

# OVERSEAS

Journal of the Royal Over-Seas League

Issue 4, December 2008–February 2009



## Winning art

The ROSL ARTS scholars talk about the inspiration behind the work in this year's exhibition

## Inside Singapore

Have the government's strict controls created a nation that works or the ultimate nanny state?

## Sonny's legacy

Building on the achievements of former Commonwealth Secretary General Sonny Ramphal

## Christmas crackers

London's top activities this winter, from pantos and festive shows to the ice-bound sport of curling

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## OVERSEAS

ISSUE 4 December 2008–January 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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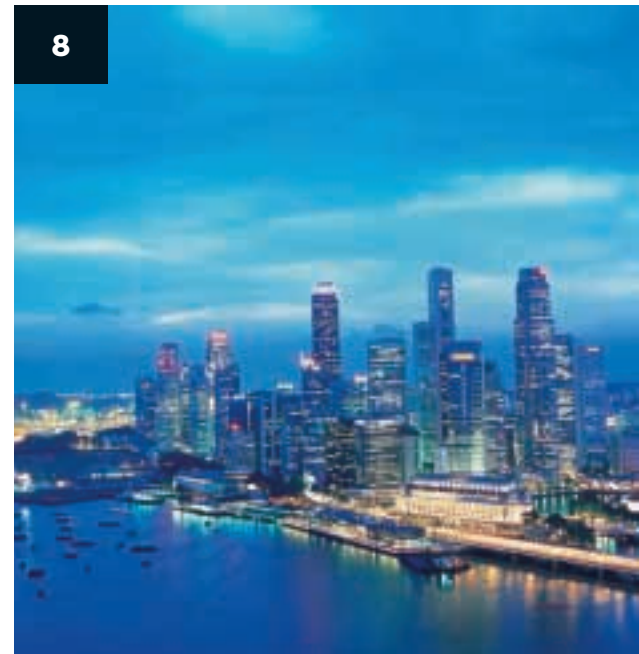


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**Front cover:** Young art critics admire a drawing at the 2008 ROSL Annual Scholars Exhibition

© Robert Piwko

## From the Director-general

In the last issue, the new Commonwealth Secretary General, HE Kamallesh Sharma, outlined his vision for the Commonwealth. The importance of his words is illustrated by a SAGA Holidays' survey on Britain's knowledge of the Commonwealth as it celebrates its 60th anniversary. It makes depressing reading, demonstrating that a large percentage of the British population, especially young adults, have little or no knowledge of the Commonwealth. Almost 20% of those surveyed were unable to say whether a given country was one of the 53 Commonwealth nation states; nearly 75% of 16–24 year olds thought the USA was a member state; 10% of that age group thought George Bush was Head of the Commonwealth and less than half knew that The Queen was its Head; 87% of the over 50s answered correctly. SAGA commissioned the survey as part of their Commonwealth celebrations, which include a comprehensive online guide to the Commonwealth.

Through its music, art, literature and Namibia project, which are for young people, the League is promoting knowledge of the Commonwealth to this important age group. There is still more to do, and we will continue to spread awareness through the journal and our branches. In these times of economic chaos, ethnic and religious differences, climate change and poverty, it is the young who will benefit most from the important role the Commonwealth plays in world affairs.

Do look at the 'Events' section in this issue, as there are many to satisfy all tastes. Our arts programme continues to flourish, with plenty of music, art and book events at the clubhouses. They offer unique opportunities for young League prize winners. In August, music scholars from Australia, Canada, Cyprus, New Zealand, Singapore and South Africa performed in our highly successful ninth annual series of concerts in Edinburgh. There will be interesting Discussion Group speakers this winter, not least Dr John Bird, founder of *The Big Issue*, and human rights lawyer Helena Kennedy.

With Christmas almost upon us, do remember that League membership makes a unique and useful Christmas gift for family and friends. The Membership Department will make all the arrangements for you, including attractive gift packaging. On behalf of our President Lord Luce, Chairman Stanley Martin, Central Council members and my colleagues on the staff, I send you very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

**Robert Newell**



## Editor's letter

Opinion was divided among the *Overseas*



team this issue. The question was whether to include an article by member Tim Hendley on his travels in Myanmar (page 6). We all felt it was a fascinating piece, but some wondered whether we should be encouraging travel to the country when several human rights organisations had called for a tourism ban. At the same time, we did not want to compromise the journal's commitment to including articles on little-known and lesser-visited places. The fact that we have a discerning and well-travelled readership clinched it. I am sure you will weigh up the arguments and decide for yourselves whether to wait until the voluntary ban is lifted before making the trip.

Our focus this issue is only slightly less controversial, with many people opposed to the Singaporean government's strict controls on almost every aspect of life. However, there are those who believe that the pay-off – a clean, safe and orderly country – is worth it (page 8). Thanks to another government initiative, Singapore's arts scene is now booming (page 12), and one of its upcoming painters, Jeremy Sharma, was among the 2007 ROSL Visual Arts Scholars. Find out more about the scholars on page 18, where you can also see examples of their work.

At this time of year, I always try to catch the pantomime at Hackney Empire, which has one of the best panto teams in London and is among our pick of the capital's best Christmas shows (page 27). After reading about curling – a sport invented in medieval Scotland – I also plan to give that a go this year. However you decide to spend the festive season, I wish you a happy Christmas and New Year from the *Overseas* team.

**Miranda Moore**

**SWITZERLAND BRANCH DINNER:** (l-r) Robert Newell, Susan Kinoshita (British Consul General in Geneva), her husband Mr Kinoshita, Stanley Martin, Jo Brown (Branch Chairman), Hanni Martin, Shanaz Newell and Elizabeth Morris

## COMMONWEALTH NEWS

# A true legacy

As former Secretary General Sonny Ramphal turns 80, **Richard Bourne** looks at the work being done to build on his achievements

It is hard to believe that Shridath Ramphal – better known by his boyhood nickname Sonny – is now aged 80. A gathering at Marlborough House on 3 October 2008, his 80th birthday, celebrated the occasion. Once again, Sonny's mellifluous Guyanese voice rang through that building, as it had when he was Commonwealth Secretary General, 1975-1990, this time as he addressed a large group of friends from around the Commonwealth. He thanked them as his health was toasted and he was presented with a new collection of essays, 'Shridath Ramphal – The Commonwealth and the World', published by Hansib.

Now that the rules have changed, no secretary-general can serve for longer than eight years, but Sonny held the position for 15 years. He was only 46 when he took office, and the years have been kind to his reputation. In 1990, just before he handed over Marlborough House to Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Nelson Mandela was released from prison. The long struggle to end apartheid, which had seen Sonny take on Margaret Thatcher in her prime, was nearly at an end and success was in sight.

Sonny was ahead of his time on the environment. He promoted Commonwealth action that brought together the need to end poverty in developing countries with the need to end destructive emissions in rich ones. Some of the earliest work was done by his economic adviser, Dr Vince Cable, who is now the deputy leader of the Liberal Democrats. This was not Sonny's only contribution in this field. As a member of the Brundtland Commission on environment and development, he helped popularise the idea of sustainable development. He also took a leading role in Brandt, Palme and several other international commissions, and encouraged the Guyana Government to donate a million acres to the Commonwealth's Iwokrama forestry programme. In 1992, he wrote *Our Country, The Planet*, the book for the Earth Summit in Rio that year.

He was also responsible for the Commonwealth's first specific statement on human rights, prompted in 1977 by the odious Idi Amin regime, at a meeting of Commonwealth Heads in London. He had earlier flown to Kampala to ensure that the self-styled 'Conqueror of the British Empire' did not carry through his threat to turn up.

A group of us who admire Sonny's record have been thinking about how best to build on his achievements. Patsy Robertson, who headed the information division at the Commonwealth Secretariat, is chairing a Ramphal Centre Committee in London. More than 20 distinguished patrons have joined, and we have been able to set up a charity and non-profit company, of which I have been acting as secretary.

After due consultation, we have decided that the best way forward is not to create a centre in a traditional, physical sense. Instead, we plan to set up a succession of Ramphal commissions, looking at specific policy issues of Commonwealth relevance and global resonance. In this, we



PHOTOGRAPHER: COLIN PATTERSON © THE RAMPHAL CENTRE

**UNITED WE STAND:** Three secretary generals — Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Sir Shridath Ramphal and HE Kamalesh Sharma — gather at Marlborough House for the 80th birthday celebrations

will be true to Sonny's adage – "The Commonwealth cannot negotiate for the world, but it can help the world to negotiate" – and to his own activity in setting up numerous Commonwealth expert groups and participating in international and UN commissions. We seek to harness the brains and diversity of the Commonwealth for effective, world-changing advocacy, and to add the new resources of information technology to the personal commitment of prominent personalities.

To begin with, we have been looking at two issues: 1) What are the factors leading to the socioeconomic success of small states, and how can they be replicated? (what might be dubbed the 'Small is Beautiful Commission'); 2) How can the global labour market and migration be made fairer and more useful to poorer countries? (or the 'Migration for Development Commission').

On 3 October we had a festival at Marlborough House for Sonny, with the Guyanese flautist Keith Waithe playing *For Guyana, With Love*. There were speeches from Michael Beloff QC on behalf of Gray's Inn, where Sonny qualified as a barrister in the 1940s; Professor Mike Faber, who worked with him at the Secretariat in the 1980s; Chief Emeka Anyaoku, who was his colleague and successor; former President Chissano of Mozambique, who took us back to the days of Commonwealth support for the Front Line States; and Lord Steel, who talked of the importance of principle – both the Commonwealth's and Sonny's.

It is right that the work of Sonny Ramphal, a man of ideas, should live on in the future. The Ramphal Centre will help the Commonwealth to move forward as an agent of well-prepared, well-argued change. As Mike Faber said, "With Sonny, work should be fun, and hard work should be more fun!" The challenge is irresistible.

*For progress on the first two Ramphal commissions, visit the website at [www.ramphalcentre.org](http://www.ramphalcentre.org). Help of all sorts is welcome. Please email [Richard.Bourne@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Richard.Bourne@sas.ac.uk).*

**Richard Bourne is senior research fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.**

# The other Burma

League member **Tim Hendley** defies the voluntary tourism ban to travel through Myanmar by river and land, taking in everything from dolphins to temples

**A**fter visiting Myanmar (Burma) briefly on a trip along the Mekong river in 2004, I knew I wanted to return. That is how I find myself, one of only three passengers, aboard the Amara Cruise Line's beautiful teak vessel, heading upstream on the Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy) river from Mandalay to Bhamo. We will be afloat for five days. Most of Myanmar's roads are in poor shape, so the river is a great way to see the country. It is also why the river is a busy commercial highway, with long, wide bamboo rafts, huge ferries, and barges loaded with hardwood and teak logs plying its course.

Leaving Mandalay, the enormous Bruegel-esque Mingun Paya soon appears on the west bank. At 116 km sq, the pagoda was only half

completed in 1819, when King Badawpaya, who commissioned the building, died. It has an impressive crack down one side, following an earthquake in 1838. A few metres away, the world's largest uncracked bell, the Mingun Bell, hangs at ground level.

Continuing upstream, we visit the village of Thabeikkyin, home to a large pottery. There are eight wood-fired ovens, producing pots of all shapes and sizes on a commercial scale. There is no electricity; it is all done by hand. We then

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*One night we are treated to a candlelit barbeque, followed by Burmese folk songs*

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visit the riverside, the setting of George Orwell's *Burmese Days* – the village of Katha, where he served as a colonial police officer in 1926-27. At the confluence with a small tributary near Tigyain, in clearer water, we are fortunate to spot a pod of seven or eight very shy Irrawaddy dolphins.

Each night, the crew throws a couple of anchors on to a convenient sandbank, so that they can take some (football) exercise. One night, we are treated to a memorable candlelit

barbeque, followed by Burmese folk songs. Then on through the narrow, picturesque second defile (of three) to Bhamo, and the end of the boat trip.

My own journey continues by road, 240km further north, to Myitkyina. Around two hours by road north of the town, the rivers Mali Hka and Nmai Hka join to become the Ayeyarwady. Here, a new hydro-electric dam is about to be built by the Chinese: 80% of the power will go to China; 20% to Myanmar.

I visit Lake Indawgyi, five hours by train and a further four and a half hours by bone-jarring four wheel drive, over the mountains to the south-west of Myitkyina. It is a lovely, tranquil place with a sizeable pagoda on a man-made island. The north end of the lake is a birding hot-spot in the migratory season.

Returning south by air, I go to the old colonial hill-station of Pyin U Lwin (Maymyo) for a cool rest stop, away from the heat of the plains. Tea and coffee plantations are dotted over the hillsides. The lovely Kandawgyi Botanical Gardens, laid out by British botanists in 1915, are a haven of peace and serenity. The Myanmar flag flies at half-mast in memory of the tens of thousands of victims of Cyclone Nargis in the Delta area to the south.

A truly amazing place lies a short flight to the west of Mandalay. Bagan is home to about 2,000 temples and pagodas, built between 1000AD and 1300AD. They occupy an area of 42 km sq and are best visited by pony and trap in the mellow early morning light, before it gets too hot. Most are in good condition and are open to visitors. There are a dozen tourists here.



© Brown35/DREAMTIME.COM

**BURMESE DAYS:** The bustling banks of the Ayeyarwady River



© LUCIANO MORTULA/DREAMSTIME.COM

**GOLDEN LAND:** Some of the 2,000 temples and pagodas found in Bagan, one of the biggest and most interesting archeological sites in Asia

Myanmar is a beautiful country with kind, gentle people. It is rich in natural resources and minerals. In addition to the spectacular temple complex at Bagan, you can see the stunning Shwedagon Paya, which has 15 tons of gold on its dome, and Sule Paya in the crumbling city of Yangon. The Gems Museum boasts the world's largest rough ruby (21,450 carats) and star sapphire (63,000 carats), and much, much more.

Nevertheless, tourists stay away in droves. The voluntary ban on tourism has divided opinion among those opposed to the military junta that

has massacred and tortured many of its people. While some argue that visiting Myanmar tacitly affirms the generals' rule, others say that sanctions, though focused on the ruling junta, have a greater impact on its impoverished people. Tourism is one of the few industries in which money trickles down to ordinary people.

I certainly felt that I, a lone tourist, was able to make a difference. Visiting so soon after Cyclone Nargis, I donated what, to me, was a small amount of money to the relief efforts in the Delta. It was used to provide bags of rice,

dry goods and money to some 200 survivors. Visiting the country is not a decision to be made lightly, but there is one thing we should all be able to agree on: the people of Myanmar deserve better than this.

**Tim Hendley is a League member.**

*The Foundation for the People of Burma, which has nine years' experience of humanitarian work in Myanmar, is continuing to focus its efforts on those affected by Cyclone Nargis. To donate, visit [www.foundationburma.org](http://www.foundationburma.org).*

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## FOCUS

# A city that works?

Although many Singaporeans are opposed to the government's strict controls on their lives, the country's prohibition culture has made it one of the cleanest, safest and most well-organised places in the world, as **Chris Pritchard** discovers

Singapore – a fine city' say the T-shirts that have piggybacked the country's important tourist industry for at least two decades. The government doesn't seem to mind, even though the premise is a rather corny joke: the back of the T-shirt lists offences for which people can be fined – spitting, littering, loitering, jaywalking, skateboarding in inappropriate places, busking without a licence, and plenty more besides. Singapore's fondness for fining generates a lot of negative comment overseas, especially as its fines are part of a penal system that includes both capital and corporal punishments (by hanging and caning respectively).

An independent republic since breaking away from Malaysia in 1965, the country has developed super-rapidly. At 646 sq km, it comprises little more than commercial and residential areas. Although it is a democracy, the People's Action Party has had a lock on

power since nationhood, and its opponents deride the party's enthusiasm for libel actions and the other techniques it uses to thwart and bankrupt opponents. Critics describe Singapore as bland, boring and the ultimate nanny state.

Well, that's one view. Others laud Singapore as a vibrant success story, a role model for Asia and a city that works. They describe coming to the city-state after visiting other Asian nations as a refreshing contrast. Everything works. What's

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*I once stayed with friends, taking the bus each day. It was never late*

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more, crime levels are low, strolling at night is safe, graffiti and other forms of vandalism are rare, the infrastructure is highly developed, and getting around is a breeze. Singaporeans are extremely computer-savvy and this reaches right across the economic spectrum. Unsurprisingly, the country flaunts its fast-growing affluence. Much attention is focused on its ubiquitous shopping malls. Ritzzy restaurants abound in hotels and along after-hours strips such as Boat Quay and Clarke Quay. Its medical and educational facilities are world class.

Indeed, Singapore is the destination of choice for patients from elsewhere in Asia who can afford to pay for its high-quality services. The public health-care system is also more

developed than others in Southeast Asia. As with medicine, so with education. The National University of Singapore and other institutions have turned Singapore into an education powerhouse, with many students coming from elsewhere in Asia and further afield. Education is an important industry.

Many of Singapore's 500,000-plus expatriate Westerners work in the financial sector (with its numerous banks and insurance companies), in advertising or in the country's many service industries. These days, the land-poor country is mainly about services and 'clean' manufacturing, with the heavy industrial factories that supply many of its goods based in other parts of Asia.

It is no surprise that several expatriate surveys have listed Singapore as the best place to live and do business in the world, including a recent survey by HSBC. Another survey, by ECA International, found it relatively cheap, calling it only the 13th most expensive place in Asia for expatriates to live. Further, this year's World Bank ranking of easiest places to do business places Singapore top for the third year in a row.

Government regulation seeps into every cranny of life. Government apartment buildings once had to be populated according to the country's racial make-up – to prevent the development of ghettos and to encourage people to get along. This policy has fallen by the wayside as more people move into privately-owned apartment towers. But the People's Action Party manages to achieve a unique melding of socialist planning and capitalist free-market policies.

At first glance, the dozens of glitzy shopping malls that dominate Orchard Road and







© EIGHTFISH

**OLD MEETS NEW:** Singapore skyline (left) and Little India (opposite), where many buildings have been recently restored

elsewhere, with their neon lights that lure locals and tourists alike, along with the multinational banks' steel and glass high-rises in the financial district around Shenton Way, are evidence of unfettered capitalism. But, behind it all, is a highly regulated and controlled society.

Take public transport, for instance. The government ensures cars are expensive in order to force Singaporeans to use trains and buses. However, no matter what the fees and taxes, Singaporeans can afford to pay them, and tolerate anti-congestion charges to enter traffic-choked shopping and office districts. Nonetheless, public transport is superb, inexpensive and much-used. The underground MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) stations and trains are spotless. A dropped wrapping at a passenger's feet? You can bet the offender is a tourist. I once stayed with friends in the Changi Village area, taking the bus each day to appointments. It was never late.

The authorities appear to recognise that there's no point in having a state that works well if few people see it. So, while sleek and futuristic skyscrapers evoke national pride, a desire to flatten the old is, itself, now history. Instead, neighbourhoods pivotal to the story of Chinese, Malay and Indian Singaporeans have been tastefully restored. Renovated colonial-era buildings pepper the little thoroughfares near Seah Street (behind the famed Raffles Hotel), and in the bustling and aromatic Little India, old edifices have been tastefully restored into restaurants and shops. There's even a tiny pocket dedicated to the small Armenian community that was commercially influential during the colonial era.

Lush tropical parkland – and there's plenty of it – is nowadays strictly protected. Singapore styles itself a 'garden city'. Patches of green seem to be everywhere, even in the heart of the main commercial district. What's more, since this is Singapore, parks are safe for strolling. A Treetop Walk involves an amble over a suspension bridge almost brushing the top of a forest canopy, with monkeys – and an occasional lemur – peeking out of the dense foliage. Even resort-driven Sentosa Island has nature walks requiring none-too-challenging hikes through lush flora.

Government prodding ensures the private sector works hard to keep Singapore ahead of its competition. Neighbours such as Malaysia and Thailand take their cues from Singapore, so the island republic frequently spruces up its facilities. Changi Airport is still regarded as one of Asia's best, the Orchard Road shopping strip was recently refurbished, and resort-oriented Sentosa Island and Singapore Zoo (one of the world's best) have both had facelifts. Aside from being a profitable carrier, Singapore Airlines also has a role in raising the little nation's profile internationally.

You can bet that in offices across the island, people are working late to keep the country at the cutting edge and ensure that the future is no less exciting than the present. As Shih Choon Fong, president of the National University of Singapore, puts it: "Singapore thrives on innovation."

**Sydney-based League member Chris Pritchard writes on Asian affairs for publications in Asia and elsewhere.**

## SINGAPORE FACTS

**Capital**  
Singapore

**POPULATION**  
4,608,167 (July 2008 est). After Monaco, Singapore is the world's most densely populated country, with 6,430 people per square kilometre.

**GDP per capita**  
US\$49,900 (2007 est.)

**GOVERNMENT**  
**Chief of State: President S R Nathan (since 1 September 1999);**  
**Head of Government: Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (since 12 August 2004)**

**ETHNIC GROUPS**  
**Chinese: 76.8%; Malay: 13.9%;**  
**Indian: 7.9%; other: 1.4%**

**LANGUAGE**  
**Mandarin: 35%; English: 23%;**  
**Malay: 14.1%. Also Hokkien,**  
**Cantonese, Teochew and Tamil**

**RELIGION**  
**Buddhist: 42.5%; Muslim: 14.9%;**  
**Taoist: 8.5%. Also Hindu, Catholic**  
**and other Christian**

## FOCUS

# Breeding for the nation

A low birth rate and ageing population are threatening to damage Singapore's growth and stability. **Rebecca Morris** investigates the measures being taken to tackle the crisis

Over the last half century, Singapore has transformed itself from a colonial outpost into one of the world's wealthiest countries. The republic enjoys one of the highest GDPs (Gross Domestic Products) per capita in the world, and its many recent accolades include the World's Most Globalised Nation and World's Best Labour Force. This year, Transparency International, the global organisation fighting corruption, listed it second only to Denmark, New Zealand and Sweden (in joint first place) as having the least perceived levels of public-sector corruption. Such success, however, has come at a price.

This nation of workaholics has been facing, for some years, a steep decline in its birth rate. In 1960, the population was around 1.5 million, doubling to a little more than three million in 1990. It now stands at 4.8 million – but about a quarter is made up by foreign workers and their families. The lack of young Singaporeans is a problem that Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong addressed during the annual National Day Rally speech in August. Using a fertility rate graph, he showed how births had dropped from six children per woman in 1960 to the replacement level of 2.1 in the mid 1970s, to just 1.3 today. "This single slide tells us about our history, about our economy, about our culture and about our policies," he declared.

A campaign in the 1960s encouraging families to have just two children proved so successful that by the late 1980s, the government had adopted an opposite

campaign to encourage an increase to three children. This, too, met with some success. But over the last 30 years, said Lee, people had exercised control over their fertility in response to the economy and other aspects of their lives, resulting in the current unsustainable birth rate.

During the recession of 1985 and the Asian economic crash of the late 1990s, the population dipped. In 2001, a 'baby bonus' scheme, through which a payment is given on the birth of every child, was introduced, but the

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## *Singapore has to adapt patriarchal Confucian values to the modern world*

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Prime Minister blamed 9/11 and the SARS outbreak two years later for minimising the impact of the scheme. Since then, the baby bonus has been extended and was further updated this year. There are also plans to increase parental leave.

But other factors are pulling families in another direction. Despite its modern façade, parts of Singapore society are deeply conservative and the country is still finding a way to adapt patriarchal Confucian values to the modern world. For many educated women,

this means a reluctance to take on the dual stresses of a career and motherhood.

Professor Gavin Jones, an expert in demography at the Asia Research Institute and Department of Sociology at the National University of Singapore, believes that the government's financial incentives are important. "People say they have failed, but if we didn't have these policies the situation could be even worse," he explains. "You have first of all a family structure where men don't do housework, where office hours are long and work places are not family friendly. For educated women, it is a tough choice whether to have a family." He points out that while 15% of households in Singapore employ a maid, this means that the huge majority don't.

Palene Sim, 38, is married to a financial consultant and worked as a secretary before giving birth to her first child, Ella, nearly 18 months ago. She received a baby bonus of S\$3,000 (£1,200), which helped pay for medical expenses for her daughter. She welcomes the increase in childcare subsidies and the number of childcare centres, but admits that even one child puts a strain on family finances and her ability to work.

Despite such pressures, surveys show that most people do want to get married. Yet studying, working long hours and socialising within tight-knit families means that people often start dating relatively late in life. In 1984, in a unique venture, the government set up the Social Development Unit – effectively a government-backed dating agency – that forged



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**REIGNITING THE BABY BOOM:** A couple sit beside a mother and baby statue in the Botanic Gardens, as the government attempts to boost the country's birth rate

links with business and commercial partners to provide social activities at which couples could meet. Another scheme exists for those without degrees and there are plans to merge the two.

Talk to graduates about the scheme and the response is likely to be a nervous giggle. And cruel jibes that SDU stood for 'Single, Desperate and Ugly/Unwanted' did nothing to help the image. One graduate, who prefers to remain anonymous, recalls: "The introduction of government-backed matchmaking initially caused considerable disquiet – not so much for state involvement in what might be considered a personal matter, but because it was unashamedly aimed at graduates to encourage the nation's academically elite to marry and have, it was hoped, academically bright children. Over time, though, it has been welcomed as a good way of meeting people, and has been successful in resulting in many marriages, including one of my own friends'."

And the facts speak for themselves: there are currently some 32,000 SDU members, all willing to pay S\$10-50 a year for the service, and, since its inception, more than 53,000 members have tied the knot. In his speech, Lee acknowledged that the country needed to change its mindset about gender roles, encouraging boys to become more domestic and companies to provide child-friendly work practices.

"Financial considerations cannot be the motive for having children. I think if you suggest to a couple that 'I give you a bit of discount, how about having more kids,' I think many would be very indignant at this, and

rightly so. But it's right for us to help women to lighten the burden of having children," he said.

The government is also encouraging the expansion of tertiary education in Singapore to provide a highly educated workforce for the future. But in the short term, at least, Singapore needs a large number of expatriates to boost the workforce. Educated workers and entrepreneurs – 'foreign talent' – are encouraged to find work in the country. Maids (largely from the Philippines and Indonesia) and building workers (many from Bangladesh) use their wages to support families back home.

But another problem is brewing at the other end of the lifespan. The real problem has not got under way: in 2020, 20% of the population will be 65 years and older," warns Jones. While the government's ideology is very much that the family should look after its elderly, working couples with children to look after find this difficult, he adds. To this end, the government is looking at initiatives that will make it easier for families to live near to each other.

For Jones, Singapore approaches its problems with "an interesting mixture of pragmatism and Confucianism". He explains: "Policies can work very effectively because the population is compliant; the people and the government are generally thinking the same way, so I think it is very different from a lot of countries."

**Rebecca Morris is director of RM Communications, a Singapore-based company offering writing services. She writes on tourism, lifestyle and business.**

## SINGLE IN SINGAPORE

**While the People's Action Party encourages marriage and childbirth, it continues to marginalise singles in the area of government housing, which has led many tax-paying singles and mandatory military men to cry foul. As part of the government's housing rule, singles can only buy resale flats (which cost more than new builds), and only when they reach the age of 35. Until recently, singles were also restricted to three-beds in specific districts, but the rules have been relaxed. Those earning less than S\$3,000 a month can even apply for an S\$11,000 grant, but this does not compare to the S\$30,000 available to couples applying for government-subsidised flats for the first time. At the same time, the government's bid to boost productivity by welcoming foreign workers more than ever before has sent the price of resale flats to a record high. Private housing is now unaffordable to most singles.**

James Leong

## FOCUS

# An arts boom by design

Eight years after Singapore unveiled its vision to become a global city of the arts, its cultural scene is thriving, says **Clara Chow**



On a sweltering hot Tuesday in October, a small but steady trickle of Singaporeans and tourists escaped gratefully into the cool interior of City Hall building. But instead of civil and legal recourse, they were there seeking art. The disused building was one of the venues for the second Singapore Biennale for contemporary visual arts. Among the gamut of artworks was a knitted tableaux of scooter, birds, lamp-posts and ivy leaves slowly being unravelled by a hidden motor; a video work of people standing still in the salt plains; and giant fibre-glass maggots strewn over a red carpet.

Mindful that the avant-garde installations on display might baffle the average visitor, the National Arts Council, which organised the event, had planted youthful volunteers next to the works to offer brief explanations and answer questions. The atmosphere was one of

open-minded, if slightly bizarre, enjoyment.

Across a wide field and a couple of busy roads, free lunchtime concerts and other cultural events were taking place in the Esplanade: Theatres on the Bay, the city's most prestigious arts venue. Once described by many as a 'cultural desert', the tiny island-state of Singapore has turned its reputation around in the last two decades.

Eight years ago, the Ministry of Information and the Arts (now the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts or MICA) consulted the local arts community and produced the Renaissance City Report. Presented in parliament on 9 March 2000, it presented a vision of Singapore as 'a world-class city supported by a vibrant cultural scene'. The strategies recommended to achieve this goal included additional funding for arts education, the development of flagship arts companies, the expansion of existing arts infrastructure and facilities, support for overseas showcases of Singapore arts, and the strengthening of arts and cultural tourism.

Since then, some progress has been made in terms of increasing artistic activity in the country. The total number of arts activities, including both performances and exhibition days, has gone from 6,094 in 1996 to 26,626 in 2007. Registered arts companies have swelled from 201 to 477. And attendance at ticketed performing arts events has doubled from 705,100 to almost 1.5 million.

Arts lovers in the republic are now spoilt for choice in terms of the venues available for

performances and exhibitions. In 2002, the Esplanade opened amid love-it-or-hate-it comments about its distinctive, twin spiky roofs (nicknamed the Durian after a thorny, pungent tropical fruit). Since then, its two main venues, a 2,000-seat theatre and a 1,600-seat concert hall, have housed extravagant musicals, indie bands and jazz greats such as Shirley Horn. And in 2005, a 615-seat proscenium arch Drama Centre, with its own separate black box space, opened in the National Library building.

The cultural landscape got an additional landmark with the opening of a refurbished and expanded National Museum in Stamford Road two years ago, which has styled itself as a hip establishment offering art film screenings (from Jean Cocteau to Matthew Barney) and night carnivals. An experimental contemporary visual art wing, 8Q, is the latest addition to the Singapore Art Museum, a stone's throw away. By 2012, the former Supreme Court and City Hall buildings will be redeveloped into a new National Art Gallery of Singapore and, in September, the National Heritage Board announced that it will spend S\$8 million over the next five years to fund private museums and other commercial heritage projects.

In other parts of the budding arts ecosystem, more arts schools are springing up across the country, including Singapore campuses of the Tisch School of the Arts, based in New York, and Sotheby's Institute of Art. The new School of the Arts (SOTA) offers an integrated arts and academic curriculum to

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**CREATIVE VISION:** The impressive Esplanade (opposite) houses a theatre and concert hall, and Thomas Papathanassiou's production of *Looming the Memory*, which will feature in the upcoming M1 Singapore Fringe Festival (left)

students aged 13 to 18.

The government's investment in arts infrastructure, as well as in nurturing artistic talents, has paid off on some level. On any given day, there are at least 10 arts events listed in the mass media, vying for the attention of a population of just 4.5 million. And as the city's arts venues get swankier and its resident companies more sophisticated, foreign counterparts are taking note and becoming more open to collaboration.

Theatre director Alvin Tan, who is artistic director of The Necessary Stage (TNS), one of

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*"It's better to be an arts practitioner today, as not all sensitive issues are thrown in the bin"*

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Singapore's most respected theatre companies, describes the government's efforts to position the country as a regional arts hub as "pretty successful". He cites his experience of curating the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival, which will be running for the fifth year in January 2009 and includes quirky offerings such as a travelling Museum of Broken Relationships and an exploration of stem cell research entitled *Frozen Angels*. "International artists want to perform at the Esplanade. They

know about Singapore and that their works will have an audience," he says.

Recognising the value of marketing its culture overseas, the Singapore government has started showcasing its artists abroad. In 2005, it held a debut Singapore Season in London, with performances by the Singapore Dance Theatre at the Peacock Theatre, the Singapore Chinese Orchestra at Barbican Hall, and a multi-disciplinary event curated by Singaporean theatre doyen Ong Keng Sen at the Institute of Contemporary Arts. Two years later, a similar effort was presented in Beijing and Shanghai.

On a parallel track, Spotlight Singapore festivals in Tokyo and Moscow, designed to promote cultural and business exchange, have been spearheaded by The Arts House, a boutique arts venue. Nevertheless, postgraduate student Lorraine Lim, a former Singapore theatre reviewer whose doctorate thesis is on the Renaissance City Report, stresses that the higher profile of Singapore's arts should not be confused with a successful local arts scene.

"Has there been a way in which arts groups are being supported?" she asks. "It's easy to say 'yes', in the sense that more people are aware of what's available. But in my opinion, artist and audience development seems to be facing the perennial problems of looking for funding, shoring up audience numbers, and rising rental costs."

Indeed, audience reception is one area in which the arts scene's makeover cannot hide its flaws. For many pragmatic Singaporeans, brushes with high art are few and far between. A

local flagship English daily newspaper recently ran an editorial dismissing many of the Singapore Biennale artworks as incomprehensible. And the annual Singapore Arts Festival, a lightning rod when it comes to cultural sensibilities in the country, saw record-low audience numbers this year, while attracting much criticism. Ironically, its line-up for a S\$7 million edition was criticised for being both too obscure and experimental, and not edgy enough.

Little wonder, then, that arts practitioners are still grappling with, and tweaking the balance between, offering crowd-pleasing, accessible works to put bums on seats, and more challenging fare to push the envelope. That said, the business of making art in Singapore seems to have become less fraught over the last decade. While arts companies continue to compete for a slice of the sponsorship pie, many have found innovative ways to secure corporate support. Earlier this year, the chain of clinics Pacific Healthcare sponsored *The Hypochondriac*, a play about the medical profession. And companies that sell everything from mattresses to puff pastries have got in on the act by providing cash, free publicity and products for cash-strapped artists.

Tan says it has definitely become easier to be an artist in Singapore. "Freelance actors are able to juggle jobs that pay the bills and the work they really want to do. Theatre companies are established enough to pay competitive fees, so one can actually make a living out of professional theatre," he explains. More talented young Singaporeans are taking the

plunge and becoming full-time visual artists, with up-and-coming names such as Donna Ong and Berlin-based Heman Chong gaining a reputation both at home and abroad.

Given the traditional anti-establishment role that artists play in many societies, in terms of both challenging and reflecting the status quo, the spectre of censorship is still a contentious issue for some Singapore culture vultures. After a series of eyebrow-raising performance art pieces by Singapore artists in 1994, which included an artist snipping off his pubic hair, funding and help from the National Arts Council was cut for performance art for a ten-year period. The now-lifted ruling essentially drove the form underground and many of its practitioners overseas.

So, with the growth of the arts scene, how have censorship laws and guidelines in Singapore changed? And will the government have to relax them in order for Singaporean arts to bloom fully? Almost all forms of public arts entertainment, including plays, musical

and dance performances, art exhibitions, variety shows, and pop and rock concerts, have to obtain a licence from the Media Development Authority (MDA) before they can be staged. Synopses, scripts and programmes have to be submitted, assessed and rated into three possible categories: general, allowed with an advisory, and restricted to over 18s.

When it comes to controversial performances, the views of an arts consultative panel are sought before the MDA decides. The organisers may then appeal to the MICA minister, whose decision is final. Earlier this year, the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival organised a Complaints Choir Project, in which mostly mundane complaints submitted by participants were made into song lyrics to be performed in public. The performance received its licence. But police later informed TNS that foreigners would not be allowed to perform in the project's free public shows in various venues. Rather than exclude the choir's Malaysian conductor,

Finnish founders and some of its singers, the organisers decided to stage just one private indoor performance.

Tan, whose latest play, *Gemuk Girls*, deals with Singapore's history of detention without trial, takes the view that there is a fair mechanism to sustain the healthy and diverse arts landscape. Pointing to the MDA's rating system, which has been refined in consultation with the arts community, he adds: "It's better to be an arts practitioner today in Singapore, as not all sensitive issues are thrown in the bin. They are being considered."

Total freedom for artists is unlikely, but many worthy messages are getting passed by the censors, albeit with conditions at times. With the seeds of a thriving arts scene planted, it would be a shame to botch its growth now, either by neglect, over-zealous tending or audience ambivalence.

**Clara Chow is a freelance writer, specialising in literature and the arts.**



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# Grog's notebook

Happenings at the London clubhouse



▲ At the July Central Council meeting, HE Mr Derek Leask, New Zealand High Commissioner, was guest of honour and speaker. He is pictured, second left, with Stanley Martin and (l-r) retiring council member Caroline Cazanove and Hanni Martin



▲ Pictured at the Central Council lunch in September are (l-r) Pierre Boulanger, Agent General for Quebec, and his wife, Michèle Larivière, with Hanni and Stanley Martin



▲ Also at the Central Council lunch in September, (l-r) Pauline Archer, Tessa Smith, retiring council member Alison Pearce, Mure Smith (immediate past chairman of the Cheltenham Branch), Lily Murray (secretary of the New South Wales Branch) and retiring Council member Graham Archer



▲ Reverend Earnshaw's Young People at St Paul's for the service of the Order of St Michael and St George in July, with League vice-chairman Sir Anthony Figgis (centre)



▲ Jonathan Scott, winner of the competition to identify the building in a painting by Denys G Wells that was acquired by the director-general earlier this year, (see pg 14, issue 3), with Samantha Whitaker (*Overseas* assistant editor) when he came to collect his prize. A bottle of champagne was also awarded to John Thorneycroft, who also correctly identified the building as the west front of Kensington Palace

# Summer of sun

The weather held out as the Inter-Club Group enjoyed barbecues and al fresco drinks for this summer's programme, reports **Alexandra Debarge**



## July

The Inter-Club Group and the Travellers Club hosted a summer drinks party in the garden behind their Pall Mall clubhouse. Luckily, the weather held up for more than 110 club members and their guests, who enjoyed flowing Bellinis and exceptional hospitality from the Travellers Club. This was yet another sell-out event (there was a waiting list within 48 hours of tickets going on sale).

## August

The Hurlingham Club hosted a barbecue and Pimms party and, knowing how unpredictable the summer weather is, they prepared a wet and a dry plan! In all, 185 members and guests enjoyed their Pimms and a scrumptious barbecue inside the club's magnificent grounds, and later listened to a short history of the club as they sat under the trees.

This year's Club Crawl was once again a great success. The first stop was the Oriental Club, then to the Lansdowne, before stopping for a delicious dinner at the Oxford and Cambridge Club. It was then on to the National Liberal Club for more drinks, finishing at the Savage Club for jazz and dancing.

## September

Unfortunately, due to the fire on the Eurostar, the lunch in Paris was cancelled, to the great disappointment of those who had booked to attend. The lunch will be rescheduled for a weekend in the spring, and those who had bought tickets will be given first refusal on the rearranged date. Fingers crossed that nothing will stop us getting there next time.



**THREE CHEERS:** Younger members enjoyed a feast at the Hurlingham Club's barbecue and Pimms party (top and above), while Bellinis were the order of the day at the summer drinks party (above right). August's Club Crawl was a resounding success, with members stopping at the Oxford and Cambridge Club (below) for drinks



## Forthcoming events

**Wednesday 17 December**  
Christmas Ball, Royal Automobile Club

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



Pictures: James Scott



# The view from Scotland

**James Wilkie**

Scottish development officer

The programme of refurbishment continued at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh during the summer. The bar (pictured) was completely renovated and the Edinburgh Room re-decorated.

The ROSL Edinburgh Festival Fringe programme was particularly successful. Audiences have been growing year on year, there is a buzz about the building as a venue, and we receive a number of membership inquiries and press notices as a result. The concerts in the National Galleries of Scotland were a splendid new addition to the programme. Well done to the ROSL ARTS

team and the core staff in Edinburgh who support them. Young, prizewinning musicians return for 'Music with a View' on Tuesday 20 January.

The 2008/09 ROSL Scotland programme is now well under way. Pupils from St Mary's Music School performed at the first arts lunch, which was followed by an event in aid of the Edinburgh University Centre of African Studies. Dr Ola Oduku spoke on modern African architecture at the benefit lunch. The Edinburgh Chairman's reception for new members was a big success and our annual St Andrew's Day



Dinner was addressed by Dairmid Gunn, an expert on Russian affairs, whose talk was entitled 'The Saltire and the Samovar – Thistles in Russian Soil'.

We now look forward to a busy festive season. The manager of Over-Seas House, Edinburgh, Alan Chalmers, extends a welcome to members, and a varied events programme is offered. Besides the legendary Hogmanay event and traditional Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's Day lunches, there will be special weekend break prices in January, February and March.

## Young and gifted

**James Wilkie** on the schools whose talented musicians are playing at the Edinburgh clubhouse

In February, pupils of the Yehudi Menuhin School will perform at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh in what is set to be an impressive performance. Based in Surrey, the school was founded in 1963 in an attempt to create conditions in which musically gifted children could fulfil their potential on stringed instruments and piano. It currently educates more than 60 talented youngsters, aged 8–18.

Since 1975, pupils have been funded by the Department for Education, with parents paying a contribution towards the cost of their child's education according to their means. "Striving for excellence does not mean exclusivity. We are looking for children with potential," says the director of music, Malcolm Singer. "We are also feeding back into the community. Peripatetic instrumental teachers come in from local schools to study our methods; we offer composition courses to pupils from other schools for GCSEs and A levels; and our older

pupils lead workshops elsewhere."

For talented young musicians in Scotland, there is an alternative to the Surrey school a little closer to home. Menuhin described St Mary's School of Music in Edinburgh as a "younger sister school". It was founded in 1880 as a choir school of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, but in 1972, its directors resolved to follow Menuhin's example and create a school for specialist young musicians.

St Mary's pupils performed at the recent arts lunch at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh. Although it is an independent school, it too receives public funds. Some of the school's 71 pupils are choristers who receive cathedral bursaries; many others receive up to 100% government funding, depending on their parents' income. Access is by audition.

Gaelic culture is also promoted. The language is taught at the school, and among the pupils are a number of native Gaelic speakers.



Several students are studying the bagpipes, and one is studying the Northumberland pipes. According to the director of music, Francis Cummings: "Every Scottish city should at least have a vibrant musical culture. St Mary's means that Scotland can keep up with national and international standards."

*Pupils of the Yehudi Menuhin School perform at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh on Friday 13 February 2009.*

# ROSL ARTS scholars

**Anna Maciuk** talks to this year's artists at the exhibition in the autumn

With stunning views of the Thames and St Paul's Cathedral, the gallery@oxo in the Oxo Tower on London's South Bank once again played the perfect host for the ROSL Annual Scholars Exhibition from 25 September to 12 October. The 2008 exhibition featured works by the 2007 ROSL Visual Arts Scholars: Jacob Carter (UK), Joanna Langford (New Zealand), Christina Papakyriakou (Cyprus), Lauren Porter (UK) and Jeremy Sharma (Singapore).

The three overseas artists spent a month at Hospitalfield House. The large historical building in the picturesque setting of Arbroath, Scotland, was bequeathed by its 19th-century owner, Patrick Allan Fraser, 'for the promotion of Education in the Arts'. With parts dating back to the 14th century, vast grounds that give access to the Angus coastline, a maze of rooms still containing original period furniture, and modern studio facilities, Hospitalfield provides artists with a wealth of inspiration, as documented by the exhibition.

Both Jacob Carter and Lauren Porter independently chose to use their scholarships to travel to Canada. Jacob spent a month following the Rocky Mountaineer Railway, which took him to vast isolated scenery that he captured on film. While Jacob explored Canada's rich environmental offerings, Lauren focused her trip on Canadian communities, studying traditional crafts and social activities.

## JEREMY SHARMA

The ROSL scholarship gave Jeremy the opportunity to visit Scotland for the first time. "I found the landscape particularly inspiring; also the people, history and culture," he says. "It took me a while to adjust to the weather and space. I was affected physically, emotionally and on a subconscious level." For the exhibition, Jeremy chose to exhibit two large paintings and a series of portraits featuring some of the people he had encountered on his trip. The dark brooding colours in his

paintings evoke the scenes of a Scottish summer. "My work is about the 'vulnerabilities of becoming' and relates very much to myself and the environment. Since my visit to the UK, the fundamentals of my practice have not changed, but my approach has widened in terms of presentation and documentation."

## JACOB CARTER



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"For my travel scholarship I flew to Vancouver, British Columbia, from which I started a journey east across Canada. My trip took me by road and on foot across the Rocky Mountains towards the flat plains of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The journey was one taken in solitude, a period of two months dedicated to photographic work. It involved a lot of interaction with the Canadian landscape, both the natural wilderness and the man-made urban environment.

The vast space in Canada was the most inspiring aspect. One could stop along a highway without seeing another car for the whole day. The view in some parts was endless in every direction, just like the sea. It made the sheer scale of the earth come into context.

For the exhibition, I created a series of landscape images that were related to the vast wilderness. I was particularly interested in the relationship between man and nature, especially in areas where there was little human habitation. The work was produced during a period in which issues such as global warming and the importance of the environment are really starting to have mass attention in the press and in Parliament."



© ROBERT PIWKO

## LAUREN PORTER

"I flew into Toronto and spent some time travelling around Ontario before going to Montana, Vancouver and Vancouver Island. I also travelled through the mountains to the Rockies. Having the time to explore my interests in a fresh new environment was really valuable. It was profitable to have time to think and draw inspiration from the things I was experiencing. Being away from the routine of work and everyday life was important to the work that I made as a result of the trip. I enjoyed meeting people and seeing the local arts and crafts that they make. It was truly inspiring to experience the amazingly vast landscape of Canada. I think it was the combination of these things that were most inspirational to me.

The 'Hunting Trophy Series' consists of hand-sewn three-dimensional animal heads made from wire armatures and covered in white fabrics. My work heavily relies on the social and historical connotations of traditional crafts. Inspired by the many quilts I saw, I wanted to incorporate the techniques in the series. The animals are all of Canadian origin. And, of course, hunting – like quilting – is quintessentially Canadian.

The opportunity has given me new inspiration and many ideas. I am currently expanding the series of work. My aim is to find a studio so I can make bigger sculptures."

## JOANNA LANGFORD

While Jeremy explored the brooding landscapes of Arbroath, Joanna studied the endless hidden corners of the house. "The staircase held a certain mystique for me, a feeling that it could go on to secret passages



© ROBERT PWWO

and undiscovered rooms," she explains. During her stay, Joanna photographed the staircase and built the images into an animation of a mystical, twisting, turning staircase, climbing its way beyond the horizon and lit by hundreds of lamps, collected in groups like great chandeliers.

For the exhibition, Joanna recreated this fantastical world by assembling hundreds of letters from computer keyboards into tiny staircases that ascend from the gallery floor and meet in a series of platforms made from spacebars, forming an infinite magical flight of steps. "In a way, I am an anti-engineer, designing improbable structures for the real world," she says. All the materials used in the installation were gathered from a recycling centre, a feature of all Joanna's installations.

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## CHRISTINA PAPAKYRIAKOU

While at Hospitalfield, Christina rediscovered her passion for drawing. One of the many benefits of the centre is the quiet serenity of the grounds and their isolation from the outside world. This enabled Christina to quietly develop a world of fantasy, which she fused with images of reality in her sketches.

Dominating the far wall of the exhibition was Christina's animation exploring human reproduction. "This is my first animation. It took over three months to complete, as each image is hand drawn. I really enjoyed the process and look forward to developing further animations," she says.



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# ROSL WORLD

## The latest from the global branches



**A WINNING TIME:** Trio Scintillatum, ROSL NZ 2007 Scholarship winners, enjoy lunch and a river trip during their visit to the Exeter Branch; James Kliffen, head of fundraising for Médecins Sans Frontières accepts a cheque for £800 from the chairman of Taunton Branch, Nigel Stuart-Thorn; Royal Schools Music Club competition for Young Singers winner, Morgan Cowling, is presented with her prize of AU\$500

### Bath

Four branch members joined the Somerset-area trip to London in September. At the autumn lunch, held at the Bath and County Club, 31 members and guests enjoyed a talk by League member Geraldine Lindley on the summer she spent working with Arab royalty. Coffee mornings are held monthly on the second Wednesday of the month at Pratt's Hotel. Sally Roberts, 01823 661148, rosl@aldith.org

### Bournemouth

In the midst of a rainy spell in July, branch members were fortunate to have fine weather for their annual Garden Party, hosted by Elizabeth Granville-Lewis. In August, 11 members travelled to London to enjoy a weekend at Over-Seas House, where they were cordially welcomed. The final event in the Summer Programme was a trip to the privately owned Heale Gardens near Salisbury at the beginning of September. Members stopped in Salisbury on the return journey. Marjorie Harvey, 01202 674857

### Cheltenham

In July, 12 members enjoyed a long weekend (the hottest of the summer) at Over-Seas House. Many visited sights of interest, such as the Hadrian Exhibition, Kew Gardens,

Kenwood, Canary Wharf and the Wallace Collection. Some even had time to take in a show. Branch member George Johnston started off the September 2008 – June 2009 programme of talks and afternoon teas with a talk on the Cocos-Keeling Atoll and a film on coral reefs.

Kathleen Northage, 01242 515540

### Exeter

In July, the branch held its annual picnic at Fursdon. After lunch in the grounds, some members took a tour of the house. At the end of July, Trio Scintillatum, the 2007 Pettman/ROSL ARTS New Zealand scholarship winners, gave two recitals as part of the Budleigh Salterton Festival, which was attended by several members. Between the recitals, the branch vice-chairman joined the musicians for lunch and a river trip. In mid-August, a group of members spent a long weekend at Over-Seas House, London. The first meeting of the new season – a talk on the Silk Road by Sir John Aske Bt – was held on 26 September at St Olave's Hotel.

Brian Hawkes, 01395 442017

### New South Wales

The branch would like to pay tribute to Carole Lye, who recently retired from her post as

honorary secretary. Carole did a marvellous job, creating goodwill and increasing membership. She is replaced by Lily Murray. Earlier this year, branch members attended a Commonwealth Day Lunch, held in the presence of the Governor of New South Wales. Jason Ronald from the Melbourne branch was also a guest.

Lily Murray, murraylily@hotmail.com

### New Zealand

With membership holding at more than 1,000, the seven active New Zealand branches continue to meet, regularly enjoying the stimulus of good speakers. The upcoming Christmas lunches are a highlight of the year, many of which will be accompanied by young musicians. Musical house concerts are also popular events, and New Zealand director, Lyn Milne, welcomes contact from members interested in opening up their homes.

Lyn Milne, royalo-s@xtra.co.nz, www.roslnz.org.nz

### Taunton

In September, 16 branch members joined the Somerset-area weekend visit to Over-Seas House, London, where they enjoyed a reception with the director-general, a visit to Sutton House in Hackney, and a day out in

Windsor and Eton, with a boat trip and college tour. The winter season began with a lunch in October with guest speaker James Kliffen, head of fundraising for Médecins Sans Frontières, who spoke about the problems of turning donations into the delivery of front-line aid. Mr Kliffen was presented with a cheque for £800, which members raised for the charity last year. Weekly coffee mornings on Wednesdays at the Brewhouse Theatre continue to be very popular.

Sally Roberts, 01823 661148, rosl@aldith.org

### Victoria

All members in Australia were pleased when Quentin Bryce, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, accepted an invitation from the ROSL Australia chairman, Jason Ronald, to become the National Patron during her tour of duty. Thanks were extended to Major-General Michael Jeffrey for his time as the National Patron.

In September, the Victoria Branch hosted a black-tie dinner at the Athenaeum Club in Collins Street, with guest speaker High Court Judge, the Hon Justice Michael Kirby, the longest serving judicial officer in Australia. The 2008 winner of the ROSL Bursary in the Opera Awards is Suzanne Shakespeare, a soprano from Victoria who graduated from the University of Melbourne and the Victorian College of the Arts. Suzanne has performed with Opera Australia's Oz Opera, Victorian Opera and Melbourne Opera, and was a finalist in the 2006 Herald Sun Aria Awards. Coral Strahan, +61 (0)3 9654 8338

### Western Australia

The highlight of the branch's winter programme was the Royal Schools Music Club competition for young singers. The adjudicator, Caitlan Hulcup, commented on the extremely high standard of contestants and presented the branch award of AU\$500 to soprano Morgan Cowling. The second prize of AU\$200 was awarded to Elena Perroni, who is also a soprano.

Jeff Turner, +61 9381 2600

### West Cornwall

In September, the League Chairman, Stanley Martin, and his wife joined members at a social evening at Trevethoe House, Lelant, and enjoyed a recital by young musicians from the Bolitho School in Penzance. The programme of monthly afternoon talks, which are followed by a Cornish cream tea, begins in October. They offer a diverse variety of

## Royal visit for the Hong Kong Branch

**In August, the Hong Kong Branch hosted a royal cocktail reception in aid of the Hong Kong Down's Syndrome Association, at the China Club in Central Hong Kong. The 170 guests, including members of the branch and other Royal and Commonwealth groups in Hong Kong, as well**



**as distinguished local citizens, were greeted on arrival by 'Beefeaters'. After receiving a souvenir booklet that contained messages from the British Consul-General, the charity, and the League, they sampled the branch's special pink champagne cocktail and enjoyed some fine canapés.**

**At 6.30pm, branch president Paul Surtees welcomed to the party Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, her husband, Vice-Admiral Timothy Laurence, and her son Peter Phillips and his wife Autumn, who had just arrived to live in Hong Kong. The ROSL chief committee officers, including Perveen Crawford (vice-president), John Shannon (chair of the branch's Charity Fundraising Committee), Maxim Chan (vice-president), George Chan and Robert Lam, were then presented to the Royal party.**

**After the national anthem, Paul Surtees gave a welcome speech and Sir David Tang, president of the Hong Kong Down's Syndrome Association, expressed the association's appreciation for the support generated by the evening. This was followed by a toast to a successful Olympics. The Princess Royal and her husband then spent more than an hour circulating through the packed chamber, meeting and chatting with most of the guests, including members of the Royal British Legion and Hong Kong Ex-Servicemen's Association, Sir Mark and Lady Weinburg, Lady Black, Dame Vivien Duffield and Hon. Robert Hanson.**

**The reception was sponsored to limit costs, and those attending donated large cheques to the charities and bought tickets for a raffle organised by Perveen Crawford. The Hong Kong Down's Syndrome Association was the main beneficiary, with donations also presented to The Hong Kong Federation of the Blind, the Save the Children Fund and the Clwyd Special Riding Centre in Wales.**

**Farewell gifts from the League were presented to the royal party before their departure at 8pm. The raffle was then drawn and one lucky winner won a luxury weekend in Beijing. The evening ended with a rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne'.**

**Both the branch and the entire League are deeply appreciative of the support of The Princess Royal and Vice-Admiral Timothy Laurence in making this gathering truly royal.**



**Paul Surtees,  
president@rosl.org.hk  
Branch contact:  
www.rosl.org.hk**



**A MUSICAL EVENT:** Stanley Martin meets members of the West Cornwall Branch during a social evening at Trevethoe House

topics, including energy policy, painting in West Cornwall, Borneo and New Zealand. Members are also looking forward to welcoming Lady Mary Holborow, Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, as Guest of Honour at the annual lunch.

Ian Wood, 01736 333460

## West Sussex

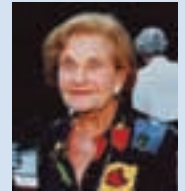
The Branch began its autumn programme in early October, with an enjoyable lunch with guest speaker Roderick Lakin, director of ROSL ARTS. As he had talked to members about the League's involvement in music and visual arts in the past, he spoke mainly on literature this time.

Marilyn Archbold, 01444 458853

## Obituaries

### Mavis Bowskill (1918–2008)

The Victoria Branch regrets to announce the death of Mavis Bowskill, a Life Member of the League and a generous benefactor to the Arts in London. Mavis spent a great deal of her holiday time at Over-Seas House, London, and was considered by all to be a kind and delightful lady. Robert Newell knew her with affection throughout his time at the League – over 30 years. Mavis joined the League in 1966 and was made a Life Member in 1998. Coral Strahan, Victorian Branch secretary, represented the League at her funeral, and offered the League's deepest sympathy to her niece and family.



### Trevor Everett (1931–2008)

The death of Western Australia Branch vice-chairman, Trevor Everett, in September has been the cause of much sadness. Trevor had been a member for more than 50 years and contributed in so many ways to the branch during that time. He began in the very active Young Members group during the 1960s, and later made his home available for garden parties, often with musical entertainment. During the re-forming years of the branch, he was elected vice-chairman. He was always generous with his time and his offers of transport for members. He was a member of the Joint Societies Council and actively participated and assisted in all events. Trevor will be sadly missed – he was a true Samaritan.

### Joseph Alexander Ferenci (1927–2008)

It is with regret that the Alberta Branch announces the death of Joseph Alexander Ferenci on 15 August after a courageous battle with brain cancer. Joe was branch president in the late 1980s, and treasurer for more than 20 years. Born in Hungary, he came to Vancouver with his family as a small boy, relocating to Edmonton in the 1950s. Joe joined the League in 1980 and was an extremely active member. He was noted in local ROSL circles for his basement pub, the 'ROSL & Crown', where many local functions were held. He will be sadly missed and forever remembered by his many friends for his kindness and generosity.

# New home from home

Why the bedrooms at Over-Seas House are now more comfortable than ever

At Over-Seas House, all bedrooms on the fourth and fifth floor of the Westminster Wing have been refurbished and new bathrooms have been installed. By clever redesign, extra space has been created. Rooms division manager Rachid Mellah, head housekeeper Deisy Garcia and head of maintenance Paul Streat, combined their efforts to achieve comfortable and practical bedrooms. The initial response from members has been very positive.



# Books

Reviews of the latest works from League members

## 'The Flavour of the Mintoff Era: Secret Negotiations Made Public'

**John Manduca**  
Printwell Ltd, 2008

ISBN-13: 978-99932-0-610-1 (paperback), €25;  
ISBN-13: 978-99932-0-611-8 (hardback), €30 plus  
postage. Email [michael\\_tabone@hotmail.com](mailto:michael_tabone@hotmail.com) or call  
+35 6 7927 8509 for more information



This book will particularly interest readers who know Malta. Some may have served there before 1979, when the British Armed Forces were forced to withdraw by the Oxford-educated Prime Minister, Dom Mintoff, who was described by Edward Heath as 'extraordinary'. John Manduca was High Commissioner for Malta in London from 1987–1990, soon after Mintoff lost power, and has written many books about his home country. The British official papers of the period are now available and Manduca has used them to great effect. He analyses the reports to London by eight British high commissioners, from 1971–1987, which provide a fascinating account of Mintoff (now 92), who dominated Maltese political life for a generation and damaged Anglo-Maltese relations for many years. Britain and Malta have been closely linked now for more than two centuries, and this book is an important addition to our understanding of that link.

**Stanley Martin**

## 'The Templar'

**Paul Doherty**  
Headline, 2008

ISBN-13: 978-0755338504 (paperback), £7.99



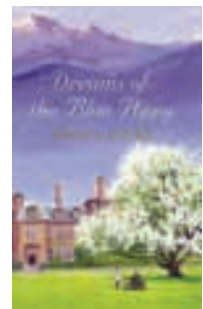
*The Templar* is the latest in a series of historical mystery novels penned by Paul Doherty. If you are a fan of *The Da Vinci Code* then this, Doherty's 52nd novel, should keep you entertained. Set in 1095 as Pope Urban II launches the First Crusade, it is the first of what I expect to be a series of exciting Templar tales. The soon-to-be founders of the Templar Order, Hugh de Payens and Godefroi of St Omer, leave their homes in Burgundy, with a plan to march to Jerusalem. Their quest is to find the relics of Jesus in the grounds of the Holy City and liberate Christians from Muslim rule in the Middle East. The ferocity of the battles and massacres that ensue do away with any theory of a just or holy war, and have a certain resonance today.

**David Jeffries**

## 'Dreams of the Blue Poppy'

**Angela Locke**  
Robert Hale Ltd, 2007

ISBN-13: 978-0709082828 (hardback), £18.99



Set in the Cumbrian fells, *Dreams of the Blue Poppy* tells the story of two families connected over four generations by a complex web of secrets. Forbidden to walk because of a weak heart, Charles Fergusson has his world turned upside down when he is confronted by Betty, a feisty servant girl, who challenges him to get up and walk. Their relationship blossoms, but their dreams take them in different directions – Charles undertakes a life-threatening mission to the Himalayas to find his grandmother's favourite blue poppy. The mystery slowly unravels and, with a faint echo of *The Secret Garden*, the story is brought to a satisfying close.

**Samantha Whitaker**

## 'Jacobites'

**Pamela Hill**  
United Writers Publications, 2008

ISBN-13: 978-1852001292 (hardback), £16.95



Pamela Hill has written an erudite and well-researched book on Scottish history. It covers the Jacobite cause from the time of James II's flight from the country.

Pamela has included some most interesting facts about the various Jacobite personalities, which, combined with her insightful observations of the era, make her latest book a fascinating read in addition to it being a genuinely academic work.

**Robert Newell**

## Other books by members

**Iraq: Searching for Hope**

Andrew White, ISBN-13: 978-0826497161, £7.99,  
Continuum, 2007

**One Man's Israel**

Neville Teller, ISBN-13: 978-1425137540, £9.99 (paperback),  
Trafford Publishing, 2008

DISCOVERING BRITAIN

# Slip, sliding away



© PHIL FREEMAN

Olympic fever hit the nation and everyone got a little more sporty. But what happens in winter? **Cecilia Thom** discovers a sport for the colder climes

It's easy to think that, now winter is drawing in, sports have to take a bit of a back seat. But many are only played during the colder months. Curling, for instance. Invented by the Scottish some 500 years ago, it is often called 'bowls on ice'. I wanted to find out what it was really all about.

There aren't a lot of people that manage to try curling, which is no surprise given that most of the UK's rinks are in Scotland. But now, thanks to Ernest Fenton, it's accessible to those of us who don't live in the north. Ernest is an avid curler, whose frustration at having to travel to Scotland to curl drove him to build England's only curling rink. Now we can all get in on the fun.

Fenton's Rink is just outside Tonbridge and offers full instruction for complete beginners or the chance to compete in a league if you already know your way around the 'sheet'. This is the lane on which you play, and part of the terminology you will pick up if you head down to learn the ropes. Which is what I did one Sunday.

I arrived at the rink in time for an afternoon session and met Gordon, who was to be my instructor. After a full safety briefing, he noted my shoe size and gave me the necessary broom, curling shoes and 'kipper'. One curling shoe has a base coated in teflon, which allows you to slide on the ice (and the carpet!), and the kipper is the removeable rubber sole that you put over this when you don't want to slide anywhere. That would definitely come in handy! Clearly, I was a little nervous. It had been some 20 years since I'd last been in a rink and I had visions of falling over straight away. With Gordon's reassurance, and using the broom for balance, I took my first tentative step onto the ice. Although it took a bit of getting used to, by the end of the session, I was perfectly at home on the ice, whether I used the kipper or not. So, here I was, ready to curl.

Gordon's tuition proved to be outstanding. We started with an easy introduction – throwing (or 'delivering') the stone from a static position, which gave me time to get

used to the feel of it and how much or how little force I needed to exert to get a highly polished, three-stone granite block to the other end of the rink and into the 'house' (target). After a couple of tries at this, it was easy to see how curling can become addictive. You don't get in the house and you want to, you get in and you want to get closer to the centre of the target. It's impossible to stop – and this is without any opponents.

After the simplicity of the static throw, Gordon made it clear it was time to move on and learn how to deliver the stone while sliding. I'd been watching all the curlers and some of them were in their 60s, maybe older – if they could do it with confidence, why couldn't I? That didn't stop me from letting another novice go first, but then my competitive spirit returned and I just had to give it a go. And there I was – curling like, well, a beginner, but we all have to start somewhere. I was already looking forward to having a proper game and using the broom to sweep a teammate's stone into the house, or an opponent's stone out of it.

The social side of curling at Fenton's also added to the day. Once off the ice, everyone retired to the bar and I was approached by people who wanted to know how I'd come to be there and if I would be returning to play with them before the end of the season in April. And, you know, what? I just might. And I'd encourage anyone to come with me.



© PHIL FREEMAN

**IN THE RINK:** League games are in full swing (above), while I have a beginners' lesson (top)

For information, prices and bookings, call Fenton's Rink on 01892 826004 or visit [www.fentonsrink.co.uk](http://www.fentonsrink.co.uk).





## MIRIAM MARGOLYES' LONDON

LONDON

### What's on...

#### When did you first perform on a London stage?

I was Barbara Windsor's understudy in Tony Richardson's *The Threepenny Opera* in 1972 at the Piccadilly Theatre. There were a lot of girls 'on the game' around the theatre at night after the show, some of whom I made friends with.

#### Do you have a favourite theatre?

I love the National Theatre; it is my ambition to perform there before I die. The South Bank is always buzzing with people having fun – exactly how it should be. But my favourite theatres are the smaller ones: The Gate, The Bush, The Red Lion, and particularly The Duke of York's Theatre, where I performed *Dickens' Women* in 1991.

#### Would you like to have lived in Dickens' London?

No. You had to be rich to have a good life in those days. Dickens' London is poor, dirty and dank, and full of cholera. Rotherhithe, where I filmed *Little Dorrit*, still looks quite Dickensian; it is very historic and beautiful.



**TIME TRAVEL:** The Dickens Room at Dennis Severs' House, Folgate Street

#### How do London audiences compare to other audiences?

They are wiser, more generous but also more discriminating. They certainly don't rush to their feet quite so readily as audiences in America.

#### Where do you go to relax?

The Clapham Manor Swimming Baths or Tooting Bec Lido. I also like to walk, usually along the Wandsworth Road to Vauxhall, and to take a boat along the Thames to Greenwich. I love London buses, and now that I've got my freedom pass I am always on them.

#### Do you have a favourite shop?

I collect 18th-century political cartoons and treat myself at Andrew Edmonds on Lexington Street in Soho whenever I get a job. I love secondhand bookshops, especially My Back Pages in Balham. I recommend the Chancery Lane Silver Vaults; the world's largest retail collection of fine antique silver is traded from within its vaults.

#### What do you miss when you are away?

The old buildings, BBC Four, Smith's crisps and Cadbury's Whole Nut. I love the way London has so many neighbourhoods that can be explored, and how it is simply overflowing with history.

#### In your opinion, what is London's best-kept secret?

Dennis Severs' House near Spitalfields. Severs recreated each room in a different historic style. The place feels like a time capsule. Another gem is the Charles Dickens Museum on Doughty Street. It has the pottery monkey that he always insisted was in place before he started work.

**League member Miriam Margolyes is an award-winning actress and voice artist. She was awarded an OBE in 2002 for her services to drama and has recently toured internationally with her one-woman show, *Dickens' Women*. Interview by Samantha Whitaker.**

#### Cirque du Soleil: Quidam

Royal Albert Hall  
4 January–7 February

Cirque de Soleil's popular show is bursting with electric energy. A young girl finds herself in the mysterious land of Quidam and is entertained by colourful characters in eccentric costumes, who perform wild juggling, trapeze and balancing acts.

**Tickets: £16–£69.50.**

**Contact: 020 7589 8212 or [www.royalalberthall.com](http://www.royalalberthall.com)**



#### Byzantium 330–1453

Royal Academy  
Until 22 March 2009

This ambitious exhibition provides a grand survey of 1,000 years of history, incorporating more than 300 objects, some of which have never before been displayed in public.

**Tickets: £12; concessions £10. Contact: 0870 848 8484 or [www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)**

#### The Royal Opera: Rigoletto

Royal Opera House  
10 February–1 March 2009

This Royal Opera revival of Verdi's great chorus opera, which features favourites such as 'La donna e mobile' and 'Caro nome', is led by the renowned conductor, Daniel Oren.

**Tickets: Prices not yet available.**

**Contact: 020 7304 4000 or [www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)**

# Mid-week wonders

Over-Seas House front office manager and holiday bargain-hunter **Seda Haceryan** on how to take a short-stay flight to Europe for as little as 2p

The term 'budget airline' is not exactly inspiring, but if you can be flexible with dates, and can do without the plasticky aeroplane meal, you could be jetting off on a European mini-break for as little as 2p. With only a few conditions, such as checking in online (which also saves you time at the airport) and paying with certain credit cards, Ryanair offers ridiculously cheap flights to 29 European destinations, from Aberdeen to Zadar.

Single Ryanair flights average at around £30. There is an extra cost if you want to check in baggage, but if you are staying at Over-Seas House, you can leave any big suitcases with reception and take the essentials as hand luggage.

I browsed the Ryanair website this summer and, before I knew it, I had booked two holidays without even checking that I had

enough annual leave! I flew to Amsterdam in September for £1 each way; there were no taxes and no extras. I booked the accommodation through easytobook.com, which was exactly that, and paid £35 for a double. Our hotel was centrally located and, as everyone cycles in Amsterdam, we hired bikes at €9 for 24 hours, and cycled around the city taking in the sights, and stopping to visit the Van Gogh Museum.

Two weeks later, I was back on a plane – this time to Sardinia, for £10 each way. We booked four nights' accommodation for £75 per person, this time through hostelbookers.com. The apartment was well equipped, and just a 10-minute walk from the beach, supermarket and town centre. We enjoyed lovely food, did some fishing and hired a car to explore the island.



**THE SCENIC ROUTE:** Seda rides the bike she hired for €9 along Amsterdam's canals

Ryanair flies from London Gatwick, Luton and Stanstead to bases in 26 European countries. Visit [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com).

# Arts in the city

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

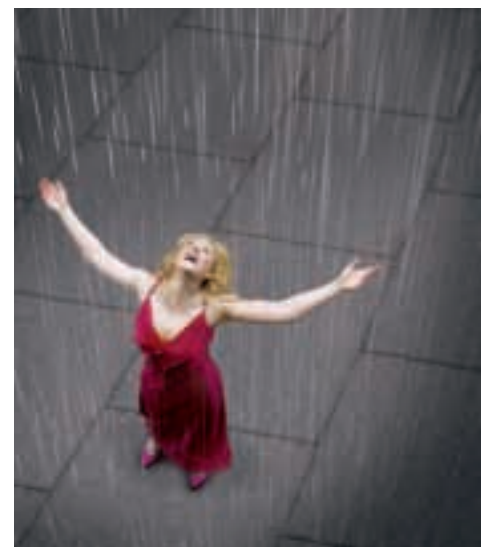
It is festive season in the Festival City, and the Royal Lyceum Theatre presents C S Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, (28 November–3 January). This is followed by *The Man Who Had All the Luck* by Arthur Miller (16 January–14 February) and *The*

*Mystery of Irma Vep* by Charles Ludlam (20 February–14 March).

The Proclaimers' musical *Sunshine on Leith* is at the Festival Theatre throughout December, and Scottish Ballet presents *Sleeping Beauty* there on 7–10 January. The Royal Scottish National Opera performs Beethoven's Fifth on 21 January and Borodin's Second, led by conductor Lavarev, on 30 January. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra performs Mendelssohn's *Elijah* on 29 January. Raymond Gubbay's *Strictly Strauss* is followed by a performance from the Glen Miller Orchestra on 22 February, making up a popular double bill.

The King's Theatre pantomime is *Aladdin* (29 November–18 January), and *Jolson & Co: The Musical* plays there from February 27 to March 7. The Playhouse has *Mary Poppins* and *The Witches of Eastwick* in December, followed by dance in January, with *Swan Lake* and *Coppelia*.

**SONG AND DANCE:** *Sunshine on Leith* (right) and Scottish Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty* (below)



In the visual arts, the work of Gerhard Richter (until 4 January) and Dutch Mannerist Hendrick Goltzius (until 8 February) can be seen at the National Gallery. *The Intimate Portrait: Drawings, Miniatures and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence* are on display at the National Portrait Gallery until 1 February.



## Panto is for kids. Oh no it isn't!

**Samantha Whitaker** picks the best pantomimes and seasonal shows this winter

"Adults are forever children at heart," says writer Andrew Pollard, "which is why pantomime is true family entertainment." It may also be why he has just written his fifth pantomime for the Greenwich Theatre, an all-singing, all-dancing production of *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

"Pantomime should be big, brash and bold, but most of all it should be about participation," he continues. Inside the theatre, the cast and the audience unite to create a show together.

With *Jack and the Beanstalk*, the team has made a shorter show that is really focused on the children, making it the perfect choice for a child's first pantomime experience. That said, King Boris – thrown in with a traditional nod to current affairs – is sure to stir up controversy for the adults in the house.

The audience is also central to The London Pantomimers' production of *Robinson Crusoe and the Pirates* at the Intimate Theatre in Palmers Green. Children will be given flags on arrival, and taught an oath to recite when the pirate battle commences. This is the 63rd pantomime by the amateur dramatics group, made up of members of the Southgate and Haringey Scouting movement. When I sat in on an early rehearsal, the church hall was buzzing as the 40-strong cast sang 'Good morning Liverpool!' to the tune of the opening song from *Hairspray*.

If you fancy something a bit chillier, you should try *Peter Pan*



© HERBIE KNOTT

**CHRISTMAS CRACKERS:** 'The Snowman' provides a spectacle of dance and mime for all the family (above) and Britt Ekland stars in 'Cinderella' at the Shaw Theatre (below)

of love, and the rehearsal I attended was punctuated by endless commands to "keep still!" and "stop spinning!" The cast of young skaters mime to pre-recorded dialogue, with a chorus of children – some as young as five – dancing on ice to bring the story of Wendy and Peter to life. After weeks of practise (during which their parents patiently piece together the costumes and scenery), the result will be a truly inspirational skating spectacular – just don't forget your thermals!

If you find the glamour of minor celebrities appealing, *Cinderella* at the New Wimbledon Theatre stars Gareth Gates, Joanna Page and Alistair McGowan, while the Shaw Theatre lets Dominic Littlewood and Britt Ekland loose on the same story. For one of the best pantos in town, try *Mother Goose* at the Hackney Empire. The usual spectacle, mayhem and comedy in 'Hackneytopia' will be extra sparkly this year, as the team celebrates its 10th anniversary.

*The Snowman* is running for its 11th consecutive year at the Peacock Theatre. The story of the boy whose snowman comes to life is told through the captivating combination of dance and mime, with a cast of colourful characters, including dancing penguins, reindeer, a snow princess and Father Christmas himself. The colours, costumes, movement and magical music, played by a live orchestra, make *The Snowman* an ideal introduction to dance for even very young children, and a wonderful way to begin the festive season.

***Jack and the Beanstalk*, Greenwich Theatre, 2 December–4 January. Tickets: £14–£22. Contact: [www.greenwichtheatre.org.uk](http://www.greenwichtheatre.org.uk)**

***The Snowman*, Peacock Theatre, 3 December–11 January. Tickets: £12–£30. Contact: 0844 412 4322 or [www.sadlerswells.com](http://www.sadlerswells.com)**

***Robinson Crusoe and the Pirates*, The Intimate Theatre, 4–13 December. Tickets: £11, £8 concessions. Contact: 01992 304327 or [www.thelondonpantomimers.org.uk](http://www.thelondonpantomimers.org.uk)**

***Cinderella*, New Wimbledon Theatre, 5 December–18 January. Tickets: £15–£27. Contact: 0870 060 6646**

***Cinderella*, The Shaw Theatre, 9 December–3 January. Tickets: £18.50; concessions £9.50. Contact: 0871 594 3123 or [www.theshawtheatre.com](http://www.theshawtheatre.com)**

***Peter Pan on Ice*, Alexandra Palace, 15–21 December. Tickets: £9; concessions £7. Contact: 020 8365 4386 or [icerink@alexandrapalace.com](mailto:icerink@alexandrapalace.com)**

***Mother Goose*, Hackney Empire, 29 November–10 January. Tickets: £9–£21.50. Contact: 020 8985 2424 or [www.hackneyempire.co.uk](http://www.hackneyempire.co.uk)**



# ROSL ARTS

**Eoghan O'Neill** provides an overview of the winter arts programme



## Music events

### Over-Seas House Princess Alexandra Hall

#### Inspired by Fred and Ginger

Wednesday 3 December, 7pm

Sarah Field (saxophone/trumpet)

Maria King (piano)

Monika Molnar (dancer)

Following the sell-out success of Tango last



**INSPIRATION:** Music and dance inspired by Fred and Ginger

year, Sarah Field returns to Over-Seas House with a programme of 1920s dance music by composers such as George Gershwin, Rudy Wiedoft and Duke Ellington. The audience is welcomed with a cocktail before young ballroom star Monika Molnar, a Latin/Brazilian dance specialist, demonstrates dances of the era – swing and lindy hop, rumba, charleston, foxtrot and samba – with live musical accompaniment. There is then the chance to learn some of the moves in a dance class.

**Tickets: £10; ROSL members and concessions £9; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8. A cocktail is included in the ticket price.**

#### Gala Concert in the presence of HRH Princess Alexandra

Monday 26 January, 6.30pm

A concert to celebrate the installation of a new Steinway concert grand piano in Princess Alexandra Hall. The purchase of this magnificent new instrument was made possible thanks to donations, legacies and subscriptions to the Friends of ROSL ARTS. A champagne reception in the Hall of India will be followed by an hour-long programme of solo piano, chamber music and song given by ROSL prizewinners. After the concert, Commonwealth wines and canapés will be served.

**Tickets: £50; ROSL members and concessions £45; Friends of ROSL ARTS £40. NB Priority booking for donors to the piano appeal and Friends of ROSL ARTS until 4 January 2009.**

#### 57th ROSL Annual Music Competition 2009

Tuesday 3 February, 7pm – Wind and percussion

Tuesday 10 February, 7pm – Singers

Tuesday 17 February, 7pm – Strings

Tuesday 24 February, 7pm – Keyboard

Friday 6 March, 7pm – Ensembles A (strings; strings and piano; piano duo/duet)

Friday 13 March, 7pm – Ensembles B (wind, percussion and mixed ensembles)

Tuesday 17 March, 7pm – Overseas awards

During February and March, Over-Seas House becomes a hive of musical activity as several hundred young musicians compete for a place in the section finals of the ROSL Annual Music Competition. The section finals are open to the public, and are an ideal way to hear some of the brightest talent currently emerging in the classical music world.

After the performances, there will be the opportunity to speak to performers and judges over a glass of wine. This will be the first competition to feature the new arrival in Princess Alexandra Hall – a brand new Steinway Model D concert grand piano.

**Tickets to section finals: £10; ROSL members and concessions £9; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8. Wine is included in the ticket price.**

**An advance date for your diaries:**

**The Grand Final of the 57th Annual ROSL Music Competition will take place in the Queen Elizabeth Hall on London's South Bank on Tuesday 5 May at 7pm.**

## Visual arts

### Over-Seas House, London

#### Jason Gibilaro: New York

Monday 26 January–Thursday 26 February

Jason Gibilaro first exhibited at the League in 1986. The exhibition at Over-Seas House this winter features work he produced between 2002 and 2006 in New York. This series of paintings explores the urban environment and the effect it has on individuals and the population as a whole.

Tickets for ROSL ARTS events are available from the ROSL ARTS office (unless otherwise stated). Tel: 020 7408 0314 x324; Email: [culture@rosl.org.uk](mailto:culture@rosl.org.uk).



## OVERSEAS MUSIC SCHOLARS VISIT THE UK

During the summer months, Over-Seas House played host to musicians from all corners of the world, who came to the UK on ROSL scholarships. Following in the footsteps of the Antipodes Quartet, Trio Scintillatum spent a month in the UK as winners of the Pettman/ROSL ARTS New Zealand Chamber Music Scholarship. The trio – Amalia Hall (violin), Sophie Williams (cello) and John-Paul Muir (piano) – who recently finished their studies at the University of Auckland, had extensive coaching from top chamber musicians in London and spent a week at Dartington International Summer School.

They also gave a concert at St Martin-in-the-Fields and delighted guests at the Friends of ROSL ARTS Garden Party, before performing at Budleigh Salterton Festival. After that, they travelled to Edinburgh to take part in ROSL ARTS' series of concerts on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, presenting works by Beethoven, Rachmaninov, Dvorak and Chausson.

The Edinburgh Festival series was in its ninth year and, despite the credit crunch and a box office system fiasco at the Fringe, the League's concerts remained immensely popular, and the majority of the 28 concerts were completely sold out. The concerts were very well received. Writing in *The Herald* about a Bach for Breakfast concert, the Scottish Culture Minister, Linda Fabiani, said: "It was a marvellous way to start the day and I wish I could do it more often. If we could all start the day with music like that then we would all be better off." A reviewer in *Three Weeks* said: "This was relentlessly absorbing music – I left feeling like I had been submerged in it and didn't want to come up for air."

For the first time, two concerts were given at the National Gallery of Scotland under the banner 'Mozart with Masterpieces'. Violaist Zhou Yi from Singapore and New Zealand clarinetist Ellen Deurall joined forces with the Cappa Ensemble and Brodowski Quartet to perform Mozart Quintets.

Two pianists also spent time in the UK as ROSL scholars: Canadian Todd Yaniv and South African Ben Schoeman. As well as giving concerts in London and Edinburgh, Todd spent a week at the Lake District Summer Music Festival. Ben, who also appeared in the ROSL ARTS Edinburgh Fringe series, joined Zhou Yi at Dartington.

All the scholars enjoyed a range of coaching with some of the UK's top tutors. They also attended concerts by world-class musicians at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival, as well as experiencing a taste of true British culture: a performance of *Twelfth Night* at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park in the pouring rain!



**MUSICAL SUPPORT:** Trio Scintillatum with Barrie and Maureen Pettman and pianist Stephen de Pledge at the July Friends Garden Party. (L-r): Stephen de Pledge, Maureen Pettman, Amalia Hall, Barrie Pettman, John-Paul Muir, Sophie Williams

## EDINBURGH

# What's on...

## December–February

### December

#### R L Stevenson arts lunch

Wednesday 3 December, 12noon for 12.30pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Two-course lunch with prize-winning author Louise Welsh speaking on 'Stevenson and Dreams'. Tickets: £14.50; non-members £16.50, including coffee and glass of wine.

#### Bridge Club Christmas lunch

Friday 5 December, 12.30 for 1pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Members-only lunch with sherry. Tickets: £14.50.

#### Carol singing afternoon

Wednesday 10 December, 3–4pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Traditional carols and mince pies. Tickets: £5, including tea/coffee and mince pies.

#### Coffee morning

Saturday 13 December, 10.30am

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Coffee mornings are on the second Saturday of the month.

#### Christmas Day lunch

Thursday 25 December, 12noon for 12.30pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Three-course lunch with coffee and mince pies, plus gifts for all the family. Please note the earlier

start time. Tickets: £45, including Kir Royale and canapés on arrival.

#### Boxing Day lunch

Friday 26 December, from 12.30pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Three-course meal with wine. Table reservations from 12.30pm; last orders at 1.30pm. Tickets: £18, including wine.

#### Hogmanay dinner and dance

Wednesday 31 December

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Cocktails, three courses plus wine, champagne, black bun and shortbread. Music by Ceilidh Band. Roof access to view fireworks at midnight. Coach home within Edinburgh area at 1am. Tickets: £90.

### January

#### New Year's Day lunch

Thursday 1 January

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Three courses, wine and coffee, plus a glass of champagne on arrival. Please make reservations with the restaurant. Tickets: £18 for two courses; £21 for three courses.

#### Coffee morning

Saturday 10 January, 10.30am

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

#### Music with a view

Tuesday 20 January, 6.30pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh



TOP OF THE CLASS: The Yehudi Menuhin School orchestra

Gala opera evening with ROSL Annual Music Competition prizewinners and paintings by Douglas Crane. Tickets £30, including cocktail reception and supper. Priority booking for Friends of ROSL ARTS until 30 November.

#### Burns supper

Friday 30 January

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

*The Immortal Memory* will be given by Douglas Abercrombie of the Burns Federation at this three-course meal, with music from Kevin Thompson. Tickets: £25, including a sherry, a glass of whisky and wine.

### February

#### Arts lunch

Wednesday 4 February, 12noon for 12.30pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Two-course lunch plus coffee and glass of wine. Speaker tba. Tickets: £14.50; non-member £16.50.

#### Menuhin school concert

Friday 13 February, 6.30pm

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Pupils of the Yehudi Menuhin School perform. Tickets £8; non-members £10; Friends of ROSL ARTS £6, including wine and canapés.

#### Coffee morning

Saturday 14 February, 10.30am

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

## GLASGOW

# What's on...

### December

#### Christmas lunch

Friday 12 December, 12.30 for 1pm

Western Club, 32 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow

With special guest League Chairman Stanley Martin.

### January

#### Glasgow trams

Friday 9 January, 2pm

Western Club, 32 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow

Talk with speaker Brian Longworth.

### February

#### Jane Haining: Scottish missionary and martyr

Friday 6 February, 2pm

Western Club, 32 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow

With a talk by guest speaker Jim Carson, the godson of Jane Haining. Described as the 'Scottish Schindler', Jane Haining died in Auschwitz after working on behalf of Jewish children in Budapest.

# Food and drink



**TOP TEAM:** (l-r) Lauris Gudlevskis (assistant restaurant manager), Karina Ferreira (restaurant and cocktail bar manager) and François Closset (sommelier)

## Christmas Day lunch

*Thursday 25 December*

This event begins at noon with a drinks reception in Princess Alexandra Hall, after which guests will take their seats for a four-course lunch. This will be followed by The Queen's Speech, with the special day drawing to a close around 4pm. Tickets: £77.50, including half a bottle of wine and a gift.

## New Year's Eve candlelit dinner

*Wednesday 31 December*

For a night of fine dining and entertainment, book your ticket to our New Year's Eve candlelit dinner. A delicious four-course meal will be followed by music and dancing.

Members are asked to arrive at 9pm.  
Tickets: £85, including champagne on arrival.

## Private dining

Over-Seas house is also the perfect venue for entertaining friends and family for private luncheons or dinners; we have a number of exquisitely decorated rooms that can be hired at a discounted rate for members and are ideal for your Christmas party.

To make a reservation for any of the above please call Bianca on 020 7491 3644.

The Restaurant at Over-Seas House, London now offers members even better value for money. At lunch a two-course menu is offered at £19.95 and three courses at £24.95. In the evenings members can enjoy the à la carte choice, from which the best value selection would cost just £22.45 for two courses or £28.70 for three.

All the clarets listed are from our own cellars; we have some old and rare vintages at extremely good value. Harpists continue to entertain at dinner on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights and, on most occasions, the musician is Ieuan Jones, winner of the ROSL Gold Medal in 1985. Come and meet the new restaurant manager Karina Ferreira who will be happy to answer any questions or make a booking.

To make a reservation in the restaurant please call Karina on 020 7408 0214 ext 220.

## Mountbatten Room shines



The Mountbatten Room has been refurbished. This unique room with original period detail and feature fireplace looks brighter and more charming than ever. To book a private lunch or dinner, with our new fine-dining menus, please call Bianca on 020 7491 3644.

## Buckingham Palace Garden Party

**If you would like to be invited to one of the Buckingham Palace Garden Parties in July 2009, you must submit a request for consideration by noon on Friday 27 February by post only (no emails/faxes or phone calls please). Include your membership number and contact details for you and your guest (one per member only) and send to the PR Department, clearly marked 'Garden Party'. A ballot will be held and ONLY SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED. Please note that it is officials of Buckingham Palace who scrutinise applications and issue the invitations, which are not sent out until June.**



© ANTHONY DEVLIN/PA ARCHIVE/PA PHOTOS

## MEMBERS' ADVERTISING

**TANZANIA.** Bungalow for sale on beautiful unspoilt beach 40km south of Dar es Salaam. House accommodates 5-6 persons, adjacent guest house 3-4. Land Area 2.86 acres, infrastructure includes rain-fed water tanks and generator. Area completely undeveloped.

Tel 44 (0) 1736810714

Email: robinjuliabryant@hotmail.com

**TRUJILLO, SPAIN.** Beautifully restored 16th-century home (sleeps 8), to rent in Trujillo, Spain. Ideal for family holidays. Are you interested in history, architecture, wildlife, shooting, riding, arts and photography? Full details on this and town house property.

Web: www.trujilloespana.com

Members can advertise at a cost of £1 per word plus VAT, min 30 words. Copy for next issue by 6 January. Contact Alex Debarge on 020 7016 6906 or email adebarge@rosl.org.uk. No advertisements are endorsed or recommended by the Royal Over-Seas League.

### Correction

An out-of-date telephone number for Rheebockvlei South African Game Farm appeared on their advert in the last issue. The current number is 020 7629 2294



## 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.

Because, where there is a will, there is a way to help.

For more information, please phone us on 0800 169 2942 and ask to speak to 'Legacy Support', look us up on the web at [www.rafbf.org](http://www.rafbf.org) or write to:  
Legacies Officer, RAFBF,  
67 Portland Place, London W1B 1AR.



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

Name.....  
Membership number.....

Name of guest(s) and trip they are attending  
.....  
.....

UK address to which tickets should be sent  
.....  
.....

Telephone number  
.....

Please also provide regular correspondence address  
.....  
.....

I enclose a cheque for a total of £.....

(Payable to ROSL, crossed and in sterling)  
Credit card bookings by telephone only:  
020 7016 6906

### Please complete this form and send with cheque only to:

Alex Debarge, Public Relations Department (Members Events Programme), Royal Over-Seas League, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR. Tel: 020 7016 6906  
Email: adebarge@rosl.org.uk.

### PLEASE SEND A SEPARATE CHEQUE FOR EACH EVENT.

			No. of tickets	
<b>Festival of Christmas Carols and Readings</b>	Sun 7 Dec	£16	.....	£.....
<b>Wallace Collection</b>	Thur 29 Jan	£10	.....	£.....
<b>Kensington Palace</b>	Mon 9 Feb	£14	.....	£.....
<b>Guided Tour of the Royal Hospital</b>	Mon 16 Feb	£8.50	.....	£.....
<b>Commonwealth Day Service</b>	Mon 9 Mar	£6	.....	£.....
<b>Historic St James's</b>	Thur 12 Mar	£14	.....	£.....
<b>Chairman's Lunch</b>	Tues 12 May	£50	.....	£.....
			Total	£.....

APPLICATIONS FOR BALLOTTED TICKETS ONLY. MAXIMUM TWO TICKETS PER MEMBER. DO NOT SEND PAYMENT YET. YOU WILL ONLY BE CONTACTED IF SUCCESSFUL.

Backstage Tour of the BBC	Wed 4 Feb	No. of tickets .....	Apply before 19 Jan
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# Members' events

## December-March



### December

#### Festival of Christmas carols and readings

*Sunday 7 December, 3.30pm, £16, G*

The League's annual carol service at St James's, Piccadilly, followed by a traditional Christmas tea, with a visit from Santa Claus, at Over-Seas House, London. This is the perfect opportunity for members and their families to get into the festive spirit.

### January

#### Wallace Collection

*Thursday 29 January, 11am, £10, G*

Enjoy a guided tour of this wonderful national museum, most famous for its 18th- and 19th-century works of art collected by the first four Marquesses of Hertford and Sir Richard Wallace, the son of the fourth Marquess. Discover the finest French furniture, scul armour, porcelain and paintings.

### February

#### Backstage tour of the BBC

*Wednesday 4 February, 1.30pm, £11, B*

This guided tour of the most famous TV headquarters in the world will take you into studios, BBC News and a dressing room, with an opportunity to play in the interactive studio.

#### Kensington Palace

*Monday 9 February, 10.30am, £14, G*

Experience Kensington Palace and its grounds, the official residence of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke and Duchess of Kent, and Prince and Princess Michael of Kent. See the exhibitions, visit the state apartments and discover how Kensington Palace's royal owners have transformed the space since they acquired it in the late 17th-century. A brief talk will be given in the Orangery by the director of the Palace beforehand.



By kind permission of the Trustees of the Wallace Collection

**FINE ART AND EDIFICES:** The Back State Room at The Wallace Collection (above) and St James's Church, Piccadilly, viewed from Jermyn Street (top)

#### Guided tour of the Royal Hospital

*Monday 16 February, £8.50, 1.30pm, G*

Founded in 1682 by King Charles II and intended for the 'succour and relief of veterans broken by age and war', the Royal Hospital still serves its original purpose. On this tour you will learn about the architecture and history of this grade 1 listed building, as well as the unique life of the Chelsea pensioners.

#### Buckingham Palace Garden Party ballot

*Date and time tbc, no charge, B*  
Applications must be submitted by noon on **Friday 27 February 2009**. Please see announcement on page 31 for further details.

### March

#### Commonwealth Day Service

*Monday 9 March, £6, 3.15pm, G*  
The service will take place at

Westminster Abbey in the presence of The Queen.

#### Historic St James's

*Thursday 12 March, £14, 2pm, G*  
A Royal Palace, some of the oldest retail businesses in London, a Wren church and several gentlemen's clubs feature on this tour as we stroll around elegant St James's Square and hear about its famous inhabitants. Then we move on to Jermyn Street for the history of its shops, which include Floris and Paxton & Whitfield.

### 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.*

### Chairman's Lunch

*Tuesday 12 May, £50, 12.30pm, G*  
Drinks will be served before a delicious three-course spring lunch at Over-Seas House, London. Hosted by League Chairman Stanley Martin, with guest speaker to be announced. The AGM will follow at 4pm.

# 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 League members and guests are welcome. For more information please contact Tim Toyne Sewell, [timtoyne Sewell@googlemail.com](mailto:timtoyne Sewell@googlemail.com)

### More than just surviving

**1 December** With Chris Hingley, Rector of the Petra Schools in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, on the school's determination to develop during the present crisis.

### Freedom and human rights

**12 January** With Helena Kennedy QC, one of Britain's leading lawyers, who has spent her professional life championing civil liberties and promoting human rights.

### The problem with Western dumb-ocracies

**2 February** With Dr John Bird, social entrepreneur and founder of *The Big Issue*.

## LONDON GROUP

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

### A unique occasion: House of Lords

**4 December, 6.30-8.30pm**

A reception in the House of Lords to celebrate the 60th anniversary



© MATTHEW HOLLOWAY



© BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



DEREK SINUS © PARLIAMENTARY COPYRIGHT 2008

**STIMULATING EVENTS:** (clockwise from left) A harpsichord at the Handel House Museum (21 January); BMA House and garden (4 February); the House of Lords (4 December); and Dr John Bird, founder of *The Big Issue* (2 February)

of the London Group's re-formation after the Second World War, hosted by the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein. Tickets: £35. Apply to Doreen Regan, London Group, c/o Porters' Desk, Over-Seas House, London, and enclose a cheque payable to London Group ROSL. For more information, contact **Doreen Regan, 020 7584 5879**

### The honours system

**15 January** A talk by Richard Fitzwilliams, royal commentator, film critic and former editor of *International Who's Who*.

### Light fingers

**19 February** An amusing account

of the numerous tricks employed by shoplifters and those who apprehend them, by Brian Wass.

### LONDON GROUP OUTSIDE VISITS

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

### Handel House Museum

**21 January, 11am** View some of George Frideric Handel's manuscripts and enjoy a 30-minute soprano and harpsichord recital of his music on this guided visit to his home. Tickets: £17; LG members £15.

### British Medical Association

**4 February, 11am** A guided tour of BMA House and garden, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens. Tickets: £12; London Group members £10.

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

Please note that London Group meetings will be on the third Thursday of each month, starting in January 2009.

# Too old to fight

# Too proud to ask

For over 180 years the Gurkhas have helped to fight our wars and keep our peace. Gurkhas have won 13 Victoria Crosses and have served in most of the major conflicts of the 20th century.

If there was a minute's silence for every Gurkha casualty from World War Two alone, we would have to keep quiet for two whole weeks. But silence will not help the living, the wounded and disabled, those without military pensions following World War Two service or redundancy, or those left destitute by ill health or natural disasters.

There is no doubt that we in this country owe the Gurkhas a debt of honour, and the Gurkha Welfare Trust is seeking to repay that debt. The work of the Trust is now vital to the health, well-being and quality of life for thousands of Gurkha old soldiers and their dependants.

Please will you help us? Anything you can send now will be gratefully received and carefully used in relieving hardship and distress among Gurkha ex-servicemen and their dependants in Nepal.



*This is Rifleman Lalbahadur Thapa (L) aged 93 and his younger brother Rifleman Dilbahadur Thapa. Both served with 6th Gurkha Rifles throughout World War Two.*

*The brothers keep each other company on the five day walk they make every three months from their home village to the nearest Gurkha Welfare Trust Area Welfare Centre to collect their 'welfare pension'. This money is their only source of income and all that stands between them and destitution.*

I would like to help these proud, gallant people who served Britain so well and gave so much for my freedom. Here is my gift:

- £20 supports a soldier/widow for one month
- £60 supports a soldier/widow for three months
- £240 supports a soldier/widow for a whole year
- £..... my preferred amount

I may wish to sponsor a Welfare Pensioner each month. Please send details.

VISA/Mastercard/CAF card/Switch      Valid from      Expires

Switch Issue No.	Credit card security number (last 3 digits on back of card)	I enclose a cheque <input type="checkbox"/> (tick if applicable)	



**The Gurkha Welfare Trust**

PO Box 18215 · 2nd Floor · 1 Old Street · London EC1V 9XB  
Tel: 020 7251 5234 · www.gwt.org.uk    Registered Charity Number 1103669

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

Signature.....

Data Protection Act. We may occasionally wish to contact you about our work. If you would prefer that we do not, please tick here.

ROC



A New  
South African Experience



## RHEEBOKVLEI SOUTH AFRICAN GAME FARM

Rheebokvlei is a private game farm in the heart of the Limpopo Province where you will experience a variety of game in the African bush surrounded by majestic mountains and waterfalls. This private game farm provides luxury thatched chalets including morning refreshment, lunch and dinner in true African style in a Lapa or around an open-air Boma with a roaring fire under a galaxy of stars. A swimming pool is an added attraction. Experienced Rangers will meet your every need throughout your stay.

Transport will be provided from Johannesburg International airport or Polokwane airport.

Price: 100 euros per day/half price for under 11s.

For brochures and more information contact Connie Booth on  
Tel/Fax +44 (0) 207 495 4152 or email: [connie.booth@talk21.com](mailto:connie.booth@talk21.com)

