ROSL Vice Chairman, Sir Anthony Figgis, and Lady Figgis attended the **Bath** Branch spring lunch at the Bath and County Club to celebrate St George's Day.

In November, **Bournemouth and District** Branch members enjoyed their annual visit to Over-Seas House, London, where they enjoyed an excellent afternoon tea. The guest speaker at their Christmas lunch was Roderick Lakin, ROSL director of arts, who spoke on 'A History of Christmas Music'. He was accompanied by Polly Hynd, ROSL centenary and international events coordinator.

The February lunch at the Connaught Hotel was well attended, and Shirley Critchley gave an excellent talk about participating in a Col. Blashford-Snell expedition to South



**THANKSGIVING:** Commonwealth Day performance by the Kiribati Tungaru Association Dance Group at Westminster Abbey; Mr Stanley Martin presents retiring Taunton Branch treasurer Mr Ken Lowson with a ROSL watch at the branch's AGM

Patagonia. Fatima Vanicek, ROSL membership secretary, was a guest. In March, member Peggy Gibbs gave an illustrated talk on her holiday in Libya, followed by afternoon tea. This year, the Bournemouth and District Branch celebrates its 50th anniversary, and plans are already under way to ensure that it will be a memorable occasion.

Nicholas Herbert started off the **Cheltenham** Branch's year with an interesting talk on road travel and transport in Georgian Gloucestershire, followed in February by Arthur Ball's excellent illustrated talk on the flora and fauna of Ecuador. In March, Peter Iliffe gave a talk on 'Marks & Spencer: The First 100 Years', and on Commonwealth Day, 20 members attended a lunch at the Little Owl in Charlton Kings.

In January, professor Ruth Hawker gave a talk on life in occupied Guernsey to **Exeter** Branch members and in February, professor Robert Sellin gave a talk on 'Hydraulic Engineering in the Roman Empire'. The March talk on the Royal Yacht Britannia was given by William Summerville, a former household liaison officer on the yacht.

Exeter Branch member Susan Ward would like to draw attention to Budleigh Salterton's first ever Literary Festival in September – a weekend of talks, discussion and performances entitled 'Writing by the Sea'. Highlights include performances of *Table Talk: An Evening with Coleridge* by Dennis Harkness; a talk about Charles Dickens by his great great grandson, Gerald Dickens; a workshop led by Martin Sorrell on writing plays for radio; and a

presentation by author Michael Morpurgo.

The **Taunton** Branch's winter season of lunches has been well attended, and in February, members were entertained by Clifford White, who spoke about the filming of the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*. In March, Esther Omerod gave a fascinating introduction to the work and collections of the Somerset Records Office, the majority of which are accessible to the public. Somerset has the oldest county archive, dating back to 1617. The AGM in April was attended by the ROSL Chairman, Mr Stanley Martin.

Members of the **West Cornwall** Branch were delighted to welcome the Lord-Lieutenant of Cornwall, Lady Mary Holborow, to an annual lunch at the Queens Hotel in Penzance in March. Lady Mary spoke on how her responsibilities today had broadened from the original local military role, although links are maintained with volunteer reserve forces.

The **West Sussex** Branch held a well-attended lunch party in February, followed by the AGM and lunch in March, with guest of honour Robert Newell, ROSL director-general. The Bath, Taunton and Torbay branches continue to hold regular coffee mornings.

**Bath:** June Jessop, 01722 780518

**Bournemouth:** Marjorie Harvey, 01202 674857

**Cheltenham Branch:** Kathleen Northage, 01242 515540

**Exeter:** Brian Hawkes, 01395 442017

**Somerset area:** Sally Roberts, 01823 661148, [rosl@aldith.org](mailto:rosl@aldith.org)

**West Cornwall:** Ian Wood, 01736 333460

**West Sussex:** Marilyn Archbold, 01444 458853

## EDINBURGH

# The view from Scotland

**James Wilkie**

Scottish development officer



**COMMONWEALTH DAY:** Mr S N Srinivasan, Indian Consul General, with Mr Bob Gregor, Edinburgh Branch chairman

A series of interesting events marked Commonwealth Week 2009. Mr Gordon Arthur, director of communications for Glasgow 2014, gave a fascinating talk at the Commonwealth Day Lunch, which was also attended by the new Indian Consul General in Scotland, Mr S N Srinivasan. Mr Arthur outlined the scale of the Commonwealth Games project and what he hoped its social legacy would be. The new sports facilities and housing should boost the local community in the deprived east end of Glasgow. The week culminated in a special musical evening at Over-Seas House, featuring

a breathtaking performance by young South African pianist Ben Schoeman.

The 'Voice of the Tattoo', Mr Alasdair Hutton, gave an interesting talk at the annual Arts Lunch in April. The ROSL Chairman, Mr Stanley Martin, attended the Edinburgh AGM and reception, and the author Mr Lorn Macintyre read from his recent work at the May Arts Lunch. We now look forward to the Scottish Members' Dinner, at which the guest speaker will be Mr Robin Harper MSP, and the final Arts Lunch of the season, when we will welcome Mr Patrick Cadell, former Keeper of the Records in Scotland.

The Glasgow Branch concluded their season with a joint event attended by Edinburgh members. The trip incorporated visits to the Rennie Mackintosh Church at Queen's Cross and New Kilpatrick Parish Church in Bearsden. The Scottish members' annual London visit takes place from 31 July to 3 August.

At Over-Seas House, Edinburgh, all the bathrooms have now been redecorated and re-tiled, and the manager, Mr Alan Chalmers, has created a shower facility for travelling members, which can be booked along with full breakfast if required (£15, including breakfast).

## Books

Reviews of recent works by ROSL members

### 'Jack Tar: Life in Nelson's Navy'

**Roy and Lesley Adkins**

*Little, Brown, 2008*

ISBN: 9781408700549 (hardcover), £20

Logbooks, journals and memoirs of naval officers have provided historians with a comprehensive account of life on the decks in the later 18th- and early 19th-century, but Roy and Lesley Adkins take us below the decks. Using unpublished diaries, letters and other manuscripts, they give us a taste of what life was truly like for the men who spent many years at sea as little more than legalised slaves. Labouring on deck, fierce storms, horrific accidents and disease: life on board a warship was harsh and brutal. Of the 92,386 British sailors lost during the Napoleonic wars, only 7% were killed by the enemy. As well as the sailors, there were often women on board – not just wives, but also prostitutes to relieve the sailors and deter them from 'unclean acts' of homosexuality. *Jack Tar* leaves nothing to the imagination, giving



us a very readable narrative history of the gruesome, terrible but also fascinating world of Nelson's navy.

### 'Villa Fleurie'

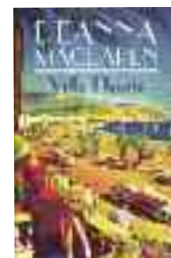
**Deanna Maclaren**

*Peter Owen Ltd, 2008*

ISBN: 9780720613162 (paperback), £8.95

It's 1959 and newly-widowed Ilona is surrounded by her friends at the Villa Fleurie in Cannes – or so she thinks. Her old school friend Paula, secretary Lizzie, handsome Kit and married couple Colin and Joleen, who are staying nearby on their yacht, join Ilona for idle days basking in the sun. But beneath the friendly facade, each has their own agenda. The tangled web of schemes built around sex and money culminates in a farcical botched abduction, which reveals that no one is quite what they seem. Deanna Maclaren writes simply, moving the story along at a pace to make *Villa Fleurie* an ideal holiday read.

**Reviews by Samantha Whitaker**





## DISCOVERING LONDON

# Secrets of a wet day out

The Wetland Centre provides a beautiful haven for the capital's wildlife, finds **Samantha Whitaker**

In the heart of London, migrating birds have already begun checking in for their summer holiday at the London Wetland Centre. Located just 25 minutes from central London in Barnes, the beautiful 105-acre wildlife reserve and visitor attraction has been identified as the best urban site in Europe to watch wetland wildlife.

The project was the dream of Sir Peter Scott, described as conservation's 'patron saint' by Sir David Attenborough OM. His vision was to create a wild area for native birds, as the River Thames, which runs adjacent to it, acts as a 'flyway' for migrating birds. Today, the focus has shifted, and as well as attracting more than 180 bird species a year, the centre is home to 30 natural wetland plant communities, and hundreds of insects and mammals, including 19 species of dragonfly and seven species of bat.

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) runs the centre with the aim of conserving the area and its wildlife, and bringing people closer to the wildlife. It attracts around 220,000 visitors a year, including more than 24,000 children from

London schools. For a modest entrance fee, visitors can wander around and come face-to-face with ducks, geese and swans from around the world, including white-faced whistling ducks from South America. An adventure area with a water vole tunnel, duck race exhibit and zip line that follows the migration route of the Bewick's Swan separates the serious bird watchers from the lively children.

With so many areas and so much to see, it is difficult to know where to begin. As I approach, the hum of traffic is replaced by a symphony of tweets, twitters and quacks, giving the sensation that I have stepped out of London and into the countryside. A mallard glides across my path, skimming in to land in a pond. At the visitor centre, there is a glass viewing observatory and an interactive discovery centre with touch-screens and water games, and in the Pond Zone, a guide explains what lies beneath the calm waters. From the Peacock Tower, I climb three stories to view the entire site: there is an area of muddy reed beds, a large main lake, and a grazing marsh, which is artificially flooded in winter and then grazed by cows and sheep to create the right environment for snipe, redshank and lapwing.

Some of the most beautiful areas of the centre are linked by boardwalks and meandering paths, so visitors can stroll through wetland meadows, past smaller ponds, and explore five other bird hides. This walk varies greatly as the seasons change, with singing reed warblers, swallows and carpets of wildflowers in the summer; and thousands of ducks that have migrated from Russia and Siberia in the winter.

The centre offers a varied events programme, including free guided walks (twice a day) and hands-on activities for children and families. And if you need a rest after all that,



© BERKELEY HOMES



© SAMANTHA WHITAKER

there is a water's edge restaurant with tables inside and out. This year, the centre will be hosting the Love London Recycled Sculpture Show (from 4 June), as part of the Love London Green Festival. Created from everyday waste, the innovative sculptures will be placed all over the site, and there are already two frogs on show, made from crushed CDs and glass, a car mudguard and a satellite dish.

## VISITOR INFORMATION

The London Wetland Centre at Queen Elizabeth's Walk, Barnes, SW13 is open seven days a week. For opening times and prices see [www.wwt.org.uk](http://www.wwt.org.uk) or call 020 8409 4400. Train to Barnes or Tube to Hammersmith then 33, 72 or 209 bus or 283 'duck bus'.

WWT membership provides free entry to all nine wetland centres in the UK and helps to support the conservation work of the charity.



© SAMANTHA WHITAKER

**BREATH OF FRESH AIR:** It is easy for visitors to find a quiet spot in the 105-acre reserve

## GAVIN HENDERSON'S LONDON



### Where do you live?

In Paddington, in what's like a little village, between Sussex Gardens and Praed Street. It's also very international. There is a big Arab community – some call it 'Little Lebanon'.

### Which is your favourite venue?

I love concerts in unusual places, such as lunchtime concerts in churches, but I would vote for the Wigmore Hall, because of the acoustics, the integrity of the programming and the general ambience there. There's an intimacy about it, like being in a great drawing room. I gave my first concert there with my brass ensemble [in 1968].

### How do you relax in London?

I play snooker. I play a curious form called Savile Snooker, which is played at the Savile Club. That's where I probably go to relax most. I am also a member of the Garrick Club, which is a bit more formal.

### What advice would you give someone coming to London for the first time?

Walk as much as you can and explore everything that is free, especially the free museums and galleries – they are one of the great joys of being in London. People don't realise that there are a lot of free concerts. I've spent the past 20 years working in higher education – in Trinity College and the Central School, which put out incredible performances, usually for nothing.

**TRUE COLOURS:** The mix of formal gardens and wildlife at Regent's Park makes it one of London's most attractive green spaces



© GILES BARNARD

### Do you have a favourite park?

Regent's Park. It is beautifully laid-out, and I like the mixture of formal gardens and wildlife. I also like that it's near to the zoo and the canal.

### Where do you shop for clothes?

Jermyn Street. A big weakness of mine is buying shirts. I tend to go to Tricker's for shoes – but only if there's a sale on! – and Favourbrook for waistcoats and ties. Another area that I love to nose around is the Charing Cross Road, which has a range of specialist bookshops, including David Drummond at Pleasures of Past Times.

### Where do you like to eat?

I've got a great weakness for the kedgeriee in the ROSL buttery, but if I had a favourite restaurant it would be J Sheekey. My local Indian restaurant, the Indian Connoisseur, is also one of my favourites because it does tandoori lobster.

### Can you recommend any current or upcoming exhibitions?

Until 2 August, Bobby Baker's *Diary Drawings* is at the Wellcome Collection. I have worked with Bobby Baker and she is a rather eccentric person. These drawings are based on her coming out of a nervous breakdown, and there is something quite compelling about that. Also, the Dulwich Picture Gallery is showing the work of Antoni Malinowski [until 27 September].

### You were responsible for moving Trinity College from Central London to Greenwich. Do you like southeast London?

There are a lot of people who are rather snobbish about South London, but I am a devotee. I particularly like the area around Waterloo. In fact, I'm looking for a painting studio there. Originally, I was a sculptor and painter, and I'm feeling a real pull to go back to that.

**Honorary member Gavin Henderson CBE is principal of the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. He is artistic director of the Dartington International Summer School, and chair of the ROSL ARTS Music Competition panel of judges. Interview by Samantha Whitaker.**

## LONDON

# What's on...

## Summer exhibition

### Royal Academy

*Monday 8 June – Sunday 16 August*

The Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition is the largest open submission contemporary art exhibition in the world, drawing together a wide range of new work by both established and unknown living artists. It includes around 1,200 works, the majority of which are for sale.

**Tickets: £5–£8.50. Contact: 0844 209 1919 or [www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk).**

## Tom Tom Crew

### Southbank

*Friday 19 June – Sunday 19 July*

Following sell-out seasons at the Sydney Opera House and Edinburgh Festival, the Tom Tom Crew arrives in London with its super-charged collision of Asian-inspired drumming, extreme circus acrobatics and contemporary music.

**Tickets: £10–£22. Contact: 0871 663 2500 or [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk).**



## New World: A Life of Thomas Paine

### Shakespeare's Globe Theatre

*Saturday 29 August – Friday 9 October*

The moving story of the life of Thomas Paine, the author of *The Rights of Man*, featuring songs, music and the carnival spirit of a world turned upside down.

**Tickets: £15–£33. Contact: 020 7401 9919 or [www.shakespeares-globe.org](http://www.shakespeares-globe.org).**



## The best things in London are free

As the world tightens its purse strings, the capital is cheaper than ever. **Judith Steiner** finds out how you can make savings

Confidence is everything in an economic downturn, but the Governor of the Bank of England doesn't seem to know that. From his recent utterances, you would think that there were so few people spending money on the streets of London that you could fire a cannon ball down Bond Street without hurting a soul. Not a bit of it. The capital is packed with shoppers, revellers and small spenders.

For the first time in almost a decade, London is cheaper than New York for everything from hotels to theatre, museums and galleries. Sloughing off its rip-off reputation, the capital has slithered down the cost-of-living table from 3rd to 27th place in the past few months. This is very good news for tourists from abroad, but also from other parts of the UK.

London's restaurants have acquired a reputation of being preposterously pricey. In some of the poshest places, one could expect to pay as much as £100 a head, if not more (which is one of the reasons the dining room at Overseas House is such a great deal). Now, London's papers run come-ons from restaurants offering all kinds of deals. Try [www.lastminute.com](http://www.lastminute.com) for good value offers of lunches and dinners in great restaurants for £25 or less.

Whistle 'The Best Things in Life are Free' as you walk along Piccadilly and you will, by and large, find that they are. You have to pay to get into exhibitions, but not the magnificent

**ART BEAT:** Visitors admire the Courtauld Gallery's permanent collection



© GEOFF CRAWFORD



**PUB DRAMA:** At the King's Head, theatre-goers can have a drink in the shabby-chic pub before heading to the back-room for a top-quality performance

building of the Royal Academy, Burlington House. Stop and admire Sir Christopher Wren's 1684 church, St James's Piccadilly, and its Grinling Gibbons altarpiece. The National Portrait Gallery, National Gallery and British Museum nearby, as well as the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington and Imperial War Museum in Lambeth, are not only free but also thriving. Visits have swollen by about 15% since the credit crunch began.

For special exhibitions at major galleries you can pay anything from £5–£15. However, if you join the Art Fund ([www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org) or 0870 8482003) you pay half at many major exhibitions and gain free entry to 16 London galleries and museums. With an Art Fund card for two people, you would recoup the joining fee of £40.50 and make a saving of nearly £10 if you only visited the Courtauld Gallery (normal price £5); Dulwich Picture Gallery (£5); Richard Long at Tate Britain (ends 6 September, £7.80); Shah Abbas at the British Museum (ends June 14, £11) and 'Baroque 1620-1800' at the V&A (ends July 19, £11).

The card offers a greater saving than the concessionary rate, and if you are a senior citizen you may get a further reduction. Crunch the numbers and count the savings. The card entitles you to reduced price or free entry to museums, galleries and historic houses up and down the country – and there are also single (£31.50) and family (£45) membership options.

If you can't bear the idea of a visit to London without going to the theatre, look at the off-West End listings and the Fringe. Much of the best theatre in London is not in the West End, yet you would be hard pressed to spend more than £20 for the best seats at the Orange Tree in Richmond, the Arcola in Hackney, or the

King's Head in Islington. Tickets at the Almeida and the Donmar Warehouse go up to £30 but start at £6 and £13 respectively, and both are world famous for the quality of their productions. Fringe Theatre is the name given to pub theatres, church theatres, any little space where plays can be staged – including a former mortuary at The New End in Hampstead. You are unlikely to pay more than a tenner for high quality fare.

The big new productions in the West End are Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* at Theatre Royal Haymarket (£15–£47.50), starring Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellen, *Calendar Girls* at Noel Coward Theatre (£27–£55), and the National Theatre's amazing *War Horse* (£15–£47.50). Between them, they had taken £5 million in advanced ticket sales before they even opened. What recession! This is high by normal standards.

If those prices sound steep, the National Theatre and Theatre Royal, among others, release a few £10 tickets on the day of the performance. But for real bargains, visit the kiosk in Leicester Square that sells tickets at reduced prices on the day, or try [www.timeout.com/offers](http://www.timeout.com/offers), which promises free tickets for some of London's best plays.

Of course, free is best of all. London always offers hundreds of free events; it is simply a matter of finding them. The best way is a listings magazine, and the pick of those for London is *Time Out*. All free events, galleries and museums are flagged with a red 'Free'. In the week I write, there are 467 'Frees' listed.

Harden's *London for Free* guide (£5.99) has the best layout of any guide I have seen. Dividing London into five parts, it advises alphabetically on indoor/outdoor and cultural/intellectual/exercise – in fact, it covers every free activity that exists.

IN THE UK

# Saving your legacy

**Christopher McNeill** offers his tips on how to avoid leaving loved ones with a huge inheritance tax bill



Now that the nil rate band (NRB) for paying inheritance tax (IHT) has increased to £325,000, and it produces less than 1% of annual revenue, it can no longer be viewed as a wealth tax. But is it still a voluntary tax? And how can you avoid leaving your loved ones with a huge tax bill?

Start with simple lifetime giving. The main limitations are to survive the gift by seven years and not to reserve a benefit for yourself. These rules are widely known, but people often overlook the fact that, if you have paid all income tax due, you can also use any income that you do not need to establish a

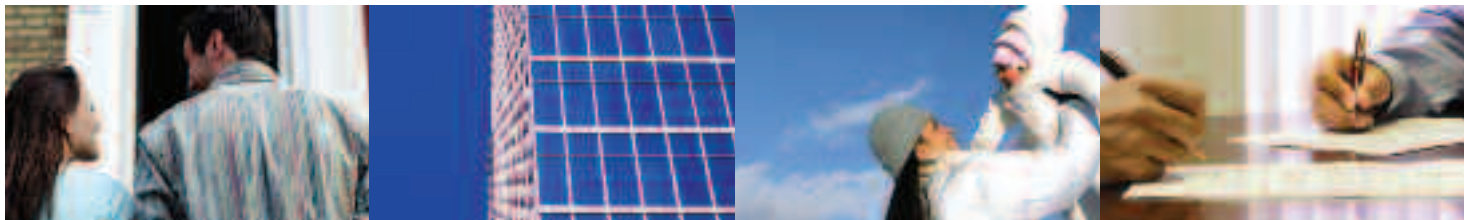
regular pattern of giving that is not subject to IHT. Taken with the annual exempt capital amount of £3,000, many married couples can easily give £120,000 over a 10-year period without impairing their lifestyle or producing unexpected tax bills. Unlike capital gifts, there is no claw-back.

Jointly occupied property also offers substantial exemptions. A child living with you and sharing the household expenses can be given, say, 95% of the house value, thus allowing (but not compelling) them to pay up to 95% of the expenses. The seven-year rule still applies, but a child can sometimes 'occupy' a

house just by having their possessions there.

Trusts enable you to give away up to £325,000 every 10 years without charge, while a discretionary trust allows you to postpone the payment of capital gains tax on chargeable assets. As to the estate on death, a properly drawn will that makes proper use of NRB trusts, or of the transferrable NRB, is essential. In life or in death, gifts to charity continue to be exempt without limit.

**Christopher McNeill is a solicitor at Anthony Gold, and a specialist in wills, trusts, tax and probate.**



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# Mid-week wonders

As long-weekends are replaced by nano-breaks, **Polly Hynd** checks out three hotels that have everything you could want for a one-night trip

The era of the long weekend is over. The dawn of the 'nano-break' has arrived. British holidaymakers are shrugging off the traditional two-night stay in favour of a one-night getaway. Not only is this new breed of mini-break kind on the wallet, it has also made people realise that they don't need to venture far from home to uncover the delights that the UK has to offer.

When it comes to such breaks, where you stay is paramount. The hotel should have a touch of luxury, comfort and homeliness; local attractions must be on the doorstep; and a decent restaurant in or next door to the hotel is essential.

Tucked away in a peaceful Cotswold village, just two hours from London, The New Inn in Gloucestershire offers sumptuously decorated bedrooms, each with its own style and picture-postcard views. The newly refurbished bar is frequented by guests and locals alike, and the adjoining restaurant offers intimate yet elegant dining. The waiters are attentive and charming, and the comforting traditional cuisine is presented with flair. The surrounding area provides a plethora of breathtaking walks along the River Coln, and to the nearby village of Bibury. Walking boots are strongly recommended!

Bath's Queensberry Hotel is set in a beautiful Georgian townhouse, centrally yet discreetly located on a quiet side street a stone's throw from The Assembly Rooms. The sleek, understated bedrooms

are fitted with every modern convenience while subtly reflecting their Georgian surroundings.

Within walking distance of the famous Thermae Spa, Bath Abbey and a wide selection of shops, the Queensberry provides everything a visitor might need while visiting the historic city of Bath. A spacious drawing room provides a peaceful space where guests can relax with a cup of tea or coffee and a newspaper, and the hotel's famous Olive Tree Restaurant offers some of the finest modern British cuisine in the West Country. Using locally-sourced produce of the best quality, head chef Marc Salmon and his team create exquisite dishes, which are complemented by the excellent wine list.

Those in search of quirky opulence need look no further than The Bath Arms. Situated in the pretty village of Horningsham on the Longleat Estate, the hotel is within walking distance of the 7th Marquess of Bath's residence, where visitors can enjoy wonderful guided tours. Diners can sample delicious, locally-produced food, including venison reared on the estate. The Hip Bath treatment rooms offer a selection of soothing massages and beauty treatments – but be sure to book ahead.

*The New Inn, Coln St Aldwyns, Cirencester; 01285 750651; [www.new-inn.co.uk](http://www.new-inn.co.uk)*

*The Queensberry Hotel, Russel Street, Bath; 01225 447928; [www.thequeensberry.co.uk](http://www.thequeensberry.co.uk)*

*The Bath Arms at Longleat, The Longleat Estate, Horningsham, Warminster; 01985 844308; [www.batharms.co.uk](http://www.batharms.co.uk)*

## MEMBERS' OFFER

During 2009, ROSL members staying at the New Inn will be offered a free bottle of Marquis de Sales red wine with dinner for two.



**RURAL CHARM:** The New Inn in the Cotswolds is both intimate and elegant



## EDINBURGH

# Arts in the city

**James Wilkie** looks at what's on in Edinburgh

Scottish Opera presents *Così fan tutte* (19, 21, 25 & 27 June) and *Manon* (20, 24 & 26 June) at the Festival Theatre, with free educational events attached to the performances. Guitarist Ry Cooder later appears at the same venue with Nick Lowe, Flaco Jimenez and guests (9 & 10 July).

Students from the Scottish Centre for Professional Dance Training, which is based at Edinburgh's Telford College, will perform their end-of-year production, *Cross Currents 09*, at the King's Theatre (20 June, pictured). There is an evening of *Abba Mania* at the Edinburgh

Playhouse (25 June), followed by a set from the legendary US group Steely Dan (28 June). The musical *Singin' in the Rain* can also be seen there this summer (7–11 July).

In the visual arts, the blockbuster *Turner and Italy* completes its run at the National Gallery on 7 June, while *Artist Rooms* at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art features the work of Damien Hirst, Andy Warhol, Alex Katz and others until 8 November. *The Conversation Piece: Scenes of Fashionable Life* runs at the Queen's Gallery until 20 September.



*The Edinburgh Playhouse:* [www.edinburghplayhouse.org.uk](http://www.edinburghplayhouse.org.uk); 0844 8471660

*Festival Theatre and King's Theatre:* [www.eft.co.uk](http://www.eft.co.uk); 0131 5296000

*National Gallery Complex and Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art:* [www.nationalgalleries.org](http://www.nationalgalleries.org); 0131 6246200

*The Queen's Gallery, Palace of Holyroodhouse:* [www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk); 0131 5565100

# All the fun of the Festival

**James Wilkie's** recommendations for this year's Edinburgh International Festival

The 18-century Scottish Enlightenment, when Edinburgh was home to intellectuals and philosophers such as David Hume and Adam Smith, is the inspiration for this year's Edinburgh International Festival. Director Jonathan Mills has resisted the temptation to place the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns at the centre of things, instead choosing Handel's anti-Jacobite work *Judas Maccabeus* for this year's opening concert.

"I wanted to say that history isn't some static, sterile idea," he explains. "Scotland is a very diverse, pluralistic, complex society and I felt that other things [than Burns] wouldn't be dealt with at all if I didn't pick them up."

New works by the Scottish choreographer Michael Clark and Scottish Ballet have been chosen for the festival. But the most ambitious event will be a huge production of *Faust* at Lowland Hall in Ingliston, with 110 performers involved in the 'pyrotechnical' and 'orgiastic' production. According to Mills, it is "a must-not-miss tour-de-force, theatrically".

Other works include a multilingual opera on

the depopulation of the island of St Kilda in 1930, and the world premiere of a new festival-funded play about Jane Horne, who in 1727, at the height of the Enlightenment, became the last witch to be burned in Scotland.

The world's largest arts festival has also announced a 20% increase in funding from corporate and private donors, despite the impact of the financial crisis on the city's banking sector. And the Festival Fireworks and National Gallery events are expected to take place as usual, regardless of the ongoing tram work in Princes Street.

Other highlights include a performance of Wagner's *Die Fliegende Holländer*; singer Sir Willard White performing with Eugene Asti on the piano; works by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and James MacMillan performed by the RSNO; and J S Bach's *Actus Tragicus*, performed as part of the Bach at Greyfriars series.

At the King's Theatre, Dublin's Gate Theatre Company will present three masterworks by the Irish playwright Brian Friel: *Faith Healer*, *The*



**SPECTACULAR PYROTECHNICS:** National Theatre's *Faust* at Lowland Hall

*Yalta Game* and *Afterplay*. The Enlightenment series of art exhibitions includes acclaimed British artist Tacita Dean's film *Sisters*, an installation created by Lee Mingwei especially for the festival, and a new work by Nathan Coley at the Dean Gallery. And we must not forget the ROSL programme of chamber music at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh (10–22 August), which last year garnered rave reviews.

## EDINBURGH

# What's on...

## June–September

### June

#### Bridge

*Friday 5 June, 12.30 for 1pm*

One-course lunch with sherry and guest day. Tickets: £9.

#### Scottish members' dinner

*Friday 12 June, 7 for 7.30pm*

Talk by Mr Robin Harper MSP on 'The New Parliamentary Experience' with reception drink, three-course dinner, wine and coffee. Tickets: £25.

#### Coffee morning

*Saturday 13 June, 10.30am*

With speaker Mr Temple Melville from the Gurkha Trust.

#### Arts lunch

*Wednesday 24 June, 12noon for 12.30pm*

Two-course lunch, plus coffee and a glass of wine, with speaker Mr Patrick Cadell, former Keeper of the Records of Scotland, who will talk on 'Archives as National Symbol'. Tickets: £16.50; members £14.50.

### July

#### Music with a View

*Wednesday 1 July, 6.30pm*

Friends of ROSL ARTS Gala Opera Evening, cocktail reception and dinner, with students of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and an exhibition of landscape paintings by Scottish artist Leo du



**FESTIVAL FINALE:** View the fireworks from the clubhouse roof

Feu. Tickets: £30 (priority booking for Friends of ROSL ARTS until 31 May).

#### Scottish members' London visit

*Friday 31 July–Monday 3 August*

Visit various London attractions, watch theatre productions and enjoy the capital's green spaces, with a special bedroom and dinner package at the London clubhouse. To attend, give your name and telephone number to the Edinburgh reception on 0131 225 1501.

### August

#### ROSL at the Edinburgh International Festival Fringe 2009

*Monday 10–Saturday 22 August, 9.30am, 2.30pm, 4pm and 10.30pm*

Performances by ROSL prizewinners and scholarship winners from around the Commonwealth. A leaflet will be available in July from ROSL ARTS and at the Edinburgh clubhouse.

### September

#### Edinburgh Festival fireworks

*Sunday 6 September*

Roof access to view fireworks, cocktail on arrival, and five-course dinner with wine, coffee and malt whisky. Please note the amended date from the printed programme. Tickets: £90.



**DRAMATIC ART:** Leo du Feu's *Drama of the Sea* (left) will be at the clubhouse; while the National Theatre may be on the London visit itinerary



# ROSL ARTS

**Renée Jones** previews the summer season events

## Music events

### Over-Seas House Princess Alexandra Hall

#### Sundays at 3

*Frank Wibaut – piano*  
*Sunday 14 June, 3pm*

Frank Wibaut was ROSL's 1968 Annual Music Competition Gold Medallist. He now plays recitals, concertos and chamber music in more than 30 countries and has recorded for music labels such as EMI and Chandos. Formerly a professor of piano at the Royal College and Royal Academy of Music, Frank has served on the panel of many major competitions, including the ROSL Annual Music Competition. In this concert, he performs works by Scarlatti, Chopin, Britten and Debussy.

**Tickets: £10; ROSL members and concessions £9; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8.**  
**Ticket includes tea and scones.**



**WIGMORE HALL:** The 2008 ensemble prizewinners, The Brodowski Quartet, will perform with flautist Laura Lucas in June

#### Sundays at 3

*Meng Yan Pan and Alexey Chernov – piano*  
*Sunday 5 July, 3pm*

In 2008, ROSL ARTS raised more than £70,000 to purchase a new Steinway Model D piano. To select a suitable instrument for Princess Alexandra Hall, the ROSL director of arts, Roderick Lakin, was assisted by three distinguished pianists: Simon Lepper, Frank Wibaut and Vanessa Latache. Vanessa is head of keyboard studies at the Royal College of Music (RCM) and a former ROSL prizewinner. For this concert, she has chosen Meng Yang Pan and Alexey Chernov, also from the RCM, to give an hour-long recital.

**Tickets: £10; ROSL members and concessions £9; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8.**  
**Ticket includes tea and scones.**

### Wigmore Hall

#### ROSL Prizewinners Concert

*Monday 29 June, 7.30pm*

This concert forms part of the prestigious Monday Platform series at London's premiere chamber music venue, the Wigmore Hall. The 2008 ROSL Gold Medallist, flautist Laura Lucas, and the prizewinning ensemble, the Brodowski Quartet, will perform works by Mozart, Mendelssohn, Poulenc, Telemann and others.

**Tickets: £10. Available from ROSL ARTS only.**  
**Ticket includes wine, served after the concert.**



**A GRAND CHOICE:** Pianists Frank Wibaut, Vanessa Letarche and Simon Lepper, and director of ARTS Roderick Lakin with the new piano

## EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE

**Over-Seas House,  
Edinburgh, 10–22 August**



**ACCLAIM:** The Solstice Quartet will perform at the Edinburgh clubhouse

In August, ROSL ARTS celebrates the tenth anniversary of its critically acclaimed sell-out series on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. With more than 30 concerts in 10 days, including programmes such as the popular Bach for Breakfast and Mozart at Teatime, the series is fast becoming a priority for discerning festival goers.

**Tickets: reduced to £9 for ROSL members; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8.**  
**Brochures with full programme details available to download from [www.roslarts.org.uk](http://www.roslarts.org.uk), or from Over-Seas House, Edinburgh from July.**



## Visual arts

### Over-Seas House, London

#### Jacob Carter: 'Wilderness'

*Wednesday 1 July – Tuesday 1 September*

Jacob Carter's 'Wilderness Series' is a collection of photographs taken while he was on a ROSL ARTS scholarship in remote parts of Canada. The photos highlight the sometimes uneasy relationship between man and nature, as attempts are made to tame the land. The photographs were created using film that expired in the 1970s and was digitally restored.



**WILD AND FREE:** Entitled 'Wilderness', the collection of photographs taken by ROSL ARTS scholar Jacob Carter in remote parts of Canada will be on display at the London clubhouse in July and August

## Book events

### Over-Seas House, London

#### Mad Dogs and Englishmen: The High Noon of the British Empire 1850-1945

*Wednesday 10 June, 7pm*

Ashley Jackson's *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* is a visually arresting and richly informative tour of the British Empire at its height, when its boundaries stretched from Cairo to Cape Town and from Winnipeg to Wagga-Wagga. The empire 'on which the sun never sets' embraced peoples as diverse as the Fulani horsemen, Gulf sheikhs and Canadian hunters. This event, hosted by Dr Jackson, promises to be an insightful exploration of the largest imperium in world history.

**Tickets: £5; ROSL members and concessions £4.50; Friends of ROSL ARTS £4. Ticket includes wine, served afterwards.**

#### Caine Prize for African Writing

*Friday 3 July, 7pm*

ROSL once again hosts readings by the six shortlisted authors nominated for the 2008 Caine Prize, an annual literary award for short stories by an African author. The evening will be chaired by Mr Nick Elam, administrator of the Caine Prize, which is named after Sir Michael Caine, former chairman of Booker. The prize, which has been awarded since 2000, is for a short story, published in English, that reflects the authors' African cultural background. It is known for offering a unique platform for some of the best new literary voices coming out of Africa.

**Tickets: £5; ROSL members and concessions £4.50; Friends of ROSL ARTS £4. Ticket includes wine, served after the readings.**

## FRIENDS OF ROSL ARTS CHAMPAGNE SUMMER GARDEN PARTIES

As a thank you for the generous support Friends of ROSL ARTS have provided over the last year, ROSL ARTS is once again hosting two complimentary summer soirées, exclusive to Friends, on Wednesday 22 July and Wednesday 2 September.\* A champagne reception in the garden with live music will be followed by an hour-long concert of familiar and less familiar musical delights in Princess Alexandra Hall, given by international ROSL prizewinners. Afterwards, there will be a private view of the latest exhibition at Over-Seas House, with New World wines and sweet pastries. Please note that this event is exclusive to Friends of ROSL ARTS, with one ticket per member. Now is the time to join!



Friends of ROSL ARTS was launched in 1999 to encourage new supporters, develop new audiences, and retain and foster the active involvement of our existing sponsors and donors. In 2008, all proceeds from Friends of ROSL ARTS went towards the purchase of a new concert piano for Princess Alexandra Hall. Income generated in 2009 will go towards assisting young Commonwealth musicians through the ROSL Annual Music Competition.

Please help us to invest in future generations of artists, musicians and writers by becoming a Friend of ROSL ARTS. Annual membership is only £30 for ROSL members (£35 for non ROSL members), and benefits include a free ROSL CD, regular newsletters and invitations, and discounts on ROSL CDs, books at literary events and artwork. To become a Friend of ROSL ARTS, contact 020 7408 0214, ext 324 or [culture@rosl.org.uk](mailto:culture@rosl.org.uk).

*\*Friends are invited to choose one of these two dates.*



#### WRITING HISTORY:

Shortlisted writers for the 2008 Caine Prize for African Literature: (l-r) Stanley Onjezani (Kenani) (Malawi), Gill Schierhout (South Africa), Uzor Maxim (Nigeria), Henrietta Rose-Innes (South Africa) and Mohammed Naseehu Ali (Ghana)

# Members' events

## June-August

### June

#### Lord's visit

*Wednesday 24 June, 2.30pm, £15, G*

Experience the exceptional atmosphere at Lord's – 'the home of cricket' – on an expert guided tour. Go behind the scenes at MCC's historic ground and see many of the famous sights in world cricket.

#### Historic Fulham

*Tuesday 30 June, 11am, £15, G*

The last in a long line of London bishops to live in this West London suburb left in 1973. Visit his home, with its 17th-century herb garden and riverside park, as well as Victorian almshouses and the home of London's oldest football club.

### July

#### Lambeth Palace

*Thursday 2 July, 2pm, £12, B, R*  
Lambeth Palace is the official

London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Due to the limited amount of spaces, there is a maximum of one ticket per member.

#### Tea at the House of Lords

*Tuesday 7 July, 3.30pm, £35, G*

Enjoy a delicious afternoon tea at the House of Lords hosted by ROSL President Lord Luce. A guided tour of the Houses of Parliament is included.

#### Royal British Legion Poppy Factory

*Monday 20 July, 1.30pm, £10, G*

See the poppies and wreaths being made and learn about the history of the factory on this fantastic visit. Tea and biscuits will be served on arrival. (Part of your payment will be donated to the RBL Factory.)

#### Little Venice

*Wednesday 29 July, 11am, £15, G*

Discover a secret world of canals, stucco villas, attractive



**ROYAL QUARTERS:** Marble Hill House by night (above) and the majestic Hampton Court Palace (top)

churches and splendid Victorian pubs on this pretty walk. Hear about the area's famous past inhabitants, from Robert Browning and Lillie Langtry to Richard Branson and Joan Collins.

### August

#### Hampton Court Palace

*Monday 3 August, 1.30pm, £20, G*

Enjoy a wonderful guided tour of Hampton Court and its magnificent gardens, including the famous hedge maze. Learn about the Tudor palace, developed by Cardinal Wolsey and later by Henry VIII, and the baroque palace built by William III and Mary II.

#### Chelsea Physic Garden

*Thursday 6 August, 2pm, £14, G*

Explore this 'secret garden' – a centre of learning, beauty and calmness – on this guided tour. Situated in the heart of London and founded in 1673 by the Worshipful Society of

Apothecaries, it continues to be the base for research into the properties, origins and conservation of more than 5,000 species.

#### Marble Hill House

*Thursday 27 August, 11am, £14, G*

Explore the charming 18th-century Palladian villa, built for Henrietta Howard, mistress of King George II. The guided tour will provide a fascinating insight into the life of Mrs Howard and her entourage. Tea and biscuits will be served on arrival.

#### Chairman's Lunch

*Wednesday 28 October, 12.30pm, £50, G*

Drinks will be served before a three-course lunch at Over-Seas House, London. Hosted by ROSL Chairman, Stanley Martin, with guest of honour and speaker Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, the retiring Archbishop of Westminster.

## Application form opposite

These codes identify ticket availability:

**M** Members only

**G** Tickets available for members and their guests

**R** Restricted number of tickets available

**B** Tickets to be allocated by ballot. Payment for balloted tickets is not needed until tickets are allocated. Maximum two tickets per member. Only successful applicants will be notified.

*Please also note: We do not acknowledge receipt of applications, but tickets are always sent out in advance. Refunds can only be given if cancellations are made at least 15 working days in advance. We do not provide refunds for tickets costing less than £5. Tickets for all events are limited and members should apply early to avoid disappointment. Tickets may be restricted to two per member for popular events. Members will be sent tickets seven days prior to each particular event.*

# Food and drink

## Garden

Enjoy the al fresco lunch menu and refreshing Pimms in the garden this summer. The garden is open to members from Monday 25 May through to early September. Two-course menu: £16.95; three-course menu: £22.75. To make a booking for the garden, call the ROSL bar on 020 7408 0214 ext 332. Alternatively, to make a booking in the air-conditioned ROSL restaurant, use ext 220.

## Weddings

ROSL also offers the perfect setting for wedding receptions and parties, with exquisite cuisine, wonderful surroundings, and exemplary service for up to 150 guests. Enjoy a champagne and canapé reception in the garden or the elegance and charm of one of the lovely rooms in Over-Seas House. A dedicated event coordinator will offer advice and assistance from your initial enquiry. Our events team is experienced in the planning and implementation of events and can be called upon to offer professional support and advice at any stage. For more information, call 020 7629 0406 or email [jessica@convexleisure.co.uk](mailto:jessica@convexleisure.co.uk).



## Application form for members' events *(see opposite)*

MEMBERSHIP NO.....

Name.....

Name of guest(s) and trip they are attending

.....  
.....  
.....

Address to which tickets should be sent

.....  
.....  
.....

Tel no.....

### Please complete this form and send to:

Alex Debarge, PR Department (Members Events), Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR. Tel: 020 7016 6906. Email: [adebarge@rosl.org.uk](mailto:adebarge@rosl.org.uk).

### Please send a SEPARATE CHEQUE for each event.

				No. of tickets
Lord's visit	Wed 24 Jun	£15	.....	£.....
Historic Fulham	Tues 30 Jun	£15	.....	£.....
Tea at the House of Lords	Tues 7 Jul	£35	.....	£.....
The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory	Mon 20 Jul	£10	.....	£.....
Little Venice	Wed 29 Jul	£15	.....	£.....
Hampton Court Palace	Mon 3 Aug	£20	.....	£.....
Chelsea Physic Garden	Thu 6 Aug	£14	.....	£.....
Marble Hill House	Thu 27 Aug	£14	.....	£.....
Chairman's Lunch	Wed 28 Oct	£50	.....	£.....
			Total	£.....

### BALLOTTED EVENTS

Only successful applicants will be contacted. Only send payment **IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL**. Maximum **2 TICKETS** per member.

	No. of tickets	Apply before
Lambeth Palace	.....	12 Jun

### PAYMENT

Please send a **SEPARATE CHEQUE** for each event. Cheques (sterling) payable to ROSL. For **CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS** telephone 020 7016 6906.



# Discussion Group & London Group

## DISCUSSION GROUP

Meetings will be held at Over-Seas House, London on the following Monday evenings from 7 to 8.30pm. There is no charge. All ROSL members and guests are welcome. For more information contact John Edwards, 01732 883556, johncoatesedward@aol.com.

### The problem with Western dumb-ocracies

**1 June** With Dr John Bird, social entrepreneur and founder of *The Big Issue* (postponed from 2 February 2009).

### Man in tights

**6 July** With Lt General Sir Michael Willcocks KCB, who will be speaking about his time as Black Rod.

## LONDON GROUP

Please note that you are not automatically a member of the London Group: ask for an application form from the PR department, Over-Seas House, London. The London Group meets at 6.30pm on the third Thursday of each month. For more information contact Beryl Keen, 020 8449 5686.

### That's cricket

**18 June** An illustrated talk by Glenys Williams, a historian and archivist for Lord's Cricket Ground and Marylebone Cricket Club (postponed from 2 October 2008).

### Heathrow Airport and British Airways

**16 July** A talk by Jonathan Lewin, London Group minutes secretary, about London Heathrow and British Airways' involvement in the airport.



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BERYL KEEN



SWANATHA WHITAKER

**HOME AND ABROAD:** (clockwise from left) Black Rod bangs on the House of Commons' door at the state opening of Parliament (6 July); the Blue Lagoon, a naturally heated swimming pool in Iceland which members of the London Group visited in September 2008 (20 August); the main square in Krakow, southern Poland (2–8 September)

### The London Group on tour

**20 August** An illustrated talk by Beryl Keen, with memories of the last four trips abroad – to Ireland, Geneva, the Baltic States and Iceland.

### LONDON GROUP OUTSIDE VISITS

For more information, contact Doreen Regan, 020 7584 5879. To apply for events, write to Doreen Regan, London Group, c/o Porters' Desk, Over-Seas House, London.

### Brit Oval

**17 June, 2pm** Guided tour of the Brit Oval in South London, the home of Surrey cricket and the first ground in Britain to host Test cricket. Visit the Members' Pavilion (Long Room, Committee Room and Display Room) and, if available, the dressing rooms, along with other points of interest. Tickets: £12; LG members £10.

### Poland visit

**2–8 September** A trip to Poland, with guided tours throughout, for all ROSL members and guests.

Fly with British Airways to Warsaw and return from Krakow. £800 per person, based on sharing a double room in 4-star hotels; some single accommodation is available with a supplement. Personal travel insurance is not included, but is obtainable on request. For further information, contact Doreen Regan, London Group, c/o Porters' Desk, Over-Seas House, London.

*Please enclose a separate cheque and stamped addressed envelope for each visit.*