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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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OVERSEAS EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor Mr Mark Brierley: editor@rosl.org.uk; +44 (0)20 7408 0214 Design Zed: www.zedcreative.co.uk Display advertisements The Media Sales House: +44 (0)20 3004 7201; rosl@themediasaleshouse.co.uk

ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

Incorporated by Royal Charter
Patron Her Majesty The Queen
Vice-Patron Her Royal Highness
Princess Alexandra KG GCVO
President The Rt Hon the Lord Luce KG GCVO DL
Chairman Sir David Brewer KG CMG CVO
Vice-Chairman David Fall CMG*
Hon Treasurer Pro Tem Mr Phil Nicklin BA FCA*
Over-Seas House, Park Place, St Jamee's Street,
London SW1A 1LR; +44 (0)20 7408 0214;
Fax +44 (0)20 7499 6738; info@rosl.org.uk;
www.rosl.org.uk
Over-Seas House, 100 Princes Street,
Edinburgh EH2 3AB

CENTRAL COUNCIL

Ms Dena Arstall*, Mr Anjola-Oluwa Adeniyi Dip IoD, Mr Clive Carpenter, Prof Meryll Dean*, Mr David Fall CMG*, Mr Peter Fernandez FFCA, Miss Judith Fisher, Mr Tony Lavender, Mrs Helen MacPherson, Prof Eve Mitleton-Kelly, Mr David Nicholson*, Mr Phil Nicklin FCA, Mrs Pamela Voice, Mr Frank Wibaut, Mrs Anne Wilkinson *Executive Committee Director-General Dr Diana Owen +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x201

Director of Humanitarian and Education Projects
Ms Margaret Adrian-Vallance MBE:
+44 (0)20 7408 0214 x307; mvallance@rosl.org.uk

Director of Marketing Miss Gemma Matthews: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x204; gmatthews@rosl.org.uk Director of ROSL ARTS Mr Geoff Parkin: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x325; gparkin@rosl.org.uk Membership

+44 (0)20 7408 0214 x214; membership@rosl.org.uk

Catering Director

Mr Ian Sparrow: +44 (0)20 7629 0406; isparrow@rosl.org.uk

Print Gemini Print Group: +44 (0)127 346 4884

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"This has not dimmed our commitment to ROSL's purpose to 'give service to humanity at large"



What a start to my life at ROSL the last few weeks have been. By now, many of you will have heard of the decision taken by Central Council to close the Edinburgh clubhouse at the end of January, to properly assess the condition of the building and consider all the options for its future. As a long-standing part of Edinburgh's cultural life, ROSL is committed to maintaining our presence in the city and will continue to organise events, including our programme at this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe. You can read more details of this new arrangement in this edition of *Overseas*.

This new reality has not dimmed our commitment to ROSL's long-standing purpose to 'give service to humanity at large', as voiced by our founder Evelyn Wrench. Today, this is expressed through our arts and events programmes, and humanitarian and education projects. With the Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings taking place in London and Windsor in April, we thought this was the perfect opportunity to highlight our role as an accredited Commonwealth organisation.

A number of events will celebrate Commonwealth Day on 12 March, beginning with a service at Westminster Abbey, followed by a reception at the clubhouse. A concert from Kabantu, winners of the 2017 Mixed Ensemble Award at the 2017 Annual Music Competition (AMC), a CommonTies networking event for our younger members and the Big Lunch will celebrate our social and cultural links throughout the world.

Our long-standing events continue, such as the 2018 AMC, now in full swing. The weekly Section Finals have been running since mid-February and this year's competitors look set to make the Grand Final at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 4 June one of the best yet.

The warm welcome I have received since joining from you, the members, has been exceptional. I hope to meet many more of you at the Grand Final and at other events planned over the next few months, as well as on my travels to branches here in the UK and around the world.

Diana OwenDIRECTOR-GENERAL



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From the **EDITOR**

What does the Commonwealth mean to you? Ask that question amongst ROSL's membership and you're likely to receive a huge variety of answers, but all with a common thread running through them; the shared language, values, interests, history, and purpose. Those commonalities have held the organisation together since its inception.

To mark the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) taking place in London and Windsor in April, this issue of Overseas aims to look at the many facets of this vast organisation and highlight some of the lesser known areas in which it works.

Many people will have heard of the Commonwealth Games, this year to be held on the Gold Coast of Australia, but much of the other developmental and diplomacy work carried out by the organisation often flies under the radar. Tres Ann Kreme, Head of Good Office for Peace at the Commonwealth Secretariat, talks about conflict prevention.

Since its inception in 1949, one constant that has kept the Commonwealth together throughout its history, and will continue to do so into the future, is HM The Queen. Her tireless commitment has been in evidence throughout the decades. On page 32, we look at back at some of the overseas tours she has embarked upon in service of the Commonwealth.

Over that time, the UK's place in the world and the relationship it has with its former colonies, many of which are now Commonwealth members, has changed dramatically. With the spectre of Brexit on the horizon, the UK's relationship with the world around it is about to alter markedly once again. Could this be an opportunity for relationships forged through the Commonwealth to take on a new role? On page 28, Ross Davis speaks to Professor Philip Murphy, Director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the School of Advanced Study, University of London, about the possibilities the forthcoming exit from the EU offers.

And what of the role of ROSL in promoting the Commonwealth? Through its arts, humanitarian and education projects, the organisation has a long history of supporting young people throughout the Commonwealth. Margaret Adrian-Vallance gives an update on the latest humanitarian and education projects on page 14, while the events calendar on page 44, looks at just some of the work we are doing for the next generation of aspiring musicians, artists, and business leaders.

> **Mark Brierley** editor@rosl.org.uk

ROSL NEWS

The latest from our clubhouses, branches, and art, music, and humanitarian projects











ROSL Edinburgh's new home at the RSC

After careful consideration, ROSL Central Council took the decision to close the Edinburgh clubhouse at the end of January 2018, to review options for the future. In the meantime, members can enjoy a new home from home at the Royal Scots Club

Why is the clubhouse closing?

The decision to close the clubhouse was not taken lightly, and was based on reports and condition appraisals from buildings surveyors and consultants. The reports highlighted issues ranging from potential structural issues arising from corroded steelwork, to urgent masonry and window repairs, and the complete replacement of the majority of building systems and installations, which are at the end of their lifespan. Once these issues had been brought to the attention of Central Council, we had a duty to act upon their advice as soon as practicable. It is a complex picture and will require further opening-up

of the building to assess the extent and costs of the repairs required. This cannot be done while the building remains open to the public.

For many, the Edinburgh clubhouse is more than just a place to rest one's head, and we know the closure has been a shock to many. We want to take this opportunity to thank the staff and Edinburgh Committee, who have worked tirelessly to make the Edinburgh clubhouse such a welcoming and well-loved location. We hope that we can continue to create an active community of ROSL members in our new home at the Royal Scots Club (RSC).

DID YOU KNOW?

ROSL has had a clubhouse in the Scottish capital since 1927, first in Charlotte Street before purchasing 100 Princes Street in 1929; the club was opened by the Duke of York in 1930. The building, formerly the Windsor Hotel, a temperance establishment, was designed in 1879 by Robert Patterson and was part of the Victorian construction boom on Princes Street. Rebuilding plans for the Edinburgh club began in 1972 as a result of an initiative by Boots the Chemist, which bought part of the old building while leasing the upper floors back to ROSL to provide the much larger restaurant, the Princes Suite and bedrooms. Five years ago, significant urgent repair work was undertaken by ROSL on the chimneys and the roof.

At the heart of Edinburgh's cultural scene

As an Edinburgh fixture since 1930, it's vital to us that ROSL continues its strong participation in the city's arts, culture, and hospitality. We are delighted that we have been able to arrange a partnership with the Royal Scots Club.

Diana Owen, Director-General of ROSL, explains: "The Royal Over-Seas League plays an important role at the heart of Edinburgh's cultural scene and this will be safeguarded while we review the future of our listed building. The partnership with the Royal Scots Club will enable us to provide home-away-from-home clubhouse facilities for members who visit or live in Edinburgh.

"Our active ROSL Edinburgh Committee will continue its great work in organising a wide range of community events for Scottish members including monthly coffee mornings, monthly arts lunches, and celebratory dinners marking key dates in the Scottish calendar. We are pleased that these will be hosted by the branch at the Royal Scots Club."

ROSL ARTS will host the popular Music programme at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe from the Royal Scots Club in August. This classical music concert series brings some of the most talented young classical musicians to perform in a series of 30 concerts over two weeks to rave reviews and critical acclaim.

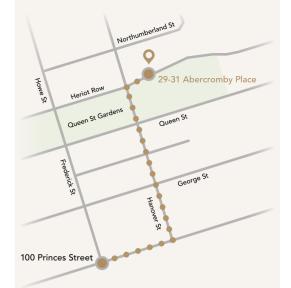
Using the Royal Scots Club

The RSC welcomes ROSL members from Scotland and the Borders to use the facilities of the clubhouse located at 29-31 Abercromby Place, and enjoy members' discount on dining and accommodation from 1 February 2018 for an initial three-month period. ROSL members will be asked to show a valid membership card and sign in on arrival. ROSL members visiting the Royal Scots Club are asked to abide by the RSC dress code and club rules which are available from

www.royalscotsclub.com.

ROSL members located in Scotland

and the Borders will receive a 30% discount on the best available bedroom rate. Accommodation bookings can be made directly with the club by calling the Reservations team on 0131 525 6165, emailing admin@royalscotsclub.com or by visiting the website and quoting reference code ROSL30. Members from across the UK and internationally will have reciprocal rights - receiving a 10% discount on accommodation - but they will need to request a letter of introduction from the ROSL Membership team (membership@rosl.org.uk) before visiting the club. Please quote reference number **ROSL10** to get 10% off the best available rates shown on the online booking site.



ROSL Edinburgh Branch events

Our ROSL Edinburgh Committee will continue their wide range of community events for Scottish members at the Royal Scots Club. Here are just some of the events planned:

SATURDAY 3 MARCH, 10.15AM

Coffee morning with author Millie Gray. **£5.**

MONDAY 12 MARCH, 12PM

Commonwealth Day lunch.

£30 members. Guests £35.

SATURDAY 7 APRIL, 10.15AM

Coffee morning with Stewart Conn, presenting a selection of his poetry describing Edinburgh and the changing seasons.

£5.

WEDNESDAY 18 APRIL, 12PM

A visit and lunch at the home of Mr & Mrs Osman in the Borders. **£35.**

SATURDAY 5 MAY, 10.15AM

Coffee morning with antiques expert Martin Cornish.

£5

WEDNESDAY 16 MAY, 6.30PM

Edinburgh Branch Annual General Meeting. **Free.**

Tickets can be booked directly by contacting the Royal Scots Club Membership Secretary on membership@royalscotsclub.com or by calling 0131 525 6157. Remember coffee mornings cost just £5 per person, please pay on arrival.

ROSL membership rates

Unfortunately, the timing of our announcement coincided with our membership renewal mailing. We would like to take this opportunity to confirm that we are discounting the 2018 Edinburgh membership rate of £277 to the Country rate of £209. All members affected by this change in rates have been contacted.

Saxing up Australia and New Zealand

November saw ROSL continue its annual tradition of touring in New Zealand with one of our exceptional prize-winning chamber groups. 2017 was the turn of the Ferio Saxophone Quartet, who won our Ensembles B prize in 2014. Director of ROSL ARTS Geoff Parkin tells all

iding high from the release of their most recent recording on the internationally renowned Chandos label, the quartet performed nine concerts in total. We started in Melbourne, Australia with a concert at the

home of ROSL member and artist Di Bresciani, for our Victorian Branch. This event was staged in celebration of the 70th wedding anniversary of the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh and it was wonderful to meet lots of members, particularly during

Below: The Ferio Saxophone Quartet in Auckland. Right: The quartet in Havelock North. Far right: The

Korimako Piano

the busy Melbourne Cup Week.

We were also pleased to meet many ROSL NZ members as we worked our way down from Auckland, starting with a concert in one of our many reciprocal clubs, the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron. Home of the Americas Cup, the venue proved perfect for greeting both ROSL and RNZYS members as they enjoyed the unique sounds of the quartet while enjoying the magnificent view of the bay.

Following concerts in Waiheke Island, Havelock North, and Nelson ,we made our way to Christchurch for our annual auditions for the Pettman/ROSL





We were thrilled to see so many ROSL members greet us and enjoy the concerts. The final concert ended with a well-deserved standing ovation for the quartet

Scholarship for a New Zealand Chamber Ensemble. The event started with a concert by the Ferio Quartet, recorded by RNZ Concert for later transmission on national radio. We then had two rounds of auditions, where I was joined on the panel by the quartet, Peter Walls, Chief Executive of Chamber Music New Zealand; principal viola in the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra Serenity Thurlow; and pianist Tony Chen Lin.

The winning group was the Korimako Piano Trio, who will be visiting the UK this summer, performing concerts in London, Norfolk and Edinburgh, attending the British Isles Music Festival, taking lessons with major UK professors, and attending concerts at venues including the Royal Albert and

Wigmore Halls. We look forward to welcoming them.

Following our Christchurch auditions, there was no rest for the quartet as they still had concerts to perform in Oamaru. Wanaka and Queenstown. Oamaru, in particular, is a unique place, with well-preserved Victorian architecture, where many of the locals dress in Victorian clothing on a daily basis. Taking place during the annual Victorian Festival, over two thirds of the audience at this concert were in Victorian fashions!

We were thrilled to see so many ROSL members greet us and enjoy the concerts as we travelled around, and our final concert in Queenstown ended with a well-deserved standing ovation for the quartet. A tour which none of us will forget.

COMMONTIES **RETURNS**

Younger Member Committee Commonwealth Liaison Jackie Yu Hon Lam previews the networking event that brings together young people from all over the world

ollowing the success of the CommonTies event last year in May, I am happy to announce that the ROSL Younger Members Group will be collaborating with the Commonwealth Secretariat's Youth Division again this year on Wednesday 14 March. Last year's event drew 17 Commonwealth organisations and over 60 young people from across the Commonwealth to ROSL. The event centred on a fair, which enabled young people to connect with organisations that put the Commonwealth at the heart of what they do. Afterwards, participants broke into different workshops that helped facilitate questions on business, health, education, gender, volunteering, and the arts in the Commonwealth.

Building on the success from last year's event, this year's CommonTies will be even more significant as it coincides with CHOGM, being held in London and Windsor in April, with a strong focus on youth. This year will again feature a Commonwealth Fair followed by pre-CHOGM Summit workshops, focusing on the four main interests of the Commonwealth theme this year: prosperity, security, fairness, and sustainability. Afterwards, the feedback from the workshops will be passed on to key personnel in the Commonwealth Secretariat to be put into action.

Join the discussion by following #CHOGM2018 and #CommonTies on Twitter.



News & views

More images online

Visit our Facebook page and the ROSL website to see more photos of ROSL events, including the ceilidh and Austentatious. Get daily news updates on the ROSL website and by

News & views

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE

Dear Member.

It is my duty to announce the ROSL AGM, which will be held at Over-Seas House London on Thursday 10 May at 3pm. The AGM will receive the 2017 ROSL accounts*. Such other business as may be necessary in accordance with the by-laws will also be conducted.

The AGM agenda includes:

- Address by the Chairman
- The Honorary Treasurer's report on ROSL Finances
- The receipt and adoption of the 2018 ROSL accounts
- To confirm appointments to the Central Council under the terms of the by-laws 14.6 and 14.7
- To fill vacancies occurring under the terms of by-laws 20.1 and 20.2
- To receive a verbal report on 2017
- To appoint the auditors for the ensuing year.

The AGM is preceded by the Chairman's lunch. For details, see page 47.

Yours sincerely
Dr Diana Owen
Director-General

*The 2017 financial accounts will be available to download from the website from 23 April, with hard copies available upon request.

VISIT TO CANADA HOUSE

Throughout October, the Royal Over-Seas League celebrated Canada's 150th anniversary of confederation. To kick off the festivities, members were given the unique opportunity of a private tour around Canada House. Built between 1824 and 1827, designed by the architect of the British Museum Sir Robert Smirke, Canada House was officially opened on 29 June 1925 by King George V. When it opened, he remarked that it was right and necessary for such a beautiful building to house the official representatives of such a great country. On the tour, members learnt more about the fascinating history and the ongoing work those representatives do from bee conservation to working with Canadian tradesmen who reside in the UK.









A CENTURY OF WAR

In the lead up to Remembrance Sunday, members were invited to a private tour at the Imperial War Museum which examined the development of warfare over the past century. "For some people, war is every breath, every waking moment and a constant fear," our guide begins as we stand next to the crushed remains of a car caught in an explosion in Baghdad. Such a sombre thought set the tone and was at the back of members minds as they traced the development of war from a Soviet T34 tank to the twisted remains of a window pane from the North Tower of New York's World Trade Center. Such artefacts called into question the ethics of civilian bombing, the use of modern technology in warfare and how soldiers themselves view and cope with their actions.

CANADIAN WINE TASTING

Liz Murray, President of our British
Columbia Chapter, led our Canadian
wine tasting event, which aimed to
give members a distinctive taste of
Canada. The tipples included an
elegant Benjamin Bridge brut sparkling
wine which hailed from Nova Scotia; a
range of wines from British Columbia
including the flavoursome Clos de
Soleil Signature, a complex Burrowing
Owl Meritage and the tangy Meyer
Family Vineyard Chardonnay we serve
at our London clubhouse; and a truly
rare gift from a magical Ontario winter,

a Peller Estates Ice Wine Riesling. It was a true delight to learn about and taste a part of Canada that is often underappreciated and we are proud to call ourselves budding Canadian wine enthusiasts. If you missed the event and would like to learn more about the wines Canada has to offer, visit Liz's wine blog at www.elizabethsvines.com. If you are interested in purchasing any of the wines mentioned, please contact Jessica Harris-Edwards on membersevents@rosl.org.uk for stockists in the UK.





Once again, this popular staple drew members from across the club to celebrate the core values and ideals ROSL holds dear. Starting in the Central Lounge, guests had a chance to catch up with friends old and new before enjoying a delightful concert by this year's Annual Music Competition String Winner, Mathilde Milwidsky violin with accompanist Andrei Illiushkin.

Afterwards, the three-course dinner was subsequent to Grace said by Central Council member Judith Fisher and the Loyal Toast by the Secretary of the Bournemouth Branch, Gordon Irving.

We were lucky enough to also welcome our new Director-General, Dr Diana Owen, at the event, with members joining the Chairman in wishing her the best as she starts her work here at the club.

CHRISTMAS YOUNGER MEMBERS DRINKS

The festive cheer took our younger members by storm as they gathered in the back of the Duke of York bar for wine and to spread their good festive cheer with fellow members. It was a pleasant evening as members wished each other well over the Christmas period and a Happy New Year. It was lovely to see some of the group appear at our Christmas Quiz or to continue their festive celebrations in the local Mayfair area.



CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Our quizmaster returned with five rounds of general knowledge to test members on how much the wine had already gone to our heads. Four teams battled it out for the prizes on offer and the moral victory that comes from knowing more than your peers. Our favourite question was: Which famous person died on Christmas Day and was then kidnapped in the 1970s? Can you figure it out?

SHARE ROSL MEMBERSHIP WITH
YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.
Contact membership@rosl.org.uk
or +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x214/216 for
details and an application pack.

News & views ROSL NEWS



SNAPPED READING

Political commentator and presenter Andrew Marr is caught reading Overseas on a visit to the clubhouse to talk about his art, organised by Art Fund. Even Henry VIII was a fan! Send in your 'Snapped Reading Overseas' pictures to editor@rosl.org.uk.

YOUNGER MEMBER **NEW MEMBERS RECEPTION**

Younger members gathered together to welcome the latest under 35s to join the Royal Over-Seas League. It was a wonderful chance to meet new people and discuss the ideas for the future of the group. This year's gathering also marked After the announcement a landmark in ROSL's history, with the announcement of two new committee members, who were voted in by the younger member community. The candidates went through a rigorous

process, which involved being vetted by Central Council and shortlisted by the Younger Member Committee. We were thrilled with how many people put their names forward and how many turned out to vote. of Nicholas Berry and Laura Powell as the new committee members, the rest of the evening was spent introducing them to other members and getting their



suggestions for future events.

just an hour to practice before taking centre stage and performed beautifully. They also led the congregration in the festive favourites Once in Royal David's City, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, O Little Town of Bethlehem, O Come All Ye Faithful, and Hark the Herald Angels Sing. After the service, members and their guests returned to the club for afternoon tea and to receive presents from Mrs Claus and her elf.

FESTIVAL OF CAROLS

As much of the UK became blanketed in snow and began to look like something out of a Victorian Christmas card, we opened the doors to our local parish church and invited members to our Festival of Carols. Led by The Reverend Roderick Leece, the church was filled with song as the ROSL Choir sang Coventry Carol, Gabriel's Message, and Candlelight Carol. Made up of members and ROSL staff, the choir had



ROSL ARTS 65TH ANNIVERSARY

October saw ROSL ARTS celebrate 65 years of supporting young musicians and artists with three celebratory concerts bringing together ROSL musicians from the past 20 years.

The first chamber concert saw an incredible collection of ROSL alumni perform pieces including Schubert's Shepherd on the Rock, Poulenc's Sextet for Wind and Piano, Frolov's Fantasy on themes from Gershwin's Porgy and Bess and a string quintet and piano version of Chopin's Piano Concerto in E Minor, Alumni included five Gold Medal winners from the Annual Music Competition,

as well as seven prizewinners, dating back as far Daniel Bates oboe, 1994 Gold Medal Winner and now principal oboe with the City of London Sinfonia. This concert gave one of our more recent prizewinners, Justin Sun bassoon, the chance to perform with other musicians who have gone on from their ROSL wins to be some of the top musicians in their field. One of the greatest successes of ROSL ARTS is the ability to bring together musicians at different stages in their careers and enable them to perform together.

For the next evening's concert, the Princess Alexandra Hall hosted 1995

Gold Medal Winner Ashley Wass piano, along with renowned violinist Matthew Trusler, for an evening of Chaplin and classical music. Our own anniversary celebrations were combined with the 100th anniversary of Chaplin's Mutual Comedies for an evening which was the screening of some of Chaplin's most well-known films along with live accompaniment.

The concerts were rounded off with an Opera Gala. with more of ROSL's alumni including Simon Lepper piano, 1999 Accompanists Prize winner, as well as Njabulo Madlala baritone, Vocal Section winner from 2012. They performed many opera favourites including Bess You is my Woman Now, and excerpts from La Cenerentola. This was followed by a dinner where members and guests had the chance to chat and meet the performers. The whole threeday event was a wonderful way to celebrate the community of young artists and musicians that ROSL ARTS supports, and showcase their immense talent.



INCOGNITO NEEDS YOU

Incognito, the anonymous

art sale is returning in 2018 and we would like you to be involved. ROSL ARTS is inviting anyone who would like to create a postcard artwork for the exhibition to email their name and postal address to roslarts@rosl.org.uk to receive a pack. We welcome work from everyone, from the professional artist to the passionate hobbyist and the submissions may be in any medium, depicting any subject with the sole restriction being the dimensions of the card provided. All the artworks will be sold anonymously for £50 with the money going towards our Arts and Humanitarian work through the ROSL Golden Jubilee Trust (Charity No. 306095). The received postcards will be available to view online in November with the exhibition and sale beginning at Over-Seas House in December. This call for entries is following the success of the inaugural 2016 exhibition which saw 127 artists exhibited and over £4,000 raised for our arts and humanitarian projects. We are looking to surpass this success and need your help, so if you would like to be involved, please get in touch.



RBA STAR STUDENTS PRIVATE VIEW

Tuesday 16 January saw ROSL ARTS, The Arts Society, and the Royal Society of British Artists (RBA) join forces to launch the Star Students exhibition at Over-Seas House, which promoted 19 aspiring young artists, all under the age of 18. The finalists presented at ROSL, selected from 272 artists proposed by the Arts Society, were chosen for their exceptional works, which combine the highest levels of skill, expression, and draughtsmanship, using a wide variety of medium to explore equally varied subjects.

News & views

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

 Raye Ward (second from right) and her family unveil the new music centre.
 Students perform at the opening of the Simon Ward Memorial Music Centre

First school music centre opens in the Rift Valley

The music centre at the St Andrews
Tarabete School in Kenya, built from
donations in memory of former ROSL
Chairman Simon Ward, was opened
in January amid much ceremony,
dancing, and goodwill

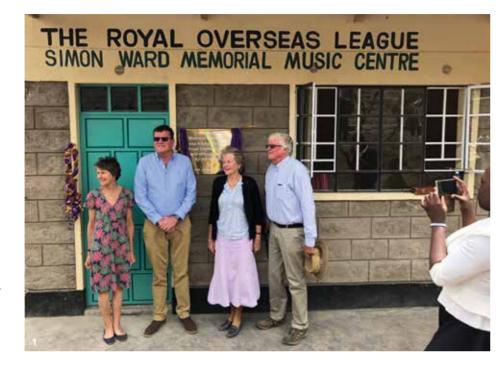
r Dickson Gitahi, Board of Management and a founder of the school, told assembled guests, which included the Hon Martha Wangari, MP for the Gilgil constituency, that the school was now the first in the Rift Valley to have a music centre.

Raye Ward, Simon's widow, sent us this brief report of the occasion: "The ceremony started with entertainment from the students of the Music Club who danced and sang accompanied by a drummer.

"This was followed by the various speeches. Peter Low (my brother) had been involved in the supervision of the building of the centre, and had also been involved in the past with getting water to the school, as well as encouraging the building of a well, so tribute was paid to him. He, in turn, spoke movingly about the role of music in the life of a school. I said a few words and read messages from the Director-General of ROSL and the Director of ROSL ARTS, who suggested possibly twinning with the Griffins Schools Trust.

"The arrival of the local Chief, Mr Musa Lokiyor, followed by the Hon Martha Wangari, MP, necessitated more speeches. However, these visitors were a huge honour for the school and community. Their presence added some interesting flavour to the occasion.

"Finally, with the formalities concluded, having taken much longer than expected, the students and guests moved to the site of the music centre



and I had the honour of cutting the ribbon before the building was inspected by the guests.

"It was some two and a half hours later that we wended our way down the rocky road from 'the school on the hill' as it is sometimes called, concluding that we had all been part of a very memorable and moving occasion. It is hoped that in the future there will be a short amateur video and a few pictures to show to recall the day."

Thank you, generous members

In addition to Kenya, elsewhere in the world, the generosity of members and others associated with ROSL has been further demonstrated by donations made during membership renewals including substantial support from members in Australia, Israel and other countries.

The computer lab constructed on the Solomon Islands has been helped enormously by funds of \$A22,000, raised mainly in Australia. "These were sent to Selwyn College in Honiara and work is nearly complete on construction of the Computer Lab", says the Project Co-ordinator, Mrs Christine Chamberlain, Deputy President of the ROSL Victoria Branch. When complete, the lab will be opened by Australian High Commissioner to the Solomons.

If you would like to donate to this or ROSL's other humanitarian and education projects, please visit www.rosl.org.uk/humanitarian/how-to-donate.



SIMON WARD PORTRAIT

In keeping with ROSL's tradition of hanging portraits of past-Chairmen, ROSL ARTS and Metro Imaging have recently collaborated on this portrait of Simon Ward, which now resides on the first floor at Over-Seas House, London.



Where you are

ROSL NEWS

1. Bournemouth Branch Committee enjoy Christmas lunch together. 2. Christchurch Branch scholarship recipient Karen Huang *violin*. 3. 2018 winner of the ROSL ARTS Scholarship for a BC Emerging Musician Carlos Savall-Guardiola *clarinet*.







ROSL BRANCHES

Our branches provide an opportunity for members in all parts of the world and across the UK to enjoy a range of social events close to home. To find out more about getting involved, simply contact your local representative

AUSTRALIA

South Australia

Australia's Forgotten Explorer

Tuesday 3 April, Naval,
Military & Air Force Club, Adelaide
A lunch address with Brian Webber
AM, Former Headmaster of Prince
Alfred College. This talk will focus
on Sir Hubert Wilkins' contribution
to Australia and the world.
\$38.

Tasmania

Commonwealth Day lunch Monday 12 March, Riversdale Estate, 222 Denholms Road, Cambridge A lunch with an à la carte menu to celebrate Commonwealth Day. Contact Stephen Jones on 04 8822 5530, 62 6135 5895, or stephenj1@iprimus.com.au

St George's Day afternoon tea

to attend.

Saturday 28 April, 2pm, 4 Clarke Avenue, Battery Point Afternoon tea at the home of Robert Dick to welcome new members from 2017 and 2018.

Members are asked to bring a plate (New members are not asked to bring a plate).

Contact Robert Dick on 03 6223 3763 or gradick1@gmail.com to attend.

The wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle

Saturday 19 May, time and venue tbc Held with the Tasmanian-Canadian Association to watch the royal wedding on a large TV and share a meal. This is a great opportunity to meet members from another Commonwealth group promoting Canada-Tasmania relations. Members are asked to bring a plate to share.

Contact Robert Dick on 03 6223 3763 or gradick1@gmail.com to attend.

Western Australia

Queen's Birthday dinner Saturday 21 April, The Weld Club, Perth Enjoy dinner with fellow members and guests at the Weld Club. Price tba.

Queen's Birthday lunch

The following weekend will

celebrate the Queen's birthday,

this time at the Victoria League

ROSL WA Branch AGM

The Annual General Meeting

for members of the Western

The Victoria League, Shenton Park

Monthly coffee mornings

Wednesday 21 May.

Australia branch.

Bath

Abbey Hotel

UNITED KINGDOM

Wednesday 14 March,

11 April, 9 May, 10.30am,

The long-standing monthly

Hotel in the centre of Bath.

For more details contact

Harry Penberthy on

01225 330 737 or

meet-ups continue at the Abbey

harry.penberthy@yahoo.co.uk

also see a lunch held to

Saturday 28 April,

Shenton Park

Price tba.

The Victoria League,

Thursday 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 March, 5, 12, 19, 26 April, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 May, 10.30am, Mayfair Hotel Get to know fellow members at this regular event. All ROSL and ESU members and guests welcome. £3.

Weekly coffee mornings

Bournemouth

AGM & lunch

Wednesday 25 April, 11am, Marriott Highcliff The Annual General Meeting, followed by a two-course lunch with coffee and mints. The guest will be ROSL Chairman Sir David Brewer.

Cheltenham

Commonwealth Day lunch
Monday 12 March, Matchams
at the Everyman Theatre
Celebrate Commonwealth Day
with other ROSL members from
the local area.
Price tba.

Edinburgh

guest speaker.

Coffee morning
Saturday 3 March, 10.15am,
Royal Scots Club
The monthly coffee morning
with author Millie Gray as

Keeping in touch

Have you been receiving our new e-newsletters and events updates? If not, please email membership@rosl.org.uk, quoting your membership number, so we can update your email address in our database.

Commonwealth Day lunch

Monday 12 March, 12pm,
Royal Scots Club
Head to the new Edinburgh
branch venue at the Royal Scots
Club to celebrate Commonwealth
Day with fellow ROSL members.
£30. Guests £35.

Coffee morning

Saturday 5 May, 10.15am, Royal Scots Club Martin Cornish will speak at this coffee morning on the subject of antiques. £5.

AGM

Wednesday 16 May, 6.30pm, Royal Scots Club Your opportunity to hear about the activities of the previous

the activities of the previous 12 months and ask questions about the future.

Glasgow

Lunch

Tuesday 24 April, 12.30pm, The Western Club A two-course lunch with wine and coffee.

£25. Call William Agnew on 0141 884 6342 to attend.

AGM

Friday 18 May, 2pm,
The Western Club
Branch Annual General Meeting.
Free. Members only.

Taunton

Talk and lunch

Wednesday 7 March, 11am, Bridgwater & Taunton College Hear from ROSL Chairman Sir David Brewer, followed by a two-course lunch. £16.50. Guests welcome.

Coffee mornings

Wednesday 14, 21, 28 March, 11, 18, 25 April, 9, 16, 23, 30 May, The Boathouse Friendly informal gathering,

potential members and guests welcome.

Pay for your own refreshments.

AGM

Wednesday 4 April, 10.30am, Taunton Library Meeting Room The Annual General Meeting with coffee and biscuits. £3.50. Guests welcome.

Talk and lunch

Wednesday 2 May, 11am, Bridgwater & Taunton College A talk from Tom Mayberry MBE entitled 'Making the South West Heritage Trust', followed by a two-course lunch.

£16.50. Guests welcome.

West Cornwall

Annual lunch

as guest of honour.

Thursday 15 March, 12.30pm, Carbis Bay Hotel A three-course lunch with coffee and tea. with Rev Andrew Yates

Price tba. Guests welcome.
One week's notice of attendance required for catering.

AGM

Thursday 19 April, 2.45pm, Carbis Bay Hotel Annual General Meeting followed by a talk from a guest speaker (tba), with Cornish cream

£6. Guests welcome. 48 hours notice required for catering.

West Sussex

AGM & lunch

tea afterwards.

Wednesday 7 March, 13.30pm, Windsor Hotel, Worthing Two-course lunch attended by ROSL D-G Diana Owen.

Price tba. Call 01444 458 853
for details.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Morning tea

Wednesday 14 March, 10am,
Holly Lea Retirement Village
Monthly gathering for members
and guests with speaker Dr Amama
Thorney on the topic of Antarctica.
\$7. Guests welcome.

Morning tea

Wednesday 11 April, 10am, Holly Lea Retirement Village Dr Geoffrey Rice speaking on 'the Black Flu' and his recently published book. \$7. Guests welcome.

Morning tea

Wednesday 9 May, 10am, Holly Lea Retirement Village Speaker to be confirmed \$7. Guests welcome.

Southland

Commonwealth Day Monday 12 March, 12pm, Club Southland Luncheon with guest Sarah Dowie, MP for Invercargill. Price tba. Contact Anne Burnett

on 03 218 4115 to attend.

Morning tea

Wednesday 4 April, 10am, Club Southland Monthly gathering with speaker Ian Beker, Manager, Southland Enterprises. Price tba.

Morning tea

Wednesday 2 May, 10am, Club Southland Speaker to be confirmed. Price tba.

CONTACTS

Alberta: Cynthia Cordery ccordery@shaw.ca +1 780 477 0001

Bath and Exeter (ROSL West):
Branch Secretary tba

rosl.west@gmail.com

Bournemouth: Gordon Irving gordon.irving43@gmail.com +44 (0)1258 480887

British Columbia: Liz Murray evmurray@telus.net +1 604 922 1564

Calgary: Madeleine King madeleine.king@telus.net

Cheltenham: Kathleen Northage +44 (0)1242 515540

Edinburgh: Helen MacPherson johnhelen@waitrose.com +44 (0)131 346 8347

Glasgow: William Agnew +44 (0)141 884 6342

New South Wales: Lily Murray murraylily@hotmail.com

New Zealand: Lyn Milne www.roslnz.org.nz rosl4nz@gmail.com

Ontario: Ishrani Jaikaran www.rosl-ontario-canada.ca rosl.ont@sympatico.ca +1 416 760 0309

Queensland: Sharon Morgan sllmorgan@hotmail.com

South Australia: Peter Willis secretary@roslsa.org.au www.roslsa.org.au

Switzerland: Jo Brown +334 5040 6631 Tasmania: Robert Dick

gradick1@gmail.com **Taunton:** Neil Milne
rosl.taunton@gmail.com

+44 (0)1823 286732 **Thailand:** Anna Bunya-Ananta

annabunya@gmail.com

Victoria: Ron Williamson www.rosl.org.au rosl@alphalink.com.au +61 (0)3 9654 8338

West Cornwall: Ian Wood +44 (0)1736 333460

West Sussex: Marilyn Archbold +44 (0)1444 458853

Western Australia: Miles Glanville +61 (0) 417 183 582

ROAD TO ROSL

New Director-General Diana Owen talks life, career and the future of ROSL

PROTECTING,

CARING, AND

SHARING OUR

CULTURAL

HERITAGE AND

PRECIOUS

LANDSCAPES HAS

REMAINED AN

ENDURING

PASSION

was born and brought up in India where my father was a tea planter in Assam following service with the Gurkhas in Burma. I was born on Monabarie Tea Estate, now the largest tea producing estate in the world and went to school in south India near Ootacamund before coming to boarding school in England. From Winchester (High School for Girls) I went to Leeds University to study International History and Politics and dreaming of a career as a foreign correspondent for the BBC having grown up listening to Tully Sahib on the World Service. I studied for a PhD under Professor David Dilks and it was a real delight to receive a letter from him on my first day in my new office here at Over-Seas House. It's intriguing how the world goes round and how my interest in international relations has led me here to ROSL.

The ROSL attraction

After completing my PhD, I worked for a few years in educational publishing, before joining the National Trust (NT) in 1988 as a Property Manager in Yorkshire and then at Petworth in West Sussex. Having the chance to live and work in these amazing places, bringing them to life and telling their hidden stories, was a real joy. At Petworth, I wrote the Guide to the Servants' Quarters based on primary research with former staff and in the archives, and opened up the extraordinary range of buildings that served the family and the estate with the help of Lord and Lady Egremont. I went on to be Area Manager for Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, and London, and then for West Sussex and south Surrey. In this role I became involved in the campaigns to create new National Parks for the New Forest and for the South Downs, and in the construction

of the Hindhead tunnel on the A3. Protecting, caring, and sharing our cultural heritage and precious landscapes has remained an enduring passion. At Petworth, I also started to work with contemporary artists in the interpretation of places including Dennis Creffield, High Buchanan, Andy Goldsworthy, and Langlands and Bell.

In late 2007, I joined the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) as Director and then Chief Executive, it is an extraordinary charity that cares for five Shakespeare family homes in Stratford-upon-Avon as well as the world's largest freely accessible Shakespeare archive, now designated by UNESCO on their Memory of the World register. Shakespeare is a truly global writer, translated into over 90 languages, taught to 50% of the world's schoolchildren, and performed all over.

I think you can see from both my time at university and with the NT and SBT, that I have real interest in people and places and creating opportunities to bring people together to foster understanding and friendship. The problems in our world today – climate change, poverty, security - are global issues requiring global solutions; no country or nation is truly an island anymore, we are all inter-connected and culture can truly bridge boundaries

that might exist between peoples.

The founders of the NT and the SBT in the 19th century and of ROSL in the early 20th century were all responding to the issues of their day, and were driven by powerful visions and supported by public participation.

Game plan

I have been truly impressed by the resilience, talent and commitment of our teams of staff, and the enthusiasm of our members. The impacts of the decision, taken before I arrived, to close our Edinburgh clubhouse following •





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TRULY BRIDGE

BOUNDARIES

the results of buildings and services surveys has absorbed much of my time and will continue to do so. Over the next few months, we will be looking at every possible option for the future of this landmark site and I very much hope that we can maintain ROSL's presence in Edinburgh. We will be continuing our full participation in the Festival with our Fringe programme, this year hosted at the Royal Scots Club.

Over the next year, I plan to meet and listen to our members and stakeholders, develop our longer-term strategy with Central Council, undertake a governance review, and support our staff to deliver the very best service we can to our members, our partners and other stakeholders, including the many wonderful projects run under the auspices of the Golden Jubilee Trust and by ROSL ARTS. I plan to visit as many branches as possible both in the UK and overseas, and to attend our varied range of events in London, Edinburgh, and elsewhere.

CHOGM in April 2018 and the resultant focus on the Commonwealth, is clearly an opportunity to showcase ROSL and open our doors to potential new members who are, of course, our lifeblood for the future. In an era of 'fake news', it is more important than ever to create opportunities for people to meet, share, work, and play together and to recognise that there is more that brings us together than divides us.

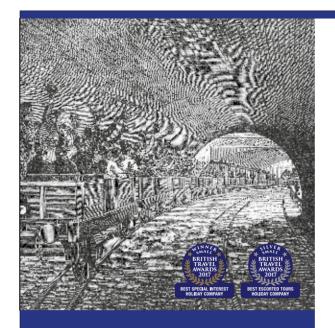
members' club with being inclusive, outward looking, and contemporary. I am quite shocked to learn that there are still some London clubs that don't admit women and especially not through the front door! I would like to original vision to 'serve humanity at large'. I have been reading through old reports and it is interesting to see how ROSL members engaged enthusiastically with the current issues of their day. Today, that might mean being 'greener' in the way we provide services, offering opportunities for internships and apprenticeships to young people, or becoming a 'dementia-friendly' organisation. That ethos of service runs through our DNA as an organisation.

> ROSL has adapted over time, and finding our place in today's world is key to our future success. We also need to think about who our members will be in the future and how we can provide something more than also do) - an opportunity to be part of an organisation that is truly contributing today to making the world a better place

And most of all, I am looking forward to getting to know our members and partners.

ROSL is a very special organisation combining a private build on our unique strengths to deliver Evelyn Wrench's

> a home from home (which many other clubs for future generations.



London's Underground Railway A History and appreciation of the Tube

11 April 2018, led by Andrew Martin

'Offering a cornucopia of delights - even to a Londoner'

See London with a different eye.

Spend a day exploring the artistic riches of London in the company of one of our experts. Martin Randall Travel's London Days focus on many fascinating themes.

Exclusive and special arrangements feature: visit Transport for London's historic headquarters at 55 Broadway or enjoy a private organ recital in a West End church. Sip champagne at the Savoy or cocktails at the Walkie Talkie. Admire the Spanish Golden Age with Dr Xavier Bray or the works of Hogarth with Dr Lars Tharp. Delve into hidden corners with Barnaby Rogerson, or probe large-scale landmarks with Professor Peter Rees CBE.

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martinrandall.com/london-days

RCSLARTS

Supporting young artists and musicians

Established in 1999, Friends of ROSL ARTS fosters the active involvement of sponsors and donors, encourage new supporters and helps develop audiences for ROSL ARTS events. Your membership fee directly supports the various scholarships which ROSL ARTS arranges

BENEFITS INCLUDE

- Invitations to all exhibition Private Views
- recommendations and special offers
- Discounted tickets to selected talks.
- Invitation to the exclusive Friends of ROSL ARTS Champagne Garden Party, which features a concert by a ROSL ARTS prizewinner.

For more information, visit www.rosl.org.uk/rosl-arts



WWW.ROSL.ORG.UK 21 20 OVERSEAS JOURNAL MARCH - MAY 2018

Memories

Many ROSL members have served or have family who have served in the armed forces. As part of our centenary commemorations for WWI in 2018 and 70th anniversary of WWII in 2019, ROSL is creating a memory board showcasing people's stories. Read the account of ROSL member Barry Whittaker, who returned to his father's grave in Normandy, many years after he died, along with thousands of others, as part of the push inland following the D-Day landings.

- a German sniper who got lucky just as my father among his comrades, all on foot, crossed an open field in Normandy on the 11th morning after D-Day. Should the Tommies have been there, out in the open, so soon after the beach landings? Allied soldiers had barely

t was a sniper that did it, they said

begun to push inland; enemy machine gunners and riflemen were still thick on the ground.

And, what ground! The Bocage - open fields bordered by woodland, dense hedges, and steep-sided lanes. It might have been created for the sniper's deadly craft.

No doubt his mates grumbled afterwards about the wisdom of entering that field when they did... but I have always believed that much of their anguish welled up simply from their fondness for my father, for a quiet, shy, rather good-looking young Lancashire coal miner, brown-eyed, open-faced.

I like to recall that, when he fell, he already knew he was going to be a father. Boy or girl? In those days there was no way of telling. He could not know that he would have a son.

He died at the age of 24, on 17 June 1944. I was born to this grieving widow five months later, almost to the day. Always I promised that one day, some time, I would head for France, cross that Channel, find his grave.

To one untravelled it seemed so far away, this little village of Hermanville, a few miles north of Caen. It might as well have been on the other side of the world.

In later years, however, an executive job with the chemical industry made European travel essential. I became a seasoned flyer. My father's distant resting place lost its remoteness... and, one day, I went. An assignment at the United Nations in Geneva included an empty weekend. I filled it by flying to Paris and, on Sunday morning, taking the train to Caen.

It was August 1985. I was 40 years old and, for the first time, I reached his graveside. I stood physically before this man who had given me life in a two-up, two-down in Bolton all those years ago, this man who have never known me.

It was a powerful experience and I was glad to have been on my own that day. I could not have helped companions with their feelings. My own were hard enough to contain.

Reaching his graveside had been a gradual process that weekend, and increasingly tense.

I had started at Sword Beach, where the British Eighth Army had landed. The very shore blasted by noise, conflict and death - but, on that humid day in August 1985, just a broad, deserted strand under grey, drizzly skies that merged with a grey sea at a grey, almost indistinguishable, horizon. o



Commonwealth War Graves Commission 2 Marlow Road Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 7DX

Telephone 0628 34221

PUR 8 EB1209

12 September 1985

Thank you for your letter of 17 August in which I was pleased to learn that your recent trip to France was successful.

Your very kind and thoughtful remarks about the appearance of Hermanville War Cemetery are much appreciated and are of great encourage-

I have passed a copy of your letter to our Area Office, who I am sure will be pleased to receive it.

Finally, may I thank you for taking the trouble to write.

This scroll commemorates

Private C. Whittaker Gordon Highlanders

held in honour as one who served King and Country in the world war of 1939-1945 and gave his life to save mankind from tyranny. May his sacrifice help to bring the peace and freedom for which he died.

OMAH/

BIVID

GERMAN 7th

VWW.ROSL.ORG.UK 23



IT WAS A POWERFUL EXPERIENCE AND I WAS GLAD TO HAVE BEEN ON MY OWN THAT DAY. I COULD NOT HAVE HELPED COMPANIONS WITH THEIR FEELINGS. MY OWN WERE HARD ENOUGH TO CONTAIN

Giant British and Canadian flags flapped from the tallest flagpoles I had ever seen. Californians redwoods painted white, they seemed.

A steady walk inland of about a mile, neat bungalows to the right, meadows to the left. Senses quickening.

A fenced green marked by a commemorative plaque – the local mayor's proud boast of so many soldiers drinking that day from this one water standpipe.

A little beyond, a stony lane. Turn left. Another lane; stonier, narrower. On the right, a high, flint wall. You do not know it yet, but this wall encloses the military cemetery.

The wall then broken by a low, double gate of black iron railings, anonymous until you peer closer: engraved on the left footstone, '1939', on the right, '1945'. You need no more for a signpost.

Willows overhanging a winding footpath defeat prying eyes. To see this place, you must enter.

The trees part to reveal white headstones just over a thousand, but they seem fewer, ranked in their little walled garden. Before them, their guardian; a towering, white marble cross inset with a great, downward-pointing bronze sword. The Army's monument.

In a side cloister, a visitors' book, a looseleaf ring binder. It is fat. How many years must this go back? To my shock, four months. So many have come here. Most have French names. Many have written, simply, 'Merci'.

What should I write? I hadn't thought of this. They say it's always best to put the first thing that comes into your head: it will be true. I write, 'Rest, Father. Your work is done'.

I find his grave: the same pure white stone as all the others, so freshfaced that it could have been laid down that morning. His name, rank, date of death, age, and a verse beneath that I know my mother chose from among official alternatives. 'My darling, in your grave...' There is more, but with wet eyes you cannot read it.

I sink to knee, emotions roiling. I press a bent finger to my lips, then draw it along his graven name and silently thank him not only for the life he gave me but for sacrificing his to safeguard mine.

As a boy, none of this had made much impact, even when Remembrance Day came round. God's way, perhaps, of sparing a child pointless grieving? But, as a man, with each passing year I feel, ever more keenly, what it is that I lost, what riches. My father.

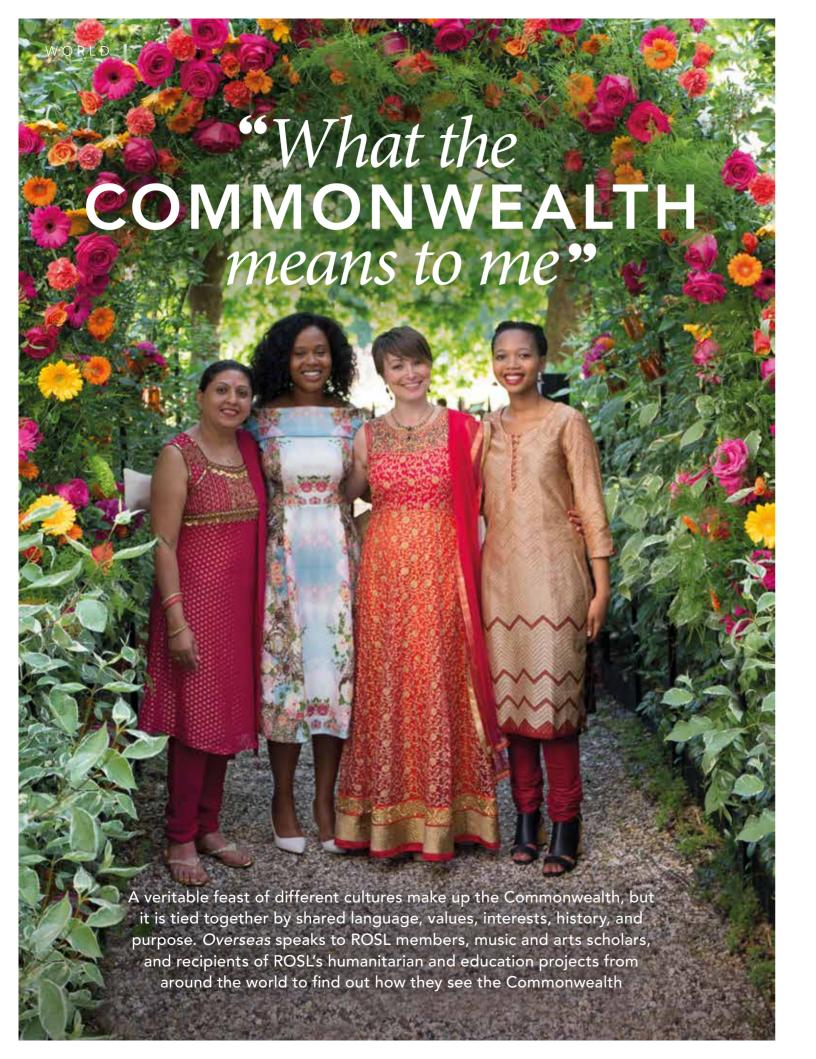
Above, what it is that he lost. All the years I have lived, in steadily increasing number, are years that he never had and can never have.

I love Shakespeare, but nowadays forgo Hamlet. It is too hard to look on as young Ophelia, heartbroken, names each different flower of her withered posy, quoting its significance. I know my breaking point. It comes, inevitable as nightfall, when she reaches the line:

"There's Rosemary. That's for remembrance" Barry Whittaker

Whether it's photos, letters, official documents or a retelling of what happened, we want to hear about the part your loved ones played in these monumental pieces of history. To submit something to the Memories collection either email membersevents@rosl.org.uk or post them to Jessica-Harris Edwards, ROSL Marketing, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's St, London, SW1A 1LR. Please only send scanned or copied documents and photos. Please note not all contributions can be published in Overseas.





The Commonwealth to me represents a bastion of the

HIGH IDEALS OF INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, RESPECT, AND COMMUNITY.

Coming from a Hong Kong and Canadian background living in the UK, the Commonwealth reminds me that we are all humans that share a delicate ecosystem and planet Earth.

Jackie Yu Hon Lam, Younger Member Committee Commonwealth Liaison, UK

In my youth, I attended Roedean School in Sussex. One of my best friends, who also grew up in England, had spent her early childhood in India, whilst I had spent five years in South Africa. This week, she sent me greetings from Australia where she's now living, having read my piece about my current hometown, Calgary, Canada in Overseas. That's the Commonwealth in my life,

A NECKLACE OF COUNTRIES SPANNING THE GLOBE

where you'll likely enjoy use of the English language, connections, common values, and some shared education. The Commonwealth has allowed me to explore and make friends. What a marvellous gift! Madeleine King, Calgary Branch President, Canada

As a young girl, I was always fascinated by the huge diversity of the world with foreign names of cities, their leaders, and their cultures all cohabitating on the same Earth. Working at ROSL in London gave me the opportunity to embrace the Commonwealth first-hand. This common

THREAD ENABLES UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE OUR DIFFERENCES

Lyn Milne, NZ Branch Chair, New Zealand

The Commonwealth is wonderful as it brings together many diverse nations into one family. I always feel that there is a great

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLE

from these countries - it is as if we share a cultural heritage, but we also learn from each other, and we encourage each other to nurture values such as compassion and respect. I have made so many friends from different Commonwealth countries through ROSL and this has broadened my horizons immensely. Ben Schoeman, ROSL ARTS alumni,

I'm a fan of the Commonwealth. Its strengths lie in the voluntary nature of its membership, their shared values and that, unlike other transnational bodies, it is not top down. Rather the opposite; it does not aspire to impose uniform or arbitrary political, cultural, and economic doctrines from above. Instead.

INDIVIDUALISM IS ENCOURAGED

and shared through Commonwealth institutions. It fosters international understanding and cooperation, supports democracy, and promotes world peace. Derek M Philips, Editorial Board Member Representative, UK

Thinking of the Commonwealth always leaves me wondering what that is. It feels like being the detective in Patrick Modiano's Rue des Boutiques Obscures, searching for his



former self or selves as it turns out, ending the book in the South Pacific, walking around an empty boat, trying to invoke his identity as it should be. It's as if I don't exist in place, it has to be through

A SERIES OF **ENTANGLEMENTS**

with fractured bits of meaning that sometimes form a complete picture. Tahi Moore, ROSL ARTS alumni, New Zealand

Having been brought up by a single mother and then finding a very kind organisation to step up and fill in the missing part is all I needed for a successful life. ROSL has paid for my school fees for four years in high school and continues to pay my tertiary school fees. Words cannot describe my heartfelt gratitude to ROSL. Without the Commonwealth, this link and support may not have happened in the first place. The organisation

GAVE LIFE TO ME AND MY FAMILY.

Antony Waweru, ROSL Bursary recipient, Kenya

I believe the Commonwealth is a lot more than just a group of nations with a common head of state. I believe it is

A 'FAMILY' OF MEMBERS ACROSS **COUNTRIES WHICH** ARE UNIFIED THROUGH A COMMON PURPOSE.

Its shared values and beliefs are developed to benefit each

Commonwealth country. The Commonwealth is unique in its history and tradition. led by our Queen, and is something to be valued and developed by all for all. Stephen Jones, Tasmania Branch Secretary, Australia

The best way for me to think about the Commonwealth and its relation to me is that it's a network. Like having a network of business associates, or friends, school contacts, neighbours, the Commonwealth shares those network characteristics of shared interests, values, and purpose. The importance of the Commonwealth, this network of countries, can be fostered to be

A MORE IMPORTANT FORCE FOR GOOD,

both for members of the Commonwealth and for the whole world. After all, it promotes democratic values, freedom of speech, and the rule of law.

Liz Murray, BC Chapter President, Canada

Living in the South-West of England I think of the Commonwealth as being like an extended family living around the world. For those of us in ROSL, the Commonwealth is a very important way of

BRINGING AND KEEPING THE FAMILY TOGETHER,

either by celebrating the wonderful variety of arts and music it creates, or by encouraging and supporting it through the education and humanitarian work. Neil Milne, Taunton Branch

Secretary, UK

* THE FUTURE * OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Its critics have long predicted its demise, yet the Commonwealth remains a network whereby small and large nations can come to the table as equals. Ross Davies asks Professor Philip Murphy, director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London, what makes the organisation still tick amid an age of geopolitical uncertainty

ILLUSTRATION WWW.MRMURRAY.CO.UK

et's be frank for a moment. If you were to take a cross section of the general public, most would struggle to describe the role of the Commonwealth.

Such is the lack of public recognition

Such is the lack of public recognition around the organisation that when asked a couple of years ago to name its head as part of a survey, a quarter of Jamaicans answered Barack Obama.

As readers of this publication, and members of the Royal Over-Seas League – itself affiliated to the Commonwealth – such unfamiliarity with the institution, particularly amongst the people of its member states, might come as a disappointment.

After all, we are not talking about a clandestine

society club. Its 52 member countries make up around 27% of nations, with a total landmass of 31 million square kilometres – roughly 21% of the world total. Commonwealth countries account for 2.5 billion people – 33% of the world population – and have a combined GDP of £10 trillion.

Those are impressive figures all right, so why is it that the layman knows so little about the Commonwealth, compared to, say, NATO or the UN?

The first distinction to be made is that the Commonwealth is not a formal group like NATO or the UN; rather, it is a network of countries that are bound mainly through historical and cultural ties, not formal obligations. •





Neither is there any formal trade agreement between Commonwealth member states. Instead, it serves as a conduit or platform through which ministers can meet informally and discuss trading potential.

But, in the past, the organisation has also not been afraid to flex its geopolitical muscle. The agreement of Commonwealth leaders on a programme of economic sanctions against the South African regime in 1986 is widely credited with contributing to the end of apartheid.

In 2007, members also moved to suspend Pakistan from the Commonwealth for a second time due to the imposition of emergency rule by then-President Pervez Musharraf - judged to be in direct contravention of democracy, rule and law, and "the Commonwealth's fundamental political values". Pakistan returned to the fold a year later upon the resignation of Musharraf.

According to Professor Philip Murphy, director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London, in recent years, the Commonwealth has sought to increasingly position itself as an organisation built on goodwill and friendship.

"Since its great crusade against apartheid in South Africa, it has attempted to reinvent itself as a group promoting good governance, human rights and democracy," Murphy tells me when I visit him in his office, located a stone's throw away from Russell Square.

Murphy, who began his current role in 2009, is keen to talk about trade. While not strictly a trading bloc, research from 2015 by the Commonwealth Secretariat - its civil service - suggests member states are 20% more likely to trade with each other than outside nations. What's more, trading costs are said to be 20% less between Commonwealth countries.

So, is there such a thing as a Commonwealth advantage?

"For a while now, there has been this idea of a Commonwealth culture, which makes trading easier, because you have common legal systems, tradition and language," says Murphy.

"From a British standpoint, we saw it most notably with Tony Blair's Labour government, which looked at pushing a trade agenda through the Commonwealth. But I think it's very difficult to precisely measure trade between member states, as we don't have standards across the globe for the cost of trade."

Murphy doesn't outwardly dispute the figures from the Commonwealth Secretariat, but warns that they "are notional, and involve a lot of counterfactuals, such as proximity between nations".

If there's anything that's galvanised UK discussion over the Commonwealth in the last year or so, it has been Brexit. Some – especially those who voted in favour of leaving the European Union – believe it offers the UK an opportunity to establish new trading channels with old friends.

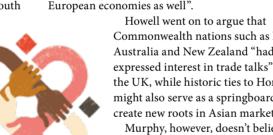
Writing in an editorial in the Telegraph days after the vote, Lord Howell - a former Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office - argued that "whatever relationship the UK ends up agreeing with the EU Single Market, the time for a sharply increased focus on both Commonwealth and adjacent markets is now ripe, and crucial for the UK's continuing prosperity and, because of connectivity, for other European economies as well".

> Commonwealth nations such as India, Australia and New Zealand "had all expressed interest in trade talks" with the UK, while historic ties to Hong Kong might also serve as a springboard to create new roots in Asian markets.

Murphy, however, doesn't believe that the EU can simply be replaced by the Commonwealth, which accounts for around 10-12% of UK exports compared with 44% on the continent.

with the EU as a result of Brexit, the in trade with Commonwealth by way of compensation," he says.

to look at trade deals through the prism of all of its Commonwealth allies,



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BECAUSE IT HAS THE

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DIPLOMATIC FORA

WITH LARGER, MORE

POWERFUL STATES

"If there were even a 5% drop in trade UK would need at least a 25% increase

"So it's not necessarily the case that any new deal Britain strikes would be of greater advantage to its trading position - or to developing countries within the Commonwealth.'

In other words, the UK would need

and avoid anything resembling Anglo-centricity. Deals and investment relations should be akin to a partnership of equals.

In fact, this is something that even those ambivalent towards the Commonwealth admit is one its best characteristics - the provision of a platform on which smaller nations can speak to larger nations on an equal footing.

In recent years, the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings have been hosted in Malta, Uganda and Trinidad and Tobago. Last year's summit had been scheduled to take place in Vanuatu, until it was cancelled due to cyclone devastating the island nation's infrastructure in 2015.

"If you were the president of small state, you'd want to belong to the Commonwealth,

because it has the hallmark of legitimacy and international respectability," says Murphy.

"That's a really useful thing to have. It allows smaller countries to interact in diplomatic forums with larger, more powerful states. So, if someone staged a coup against you, for instance, you could contact Marlborough House and raise international concerns that way."

Despite the brand of gentle goodwill projected by the Commonwealth, it's not all been plain sailing in the last few years. In 2013, the Gambia rescinded its membership with former President Yahya Jammeh labelling it a neo-colonial institution. In 2016, the Maldives also withdrew, accusing it of interfering in its domestic affairs.

Yet last year, after Jammeh went into exile after losing the Gambian elections, new President Adama Barrow pledged to return the country to the organisation. However, it is yet to be reinstated as a member state, according to the Commonwealth's official website.

There is even a chance the institution may see its ranks swell in the near future. Sudan, South Sudan and Somaliland have all voiced their intent to join in recent years.



Formed in 1949

Home to nearly 2.5 billion people, a third of the global population

Combined GDP of more

78% of this made up by the four largest economies of the UK, India, Canada, Australia

Covers 11.5 million square miles, 21% of the world's land area

Home to one in three young people aged 15-29

The Commonwealth has observed more than 140 elections across 40 countries since 1980

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Commonwealth countries make up seven of the top ten highest performing countries for gender equality

"Like I said earlier, it's not surprising these countries want to join the Commonwealth," says Murphy. "It boosts their diplomatic weight."

A while back, there was also talk of Palestine joining, although Murphy doubts this would ever happen while tensions in the Middle East remain so fraught. "It would be political dynamite".

As for its future, Murphy sees the Commonwealth as a going concern. Of its 52 members, 16 countries still have the Queen as their monarch, which won't change any time soon, "as it's too difficult for these states to make the transition to republics, even if they wanted to".

Commonwealth detractors – particularly

those on the far left – view it as nothing more than a hangover of the British Empire.

As evidenced by the recent furore at Christmas surrounding Oxford University Professor Nigel Biggar - who launched a project balancing the rights and wrong of Britain's colonial legacy - the empire can be a polarising topic. Biggar stands accused by some 60 of his own colleagues at Oxford of "whitewashing" history.

But, the Maldives and the Gambia aside, there is little evidence that former colonies want to break ties with Commonwealth, says Murphy. Research conducted by his department reveals quite the contrary.

"Between 2013 and 2016, we interviewed over 70 leading Commonwealth figures – including secretaries and Prime Ministers - as part of a major project called the Commonwealth Oral History Project," he explains.

"I went over to Dehli to speak with three Indian foreign ministers, and I asked about a possible exit, and one of them turned to me and said, 'Well, if you are a member of a club, why would you leave it?' One of the Commonwealth's greatest achievements is that it still exists."

Queen and COMMONWEALTH

By far the most-travelled monarch in history, much of the Commonwealth's continued success is owed to her dedication to getting out there and being seen. During her reign, The Queen has made nearly 200 overseas visits to Commonwealth countries, including attending 19 CHOGMs, the latest of which will be held in London and Windsor in April 2018. This dedication has seen her visit all but two Commonwealth nations, Cameroon and Rwanda, two of the most recent members. Here, we look back at some of the most important trips she has made during her reign.







953 ⊢ _ _ 10

THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visited British Guiana (now Guyana) in February

1966, as part of a tour of the Caribbean. It was just 111 days away from becoming independent from the UK and the visit was overshadowed by a boycott from the country's opposition party. A bag containing bullets was even found on the route the royals were due to take. Despite this, 10,000 children attended a rally in her honour. Guyana is just one of many countries that have become independent since the start of Elizabeth II's reign.

Most visits by country

Canada: **24** | Australia: **16** | New Zealand: **10**The Queen's reign has coincided with the jet age, making it easier to travel than ever before. The Queen's visits to Canada alone

exceed all the overseas trips made by Queen Victoria during her reign.

1973 2ND CHOGM The Queen visi

The Queen visited Ottawa for the second CHOGM, hosted by Canadian Prime Minister

Pierre Trudeau. This trip began a succession of CHOGM visits until 2013, when the Queen began to take on less long-distance travel. She will again be present at next month's CHOGM in London. The 1973 event saw many Commonwealth traditions appear for the first time, such as the flag, which was officially adopted three years later.

day 1991 MUGABE'S GUEST

Again attending a CHOGM, the Queen travelled to Harare in 1991 for the 12th summit this time hosted by President Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe. Already starting to



struggle with rolling blackouts and water shortages at this stage, his rule has seen conditions worsen greatly since then. This would be the Queen's only visit to the country as it was suspended from the Commonwealth in 2002 for breaching the Harare Declaration.

FIRST OFFICIAL TOUR | 1966

The Queen's first official tour took in Fiji, Bermuda, Australia, and New Zealand, among others. Upon arrival in Tonga, she was greeted by the imposing Queen Salote (above right), a guest at her coronation. The British public are said to have taken Salote to their heart after she refused to draw the roof of her carriage closed during the procession for the coronation, instead braving the torrential rain along with the millions of Britons who had lined the route for the occasion. She shared the carriage with the diminutive Sultan of Kelantan and when someone asked Noel Coward who the man was, he is said to have replied "her lunch".

1976 OPENING THE OLYMPICS

The Queen visited Montreal in 1976 to open the Olympics, the first to be held in Canada. The country has gone on to host the Winter Olympics twice more; in Calgary in 1988 and Vancouver in 2010. Some

29 countries boycotted the Games, mostly African nations, over the New Zealand All Blacks' decision to tour South Africa earlier in the year, going against the UN's call for an embargo in light of the country's policy of apartheid.

2007 RETURN TO MALTA

To coincide with The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh's diamond wedding anniversary, the couple returned to Malta.

The island holds special memories for them both as

the young couple spent two years here in 1949-51, before Princess Elizabeth became the sovereign. At the time the Duke was stationed here with the Royal Navy, aboard HMS Chequers (left).



Non-Commonwealth travels

In total, The Queen has visited **116 countries** on more than **270 foreign trips** during her reign, but such is the importance of the Commonwealth, leaders on the world stage such as France, Germany, and the US have only been visited five times each, less than the six times relatively small nations Barbados, Fiji, and Jamaica have welcomed her.

THE PURSUIT OF PEACE

The Commonwealth's approach to conflict prevention is marked by respect, impartiality, and discretion. This means its work often flies under the radar, but is no less important argues Tres-Ann Kremer, Adviser and Head of the Good Offices for Peace at the Commonwealth Secretariat





THE CHALLENGES

The conflict prevention work of the Good Offices team is generally well received, but the team also face persistent challenges:

- 1. How to engage the parties when they themselves do not want or see the need for change.
- 2. How to publicly demonstrate that the Commonwealth is a values-based organisation and yet be seen to be working with even the most repressive of governments as partners.
- 3. How to maintain the discretion and confidentiality of Good Offices initiatives, and still safeguard its image in the media and among all Commonwealth citizens.

anding in Zambia last September,
I thought about the importance of
the mission I was about to begin.
It was my first assignment since
being appointed Adviser and Head
of Good Offices and Peace at the
Commonwealth Secretariat. I was
there to support the work of Professor Ibrahim
Gambari, the Nigerian scholar and diplomat that
Secretary-General Patricia Scotland appointed as her
special envoy to facilitate a national peace dialogue.

Just weeks before the Secretary-General herself had visited the country and met with President Edgar Lungu, and the main opposition leader, Hakainde Hichilema, who was in prison at the time. Working with the government, opposition parties, civil society, religious bodies, and a number of other stakeholders, she was able to negotiate a commitment from leaders to engage in forward-looking political dialogue and to address issues of common interest ahead of the next election in the country.

Since this commitment from the leaders and Hichilema's release from prison, the Commonwealth's Good Offices has continued to work with a wide range of stakeholders in the country.

By the end of my mission, Professor Gambari was able to conceptualise a national mechanism that would include key individuals, groups and bodies, and oversee and monitor the progress and implementation of the dialogue.

This is just one example of the importance and effectiveness of the Commonwealth's conflict prevention and Good Offices role, which involves

working primarily with leaders and aims to promote Commonwealth political values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law; enhancing efficiency; transparency; and accountability in governance through the effective separation of powers among the three branches of government - parliament, the executive and the judiciary.

Indeed, the post-Cold War era brought with it unprecedented threats to peace and security, a surge in popular demands for democracy, tolerance, and prosperity, a dramatic increase in intra-state conflicts and a concomitant increase in demand for, and acceptance of the Commonwealth's good offices engagements. Consequently, a succession of "Special Envoys" have been appointed by Commonwealth Secretaries - General to assist member countries with internal disputes and potential conflict situations. We believe this is a testament of the Commonwealth's high stature and the calibre of expertise it can call upon to provide political and technical advice through the deployment of Special Envoys and Advisers.

When Lesotho had its first coalition government in

2012, the deployment of Commonwealth Special Envoy Rajen Prasad of New Zealand, who has in-depth knowledge of coalition governance in a mixed-member proportional parliament, was instrumental in supporting a broad-based dialogue and consultations on coalition governance, and identifying pathways for critical areas of governance

These kinds of efforts are underscored by the Commonwealth's ability to understand and respect sensitivities, historical circumstances, •

THE
COMMONWEALTH'S
CONFLICT
PREVENTION AND
GOOD OFFICES ROLE
AIMS TO PROMOTE
COMMONWEALTH
POLITICAL VALUES
SUCH AS DEMOCRACY,
HUMAN RIGHTS AND
THE RULE OF LAW

.....,



LEFT: Commonwealth observer group mission for 2017 election n The Bahamas

BELOW: From previous spread, John Dramani Mahama, at the 2017 General Elections

legal tradition and local culture, and to enable dialogue in difficult political situations. The Commonwealth will only intervene when it is invited to do so and has the consent of the member country involved.

Much of the intergovernmental organisation's conflict prevention and Good Offices work is predicated on the access granted to the Commonwealth, and in particular the Secretary-General, as well as on the sense of trust the organisation enjoys, flowing from its sensitive approach in dealing with member states and its desire to promote home-grown solutions that have the buy-in of a country's citizens.

In problematic and contested situations, it is important that the Commonwealth is seen as a 'helpful friend' that is respectful, impartial and discreet, and not a 'strict authoritarian parent'. In addition, that it has the capacity to ensure the sustainability of its political efforts by supporting the country with appropriate and inclusive technical advice and capacity-building programmes.

The Commonwealth's focus on promoting strong political values has yielded significant results. Notably, it has created a conceptual framework that supports important aspects of democracy such as holding free and fair elections, enhancing the independence of the judiciary and strengthening national adherence to best practice in international human rights.

The Commonwealth has been particularly successful in supporting elections, including through election observation and bolstering electoral management bodies. The credibility it has built up in this field has created a valuable entry point for conflict prevention and Good Offices engagements and longterm partnerships in institution building activities.

Yet, the Commonwealth remains conscious that its Good Offices and conflict prevention capacity must continue to keep pace with the evolving nature of

conflict and requirements of peace. The increasing power and decreasing accountability of traditional and non-traditional media, and the rising strength and reach of civil society have ensured that international organisations are more accountable for how their values are upheld and perceived.

Under the leadership of Secretary-General Scotland, the Commonwealth Secretariat is in considering how it can use more sustainable approaches to peacebuilding, involving women, youth and marginalised communities. The restructuring of the Secretariat has been carried out with cognisance of the interconnectedness of the sustainable development goals to which all our member states are committed. We believe this multidisciplinary approach will be even more effective in enabling sustainable peace and accelerating prosperity in our member states.

That said, the Commonwealth is a small organisation with limited presence - its resources and leverage do not match those of bigger and wealthier organisations or state actors. Perhaps its greatest advantage in the realm of conflict prevention and Good Offices is its ability to complement high-level political engagement with bespoke technical assistance. In this sense, it welds together development work and conflict prevention imperatives with specialist in-country knowledge, while preserving the valued trust of states and citizens, which allows it to support them through difficult situations they face.





CAPITAL GAINS

Think you know London's museums and art galleries? Think again. New venues, redevelopments, and extensions of existing locations are taking place throughout the year. Jessica Harris-Edwards runs down the latest additions to the capital's vibrant arts and cultural scene

1. HAYWARD GALLERY

OPENED: THURSDAY 25 JANUARY 2018 Nearest Tube: Waterloo (Bakerloo, Jubilee, Northern and Waterloo & City) For just over two torturous years this world-renown contemporary art

gallery has been closed for essential repairs and refurbishment, including the replacement of the Brutalist building's 66 iconic pyramid roof light wells. On Thursday 25 January, the

gallery reopened its doors with a dazzling exhibition by Andreas Gursky. Known for his large-scale, spectacular pictures that portray emblematic sites and scenes of the global economy and contemporary life, Gursky is widely regarded as one of the most significant photographers of our time. The exhibition runs until Sunday 22 April when we wait with bated breath for what the gallery will wow crowds with next.



2. THE ROYAL ACADEMY'S 250TH BIRTHDAY EXTENSION

OPENS: MAY 2018

Nearest Tube: Green Park (Jubilee, Piccadilly and Victoria lines) Much like our own clubhouse, the Royal Academy of Arts (RA) is made up of two buildings: the Burlington House, a 17th century aristocratic house, and Burlington Gardens, the palazzo behind. There have been many attempts to make these two grand buildings get along after generations of the cold shoulder. Finally it would seem that David Chipperfield Architects have found the solution. Instead of focusing on creating something new, Chipperfield is using and accentuating the RA's unique beauty. To suit this new and expanded space, the Academy will be using it to exhibit the historic treasures they have previously been unable to show to the public, plus the work of their academics, and for the benefit



3. THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE GALLERIES

OPENS: JUNE 2018

Nearest Tube: St James's Park (Circle and District lines) Westminster Abbey is embarking upon an exciting renovation project in the Abbey's medieval triforium, 70ft above the Abbey floor, which has been hidden to the public for over 700 years. Visitors will finally be able

providing some truly unique views into the Abbey and surrounding London. Not only will the new galleries be restoring history, but to make the galleries accessible, history will also be made with the construction of a new access tower outside Poets' Corner. The tower, constructed of glass, wood, lead, and stone will be the first physical addition to the Abbey church since its iconic towers by Nicholas in 1745.

THERE HAVE **BEEN MANY** ATTEMPTS TO TWO GRAND BUILDINGS **GET ALONG** AFTER **DECADES**

4. V&A PHOTOGRAPHY CENTRE

OPENS: BY JUNE 2018

Nearest Tube: South Kensington (Circle, District and Piccadilly lines) Since it was founded in 1856, the V&A has been collecting photographs and was one of the first museums to present them in an exhibition. It is now one of the largest and most important collections in the world, comprising around 500,000 images. Recently, the V&A has also added the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) collection to its holding, which comprises 270,000 photographs, an extensive library, and around 6,000 cameras and pieces of equipment. All of which will be displayed in their new Photography Centre. The Centre will also be the new event space for the museum's exciting activities, learning events, and broader opportunities for visitors and budding photographers to engage with the medium.



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5. THE LONDON MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

OPENS: AUTUMN 2018

Nearest Tube: Aldgate (Circle, Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan lines) After the success of the Swedish Museum of Photography, which has showcased work from top photographers such as Guy Bourdin, Annie Leibovitz and Lars Tunbjörk, Fotografiska has decided to spread its concept across the globe; next stop London. Fotografiska describes itself as an international meeting place where everything revolves around photography and helps to develop the special growing connection humans have with the artform. With the museum set to occupy the lower ground floors at The White Chapel Building, designed by Fletcher Priest Architects, the Whitechapel area is fast becoming an important cultural and leisure hub in London.



Looking ahead

6. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

OPENS: 2020

Nearest Tube: South Kensington (Circle, District and Piccadilly lines) The Natural History Museum's fingers are turning a delightful shade of green with their latest proposals for the future. Current designs show plans for an expanded wildlife garden and three new outdoor zones: The Square, Eastern Grounds and Western Grounds. The Square is the current entrance to the site for visitors arriving from South Kensington tube station and will be transformed into a large green area for guests to sit, eat, and relax. The Eastern Grounds will be landscaped



LONDON'S **HOLOCAUS**7 **MEMORIAL** AIMS TO BE A **SPACE FOR** LIVING, NOT JUST A MONUMENT TO THE PAST

to create a journey back through time from the origins of life to the present day. In contrast, the Western Grounds will be dedicated to existing wildlife and will become a space for visitors to feel closer to nature within the city.

7. LONDON'S HOLOCAUST **MEMORIAL**

OPENS: 2021

Nearest Tube: St James's Park (Circle and District lines) To honour the millions who died during the Holocaust, a new memorial is set to be opened in the Victoria Tower Gardens next to the Houses of Parliament in Westminster by 2021. Featuring a series of 23 towering bronze fins, the 22 spaces in between symbolise the different countries where Iewish communities were destroyed. Much like the memorial in Berlin, the new landmark in London aims to be a space for living, not just a monument to the past. Victoria Tower Gardens was chosen for its connection to Emmeline Pankhurst, the Burghers

of Calais, and the Buxton Memorial, strong advocates of opposing injustice.

8. MUSEUM OF LONDON

OPENS: 2022

Nearest Tube: Barbican (Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines) Whilst it's not technically new, the Museum of London is planning on relocating to West Smithfield, a site that has already seen dramatic transformations over the years, and includes the Smithfield General Market and a suite of buildings known as The Annexe. The space is an extraordinary site for the museum to get their hands on, with records of the site being used as a market going as far back as the 14th century. The market buildings were designed by Sir Horace Jones, the man behind Tower Bridge, and have survived - mainly - intact after both the Blitz and the Fire of Poultry Market. 2022 will see the museum entwine this rich source of city history with its collections.





LONDON & EDINBURGH

highlights



FROM THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD

Wednesday 7 March - Saturday 24 March, Royal Opera House Janáč ek's final work receives its Royal Opera premiere in a new production directed by Krzysztof Warlikowski, with Mark Wigglesworth conducting an excellent cast including Johan Reuter and Willard W White. Prices vary. roh.org.uk/events

LONDON

ORCHIDS FESTIVAL

Until Sunday 11 March, Kew Gardens

The 23rd annual Orchids Festival in the Princess of Wales Conservatory has a Thai theme this year, including handcrafted umbrellas, a bright Vanda tunnel and arches decorated with orchids. You can learn about the significance of orchids in Thai cuisine. medicine and culture. From £10. kew.org/ kew-gardens/whats-on

EDINBURGH

FDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FESTIVAL

Saturday 31 March -Sunday 15 April, venues across Edinburgh Founded in 1989, the festival takes place across the city, and aims to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to discover the world around them.

Price tba. sciencefestival.co.uk



LONDON

LONDON VISIONS

Until Sunday 15 April, Museum of London Made up of contributions from architects, designers and contemporary artists, this exhibition looks at the potential routes London could take in the future, based on today's challenges. Free. museumoflondon.org.uk



BELTANE FIRE FESTIVAL

Monday 30 April, Calton Hill Evoking the ancient Gaelic festival of Beltane, this thrilling tribute boasts a mix of drums, fire and physical theatre. £9-13. beltane.org

PETER PAN

From Thursday 17 May, Regent's Park Open Air Theatre The first in the 2018 season

of open air productions in

Regent's Park, JM Barrie's Peter Pan will transport you to Neverland, weather permitting! From £11.50.

openairtheatre.com

EDINBURGH

HEROES AND HEROINES: THE **VICTORIAN AGE**

Until Thursday 31 May, Scottish National Portrait Gallery An exhibition which re-examines some major historical figures and questions the nature of hero-worship. Is it a practice that should be abandoned or a useful way of looking back at great advances in society? Free.

www.nationalgalleries.org

EDINBURGH

HISTORIC **UNDERGROUND**

Throughout 2018, 2pm & 4pm, Mercat Cross, High Street Discover the city's oldest and deepest vaults, hear stories of Edinburgh's underworld and see a selection of 19th century artefacts in this exclusive tour. £13. mercattours.com

Get involved in the Commonwealth

THE COMMONWEALTH BIG LUNCH

Monday 12 March -Sunday 22 April, Commonwealth-wise

The Big Lunch has been the UK's annual get together for neighbours since 2009, in which millions of people join together with their neighbours in a nationwide

act of community friendship. To coincide with CHOGM this year, people from

all over the Commonwealth will join in to make 2018 the biggest and best year yet as we celebrate everything we have in common across our 52 nations.

Commonwealth Big Lunches are about celebrating being part of the Commonwealth, encouraging people to come together, and making new connections. Check out ROSL's very-own Big Lunch in the Events section, or to set up one in your local area visit edenprojectcommunities.com/ stuff-to-do/

THE COMMONWEALTH CHOGM 2018 **GAMES**

Taking place on the Gold Coast of Australia from 4 to 5 April, members in the UK can watch the games on the BBC and keep up-todate with all the action at www.gc2018.com. If you are feeling more active having watched the best and brightest from 52 nations give it their all, then head to www.bbc.co.uk/sports/ get-inspired to find out how to get involved in all manner of weird and wonderful activities, from roller derby to parkour, in your local area.

The CHOGM summit runs from 16-20 April in London and Windsor and will be holding four forums in which you can play a part. The Business Forum seeks to take advantage of the so-called Commonwealth Advantage. The People's Forum looks at the role civil society plays in driving forward the organisation. The Youth Forum will focus on the opportunities the Commonwealth's one billion young people have, while the Women's Forum seeks to promote gender equality and women's rights. To find out more about each, visit www. chogm2018.org.uk/forums.

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ROSLEVENTS

Just some of the highlights over the next few months, followed by the full calendar



n April 2018, the UK will host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), when leaders from all the member countries will come together to reaffirm our common values, address our shared challenges, and agree on how to work to create a better future for all our citizens. This year's theme, towards a common future, is focused on building on the strengths of the Commonwealth to ensure this unique organisation is able to respond to global challenges, and can deliver a more prosperous, secure, sustainable and fair future for all its citizens, particularly its young people.

The Royal Over-Seas League is the proud champion of nurturing emerging talent across the Commonwealth, and feels that this year's CHOGM focus aligns perfectly with what stands at the very heart of the club. Take a look at your opportunity to join in the celebrations that will be taking place across all 52 member countries in March and April:

COMMONWEALTH DAY SERVICE WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Monday 12 March, 1.30pm, Westminster Abbey

COMMONWEALTH DAY LUNCH

Monday 12th March, 12.30pm, Royal Scots Club, Edinburgh

COMMONWEALTH DAY RECEPTION

Monday 12 March, 5pm, Over-Seas House, London

COMMONTIES: TOWARDS A COMMON FUTURE

Wednesday 14 March, 5pm, Over-Seas House, London

THE BIG LUNCH

Sunday 15 April, 12pm, Over-Seas House, London

AN EVENING WITH KABANTU

Tuesday 17 April, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London

Battlefield Tour: The 100 Day Advance

Friday 6 - Monday 9 July, Amiens, France ROSL's commemoration of the centenary of the First World War concludes with a tour reflecting on the battles of 1918 between St Quentin and Amiens. After the stalemate of the previous years of the war, 1918 saw dramatic movements especially in the area of our study. In March, the Fifth Army was forced to retreat, fighting a number of famous rearguard actions in the process before the Germans were finally checked in front of Amiens. It was from this line that the Allies began their offensive, the so-called "Hundred Days" which ended when the Germans accepted Armistice terms on 11 November.

FRIDAY 6 JULY

Our study of the 1918 campaigns begins on 30 December 1917 at Welsh Ridge near Cambrai. Here, the Germans launched a trial attack for their new tactics, attacking the Royal Naval Division across snow-covered ground. The counter-attack by the 1st Battalion Artists Rifles is the theme for *Over the Top*, one of the most reproduced paintings of the war, which was painted by John Nash, who took part in the action.

This area was also crucial ground when the Germans began their Spring Offensive in March 1918, which we will study as we proceed to Amiens and our hotel, the Mercure Amiens Cathedrale. Group dinner in the hotel.

SATURDAY 7 JULY

We will focus on the German Spring Offensive, Operation Michael, or the Kaiserschlacht, between 21 March and 25 April. Among the actions we will study are Manchester Hill, where Lt Col Wilfrith Elstob







For booking information, see page 50.

won a posthumous VC and the South African Brigade's fight to the end at Marrieres Wood. This period also saw one of the last mounted cavalry charges, by the Canadians at Moreuil Wood, and the first battle between tanks at Cachy. We will finish the day with visits to the Australian National Memorial and the new Sir John Monash Centre.

SUNDAY 8 JULY

On 4 July 1918, Australian and American troops made an attack at le Hamel, which was taken as the model for the new combined arms tactics employed in the Hundred Days advance. So it is appropriate to begin the day at le Hamel, and we will then move to the start lines for the Battle of Amiens on 8 August which was described by Ludendorff as the "Black Day of the German Army". We will follow the Canadian, Australian and British troops as they advanced on Peronne, culminating in the capture of Mont St Quentin by the Australians. The Allies pushed on to the Hindenburg Line, which was attacked and breached on 29 September. Finally, we will visit the American Cemetery at Bony and Riqueval Bridge, captured by the North Midlands Division in one of the most famous actions of 1918.

MONDAY 9 JULY

Our journey home takes us through the rear areas of the British Expeditionary Force, giving the opportunity to remember the vital role of the logistic and medical troops. The British Cemetery at Etaples contains the graves not only of those who died of battle wounds but also many of the victims of the 1918 flu epidemic that, worldwide, killed many more than the war itself. Lunch will be taken at Montreuil-sur-Mer, the location of the British General Headquarters from 1916 to the end of the war. Before lunch we will visit the chateau which was part of the headquarters complex.

£800. £100 single supplement.

ROSL 66th Annual Music Competition

Our Annual Music Competition is already well under way, the Section Finals began in February where musicians performed for a panel of specialists including our Director of ROSL ARTS Geoff Parkin, and Chairman of the adjudicators Gavin Henderson CBE. Each week, a different section performed and we're down to the last three Section Finals, our Ensembles categories and the Overseas Final.

This year, we had a record number of applications from all over the Commonwealth, with an extraordinary amount of talent in all categories. Last year, we had our first ever brass player

win the Gold Medal and we can't wait for the finals this year.

Don't worry if you missed our Section Finals; the Gold Medal final is on Monday 4 June and this year we're in a new location. After two years at Cadogan Hall, we're back in the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London's Southbank Centre. Fresh from a two-year closure for major refurbishments, the Queen Elizabeth Hall will reopen in April and we can't

www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-o +44 (0)20 3879 9555

wait to hear our Section Finalists

perform in this iconic venue.



Percentage of total applicants for each section

19% for keyboard 20% for voice

20% for strings 20% for wind and brass

10% for Ensembles A
11% for Ensembles B

Nationalities represented this year

British
Belgian (joint)
Australian
New Zealand
China (joint)
South Korea (joint)
Canada
South Africa
Malaysia

Singapore

Total prize money to be awarded: £76,500

Total number of adjudicators across the auditions, Semi-Finals, Section Finals, and Grand Final: 28

40 hours of first round audition videos submitted and reviewed

73 Semi-Finalists







For booking information, see page 50.

ROSL calendar

MARCH



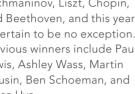
AMC SECTION FINAL KEYBOARD

Tuesday 6 March, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London The pianists in the keyboard section are never afraid of scaling the great heights of the piano repertoire. Our hall

is no stranger to the strains of

Rachmaninov, Liszt, Chopin, and Beethoven, and this year is certain to be no exception. Previous winners include Paul Lewis, Ashley Wass, Martin Cousin, Ben Schoeman, and Tessa Uvs.

£15. Friends of ROSL ARTS £12. Students £5. Season ARTS season ticket £60.



ticket £75. Friends of ROSL



COMMONWEALTH DAY LUNCH

Monday 12 March, 12pm, Royal Scots Club

Head to the new Edinburgh branch venue at the Royal Scots Club to celebrate Commonwealth Day with fellow ROSL members. £30. Guests £35.



COMMONWFAITH DAY SERVICE AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY Monday 12 March, 1.30pm,

Westminster Abbey Celebrate the remarkable association of 53 countries in the beautiful setting of Westminster Abbey. The Commonwealth Service is customarily attended by the Head of the Commonwealth, HM The Queen and we have a select few tickets for our members to join in with the celebrations. £10.



COMMONWEALTH DAY RECEPTION

Monday 12 March, 5pm, Over-Seas House, London

The festivities don't stop at Westminster Abbev. Join members, quests, and those who attended the service at our reception after the service and take advantage of this unique opportunity to meet people working and living all over the Commonwealth.



AMC SECTION FINAL **ENSEMBLES A**

£20. Guests £30.

Tuesday 13 March, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London Teamwork at its finest is displayed in the string and piano ensembles section, with daring performances of Prokofiev and gentle interpretations of Haydn; many of the UK's finest players

gather on our stage. Previous



COMMONTIES: TOWARDS A **COMMON FUTURE**

winners of this £10,000 prize

include the Cavaleri Quartet,

the Busch Trio, the Solem

£15. Friends of ROSL ARTS

ticket £75. Friends of ROSL

£12. Students £5. Season

ARTS season ticket £60.

Wednesday 14 March, 5pm, Over-Seas House, London The future of the

Commonwealth depends on its one billion young people. It is unsurprising therefore that this year's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), held in London in April, will have a strong youth focus. This year's CommonTies event will allow young people to air their thoughts on the four key CHOGM themes: prosperity, security, sustainability and fairness. Together with fellow quests, debate with professionals in the field and your peers, before feeding back their thoughts to key



personnel in the Commonwealth Secretariat. who will then pass those thoughts on to the Heads of Government. Followed by a networking event and fair, this event promises to be an enlightening evening.

Free. RSVP is necessary.



THE CATHEDRALS OF ENGLAND PART TWO

Thursday 15 March, 6pm, Over-Seas House, London After the popularity of last year's talk by The Rt Hon Lord Cormack DL FSA on



quests.



AMC SECTION FINAL **ENSEMBLES B**

Tuesday 20 March, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London The most eclectic of the

sections, music is stretched to its limits with these wonderfully creative ensembles, which have included, in the past, saxophone quartets, percussion, and string/ accordion duos. Previous winners include the Ferio Saxophone Quartet, Block 4, the Aurora Percussion Duo, the Camarilla Quartet, and Kabantu, among many

£15. Friends of ROSL ARTS £12. Students £5. Season ticket £75. Friends of ROSL ARTS season ticket £60.



Thursday 22 March, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London A selection of the finest Commonwealth musicians come together to perform in the penultimate concert of the competition, at which £3,000 is presented, along with several other high-profile prizes for competitors from major Commonwealth countries. Previous winners include Amalia Hall (New Zealand), Som Howie (Australia), Njabulo Madlala (South Africa), Sadie Fields (Canada), Rohan de Saram (Sri Lanka), and Abel Selaocoe (South Africa). £15. Friends of ROSL ARTS £12. Students £5. Season ticket £75. Friends of ROSL ARTS season





ticket £60.

LONDON GROUP VISIT: CUTLERS' HALL

Monday 26 March, 11am, Cutlers' Hall

Our tour will be led by the Beadle, the Ceremonial Officer of the Worshipful Company of Cutlers and his staff. We will have an introduction to the work of the cutler, the history of the Livery Hall and a conducted tour of its architecture. We will get a close-up view of some of the treasures from the company vaults and a tour of the company's collection of historical swords and cutlery from Roman times to the modern day. £16. Guests £18.



A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN POLITICS: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY DEBATE

Thursday 8 March, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London

Here at the Royal Over-Seas League we pride ourselves on our egalitarian history. Since our creation in 1910 we have been accepting female members and boast a 50:50 gender split in membership. With our club history and the centenary of female suffrage here in the UK, it is with great pleasure the younger

members announce this year's International Women's Day Debate will focus on women in politics, and invite members and guests to join us for what promises to be an insightful evening. The talk will cover a range of issues from the backlash against female party leaders, to the low political participation from women.

£10.





FVFNTS







For booking information, see page 50.

ROSL calendar



APRIL



Free.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS CONCERT Monday 2 April, 1pm, St Martin's in the Fields Our 2017 AMC Keyboard winner, Dominic Degavino, will be performing at St Martin-in-the-Fields, with a programme of David Matthews and Beethoven.

the exhibition Pop Up Creators. The exhibition presents an international exchange of outstanding and emerging illustrators and comics artists across the UK, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania launched by the not-for-profit Community Interest Company, Pop Up Projects. 160 students will produce their own illustrated stories in a distinct 'leporello' format. Free.

MEDICAL MUSIC SOCIETY Wednesday 11 April, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London The Castalian Quartet perform a programme including Haydn, Schumann and Schubert. with a wine reception and an optional buffet dinner. Concert only £28. Concert and buffet £56. Friends of ROSL ARTS Concert only £22. Friends of ROSL ARTS Concert and buffet: £48



LONDON GROUP AGM Thursday 12 April, 6pm, Over-Seas House, London Meet with your fellow London Group members to review the past year and discuss the future of the London Group with its committee. Afterwards, continue to discuss your ideas over a glass of wine. Free for London Group members.



AN EVENING WITH KABANTU Tuesday 17 April, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London Reimagining global sounds, rewriting the rulebook winners of the Royal Over-Seas League Ensembles Section 2017, Kabantu are a

quintet from Manchester who

unravel new marriages of

music from around the globe to celebrate the space where different cultures meet. Embracing variety, this programme mainly explores music from the Commonwealth, tied together by our links to South Africa and the UK, to reflect Kabantu's own nationalities. £15. Friends of ROSL ARTS £12.



LONDON GROUP VISIT: **ROYAL ALBERT HALL** Wednesday 25 April, 11am, Royal Albert Hall

A tour of the world famous building, conceived by Prince Albert to celebrate both the arts and sciences, in use since 1871. Well over one million people attend events the hall each year. The tour will cover the history and architecture of this iconic building and the route has good mobility

£16. Guests £18.



LEONARD BERNSTEIN AT THE PIANO: A 100TH ANNIVERSARY **CELEBRATION**

Monday 23 April, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London ROSL ARTS and the Park Lane Group celebrate the 100th anniversary of Leonard Bernstein by bringing



CHAIRMAN'S LUNCH & AGM

Thursday 10 May, 12pm, AGM

AGM free to attend.



3pm, Over-Seas House, London Sir David Brewer cordially invites you to the Chairman's Lunch and Annual General Meeting. Start the afternoon off with a wine reception, followed by a two-course meal and an exceptional talk by our guest speaker. Afterwards, help to shape the future of the Royal Over-Seas League at our AGM. £50. Guests £55.





POP UP CREATORS **EXHIBITION LAUNCH** Monday 9 April, 6pm,

Over-Seas House, London ROSL ARTS are pleased to bring together our interest in the development of both literature and visual art with



THE BIG LUNCH

Sunday 15 April, 12pm, Over-Seas House, London Last year, 9.7 million people turned out across the UK with their neighbours in a nationwide act of community and friendship. This year, The Big Lunch has extended its invitation to the entire Commonwealth as we celebrate our connection with all 52 nations. As it coincides with the end of the Commonwealth Games, you have double the reason to join us at the London clubhouse for an afternoon of music, food, and games. Some branches will be hosting their own Big Lunches so remember to check out your branch information online regularly. £35. Guests £40.







£12.



NEW MEMBERS' RECEPTION Tuesday 1 May, 6.30pm,

together four solo pianists to

play nearly all of Bernstein's

29 Anniversaries (1943-1989,

his Piano Sonata (1938) and

Touches (1980), Bernstein's

1937 arrangement for solo

piano of Copland's El Salón

México, as well as excerpts

from Candide (1956) and

West Side Story (1957) in

special arrangements for

Editor, Charlie Harmon.

piano by Bernstein's Music

£15. Friends of ROSL ARTS

dedicated to 29 friends),

music for piano, including the UK premiere of his

Over-Seas House, London Are you new to ROSL or are thinking of joining and wish to find out more? Come along to our New Members' Reception, which is open to both new and prospective members, and offers you a chance to get a real flavour for the Royal Over-Seas League and all that we stand for. Free. RSVP is necessary.







SPRING DINNER

Thursday 24 May, 7pm,

Over-Seas League, London

Calling all Under 35s! The

Younger Member Committee

would like to invite you to an

evening of good food and

even better conversation at

their Spring Dinner. So put

your glad rags on and enjoy

a sophisticated three-course

meal with wine, while getting

to know your committee and

fellow younger members.

£30. Guests £35.





ROSL calendar



SHACKLETON'S FORGOTTEN MEN BY DEBBIE HORSMAN

Thursday 17 May, 6pm, Over-Seas House, London "Men wanted: For hazardous journey, small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful, honour and recognition in case of success," read the advert

Sir Ernest Shackleton placed in a London newspaper seeking recruits in 1914 for his Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. But who were the men who answered such a call? Debbie Horsman, a descendant of a member of the team, will talk about the 28 men who set out for the Antarctic to what was almost certain death. Free for London Group members and overnight guests.



THE ROYAL WEDDING Saturday 19 May, 12pm, Over-Seas House, London We will be celebrating the big royal wedding at the London clubhouse in a style befitting the newly wed Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. Watch the wedding of the year with fellow members before heading out to our garden to enjoy all the benefits a spring wedding has to offer: champagne, delicious food, and music in the sun.

£15. Guests £20.



FREUD, HOCKNEY, AND THE LONDON PAINTERS, BY MARTIN GAYFORD Thursday 24 May, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House, London In this talk based on his new book of the same title. art critic Martin Gayford discusses the development of painting in London from the Second World War to the 1970s, focusing on the story of interlinking friendships, shared experiences, and artistic concerns among a number of acclaimed artists, including Frank Auerbach, Gillian Ayres, Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, and David Hockney.

£25.

MODERNISTS AND

MAVERICKS: BACON,







CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW Thursday 24 - Saturday 26 May, Royal Chelsea Hospital

The released preview of what's in store at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show confirmed our suspicions that 2018's show is set to be even better than 2017. Headliners - Space to Grow Gardens will be showcasing how city dwellers can make the most of their small spaces, and on Friday the show will be extending its hours and showcasing live music, artisar food, and exclusive artists. £65 plus administrative and



Tickets will be balloted and drawn on 23 April: limited number available. Please select dates in order of preference; choice of dates will be allocated on a first drawn, first served basis. If successful, tickets will be need to be signed for upon delivery.



TROOPING THE COLOUR Saturday 26 May, 2 June, 9 June, Horse Guards Parade

Trooping the Colour dates back to the 17th century during the reign of Charles II, when

the colours of a regiment were used as a rallying point in battle and were therefore trooped in front of soldiers every day to ensure every man would recognise his regiment. Today, this impressive display of pageantry is held on the occasion of the Queen's Official Birthday, taking place in June every year.

£10. £15. £40. Tickets for all three dates will be balloted and drawn on 15 May. Please select dates in order of preference: choice of dates will be allocated on a first drawn, first served basis.





BRIDGE CLUB COURSES

Starting Monday 9 April, Over-Seas House, London The ROSL Bridge Club will be running more courses, starting 9 April 2018 for six weeks (excluding the Bank Holiday). All meetings are on a Monday, usually in the Mountbatten Room. Courses must be booked in advance. as numbers are limited. 2.00-4.00: Intermediate

4.30-6.30: Next Steps (for Beginners who have taken earlier ROSL courses) **6.30-8.30:** Beginners

There is also an Advanced group, which meets occasionally with our tutor, Ingar Kofoed Hansen. Ingar is a wonderful tutor and professional bridge player, who has taken the first group, who started two years ago, through several courses. We are all very enthusiastic and committed players thanks to Ingar, who makes it so much fun!

Please contact Eve Mitleton-Kelly E.Mitleton-Kelly@mitletonkelly.org.uk the Bridge Club Coordinator for details on the Advanced group and any other Bridge Club details. £120. £135 for guests.



SUMMER DINNER Tuesday 5 June, 7pm, Over-Seas House, London Join your fellow London Group members for their annual Summer Dinner. Enjoy a threecourse meal with wine followed by a talk by our esteemed



ART & MUSIC IN VIENNA: A KIRKER AND architecture including **ROSL TOUR**

Friday 11 May -Wednesday 16 May, Vienna Vienna established itself as the undisputed centre of Europe's musical life from the middle of the 18th century. A hundred years later the city's reputation as an artistic melting pot was consolidated and strengthened by the works of artists such as Klimt and Schiele, and the architect Otto Wagner. This creative genius was added to what was already there – an Imperial capital city adorned with

grand and beautiful Emperor Franz Josef's famous Ring, lined with the great buildings of state. For all its pomp and magnificence, Vienna has somehow kept the atmosphere of a small city, simultaneously imposing and intimate. It is the perfect destination for everyone with an interest in art, music, and history. Join ROSL members for a fascinating holiday that combines guided visits to Vienna's great galleries and museums with a series of world class opera and music

performances.



£2,573 per person with a £398 single supplement for five nights. Includes flights, accommodation with breakfast, two dinners, tickets for four performance, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the

services of a member of ROSL staff and a local guide. To reserve your place, contact Ellie Seaton or Oliver Coulson on 020 7593 1896, or email ellie.seaton@ kirkerholidays.com or oliver. coulson@kirkerholidays.com.



special delivery cost of £6.95



guest speaker, yet to be announced, in the company of friends both old and new. This evening promises to be the perfect start to the summer season in London. Price tba.



WUTHERING HEIGHTS' SUMMER BALL

Saturday 16 June, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House, London The Earnshaws cordially invite you to Wuthering Heights for an evening of Georgian dancing and the century's finest entertainment, to celebrate the 200th birthday of their beloved Emily Brontë. Start the evening in our



delightful garden with a glass of champagne in hand while enjoying the first of the evening's festivities. Then, join us in the Hall of India and Pakistan for a three-course meal before retiring either to our ballroom to learn how to dance like a true Georgian, or recline in the bar to the best 18th century music London has to offer.

£110. £1,000 for a table of 10.



HOUSE OF LORDS AFTERNOON TEA Tuesday 26 June, 3.30pm, Over-Seas House, London A staple of many members' social calendars, The Rt Hon Lord Luce invites you and your guests to the House of Lords for afternoon tea. this June. Dine with the views of some of London's most iconic buildings. while sitting in a room steeped

in political history. £30. Guests £35.



BATTLEFIELD TOUR: THE 100 DAY ADVANCE Friday 6 - Monday 9 July,

Amiens, France ROSL's commemoration of

the centenary of the First World War concludes with a tour reflecting on the battles of 1918 between St Quentin and Amiens. After the stalemate of the previous years of the war, 1918 saw dramatic movements. especially in the area of our study. In March, the Fifth Army was forced to retreat, fighting a number of famous rearguard actions in the process, before the Germans were finally checked in front of Amiens. It was from this line that the Allies began their offensive, the so-called "Hundred Days", which ended when the Germans accepted armistice terms on 11 November.

£800. £100 single supplement.

CONTACT DETAILS AND **BOOKING INFORMATION**

Visit www.rosl.org.uk/events for more information on the full programme of events

ROSL ARTS

+44 (0)20 7408 0214 x219; roslarts@rosl.org.uk

+44 (0)131 225 1501; reception@rosl-edinburgh.org

MEMBERS' EVENTS

Book online at www.rosl.org.uk

To reserve a ticket for popular events or if you have trouble booking online, contact Jessica Harris-Edwards: membersevents@rosl.org.uk; +44 (0)20 7016 6906. To pay by cheque, send separate cheques (sterling) for each event, payable to 'ROSL', to Members' Events, Marketing Department, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London, SW1A 1LR.

YOUNGER MEMBERS

For members aged 35 and under. Book online at www.rosl.org.uk/events. Inter-Club events must be booked independently via www.inter-club.co.uk. For information about the ROSL YM programme, join the Facebook group facebook.com/groups/roslym or contact Jessica Harris-Edwards: membersevents@rosl.org.uk.

LONDON GROUP

For London Group members, their guests and ROSL members staying at Over-Seas House, London. To join, speak to the Membership Team on +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x214/216 or email membership@rosl.org.uk. No booking is required for talks. To book outside visits, send a cheque payable to 'Royal Over-Seas League' and a stamped, addressed envelope to Maureen Howley, London Group, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London, SW1A 1LR. The London Group is a voluntary organisation and unfortunately cannot take bookings by email or telephone. Confirmation is sent approximately ten days in advance. Cancellations and refund requests must be made at least two weeks before the event. Contact howleymaureen@hotmail.com.

KIRKER MUSIC FESTIVALS

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Kirker Holidays offers an extensive range of holidays for music lovers. These include tours to leading festivals in Europe such as Schubertiade and the Puccini Opera Festival, and opera weekends in Verona, Venice, Milan, Dresden, Vienna & New York.

We also host a series of exclusive chamber music festivals throughout Europe & the UK, featuring highly acclaimed musicians in elegant surroundings.

THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND & ORKNEY

A SEVEN NIGHT MUSIC CRUISE | 15 SEPTEMBER 2018

Liverpool – Kirkwall – Invergordon – Ullapool – Tobermory Greenock - Liverpool

with The Gould Piano Trio and Robert Plane, clarinet

This shorter sailing takes in some of Europe's most spectacular coastline. After cruising the Sound of Canna and picturesque Loch Dunvegan our first port of call will be Kirkwall on Orkney, home to Neolithic villages and ancient stone circles. Next is Invergordon, gateway to Loch Ness, and then Ullapool, whose historic buildings clutch the water's edge. Sailing south, we stop at the Isle of Mull, and

Greenock on the Firth of Clyde, before returning to Liverpool.

Prices from £1,530 (double) or £2,215 (sole occupancy) for seven nights including full-board, private drinks parties and admission to all the concerts.



THE KIRKER CORNWALL MUSIC FESTIVAL

A FOUR NIGHT HOLIDAY | 1 OCTOBER 2018

Following on from the annual success of the Kirker Music Festival in St. Mawes, we've added a new Cornish Music Festival which includes three concerts given by the Piatti Quartet.

Highlights include visits to Boconnoc near Lostwithiel, where we will be welcomed by Elizabeth Fortescue who lives on the vast estate. We will visit the house twice – once for a morning concert and again for an evening concert followed by dinner in the house. There will be a third concert in the St. Mawes Methodist Chapel. Based in the pretty town of Fowey, our holiday will also include a visit to the newly reopened Tate Gallery in St. Ives and the Barbara Hepworth Studio and Garden.

Price from £,1,498 (single supp. £,298) for four nights including accommodation with breakfast, one lunch, four dinners, three concerts, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.



THE KIRKER MUSIC FESTIVAL IN ISCHIA A SEVEN NIGHT HOLIDAY | 12 OCTOBER 2018

For our thirteenth Music Festival on the idyllic island of Ischia we will be joined by Kaleidoscope, an ever-changing group of musicians and friends created by the pianist Tom Poster.

We shall enjoy six exclusive concerts in the lovely concert hall overlooking the garden at La Mortella, the former home of Sir William & Lady Walton. Our base for the duration will be the 4* Albergo San Montano in the small resort of Lacco Ameno, with spectacular views of the Bay of Naples. We include a guided tour of the garden at La Mortella and a half-day sightseeing tour of Ischia.

Price from £2,396 per person (single supp. £252) for seven nights including flights, transfers, accommodation with breakfast and dinner, six private concerts, a half day tour of Ischia, a private guided tour of the gardens at La Mortella and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.



THE KIRKER MUSIC FESTIVAL IN TENERIFE

A SEVEN NIGHT HOLIDAY | 12 JANUARY 2019

For our fourth exclusive music festival on the island of Tenerife, we will present a series of six concerts featuring the Gould Piano Trio, pianist Benjamin Frith, soprano Ilona Domnich and violist Simon Rowland-Jones.

Staying at the 5* Hotel Botanico, surrounded by lush tropical gardens in an unspoilt part of this volcanic island, we shall also enjoy a programme of fascinating excursions. Highlights include the Sitio Litro Orchid Garden, a cable car journey to the peak of Mount Teide and a visit to the primeval cloud forest of the Anaga Mountains. We will also visit historic and picturesque villages along the spectacular north coast, including Garachico with its 17th century convent.

Price from £2,698 per person (single supp. £,375) for seven nights including flights, transfers, accommodation with breakfast, six dinners, six private concerts, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.



Speak to an expert or request a brochure:

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Valletta International Baroque Festival

7 days | £1995

Enjoy a performance from acclaimed harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani in Valletta's 18th century Teatru Manoel and the superb Baroque ensemble Concerto Köln performing Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*.

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