

OVERSEAS

Quarterly journal of the ROSL

Issue 3, September-November 2013



Inside Sri Lanka

Insights from the High Commissioner, the tea industry, and world-renowned musicians

Silver surfing

How getting online is helping the over-50s with everything from savings to depression

Winning music

Revealing the winner of the ROSL Annual Music Competition Gold Medal 2013

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ISSUE 3 September-November 2013

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FRONT COVER: Statues of Buddha along the Kelani river in Colombo © iStockphoto

From the Director-General



Our busy schedule of summer events is well under way and we are reflecting on yet another highly successful ROSL Annual Music Competition, won this year by the Australian baritone, Morgan Pearse. I was struck by the quality of his singing in last year's competition and was delighted that, his voice refined by a further year's work, he found clear favour with the adjudicators. Watch out for Morgan around the world in the coming years.

Our thanks go to Gavin Henderson and all the judges for their excellent work throughout the competition and, of course, to all the competitors and our own team: Roderick Lakin, Mandy Murphy and George Harwood-Smith. Many things have impressed me during the three competitions I have enjoyed thus far; one is the quality of the many pianists accompanying the competitors. As one of my sons observed, "How can there be so many quality pianists in London?" There are; and we thank them too.

Much of what we do is enabled by the great generosity of our members. This is certainly true for our arts and humanitarian programmes, and we have recently received further bequests from two members, as Roderick Lakin writes on page 17. Leaving a legacy is an important way in which you can enable ROSL's work to continue into the future, in terms of maintaining both the splendour of our buildings and the excellence of our programmes.

I am grateful to the many members who attended the Annual General Meeting in May. We had a very good session, with plenty of questions from the floor to keep the Chairman and me on our toes. I appreciated

the opportunity to articulate some of our plans to develop our activities and facilities in the future. Space prevents reiterating this information here but please look out for developments. For example, you will be pleased to hear that we have now signed a contract for comprehensive wi-fi coverage in Over-Seas House London. I hope that, by the time you read this news, it will be installed and working. Coverage will include bedrooms and the garden.

On the subject of communications, we are working towards a major update of the website to enable faster and more intuitive navigation and to give the site a significant uplift (see page 27 for further details). We are also completing some technical changes to make the payment of subscriptions, and for events and merchandise, easier by direct debit; details should be available soon.

My team was grateful for the many complimentary comments about the content of the last issue. We plan to cover more of such ROSL matters in future publications. Finally, I am sad to have to bid farewell to Claire Simon, who has brought her many talents to the Marketing Department and, especially, this journal over the last two years. She has been a terrific member of the team. We are sorry to see her go but happy that she has gained an excellent new post in the publishing world. Congratulations and 'vale', Claire, and thank you for all your work for ROSL. Into Claire's shoes steps Christine Wilde, who we are delighted to welcome on board and who we know will also have much to contribute in the years ahead.

Roddy Porter

Editor's letter

Navigating home by sat nav recently, it occurred to me that my children may never learn to read a map. When we got home our Tesco's delivery (ordered online the previous day) was waiting, and the driver apologetically handed me a paper form to sign (the machine was on the blink). He admitted that he was 50 when he first used a computer. And therein lies the great social divide of our times: while our kids will never know a world without the internet, many of the older generation have been left behind. Talking to some of the people affected for our 'Surfing to Freedom' feature (page 14) really brought home why training initiatives, such as ROSL's new 'Technical Tuesdays' workshops (page 29), are so important.

Overseas has had its own technical challenges this issue. We are excited to present the new ROSL calendar (pages 28-34), providing a comprehensive list of all the events offered by ROSL in chronological order, so that you can plan the months ahead more easily. Yet redesigning the entire Events section in an easy-to-use format has been no easy task for the Editorial team and our hardworking designer, Hannah Talmage.

The listings are colour-coded so, whether it's a ROSL ARTS or a YM event, you will be able to tell at a glance. The idea is to make life easier for you, our readers, and to make sure you don't miss out on events of interest. So do let us know if you have any queries and we'll be very happy to help.

With CHOGM 2013 taking place in Colombo, this issue's Focus is on Sri Lanka, with an introduction from the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka providing a real insight (page 5). Articles about the role of the tea industry in the country's recent history, and interviews with ROSL prizewinners about their Sri Lankan heritage (pages 6-9), provide varied and interesting perspectives.

This was the first issue for Christine Wilde, who took over the role of Deputy Editor from Claire Simon at our busiest time – on the first day of a production schedule. She has made an impressive start and, thanks to the efficiency and dedication of both Claire and Christine, the issue got off without a hitch.

Miranda Moore





SENSE OF DUTY:
HE Dr Chris Nonis,
a ROSL member
since 1994, meets
HRH Prince Charles



©Commonwealth Secretariat

FOCUS

A pearl of great worth

Chris Nonis, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, looks at the phenomenal progress being made since the end of the conflict four years ago

In 2009, following 28 years of conflict, Sri Lanka achieved peace under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. The country has now embarked on a comprehensive Rehabilitation, Reconciliation, Reintegration and Reconstruction programme, as we build a pluralistic and inclusive society, in which all our communities can reap the dividends of peace.

Sri Lanka was one of the eight founder nations of the modern Commonwealth in 1949. It has always cherished the values of democracy and development, and the principles enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter. Today the country is a microcosm of the contemporary Commonwealth in terms of its cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, in which Tamil, Sinhalese, Muslim, Burgher and Malay have been living together as a heterogeneous community for 2,500 years. All ethnic groups are united in their effort to rebuild the nation.

The country achieved a GDP growth rate of more than 6.4% last year, and a regional growth rate of more than 22% in the conflict-affected areas of the North and East. The policy of 'pro-poor growth' and growth with equity (as outlined in the Mahinda Chinthana policy document on the country's future) aims to bring the benefits of peace to all sectors of the country, and make that peace a durable one.

In November, the country will host the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) on a theme of 'Growth with Equity: Inclusive development'. The meeting of 54 Heads of Government is an opportunity for people from throughout the Commonwealth to visit Sri Lanka, so that they may make a fair and objective analysis of the very real progress being made in the post-conflict era.

As well as being one of the most compelling destinations for investment, Sri Lanka today offers a wealth of culture, history, heritage, and diversity of experiences, from pristine beaches to wildlife and adventure, all within a compact location. The UK was the second largest source of tourism in 2012, with around 114,000 British visitors from a total of more than one million. In addition, Prime Minister David Cameron's focus on economic diplomacy provides opportunities for the UK-Sri Lankan trade relationship.



While paying enormous tribute to HM The Queen's continuing dedication, passion, and deep sense of duty to the Commonwealth, we warmly welcome HRH The Prince of Wales to Sri Lanka for CHOGM 2013. Prince Charles has maintained a keen interest in Sri Lanka, having visited in 1998 to celebrate 50 years of independence, and in 2005, just two months after the devastating tsunami. Two of the Prince's charities – the British Asian Trust and Youth Business International – support meaningful and sustainable rural upliftment and youth entrepreneurship projects in the country. I met the Prince at CHOGM 2007 in Kampala, Uganda, which reflects his strong interest in supporting and encouraging the Commonwealth.

On a personal note, having been a ROSL member for many years, and being its Honorary Corresponding Secretary for Sri Lanka, I have always felt valued as a member of the wider Commonwealth community within ROSL. I feel that ROSL truly lives up to its ethos of strengthening international friendship and understanding, which is a continuation of the inspirational legacy of Sir Evelyn Wrench. It therefore gives me particular pleasure, in my capacity as High Commissioner, to welcome all ROSL members to Sri Lanka for CHOGM 2013, as a celebration of true Commonwealth spirit.



WILDLIFE AND ADVENTURE:

Tourism is an important industry, with a million visitors in 2012 (above left)

REBUILDING A NATION:

The 'pro-poor' approach aims to ensure that everyone benefits from development (above)

WORKING TOGETHER:

(L-r) Former ROSL Chairman Stanley Martin, the Sri Lankan President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, and Chris Nonis (top)

FOCUS

A life with tea

Through his journey from tea plantation worker to owner of an exclusive estate, **Herman Gunaratne** charts a revolution in the Sri Lankan industry

I was 17 when I sought my fortunes as a tea planter. My first appointment was to Yataderia Estate Undugoda – a tea and rubber plantation managed by a British-owned Agency House. This was in the low country of the island. I soon joined the biggest Agency House in Sri Lanka – George Steuart and Co – on Dunsinane Estate in Pundaluoya. As the only Sri Lankan Assistant Manager among English and Scotsmen, I expected to be treated differently, but they were very accepting thanks to the hard work and diligence with which I performed my duties.

The plantation was like a small kingdom: the manager was king and his assistants were the princes. Each assistant was in charge of around 300 acres. There was a hospital, a tavern, tennis courts, volley ball grounds, a butcher's, barber's, tailor's and a grocery shop. You could remain on the plantation for months without wanting for anything.

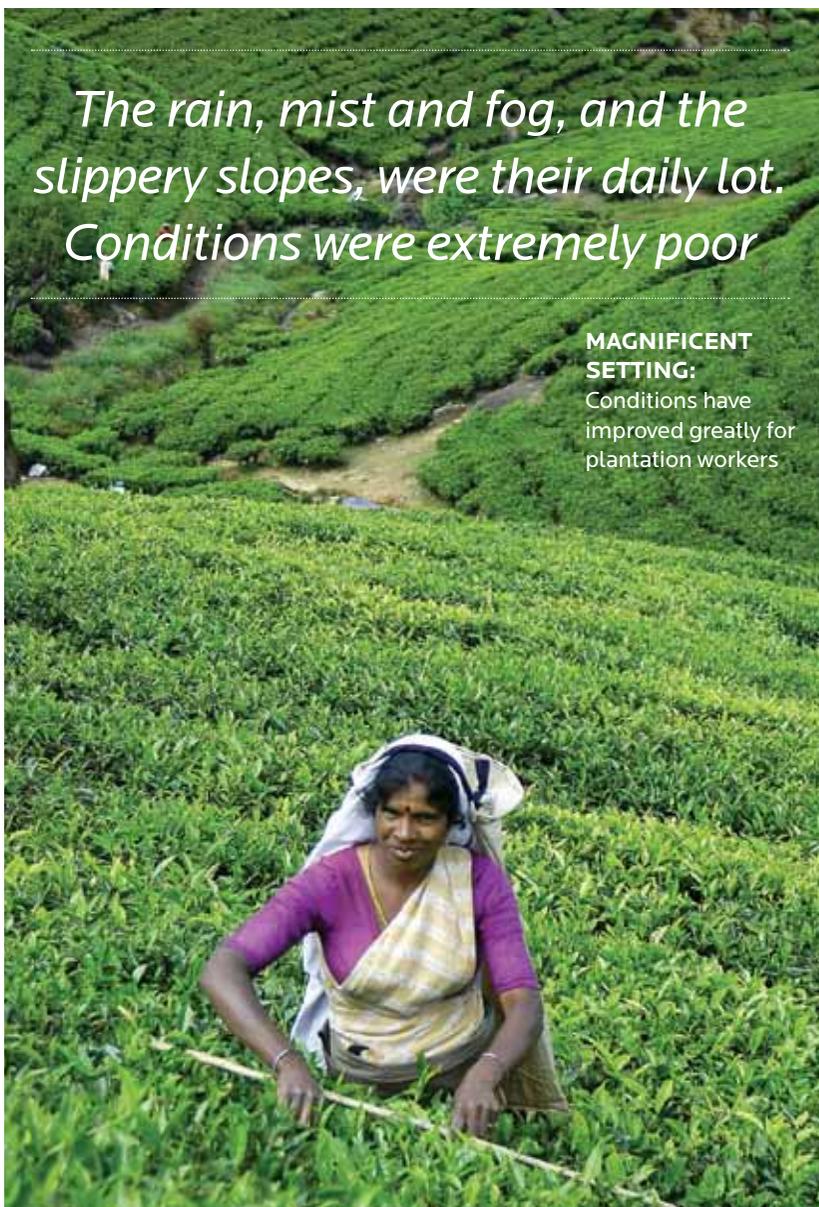
The work was hard. The day started with morning muster at 6am, when the workers were deployed to the various tasks scheduled for the day. I then visited every field to check on the work, returning to the bungalow for lunch before resuming my tour of inspection in the afternoon. Despite the heavy workload, the magnificent surroundings made it feel like a paid holiday.

To gain increments in salary, assistant managers had to pass proficiency examinations in Tamil (the language of the workers), as well as exams in tea-making and basic accountancy. After a tour of duty on several plantations, I gained a comprehensive knowledge of the various aspects of plantation life.

The kingdom crumbles

In 1974-75, the plantations were nationalised. With that single act the plantation raj as we knew it came to an end. I was appointed Regional Manager of 100,000 acres of Sri Lanka's best tea lands – on the rooftop of the island in Nuwara Eliya. Ownership by the state provided a licence for politicians to interfere with appointments, the awarding of contracts and sundry affairs on the estates. It seemed inevitable that the delicate balance between rigid management controls and the needs of the estates would break down. Nationalisation was done in the name of the people of Sri Lanka; it was the people who later suffered.

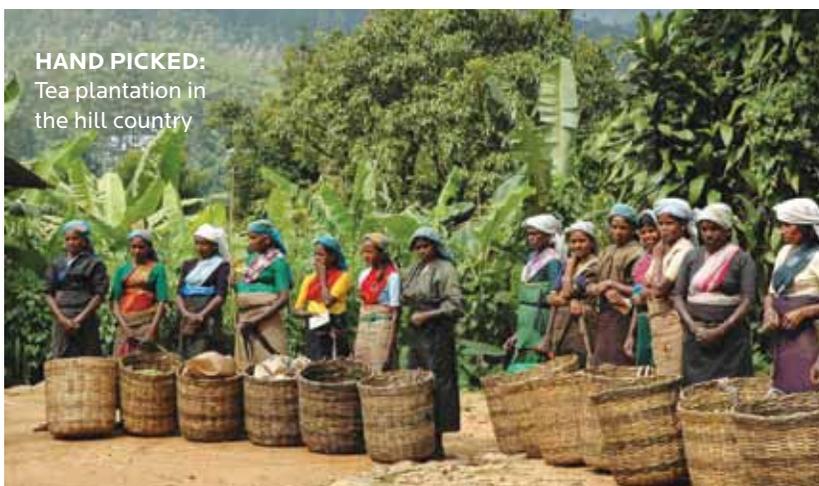
For the plantation labour force, however, nationalisation saw a dramatic improvement in living conditions. The plantations covered around a million acres, with three workers required for every two acres. It was they who enriched the soil with their sweat and toil. The rain, mist and fog, and the slippery slopes, were their daily lot. Conditions were extremely poor, with six people living in one 19ft by 8ft room, known as 'the lines'. Nationalisation brought awareness of this appalling situation. Programmes were launched by the World Bank and the IMF to build twin cottages, provide improved health facilities, and establish



The rain, mist and fog, and the slippery slopes, were their daily lot. Conditions were extremely poor

MAGNIFICENT SETTING:

Conditions have improved greatly for plantation workers



HAND PICKED:
Tea plantation in the hill country

crèches on the estates. In some instances, plantation workers were better off than nearby villagers and gradually the benefits were extended beyond the plantations.

Rise of the low country

Until nationalisation, tea lands had been owned exclusively by large companies, and the indigenous people of the country had little or no association with the industry. This has changed dramatically over the last 40 years. A significant development, in the 1970s, was the establishment of low-grown small-holder tea plots. Villagers took to growing tea mainly in the low country, below 2,000ft, and the industry began to boom, with indigenous people as the primary beneficiaries.

This gradually led to the small-holder sector overtaking the organised plantations, partly as a result of Sri Lanka losing its preeminent position as the world's largest exporter of tea to newcomer Kenya, whose tea industry was established by former Ceylon planters. Some plantations became unprofitable, massive estates in the midlands were abandoned, and crops began to decline.

Today, 75% of the nation's tea is produced by small-holders, and the low country enjoys the best price for tea in the world. Tea has been planted in every small plot of land in the wet zone of the low country, and these plots are individually owned and managed with great care. The industry now plays a significant role in the lives of the people. The island has a population of 22 million and around 3.5 million are directly or indirectly involved, including people working in factories, packing plants, engineering workshops and banks. An estimated one million people who do not work on the plantations also benefit.



Investing in luxury

Turning back to my own fortunes, I returned to my ancestral property in the Galle District of Sri Lanka 15 years ago. It was a rubber plantation. All I knew was tea. So I set about the difficult task of transforming a neglected rubber plantation into a tea estate with its own tea factory. I had very little to offer as collateral other than the dilapidated plantation and my experience in tea, but the banks looked at my assets favourably. They appreciated the knowledge collateral more than the land.

From working as a Regional Manager of 100,000 acres, I went back to land clearing, establishing tea nurseries, uprooting rubber trees using elephants, recruiting labour, and the other attendant works related to planting tea. We bought machinery from an abandoned factory, moving it part by part to Galle by train. It was back-breaking work but the results were rewarding.

By this time, the low country tea industry was booming, with the former Soviet block and the Middle East particularly favouring low-grown teas. I started to produce luxury teas, and today my virgin white tea is sold in the world's most exclusive tea salon. To the best of my knowledge, it is the only tea in the world that is completely untouched by hand. For me and for many of my compatriots, tea has been the road to a contented and rewarding life.

Herman Gunaratne will talk on 'The Scenery of Sri Lanka' at Over-Seas House in October (see page 31 for details).

Malinga Herman Gunaratne is the sole proprietor of Handunugoda Tea Estate. He has written three books, including The Plantation Raj.

TASTE OF SRI LANKA:
(Clockwise from top) Bearing tea on a plantation; a tea tasting at Herman Gunaratne's estate; and workers wear gloves to pick his exclusive virgin white tea

A developing nation

Led by President Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Sri Lankan government hopes to focus CHOGM 2013, in Colombo, on development and particularly on enabling rural communities to benefit from national growth. Approximately 75% of the population is Sinhalese and 15% Tamil. An estimated 80,000-100,000 people were killed during a civil war that lasted for nearly 30 years and ended with the government defeating the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in May 2009. In 2011 the State of Emergency was lifted.

Since the end of the conflict, the economy has strengthened. Between 2005 and 2010, poverty halved to 7.6% and unemployment fell to 4.9%; the following year GDP grew by 8.3%. The Dow Jones has identified Sri Lanka as an emerging market. Compared with other countries in the region, it ranks high on the Human Development Index charting life expectancy, education and income. Supported by a universal 'pro-poor' health care system, life expectancy is 77.9 years. However, anaemia and malnutrition continue to affect around half of the infant population.

Charity and support for others are core values of Sri Lankan culture and the country is 15th in the World Giving Index. In a 2008 poll, 99% said religion was an important part of their daily life; 70% is Buddhist, 15% Hindu, 8% Christian and 7% Muslim.

FOCUS

Flying the flag

ROSL prizewinning musicians tell us how their Sri Lankan heritage has shaped their careers and why their links to their home country are so important to them

Kishani Jayasinghe, soprano You come from a musical family. How did that influence you growing up?

I grew up in Colombo and was fortunate enough to be exposed to many types of music, ranging from traditional Sri Lankan to Western classical. My father and his three siblings formed their own string quartet and my grandmother was one of the pioneer members of the symphony orchestra. My mother's family excelled in piano and had an ongoing love affair with the voice.

I have strong memories of favourite Puccini, Verdi and Tchaikovsky arias playing in the background whenever I visited my maternal grandparents, and lots of Mozart and Strauss when I was with my paternal grandparents. These continue to be my favourite operatic composers.

One of my earliest memories is hearing Maria Callas's rendition of *Vissi d'arte*. I remember thinking that this kind of unadulterated vocal prowess was extraordinary, so perhaps early exposure to this type of music influenced my life. On a tiny island, such as Sri Lanka, it was certainly unusual to grow up immersed in the world of classical music. While our friends spent the evening at the cinema, my brother and I would attend an orchestral concert.

When did your musical education begin?

I always loved to sing and a wonderful teacher in Sri Lanka recognised that I had a natural aptitude. However, growing up in Asia, I never considered becoming a professional artist. I went to England and had just completed a Master's in Law when destiny placed [renowned vocal coach] Pamela Cook in my path. It was her unreserved belief in me, and the unconditional support of my parents and family, that gave me the confidence and strength to make the switch from law to singing. I was offered a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music, and was then accepted on the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House (ROH). Pam continues to be my teacher and most cherished mentor.

Tell me about representing Sri Lanka at the ROSL centenary celebrations...

I was delighted; being introduced to Her Majesty as a pioneer in this art form in my country was one of the most memorable moments of my career. It felt as if I had come full circle, as I had previously represented Sri Lanka as the recipient of the ROSL/Sri Lanka scholarship, and first met [Director of Arts] Roderick Lakin as a teenager.

I feel a great responsibility when I am flying the flag, so to speak. I am fortunate to have had that privilege several times. It was such an unusual career path for a girl born and raised in Sri Lanka, and to be given that level of recognition for doing something I love is a dream come true.

Is it true that you were also the first Sri Lankan to perform on the main stage at the ROH?

Absolutely. I was incredibly excited about making it there, not only as the first Sri Lankan but also as the first South Asian soprano. I was so happy to have the opportunity to open that door for future singers from my region.

Ashan Pillai, viola You have studied in Britain, the United States and Canada. When did you decide to move overseas?

I was born in Colombo, but my parents emigrated to the UK when I was nine months old. I started playing the violin at the age of 7 while I was at school in England. We then returned to Sri Lanka for two years, and I later switched to viola, aged 11. I have received great teaching throughout my education, firstly at the Royal Academy of Music in London, then at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, Banff in Canada and the Juilliard School in New York.

When did your relationship with ROSL begin?

In 1995 with my participation in the Annual Music Competition; I won the Bernard Shore Memorial Scholarship for a viola player.

Why is it important for you to retain musical ties with Sri Lanka?

I first went back to Sri Lanka to play for the 50th anniversary of independence in 1998, after an absence of 15 years. I played as a soloist with the English Chamber Orchestra in the presence of HRH Prince Charles. Since then I have been every two years to play recitals, chamber concerts, and to do educational work and masterclasses.

It has become an important part of my life – the opportunity to show that there are Sri Lankans representing all artistic fronts on an international level, especially for the younger generations. I also get the chance to see my family there and to enjoy the wonderful local cuisine. I have to thank the British Council for their support in each of my trips to Sri Lanka.

How has your Sri Lankan heritage influenced your musical career?

That's a difficult question. My visits to India and Sri Lanka are a result of this heritage, but music is an international language which surpasses boundaries of language, race, sex, etc, and therefore there has been little that I consider influential when looking at my heritage – except possibly character traits and a relaxed attitude to everything.

WORLD RENOWN:
Rohan De Saram in the Cévennes, France (above right); Kishani Jayasinghe (bottom); and Ashan Pillai (below)





© D. Julien-Waring

Rohan de Saram, cello When did you start to study music?

My father was a lawyer but both my parents were keen amateur musicians. As children, my brothers, sister and I learned to play the piano; I also studied the Kandyan drum, one of the main classical instruments of Sri Lanka.

It was difficult to find good teachers for Western instruments, so when my parents heard that a fine Polish cellist, Martin Hohermann, had arrived they asked if he would teach one of the children. He was not interested, but after he heard me play the piano he agreed to teach me, on the condition that I made sufficient progress.

After a year, Mr Hohermann became very insistent that my parents send me to Europe to continue my training. This was certainly not something my parents had in mind for my future, but I set off with my mother by boat, at the age of 11, to play to some of the leading cellists of the time, in London, Paris and Prades. Gaspar Cassado offered to teach me, free of charge, in Florence, Italy.

How did you get involved in the ROSL Annual Music competition?

Studying went hand in hand with concert playing in many countries. The ROSL competition, which I won in 1955, was among the earliest of these competitions and, from what I can remember, had just one round and one adjudicator: the composer Herbert Howells. Winning the competition helped me a lot during that stage of my career.

What are the sounds you most associate with Sri Lanka?

The wide variety of drums, the piercing sound of the double-reed *horanawa*, Buddhist chanting, and the awe-inspiring sacred music of the *nagasvaram* in the Hindu temples are all very vivid in my mind and something from which I draw inspiration in my improvisations. In the *Cello Sequenza XIV* that Luciano Berio wrote for me, he incorporated the rhythms of the Kandyan drum of Sri Lanka.

How important is it for you to collaborate with Sri Lankan musicians?

I have worked for many years with my pianist brother Druvi in programmes of mainly, but not exclusively, Western music. I have also had the good fortune to work with some of the leading Kandyan drummers and dancers from Sri Lanka, among them the drummer Piyasara Silpadipathe and dancers Chitrasena and Vipuli.

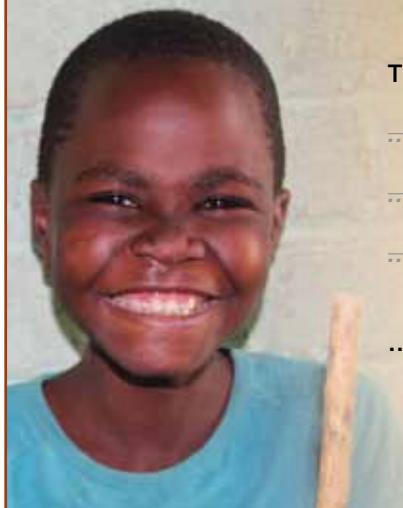
Since the combined tragedies of the civil war and the tsunami in Sri Lanka, I have participated in fundraising concerts with colleagues from Sri Lanka and other parts of the world.

Conversations by Rohan de Saram and Joachim Steinheuer is available at amazon.co.uk or by emailing wolke@wolkeverlag.de.



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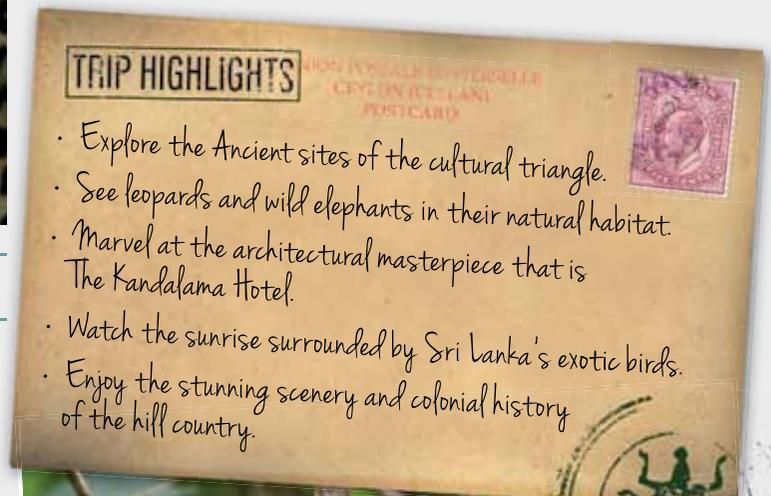
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To register your interest, please leave your contact details at the main reception for the attention of Gemma Matthews, or e-mail her at: gmatthews@rosl.org.uk.



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FOCUS

SOOTHING NOTES:
The Commonwealth Resounds! musicians play at a hospital in Perth during CHOGM 2011

A resounding success

How a life-changing music project is preparing for CHOGM. By **Alison Cox**

What is the connection between a goatskin, a memorial plaque in Gozo, Westminster Abbey, a Symphony Orchestra and an *ekivuuvwe* reed? Answer:

The Commonwealth Resounds! (TCR), a cross-cultural musical organisation. I created TCR in 2005, with partners in Malta, because there were no organisations within the Commonwealth dedicated to people's musical needs and livelihoods. With TCR support, African flute and adungu makers crafted instruments and exhibited them to a world audience at the 2007 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Uganda. Other projects included choral programmes with orphaned children and village brass bands, and an unforgettable performance of Mozart's *Requiem* in Namirembe Cathedral, sung by Ugandan church choirs and accompanied by the original Commonwealth Festival Orchestra.

In 2009, CHOGM was in Trinidad and Tobago. During TCR's visit, two expert musicians, Eugene Skeef and Claudio Kron, donated instruments and worked with young Guyanese drummers to address their technique. As a direct result, the group opened the Buxton Fusion School of Music in Guyana. TCR has also run events in Australia, Edinburgh, London and Manchester, including a performance for Commonwealth Observance Day in Westminster Abbey and concerts for visiting Commonwealth musicians.

Four organisations have led TCR's development: ROSL regularly sponsors outstanding soloists to participate in TCR. The International Federation of Musicians (FIM) supports life-changing Music Business Seminars, tailored to the needs of CHOGM host countries. Two specialist UK music schools with strong international profiles – the Purcell School and Chetham's School of Music – train young

UNFORGETTABLE: During CHOGM 2007 in Uganda, the Commonwealth Festival Orchestra plays in Namirembe Cathedral (right); and an adungu-maker crafts an instrument (bottom right)

musicians through community outreach work and raise international awareness. In addition, the Sri Lankan travel business Jetwing is sponsoring this year's programme.

In Sri Lanka, TCR is running the Commonwealth International Music Festival (8-18 November), leading up to CHOGM 2013. This will be the biggest international gathering of musicians in Sri Lanka in living memory, with more than 30 visiting musicians involved. James Ross will conduct the Commonwealth Festival Orchestra, hosted by the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka; ROSL has sponsored three award-winning young soloists; there will be gala concerts in Galle and Colombo, and a Charity Gala Concert for the Sunera Foundation; Vatche Jambazian and Sri Lankan pianists will create the Commonwealth Piano Foundation; and a new chamber orchestra will perform a specially commissioned piece by Danyal Dhondy.

Outreach work will come from Joseph Walters' musical charity, Songbound; Juliet Fraser, from the British vocal ensemble EXAUDI, supporting choral development; school outreach projects developed by TCR's Co-Directors, Nicholas Oliver and Sarah Noon; and Music Business Seminars organised by John Smith and FIM.

There will be a TCR pre-view concert at Over-Seas House London in November (see page 32 for details). Visit www.commonwealthresounds.com for more about TCR.

Alison Cox OBE is Founder and Co-Director of The Commonwealth Resounds!





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THE HIGH LIFE:

The hill country, where many of the tea plantations are located



JOY FERNANDO'S Colombo

How long have you lived in Sri Lanka?

My family is from Colombo and I was born there.

When is the best time to visit?

In August, when it is cooler and there is less rain. The main attraction in August is a famous Buddhist procession in Kandy, where more than 200 elephants are dressed up and hundreds of dancers parade the streets for one week. A special elephant carries the casket of the Sacred Relic of the tooth of Buddha on its back. Thousands of people from all over the world visit Kandy during this festival.

Colombo is the cultural capital of Sri Lanka. What would you recommend doing in the city?

Colombo is full of lovely hotels and restaurants to wine and dine the evenings away. I would suggest taking an organised city tour, and paying a visit to the museums and temples. A very popular spot is the Galle Face Green promenade, a large open space stretching along the Indian Ocean.

Sri Lanka is known as the 'Pearl of the Indian Ocean' because of its incredible natural diversity. Do you have a favourite area?

We have lovely beaches in Sri Lanka – something for everyone. In the south there is plenty of opportunity for keen surfers, and the beaches of Trincomalee and Passikudah in Batticaloa are famous for their picturesque beauty. The Yala, Wilpattu and Minneriya National Parks are the most popular destinations to see animals, and Bundala National Park in southern Sri Lanka is famous for bird watching.

With eight Unesco World Heritage sites, it's hard to know what to see first. What three places would you recommend?

Go to Kandy and watch a Kandyan cultural dance performance and visit the Temple of the Tooth, which houses the relic of the tooth of Buddha. En route, visit

the elephant orphanage at Pinnawala. The hill country is the place to go for the country's famous tea plantations. To top off a visit, go to the 'cultural triangle', an area in central Sri Lanka that houses some of the country's most ancient sites. When there, climb the Dambulla cave temple or visit the Sigiriya rock fortress, known as the eighth wonder of the world. The ruins and temples of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa are also very beautiful.

What is your favourite Sri Lankan dish?

Rice with pork curry and jackfruit – a famous fruit among Sri Lankans, which is about 2ft in length, very sweet when ripe and delicious when eaten raw.

How would you describe Colombo in three words?

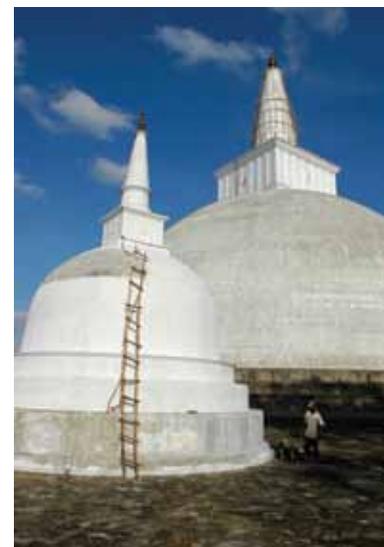
Humid, friendly, clean.

Joy Fernando is an honorary ROSL member. She runs the International Institute of Music, Speech and Drama in Sri Lanka, conducts the Sri Lanka Festival of Music, Dance and Speech, and directs an annual summer camp. She is the Sri Lanka representative of the London College of Music.

Interview by Claire Simon.

CULTURAL TRIANGLE:

The stunning temple of Anuradhapura (below) and Dambulla cave temple (bottom)





Surfing to freedom

Miranda Moore finds out why it is becoming a priority for older people to get online, and how the web can help with everything from savings to depression

When Margaret Hepburn's granddaughter moved to Peru, she knew she would miss the milestones of her great grandchildren growing up. Yet the 92-year-old Patron of Age UK Camden was able to see her great granddaughter take her first steps using the free video-call program Skype. Having used a computer for the first time when she was in her 70s, Hepburn is part of an older tech-savvy generation – dubbed the 'silver surfers' – who have become the internet's most prolific users.

The over-65s now spend more time online than any other group, including those aged 18-24, leading to a growth in specialist websites such as www.silversurfers.net, which promises access to any area of interest in 'only four mouse clicks... no typing is required'.

At the other end of the scale, however, are the 6 million Britons over the age of 55 who are not online. In the UK, this age-group represents 85% of people who do not use the internet – worrying when you consider the potential of the worldwide web to connect people and to save us money on everything from utility bills to insurance.

There is increasing evidence that the internet can help older people to lead independent lives, keep in touch with

friends and family, and make informed decisions on issues such as health and travel. According to new research from the University of Illinois, regular use of social-networking sites by the over-50s also leads to a reduction in depression. This could provide a lifeline for older people, who are more likely than any other group to suffer from depression, often as a result of mobility issues and feelings of isolation.

For these reasons, several UK charities support IT training for the over-50s, and ROSL has launched its own series of workshops for members, called Technical Tuesdays (see page 29). Age UK runs free 10-week beginners' courses at local branches across the country, as well as drop-in sessions and one-day classes ranging from genealogy to social-networking sites.

'These are exciting projects and they massively help people who can otherwise feel quite isolated from friends and family,' says Clare O'Driscoll, Communications Manager at Age UK Camden. 'It helps people save time and money, and access a lot of information.' In fact, there are many things that can only be done online, including applying for some benefits, says Mark Hughes, one of a small team of volunteer IT trainers at the Camden charity. 'It's not really a choice any more,' he adds.

NEW SKILLS:
Working in pairs on a 10-week beginners' course at Age UK headquarters in central London (above and top right)



Before she took an IT course with Shell (South Hampstead Education and Life-long Learning), Kiran Ahuja, 67, found she was increasingly having to ring her son in Dubai to ask for help buying goods and services. 'Everything is on computers, so we had to go to my son to buy aeroplane tickets, book hotels.' Now she is gradually gaining the confidence to be able to do these things for herself. She also keeps in touch with her daughter and grandchildren in India by email.

We meet at one of the drop-in sessions that Age UK Camden runs four days a week. Looking round the IT suite, I find one woman looking at recipes, another emailing a friend, someone looking at family photos on Facebook – and one man learning to play the piano via YouTube. Fiorella Longo, 62, is renewing her European Health Insurance Card. She took Age UK Camden's 10-week course because she wanted to be able to send emails, search for information on Google, and talk to her sister in Italy without racking up prohibitively high phone bills. Before retiring she had been a district nurse and then a full-time carer for her husband; they never owned a computer and the course really helped her to gain confidence.

'People are quite nervous, thinking "I'm never going to be able to learn that – that's for the young people". It's such an alien thing. But anybody can learn,' comments O'Driscoll. 'Very basic things, like copy/paste, may take half an hour to explain because it's a whole new concept,' adds Hughes.

Sonia Delauney took a six-week Spring Online course at the sheltered housing complex where she lives. 'For our generation, everything was pen and paper; for all our information we went to books,' she says. 'Now we've got this massive opportunity but it's quite scary too. You need someone to sit with you and show you even how to switch it on.' The week-long Spring Online campaign was launched by Digital Unite 12 years ago as part of their charitable work to give older people the opportunity to get online. Out of hundreds of free guides, their 'How to turn on a computer' guide is the most popular.

This year, around 20,000 people learnt at Spring Online taster sessions, held in local libraries, schools, sheltered housing schemes, community centres and even a pub. 'The computer's like my right arm now: I shop online,



'Everything is on computers. We had to ask my son to buy us plane tickets'

I bank online,' says Delauney. 'On Monday morning, by 8 o'clock, I'd had my groceries delivered, they'd all been put away and I didn't even have to go in a shop.'

With 12 million people over 50 now online, the national picture is improving. One figure particularly stands out: the number of people over 65 using social-networking sites has risen from 6% to more than 30% in the last three years. However, with an increasing number of services available only online and huge savings to be made on services and products bought over the internet, there is still a long way to go before the work of charities such as Digital Unite and Age UK is done.

See pages 28-30 for more about ROSL's Technical Tuesdays, organised in collaboration with Age UK K&C. Visit www.ageuk.org.uk to support local Age UK charities.

SYSTEM UPDATE: Drop-in sessions at Age UK Camden offer people the chance to practise under the guidance of volunteer trainers



Winning performance

Australian baritone Morgan Pearse wins Gold Medal and £16,000 in the ROSL Annual Music Competition. ROSL Director of Arts **Roderick Lakin** reports

The ROSL Annual Music Competition Final took place on Monday 3 June at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London. The Chairman of the distinguished panel of judges was **Gavin Henderson CBE**, Principal of Central School of Speech and Drama, who presided over a panel of 12 judges, nine of whom are past ROSL prizewinners. The Guest of Honour and prize-giver was the renowned Singaporean pianist **Melvyn Tan**, himself winner of the ROSL Gold Medal in 1976.

The other finalists, who each received £5,000, were **Peter Moore** trombone (Chetham's School, Manchester), **Michael Foyle** violin (Royal Academy of Music) and **Sophia Dee** piano (Guildhall School of Music and Drama).

Specialist vocal and instrumental juries had selected the performers at the Final from more than 500 soloists, accompanists and ensemble members from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, South Africa and the UK. The demanding auditions had been held over a six week period in February and March at Over-Seas House London.

During the jury deliberations, the audience enjoyed the flair and artistry of the **Françoise-Green Piano Duo** (Royal College of Music) and **Tempest** flute trio (Royal Northern College of Music), winners of the competition's two ensemble awards of £10,000 each.

OUTSTANDING: (Clockwise from left) **Morgan Pearse**, Gold Medallist and First Prize winner; **Peter Moore**, winner of the ROSL Wind Award; **Ensemble Award** winner the **Tempest** flute trio; **Sophia Dee**, winner of the ROSL Keyboard Award; and **Michael Foyle**, winner of the ROSL Strings Award

They were joined by other outstanding young musicians, who won specialist instrumental and overseas awards totalling a further £16,000. **Jennifer Hughes** (Royal College of Music) won the Accompanist Award of £5,000, while Australian pianist **Primavera Shima** was awarded a Tait Memorial Scholarship worth £1,000, the **Lorna Viol Memorial Prize** of £3,000 for an outstanding overseas musician, and a specially commissioned Overseas Trophy from ceramic artist **Lydia Hardwick** (Royal College of Art).

As with ROSL prizewinners of the previous 60 years, **Morgan Pearse** and the ROSL 'class of 2013' are certain to become familiar names to the concert-going public in the years to come.

Specialist vocal and instrumental juries selected the performers at the Final from more than 500 musicians

A musical legacy

Roderick Lakin remembers two loyal supporters of the ROSL Annual Music Competition who recently made bequests

In the last issue of *Overseas* I wrote about the great contribution legacies from members have played in the development of the ROSL Annual Music Competition over the past 60 years. Since writing that article I have received notification of generous bequests towards our musical endeavours from two long-standing supporters, Harry Miller and Margaret Ker.

When I joined ROSL 30 years ago, Harry Miller was already one of the most enthusiastic followers of the competition auditions and concerts. His support dates back to the 1960s and, thanks to his generosity, an Ensemble Prize was established in 1970, in addition to the solo awards. In 1982, he gave ROSL a fine trophy to be presented to the Ensemble Prize winners – an antique Chinese silver gilt ship, which bears a similarity to the ship depicted in the ROSL crest.

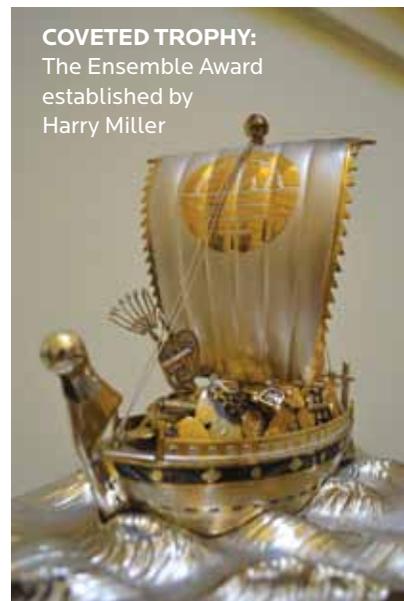
The Ensemble Prize has grown in strength and stature over the years and is now as important as the First Prize and Gold Medal for soloists. Since 2005, two equal ensemble prizes have been awarded: one for strings, strings and piano, and piano duo/duet, and the other for wind, vocal and mixed ensembles.

In recent years, due to ill health, Harry was unable to attend the auditions he enjoyed so much, but he continued to follow the competition. According to the executor of his estate, he spoke often about how much he enjoyed the clubhouse and the wonderful young musicians and exceptional music-making he enjoyed there.

I first started presenting concerts by ROSL prizewinners at the Edinburgh clubhouse on Princes Street 20 years ago. From the very first concert with South African cellist Liam Abramson, until last year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe series, Scottish member Margaret Ker was a keen supporter, and only missed a concert when she went on her frequent travels. She enjoyed life to the full and often counselled my younger colleagues to make the most of their health and vitality. She loved the Edinburgh clubhouse and will be fondly remembered for her positive and joyful presence.

The legacies from Margaret Ker and Harry Miller will be held in the ROSL Centenary Appeal Fund within the ROSL Golden Jubilee Trust (registered charity number 306095). The ROSL Centenary Appeal was launched to secure endowment of awards for outstanding young musicians in the ROSL Annual Music Competition. *For advice on how to remember ROSL ARTS in your will, please contact Roderick Lakin on +44 (0)20 7408 0214 ext 325 or rlakin@rosl.org.uk.*

COVETED TROPHY:
The Ensemble Award established by Harry Miller



Australian prizewinners at ROSL

Morgan Pearse is the latest in an illustrious list of Australian ROSL Music Competition prizewinners, joining pianists Geoffrey Parsons (1953), Geoffrey Tozer (1970) and Piers Lane (1982), opera star Cheryl Barker (1989), cellist Liwei Qin (1997), saxophonist Amy Dickson (2004), and last year's Gold Medallist, pianist Jayson Gillham.

Born in Sydney in 1988, Morgan graduated from the Sydney Conservatorium with a first-class honours degree before moving to London in 2012 to study at the Royal College of Music, appropriately as the first Joan Sutherland Scholar. He enjoyed a further accolade this year when he was selected to be represented by YCAT (Young Classical Artists' Trust). He has received significant support from the Australian Music Foundation, Tait Memorial Trust and Australian Singing Competition.

GOLD MEDALLISTS PAST AND PRESENT:

Morgan Pearse and Melvyn Tan

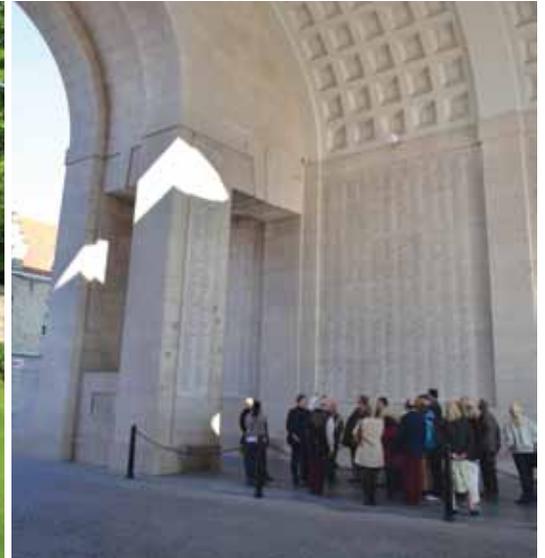


News and views

The latest from the clubhouses in London and Edinburgh

▶ The battlefields of Ypres

So far, 2013 has proved to be a busy and successful year for ROSL Members' Events, and the Battlefield Tour on the last Bank Holiday weekend in May has been a highlight. Led by Sandhurst military historian Michael Orr and ROSL Director-General Roddy Porter, the three-day trip to Ypres in Belgium covered the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, Tyne Cot Cemetery and Toc H. The group of 25 members visited some of the most significant First World War battle sites, including the Menin Road, Nonnebossen and Passchendaele. The memorable and extremely moving trip was a great success.



◀ Tour of the roses

Despite the rain, members' spirits weren't dampened on the June day-trip to the rural estate of Mottisfont, home to the National Collection of old roses. The group explored the idyllic walled garden and grounds, the trout stream and the remains of a 13th-century gothic priory, before enjoying a delicious, specially sourced lunch, served in a private marquee.

▼ Central Council

In June, the Central Council welcomed as guest speaker Dame Judith Mayhew Jonas DBE, Trustee and Chairman of the Redevelopment Committee of the Imperial War Museum (IWM). Dame Judith (centre right) described the renovation work at the IWM and explained its pivotal role in the activities to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War. This was also the first Council meeting for Caroline Roddis (centre left), who also sits on the Younger Members Committee. They are pictured with Sir Anthony Figgis (left) and Roddy Porter.



▲ Hello and goodbye

It was with a heavy heart that we said goodbye to Claire Simon (left), *Overseas* Deputy Editor and ROSL Marketing Executive. Over the last two years, Claire has been instrumental in making *Overseas* a cracking read by conducting interviews with members, authors and musicians, and developing the look of the magazine – often acting as photographer along the way. Claire is moving on to a wonderful role at Sunday Publishing and we wish her the very best of luck. ROSL is delighted to welcome Claire's replacement Christine Wilde (right), who joined the Marketing Department in July.

► From Stratford to Gosport

In April, the members' events programme took members from East London to the south coast on popular trips to see the regeneration of the Stratford area in London, and the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport. In Stratford, members took a walking tour to see the largest tidal mill in the world, and heard about the prospects for the area following the 2012 Olympic Games. The day ended with a delicious lunch at Dane's Yard Kitchen (right). In Gosport, members enjoyed a guided tour of HMS Alliance (far right) with an ex-submariner, and a trip on the waterbus in beautiful weather.



▼ Tea at the House of Lords

This annual members' event remains a firm favourite, offering a rare opportunity to take tea in the Cholmondeley Room and Terrace at the Palace of Westminster. ROSL members sat overlooking the Thames while feasting on delicious scones, cakes and sandwiches. The tea was hosted by ROSL President Lord Luce, whose illuminating speech about the House of Lords was much appreciated.

▲ Chairman's Lunch and AGM

At the beginning of May, ROSL welcomed Sir Malcolm Rifkind KCMG QC MP as Guest Speaker at the Chairman's Lunch. Sir Malcolm, who was a member of the Eminent Persons Group at CHOGM 2011, gave a lively and riveting talk on the future of the Commonwealth. The lunch was followed by the Annual General Meeting, which was very well attended.

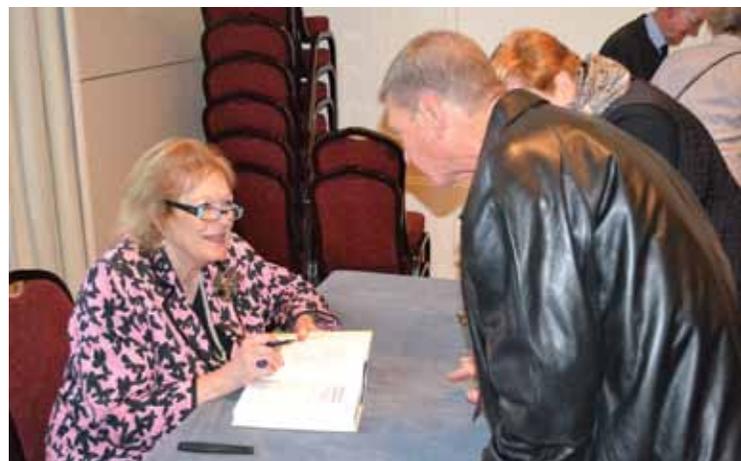


◀ Coronation celebrations

Guests at ROSL London toasted the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty's Coronation in June, while watching the Service of Thanksgiving on televisions in the Hall of India and Pakistan, and enjoying a coronation-themed buffet (left). In Edinburgh, members marked the occasion with a live screening of the service and a three-course lunch.

▼ Antonia Fraser

In June, ROSL was honoured to welcome the doyenne of British historians, Antonia Fraser, who presented her new book *Perilous Question: The drama of the Great Reform Bill 1832*. She was joined by author Allan Mallinson, and both answered questions from the audience at this hugely popular ROSL ARTS event. After the talk, guests had the chance to buy the book, which Antonia was happy to sign.





Bright young things

Younger Member **Caroline Roddis** reviews recent events

"Can't repeat the past?" Gatsby cried incredulously. "Why of course you can!" As a proud member of a club with such a long history, I sometimes wonder what it would have been like to visit the London clubhouse at different points during the last 100 years. Thanks to our Great Gatsby Ball, which proved to be a huge success with under 35s from across clubland, we were recently given a glittering glimpse into the ROSL of the 1920s.

Events and catering staff had worked tirelessly to transform the club into Gatsby's mansion. Revellers in white and black tie, flapper dresses and ball gowns were greeted by the sight of long banqueting tables in the garden, which was decorated with paper lanterns and buzzing with the sound of live jazz. As guests enjoyed prohibition cocktails and a delicious buffet supper, actors moved through the crowd offering news of the mysterious Gatsby and teaching people how to Charleston – something that came in handy as we danced the night away later in Princess Alexandra Hall.

I am now organising another clay shoot for YMs, this time in leafy Surrey. We'll be giving members of all abilities the chance to enjoy a day of shooting. See page 28 for further details.

GREAT GATSBY BALL: Jay Gatsby's parties are the most lavish of them all, and the ROSL ball did not disappoint



Photos © Tom Hunter

MEXICAN FUN: At First Thursdays drinks in May, YMs marked the Cinco de Mayo with burritos, margaritas and a piñata



THE FINALISTS: (L-r) Tope Folarin, Pede Hollist, Chinelo Okparanta, Elnathan John and Abubakar Ibrahim

Caine Prize

'Miracle' wins Nigerian writer Tope Folarin the prestigious award

ROSL hosted the first in a series of readings by the finalists of the Caine Prize for African Writing, awarded annually for a short story by an African writer published in English. On Thursday 4 July, an attentive audience gathered in Princess Alexandra Hall to hear authors Pede Hollist (Sierra Leone), Abubakar Ibrahim, Elnathan John, Tope Folarin and Chinelo Okparanta (all from Nigeria) read extracts from their shortlisted stories. Guests were then given the opportunity to find out more about the writers' inspirations and motivations in the informative question and answer session that followed.

However, we all had to wait until Monday 8 July for the winner to be announced. At a dinner held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, nominees joined past winners, celebrities and supporters to hear who would be taking home the £10,000 prize. The Chair of Judges, Gus Casely-Hayford, announced Tope Folarin as the 2013 winner for his story *Miracle*. Set in Texas in an evangelical Nigerian Church, where the congregation gathers to witness the healing powers of a blind pastor-prophet, Folarin's intriguing tale addresses themes of faith, gullibility and the American dream.

ROSL has supported the Caine Prize since 2001, providing accommodation at Over-Seas House for the finalists during their short stay in London. Visit www.caineprize.com to read the five shortlisted stories and find out more about the writers.

Books

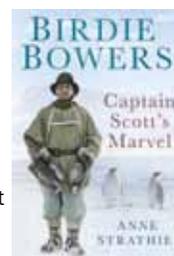
'Birdie Bowers' by Anne Strathie

Henry 'Birdie' Bowers became the first Scot to the South Pole when he realised his life-time ambition in being selected for Captain Scott's Terra Nova expedition to the Antarctic. The story of Birdie Bowers is often overshadowed by tales of his famous contemporaries, but Bowers was the man described by Scott as 'a marvel', relentlessly full of cheer and hope.

Birdie Bowers: Captain Scott's marvel draws on letters, journals

and previously unpublished material to tell the full story of the naval officer who met his death with Scott and Wilson on the return journey from the South Pole.

Anne Strathie will be at Over-Seas House in October to talk about *Birdie Bowers* (2013, The History Press). See page 30 for details.





Keeping it in the family

Claire Simon meets Fraser and Daniel Campbell, the father and son team running the Edinburgh clubhouse

In 2011, the management of the ROSL Edinburgh clubhouse was outsourced to the Loch Ness Coffee Company (Cobbs) in order to help ensure the longevity of the clubhouse facilities. However, the links between ROSL and Cobbs Co-Founder Fraser Campbell go back much further. Fraser's son Daniel, now General Manager of 100 Princes Street, brings the Campbell connection to ROSL right up to the present.

Fraser, I believe you founded Cobbs, the company that runs Over-Seas House Edinburgh, in 2001?

Yes. I founded Cobbs with my wife Jackie, Willie Cameron, who is in charge of Marketing, and Angus McMaster, our Accountant. It has now grown to more than 200 employees.

How did you first find out about ROSL?

I came across the advert for the House Manager role in 1985, when I was Food and Beverage Manager with Trust House Forte. I was appointed to the position at ROSL Edinburgh, where I remained for three very happy years. At that time there was a manager's flat in the clubhouse and I lived there with my wife Jacqueline. Our first child, Daniel, was born during this time, so 100 Princes Street was his first home. Daniel's links to ROSL are from the day he was born!

Daniel, you are General Manager of the Edinburgh clubhouse. How does the role compare to when your father had the job?

The role has not changed dramatically, and my day-to-day duties, such as attending to members and their guests, is very similar to my dad's daily routine all those years ago.

How has the clubhouse changed since you were General Manager, Fraser?

What used to be the manager's accommodation is today members' accommodation. And since Cobbs took over the day-to-day running of the club we have upgraded the restaurant; refurbished some of the function suites and members' lounge; and witnessed the installation of the new lift and the major roof refurbishment undertaken by ROSL in 2012-13.

What is the most memorable moment of your time at 100 Princes Street?

It is the same for both of us: the preparation and visit of ROSL Vice-Patron, HRH Princess Alexandra. This was my

first important job when I joined in 1985 and took place almost immediately after me settling in. It was a great honour for me, as it was when history repeated itself in almost the same circumstances for my son; coincidentally, Daniel had the same experience shortly after he was appointed General Manager.

What would you like to see for the future of the clubhouse and ROSL membership in Scotland?

First and foremost we would like to see ROSL membership in Scotland go from strength to strength, with more members attending events and using the facilities. If members haven't yet visited the clubhouse, we'd love to welcome you to Edinburgh. Next year would provide the perfect opportunity for members to visit Scotland, what with both the Commonwealth Games and the Homecoming Scotland 2014 festival taking place.

FROM THE FAMILY ALBUM: Fraser and Jackie Campbell with baby Daniel in the manager's apartment in 1986 (right); and Fraser today (above)



This was Daniel's first home. His links to ROSL are from the day he was born



MEMORABLE MOMENTS: Daniel met Princess Alexandra (left) shortly after he became General Manager (below)



ROSL WORLD

The latest from the global branches



Australia

In June, the **New South Wales** Branch joined first the Australia-Britain Society to celebrate The Queen's birthday and then the Royal Commonwealth Society to mark the Coronation. The **Queensland** Branch marked both occasions with an opera by candlelight at Christ Church in Milton; Government House Open Day on Queensland Day; and Combined Patriotic Societies Scholarship and Jubilee Celebrations in Brisbane City Hall, attended by Queensland Governor, Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC. The Governor also held a reception at Government House to celebrate The Queen's birthday.

The **South Australia** Branch was well represented at the Commonwealth Day Reception, and at a dinner of the Royal Society of South Australia. Its monthly lunch programme continues, and a visit to the TAFE catering college also proved very popular. At the AGM in May, two long-serving members of the committee stepped down.

The **Victoria** Branch learnt about the Myer Mural Hall while enjoying high tea in May and, in June, celebrated The Queen's Coronation at a special service at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne. ROSL Australia President, Jason Ronald, read the First Lesson and Deputy President Christine Chamberlain led the prayers.

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 **British Columbia**, former Branch President Pam Ducommen, and current President Liz Murray, attended a Royal Commonwealth Society Lunch to commemorate the Coronation. Liz recently visited Over-Seas House London and met with ROSL Director of Marketing, Gemma Matthews, and Director-General Roddy Porter.

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

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

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

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



Hong Kong

Hong Kong: Miss Kate Yau, roslsecretary@rosl.org.hk



New Zealand

Christchurch Branch members were entertained by opera students from the University of Canterbury, while member Liz Baxendine gave a vivid account of her life, more recently as President of Age Concern NZ. Talks at the **Southland** Branch morning teas covered a variety of topics, including the History of Invercargill's Civic Theatre.

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



Switzerland

Switzerland: Jo Brown, +334 5040 6631



Thailand

At the AGM in May, Jim Napier and Roger Willbourn stepped down as Chairman and Honorary Secretary respectively. ROSL is grateful for their dedication to developing ROSL's presence in Thailand. The new Chairman and Honorary Secretary will be announced in the next issue of *Overseas*.

Thailand: Vincent Swift, info@roslthailand.com



UK

At the **Bath** Branch's spring lunch, member Mike Manning spoke on the postal service to India in the days of the East India Company. Monthly coffee mornings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at Pratt's Hotel. The branch is sad to report that Peggy Walters has resigned as Chairman due to ill health; the position remains open.



© Cecilia Sultana de Maria

Sir Anthony and Lady Figgis were Guests of Honour at the **Bournemouth** Branch's Queen's Birthday lunch, with a performance by harpist Cecilia Sultana de Maria. The branch will hold its autumn lunch on 23 October, followed by the inaugural Chris Bladen Memorial Address; Simon Gimson, Director and Head of the Office of the Commonwealth Secretary-General, and a ROSL Central Council member, will speak on 'The Future of the Commonwealth'. Coffee mornings are held every Thursday at the Marriott Highcliff Hotel.

At its AGM in May, the **Cheltenham** Branch elected Matthew Gemmill as Chairman, Barbara Snell as Secretary, and George Johnstone as Vice-Chairman. Jean Miller remains Treasurer and Kathleen Northage, the long-serving Secretary and Chairman, joined the committee. In November, Amy Woolcott will talk on 'Scottish Castles and Abbeys'. The branch Christmas lunch is on 18 December.

Mae Barr MBE succeeded Bill Chalmers as **Edinburgh** Branch Chair at the AGM. Ken MacIntosh MSP was guest speaker at the Scottish Members' Dinner, and ROSL ARTS staged a Gala Opera evening in June, prior to their Edinburgh Festival Fringe programme. Following a successful trip to the Highlands and Isle of Skye, Scottish members took their annual trip to Over-Seas House London in July.

At the **Exeter** Branch's AGM in April, Brian Hawkes stood down as Chairman and was appointed Honorary President. Vice-Chairman

SUMMER TOUR: Taunton Branch members in South Devon



© Kim Andrews

Where to stay: Sri Lanka

Member **Anne Collins** discovers two excellent ROSL reciprocal clubs



John Tregoning took over as Chairman. In May, the branch visited Exeter Cathedral and member Brian Le Messurier gave them a tour of the Devon and Exeter Institution.

The Glasgow Branch held its AGM in May. Branch meetings will resume in October with talks on a rail journey from Glasgow to Beijing, and Shetland. At its April AGM, the Taunton Branch welcomed Doreen Cardwell to the Committee. Rachel Davies, Principal of Somerset College, spoke at the May lunch, while the summer outing took members on a tour of South Devon, including a steam train from Paignton and a cruise to Totnes. Coffee mornings are held every Wednesday.

In May, the West Sussex Branch went to a concert at the Brighton Festival, arranged in association with ROSL and featuring Ashley Frupp, a winner in the 2012 ROSL Annual Music Competition. Roddy and Marianne Porter were Guests of Honour at the lunch to celebrate The Queen's Birthday and the Coronation.

Bath, Exeter, Taunton, Torbay:

Sally Roberts, +44 (0)1823 661148;
rosi.west@googlemail.com

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

Cheltenham: Barbara Snell,
+44 (0)1452 813373

Edinburgh: Mae Barr, +44 (0)131 334 3005;
maebarr@tiscali.co.uk

Glasgow: Bill Agnew, +44 (0)141 884 6342

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

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

STRIKING A CHORD:

Harpist Cecilia Sultana de Maria performed at the Bournemouth Branch's lunch to mark The Queen's Birthday (above)

MARKING THE CORONATION:

Pam Ducommen (r) and Liz Murray, from the British Colombia Branch, at the Royal Commonwealth Society lunch in June (above left)

ALL CHANGE:

New Edinburgh Branch Chairman Mae Barr with her predecessor Bill Chalmers (below)

The Colombo Swimming Club is in an ideal location: by the sea but also in the business and hotel area of Colombo. You can saunter along the beach into town, past the Old Parliament, and enjoy the curious sight of pelicans perched atop lamp posts. The famous Galle Face Hotel, where many illustrious guests have stayed, is a five-minute walk away – great for lunch or a drink.

Features of the Swimming Club include a library, billiard room, gym, and tennis, squash and badminton courts. But its proudest attribute, as its name suggests, is the magnificent 33.5m swimming pool, built in 1938 by Walker & Son, the leading engineering firm of the day. I was exhausted after an overnight flight, but swimming in the silky waters in dreamy golden sunshine was both refreshing and relaxing. The pool is overlooked by a railway line, but you quickly get used to commuter trains rattling by.

The club has a friendly atmosphere and its staff are helpful. Our rooms were simply but tastefully decorated, with a sea view, and at sunset, we drank cocktails on the terrace before a lovely dinner. Breakfast brought the only incongruous note: Abba played loudly at 9am.

The setting of the Hill Club in Nuwara Eliya (also known as Little England) could not be more different. It is in the central hill country, about 6,500ft above sea level. Founded in 1876 as a 'home from home' for a group of British coffee planters, the club may be too formal for some. It is true that the leopard's and stag's heads on the walls – not to mention the python skin – take a bit of getting used to, but I loved it.

The club is reminiscent of an English country club in days gone by; even though it has every modern amenity, you feel as if you're in a Somerset Maugham novel. My room was attractive, comfortable and spacious, and looked on to gardens with beautifully tended lawns and flowerbeds splashed with colour. The four-course dinner was excellent, and afterwards we enjoyed coffee in front of a roaring fire.

The Hill Club has two dining rooms, a large reading room, a fireplace lounge, two bars, a TV room, a billiard room, smoking room and four tennis courts. Across the road is a golf club, and a short walk down a leafy country lane takes you into downtown Nuwara Eliya.

Colombo Swimming Club: www.colomboswimmingclub.org;
residency@colomboswimmingclub.org; 148 Storm Lodge, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka; +94 11 2421 645

The Hill Club: www.hillclubsrilanka.net; hillclub@sltnet.lk; 29 Grand Hotel Road, Nuwara Eliya, 002 2000, Sri Lanka; +94 52 2222 653.

COUNTRY CLUB: The Hill Club's immaculate gardens



REFRESHING: The pool at the Colombo Swimming Club



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PICTURE PERFECT:
Denham Lock on the
Grand Union Canal

Are you in the Loop?

ROSL Director-General **Roddy Porter** discovers the delights of London's 140-mile walking trail

Marianne and I discovered the Loop, a 140-mile path around London, inside of the M25, a few years ago. We could not, at first, believe that so much varied countryside existed within the boundary of London. But it is true; the London Outer Orbital Path (Loop) is a glorious secret, waiting to be explored by anyone who enjoys relatively easy walks that trace the history of the nation.

The 18 sections, each between eight and fourteen miles, take the walker through some of the loveliest countryside, interspersed with fascinating remnants of British social, industrial and military history: canals, sites of armament factories and the 1471 Battle of Barnet, and even barges from the Second World War 'Mulberry harbours'. Flora, fauna and wildlife abound and all four seasons may be enjoyed in the course of completing the circuit.

There is so much to see, no review can do justice to the delights that await. The panoramas of London at every compass point are splendid. Our favourite discoveries include the glorious hawthorn hedges in spring along the Dollis Brook; Monken Hadley Common; the deer and the ancient swamp cypress in Bushy Park; the Dickensian barrenness of the Crayford and Rainham marshes; and the bluebell woods around Bromley. This feast is interspersed by buildings of historical and architectural merit, such as Inigo Jones' Forty Hall, the Shot Tower in Crane Park, Hall Place in Bexley and one of Queen Elizabeth I's hunting lodges on Chingford Plain.

Known as the 'M25 for walkers', the Loop officially starts at Erith on the south bank of the Thames, although one can start at any section; we began at Moor Park Tube station in the northwest. Although it is well signposted throughout, I would highly recommend buying a map book; *The London Loop (Recreational Path Guides)* by David Sharp (2012), less than £10 on Amazon, is excellent. But don't take our word for it; get out there and enjoy the splendour of the Loop for yourselves. See www.walklondon.org.uk/route.asp?R=5 for more information.



Photos: © Roddy Porter

RURAL LONDON: Old iron gatepost at Havering-atte-Bower (left); and a deer in Bushy Park (above)

EDINBURGH & LONDON

What's on...

Witches and Wicked Bodies

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (Modern Two), Edinburgh

Until 3 November

Discover how witches and witchcraft have been depicted by artists over the past 500 years through the major works on display in this exhibition.

Tickets: £7; £5 concessions.

Contact: www.nationalgalleries.org



© National Galleries of Scotland

'THE FOUR WITCHES':
Engraving on paper by
Albrecht Dürer (19 x 13.10 cm)

Australia

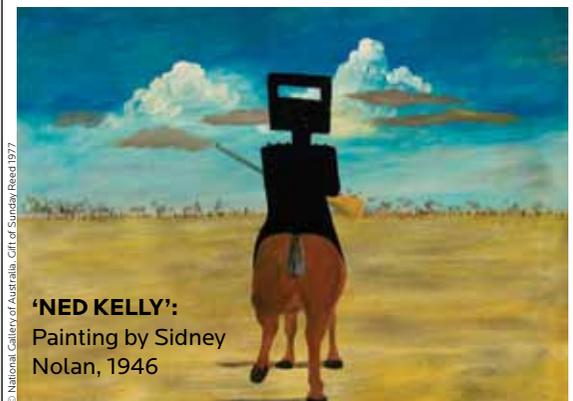
Royal Academy of Arts, London

21 September - 8 December

The first survey exhibition of Australian art in the UK for more than 50 years. Spanning more than 200 years and 200 works, 'Australia' is organised by the Royal Academy of Arts, London, in partnership with the National Gallery of Australia.

Tickets: £14; concessions available.

Contact: www.royalacademy.org.uk



© National Gallery of Australia. Gift of Sunday Reed 1977

'NED KELLY':
Painting by Sidney
Nolan, 1946

The 57th BFI London Film Festival

Various venues, London

9-20 October

This two-week showcase of the world's best new films includes screenings of documentaries, shorts, features, animation and experimental films from around the world.

Tickets: on sale from Friday 20 September.

Contact: +44 (0)20 7928 3232; www.bfi.org.uk/lff

SILVER SCREEN:

Tim Burton and Helena Bonham Carter at the Opening Night Gala of the BFI London Film Festival 2012



© Stuart Wilson



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Or email: miriam.warner@miracle-workers.co.uk

Members' benefits

Director of Marketing, **Gemma Matthews**, explains the evolution of the ROSL brand and what you can expect to see from ROSL communications from now on

It is true that a successful brand is more than just a logo. In fact it is the sum of many parts – imagery, tone of voice, vision, values, communication channels, colours and, most importantly, people. We all know which brands get these factors right, delivering a product or service we're happy to use and recommend.

One of our biggest aims in evolving the ROSL brand is to bring members consistent communications; we want everything you receive from us, or read about us – from letters and e-newsletters to the website and magazine – to look and feel similar. It is going to be quite a big job to bring all of our communications in line and you'll see the results materialise over the coming months.

Now, more than ever, the ROSL website is our window to the world. It is often the first port-of-call for members and non-members, so making sure we are represented consistently online is a priority. As such, the site is undergoing a transformation that will improve



the look and navigation. We aim to show the vibrant personality of the club through better photography, new blogs and improved content, making it a site that members and non-members are happy to visit again and again.

To help make sure the ROSL brand is consistent and that the ethos of the club is clearly conveyed, we have developed a set of guidelines. These include a bespoke ROSL colour palette, inspired by the heritage and decor of the clubhouse; you'll soon be familiar with the regal purple, antique gold and

muted blues that have been used to great effect in the colour-coded ROSL calendar, launched in this issue of *Overseas* (see pages 28-34 and the introductory guidelines for use below).

By making sure we talk with one voice, we feel that our brand will go from strength to strength, attracting new members and partnerships, which bring benefits to you, the members. Please email me at gmatthews@rosl.org.uk if you have any comments about the brand.



Offering you more

Did you know that, as a ROSL member, you receive benefits and discounts with some of our partner organisations?

ROSL is in partnership with Grange Hotels Spa and Health Club. Our members are eligible for reduced membership and treatments at the St Paul's Spa and Health Club (either daily or annually). Please visit www.ajalaspaspa.com to find out more about their facilities.

When our bedrooms are fully booked, ROSL members will be offered a choice of 10 Grange Hotels within central London, and room rates will be charged at equivalent members' rates. We want ROSL members to feel cared for inside and outside of the clubhouses, which is why, in forging these new partnerships, we can offer you more. See www.grangehotels.com for more details.

Introducing the new ROSL Calendar

We are putting a huge amount of emphasis on developing an online events calendar, which presents all of the information you need in one place, chronologically – making it even easier to plan your visits to the clubhouses. We have now brought this change to *Overseas*, as you will see over the next few pages.

ROSL events have a big remit: Arts events; Members' events; Younger Members events; Edinburgh events; Food and Drink events; and London Group and Discussion Group events. In our new-look ROSL calendar in *Overseas*, all of these are listed chronologically, and each one is colour-coded to enable you to decipher quickly what type of event it is. Under each date is the event name, where it is happening, the event information and ticket information, and on each page there is a quick booking information box, as well as the colour code key.

We hope this is clear for anyone wishing to book an event, but if you are still unsure who to contact, please turn to the end of the Events section, where we have detailed booking information (page 34).

We are fortunate to have a thriving ROSL calendar, and our aim is to present the events information to you in the clearest way possible. We hope you like the change as much as we do, and find it an easy and useful way to get information about all of the events happening in ROSL London and Scotland.

ROSL CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

**Until Sunday
20 October**

Closer to Home:
Louise Truslow

**Over-Seas House London,
Central Lounge, daily 10am-6pm**

Watercolours and kiln-formed glass panels by ROSL Thailand Visual Arts Consultant, Louise Truslow. In this second exhibition at ROSL, Louise has focused on a number of locations and subjects that are close to her heart. She takes us on a tour around the UK, as well as to several European destinations. The subjects are mostly places she has visited many times, interspersed with a few she has been to only once. *Free.*

**Wednesday 4
September**

Friends of ROSL ARTS
Champagne Garden Party



Over-Seas House London, 6pm

It's not too late to become a member of ROSL ARTS in 2013 and join like-minded arts enthusiasts for a champagne reception in the clubhouse garden, followed by a delightful hour-long concert given by ROSL prizewinners in Princess Alexandra Hall. Commonwealth wines and sweet pastries are served afterwards.

Joining the Friends costs just £30 for ROSL members or £35 for non-members. In addition to the annual Friends of ROSL ARTS Champagne Garden Parties, benefits include discounted

tickets to all ROSL ARTS events, invitations to private views of exhibitions and regular mailings.

To become a Friend of ROSL ARTS, please email culture@rosl.org.uk or call +44 (0)20 7408 0214 ext 219. *Free. Friends of ROSL ARTS only.*

**Wednesday 4
September**

Coach visit to Hever Castle
and Gardens, Kent



**Over-Seas House London,
9.45am-6pm**

A London Group outside visit to explore the magnificent Hever Castle and Gardens. This 13th-century castle was the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, and has a double moat and drawbridge, splendid panelled rooms and an important collection of Tudor portraits. Audio guides are provided in the castle. Lunch and tea are provided but not included in the price.

Tickets: £46; LG members £44.

**Thursday 5
September**

First Thursdays

**Over-Seas House London,
from 6pm**

Monthly Younger Members drinks night in the ROSL bar.

Tuesday 10 September

Technical Tuesdays:
Discover your digital camera

**Over-Seas House London,
11am-4.30pm**

Professional photographer Roy Matthews leads this day

workshop in digital photography, which teaches participants how to use their digital camera (phones and iPads also welcome), and introduces basic photography skills, such as composition and exposure.

The workshop includes a practical shooting session in Green Park and the local area in the morning, followed by a group 'crit' (or discussion) of pictures taken on the day, as well as further tutoring on displaying, editing and printing digital photographs. The workshop is suitable for both absolute beginners and those with basic digital photography knowledge, and includes coffee and tea.

Tickets £40. ROSL members only.

**Thursday 12
September**

Inter-Club Crawl

The most infamous, ingenious and – most likely – inebriated Younger Members event of them all: the Inter-Club Crawl! The main meal will be hosted at the Farmers Club, with other stops at the Savile, Landsdowne, Carlton and Savage.

Tuesday 17 September

Technical Tuesdays: Using
the web confidently & safely

Over-Seas House London,

1.30pm and 3.30pm

Do you want to find out how to surf, browse and Google? ROSL is delighted to participate in national IT Tea and Biscuits Week for internet beginners and intermediates. This Technical Tuesday will host two classes, in collaboration with Age UK K&C, addressing fundamental internet skills. Participants will learn basic internet usage and gain answers to their questions and security concerns, helped along by plenty of tea and biscuits.

Free. ROSL members only.

**Thursday 19
September**

Prospects for South Sudan

**Over-Seas House London,
6-7pm**

Mike Main, author, explorer, raconteur, business executive and entrepreneur, among many other attributes, will speak to the London Group about his experiences in South Sudan.

Free. LG members and overnight guests at Over-Seas House only.

Saturday 21 September

ROSL Younger Members
clay shoot

Bisley Shooting Ground, 10.30am

Following the success of our clay shoot last year, ROSL YMs are invited to venture out again, this time to the outstanding natural beauty of Bisley shooting ground. Both novices and experienced shots are welcome: beginners will benefit from expert tuition on a range of clays, while experienced shots will tackle a series of challenging stands. Gun hire and safety equipment are included, as are a tantalising pre-shoot breakfast and a tasty post-shoot lunch in the renowned Old Sergeants' Mess Shooting Club. *Tickets £70.*

Friday 27 September

Inter-Club Reverse Dinner

Savile Club, London

The Savile's reverse dinner, held in the club's beautiful ballroom, is a tried and tested formula, and well worth attending.

OCTOBER

**Until Sunday
20 October**

Closer to Home:
Louise Truslow



**Over-Seas House London,
daily 10am-6pm**

For details, see September listing.



Wednesday 2 October

Edinburgh Arts Lunch

Over-Seas House Edinburgh, 12 for 12.30pm

Pupils from St Mary's Music School return for their annual lunchtime concert, with a two-course lunch, glass of wine and coffee.

Tickets £19; non-members £21.

Thursday 3 October - Sunday 20 October

ROSL Annual Scholars' Exhibition 2013

gallery@oxo, daily 11am-6pm

ROSL ARTS returns to gallery@oxo in the landmark Oxo Tower, situated between the National Theatre and Tate Modern on London's Southbank. This year's exhibition will showcase the work of Leilah Babirye (Uganda), Jordy Hamilton (Canada), Meor Saifullah Lulaed (Malaysia), April Phillips (Australia) and Rob Tucker (New Zealand), who recently undertook ROSL ARTS-funded residencies at the Patrick Allan Fraser Foundation at Hospitalfield in Arbroath, Scotland.

Members and guests are invited to meet the artists over wine and cheese at the **Private View on Wednesday 2 October**, 6-8pm, at Oxo Tower Wharf, Bargehouse Street, London SE1 9PH. Email gharwoodsmith@rosl.org.uk to attend.
Free.

ON TARGET:

Younger Members pause for a photo at the 2012 Clay Shoot. This popular event returns to the calendar in September

Thursday 3 October

First Thursdays

Over-Seas House London, from 6pm

Monthly Younger Members drinks night in the ROSL bar.

Saturday 5 October

Edinburgh Branch coffee morning

Over-Seas House Edinburgh, 10.30am

Meet other members over coffee at the clubhouse at 100 Princes Street. Speaker tba.

Tickets £2.50.

Monday 7 October

The Monday Platform



Jayson Gillham piano and Aurora Percussion Duo Wigmore Hall, 7.30pm

Jayson Gillham, winner of the 2012 ROSL Annual Music Competition Gold medal, joins illustrious ROSL alumni, including pianists Melvyn Tan, Barry Douglas, Paul Lewis and fellow Australians Geoffrey Parsons and Piers Lane, to perform works by Bach, Chopin,

Debussy, Ligeti and Piazzolla. The concert will also showcase the dynamic Aurora Percussion Duo, winners of the 2012 ROSL Ensemble Prize.

Tickets £15 available from www.wigmore-hall.org.uk; Friends of ROSL ARTS £12, available ONLY from ROSL ARTS.

KEY

- ROSL ARTS
- ROSL Scotland
- Members' events
- Younger Members
- London Group & Discussion Group

EVENT BOOKINGS & CONTACT DETAILS

For further details, see page 34

■ ROSL ARTS

+44 (0)20 7408 0214 ext 219; culture@rosl.org.uk

■ ROSL Scotland

+44 (0)131 225 1501; www.rosl-edinburgh.org.uk

■ Members' events

Book online at www.rosl.org.uk
Contact: membersevents@rosl.org.uk

■ Younger Members

Book online at www.rosl.org.uk
Contact: membersevents@rosl.org.uk

■ London Group

Clive Carpenter; +44 (0)7798 824193; clivedavidcarpenter@compuserve.com. For outside trips contact Doreen Regan c/o Overseas House London

■ Discussion Group

John Edwards; +44 (0)1732 883556; johncoatesedward@aol.com

Technical Tuesdays

ROSL is pleased to present a series of members' events in September and October called Technical Tuesdays. With the advent of an all-singing, all-dancing new ROSL website, and an increasing number of club activities and benefits publicised and documented online, it is our aim to help members who are not completely confident with computers or would like to brush up on their digital skills.

ROSL is all about bringing people together, and we don't want any of our members to miss out on being part of our online community. So come and join us at one or more of our Technical Tuesdays events. They will cover a wealth of topics, cater to all skills levels, and run alongside national ITea and Biscuits Week and the Europe-wide Get Online Week, in collaboration with Age UK Kensington and Chelsea.





Tuesday 8 October

Technical Tuesdays:
How to use email

Over-Seas House London, 11.30am

Email enables you to send a message to the other side of the world in a matter of seconds, and the cost is much less than the price of a postage stamp, making it an ideal way to keep in touch with family and friends.

This Technical Tuesday session, in collaboration with Age UK K&C, will show members how to set up an email account and send an email, explain email addresses and password management, and advise on email security and spam. The class caters to a wide range of abilities and individual members' questions.

Free. ROSL members only.

Friday 11 October - Sunday 19 January

Traces (Influences from W G Sebald)

Over-Seas House Edinburgh, daily 9am-6pm

Exhibition of paintings and drawings by Leigh Chorlton,

VISUAL INFLUENCES:

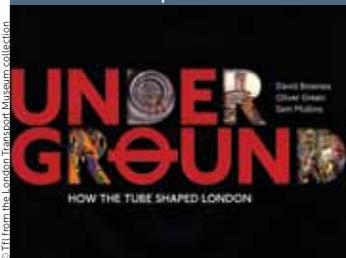
Tim Le Breuilly's 'Dunmore Pineapple', 'Traces' exhibition

Tim Le Breuilly and Robin Wu exploring the writings of W G Sebald and his influences on the practice of fine artists today, in association with Whitespace.

Email gharwoodsmith@rosl.org.uk to attend the **Private View on Thursday 10 October, 6-8pm.** Free.

Monday 14 October

Underground: How the Tube shaped London



Over-Seas House London, 7-8.30pm

Discussion Group talk with Sam Mullins, Director of the London Transport Museum since 1994. Free.

Tuesday 15 October

Technical Tuesdays: The ROSL website masterclass

Over-Seas House London, 11.30am

The new ROSL website is coming, and we are excited. Learn about our online facilities to make room, restaurant and event bookings, renew membership, request reciprocal cards, and view club activities. The ROSL website masterclass will make sure that you understand what our website offers, and teach you how to use it effectively. Free. ROSL members only.

Tuesday 15 October

The BBC's new multimedia TV and radio studios



BBC Broadcasting House, 3.15-5pm

The original Broadcasting House was the first ever purpose-built broadcasting centre in the UK. Top architects, designers and artists have been involved in shaping the new Broadcasting House. The site has taken a decade to complete and became fully operational in April 2013.

No two tours are the same, but it is likely that guests on this London Group outside visit will see into studios broadcasting programmes to the nation.

Limited number of places available, so book now. Tickets £17; LG members £15.

Wednesday 16 October

Anne Strathie's 'Birdie Bowers' with Felicity Aston

Princess Alexandra Hall, Over-Seas House London, 7pm

Anne Strathie talks about *Birdie Bowers*, her recently published biography of Henry Bowers, one of four men who reached the South Pole with Captain Scott. (See page 20 for our review.) She is joined by Felicity Aston, the first woman to ski across Antarctica alone, in conversation about Antarctic exploration past and present. Includes wine, served after the event. Tickets £7; Friends of ROSL ARTS £5.

Thursday 17 October

Elegant Mayfair tour



Over-Seas House London, 11.30am

Our wonderful blue badge guides, Diane and Val, are back – this time to take us on an exploration of ROSL's home ground. Explore the village-like streets of Shepherd Market, hear about the area's distinguished residents (Fanny Burney, Florence Nightingale, Somerset Maugham, Beau Brummel), see London's most haunted house, and discover a small part of America in Central London. Tickets £15. For ROSL members and guests.

ALONE IN ANTARCTICA:

Felicity Aston will join author Anne Strathie in October, to talk about her inspiring trip



Exclusive tour of Sri Lanka

Experience Travel Group is offering ROSL members a unique 16-day Sri Lankan tour in March 2014. With CHOGM 2013 being held in Sri Lanka a few months earlier and a four-article Focus on the country in this issue (pages 5-11), the trip is designed with ROSL members in mind. This tour for up to 12 people will provide the chance to experience the rich heritage and traditions that make Sri Lanka such an alluring destination.

A private guide and driver will accompany members as they travel to locations such as the ancient cities of Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura, the beautiful Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens, and Galle Fort – a Unesco World Heritage Site. This bespoke trip is priced at around £3,500 per person, including flights.

The team from Experience Travel Group will be hosting an afternoon tea at Over-Seas House London in October for members who would like to find out more about their ethos and the trip.

Email gmatthews@rosl.org.uk to register your interest.

**Experience
Travel Group**



© Experience Travel Group

Thursday 17 October

The scenery of Sri Lanka

Over-Seas House London, 6-7pm

Herman Gunaratne, one of Sri Lanka's leading tea growers, will talk to London Group members about his 45 years of experience on the tea plantations in his home country. His estate, which includes a tea museum, tours and tasting sessions, produces an exclusive 'virgin white tea' that has attracted the attention of tea enthusiasts all over the world. (See page 6 for his fascinating article about a life-time with tea.)
Free. LG members and overnight guests at Over-Seas House only.

Tuesday 22 October

Technical Tuesdays: Keep up with friends and family



Over-Seas House London, 11.30am

Skype, Facebook and blogs such as Travelpod are valuable online tools that enable you to connect to loved ones abroad as well as providing exciting and fun new ways to communicate. This session, in association with Age

UK K&C, will answer basic social media questions, and give guidance and security advice on setting up and using accounts with Facebook and Skype. We'll show you what a webcam is, how to 'like' something on Facebook, and how to make a free phone call across the globe using Skype.

Free. ROSL members only.

Tuesday 22 October

Morgan Pearse baritone and Chad Vinden piano



Princess Alexandra Hall, Over-Seas House London, 7pm

A recital of popular songs and arias by 2013 ROSL Annual Music Competition Gold Medallist Morgan Pearse (baritone), with pianist Chad Vinden. Includes a glass of Australian wine, served on arrival, and wine and canapés after the concert. This ROSL ARTS event is held in association with the Tait Memorial Trust, which supports outstanding Australian musicians.
Tickets £25; Friends of ROSL ARTS and Tait Memorial Trust £20.

Friday 25 October

Inter-Club curry night

With the Oriental Club eager to show off its fantastic new chef, this YM event will showcase sizzling style and enviable Epicureanism.

Wednesday 30 October

Know your club cellar: ROSL claret tasting



Over-Seas House London, 6.30pm

ROSL boasts a lovingly collected wine cellar and, after a glass of bubbly, Martin Everett, Master of Wine and our resident wine expert, will help us to explore five of our fantastic clarets. Reflecting on the recent ROSL Bordeaux Wine Tour, the event is matched by a post-tasting offer in the Restaurant.
Tickets £20. For ROSL members and guests.

Wednesday 30 October

'Britten on the Couch' with Piers Burton-Page

Princess Alexandra Hall, Over-Seas House London, 7pm
Two actors, two singers and a piano: a sequence of Britten

songs, interspersed with a dialogue about Britten's childhood, his fears and phobias – sex and death included – and his friends and enemies. The programme is devised and performed by Piers Burton-Page and friends, and presented in association with Woodhouse Music. Includes glass of wine, served on arrival, and wine and canapés after the concert.

Tickets £25; Friends of ROSL ARTS and Woodhouse Music £20.

Thursday 31 October

Inter-Club
Halloween dinner

Not for the faint-hearted! City University is taking on Halloween Inter-Club style, so dress up in your most outlandish outfits and enjoy this fearsome three-course dinner on the most goulish night of the year.

KEY

- ROSL ARTS
- ROSL Scotland
- Members' events
- Younger Members
- London Group & Discussion Group

EVENT BOOKINGS & CONTACT DETAILS

For further details, see page 34

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- Discussion Group
John Edwards;
+44 (0)1732 883556;
johncoatesedward@aol.com

EVENTS

NOVEMBER

Until 19 January

Traces (Influences from W G Sebald)

Over-Seas House Edinburgh, daily 9am-6pm

For details, see October listing.

Saturday 2 November

Edinburgh Branch coffee morning

Over-Seas House Edinburgh, 10.30am

Norman Bonney speaks on 'The Extraordinary History of the Cenotaph and the Edinburgh Stone of Remembrance'.

Tickets £2.50.

Sunday 3 November

The Commonwealth Resounds! preview concert



Princess Alexandra Hall, Over-Seas House London, 3pm

Pupils of the Purcell School and Chetham's School of Music in Manchester present music they will be performing later in the month as part of a cultural festival surrounding CHOGM 2013 in Colombo. The concert will be introduced by The

Commonwealth Resounds! Founder and Director Alison Cox OBE. Includes tea and scones, served afterwards.

For more information about the ambitious programme of concerts for CHOGM, organised by The Commonwealth Resounds! in association with ROSL ARTS and the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka, see Alison Cox's article on page 11. Tickets £15; Friends of ROSL ARTS £12.

Monday 4 November

Gillian Keith soprano and Tom Randle tenor



Princess Alexandra Hall, Over-Seas House London, 7pm

Canadian soprano Gillian Keith (ROSL and Kathleen Ferrier past prizewinner) and American tenor Tom Randle, with pianist John Reid, will perform a seductive mix of songs and duets by Rossini, Schumann, Brahms, Debussy, De Falla and settings of Pablo Neruda by Tom Randle. Includes sparkling wine and canapés, served afterwards. The programme will then travel to the Opéra de

Lille in Paris. In aid of ROSL Canadian Music Scholarships. Tickets £25; Friends of ROSL ARTS £20.

Thursday 7 November

First Thursdays

Over-Seas House London, from 6pm

Monthly Younger Members drinks night in the ROSL bar.

Monday 11 November

Light-hearted aspects of a legal career

Over-Seas House London, 7-8.30pm

Discussion Group talk with His Honour Judge David Pitman. Free.

Tuesday 12 November

Chairman's Lunch

Over-Seas House London, midday

ROSL Chairman Sir Anthony Figgis will host the November Chairman's Lunch, with Guest of Honour and speaker Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. The event includes reception drinks and a three-course lunch.

Tickets: £58. For ROSL members and guests.

Tuesday 12 November

Primavera Shima piano



Over-Seas House Edinburgh, 6.30pm

Australian pianist Primavera Shima, major prizewinner in the 2013 ROSL Annual Music Competition, performs an hour-long programme of works by Beethoven and Clementi, and Rachmaninov's *Corelli Variations*. Includes wine and canapés, served afterwards.

Tickets £12; £10 Friends of ROSL ARTS.



Wednesday 13 November

Edinburgh Arts Lunch: RL Stevenson Day

Over-Seas House Edinburgh, 12 for 12.30pm

Professor Rory Watson, Co-Editor of *The Journal of Stevenson Studies*, will give a talk entitled 'Seeking Mr Hyde', on the birthday of Robert Louis Stevenson, at this two-course lunch, with a glass of wine and coffee.

Tickets £21; ROSL members £19.

Sunday 17 November

Tempest flute trio



Princess Alexandra Hall, Over-Seas House London, 6pm

The immaculately presented trio from the Royal Northern College of Music reprise their recent prizewinning performances in the ROSL Annual Music Competition Final (see page 16 for a full report). This hour-long programme ranges from Vivaldi to Duke Ellington. Presented in association with Ursula Jones and SRF Kulturclub. Includes a glass of sparkling wine, served afterwards. Tickets £20; Friends of ROSL ARTS £15.

The portrait in Vienna 1900: an arts talk

Wednesday 4 December, Princess Alexandra Hall, 6.30-8pm

James Malpas, Director of Short Courses at

Christie's Education, sets the scene for the National Gallery's exhibition 'Facing the Modern: The portrait in Vienna 1900'. Striking works by Gustav Klimt (pictured), Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka star in this major exhibition examining the central role of portraiture in Viennese painting.

Traditions of 19th-century art were both sustained and broken apart by the innovations of avant-garde artists around 1900. This ROSL ARTS event is presented in association with the ArtFund. A wine reception will follow. Tickets £15. Includes wine and nibbles, served afterwards.



Portrait of Hermine Callia - Gustav Klimt, 1904 © The National Gallery, London

**PAINTING KENYA:**

Work by MASK student Naftary Irungu Maina, 20, on display at Over-Seas House in December

Wednesday 20 November

Visit to the William Morris Gallery



William Morris Gallery, London, 11.30am

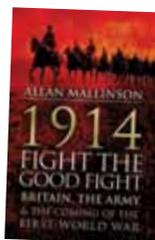
Following a £1.6m refurbishment, this Walthamstow gallery won the prestigious 2013 ArtFund Museum of the Year, and beat world-famous museums to an award for the UK's best permanent exhibition. This visit includes a 50-minute tour by the curator, covering William Morris's personal life, as well as his popular Arts and Crafts designs. (See the March-May issue, page 25, for our review of the museum). *Tickets £12.50. For ROSL members and guests.*

Wednesday 20 November

1914: Fight the Good Fight with Allan Mallinson
Princess Alexandra Hall,

Over-Seas House London, 7pm
Allan Mallinson is one of Britain's foremost historians and defence

commentators. In his major new history, subtitled 'Britain, the Army & the coming of the First World War', he tackles the origins – and first weeks – of what would become known as the 'war to end all wars'. Includes wine, served afterwards. *Tickets £7; Friends of ROSL ARTS £5.*

**Thursday 21 November**

The Royal Court, 1660-1714



Over-Seas House London, 6-7pm

A talk for London Group members by Siobhan Clarke, Guide Lecturer at Historic Royal Palaces, who specialises in 16th-century dress and delivers tours of Hampton Court Palace and the Banqueting House at Whitehall Palace. *Free. LG members and overnight guests at Over-Seas House only.*

Friday 22 November

Inter-Club Scottish ceilidh

The Caledonian Club warms up November with a dram and

a wee jig. Don your kilt and take your lassie, and let the sound of bagpipes brighten the night.

Tuesday 26 November

Adrian Brendel cello and Imogen Cooper piano



Princess Alexandra Hall, Over-Seas House London, 7pm

World-renowned musicians Adrian Brendel and Imogen Cooper will perform music for cello and piano by Bach, Schubert, Liszt and Rachmaninov. In association with the Medical Music Society of London.

Tickets for concert with interval glass of wine £28; Friends of ROSL ARTS £22. Concert with interval glass of wine and post-concert two-course buffet with wine and tea/coffee £56; Friends of ROSL ARTS £48.

Saturday 30 November

St Andrew's Day dinner



Over-Seas House Edinburgh, 7 for 7.30pm

Three-course dinner to celebrate St Andrew's Day, with a reception drink, wine and tea or coffee. Speaker tba. *Tickets £40; ROSL members £35.*

DECEMBER**Until 19 January**

Traces (Influences from W G Sebald)

Over-Seas House Edinburgh, daily 9am-6pm

For details, see October listing.

Wednesday 4 December - Friday 24 January

MASK Art Prize (Mobile Art School in Kenya)

Over-Seas House London, daily 10am-6pm

The MASK Art Prize is an annual competition for young artists in Kenya. MASK (Mobile Art School in Kenya) was established to engage young people in Africa and develop creative education in the arts.

The prize introduces young Kenyan artists to new international audiences, with shortlisted artworks exhibited at the Nairobi National Museum and the Saatchi Gallery in London before arriving at ROSL in December. Email gharwoodsmith@rosl.org.uk to attend the **Private View for Friends of ROSL ARTS** on Tuesday 3 December, 6-8pm. *Admission free.*

KEY

- ROSL ARTS
- ROSL Scotland
- Members' events
- Younger Members
- London Group & Discussion Group

EVENT BOOKINGS & CONTACT DETAILS

For further details, see page 34

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■ Discussion Group

John Edwards;
+44 (0)1732 883556;
johncoatesedward@aol.com



FESTIVE FUN:
There will be mince pies galore, as Younger Members gear up for two fantastic Christmas events

Thursday 5 December

First Thursdays & ROSL mulled wine and mince pies

Over-Seas House London, from 6pm

It's time for the traditional ROSL Younger Members Christmas gathering, with mulled wine and mince pies on the first Thursday of the month. Come to the bar from 6pm for drinks and a festive meal. Expect trees, tinsel and turkey.

Sunday 8 December

Festival of Christmas carols and readings

St James's, Piccadilly, 3.30pm

The annual ROSL Christmas service at St James's Church, Piccadilly, followed by a delicious festive tea and a visit from Father Christmas himself. *Tickets £20. For ROSL members and guests.*

Monday 9 December

Foreign Policy under the Iron Lady

Over-Seas House London, 7-8.30pm

A Discussion Group talk by Lord Renwick of Clifton, Ambassador to Washington 1991-1995, whose recently published book, *A Journey with Margaret Thatcher: Foreign Policy under the Iron Lady*, will be on sale. *Free.*



Friday 13 December

Younger Members Inter-Club Christmas Ball

The Inter-Club Christmas Ball will come around before you know it and this year it's taking place in the glamorous Hurlingham Club.

Christmas and New Year at Over-Seas House

Spend Christmas and New Year's Eve with ROSL, and enjoy the company of other members and the fantastic food in our Restaurant.

Sit back and relax this **Christmas Day** with a sparkling drinks reception at midday, followed by a festive four-course meal and half a bottle of wine. The Queen's speech will be followed by a visit from Santa, who will have a gift for everyone.

Celebrate the **New Year** in style with a candle-lit dinner in the ROSL Restaurant. The night will start with canapés

and a delicious four-course meal, followed by live music. Sip a glass of champagne while watching the countdown and coverage of the fireworks on a big screen.

For both events, book a space on one of our shared members' tables, or reserve a private table for your family and friends.

Christmas Day lunch £84pp; New Year's Eve candle-lit dinner £62.50pp. For bookings contact Jessica Taube: jessica.taube@graysonsrestaurants.com; +44 (0)20 7629 0406.

EVENT BOOKINGS & CONTACT DETAILS

■ ROSL ARTS

For bookings contact ROSL ARTS. *Contact: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 ext 219; email culture@rosl.org.uk*

■ ROSL Scotland

For booking contact Over-Seas House Edinburgh. *Contact +44 (0)131 225 1501; reception@rosl-edinburgh.org*

■ Members' events

Book online at www.rosl.org.uk/events
Booking confirmations will be sent within 14 days of payment. If you have trouble booking online, contact Sara Brouwer for guidance, or to reserve a ticket for popular events. To pay by cheque, please send separate cheques (sterling) for each event, payable to ROSL, to Marketing Department (Members' Events), Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR. *Contact: Sara Brouwer, membersevents@rosl.org.uk; +44 (0)20 7016 6906.*

■ Younger Members

For members aged 35 and under. Book online at www.rosl.org.uk/events
Inter-Club events must be booked independently; visit www.inter-club.co.uk for details. For information about the ROSL YM programme contact Sara Brouwer. *Contact: Sara Brouwer, membersevents@rosl.org.uk; or Ross Lima, ross.lima@gmail.com*

■ London Group

Meetings are held once a month at Over-Seas House London on Thursday evenings. Meetings and outside visits are open to London Group members and their occasional guests, and to ROSL members staying at Over-Seas House London. To become a member, please request an application form.

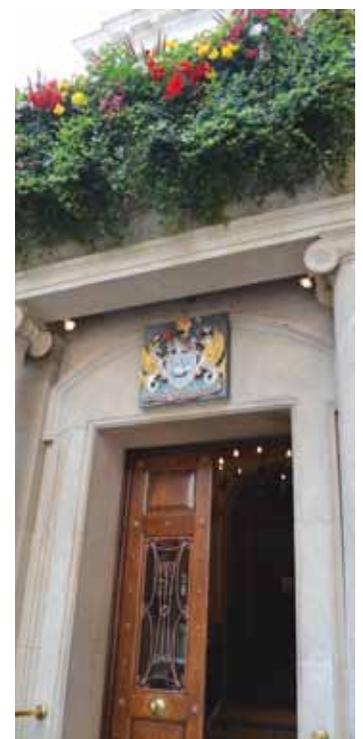
Tickets for outside visits are sent out 10 days in advance;

amendments and cancellations must be made at least two weeks before the event. To book, send a cheque payable to 'London Group, Royal Over-Seas League', and a stamped addressed envelope, to Doreen Regan c/o Over-Seas House London. *Contact: Clive Carpenter, +44 (0)7798 824193; clivedavidcarpenter@compuserve.com*
Outside visits contact: Doreen Regan, London Group, c/o Porters' Desk, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR

■ Discussion Group

Meetings are held at Over-Seas House London on Monday evenings. There is no charge, no need to book and all ROSL members and guests are welcome. *Contact: John Edwards, +44 (0)1732 883556; johncoatedward@aol.com*

Please visit rosl.org.uk/events for more information on the full programme of events.



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Prices are per person and include flights (Eurostar for Paris), return transfers or car hire, accommodation with breakfast, Kirker Guide Notes to restaurants, museums and sightseeing and the services of the Kirker Concierge.

VENICE

Palazzo Sant'Angelo **** Deluxe

The Sant'Angelo, with its excellent location between the Rialto and Accademia Bridges, is housed in a grand Venetian palazzo. The building has been lovingly transformed into a charming boutique hotel with just 28 bedrooms, some of which overlook the Grand Canal. All the rooms are decorated in a rich, traditional Venetian style and have luxurious Italian Carrara marble bathrooms with hydromassage baths.

4 nights for the price of 3 for Sunday to Thursday stays in Sep & Oct - price from £859, saving £138

Includes Doge's Palace, Accademia or Guggenheim tickets and water taxi transfers.

MDINA - MALTA

Xara Palace **** Deluxe

Located in the ancient capital city of Mdina just 30 minutes' drive from Malta's airport the 17th Century Xara Palace has been meticulously restored. A member of Relais & Châteaux, it has a wonderfully atmospheric location just a few metres from the main entrance of the walled city. There are just 17 bedrooms furnished with original antiques. Some of the suites have their own private terraces with outdoor jacuzzis that have outstanding panoramic views over the city and the countryside.

3 night price from £835 per person



PARIS

Westminster **** Deluxe

With a wonderful location on the prestigious shopping street Rue de la Paix, close to the Place Vendôme, this is one of the oldest hotels in Paris. Its 102 rooms are all furnished in the Louis XV style. Original furniture, paintings and antiques adorn the bedrooms, elegant lounge and Michelin-star restaurant.

3 nights for the price of 2 for Friday arrivals all year - price from £660, saving £178



Includes 48 hr Paris museum pass, Seine river cruise & metro tickets

NAPLES

Enjoy a three night break in the ancient city of Naples including tickets to the Archaeological Museum where the majority of the unique artefacts recovered from Pompeii are now preserved. Naples itself is a wonderful example of an authentic Italian city, with its blend of elegant monuments, lively markets and some excellent cuisine.

Grand Hotel Parkers **** Superior

Located at the beginning of the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, 20 minutes walk from the Royal Palace and Piazza Plebiscito this elegant hotel offers the most spectacular views over the city and the Gulf of Naples, with the looming figure of Vesuvius in the background. The property has been welcoming discerning visitors to Naples since 1872 and is beautifully decorated throughout in Liberty style. There is a rooftop restaurant, bar and a luxurious spa. The owners also have a beautiful vineyard in the heart of the Campania countryside where wine-tasting can be arranged.

3 nights for the price of 2 - price from £659 per person, saving £92



Includes entrance tickets to the Museo Archeologico Nazionale

CHRISTMAS IN VIENNA

A FIVE NIGHT ESCORTED HOLIDAY | 23 DECEMBER 2013

Including two performances at the Vienna State Opera:
The Nutcracker with music by Tchaikovsky and choreography by Rudolf Nureyev and La Cenerentola by Rossini.

Christmas is a magical time in Vienna when the city presents itself at its very best. We stay at one of Kirker's favourite hotels: the centrally-located 4* K & K Palais Hotel on Rudolfsplatz. Our programme includes two wonderful performances at the Staatsoper. Sightseeing will include a panoramic tour around the famous Ring, lined by all the great buildings of State; the Imperial apartments at the Hofburg; the impressive and moving Kaisergruft where all the Hapsburgs are buried;



and a walking tour of the historic area including St Stephen's Cathedral and the Graben. We include four meals at carefully selected restaurants including Christmas Lunch at the Steigenberger Hotel.

Price from £1,970 for five nights including flights, accommodation with breakfast, Christmas Day lunch and three dinners, one opera, one ballet, a full programme of sightseeing & the services of the Kirker Tour Lecturer.

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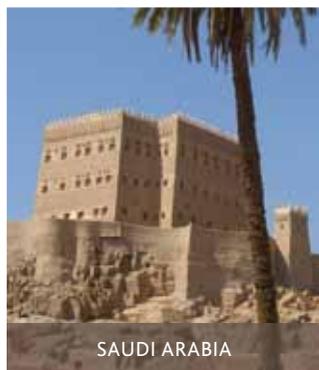
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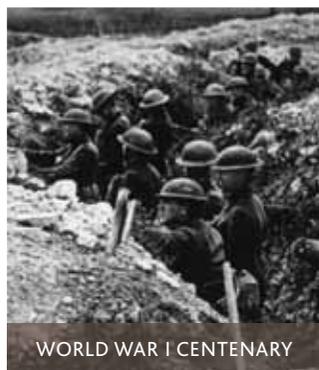
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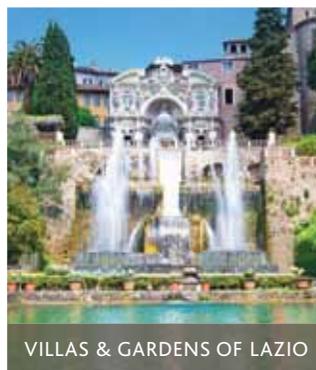
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