

OVERSEAS

Quarterly journal of the ROSL

Issue 1, March-May 2012



Perth perspectives

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OVERSEAS

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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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FRONT COVER: Australians in Melbourne welcome The Queen during her tour of the country in October © Newspix/Alex Coppel

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From the Director-General



My first months as Director-General have flown pleausurably by. It has been a joy to meet so many ROSL members, including during my first visit to our Ontario Chapter. I hope to meet many more of you during 2012. Christmas and New Year were celebrated with customary style, ushered in by the wonderful London carol concert, featuring no fewer than seven ROSL staff and family in the choir; and the excellent tea at Over-Seas House which followed. The farewell lunch for Bob Newell and Fatima Vanicek, to which 180 sat down, was fitting, with moving speeches from Lord Luce, Jason Ronald and Bob himself. Sixty members enjoyed Christmas in the London clubhouse and Edinburgh hosted a fabulous Hogmanay.

2012 will be an exciting year. In this issue you will find an outline of our plans to celebrate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee (page 30); the Diamond Jubilee of the ROSL Music Competition, at which HRH Princess Alexandra, our Vice-Patron, will be the

Guest of Honour (page 28); and the Olympic Games. We will update you on developments via our refurbished website (www.rosl.org.uk). We have made the starting line-up for the Thames pageant on 3 June and have 150 places on The Queen Elizabeth for members to witness the pageant; I will be drawing names soon, so there's just time if you wish to participate. Do not be too disappointed if your name does not come up – come instead to our Big Lunch in either clubhouse.

This year will doubtless have its challenges. The financial climate will be problematic but be assured that the great value that ROSL membership offers will continue. The Central Council has invited me to produce a strategic plan, giving direction for the years ahead and I aim to ensure that what we hold dear endures, membership remains buoyant and that ROSL becomes the organisation of choice for the next generation of members. We all have a part to play here, so please continue to invite new members, friends, family and business colleagues to join us; if we could all recruit one new member each this year, we would be in a really strong position.

I would also welcome your thoughts on our future; please write with whatever ideas you may have. I will be convening Member Forums to hear what you think and, as I travel round our branches, I hope to engage you in this debate. I will cover this, too, in our AGM on 9 May – so please come along to that and the Members' Reception afterwards. But do not wait until I can visit you; I am keen to hear from you now.

Roddy Porter

Editor's letter

Our cover reflects the depth of feeling that marked



The Queen's 11-day tour of Australia in October last year. Notwithstanding the important talks being conducted by the Commonwealth leaders, by all accounts Her Majesty stole the show, and even fervent republicans turned out to show their respect and affection. In this issue, we look at the importance of The Queen's visit and what it revealed about Australia's relationship with its monarch (page 6). With an introduction from ROSL Chairman, Sir Anthony Figgis (page 5), we discuss the impact of CHOGM on Western Australia, and Perth in particular (page 10), and hear from a Scottish delegate to the Commonwealth Youth Forum about the inspiring work being done by our young citizens (page 8).

Roderick Lakin, Director of Arts, toured the region following the meeting. He reports on the musical events held with five of the Australian branches (page 21), and the high standards at the auditions, in New Zealand, for the 6th Annual Pettman/ROSL ARTS Scholarship (page 18). On his travels he discovered Hobart, Australia's second oldest city, and he shares his must-see sights of the Tasmanian capital on page 14.

I am excited by an event a little closer to (my) home: the Globe's forthcoming multilingual Shakespeare extravaganza. Linked to London 2012 and the associated Cultural Olympiad, the festival will see 37 international theatre companies descend on the Southbank. I interviewed the Festival Director to find out more (page 26). Like many Londoners, I missed out on tickets to the Games themselves, but I am still hoping to take in the impressive Olympic Park – and ROSL has organised a tour of the top sites (page 30), surely a must for anyone in the capital.

Miranda Moore

**CEREMONY:**

At the Perth Convention Centre (pictured below), a student choir performs at the opening of CHOGM, in the presence of HM The Queen, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard and other dignitaries (left)

A meeting of minds

Following CHOGM, ROSL Chairman, Sir Anthony Figgis, takes the opportunity to meet branch members

My wife and I have just circled the globe for the second time in 18 months on behalf of ROSL members. How lucky we are!

This time, we went to Perth in Western Australia for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), and then on to the ROSL branches in Hong Kong, Vancouver and Edmonton.

CHOGM was a massive affair, much bigger than I had imagined: by some estimates 6,000 delegates. We were not involved on the political side, except for the opening ceremony and to hear a punchy address to the Peoples' Forum by William Hague, who defended the Commonwealth ideal. ROSL is recognised as an important part of Commonwealth civil society. There was much networking!

ROSL's musical contribution to the event was second to none. Roderick Lakin had arranged for two Australian prizewinners from the Annual Music Competition to play as soloists with the Symphony Orchestra of Western Australia (Amy Dickson on her magical saxophone and Yelien He on his equally magical cello). They also played on various other occasions, with Les Neish, at a thanksgiving service at Perth Cathedral, and, in the framework of Commonwealth Resounds (with Alison Cox, Martin Weiss and Nick Oliver), at the Commonwealth Youth Forum.

The Commonwealth meeting was a good opportunity for the Western Australia Branch to

get together. More than a hundred of us sat down to an enjoyable dinner, organised by branch Chairman Tony Abbott in honour of his predecessor, Jeff Turner. On behalf of the Central Council, I presented Jeff with a small token of thanks for his 20 years' service as Chairman.

Tony handed me a generous cheque from the branch as their contribution to the ROSL Namibia project. There was lovely music from Commonwealth Resounds and from Les Neish, who can make his tuba sound like liquid gold or a didgeridoo, or both at the same time.

Thanks to Qantas, who grounded all their planes without notice, we had to leave on another airline before CHOGM was properly over. But the whole thing was a great experience, not least the open-air barbecue attended by HM The Queen on the Sunday morning. We were there, along with Jason Ronald, ROSL's Chairman in Australia, and more than 100,000 others. The cheers and flag-waving that greeted Her Majesty were quite something.

We were very glad to visit the branches in Hong Kong, British Columbia and Alberta on the way back, and were grateful for the opportunity to meet members in all three places. Einstein was right: time and space are relative – the friendliness of ROSL members around the world shrinks distance and dissolves time.



© CHOGM 2011

CHOGM was a massive affair, much bigger than I had imagined: up to 6,000 delegates

FOCUS

Right royal reception

The Queen's 11-day tour of Australia united the country in its admiration for the monarch as the number of her supporters continues to grow, says **Fran Molloy**

Last October's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) was the official focal point for The Queen's 16th royal visit to Australia.

However, while hosting Australia's largest-ever gathering of world leaders was a momentous occasion, the highlight for most Australians was a farewell charity barbecue held for the royal couple on the banks of Perth's Swan River, which was attended by a crowd of more than 100,000 people.

During the 11-day visit, tens of thousands of Australians lined the streets in Canberra, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth to greet the pair, making this the most successful Royal Tour since The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh first visited Australia in 1954. It is true that interest in the monarchy has been more overt since Prince William's wedding last April – and this, together with ongoing media speculation that this might be The Queen's last visit to Australia, is credited with raising crowd numbers.

The Queen's popularity may have overshadowed the proceedings of CHOGM, but it also raised its profile in the media, according to Dr Mathew Davies, a Research Fellow in International Relations at Australian National University in Canberra. During the royal visit, Dr Davies ran a Diplomatic Training Programme for junior-level diplomats, many of whom had colleagues attending CHOGM in some capacity.

He took them to join the crowds viewing the royal entourage as it passed through the city of Canberra to Parliament House and they were delighted to see The Queen, he says. "They loved the pageantry of it, on a beautiful day down by Lake Burley Griffin, in the nation's capital." Most of the diplomats, particularly those from the smaller Pacific countries, were buoyed by the opportunity that CHOGM gave to increase the profile of their nations and enable them to access high-level international conversations.

Yet they were surprised by the scale of the interest that the local and international media

displayed in what was happening at CHOGM. "A lot of reporting focused on the royal visit – CHOGM was certainly pulled along by The Queen's profile somewhat – but there was also more media engagement with the event itself than perhaps might otherwise have been the case." He admits, however, that much of the media coverage "tended towards the sentimental and personal, rather than the politically-focused".

Reporter Courtney Trenwith, of metropolitan daily news outlet *WA Today*, says she wasn't surprised by her readers' level of interest in The Queen. "The royal visit did take the focus away from CHOGM," she says. "The average reader

The Queen's popularity overshadowed CHOGM but it also raised its profile in the media

RESPECT: Crowds gather in Melbourne's Federation Square (right) to welcome The Queen, who is pictured with Prince Philip (bottom) on 26 October and, two days later, arriving at CHOGM's opening ceremony with Prime Minister Julia Gillard (below)





© NEWSPIX/ALIX COPPEL

takes more interest in the personalities involved than perhaps they do in the drier side of international affairs.” *WA Today* publishes much of its material online, enabling rapid feedback from readers. “Stories about [Nigerian President] Goodluck Jonathan had more [online] hits than those about David Cameron, for example,” she adds.

Official debate

The theme for CHOGM 2011 – which was attended by 53 leaders from six continents, representing around a third of the world’s population – was ‘Women as Agents of Change’. Citing this in her opening speech, The Queen said: “We must continue to strive together to promote that theme in a lasting way beyond this year.” The symbolism of the female monarch opening the meeting, accompanied by Australia’s female Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, and female Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, gave credence to that theme, despite the presence of just seven female leaders among the 53 government heads.

Recommendations from a nine-member Eminent Persons’ Group (EPG) about reforming the Commonwealth were presented to the meeting for discussion. They included the

introduction of a charter of principles and the somewhat controversial proposal to appoint a commissioner for democracy and human rights.

While The Queen’s role at CHOGM and, indeed, within the Commonwealth, is largely symbolic, she plays an important unifying role. As Head of the Commonwealth, her role was described in the London Declaration of 1949 as ‘the symbol of the free association of the independent Member Nations’.

Of greater interest to the media, however, was a perceived protocol breach by the hatless Julia Gillard, who shook The Queen’s hand and chose to bow, rather than curtsy, when greeting her on her arrival in Canberra. Like many Australians, Ms Gillard (who, in the past, has professed her preference for a Republic), is an admirer of Queen Elizabeth II though less taken with the pomp and ceremony of monarchy.

A Republican conversation

A royal visit invariably sparks Australia’s long-standing debate about the make-up of its constitution and government – currently a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy, with the Governor-General as The Queen’s representative in Australia. Despite

the unsuccessful Republican referendum held in Australia in 1999, discussion about the nation’s possible transition to a republic continues. However, opinion polls suggest a decline in republican sentiment in recent times to around 30 percent of the population.

While Australians’ fervour for a Republic has waned, their affection for Queen Elizabeth II remains steady. “There’s enormous affection for the Crown among Australians”, says Professor David Flint, head of the organisation Australians for a Constitutional Monarchy. Even Prof Flint’s nemesis, the former leader of the Australian Federal Opposition and former head of Australia’s republican movement, Malcolm Turnbull, has a great fondness for The Queen. During CHOGM, he told reporters in Sydney that all Australians, republican or not, welcomed The Queen’s visit.

“Nobody could fail to have enormous respect and affection for Queen Elizabeth”, he told the gathered journalists. “As someone once said to me, ‘There are a lot more Elizabethans in this country than there are monarchists’, and I think that’s probably a keen insight.”

Fran Molloy is a freelance journalist based in Sydney.

FOCUS

Platform for the future

Scottish delegate **John Loughton** offers an inside view of the Commonwealth Youth Forum 2011

In October last year I touched down in Perth as the UK Planning Group member for the Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF8). It was the eighth summit of its kind, and is a formally recognised parallel event to CHOGM. The Forum exists to act as the flagship Commonwealth platform to give young leaders and campaigners from all member countries an opportunity to debate issues important to youth and form radical solutions to many of the world's most pressing problems. It is also an opportunity to gain valuable skills, meet like-minded peers and have a direct dialogue with Heads of State.

This was my first CHOGM experience; in fact it was essentially my first international Commonwealth experience. I was very honoured to represent millions of young Britons, as well as the 1.2 billion young Commonwealth voices. As our societies grow younger, countries must do more to promote the values of the Commonwealth and highlight how young people can be drivers of progressive change. That's exactly what I wanted to do.

Neither a blind romantic to the Commonwealth, nor blinded by the pageantry and importance of CHOGM, I see the Commonwealth and CHOGM as a practical vehicle for change, where we can place emphasis on political equality and voluntary association. The common thread is that of values, not only of military or financial interests.

I was fortunate enough to have quite an active role in CYF8. At the Opening Ceremony we were joined by Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard, the Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma and a whole host of ministers, diplomats and media from across the globe. I was particularly touched when, during Ms Gillard's speech, she chose to single out my story as an example of excellence and overcoming adversity to fight for a better and fairer society.

Although I grew up in a rough area of North Edinburgh, I went on to become Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament and won the reality TV show *Big Brother: Celebrity Hijack* in 2008. This generated a lot of press interest, and I found myself being interviewed by local and international media. I was keen to highlight and demand action on human rights, gender equality, gay rights and Commonwealth reform.

As the Forum continued, young people took part in an array of skill-building workshops, heard from a host of high-profile speakers and, crucially, broke into sub-groups in order to form our final communiqué, which would be presented to the Heads of Government on the final day of CHOGM. The core recommendation from CYF8 was the establishment of an independent youth-led governing body to oversee the administration of a youth development fund. This was seen as young people's opportunity to work in partnership with governments to address the needs of all the people of the Commonwealth.



UNITED WE STAND: John Loughton poses with other youth delegates (above) and chats with Goodluck Jonathan (below)

A light was also shone on the devastating impact that the global economic crisis is having on young people, with a demand for more to be done to generate jobs and opportunities. It is fundamental to stimulate economic activity among our young people now if we are to have a sustainable global economy.

CYF8 was an amazing opportunity to share our vibrant cultures with one another. From me





of the Commonwealth roared and the governments whimpered.

I got to air my views when I was elected to attend the formal CHOGM Youth Dialogue breakfast with 15 Heads of States. I was the African and European spokesperson – a role I was honoured to serve as a Brit. I sat next to, and made friends with, the South African President, Jacob Zuma, and Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan. We spoke about the communiqué of CYF8, which outlines the aspirations of a generation regarding how we want our Commonwealth to reform and renew. I stressed that we must give voice to the voiceless and engage the disengaged. This was our duty as youth leaders and Heads of State.

The CYF is a powerful and unique platform because it is run by young people, for young people. We had effective plans for progress and were able to engage politicians at the highest rank. It is so important that this continues and that young people are seen as part of the solution, not part of the problem. After all, we are the world's greatest natural asset.

John Loughton is Parliamentary Manager for the charity Fairbridge and was previously Chairman of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

donning my tartan kilt to the Pacific Islanders showing us the *haka*, it was clear that we are all proud of our local heritage, as well as our Commonwealth identity. We were very much all different, all equal.

It became clear to me, however, that the Commonwealth has to change course quickly. It has reached a point in its history where it must ask itself the big questions. What is it for? Who does it service? Where is it relevant? What difference is it making and can it make? And how effective is it in upholding its own values day-to-day?

The way the Commonwealth itself sought to answer these questions was through the Eminent Persons Group (EPG), made up of a host of accomplished, powerful and wise individuals. The package of EPG recommendations published in 2011 was a radical roadmap to get the Commonwealth on course for the future.

It called for a charter of values, a Commissioner on Human Rights and a host of progressive new ideas that would throw open the doors of the Commonwealth and give it real political teeth. Young people were disappointed when publication was delayed and concerned that many of its recommendations might be blocked or kicked into the long grass. However, it was finally published and some of the ideas were approved. I can't help but feel that the people

Giving young people a voice

The Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC) is a youth development and education charity working alongside young people to support them as active global citizens through sharing ideas and experiences, and working together.

Young people are vital to the future of the Commonwealth. More than 60% of its population is under 30, and CYEC believes young people are a crucial, yet largely untapped, asset for our societies, and can act as a catalyst for nation building and for developing a stronger, 21st-century Commonwealth. This is at a time when there is a 'youth bulge' affecting all aspects of poverty and development efforts in member states. A disproportionate percentage of the younger generation lives in poverty and unemployment, and is affected by widespread disease, poor sanitation and inaccessible healthcare and education.

CYEC promotes youth exchanges and programmes for young adults that enable them to share and compare views, learn about the reality of each other's lives and build Commonwealth links and awareness. This gives them an

opportunity to educate each other, because they understand best the problems that they and their contemporaries face, and how best to solve them.

CYEC supports a number of youth-led development activities and networks, and is particularly proud of its role in helping to found the Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF), held at the time of CHOGM. Each CYF provides a platform for young people of the Commonwealth and aims to support them as change-makers, enabling them to develop an understanding of core Commonwealth values, and contributing to the development of their communities and the wider Commonwealth.

At every Forum, young people have asked to be seen and treated as partners in democracy and development; they have contributions to make as agents of peace-building and climate change awareness, and as drivers of social and economic enterprise. The 2011 CYF in Australia was no different.

Vic Craggs, Chief Executive, CYEC
www.cyec.org.uk

FOCUS

Flying the flag for Perth

Rhianna King looks at the impact of CHOGM on the region and how the city pulled off a true-blue Australian programme



Picture: © CHOGM 2011

Ask most Western Australians what the leaders of the Commonwealth discussed during the Heads of Government meeting last year and few would be able to tell you. Because while the Commonwealth leaders were facing questions about the institution's relevance, the world's most isolated state capital was enjoying its time in the sun.

For Perth and Western Australia (WA), CHOGM was all about showcasing the city on an international stage, strengthening ties with neighbouring countries and proving that Perth was more than just a mining town. More than 4,000 delegates were expected to attend CHOGM and related events during the week-long round of meetings, official functions and public participation activities. It was billed as WA's chance to shine, and the lead-up to the event was unlike anything Perth had ever seen.

The city centre was in lockdown amid unprecedented security, and hundreds of extra police officers were flown in from New Zealand

and the eastern states to make sure that every corner of the city was monitored. The state government spent AUS\$24 million ensuring Perth looked its best when it was televised to 2 billion people in more than 50 countries, splashing out AUS\$9 million on a new reception centre and \$3 million upgrading Government House.

In addition, a new police command centre was built, a Hollywood-style 'Perth' sign was erected on the banks of the iconic Swan River and the main streets in the city underwent a makeover. And while there was an argument from some that the money was a waste, and CHOGM nothing more than an inconvenience to locals, both the government and business leaders said it would provide a lasting legacy.

Aussie tone

The event had a distinctly Australian tone. From the kangaroo stew and football presented to The Queen by Aboriginal students, to the Great Aussie Barbecue on the Perth foreshore,

PRIDE OF WA: The North Cottesloe Surf Life Saving Club (above) at a reception for Foreign Ministers during CHOGM

delegates were left in no doubt as to who was hosting the event.

At times the backdrop to CHOGM appeared to take centre stage. Both international and local media delighted in the activities that 'first bloke' Tim Matheson, the partner of Prime Minister Julia Gillard, had arranged for the delegates' spouses. He took his mainly female counterparts to Perth's tourism hotspots and arranged for them to meet a variety of native animals, including a hairy-nosed wombat, koala and baby kangaroos – perfect fodder for the global media, who screened the images all over the world.

One of the themes of CHOGM was women as agents of change, and so it was fitting that Australia's female double-act, Governor-General Quentin Bryce and Prime Minister Julia Gillard, were on hand to greet The Queen. This also

reinforced Australia's position as a modern, progressive country – the ideal base from which to explore the idea of renewal and reform of the Commonwealth, which was the underlying aim of this year's meeting.

It was the largest gathering of sovereign leaders in one place in Australia's history, and the pressure was on for the nation to be portrayed at its best. Planning for CHOGM took two years and every detail had been considered, from the Margaret River wine at the sumptuous delegates' dinner to a disaster preparedness plan in case of attack or emergency.

One element that threatened to jeopardise the careful planning was the protests planned to coincide with the opening ceremony. CHOGM is always a target for protests, no matter where the biennial conference is held, and in the context of the global financial crisis and Occupy movements, this was always likely to be intensified in 2011.

Just a week before the event, Occupy protesters clashed with police in Sydney and Melbourne, and there were fears the violence could be repeated in Perth. But more than 1,500 demonstrators paid heed to WA Premier Colin Barnett's plea for them to protest peacefully.

The protesters marched through Perth to coincide with the opening of the summit, aiming to put pressure on leaders to take a tougher line on human and political rights abuses. They also argued for Aboriginal rights, the freeing of detained asylum seekers and an end to the war in Afghanistan.

Community benefits

Aboriginal culture played a strong part in the proceedings. Delegates were greeted with an Aboriginal welcome and traditional dance, and



WARM WELCOME: Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamallesh Sharma and his wife Babli are greeted by indigenous Australians in traditional dress at the official opening of CHOGM (below). Delegates' spouses spend time sailing as part of the Perth Sailing World Championships (above)

A Hollywood-style 'Perth' sign was erected on the banks of the iconic Swan River

The Queen was presented with a message stick from indigenous leaders.

Involving the Perth community in the event was also important for Mr Barnett, who declared CHOGM to be "much more than simply a meeting of leaders". The city staged an eight-day arts and culture festival, and the government offered free public transport to make sure residents were compensated for the inconvenience of staging a high-security event. This was embraced by a large proportion of the Perth community, with more than 100,000 people flying Australian flags and basking in the Perth sunshine at the Great Aussie Barbecue.

For Barnett, CHOGM was the highlight of his time in office so far. "The legacy I think for WA will be that Perth will be seen as a modern, sophisticated city that can put on a great event like CHOGM, can host a royal visit over four days, and Perth will be seen as Australia's west coast capital, as Australia's city on the Indian Ocean," he said.

The Prime Minister agreed, saying that the event had showcased WA as one of the world's most dynamic economies, which boasted vast natural resources and expertise in technology, health and education.

Barnett added: "I think that will be a lasting legacy. There is no doubt that many of the world leaders who came to Perth, had never been here before, most of them had never been to Australia. I think many of them came thinking this would be simply a mining town – they were surprised to see such a modern, green, beautiful city, and a number of those leaders have commented to me how friendly the people of Perth have been."

Rhianna King is a journalist for WA Today.





JAMES RAISBECK'S BOGOTÁ

How long have you lived in Colombia?

I was born in Bogotá in 1937, but went to school and college in the US, so I didn't really live in Colombia until I was 21. From 1958 to 1995, when I retired, I basically lived in Bogotá. Now I live about half the time there; the rest, between the US and the UK.

Bogotá is known as 'the Athens of South America'. Do you find it to be a cultural capital?

There are numerous cultural activities and sights in the city, be it the various forms of theatre, sporting events, libraries, museums of art and history, or the numerous historical sites. There are more than 12 universities, including El Rosario University, from which I graduated in law – the second oldest university in the western hemisphere, founded in 1653.

Where do you like to eat?

My favourite restaurant is Pajares Salinas, which is owned by Spaniards and specialises in Spanish and international dishes. It has the best crab in the city. Bogotá has one particular traditional dish called Ajiaco, a soup with three main ingredients: potatoes, chicken and the guasca leaf that gives the broth its flavour.

What do you love most about the city?

Bogotá is located in the plains, surrounded by the Andes Mountains. In addition to offering

some majestic views, the city is only three degrees from the Equator, which leads many to believe it must be steaming hot, but since it is 8,650 feet above sea level, the overall result is a pleasant climate with an annual mean temperature of 17-22 degrees during the day.

What can you do in Bogotá that you can't do anywhere else?

You can go to Monserrate. I wouldn't recommend this during weekends or holidays due to the crowds, but on weekdays the queues are quite acceptable. A cable car takes you on a three-minute ride up the side of the mountain. At the top you find a replica of some 18th-century colonial Bogotá streets, along with the cathedral known as Monserrate. The view of the entire city is breathtaking, and at one end of the little village there is the San Ysidro restaurant, which has the best lobster I have ever tasted; they bring it in fresh from the Colombian coast every morning.

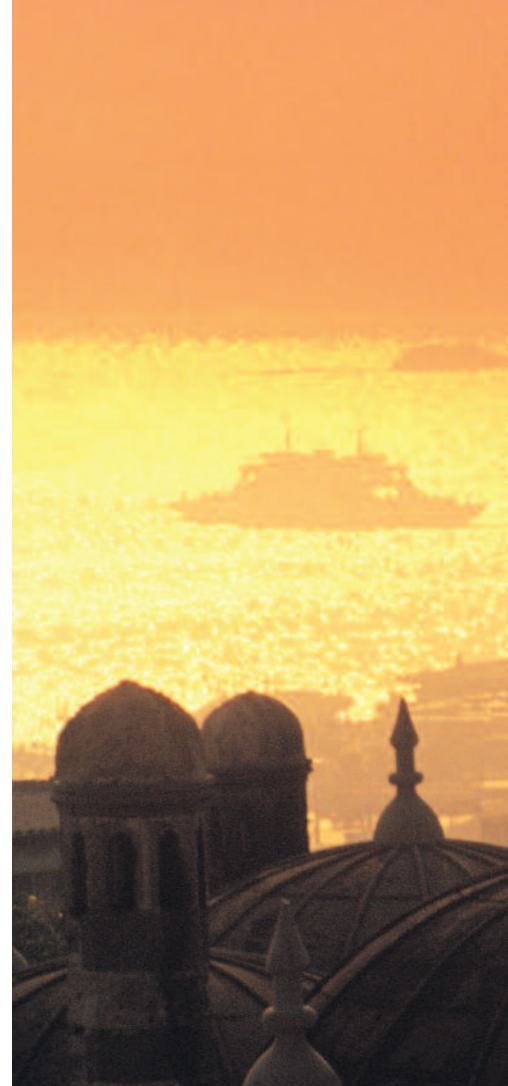
James Raisbeck has been a ROSL member for 14 years. His book, Would I Do It Again? is a memoir of the highs and lows of his life, from being a top DJ to a career with Baker & McKenzie, the world's largest law firm. It is available to buy from Amazon.

Interview by Claire Simon.

PEAK VIEWS: Bogotá's colourful streets are overlooked by the Andes Mountains



BOGOTÁ, 131-1212/09 via Flickr (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



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TREASURE TROVE: The Grand Bazaar has more than 4,000 shops and a huge variety of products on sale

Escape to Istanbul

The city offers breathtaking views and a majestic palace, but the Grand Bazaar is its crowning glory, says **Diane Jones**

SEAT OF POWER:

Topkapi Palace, residence of the Ottoman sultans, 1465-1853



This remnant of Old Byzantium beckons visitors into its labyrinth of alleys

A shrewd choice for a recession-friendly getaway is Istanbul – a destination suitable for the curious, for lovers of exotic cuisine, avid shoppers and romantics alike. Until 1922, it was the capital of the extravagant and sprawling Ottoman Empire and before 1453, of Christian Byzantium when, as every schoolchild knows, it was called Constantinople.

The city is a magnet for those interested in archaeology and ancient history, and is crowned by a skyline as memorable as that of New York. A highlight for me is the Grand Bazaar. This remnant of Old Byzantium beckons visitors and residents into its labyrinth of alleys, all boasting a myriad of tiny shops, splendidly versatile in their wares.

With more than 4,000 shops, it is the oldest and most extensive bazaar in the world. The constantly replenished boutiques overflow with shining purple and blue mosaics, waistcoats embroidered with silver and gold brocade, lacquered backgammon sets, Turkish miniatures hewn from camel bone, ceramic spice jars from Persia, luscious Oriental carpets, and baubles, bangles and beads galore.

Good-natured traders vie for attention in an assortment of tongues. Tea, served in delicate gold-rimmed glassware, appears as if from nowhere to encourage you to linger, and pistachios are offered free of charge. Against

this riot of colour and sounds comes the unmistakable aroma of Oriental fragrances, from pungent juniper seeds to cloves from Zanzibar, and the all-pervading smell of extra-strong Turkish coffee, which must be sampled – even if only once. In the dingy coffee-houses, a cosmopolitan clientele relaxes, spending long hours playing cards or sitting in quiet camaraderie, sipping coffee out of bone china cups.

Outside the bazaar, it is a 15-minute walk to the famous Topkapi Palace, which witnessed the rise and fall of the Ottoman Empire. It is reminiscent of the Arab palaces of Andalusia, with a series of elegant open courtyards providing shade. From here, powerful armies were sent abroad to conquer new territories and a succession of spoilt sultans enjoyed all that life had to offer. Certainly they enjoyed one of the most breathtaking views of both Europe and Asia: the hilltop palace is situated at a point where the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmara merge, and its gardens extend to the sea.

My three-day trip from London cost £325, including 3-star accommodation in the Old City. Go for it! It's well worth it.

Diane Jones has been a ROSL member for 10 years, and has lived in Azerbaijan, Russia, Egypt, Pakistan and Europe.

Surprising Hobart

Director of Arts, **Roderick Lakin**, falls for the Tasmanian capital, with its exciting mix of old and new

My tour of the Australian branches in October and November last year (see page 21) introduced me to cities and regions I have never visited before. Hobart, Tasmania's compact capital, with a population of nearly 220,000, was, for me, a delightful surprise. Staying in the heart of historic downtown Hobart, overlooking the busy harbour at Constitution Dock, made for a splendid base to make the most of my limited free time.

The old 19th-century harbour waterfront of ship's chandlers, bond stores and cosy sailors' pubs has undergone comprehensive regeneration, with stylish and sympathetic renovation of the buildings as boutique hotels, bars and restaurants, enhanced by restored tall ships and wooden boats moored in the harbour.

Superb fresh produce of land and sea, married to a new generation of world-class chef-patrons, has transformed Tasmania into a foodie destination, on a par with its glamorous metropolitan cousins, Melbourne and Sydney. In recent years, high-end local wineries, breweries and even a malt whisky distillery have added to the distinctive gastronomic mix. It is, however, hard to beat the simpler pleasure of sitting on the wharf with a portion of super-fresh fish and chips, watching the comings and goings of the fishing boats and vessels servicing Australia's research bases in Antarctica. The waterside sights and atmosphere at the start of the annual Hobart to Sydney yacht race must be unforgettable.

The big surprise of the trip was a visit to MONA – the Museum of Old and New Art – which opened in January 2011. The museum radically challenges any notion of Tasmania as a conservative cultural backwater and has propelled Hobart into the world league of art destinations, with visitor numbers already in excess of 400,000.

The museum houses the huge contemporary art collection of entrepreneur and self-confessed 'artholic' David Walsh – a sort of Australian Charles Saatchi. Best approached by a dedicated visitors' boat from Constitution Dock, MONA is located on a promontory in the Derwent river estuary. The spectacular building is hewn out of the cliff and built around the installation of the eclectic collection. Work by contemporary artists, much of it controversial and provocative, is juxtaposed with objects from classical and ancient civilisations. Walsh describes the resulting sensory experience as 'a subversive adult Disneyland'.

Key to its uniqueness is the absence of labels or curatorial descriptive displays; instead you are handed an iPod-like device on entry, which tracks your progress through the museum – rather like a car's sat nav. You can choose to scan the device to identify the works in your immediate vicinity and search for further background information, including interviews with the artist. You can also give

your opinion of specific works on display by pressing 'Love' or 'Hate' buttons and get instant feedback about how other visitors have reacted. You even get a follow-up when you return home, as the gallery emails you a virtual record of your visit.

After the first couple of galleries, I found that I preferred not to identify the objects I was looking at, but to absorb and reflect on the integral ensemble of architecture and objects. The building itself is a massive all-enveloping artwork. 'Love' it or 'Hate' it, MONA is unmissable.



PHOTOGRAPHER MATT NEWTON, COURTESY OF MONA MUSEUM OF OLD AND NEW ART, HOBART, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

CHARMING: Hobart harbour (below) and 'The Void' in the Museum of Old and New Art (above)





"I will never have to visit a shoe shop again."

Nowadays the Shoe Industry is a Fashion Industry.

After trudging around dozens of shops, you may find a pair of shoes that are comfortable, in the colour you want, but by next season they will be out of fashion or because they are designed to be thrown away when the soles wear out, you will have to shoe-shop again.

Hello my name is Alan. I make shoes and I come to shoemaking with attitude. I have designed my Shoes to be repaired so they will last years.

I will never make pointy shoes that weaken and damage the feet.

I make feet shaped shoes. That is - they have a straight inside edge, are broad over the metatarsal arch and they have a low heel.

I make the Uppers out of high quality, soft, full grain Italian leather in over 48 colours and I fully line them in suede or leather.

The soles are made from soft leather up to 12mm thick, so your unique footprints will imbed into them. Instead of shoe-shaped feet, you end up with feet-shaped shoes.

The older they get, the more comfortable they become.

My shoes are not cheap, but great value for money, especially

when you realize that along with a comfortable pair of handmade shoes, made exclusively for you; you now have your own personal Shoemaker that you can ring anytime and re-order or get them repaired by return post.

I make around 100 pairs a year and each pair are signed and dated.

I am the designer of Shandals, originally designed for those with incipient bunions - they guide the big toe straight and relieve the pressure on the second and little toes. Those with undamaged feet love them too. I make Golf Shoes and am the designer and maker of Rope Soled Slippers.

For those with damaged feet - corns, bad circulation, hammer toes, ingrowing toe nails, then my Shoes and Shandals can have profound healing properties. For those with high arches, broad or odd size feet then I could be your personal Shoemaker.

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News and views

The latest from the clubhouses in London and Edinburgh

▼ Farewell Robert and Fatima

On 15 December, ROSL members said farewell to Robert Newell and Fatima Vanicek at the Chairman's Christmas Lunch, hosted by Sir Anthony Figgis. As expected, the event was extremely popular, with 180 members from branches around the world coming together to say their farewells. ROSL President, Lord Luce, and ROSL Australia Chairman, Jason Ronald, captured the mood of the room with their tributes to Robert and Fatima; and Robert (pictured) replied in moving terms. The whole day was testament to their popularity. *Valete, friends. Sail well and come back*



▲ ROSL and the FCO Association

At the FCO Association/ROSL lunch in November, The Rt Hon The Lord Howell of Guildford, Foreign & Commonwealth Office Spokesman in the House of Lords, spoke on 'Why We are Putting the "C" Back in the FCO: Commonwealth Mark II' – a topical subject considering that the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting had taken place a short time before. Pictured (l-r) are Maj Gen Roddy Porter, Lord Howell, Sir Anthony Figgis and Sir James Hodge (FCO Association Chairman)



◀ Constantly upgrading

Maintenance and repair continues at Over-Seas House, London. The programme of upgrading and renovating bedrooms is picking up speed, and the beautifully refurbished Members' Drawing Room is now painted to compliment the scheme in the Mountbatten Room, to stunning effect when the double doors are opened

▶ Chairman's Lunch

ROSL Chairman, Sir Anthony Figgis, welcomed The Rt Hon The Lord Wright of Richmond GCMG as speaker and guest of honour at the lunch on 15 November. Lord Wright, a former Head of HM Diplomatic Service, spoke and answered questions on the future of the House of Lords. Pictured (l-r) are the Director-General, Maj Gen Porter, Lady Figgis, Lady Wright, Lord Wright and Sir Anthony Figgis





◀ Festive spirits

Father Christmas paid a visit to Over-Seas House, London after the annual Festival of Christmas carols and readings. At the tea following the service everyone received gifts to celebrate the festive season

▼ Recognition

Margaret Adrian-Vallance, ROSL Director of Public Relations & Development, holds the MBE for services to the education of disadvantaged children in Namibia that she received from HRH The Prince of Wales during the Investiture at Buckingham Palace in October. She is pictured in the Palace Quadrangle with her brother D'Arcy



◀ Tutored tasting

Master of Wine, Martin Everett, gave ROSL members the benefit of his extensive knowledge of fine wines at Over-Seas House, London, in October. A tutored tasting of a selection of magnificent clarets from the ROSL cellar was appreciated by all. The wines are available to members in the Restaurant at very competitive prices

▶ Imperial banquet

In October, ROSL welcomed Philip Birkenstein, Chairman of the St Petersburg Collection, to give a talk on the 400-year history of Fabergé. The Russian imperial banquet-themed evening also included a private viewing of masterpieces created by Theo Fabergé, grandson of Carl Fabergé



◀ Edinburgh Central Council

The November Central Council took place at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh. Trevor Royle MA FRSE, a Trustee of Combat Stress, gave a moving talk on mental stress on the battlefield. He is pictured flanked by Sir Anthony Figgis (l) and Maj Gen Porter



Once in a lifetime

Roderick Lakin reports on the hotly contested 6th Annual Pettman/ROSL ARTS Scholarship auditions in New Zealand and ROSL prizewinners tour

Following directly on from the ROSL ARTS concert tour of Australia (see page 21), I headed off to New Zealand, in mid November, for the 6th Annual Pettman/ROSL ARTS Scholarship tour of New Zealand. The object of the tour is twofold: firstly to select an outstanding young New Zealand chamber group for a month-long study visit to the UK; and secondly to give UK-based past ROSL prizewinners the opportunity to perform in New Zealand and to act as scholarship jury members.

The scholarship

Now established as one of New Zealand's most valuable and sought-after musical awards, the Pettman/ROSL ARTS International Scholarship offers a unique, bespoke study package for a New Zealand chamber group, valued in excess of NZ\$50,000. Groups from

university music departments in Auckland, Christchurch, Hamilton and Wellington participated in three intensive days of concerts, auditions and mentoring, as part of the selection process at the University of Waikato in Hamilton.

Three ensembles were selected for the Final Concert on Monday 21 November: Estrella Quartet (Somi Kim, Gemma Lee, Judy Lee, Cindy Tsao pianos – University of Auckland); Duo Vivo (Santiago Cañon Valencia cello, Rafaella Garlick-Grice piano – University of Waikato); and Sylventus (Hugh Roberts flute, Todd Gibson-Cornish bassoon, Jeremy Woodside piano – University of Canterbury, Christchurch). The Final Concert was recorded and broadcast by Radio New Zealand Concert.

I was joined on the adjudicating panel by highly successful past ROSL prizewinners, Robert Plane (clarinet), Alice Neary (cello) and

Sophia Rahman (piano); pianist Michael Houstoun, one of New Zealand's foremost musicians; and Rodney Slatford OBE, former Head of Strings at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester.

We were impressed by the quality of music-making achieved by all three groups, and awarded the scholarship to the Estrella Quartet for their impeccable preparation and the vitality, musicality and polish of their performance. The judges felt that individually and collectively they are ready to take full advantage of the intensive performance and coaching opportunities that the scholarship offers.

Formed in 2010, the Estrella Quartet studied at the University of Auckland with past ROSL prizewinner Stephen De Pledge and Rae de Lisle. In their unusual combination of four pianists at two pianos, they are the first permanent group of its kind in New Zealand, and present a distinctive visual



The first NZ group of its kind, they present a distinctive visual and aural experience

and aural experience. The quartet's enterprising repertoire includes several pieces specially written for them by leading NZ composers.

They can look forward to a demanding and stimulating time in their six-week scholarship trip to the UK in July and August this year. Concert appearances are already lined up at St Martin-in-the-Fields; St James's, Piccadilly; St Barnabas, Ealing; and Over-Seas House, London. They will also perform in Budleigh Salterton and Dartington in Devon, South Creak in Norfolk and Corbridge in Northumberland. The trip ends with a week participating in the ROSL ARTS annual Edinburgh Festival Fringe concert series.

In addition to performances, they will have coaching and master-classes from leading UK teachers, and will be given tickets

Supporting development

Margaret Adrian-Vallance on the scholars in Kenya and a new way for clubhouse guests to support projects

ROSL Development Projects welcomes two new scholars, Antony Mutaari and Beatrice Kinuthia, from the villages of Gitare and Simba in the Rift Valley of Kenya. They will be able to attend Nyandarua High School in Ol'Kalou, near Gilgil, for the next five years, via ROSL's sponsorship of two places in the Langelanga Scholarship Fund, which was started by Harry Vialou Clark MBE to help young people in the area obtain an education.

Antony is 14, attended Gitare Primary and was a class prefect. He lives with his mother on a one-acre plot producing five bags of maize a year. He likes football, music and reading. Beatrice is 15. A keen reader, she went to Simba Primary and lives on a quarter-acre plot, which produces two bags of maize a year. Like Antony's family, they have no electricity and get water from the river.

This year, Langelanga had 20 scholarships to award. ROSL Honorary Treasurer, Simon Ward, was on an interview panel of nine, which met at Comboni Technical College on 14 January to select awardees. "We had no idea how difficult and emotional this would be," he says. "Applicants had written essays about their lives and we were very impressed by the writing, spelling, punctuation and descriptive skills. All of this from schools with few teachers and homes with very small incomes.

"One impressive element of the day was the participation of past scholars, and four were on the interview panel. This alumni programme clearly works and is an important part of the Langelanga project," adds Simon.

In Namibia there have been many success stories; and thank you letters have come from ROSL bursary recipients at UNAM, Da Palm Secondary School and Swakopmund Secondary. At Over-Seas House, London, the voluntary £1 add-on to accommodation bills, suggested by Central Council member Clive Carpenter, is helping to take forward projects not only in Kenya and Namibia but also in Botswana.

IMPRESSIVE: New scholars Antony Mutaari and Beatrice Kinuthia



for concerts by international orchestras and musicians at the Wigmore Hall and BBC Promenade concerts in London, and at the Edinburgh International Festival. As past winners have commented, it is a "once in a lifetime experience".

The tour

The Plane Neary Rahman Trio opened the Pettman audition weekend, in Hamilton, with a concert of music by Debussy, Ireland and Beethoven. They travelled widely throughout the country, including return visits to Purau in Canterbury, Havelock North, Gisborne and Waiheke Island, and gave eight further concerts.

The tour took ROSL ARTS, for the first time, to three very different venues in South Island: the Burnside Homestead near Oamaru, a lovingly restored Victorian country house with a magnificent octagonal music room; the ultra-modern club house of The Hills, New Zealand's most exclusive – and expensive – golf club in a spectacular Queenstown setting; and the Jubilee Hall, a typical 1950s civic building, in the wine and fruit farming community of rural Cromwell. Each concert on the tour was given in aid of a different charity, including Cure Kids, Hearts and Hands for Haiti, St John, Rotary International, and Save the Children.

Both the tour and the auditions heightened interest in, and encouraged support of, ROSL in New Zealand. I would like to acknowledge, in particular, ROSL NZ Director Lyn Milne for her considerable flair and untiring efforts in developing the scholarship auditions and concert tour, which has gone from strength to strength over the last six years; and Professor Barrie Pettman and his wife Maureen for their generous support in creating and sustaining this unique opportunity for New Zealand and UK-based musicians.

IMPECCABLE: Pettman/ROSL ARTS scholarship winners, the Estrella Quartet (above); and ROSL past prizewinners the Plane Neary Rahman Trio perform in Burnside Homestead, Oamaru (left)

ROSL WORLD

The latest from the global branches

Australia

In New South Wales, members were invited to join the Australia-Britain Society at a Christmas Reception in the residence of the British Consul-General, and an Australia Day lunch with the Royal Commonwealth Society. At the South Australia Branch's Annual Dinner, the Deputy Lord Mayor of Adelaide, David Plumridge AM, was guest of honour. More than 100 branch members and their friends enjoyed a concert given by ROSL prizewinners Amy Dickson (saxophone), Yelian He (cello) and Daniel de Borah (piano) during their visit to Adelaide.

The Victoria Branch raised funds for the ROSL Singing Bursary at its Christmas Reception in the home of the British Consul-General Stuart Gill. The Western Australia Branch's reception for CHOGM was followed by a Gala Concert in the Perth Concert Hall, and 130 members attended a fundraising dinner at which ROSL Chairman, Sir Anthony Figgis, and Lady Figgis were guests of honour. Sir Anthony received a cheque for AUS\$5,000 for the ROSL Namibia Education Fund, and he presented gifts to retiring Chairman, Jeff Turner. Anna Dean, Hon. Secretary, retired after many years of service.

New South Wales: Lily Murray, murraylily@hotmail.com

Queensland: Sharon Morgan, sllmorgan@hotmail.com

South Australia: Michael Kent, rosl.sa@mac.com

Tasmania: Robert Dick, gradick1@gmail.com

Victoria: Coral Strahan, +61 (0)3 9654 8338, rosl@alphalink.com.au

Western Australia: Anthony Abbott, +61 (0)8 9368 0379, losabbotts@hotmail.com

Canada

In November, The Hon Mary Lemessurier presented Sir Anthony and Lady Figgis with a gift from the Alberta Branch in the presence of 21 branch members and the President of the Canadian Commonwealth Society. Sir Anthony presented flautist Jessica McMillan with the centennial prize in honour of Joseph Ferenci.

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

British Columbia: Pamela Ducommun, +1 604 925 3719

Nova Scotia: Liz Stern, +1 902 678 1975, lizstern317@gmail.com

Ontario: Ishrani Jaikaran, +1 416 760 0309, rosl.ont@sympatico.ca

Hong Kong

In November, the branch arranged a charity fundraising function at the China Club, at which HRH Prince Edward was guest of honour. Many of the 125 guests made donations to the Hong Kong Federation of the Blind and the Hong Kong Awards for Young People. Sir Anthony Figgis and branch President Stella Lam made speeches.

Hong Kong: Stella Lam, www.rosl.org.hk, presidentS@rosl.org.hk

New Zealand

The NZ\$5,000 raised at the ROSL ARTS Christchurch Earthquake Appeal Concert at Over-Seas House, London, in December, was donated by the New Zealand branches to the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra. The money will be used to help refurbish the new rehearsal rooms. Members of the Manawatu, Southland and Auckland branches enjoyed garden tours, including a visit to the Pah Homestead to view the Wallace Collection. Two limited edition prints by New Zealand artist Jane Galloway were sent to former Director-General, Robert Newell, as a reminder of his visits to New Zealand.

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

Switzerland

The branch held its Annual Dinner in September at the Lausanne Hotel School. The guests of honour were the Chargé d'Affaires of the Namibian Mission to the United Nations and



ON TOUR: (Clockwise from left) At the Victoria Branch Christmas reception are (l-r) Dr John Chamberlain, Dr Rebecca French and Vice-President The Hon Dr Kay Patterson; (l-r) past ROSL prizewinner Gretchen La Roche, Dr Therese Arseneau (Christchurch Symphony Orchestra), Lyn Milne and Serenity Thurlow (CSO); and Sir Anthony Figgis at the Alberta Legislature

Specialised Agencies and his wife; Doreen Regan; and Clive Carpenter of the ROSL Central Council, who gave an illustrated talk about his recent visit to the ROSL Namibia project.

Switzerland: Jo Brown, +334 5040 6631

Thailand

Thailand: Roger Willbourn, + 66 2649 2690, info@roslthailand.com

UK

The Bath Branch held a lunch in October, followed by a discussion on the future of the branch. At the Bournemouth Branch's Christmas coffee morning more than £200 was raised for the charity A Touch of Light. The 'Chairman's Autumn Challenge', which invited members to bring one new member to ROSL, was a success, boosting membership numbers.

The monthly meetings of the Cheltenham Branch have included talks on Tasmania, Sudan and Gloucester Cathedral. The Central Council convened in the Edinburgh clubhouse in November, and the actor John Cairney was guest speaker at the annual RL Stevenson Lunch. The Hogmanay celebrations were extremely popular, and the 2012 event has nearly sold out already.

The Exeter Branch had a number of lunches, which included talks about growing up on a remote farm after the war and volunteering on the hospital ship 'African Mercy', which gives free treatment off the west coast of Africa. Glasgow Branch meetings resumed in October, with talks on the State of Wisconsin

Arts down under

Director of Arts, **Roderick Lakin**, reflects on a country-wide Australian concert tour



and a medieval Glaswegian watercourse. Sir Anthony Figgis was guest of honour at the branch's Christmas lunch.

The **Taunton** Branch began its winter season with a presentation by Shelterbox, one of the charities it is supporting this year. In January, 48 members had a guided tour of the newly-opened Museum of Somerset. The **West Cornwall** Branch's monthly Cornish cream tea meetings at Carbis Bay included talks on Egypt and Bhutan. The **West Sussex** Branch programme for 2011 concluded with the traditional Christmas lunch, followed by a fundraising event for the ROSL Music Competition Sussex Prize for a young woodwind player of promise.

Bath, Exeter, Taunton, Torbay: Sally Roberts, +44 (0)1823 661148, rosl.west@googlemail.com

Bournemouth: Gordon Irving, +44 (0)1258 480887, westoverirving@aol.com

Cheltenham: Kathleen Northage, +44 (0)1242 515540

Edinburgh: Bill Chalmers, +44 (0)131 5572754

Glasgow: Bill Agnew, +44 (0)141 4230012

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

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

It was a landmark year for ROSL ARTS in Australia, as 2011 was the first time that musical events were held in collaboration with five Australian branches. CHOGM in Perth provided a variety of opportunities to showcase outstanding ROSL Annual Music Competition prizewinners. Chief among these was a Gala Concert at Perth Concert Hall on 25 October with the WA Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Brad Cohen and featuring as soloists two past ROSL Australian prizewinners: cellist Yelien He (2009) and saxophonist Amy Dickson (2004). This sell-out concert was recorded and broadcast nationally by ABC.

Amy and Yelien were joined in Perth by British tuba virtuoso Les Neish (ROSL 2006) to work on Commonwealth Resounds, leading a team of young musicians from the Purcell School, London, and Chetham's School, Manchester, in concerts, workshops and music education outreach projects in schools, universities, community centres and hospitals. They also performed at CHOGM-related events, such as the Commonwealth Youth Forum in Fremantle and a Service of Thanksgiving at Perth Anglican Cathedral, and at a dinner honouring Jeff Turner, who recently retired as Western Australia Branch Chairman.

From Perth, I travelled with Amy, Yelien and the Melbourne-based pianist Daniel de Borah (ROSL 2007) to give concerts organised by branches in Hobart, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. ROSL members Lino and Di Breciani in Melbourne and Joyce Bennet in Brisbane generously hosted concerts in their homes.

The concerts in Adelaide and Hobart were their first ever ROSL ARTS events, and attracted large and appreciative audiences. In Adelaide, the smart new Burnside Uniting Church proved an ideal



MAGNIFICENT: (l-r) Daniel de Borah, Frances Underwood, Peter Underwood, Amy Dickson, Yelien He and Roderick Lakin at Government House, Hobart

chamber music venue and, in Hobart, ROSL was honoured to give a concert in the magnificent ballroom of Government House, hosted by the Governor of Tasmania HE The Hon Peter Underwood AC and Mrs Frances Underwood, both of whom are ROSL members.

For members in New South Wales, there was a very special event at Sydney Opera House on Sunday 30 October as I took on the role of Chairman of the Jury for the Final of the 2011 Australian Singing Competition, with which ROSL has been associated for more than 25 years. Before the concert, I hosted an afternoon tea for ROSL members and Australian Singing Competition dignitaries on the North Terrace of the Opera House, with its incomparable views of Sydney harbour.

ROSL ARTS is extremely grateful to the branch committees and officers throughout Australia for their support and enthusiasm in making this tour possible, and to the performers themselves for acting as most effective ambassadors for ROSL.

ROSL Diamond Jubilee Concert in Blandford Forum

On 21 April, the Royal Over-Seas League is giving a concert in Blandford Forum, North Dorset, as part of Blandford Forum's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. The concert will be held at the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul in the Market Place at 7pm, followed by wine and canapés.

Tickets are £10 for ROSL members and £12 for guests, inclusive. Proceeds will be divided between the Church's Cupola Fund and ROSL ARTS. Contact Gordon Irving on +44 (0)1258 480 887 or westoverirving@aol.com.

History of equality

Director-General, **Roddy Porter**, explains the significance of ROSL's membership policy

It was one of the key concerns of our founder, Sir Evelyn Wrench, in 1910 that ROSL membership, and the enjoyment of all attendant facilities, should be available to both women and men on an equal basis; this was before suffrage in the UK, highlighting the utmost importance of equality for the Royal Overseas League. We have enjoyed a unique position among the clubs in London in this respect ever since.

One of the attractions of ROSL for our women members is that they enjoy our facilities here and in Edinburgh in their own right. We are proud of this heritage. We therefore ask all prospective members to complete their own application forms so no one is treated merely as an appendage. Although ROSL members may bring guests into the restaurants, bar and garden, everyone using bedroom accommodation in the London clubhouse has to be a member, including husbands and wives.

Our members often say that they do not want this situation to change. One reason cited is that they like the idea that everyone staying at our clubhouse is a known member; they feel this is good for security, and in turn encourages the unique family atmosphere that prevails at ROSL, encouraging members to forge business or



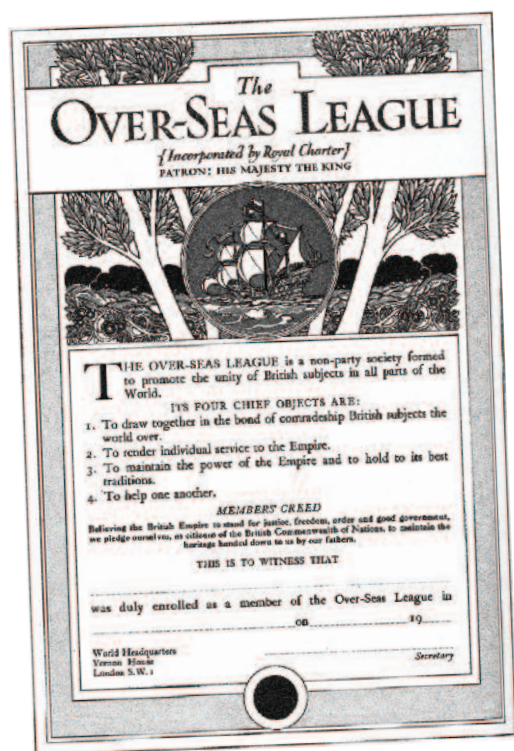
UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY: Sir Evelyn Wrench (above) was committed to equal access. An early membership certificate (below), available to both women and men

personal acquaintances that last, in many cases, for generations.

The family atmosphere is much cherished and this differentiates us significantly from a hotel and most other clubs. In addition, when the excellent value of ROSL membership is considered (our rates are significantly lower than any other London club in this area), couples are happy to take out individual membership.

This has nothing to do with the collection of funds but everything to do with equality. Indeed, we make every effort to ensure that our membership fees are firmly in the 'not for profit' league, the more to encourage prospective members to join. I do hope that you will agree with this unique and historic perspective.

I have been enjoined by the Central Council to undertake a strategic review of ROSL and the whole enterprise. Part of this review will be dedicated to membership matters, including reviewing subscriptions. I do not yet know what the outcome might be, but I fully accept that we must balance the historic basis of membership with members' needs now; there is balance in everything.



The Claremont connection

Marion Smith offers a biography of the former Glasgow Branch headquarters



© Gillian Macfarlane

I joined ROSL at the premises of 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh, 70 years ago, in 1942, as a place to meet my friends and enjoy the club's activities while I was a student nurse at Edinburgh Royal. However, my connection with ROSL goes much further back.

In 1842, the architect John Baird I built the first house in Claremont Terrace, Glasgow. Completed in 1880, it is a symmetrically arranged classical terrace set among private gardens, close to Kelvingrove Park. The lovely Ionic porches and delicate wrought-iron balconies exist to this day. Originally the houses were privately owned. In the Scotland census of 1851, the resident owner of no.3 was a 45-year-old Justice of the Peace, who lived there with his wife, five children and ten servants.

As time passed, the mansions were sold – some taken over as office premises, others bought as private nursing homes. No.3 became Woodlands Nursing Home, with matron and owner Miss E Burns. In 1923, my twin sister and I were born there, and in 1945 the present Chairman of the Glasgow Branch, Bill Agnew, was also born there.

With the establishment of the National Health Service, private nursing homes became obsolete, and in 1947 the property was sold to ROSL, becoming the Glasgow Branch headquarters and remaining as such until 1972. The building made a lovely meeting place and was much admired by those who used it. The tiled entrance hall, with its gothic pillars, was very impressive. The property is now privately owned and beautifully converted into three private flats.

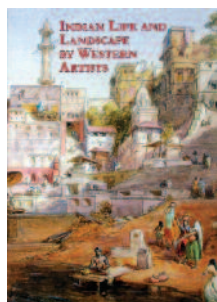
Despite the loss of its HQ, the Glasgow Branch is still in good heart, meeting at the premises of the Western Club in Royal Exchange Square. Do join us if you are in town.

Books

Reviews of recent works by ROSL members

Indian Life and Landscape By Western Artists

Pauline Rohatgi and Graham Parlett, assisted by Shirley Imray and Pheroza Godrej
Victoria and Albert Museum and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS)
 ISBN: 81-901020-9-5. To order, email the CSMVS Museum at csmvsmumbai@gmail.com



This impressive labour of love by the V&A and CSMVS, featuring significant input from Shirley Imray, wife of Sir Colin Imray (ROSL Chairman 2000-2005), is a fascinating journey through 250 years of India's history to the early 20th century. Seen through the work of British and European artists, this remarkable country, its people, architecture and complex international and internal relationships, are carefully captured and extensively illustrated. Here, art and history coalesce; the collection tells the vibrant history of India but also has the wider aim of relating it to the main art history trends, especially in the British Isles.

The artwork is carefully and beautifully presented; the historical narrative clear; and the artists' biographical details always instructive and often fascinating. As a historian versed in the military history of India, I was intrigued to revise what I thought I knew through the medium of art. Most of the artists were unknown to me, but that did not matter. The authors bring each to life and successfully set them in their historical context, allowing them

to speak for themselves through their diaries and scrapbooks.

No stone is left unturned and there is a particularly good section on amateur artists, including brush-wielding soldiers. Lady Imray's interest in Charlotte, Lady Canning, wife of Lord Canning (the last Governor-General of India and first Viceroy), reflects the art of 'one of the most prolific women artists in India' and covers the great upheaval of the Indian Mutiny in 1857.

Thus, although this is a huge canvass, spanning centuries, it is at the same time very personal – great historical events, calamitous battles and tales of ever-changing landscapes told through the lives and art of individuals. The authors' purpose of setting their study within the prevailing art history trends is well done.

This is a rich and lavish volume, which always enticed me back for another look. Whether you dip into it at random or take time to study the history more carefully, there is a wealth of material and many pearls to be discovered.

Maj Gen Roddy Porter

One Year in the History of Israel and Palestine

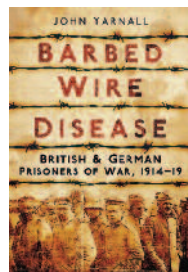
Neville Teller
Troubador Publishing Ltd, 2011
 ISBN: 978-1848766464, £12.99



A detailed account of the events in 2010 that impacted on the determined effort, led by Barack Obama, to resolve the Israel-Palestine situation and the wider Middle East conflict. Neville Teller has been commenting on the issue for three decades and *One Year...* is based on his blog about the peace process.

Barbed Wire Disease

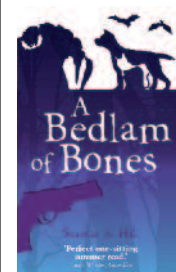
John Yarnall
The History Press Ltd
 ISBN: 978-0752456904, £12.99



John Yarnall looks at the conditions facing prisoners of war during the First World War, including the disease of the book's title, caused by lengthy confinement in barbed-wire enclosures. Using unpublished official files and Cabinet papers, he assesses the controversy surrounding their treatment.

A Bedlam of Bones

Suzette A Hill
Constable, 2011
 ISBN: 978-1849014588, £18.99



The final instalment of Suzette Hill's humorous crime quintet set in a quintessential English village of the 1950s, *A Bedlam of Bones* follows the affable but dotty Reverend Francis Oughterd into some sinister but amusing situations.

Reviews by Claire Simon.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

Dear Member,

I am instructed to inform you that the ROSL AGM will be held at Over-Seas House, London, on Wednesday 9 May 2012 at 4pm. The AGM will receive and consider the Annual Report and Accounts of ROSL, and consider the strategic review into ROSL's future. Such other business as may be necessary in accordance with the bye-laws will also be covered.

The AGM will be preceded by the Chairman's lunch (12.30 for 1pm), and followed by a reception at which members attending the AGM will be served refreshments. Yours truly,

Roderick JM Porter MBE, Director-General

AGENDA

- To sing the first verse of the National Anthem
- Address by the Chairman
- The Honorary Treasurer to report on the ROSL finances
- To receive and adopt the accounts of the ROSL for 2011
- To confirm appointments to the Central Council under the terms of bye-laws 14.6 and 14.7
- To fill vacancies occurring under the terms of bye-laws 20.1 and 20.2
- To receive and adopt the Annual Report for 2011
- To consider aspects of the strategic review of ROSL's activities
- To appoint auditors for the ensuing year.

Note: copies of the 2011 Annual Report will be available from the PR Department from 16 April 2012.



Armchair Travel WEEKENDS

Royal Over-Seas League, St. James's, London



VENETIANS, ETRUSCANS & ROMANS

Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th August 2012

Glittering Byzantine basilicas, mosaics and icons - legacy of La Serenissima's maritime trade with the Orient ; Etruscan hill towns, their painted tombs and beautiful sculptures that inspired Gacometti - plus

daily life in ancient Rome. The weekend features a visit to the British Museum.

Fine cuisine and wine in elegant private dining rooms



SICILY: JEWEL OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

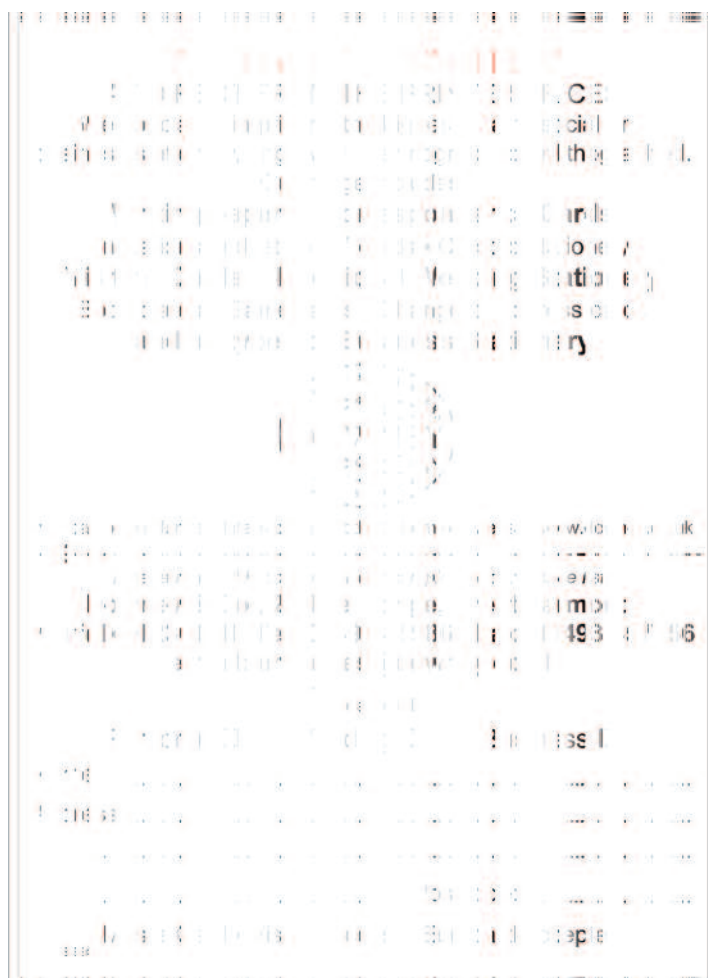
Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th August 2012

Sicily's position at the centre of the Mediterranean produced a succession of foreign occupations resulting in a stunning architectural legacy: Greek temples, superb Roman mosaics and an age of great splendour: Arabs and

Normans in Palermo. The weekend includes a talk on another culture born of the island's history - the Sicilian Mafia.

Coming in 2013: Egypt, Iran, Syria and Crete

Price for 2012 weekends: £399 For full programme details, please apply to:
ARMCHAIR TRAVEL, 7 Home Farm, Croyde, Devon. EX33 1PD. Tel: 01271 890533
Email: et.armchair.travel@gmail.com www.armchair-travel.co.uk



Beautiful Photography



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professional photographer

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info@beautifulphotography.biz



Green London

How eco-friendly is the UK capital? **Claire Simon** is surprised by a tour of its most sustainable sights

A scrutinising spotlight will shine on London this summer with the Olympics coming to town. But it's not just the management of the Games on which the capital will be judged: the London 2012 organisers have claimed these Olympics will be the 'greenest in history'. With this in mind, I booked myself on a Cutting-Edge Green Tour to see if London really is going for gold in the world sustainability stakes.

Although I'm not usually one for tours, when I discovered Insider London, a tour company offering 'Award-winning Alternative London Walking Tours' around the capital, I jumped at the chance to see London with new eyes. On a cold, grey day in January, I donned my coat, hat and scarf ready to face the elements on a three-hour tour. I met my guide, Tobias, on Tottenham Court Road and it soon became clear that Insider London's 'alternative' tours offer a much more personal experience than conventional ones. I asked the London resident why he decided to become a tour guide: "I just love meeting such a variety of people and sharing my knowledge of London".

Tobias took me to Neal's Yard, a wonderful little community of shops and eco-restaurants that provides a tranquil space away from the hustle and bustle of Covent Garden. From there we swung by an electric car-charging point. So unobtrusive are they, I'd never noticed one before. Yet the electric vehicle charging point network and membership scheme, Source London, aims to have more charging points than petrol stations in London by 2013.

Next stop were the luxury businesses contributing to a greener London: One Aldwych

URBAN HAVEN:

Neal's Yard in Covent Garden

and The Savoy, which Tobias described as 'invisible green' businesses. Since reopening in 2010, The Savoy has adopted many green technologies, including turning food waste into electricity, making it one of the greenest luxury hotels in London. One Aldwych also has many environmentally-friendly aspects that are largely unnoticeable at first glance. The toilets, for example, have a vacuum flush that uses 80% less water than a conventional flush.

To end the tour we crossed the river, with Tobias pointing out the 'eco-scrappers' of London's skyline along the way – the Gherkin, the Shard, the Razor – all of which have some impressive features. The whole experience felt less like a tour and more like a three-hour conversation. "Our tours are more conversations than presentations", agrees Cate Trotter, who founded the company in 2008. "They're a learning experience on both sides."

Cate wanted to start a company where the tours were informative yet personal, led by guides with enthusiasm and knowledge. Coming from an eco-marketing background, she saw a gap in the tours market: the Cutting-Edge Green Tour was the company's first – and the first urban green tour in the world. Now, Insider London runs many other tours, catering for different tastes, and all with a twist on conventionality.

For information, call +44 (0)844 504 8080 or see www.insider-worldwide.com.

IN THE UK



ICONIC: Cecil Beaton's photograph of The Queen with Prince Andrew in 1960

LONDON What's on...

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Royal Opera House

17 March-16 April

The Royal Ballet brings Lewis Carroll's infamous characters to life in Christopher Wheeldon's *Alice*, with an endlessly inventive set designed by Bob Crowley.

Tickets: £4-£91. Contact: +44 (0)20 7304 4000.

Queen Elizabeth II by Cecil Beaton: A Diamond Jubilee celebration

Victoria & Albert Museum

8 February-22 April

Beaton's portraits of The Queen depict her roles as princess, monarch and mother. The show includes images never exhibited before, as well as Beaton's diaries and letters.

Tickets: £6. Contact: +44 (0)20 7942 2000.

Grand Designs Live: members' giveaway

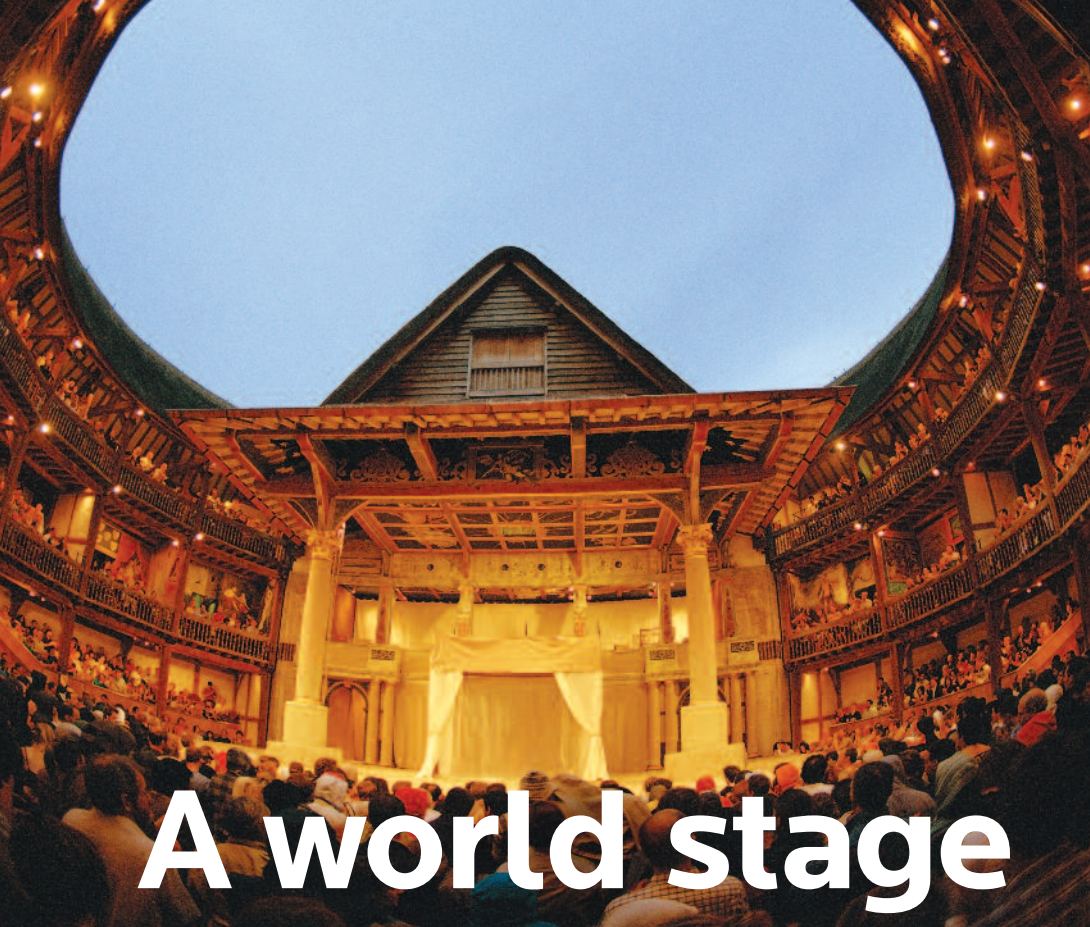
ExCeL London

5-13 May

The show offers ideas on everything from gardens to self-builds. *Overseas* has pairs of tickets for the first 10 members to email overseas.editor@gmail.com with 'GDL' as the subject header.

Tickets: £12-£19; children free. Contact: +44 (0)844 854 1348, www.granddesigns.live.com.





A world stage

Miranda Moore is awed by the Globe's ambitious festival of 37 Shakespeare plays in 37 languages

When London 2012 were charged with putting on a Cultural Olympiad of arts, music and cultural events befitting the Games, they certainly had their work cut out. How do you compete with the Olympics? Fortunately, they had Dominic Dromgoole, Artistic Director at Shakespeare's Globe, to work with. He had heard that LOCOG (the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) was funding international arts collaborations for its World Shakespeare Festival, and had a grand idea on an Olympic scale: a programme of 37 Shakespeare plays by 37 international theatre companies in 37 languages.

Starting with a carnival-inspired South African version of *Venus & Adonis*, the six-week Globe to Globe Festival on London's Southbank will showcase some of the best theatrical talent from around the world. From 21 April, theatre lovers will be able to see everything from a minimalist *Coriolanus* in Japanese to a circus-style interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* in Brazilian Portuguese, via *As You Like It* in Georgian, a Maori *Troilus & Cressida* incorporating the *haka*, and a Nigerian *The Winter's Tale* based on Yoruba folktales.

It is an astounding feat. Dromgoole and Festival Producer, Tom Bird, had just 16 months to scour the globe for 37 companies capable of putting on Shakespeare's plays in their native languages; arrange the visits and rehearsals of more than 600 international performers; and schedule and stage a complex programme of 37 very different productions.

"It was wonderful and daunting," admits Bird. They looked first to languages widely spoken in London, including Polish and Urdu, and then to places where Shakespeare has become part of the national culture, such as Georgia and Armenia. Finally, they opened the doors to

exciting productions from anywhere in the world, keen to ensure a lively programme from a variety of companies.

On the website you can browse by date, language or play. The site automatically suggests other productions you may be interested in, and there's even a 'one-armed-bandit' shuffler to present

random choices you might otherwise miss. Deafinitely Theatre's version of *Love's Labour's Lost* caught my eye. The first of the Bard's plays to be staged in British Sign Language, the production promises to translate the 'rich, pun-riddled text... into the physical language of BSL'. It's exciting and groundbreaking stuff.

Another first is the Juba Arabic production of *Cymbeline*. The Minister of Culture of the world's

'It allows us to experience these stories through different spectacles'

ACCLAIM: Lithuanian company Meno Fortas will bring their celebrated production of *Hamlet* (below) to the Globe (left)

newest country sent the Globe a 20-page letter setting out the reasons South Sudan should take part. "The size of their desire to come here was simply overwhelming," said Dromgoole. How could the Globe refuse? "We think it's the first time Shakespeare has ever been translated into that language," says Bird.

Despite the array of exotic languages, I am drawn, inevitably, to Compañía Nacional de Teatro's *Henry IV, Part 1* in Mexican Spanish – the only foreign language I speak. Yet for Bird, the festival is more about the joy of experiencing the plays through new eyes, whether you speak the language or not. "There's something lovely and almost mesmerising about sitting there and listening to the music of another language," he says. "It allows us to experience these stories that we know very well through a different set of spectacles. To engage with the way someone from Tokyo would do a Shakespeare play, or someone from Buenos Aires, is fascinating."

With that in mind, I consider booking *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, a Shona version by a two-man Zimbabwean company. But then, I have always enjoyed *The Tempest* and a Bangla interpretation from 'a land constantly troubled by water' intrigues. And I really ought to see the Roman version of *Julius Caesar*. Thankfully, I don't have to choose: for just £100 the 'Yard Olympian' (standing) ticket allows me to see the entire programme.

Tickets £5-£35, with multiple-buy discounts.
For details or to book, call +44 (0)20 7401 9919 or visit globetoglobe.shakespearesglobe.com.



ROSL Younger Members speak up!

With an exciting Inter-Club programme planned, **Alex Pavry** seeks to improve services and events even further with a call for under-35s to get more involved

Calling all ROSL Younger Members (roughly defined as under the age of 35). ROSL enjoys and encourages participation in the full calendar of Inter-Club events, in cooperation with the younger members of 17 other London clubs. Over the past few months we have co-hosted the Inter-Club crawl, danced our Scottish socks off at the Caledonian Club ceilidh, passed the port to the left at the Army & Navy Club for Trafalgar night, enjoyed live jazz at the Reform Club, and indulged in the festivities of the annual Christmas Ball at the Lansdowne Club.

On the horizon we have a drinks tasting at the Carlton Club*, the annual Inter-Club quiz at the Savage Club* and a Diamond Jubilee dinner at Over-Seas House. But we want to do more. The Director-General invites all ROSL Younger Members who would like to become more involved in the programme of events and ROSL services for the

under 35s to come forward and speak up!

To make the most of your ROSL membership and get ROSL working for you, please email Alex Pavry in the PR department: apavry@rosl.org.uk.

**Inter-Club event details to be confirmed. www.inter-club.co.uk.*

MAY

The Diamond Jubilee ROSL dinner & music

Friday 25 May, 7.30pm, £52

A double celebration of The Queen's 60-year reign and 60 years of the ROSL ARTS Annual Music Competition, this black-tie, four-course meal includes a sparkling reception drink and wine, with performances by prizewinning ROSL musicians. Open to all Inter-Club members and their guests.

TOP EVENTS: Inter-Clubbers enjoyed the Caledonian Club ceilidh (top) and will indulge in a black-tie Diamond Jubilee dinner at Over-Seas House (below)



JAMES SCHWIGGOUR



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Get ready to mark 60 years of The Queen's reign! The Diamond Jubilee will take place around an extended weekend on 2-5 June, 2012.

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ROSL ARTS

Director of Arts, **Roderick Lakin**,
previews the spring programme

MUSIC EVENTS

Princess Alexandra Hall Over-Seas House 60th ROSL Annual Music Competition 2012 Section Finals

The section finals offer music-making of the highest quality, with the chance to meet competitors and adjudicators afterwards over a glass of wine.

Tuesday 6 March, 7pm

Ensembles A (strings; strings and piano; piano duo/duet).

Tuesday 13 March, 7pm

Ensembles B (wind; percussion; vocal; mixed ensembles).

Tuesday 20 March, 7pm

Overseas Awards.

Tickets £12; ROSL members £11; Friends of ROSL ARTS £10.

Includes wine, served after the adjudication.

'The Sound of Mumbai'

Wednesday 14 March, 7pm

As part of Commonwealth Week 2012, ROSL ARTS will host a screening of the heart-warming, if unsettling, *The Sound of Mumbai* documentary about the

Muktangan School and the power of music to transform lives.

'Three years ago I decided to make a film. As a freelance horn player with no experience in filmmaking but a huge passion for India, I convinced a director and cameraman friend to join me on a self-financed reconnaissance trip. What resulted was the documentary *The Sound of Mumbai: A musical*, bought by HBO and broadcast on More 4,' explained Director Joseph Walters in the last issue of *Overseas*.

'It tells the story of a newly formed slum school choir joining forces with the Bombay Chamber Orchestra (BCO) to perform songs from *The Sound of Music*. The powerful disparity of the Rogers & Hammerstein score accompanying not expansive Alpine vistas, but warren-like shanty-towns, was so visually compelling that I had to put down my horn and act.'

Joseph Walters will talk about the charity set up to support this inspiring project, and his ambitious plans for the future.

All proceeds from this event will be used to support the project.

Tickets £25; ROSL members and concessions £20; Friends of ROSL ARTS £15. Includes wine and Indian-inspired canapés.

St Faith's Church, North Dulwich

In Aid of Practical Action: Using Technology to Challenge Poverty, with The Cries of London

Saturday 28 April, 7.30pm

ROSL ARTS invites you to the charity fundraising concert 'In Aid of Practical Action' with the winners of the 2011 ROSL Ensemble Award, the brilliant a cappella vocal group The Cries of London, performing works by Brahms, Elgar, Pearsall, Palestrina, Franck and Gibbons.

'Practical Action works alongside communities to find practical solutions to the poverty they face. We see technology as a vital contributor to people's livelihoods.

'We actively seek to work with communities and adopt a collaborative approach, sharing knowledge and experience. We increase our impact by scaling up success and pushing for policy change that directly benefits poor communities.'

www.practicalaction.org

Tickets £12. St Faith's Church, Red Post Hill, North Dulwich.

Queen Elizabeth Hall 60th ROSL Annual Music Competition Grand Final, in the presence of HRH Princess Alexandra

Tuesday 8 May, 7pm

The final of the 2012 ROSL Annual Music Competition showcases performances by winners of the solo wind, singers, strings and keyboard sections as they compete for the Gold

Medal and First Prize of

£10,000. As the distinguished panel of judges and Chairman, Gavin Henderson, make their decision,



**INSPIRATION:**

Members of the children's slum choir featured in *The Sound of Mumbai* (left). The 60th ROSL Annual Music Competition Final will be held at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (below), part of London's Southbank cultural complex

performances are given by the two prizewinning ensembles.

ROSL is honoured that Princess Alexandra, Vice-Patron of ROSL, will present the prizes at this special occasion, which marks the Diamond Jubilee of the ROSL Annual Music Competition.

Tickets: ROSL members and guests £12; Friends of ROSL ARTS £10 (reduced from £20/£15) available ONLY from ROSL ARTS, not the QEH box office.

for fame and fortune. Three million souls know it as home.

Tickets £7; ROSL members £6; Friends of ROSL ARTS £5. Includes wine, served after the event.

VISUAL ARTS

Over-Seas House ROSL Young Artist of Thailand

Tuesday 24 April - Friday 18 May

In 2007, the ROSL Thailand Branch inaugurated the ROSL

Young Artist of Thailand Scholarship, open to Thai citizens aged 14-20. The selection of the 2012 ROSL Young Artist of Thailand will take place in Bangkok on Saturday 24 March. The chairman of the selection panel is ROSL Director of Arts, Roderick Lakin.

The prizewinning work, together with the works of the runners up, will be exhibited at Over-Seas House, London, in

April/May, and at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh, in June/July. As part of the prize, the 2012 Young Artist of Thailand will be in London for a Private View of the exhibition, as a guest of ROSL ARTS.

For tickets, call ROSL ARTS on +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x 219 or email culture@rosl.org.uk.

BOOK EVENTS

Princess Alexandra Hall Over-Seas House

'The Sahara: A cultural history', with author Eamonn Gearon

Tuesday 1 May, 7pm

The Sahara: A Cultural History covers the history of the Great Desert, from its prehistoric origins to today's political dramas, including millennia of human habitation, 11 modern nations, and landscapes that appeal and appal in equal measure: seas of sand, moonlike mountains, life-giving oases and rocky wastelands.

The Sahara's human landscape is made up of nomads, hunters, farmers, and countless sword- and gun-wielding invaders. Others came bearing pens and paint brushes, and centuries of artists, authors, poets and filmmakers have found their muse in the Great Desert. Explorers, adventurers and geographers have all crossed the Sahara, searching for gold, slaves, salt;



EVENTS

Members' events

March-June

MARCH

Hangings, horsemen and Hyde Park – SOLD OUT

Friday 23 March, 2pm, £15, G

Due to high demand, the application for tickets to this event is now closed and a waiting list is in operation.

APRIL

London Olympic tour

Monday 16 April, 10.30am, £45, R

This full-day coach tour will leave Over-Seas House at 10.30am and take members around the London 2012 Olympic sites in Stratford, Woolwich, the Royal Docks and Greenwich. A blue badge guide will comment on all the major venues as well as the regeneration plans following the Games.

A bagel lunch, served at the Forman's Smoked Salmon Factory on the border of the Stratford site, with a spectacular view of the showcase stadium, is included in the price. Tickets are limited to two per member.

Behind-the-scenes at the Theatre Royal Haymarket

Thursday 26 April, 11am, £12, R

Due to a change of schedule, a limited number of tickets is now

available for this tour, advertised in the last issue.

MAY

Private tour of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers Museum

Tuesday 1 May, 2pm, £12, G

Sir George White Bt, Consultant Keeper of the clockmakers museum, will guide ROSL members through the history of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers, the oldest surviving horological institution in the world, established by Royal Charter in 1631. Situated at Guildhall in the City of London, the museum contains the oldest – and one of the finest – collections of clocks, watches and sundials that exists today.

Whisky tasting & dinner

Thursday 3 May, 6.30pm, £75, G

'Too much of anything is bad. Too much of good whisky is barely enough', wrote Mark Twain.

Tickle your taste buds with a tutored tasting of fine whisky, courtesy of the Scotch Malt Whisky Society, before tucking in to a sumptuous three-course dinner in the Hall of India & Pakistan at Over-Seas House.



Chairman's Diamond Jubilee Lunch and AGM

Wednesday 9 May, midday, £58, G

Drinks will be served before a delicious three-course lunch, hosted by ROSL Chairman, Sir Anthony Figgis, at Over-Seas House, London. With guest speaker Camila Batmanghelidjh, founder of the Kids Company charity. The AGM will take place at 4pm and will be followed by a tempting reception for those attending the AGM.



OFFICIAL EMBLEM:

Events will be held in celebration of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

JUNE

Trooping the Colour

Saturday 2, 9 & 16 June, £5-£30, B

Witness this impressive display of pageantry to celebrate the official birthday of HM The Queen:

The Major General's Review (2 June); the Colonel's Review (9 June); and The Queen's Birthday Parade (16 June). Tickets will be balloted and drawn on Tuesday 8 May. Dates will be presented on a first drawn, first served basis.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee ROSL buffet lunch

Sunday 3 June, 12.30pm, £45, G

As announced by Buckingham Palace, 'The Big Jubilee Lunch' will be part of the main programme of events over the weekend of celebrations in June. Hosted by ROSL Vice-Chairman, Sir Roger Carrick, and his wife Lady Carrick, a drinks reception will be held in

Da Vinci private evening talk and view at the Queen's Gallery

Friday 18 May, 6pm, £45, G

An exclusive introductory talk, with a glass of champagne, at a private view of one of the Royal Collection's greatest treasures – the largest of Leonardo da Vinci's studies of the human body.

Chelsea Flower Show

Thursday 24 - Saturday 26 May, 8am-8pm, £53, B

Enjoy the Royal Horticultural Society's world famous flower show at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. Tickets will be balloted and drawn on Monday 30 April.

Application form opposite

These codes identify ticket availability:

- M** Members only
- G** Tickets available for members and their guests
- R** Restricted number of tickets available
- B** Tickets to be allocated by ballot. Payment for balloted tickets is not needed until tickets are allocated. Maximum two tickets per member. Only successful applicants will be notified.

Please note: A booking confirmation will be sent within 10 working days of receiving the application. Refunds can only be given if cancellations are made at least 15 days in advance. Tickets for all events are limited and members should apply early to avoid disappointment. Tickets may be restricted to two per member for popular events.



OLYMPIC TOUR: An aerial view of the Olympic Park under construction, looking south towards Canary Wharf

the ROSL garden, followed by a buffet lunch in the Hall of India & Pakistan. Live events from the river will be broadcast on TV screens.

The Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant

Sunday 3 June, tbc, £195, B

In celebration of The Queen's 60-year reign, at high water on the afternoon of 3 June, a thousand boats will muster on the River

Thames in preparation for The Queen to lead the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant. It will be one of the largest flotillas ever assembled on the river, and ROSL will be participating aboard the Queen Elizabeth. The ballot for this event will be drawn by the Director-General on Monday 12 March (earlier than originally advertised). Only successful applicants will be notified.



EVENTS

PRIVATE VIEW:

Da Vinci's studies of a foetus in the womb, c.1510. Members will be given an exclusive talk at the Queen's Gallery exhibition

ROSL's Diamond Jubilee al fresco evening

Monday 4 June, 7pm, £48, G

Listen to the Diamond Jubilee Concert at Buckingham Palace from the comfort of the private garden at Over-Seas House, London. Live TV coverage will be shown while members enjoy a sparkling reception drink followed by a hot fork buffet with wine.

Wimbledon Tennis Championships

Monday 25 June - Tuesday

3 July, court no. 2, £76-116, B

The 2012 Championships will bring the finest players from more than 60 countries to Wimbledon. Watch some of the top players compete for the coveted Champion title. Tickets will be balloted and drawn on Monday 4 June. Dates will be presented on a first drawn, first served basis.

Diamond Jubilee gifts

To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee, ROSL proudly announces its official Diamond Jubilee gift range. Exclusive to ROSL members, these bespoke gifts are limited edition. To ensure the purchase of your gift, reserve your items today. For details, see www.rosl.org.uk.

Members' events Application form *(see opposite)*

Please complete this form (or a photocopy) and send to: Alexandra Pavry, PR Department (Members Events), Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR. **Tel:** 020 7016 6906. **Email:** apavry@rosl.org.uk

It is advisable to call in advance to reserve a ticket. Alternatively you can now book online. Visit www.rosl.org.uk for more details.

Membership No

Name

Name of guest(s)

and trip they are attending:

Address to which ticket(s) should be sent:

Tel no

Payment – please send a **SEPARATE CHEQUE** for each event. Cheques (sterling) payable to ROSL. For Credit/Debit Card Payments call +44 (0)20 7016 6906.

EVENT

London 2012 Olympic tour

Behind-the-scenes at the Theatre Royal Haymarket

The Worshipful Company of Clockmakers Museum

Whisky tasting & dinner

Chairman's Diamond Jubilee Lunch

Da Vinci private evening talk & view

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee ROSL buffet lunch

ROSL's Diamond Jubilee al fresco evening

DATE

Mon 16 Apr

Thu 26 Apr

Tue 1 May

Thu 3 May

Wed 9 May

Fri 18 May

Sun 3 Jun

Mon 4 Jun

PRICE

£45

£12

£12

£75

£58

£45

£45

£48

NO.

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

BALLOTTED EVENTS. DO NOT SEND PAYMENT YET. YOU WILL ONLY BE CONTACTED IF SUCCESSFUL. Maximum TWO tickets per member.

DATE

Thu 24 - Sat 26 May

Sat 2, Sat 9 & Sat 16 Jun

Sun 3 Jun

Mon 25 Jun - Tue 3 Jul

PRICE

£53

£5-£30

£195

£76-£116

APPLY BY

Fri 27 Apr

Fri 4 May

Fri 9 Mar

Fri 1 Jun

NO. OF TICKETS

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Food & drink: London

March-June

Asparagus fortnight

Monday 14 - Saturday 26 May

Come and taste our chef's creative selection of asparagus dishes in the Restaurant to welcome the start of the English summer.

Summer Season

Enjoy the sunshine this summer and have a fantastic al fresco lunch in our peaceful and colourful garden. The spring garden menu will be available from Monday 6 April. The full summer service will be available from Monday 26 May.

For reservations or for more information contact Alastair on +44 (0)20 7491 3644.

Jubilee packed lunch

Tuesday 5 June

Order your Diamond Jubilee packed lunch to take with you to view the Royal Carriage procession.

Place your order with the Buttery on 4 June for collection on 5 June, 10.30-11.30am. £12 pp.

TASTE OF SUMMER:

Delicious spring and summer menus will soon be available in the stunning ROSL garden



DO YOU HAVE A RECORD OF YOUR POSSESSIONS?

Now you see it



Now you don't

If some valuable things were stolen or lost, could you give an exact description? Could you prove ownership and worth?



Clear



Unclear

Do you have a clear, documented overview of your belongings? Are your records up to date? Do you know where everything is?

Art&Antiques Ledger

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Write: Stoneleigh, Week St. Mary, Holsworthy EX22 6XA

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PREVIEW:
ROSL Gold
Medallist
Sean Shibe

EDINBURGH

What's on...

March-June



© JULES LAWRENCE

MARCH

Bridge Club lunch

Friday 2 March, 12 for 12.30pm

An opportunity for Bridge Club members to introduce a guest.
One-course with sherry: £12.

Coffee morning

Saturday 3 March, 10.30am

'Expedition to Antarctica' with speaker Bill Barr.

Commonwealth Day lunch

Monday 12 March, 12 for 12.30pm

With speaker Richard Simpson MSP.
Two courses with sherry, coffee and glass of wine: £20; ROSL members £18.

Visit to Loch Ness

Wednesday 14 - Friday 16 March

Includes breakfast, dinner and trips to Cawdor Castle, Urquhart Castle, Culloden Battlefield and House of Bruar. Coach from the clubhouse at 9am, returning 5pm on the Friday.
£265pp Loch Ness Country House Hotel; £225pp Clansman Hotel (single occupancy: £40.70 extra).

Music @ 100 Princes Street

Wednesday 21 March, 6.30pm

Australian cellist Yelien He and pianist Yasmin Rowe perform works by Rachmaninov and Chopin.
Tickets £12; ROSL members £10; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8. Wine and canapés served afterwards.

APRIL

Coffee morning

Saturday 7 April, 10.30am

'The BBC: 50 years in Scotland', with speaker Ross Anderson.

Arts lunch

Wednesday 25 April, 12 for 12.30pm

Speaker James Simpson on the Kolkata Scottish Cemetery, followed by a bring and buy sale.
Two courses with coffee and wine: £18; ROSL members £17.

MAY

Coffee morning

Saturday 5 May, 10.30am

'Sir James Wylie, Surgeon to the Czar', with speaker Margaret Street.

Prestigious award

In February, Sean Shibe was awarded a Borlotti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship of £12,000. He was the only British musician of the four selected for this prestigious international award.

Music @ 100 Princes Street

Monday 14 May, 6.30pm

A preview of ROSL Gold Medallist guitarist Sean Shibe's Wigmore Hall debut programme, with rising stars the Cavaleri Quartet. Includes Boccherini's *Fandango Quintet*, and other Hispanic music by Albeniz and Rodrigo.
Tickets £12; ROSL members £10; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8. Wine and canapés served afterwards.

Edinburgh Branch AGM

Wednesday 23 May, 6pm

Chairman's Reception follows, with complimentary buffet.

Arts lunch

Wednesday 30 May, 12 for 12.30pm

'ROSL and the Namibia charity', with speaker Clive Carpenter, ROSL Central Council.
Two-courses with coffee and glass of wine: £18; £17 ROSL members.

Membership offer

This year, Cobbs, who manage Over-Seas House, Edinburgh, have an exciting special offer for prospective ROSL members in Scotland. All new members in Scotland will receive £100 worth of vouchers, which can be used for fine dining and accommodation at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh, and at our partner Loch Ness Country House and Clansman hotels in the Scottish Highlands.

Additionally, any current ROSL member who recommends a new member in Scotland will receive £50 worth of vouchers, redeemable at the Edinburgh clubhouse and Loch Ness hotels.

Over-Seas House, Edinburgh has an outstanding new restaurant – Restaurant 100 – with a unique wine list, including clarets from the ROSL cellar, and some of the most iconic views in Edinburgh. An exciting refurbishment programme is also under way.

To take advantage or to request a membership pack, contact James Wilkie at james@rosl-edinburgh.org, +44 (0)131 225 1501 or Scotland Development Officer, 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh EH2 3AB. Please quote reference: 'Overseas'.



HISTORY TALES:
A depiction by John Sackhouse of the Royal Navy's first encounter with the natives of the Northwest Passage (left). A group of coins from the Frome Hoard (below)

© NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

Discussion Group & London Group

DISCUSSION GROUP

Meetings will be held at Over-Seas House, London on the following Monday evenings from 7 to 8.30pm. There is no charge, no need to book and all ROSL members and guests are welcome. *Contact John Edwards, +44 (0)1732 883556, johncoatesedward@aol.com.*

2012: ROSL/ Goodenough Diamond Jubilee series

Discussion Group meetings in 2012 are organised in association with Goodenough College. Founded in 1931, the college provides residential accommodation in the heart of Bloomsbury for postgraduate students from all over the world. It is justifiably proud of its rich extra-curricular life, which draws on the intellectual and cultural interests and strengths of its student body. See www.goodenough.ac.uk.

The Northwest Passage past and future 12 March

With Sir Nicholas Bayne, British High Commissioner to Canada, 1993-1996, whose 19th-century uncles were polar explorers.

The Frome Hoard: The largest pot of Roman coins found in Britain 16 April

With speaker Sam Moorhead, National Finds Adviser for Iron Age and Roman coins at the British Museum.



© PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME

Genes, economics and happiness 14 May

With Dr Jan-Emmanuel de Neve, Lecturer in Political Economy and Behavioural Science at University College, London.

LONDON GROUP

Meetings and outside visits are open to currently subscribed London Group members and their occasional guests. ROSL

members staying overnight at Over-Seas House, London are also welcome. To become a member of the London Group, ask for an application form from the PR Department or from the London Group Honorary Membership Secretary c/o Porters' Desk at Over-Seas House, London.

Meetings

Held once a month on a Thursday at 6-7pm in the Mountbatten Room, Over-Seas House, London.

The history of Great Ormond Street hospital 15 March

Presentation by Andrea Tanner.

London Group AGM 19 April

Members of the group have received formal notice of the Annual General Meeting.

The Duke of Wellington's country house at Stratfield Saye 10 May

Brigadiers Michael Aris and Neville White, tour guides at Stratfield Saye House in Hampshire, will give an illustrated history of the development of the house by the first Duke of Wellington, the victor of Waterloo.

OUTSIDE VISITS

For more details, contact Doreen Regan, +44 (0)20 7584 5879. To apply for events, write to Doreen Regan, London Group, c/o Porters' Desk, Over-Seas House, London. Please enclose a cheque payable to London Group ROSL and a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

A guided tour of the Whitechapel Gallery Wednesday 7 March, 11am

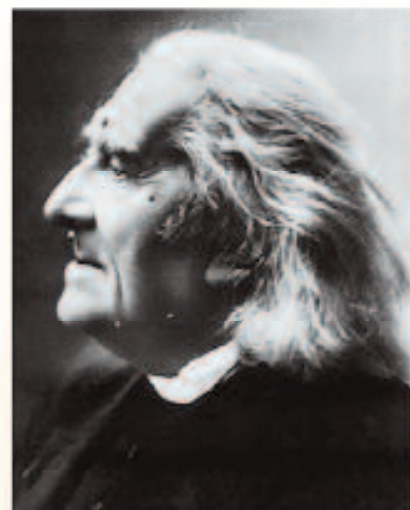
This refurbished gallery in the East End of London presents an international programme of 20th-century art. Lunch is not included, but is available in the gallery Dining Room or café. *Tickets: LG members £11; guests £13.*

A guided tour of RAF Northolt Wednesday 18 April, 12.45pm

In 1952, while Heathrow was under construction, Northolt became the busiest airfield in Europe. Today it is used by Royal Squadron units and the British Forces Post Office. Apply by 1 April, specifying nationality (for security purposes). Photographic identification is required. *Tickets: LG members: £23; guests £25. Includes return coach from Over-Seas House.*



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to Her Majesty The Queen
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On the morning of the 6th April 1886, the elderly Franz Liszt was visiting the Royal College of Music, London. He was there to receive an award, not to perform. But the large gathering of students present were desperate to hear him play. They had plucked daffodils from the London parks, and in a strong hint to their distinguished guest, they threw the flowers towards the Broadwood grand standing there in the Main Hall. At last, the maestro recognised their wishes, and seating himself at the Broadwood, all smiles, he began to strum his *Cantique d'Amour*...

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Independent holidays for individuals including flights, return transfers or car hire, accommodation with breakfast, Kirker Guide Notes to restaurants, museums and sightseeing and the services of the Kirker Concierge to book concert and opera tickets or reserve a table for a delicious dinner.

MONACO

Columbus **** Deluxe

This stylish hotel is located in the quiet harbour district of Fontvieille, a five minute taxi ride from Casino Square and has a feel of laid-back luxury. The sleek bar is one of Monaco's 'hot spots' and the informal 'Columbus' Brasserie serves Mediterranean dishes. The 181 bedrooms are very comfortable and decorated with black and white photos of Monaco's 1930's heyday.

3 nights for the price of 2 until 31 Mar - price from £399, saving £290.

Prices from 1 April on request

Includes complimentary return helicopter transfers and entrance to a wide range of museums and attractions.

PRAGUE

Paris *****

The city's most famous hotel is located right in the heart of the old town opposite the Municipal House. All the public rooms are still in the original Art Nouveau style. These include a magnificent restaurant, a grand staircase, lounge and the famous Café de Paris. The 86 rooms have been renovated recently and are more contemporary in style.

3 nights for the price of 2 all year - price from £489, saving up to £125.

VENICE

Liassidi Palace **** Superior



The Liassidi Palace is a handsome 15th century Gothic palace that has been imaginatively restored to create one of Venice's most stylish boutique hotels. Located in the authentic Castello district, a short walk from St. Mark's Square and the lagoon. Each of

the 26 bedrooms combines traditional Venetian style with some modern twists. Buffet breakfast is served in a room overlooking the San Lorenzo canal. We highly recommend our favourite family run restaurant Osteria Oliva Nera just 2 minutes' walk away.

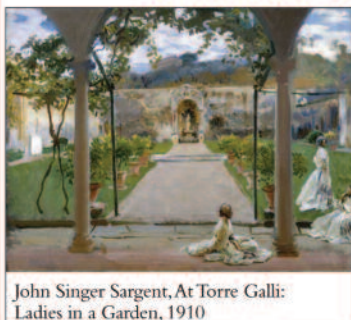
3 nights for the price of 2 until 3 April - price from £598, saving £64.

A private walking tour of Venice is included, alternatively you can elect to have a delicious 4 course dinner at Osteria Oliva Nera.

All Venice holidays include Doge's Palace tickets and water taxi transfers.

FLORENCE - NEW EXHIBITION

AMERICAN IN FLORENCE:
SARGENT AND THE AMERICAN IMPRESSIONISTS
AT THE PALAZZO STROZZI, 3 MARCH - 15 JULY



John Singer Sargent, At Torre Galli: Ladies in a Garden, 1910

To celebrate this major exhibition in Florence, we are offering our clients special short breaks with guaranteed entrance tickets. This stunning exhibition tells the story of the love affair between Americans and Florence through the eyes of Sargent who was born in the city.

Antica Torre di via Tornabuoni

This beautiful hotel dates from the 13th Century and has a spectacular roof terrace. Kirker clients stay in the seven renovated rooms which are amongst the most stylish and comfortable in Florence. The Antica Torre offers exceptional personal service.

3 nights for the price of 2 until 29 March - price from £589, saving £113. From 30 March 3 nights price from £719 including private 2 hour walking tour

Includes Uffizi Gallery tickets & Palazzo Strozzi tickets (3 March - 15 July)

VILLAS & GARDENS AROUND ROME

A FIVE NIGHT ESCORTED HOLIDAY WITH TOUR LECTURER
CAROLINE HOWARD

Including two famous gardens, La Landriana and Ninfa

Our tour is based in the charming small town of Frascati, surrounded by vineyards and yet just 20km from the centre of Rome. Visits from our base at the delightful 4* Park Hotel Villa Grazioli, with its 17th Century frescoes, will include a day in Tivoli to see the famous Villa d'Este Gardens and Hadrian's Villa. La Landriana, created by the Marchesa Taverna over 30 years, the romantic garden of Ninfa and a day in Rome are also included.

Price from £1,559 per person including flights, accommodation with breakfast, transfers, three dinners, one lunch, visits as described and the services of the Kirker tour lecturer.

Departs 22 April & 23 September 2012



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