

OVERSEAS

THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL
250 years of American independence



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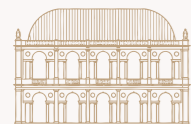
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The Royal Over-Seas League is dedicated to promoting international friendship in the Commonwealth and beyond. A not-for-profit private members' organisation, we've been bringing like-minded people together since 1910.

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Chairman

Helen Prince

Deputy Chairman

Mark Rose OBE

Over-Seas House, Park Place,
St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR

+44 (0)20 7408 0214

Fax +44 (0)20 7499 6738

info@rosl.org.uk

www.rosl.org.uk

Director General

Dr Annette Prandzioch DL

+44 (0)20 7408 0214

Dgoffice@rosl.org.uk

Useful Contacts

Dining: dining@rosl.org.uk

Accommodation: reservations@rosl.org.uk

Membership: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x214

membership@rosl.org.uk

OVERSEAS EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor

Laura Winter: editor@rosl.org.uk

+44 (0)20 7408 0214

Design

zed creative

www.zedcreative.co.uk

Advertising

charlotte@parkwalkmedia.com

renata@parkwalkmedia.com

Print

ls-printing.com

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This year marks a notable milestone in the history of the United States: the semiquincentennial, celebrating 250 years since Independence Day



Such an anniversary invites reflection not only within the nation itself, but also across the wider international community on the ideals, culture and creative energy that have come to define the United States over two and a half centuries. For ROSL, this moment resonates strongly. We are proud to count a large number of members from the United States, whose perspectives and participation continue to enrich our global network, and reinforce our shared commitment to international friendship.

A particular highlight of this issue of *Overseas* is our lead article by eminent royal biographer Robert Hardman, which offers a timely and engaging perspective on the enduring ties between the US and the UK – ties that continue to evolve while remaining rooted in a shared history.

It was wonderful to see so many members at the Annual Music Competition Gold Medal Final at Wigmore Hall in May. Bringing together four exceptional female performers, each victorious in their respective section finals earlier this spring, the final represented the very highest standard of emerging musical talent. Read all about our four spectacular finalists, as well as our ensemble and overseas winners, in this issue.

A lively programme of events continues at the Clubhouse throughout the season, including wine tastings, music in the garden, and delicious themed menus. We look forward to welcoming you soon.

Dr Annette Prandzioch DL
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

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The National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, is home to Thomas Cole's four-part series *The Voyage of Life*

From the EDITOR

Summer is my favourite season – the longer evenings and warmer, sunnier days seem to lift everyone's spirits, allowing us to get outside, enjoy nature, socialise a little more, and dust off the cobwebs that may have formed in the darker, colder months. Summer feels like a celebratory season too – summer holidays, school sports days, weddings, graduations, or just the spontaneous barbecues in the garden that bring friends together, make this the season to celebrate our relationships and shared histories, and make new memories. This summer brings with it a significant celebration for Americans, as the US marks 250 years since the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. In this issue, we honour that milestone with a fascinating lead article from royal biographer Robert Hardman, in which he explores the relationship between past US presidents and the British royal family. I also explore the special link between the two nations on a historic walk around London, visiting sites and monuments that reflect the ties that have shaped their shared history – perhaps you will also be inspired to visit some of these locations during your next stay at the Clubhouse.

Summer also brings with it the reopening of our Clubhouse Garden, and we hope to see many of our members making the most of the sunshine while enjoying our delicious new garden menu or attending one of our summer events. Shakespeare returns to ROSL in July, with outdoor theatre company Illyria turning the garden into our very own Forest of Arden with their staging of *As You Like It* – read all about this transformative play on pages 28–31. I also take a closer look at what's growing in the Clubhouse Garden this summer, and we suggest some delicious light wines to enjoy in this beautiful outdoor space.

Wishing all our members a wonderful season, wherever you are in the world.

Laura Winter
editor@rosl.org.uk

A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

The rupture that created the United States ultimately forged one of the most enduring alliances in modern history. Robert Hardman, author of *Elizabeth II: In Private. In Public. The Inside Story*, explores how personal ties at the highest level helped shape a 'special relationship' that transcends politics

'America is lost!' wrote George III in one of the most celebrated documents in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle. 'Must we fall beneath the blow?' The loss of his North American colonies 250 years ago this summer is sometimes cited as a trigger for his first bout of 'madness', though his initial nervous breakdown would not actually occur until more than a decade after the founding fathers of the USA signed the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776.

The final defeat would not occur until the Battle of Yorktown six years later. Nonetheless, the whole business distressed George so profoundly that he even contemplated abdication.

If only he had been able to see how things would pan out thereafter. Despite a few hiccups along the way – not least the torching of the White House by the British in 1814 (in retaliation for the US burning of what is now Toronto) – America's break with the 'tyrant King' would produce one of the most consequential alliances in history, liberating much of the world from genuine tyranny along the way.

It was Winston Churchill who called this 'the special relationship'. It is a phrase that goes in and out of fashion. During the seventies and eighties, it was actively discouraged by British diplomats, who feared that it looked boastful and would upset other allies. Come the 21st century, both

Presidents Obama and Trump proclaimed it enthusiastically (even if the latter would go on to test it to the limits).

Commentators and historians continue to debate its 'special' qualities in terms of the relationship between the White House and Downing Street. There have been many moments, from the Suez crisis of 1956 to the Vietnam War, the 1983 US invasion of Grenada and the 2026 US offensive against Iran, when the rapport between the politicians on either side of the Atlantic has been sorely tested.

However, I would argue that the truly 'special' relationship is the one that operates in parallel between the White House and Buckingham Palace. For that is the one ●



that transcends the hardball of politics and celebrates the cultural, historical, sentimental and personal bonds between two old friends; ties rooted in a shared language, shared ideals and shared sacrifice. And they have never been stronger than in the hands of the last three generations to occupy the throne.

Prior to that, George V was the first British monarch to welcome a US president, Woodrow Wilson, to Britain, in the aftermath of the First World War. It was a stiff encounter. George V's eldest son, Edward VIII, would sacrifice his own throne in order to marry an American divorcee.

It was his replacement and younger brother, George VI, who would lay the foundations of today's 'special relationship'. His state visit to the USA in 1939, the first by a reigning monarch, was critical. For it happened just weeks before the start of the Second World War. Though America would remain neutral for another two years, the visit ensured a strong personal connection between the King and President Roosevelt, one which ensured vital support during those years before Pearl Harbour brought the US into the war.

It was during this period that the world first heard a voice that would go on to broadcast for longer than any other in history. In 1940, with the Blitz raining down on London, 14-year-old Princess Elizabeth made her debut on the airwaves to reassure evacuated children that 'all will be well'. The message was so popular in the USA that it was released as a record.

Thus began America's love affair with Elizabeth, one that was entirely reciprocated. She never forgot that it was those gallant Commonwealth cousins from across what was then still called the Empire who stood shoulder to shoulder from the very start of the war. However, for the rest of her life, she would always see the USA through that wartime prism – the cavalry who came charging alongside when it mattered most. In drab post-war London, she loved the glamour of all things American and was thrilled to pay her first visit as a Princess

American Light Infantry under Alexander Hamilton storm Redoubt 10 at Yorktown on 14 October 1781, a decisive ten-minute assault that helped break British defences and seal victory in the final major battle of the American Revolutionary War. Courtesy: US Army/US Army Center of Military History (public domain), via Wikimedia Commons; King George VI and Queen Elizabeth's state visit to the USA in 1939 was the first by a reigning monarch. Courtesy: Alamy

in 1951 to President Truman's White House, on behalf of her sick father.

She would come to know 14 presidents. President George W Bush told me that no one in history – American or otherwise – could claim that.

If anyone could be said to represent a 'special' relationship, it was her. For just four years after her accession to the throne in 1952, the British and US governments were at loggerheads over the Suez crisis. Britain's calamitous plot with France and Israel

to reclaim the canal from Egypt appalled Washington. America even threatened to devalue the pound. It was left to the Queen to mend some very damaged fences – and she did. Within a matter of months, her first state visit to the US in 1957 had been a triumph, as prime minister Harold Macmillan reflected afterwards: 'She buried George III for good and all.'

Four years later, John and Jackie Kennedy were dining at Buckingham Palace.

Britain and the US fell out again over Harold Wilson's refusal to join the Vietnam War. However, the Queen – as Queen of Australia and head of its armed forces – had

60,000 troops in the conflict. Once again, it was the Windsors who were integral to restoring the alliance. Richard Nixon came to lunch at the palace in 1968 and invited the Queen's two eldest children to pay a visit to the US. In 1970, a shy Prince Charles had an extraordinary honour – a 90-minute, one-on-one tutorial in leadership in the Oval Office from President Nixon. The press were more interested in detecting any spark between the prince and 24-year-old Tricia Nixon (there wasn't one).

There was tremendous excitement in 1976 as the US celebrated its 200th birthday with George III's great-great-great-granddaughter – who brought a special gift on board the Royal Yacht: a new Liberty Bell from the same Whitechapel foundry that made the original in Philadelphia. The only glitch came when President Gerald Ford invited the Queen on to the floor for the first dance at the White House ball, whereupon the band decided to strike up *That's Why the Lady is a Tramp*. Ford was incandescent. The Queen dined out on it for years afterwards.

She had an enduring and genuine friendship with Ronald Reagan, an entirely mutual one. The Foreign Office files show that on Reagan's first trans-Atlantic tour as president in 1982, his overarching priority was not the G7 or Nato summits or even meeting the Pope. It was riding in Windsor Home Park with the Queen. That mattered



equally to his host. By then, Britain was at war in the Falklands, her second son was in the thick of the fighting and Britain needed maximum US support. It got it.

In 1983, Reagan fulfilled the Queen's lifelong dream of seeing Hollywood. As former governor of California, he took over an entire studio for a full gathering of every A-lister in the business for a gala dinner. The Queen and Prince Philip also braved a biblical rainstorm to visit the Reagans' ranch.

Hollywood would turn out again two years later when the new royal glamour couple – 'Charles and Di' – landed in Washington. The Princess of Wales's turn on the White House dance floor with John Travolta more than made up for the *Tramp* episode nine years before.

The Queen returned in 1991 to honour the shared victory in the first Gulf War, an exemplar of the 'special relationship' in action. There was another entertaining blunder when the Queen stepped up to the White House podium at the welcome ceremony. No one had thought to lower it after President George H Bush's opening remarks. 'She's gone!' exclaimed NBC's Jim Miklaszeski. 'All I got is a talking hat!' It has been known as the 'talking hat tour' ever since. The Queen was greatly amused, as was

Congress two days later when she came to address a joint session and opened with the words: 'I do hope you can see me today.'

Elizabeth II would come to know two generations of the Bush family during the 1991 visit. George W Bush was by his own admission a little 'wayward' at that stage and proudly showed the monarch a new pair of cowboy boots with 'God Save The Queen'

etched into them. Though Barbara Bush was most unamused, the Queen was enchanted.

During the Clinton years, Downing Street and the White House were, once again, somewhat distant. It was the

Queen who invited the Clintons to stay on board her yacht for the 50th anniversary of D-Day in 1994, something they never forgot.

Amity was restored, by Tony Blair and George W Bush, after the horrors of the 9/11 attacks in 2001. As a result, Bush junior paid a state visit to the UK in 2003, and the Queen returned to Washington in 2007. It was not wholly coincidental that the visit coincided with another long-held event on her 'bucket list' – the Kentucky Derby.

Her final visit to the USA came in 2010, when she addressed the United Nations. But presidents would keep coming the other



In 1982, amid global summits and state duties, Ronald Reagan's most anticipated engagement was a horse ride with the Queen in Windsor Home Park. Courtesy: Alamy; President John F Kennedy and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy dine at Buckingham Palace with the Queen and Prince Philip in 1961. Courtesy: Alamy

way. In 2011, Barack and Michelle Obama were welcomed to the palace within weeks of the wedding of Prince William to Catherine Middleton. President Obama would go on to become both a friend and admirer of the Queen. Towards the end of his second term, he delivered a speech in which he singled out the greatest leaders of his times: Nelson Mandela – and Elizabeth II. He even arranged his valedictory world tour to coincide with the Queen's 90th birthday in 2016.

Her last state visitor was Donald Trump, in 2019. He had come for tea a year earlier and had forged something of a bond with the Queen, based on two common factors: both had Scottish mothers and both were Scottish landowners. As President Trump told me himself, 'the first time I met her, we were only supposed to have 15 minutes, and it just went on because she liked me and I liked her. She was so clever and we talked a lot.' He was determined to get an answer to one question. 'I kept asking her: "Who was your favourite president? Was it Reagan? Or Eisenhower?" and she just said, "they were all very nice." That sort of thing.' It was the same when he tried her on prime ministers. 'So I realized: that's why she lasted 75 years without a complaint – because she was so good at it. The rest of us would have said: "Oh, I liked

so-and-so." But she was so clever. And I know she liked me because we talked a lot.'

Her final presidential encounter was with Joe Biden in 2021. But Donald Trump would be back in 2025 to make an unprecedented second state visit at the invitation of King Charles. Reflecting on that enduring relationship, he declared, 'the word "special" does not begin to do it justice.'

He would be at odds with Downing Street within a matter of months, but the rapport with the palace was untouched. Plans were duly announced for the first state visit of King Charles III to celebrate the USA's 250th birthday. George III would be very happy indeed.



President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump arrive with King Charles III and Queen Camilla for the Windsor Castle state banquet in 2025. UPI/Alamy Live News

A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

- **1776 – Declaration of Independence signed:** America declares independence from Britain, a break that ultimately evolves into a lasting alliance between the two nations
- **1939 – Royal connection:** King George VI makes the first state visit by a reigning monarch to the United States, forging a crucial bond with President Roosevelt on the eve of war
- **1940 – A Princess's voice:** 14-year-old Princess Elizabeth's broadcast during the Blitz is so popular in the US it is released as a record, beginning a lifelong connection between the nation and the future Queen
- **1957 – Fences mended:** Queen Elizabeth II's triumphant state visit to Washington helps repair relations after the Suez crisis, prompting Harold Macmillan to say she had 'buried George III for good'
- **1961 – Camelot dinner:** John and Jackie Kennedy dine at Buckingham Palace
- **1976 – Anniversary gift:** The Queen marks America's bicentennial with a state visit and a gift of a new Liberty Bell
- **1982 – Windsor ride:** The Queen and Ronald Reagan bond over horses at Windsor, a moment of warmth amid the strains of the Falklands War
- **2001 – Shoulder to shoulder:** After 9/11, Britain and the US reaffirm their alliance, with the Queen playing a quiet but vital role in showing solidarity at a moment of crisis
- **2019 – Final visit:** Donald Trump becomes the last president to make a state visit during Elizabeth II's reign, forming an unexpected rapport with the monarch
- **2025 – New reign, old bond:** President Trump returns for an unprecedented second state visit, hosted by King Charles III, underlining the palace's enduring role at the heart of the modern special relationship



EST

1910

Heritage at the Heart

A NEW WELCOME



RESTORE AND PRESERVE ROSL'S UNIQUE HERITAGE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

As ROSL continues its journey in restoring our Grade I-listed clubhouse, Over-Seas House, we invite our members to support us to complete the final piece of the architectural jigsaw.

Vernon House dates back to 1835, and constitutes a significant part of the architecture. Our plan is to restore the entrance hall within Vernon House to its former glory. The arrival experience members and their guests receive is at the very heart of ROSL; a first impression is often the last impression.

We are a London-based institution with a global reputation and outreach; the entrance is a gateway to a world of culture, heritage, public affairs, arts and dining.

To deliver this project, we need to raise £300,000. We are asking for the generous support from our

membership to reach this ambitious target. This would equate to £40 per member, an amount that we hope may be realistic for many, but any size donation will make a difference.

Should you be able to support this final significant development to the Royal Over-Seas League clubhouse, we will have an entrance hall that will preserve ROSL's architecture and heritage, creating a welcome that is fit for a king!

To make a donation, please scan the QR code, or contact the Director-General Dr Annette Prandzioch: b.neale@rosl.org.uk or visit the ROSL website <https://rosl.org.uk/product/wc-donation-heritage-at-the-heart-a-new-rosl-welcome/>



Thank you for your anticipated support

Director General | Dr Annette Prandzioch

ART ACROSS AMERICA

American art tells a story as expansive and varied as the country itself, ranging from 19th-century landscapes to bold modern and contemporary works that reshaped the global art scene. If you're planning a trip to the US this summer, why not add a visit to see some of its most significant artworks to your itinerary? Here, we highlight key pieces displayed in the country's leading art museums and galleries – and each is within easy travelling distance of one of our reciprocal clubs, offering convenient bases from which to explore these cultural landmarks



Whitney Museum of American Art in Downtown Manhattan.
Courtesy: Ed Lederman

NEW YORK CITY, NY

Downtown Manhattan is home to the **Whitney Museum of American Art**. Among its most celebrated works is Jean-Michel Basquiat's *Hollywood Africans*, painted in 1983 during a formative period of the artist's career. Painted on a gold backdrop, the painting features a self-portrait of Basquiat alongside two of his friends and fellow artists, with fragmented text, symbols and references to racial stereotypes in the entertainment industry surrounding them. This visually urgent artwork stands as a powerful commentary on identity, fame and representation in late 20th-century America, and also reflects the Whitney's focus on showing modern American art that engages directly with social and cultural issues of its time.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, located on Fifth Avenue, New York City, is an essential stop on any cultural visit to the Big Apple. Founded in 1870 and spanning over two million square feet it is, by area, one of the world's largest art museums, and also one of the most visited. Among its collection of over 490,000 works of art is Georgia O'Keeffe's *Cow's Skull: Red, White and Blue*. Painted in 1931, this oil on canvas depicts a bleached cow skull against a bold background of red, white and blue stripes, representing the desert's enduring beauty and the strength of the American spirit. It is a striking example of American Modernism, and the skull motif has become one of O'Keeffe's most recognisable signatures.

NEARBY RECIPROCAL CLUBS: Cornell Club and Penn Club (around 20 minutes by subway for both museums, or enjoy a scenic walk through Central Park for the Met)



Portrait of Mrs Cecil Wade
by John Singer Sargent

KANSAS CITY, MO

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City is one of the Midwest's leading art institutions, set within expansive grounds that blend classical architecture with contemporary sculpture installations. Known for its encyclopedic collection of art from across the globe, its American collection is home to *Portrait of Mrs Cecil Wade* by John Singer Sargent. While Sargent is perhaps best known for his more controversial masterpiece *Madame X*, *Mrs Cecil Wade* demonstrates his remarkable command of light and texture and, upon its acquisition by the museum in 1986, fetched the highest price ever paid for a Sargent painting at that time. The museum also holds the largest public collection of works by Thomas Hart Benton, who lived and worked in Kansas



City, offering visitors an immersive view of his dynamic depictions of American life.

NEARBY RECIPROCAL CLUB: Kansas City Club (10-minute taxi ride) ●

PITTSBURGH, PA

No conversation about American art would be complete without mention of Andy Warhol, the artist and filmmaker at the forefront of the pop art movement. Warhol was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1928, and the city is now home to the **Andy Warhol Museum**, which houses the largest collection of his art, films and other archival materials in the world.

While the museum's exhibitions are ever-changing, its collection includes 1960s pop art paintings of consumer products including *Campbell's Soup Cans*, and portraits of stars like Elizabeth Taylor, Jackie Kennedy and, perhaps most notably, Marilyn Monroe. *Three Marylins* is arguably the most striking of these – using silkscreen printing on canvas, Warhol repeated the iconic image of Marilyn Monroe, taken from a publicity still, to explore themes of fame, mortality and mass production. Warhol's portraits of Monroe became a cornerstone of American pop art, reflecting both the era's fascination with celebrity and Warhol's unique ability to turn commercial imagery into high art.

NEARBY RECIPROCAL CLUB: Pittsburgh Golf Club (15-minute taxi ride)



Pittsburgh's Andy Warhol Museum

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

For visitors to the Golden Gate City, the **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art** is not to be missed. One of the largest museums of modern and contemporary art in the country, its striking building spans multiple floors and features a diverse collection straddling photography, design, sculpture and painting. Among the highlights is *No 14, 1960*, a signature piece by the abstract expressionist master, Mark Rothko. Created in 1960, this large-scale canvas features deep, layered blocks of colour that seem to float against one another, inviting viewers into an absorbing, contemplative experience. Rothko was a leading figure in this style, known as colour field painting, which used expansive, flat areas of colour to evoke emotional responses and immerse the viewer. *No 14, 1960*, currently sits alongside masterworks and experimental pieces in SFMOMA's 1900 to Now collection, offering visitors

a comprehensive view of mid-20th-century innovation in American painting and sculpture.

NEARBY RECIPROCAL CLUBS: Marines' Memorial Club and Metropolitan Club San Francisco (both a 15-minute walk) ●



ABOVE: Mark Rothko, *No. 14, 1960, 1960*. Collection SFMOMA, Helen Crocker Russell Fund purchase; © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York
THIS IMAGE: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

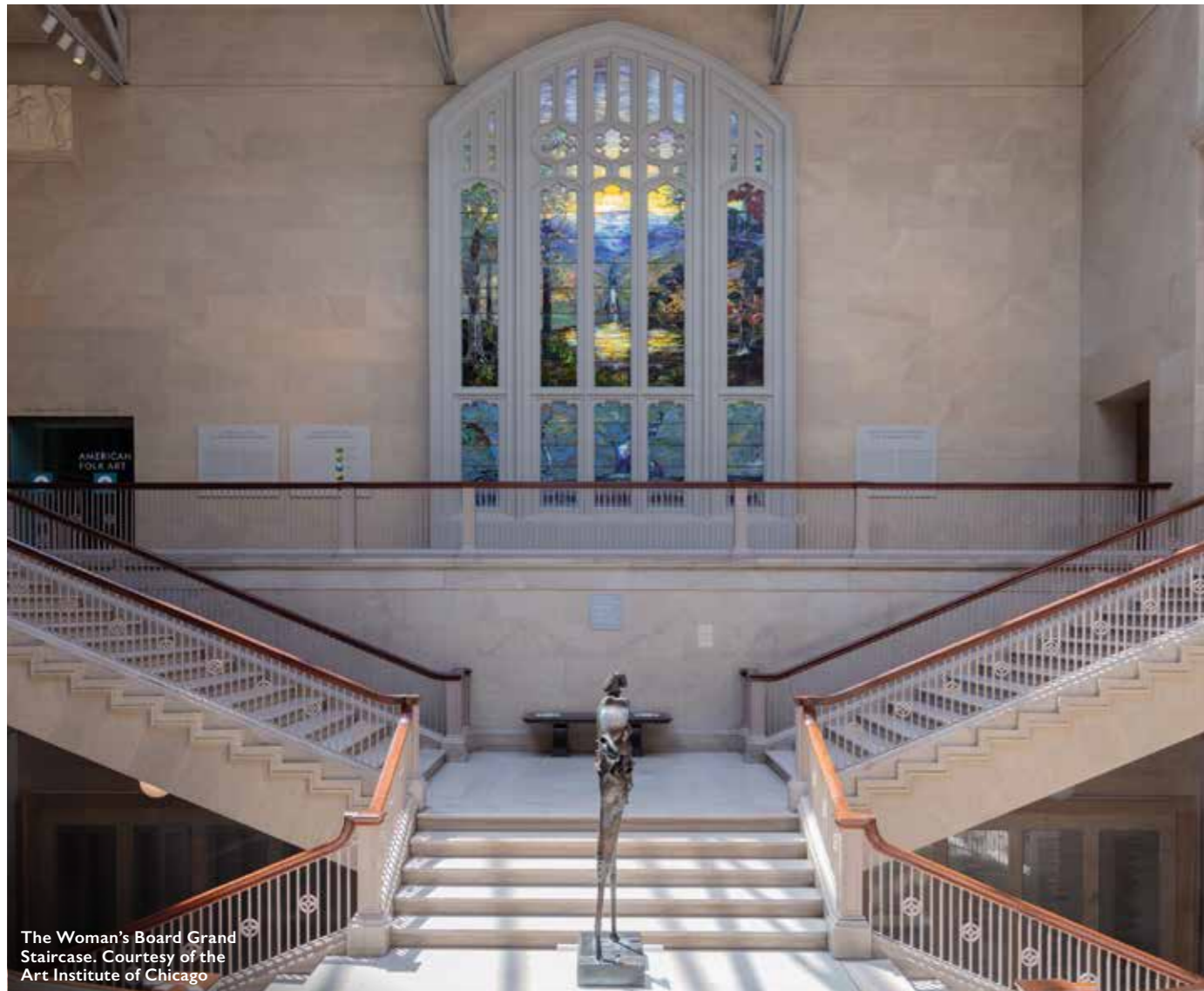


National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

WASHINGTON, DC

The National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, is home to Thomas Cole's four-part series *The Voyage of Life*. Painted in the 1840s, it is one of the defining works of the Hudson River School, the first major American painting movement, and depicts a voyager travelling on a boat through the American wilderness along the river of life. Each painting represents a different stage of human life – *Childhood, Youth, Manhood* and *Old Age* – with the landscape changing with the seasons. Cole's landscapes combine detailed natural observation with allegorical storytelling, reflecting early American ideas about progress, spirituality and the role of nature. The paintings can be found on the main floor of the gallery's West Building, which was designed by John Russell Pope in a neoclassical style that mirrors elements of the nearby National Archives building and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

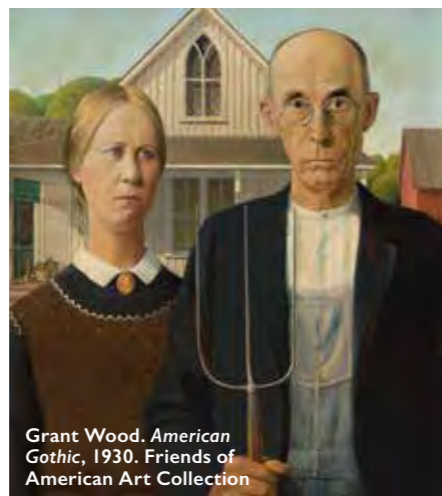
NEARBY RECIPROCAL CLUBS: University Club of Washington DC (35-minute walk); Cosmos Club (a short taxi ride)



The Woman's Board Grand Staircase. Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago

CHICAGO, IL

The Art Institute of Chicago's central location and extensive collections make it a key cultural stop in the city, and it is home to some of the most recognisable images in American art, including Grant Wood's *American Gothic*. This enduring image of Midwestern life depicts a farmer and his adult daughter standing before a rural Iowa house, painted with sharp detail and restrained expression. Painted in 1930, it was an instant sensation when first exhibited at the Art Institute, and was quickly reproduced in newspapers across the US. Its ambiguity prompted much speculation, with many interpreting it



Grant Wood. *American Gothic*, 1930. Friends of American Art Collection

as a satirical critique of midwesterners struggling to keep pace with a modernising world; however, Wood himself declared it a depiction of his appreciation for rural American values. Alongside this iconic work, the museum's collection also includes Mary Cassatt's *The Child's Bath*, a tender impressionist portrayal of maternal care, and Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*, which captures the quiet isolation of urban life at night. Together, these works make the Art Institute of Chicago a must-see destination for any visitor to the Windy City.

NEARBY RECIPROCAL CLUB: Union League Club of Chicago (10-minute walk)

If this has inspired you to explore the art galleries and museums of the US on your next visit, remember to take advantage of our extensive list of reciprocal clubs – an up-to-date list can be found at rosl.org.uk/reciprocal-clubs. Collections are constantly refreshed, so check galleries' websites before your visit



LET THE LEAGUE BE YOUR LEGACY

Continue to support your home away from home by bequeathing a gift to the ROSL Foundation in your will. Your generosity will give talented young musicians and artists from the UK and across the world support in their careers, and it will safeguard the future of your beautiful Grade I listed clubhouse.

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SPIRIT — OF A — NATION

Members who have enjoyed a quiet afternoon or an evening catching up with friends and colleagues in the Duke of York Bar at Over-Seas House may be familiar with its carefully curated menu of classic cocktails. As the 250th anniversary of Independence Day approaches, we explore the stories behind some enduring American favourites

WHISKEY SOUR

The Whiskey Sour is one of the oldest and most enduring American cocktails, built on the classic 'sour' formula of spirit, citrus and sugar. Traditionally made with whiskey, fresh lemon juice, sugar and often egg white for a silky foam, it's typically garnished with an orange slice and cherry. Many modern bars now omit the egg white, serving a simpler version instead.

Its origins trace back to maritime traditions in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Sailors commonly mixed spirits with citrus and sugar both for flavour and to help prevent

scurvy, creating early versions of sour-style drinks. As whiskey became the dominant spirit in the United States, the combination evolved naturally into the Whiskey Sour. The drink then entered cocktail canon in the mid-19th century, when pioneering bartender Jerry Thomas included it in *The Bartender's Guide*, the first major American cocktail book.

In contrast to spirit-forward classics like the Martini or Manhattan, the Whiskey Sour is bright, lively and refreshing, with a smooth texture and sharp citrus notes that offer a very different drinking experience, emphasising tang and sweetness over sheer strength.

Appeal

Bold yet refreshing, the Whiskey Sour works equally well before dinner or late into the evening.

Famous association

The Whiskey Sour is famously linked to literary figures of the Roaring Twenties, with anecdotes of Ernest Hemingway and F Scott Fitzgerald drinking it until dawn in the Dingo Bar in Paris.

Classic recipe

- ◆ 60ml bourbon or rye
- ◆ 30ml fresh lemon juice
- ◆ 15–20ml sugar syrup
- ◆ Optional egg white

Shake with ice (dry shake first if using egg), strain into rocks glass



CLASSIC MARTINI

While its exact origin is debated, the classic Martini is arguably one of the purest expressions of American cocktail culture – a spare, elegant blend of gin and dry vermouth, finished with a lemon twist or olive. Its roots are believed to trace back to Martinez, California in the late 19th century, likely evolving from the sweeter gin-and-vermouth mixtures served during the Gold Rush before being refined in New York City into the drier version we know today. By the early 20th century, the Martini had become a fixture of American bar life, with cocktail manuals such as Harry Craddock's *The Savoy Cocktail Book* (1930) helping to formalise its proportions and cementing its status as a modern classic.

Though frequently associated with James Bond, the classic Martini itself was shaped in the bars of New York and embraced as a symbol of urban sophistication. Hollywood icons like Humphrey Bogart and Cary Grant further elevated its image, linking the drink to glamour and power.

Appeal

Its elegant simplicity and precise balance, mixed with a healthy dose of Hollywood glamour.

Famous association

Humphrey Bogart was rarely photographed without a Martini in hand, helping cement the cocktail's association with mid-century Hollywood glamour and sophistication. Across the pond, Winston Churchill supposedly preferred his Martini so dry he joked he merely glanced toward a bottle of vermouth across the room.

Classic recipe

- ◆ 60ml gin
- ◆ 10ml dry vermouth

Stir with ice until very cold

Strain into chilled martini glass

Garnish with olive or lemon twist

Variations

Dry Martini – very little vermouth, emphasising gin

Wet Martini – more vermouth for a softer, rounder flavour

Dirty Martini – includes olive brine for a salty, savoury twist

Vodka Martini – replaces gin with vodka, popularised in the mid-20th century

Gibson – garnished with a pickled onion instead of an olive or lemon twist

Vesper – invented by Ian Fleming for his spy James Bond, made with gin, vodka and Lillet Blanc



MANHATTAN

Few cocktails are as closely tied to American urban identity as the Manhattan. Emerging in the late 19th century, when vermouth was newly fashionable and American bartenders were refining the modern mixed drink, it reflects the elegance and confidence of Gilded Age America.

Popular legend has it that the Manhattan was created at a banquet in honour of presidential hopeful Samuel J Tilden and hosted by Jennie Jerome (Lady Randolph Churchill), mother of Winston Churchill; however, many cocktail historians think a more likely origin is tied to a bartender named George Black, who ran a bar called the Manhattan Inn in Manhattan during the 1860s and 1870s.

The oldest printed recipes for the Manhattan appear in several 1884 bartender guides, showing the drink was already well established by that point. But whatever its true origin, the drink became synonymous with sophisticated metropolitan drinking culture, and quickly became a template for American cocktail craft. Its structure of base spirit, fortified wine and bitters laid the groundwork for countless cocktails that followed, influencing drinks from the Martini to the Rob Roy.

Appeal

Its elegant simplicity – no citrus, no dilution beyond careful stirring, just whiskey mellowed by a hint of vermouth and bitters.

Famous association

Often linked in legend to elite society hostesses of the late 1800s, such as Lady Randolph Churchill.

Classic recipe

- ◆ 60ml rye whiskey
- ◆ 30ml sweet vermouth
- ◆ 2 dashes Angostura bitters

Stir with ice, strain into chilled coupe, garnish with cherry

Try ROSL's variations on these American classics, alongside other favourites, in the Duke of York Bar, and check our website for seasonal specials



OLD FASHIONED

If the Manhattan is whiskey dressed for the city, the Old Fashioned is whiskey in its purest, original form. Built from the same 19th-century template of spirit and bitters, the Old Fashioned strips the formula back to basics, while the Manhattan refines it with vermouth into something distinctly stylish and metropolitan.

Often described as the original cocktail, the Old Fashioned's roots trace back to 1806, when a New York newspaper defined a cocktail as 'a stimulating liquor, composed of spirits of any kind, sugar, water, and bitters.' This formula is essentially the Old Fashioned; in other words, the drink wasn't originally called an Old Fashioned – it was simply called a cocktail. According to one much-debated story, its modern identity took shape in Louisville, Kentucky, where a bartender at the Pendennis Club created the drink for bourbon distiller James E Pepper. Pepper then brought the recipe to New York, where it spread to major hotel bars like the Waldorf-Astoria. The name emerged later in the 19th century, when bartenders began embellishing drinks with liqueurs and other ingredients. Traditionalists, preferring simplicity, asked for their whiskey cocktail made 'the old-fashioned way.'

Appeal

A timeless cocktail that showcases the whiskey's flavour, while remaining perfectly balanced.

Famous association

Don Draper of TV series *Mad Men*, who helped re-establish it as a symbol of mid-century cool.



Classic recipe

- ◆ 1 sugar cube
- ◆ 2–3 dashes Angostura bitters
- ◆ A few drops of water
- ◆ 60ml bourbon or rye

Place sugar cube in a rocks glass and add bitters and water. Muddle until dissolved, then fill with ice cubes and add whiskey. Stir gently and add orange peel garnish

The Prohibition effect

When the United States banned the manufacture and sale of alcohol between 1920 and 1933, it didn't kill cocktail culture, it reshaped it. Prohibition forced drinking underground into secret bars known as speakeasies, where discretion, creativity and speed became essential. Establishments hid bottles behind false walls and served patrons who wanted glamour as much as liquor.

Quality spirits were often scarce or poorly made, so bartenders leaned heavily on citrus, sugar and bitters to mask harsh flavours. This necessity helped popularise

balanced mixed drinks like the Whiskey Sour. Meanwhile, many American bartenders simply left the country, exporting their expertise to cities such as Paris and London, where grand hotel bars thrived. The legendary American Bar at The Savoy became a hub for expatriate mixology. When Prohibition ended, Americans returned to legal drinking with renewed enthusiasm and cocktail recipes with a more global influence. In many ways, modern cocktail culture is the direct descendant of those inventive, illicit years.

HIDDEN AMERICA

Some of history's most influential Americans have lived, worked or left their mark in London. Long before the United States became independent, early leaders walked its streets – attending lectures, debating politics, and forging diplomatic ties that shaped a new nation. Over the centuries, leaders from the US continued to engage with London, leaving traces of history scattered across the city for those who know where to look. Editor Laura Winter takes a closer look at these sites, with a historical walk through London's hidden America



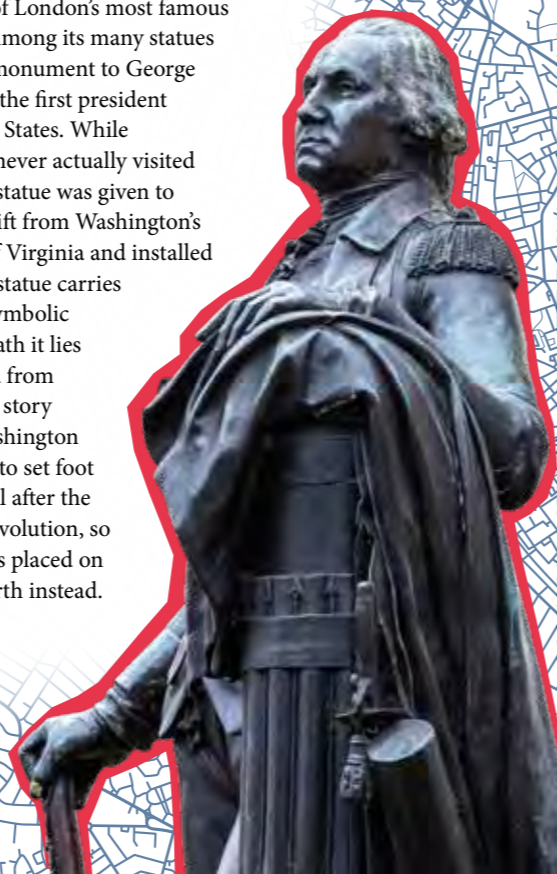
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S HOUSE, CRAVEN STREET

One of the most noteworthy places to begin is the Benjamin Franklin House on Craven Street, just off the Strand. From 1757 to 1775, Benjamin Franklin lived here while serving as a colonial diplomat representing several American colonies. The townhouse is the only surviving residence of Franklin anywhere in the world, making it a unique historical treasure. Built around 1730, it holds England's highest Grade I heritage listing and retains many of its original features, with the rooms carefully restored to reflect the 18th century. It is now a dynamic, interactive museum, making it easy to imagine Franklin working late into the night, surrounded by papers and scientific instruments, or hosting lively discussions with scholars and politicians.



STATUE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, TRAFALGAR SQUARE

Just a short walk away lies Trafalgar Square, one of London's most famous landmarks. Among its many statues is a striking monument to George Washington, the first president of the United States. While Washington never actually visited London, the statue was given to Britain as a gift from Washington's home state of Virginia and installed in 1921. The statue carries an unusual symbolic feature: beneath it lies soil imported from Virginia. The story goes that Washington vowed never to set foot on British soil after the American Revolution, so the statue was placed on American earth instead.



GROSVENOR SQUARE (KNOWN AS 'LITTLE AMERICA')

Grosvenor Square in Mayfair is an area long associated with the American presence in London. From the 1930s until 2017, the square was home to the American embassy, but its connection to the United States stretches back even further. In the late 18th century, John Adams, who would later become America's second president, lived nearby while serving as the first US minister to Great Britain after the Revolutionary War. A commemorative plaque on the wall of number 9, at the edge of the square, marks the residence where Adams and his wife Abigail lived as they navigated the delicate task of building diplomatic relations between two nations that had only recently been enemies.

The square also reflects the later history of the Anglo-American alliance. Statues here honour two key figures of the 20th century: Franklin D Roosevelt and Dwight D Eisenhower. Roosevelt led the United States through the Second World War and worked closely with Britain's wartime government, though he never lived in London. Unveiled by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1948, the statue depicts him in a cloak, standing with the aid of a stick, in an understated rather than dramatic pose –



commemorating him as a statesman and wartime ally, and reflecting both the weight of leadership and the reality of his disability. Eisenhower, by contrast, stands in uniform with his hands on his hips, conveying quiet confidence and command. Based in Britain between 1942 and 1944, Eisenhower directed the planning of the D-Day invasion from the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) in Grosvenor Square. The abundance of American soldiers in the area during this time led it to be nicknamed 'Little America'.



BUSHY PARK

To further explore the UK's wartime relationship with the US, visitors can travel to Bushy Park in south-west London. By 1944 it had been decided that SHAEF should move out of central London to reduce the risk of direct overhead bombing. They relocated to Bushy Park, and the site became known as Camp Griffiss; it was here that Eisenhower and Allied planners prepared the enormous military operation that would eventually launch from Normandy on 6 June 1944. Today, there are three landmarks that bring this history to life. The SHAEF Gate marks the former

entrance to Camp Griffiss, while the nearby SHAEF Memorial pinpoints the location of General Eisenhower's office. Close by, the USAAF Commemorative Tablet honours the vital role of American air forces and serves as a lasting reminder of the park's importance during the Second World War.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Looking through the Rose Arch into the ROSL Garden; Rosa odorata 'Bengal Crimson'; Iris sibirica 'Perry's Blue'; Miscanthus 'Morning Light'; Hydrangea 'Kyushu'; Members enjoying the longer evenings; Penstemon 'Garnet'; Euphorbia 'Tasmanian Tiger'; Agastache 'Blue Fortune'



SUMMER SANCTUARY

With the return of the warmer weather comes the reopening of our Clubhouse Garden, a hidden oasis in the heart of St James's. Editor Laura Winter takes a stroll across the lawn and explores what's flourishing this summer

After what felt like a long, wet winter here in London, summer has finally arrived and many of us in the northern hemisphere will be taking advantage of the warmer weather to get outside – either in public green spaces, or our own gardens. At ROSL we are always excited to reopen our delightful Clubhouse Garden for the summer months, where members can while away a sunny afternoon with a chilled glass of wine, or enjoy the longer evenings and share something delicious from our summer menu with

friends. The ROSL Garden backs directly on to Green Park, offering stunning views of this beautiful green space in the centre of London, while also sheltering members from the bustle of the city.

The Clubhouse Garden is largely inspired by the quintessential English country garden, but can be roughly divided into three distinct areas: the shrub border, which runs from the smokers' corner at one end to the rose arch at the other; the fountain border, on the right as you look out of the Clubhouse; and the side border on the Arlington House side.

While the garden has been in gradual transition in recent years, the shrub border is the area that has changed the least. Heavily planted with hydrangeas, including the large, mophead 'Hills of Snow', the more delicate lacecap 'Villosa', and paniculata varieties including 'Kyushu', they give a long period of display. The border is also home to a range of shrubs, notably camelias, a daphne, a Japanese maple and various fatsias, offering rich foliage and colour almost all year round.

A highlight of the garden is the beautiful rose arch, over the private gate that gives



the best view of Green Park. It is clad in a rambling rose called 'City of York' – known for its large, creamy-white blooms with lemon-yellow centres that are born in early to mid-summer, often repeating again in early autumn, it creates a stunning focal point.

The fountain bed, which was replanted last spring, provides a long run of colour, particularly from a mid-summer onwards. It benefits from a sunny position and free draining soil, and has been laid out with informal symmetry, giving it the feel of a paradise garden. It has yew domes at its

corners, a lavender hedge surround, and a tapestry of bulbs, perennials and miscanthus grass. Half-hardy salvias feature heavily here, including the rich blue 'Animo', delicate 'Pink Amistad' and vibrant magenta 'Ping Pong'. A range of hardy Korean chrysanthemums, including the delicate old variety, 'Emperor of China', provide an autumn display of colour. Flamboyant dahlias add an extra layer to the garden's palette later in the year.

The side border is filled with a mixture of vibrant salvias, delicate cistus, late season dahlias and clipped yew domes, while an Irish yew provides height. The fence behind is home to a well-established example of *rosa odorata* 'Bengal Crimson', which was presented to ROSL in memory of a former member and originates from a cutting from a parent plant at the Chelsea Physic Garden, one of the oldest botanical gardens in Britain. This rose frequently blooms almost all year round, providing this border with a near-constant splash of cherry-red blooms. *Abutilon megapotamicum* also grows up against the fence, and *anisodonta capensis*, the Cape Mallow, brings a profusion of soft pink flowers right through the winter, helping to create a colourful backdrop to this corner of the garden, even during the colder months.



Outdoor events take place throughout the summer

Explore the Clubhouse Garden throughout June, July and August until late September (weather permitting). Members are welcome to bring up to six non-member guests at any one time – book a table at rosl.org.uk/dining

GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

Rose arch, 'City of York'

A defining feature of the Clubhouse Garden, the 'City of York' rose is a vigorous climbing variety with creamy white blooms and a soft fragrance. It's prized for its hardiness, repeat flowering and ability to cover arches or walls with elegant, classic beauty



Salvia involucrata 'Bethellii'

Growing in the garden's side border, *Salvia involucrata* 'Bethellii' is a tall, shrubby perennial sage with soft pink ball flowers that bloom from late summer into autumn. It attracts bees and butterflies, adds height and colour to borders, and thrives in sunny, sheltered spots



Chrysanthemum 'Emperor of China'

Found in the fountain border, this hardy perennial produces small, daisy-like pink blooms and will be at its finest in September. Its long-lasting colour and reliability make it the perfect addition to the garden, brightening the border even when the season fades

A TASTE OF THE GARDEN

When the sun is out and the evenings are long, what could be better than a glass of wine in the Clubhouse Garden? Head of Food and Beverage Serge Pradier recommends lighter wines to enjoy with the dishes from our summer menu

WHITES



Adam Who? Riesling, Eden Valley, South Australia 2023 – ABV 11.5%

With an aromatic nose of white peach and citrus blossom, flavours of ripe pear and honeydew melon give way to a lingering, refreshing orchard fruit finish, with underlying slaty minerality. An expert balance between sweet fruit flavours and lemon/lime acidity.

ENJOY WITH: the lobster linguine



Bethany Riesling, Eden Valley, South Australia, 2024 – ABV 11.5%

A delightful, vibrant wine with notes of green apples, white peach, grapefruit and orange blossom.

ENJOY AS: an aperitif



Allram, Grüner Veltliner, Alte Reben, Kamptal, Austria 2023 – ABV 12%

Brilliant golden yellow in colour, with nuances of pineapple and apricots, warm and ripe, and underlying hints of honey, spice and white pepper. Full-bodied on the palate.

ENJOY WITH: the smoked and cured fish selection to share

REDS



Pinot Nero Tunella Italy, 2023 – ABV 13%

A smooth and spicy Pinot Nero from a family-owned estate in the far north-east of Italy. Crushed red berries on the nose, with a supple, juicy palate. This Pinot Nero has juicy, crushed raspberry flavours, with delicate warm spice, and shows off the characteristic 'Friulian' weight and elegance.

ENJOY WITH: the grilled spatchcock chicken



ROSL Walt Pinot Noir, Germany, 2023 – ABV 13%

With a lightly aromatic red cherry fruit flavour, a smooth, elegant fruitiness gives way to a hint of spice and earthy complexity.

ENJOY WITH: the Caesar salad, with or without chicken



Sanziana Pinot Noir Recas Cramele, Romania, 2024 – ABV 12.5%

A fresh, fruit-forward Pinot Noir showing vibrant notes of cherry, raspberry and cranberry with a subtle hint of spice. Light-bodied and smooth, it has soft tannins, balanced acidity, and an easy, refreshing finish.

ENJOY WITH: the margherita stone-baked pizza

Here are just a few highlights from our summer menu. For the full list, visit the Club website

STARTERS

Greek salad
Cucumber, tomato, red onion, peppers, Kalamata olives and feta cheese (v)

Panache of melon and mortadella
Galia, Charentais, watermelon and mortadella

MAINS

Tuna Niçoise
Grilled tuna steak served on a salad of eggs, tomatoes, French beans and black olives

Cold poached salmon
Cold salmon with Russian salad, salad leaves and lemon

FROM THE GRILL

Loaded Iberico pork burger
Topped with pulled barbecued pork, melted cheese, toasted brioche bun

Minute steak
Served with rocket leaves, cherry tomatoes and balsamic

DESSERTS

Ginger wine jelly
Ginger wine jelly set with chopped fruit

Chocolate mousse
Caramel chocolate mousse with matcha cream (v)

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Shakespeare returns to the ROSL Garden this summer with Illyria's production of *As You Like It*. Set in the Forest of Arden, the play's themes of nature, freedom, transformation and love come alive in an outdoor setting, making it the perfect play to watch in the stunning surroundings of our Clubhouse Garden. Illyria's Artistic Director Oliver Gray tells us what makes *As You Like It* so unique

If a romantic comedy can be summed up as 'girl meets boy; girl loses boy; girl wins boy', then *As You Like It* is Shakespeare's most quintessential romantic comedy. However, it's perhaps also his most experimental play. For unlike almost any other romantic comedy, this one starts with a coup, multiple banishments and two attempted murders.

On the same day that Rosalinde, daughter of the banished Duke, is herself banished, impoverished Orlando, with whom she is smitten, foils his older brother's plot to have him killed by escaping to the Forest of Arden. There the two meet up again – but now Rosalinde, for her own safety, is disguised as a boy called Ganymede. Lovesick Orlando allows 'Ganymede' to cure him of his love by 'pretending' to be Rosalinde, who makes him woo her and reacts in a thoroughly fickle way to his courtship. In the midst of all this, we are introduced to the banished Duke, who also now lives in the Forest of Arden with his peers, and sundry other shepherds, goatherds and forest folk.

In no other play does Shakespeare switch genre so abruptly – and with quite so profound an effect. The tense, early scenes set in the court feature loyalty and betrayal, friendship

and hatred, politics and corruption. The conflict in each is either dangerously physical or has life-or-death consequences. The audience is led to believe the play's genre is drama/thriller. But when the characters move to the Forest of Arden, it is as though a weight is lifted from them. The action is no longer visceral and threatening because it has now migrated into the hearts of the characters instead. This neat trick of switching genre evokes a feeling of release – at last the characters on stage can be their true selves!

From this point, the play focuses heavily on the subject of love. We are offered no fewer than four romantic relationships, each culminating in marriage, each illustrating one aspect of love. These are love-at-first-sight, as depicted by Oliver (Orlando's now-reformed brother) and Celia (Rosalinde's cousin); emotional manipulation, represented by the haughty shepherdess Phebe and the adoring Silvius; sexual lust, played out by Touchstone the clown and Audrey the goatherd; and finally (and explored most playfully and thoroughly) attraction, respect and shared values, embodied by Rosalinde and Orlando. All are mined for laughs and contrived to a climax where everyone's problems can only be solved by Rosalinde revealing who she really is. ♦

Shakespeare also uses four entirely original lenses to examine love more closely:

GENDER

Rosalinde is not unique among Shakespeare's female characters to adopt a male persona: Portia does so to electrifying effect in *The Merchant of Venice*, written just a year or two previously. So does Viola in *Twelfth Night*, written a year or two later. But only in *As You Like It* does Shakespeare exploit the gender ambivalence of a male actor playing a female character, adopting a male role (notably naming herself Ganymede after the mythological male lover of Jove himself), who pretends to be a female. This Russian-doll structure makes her interactions with her lover feel both layered and real. And when another woman declares her love for her, the comic situation only intensifies.

TRIAL

Plenty of Shakespeare's plays written before *As You Like It* feature one character testing another: either their promise to keep a ring in *The Merchant of Venice*; their loyalty to the King's cause in *Henry V*; or a wife's marital fidelity by a hysterically jealous husband in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. But *As You Like It* is his first play where one character, Rosalinde, exposes another to a sustained trial about the strength of his love. Furthermore, the trial doesn't just resolve nicely; Shakespeare pushes it to the point where Orlando's mental well-being is in danger of collapsing. (In later plays such as *Measure for Measure* and *The Tempest*, the trial is pushed even further; in *King Lear*, to the point where an entire kingdom falls apart.) What starts as a flirtatious game mutates into something Rosalinde can no longer bear – a brilliant writer's device to express the extent of love on both sides of the trial.

CYNICISM

'Men are April when they woo, December when they wed,' says Rosalinde, as Ganymede, as Rosalinde to the man she adores; she continues, 'Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives!' Rather like the abrupt switch of genre, this discordant epithet – and many others like it – strips away rose-tinted rom-com platitudes, leaving in their place an array of icy, sharp witticisms about the realities of love. Whether or not they really are true is of course another matter!

ROLE-PLAYING

Everyone on a first date is a slightly different or heightened version of their real selves, but in *As You Like It* Shakespeare dramatises that simple truth by having Rosalinde *literally* playing a role, something that surely strikes chords with us all! In reverse, her father, the banished Duke, speaks of the relief of now being free from the pressures of having to maintain a guarded demeanour at court. Jaques, one of the lords who accompanied him into the forest, has one of the most famous lines Shakespeare ever wrote: 'All the world's a stage / And all the men and women merely players. / They have their exits and their entrances / And one man in his time plays many parts.'



Courtesy of Illyria Outdoor Theatre

DID YOU KNOW?

Shakespeare wrote for the open air

When *As You Like It* was first performed around 1599, it would have been staged outdoors at the Globe Theatre, beneath an open sky and in daylight. Audiences stood, drank, ate, chatted – and sometimes heckled. In that sense, open-air performances today may be closer to Shakespeare's original vision than traditional indoor theatres.

Shakespeare believed not just that role-playing *is* real life, but that the place to see all life is the theatre. When the Globe first opened in 1599, inscribed above the main entrance was the motto *Totus Mundus Agit Histrionem*, the Latin quote Shakespeare has Jaques speak aloud in translation. This is one of the reasons why many scholars believe *As You Like It* was the first play staged in the new theatre, a view supported by the fact that Shakespeare's rivals, The Admiral's Men, had recently enjoyed huge success at the nearby Rose Theatre with a play by Anthony Munday called *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon* – the first dramatisation of Robin Hood. Shakespeare's company needed to pack out their new, much larger, theatre with a hit –

so, as outlaws were clearly flavour of the month, what better than to commission an outlaw play of their own? Applying the test of history, who's ever heard of Munday's play today?

The sudden gear-change in genre in *As You Like It* chimes with a modern audience in a further way when the play is performed outdoors. Once the action moves to the Forest of Arden, audiences are reminded of leaving behind the strictures of indoor theatres, of sitting in straight rows, of having their knees painfully rammed up against the back of the seat in front, of being prevented from taking their drinks and food into the auditorium. Here people can relax, top up glasses, and tuck into picnics. They can take photos freely, or even murmur to friends without being

hushed by fellow patrons. Open-air performances engender a festival atmosphere, where a beautiful environment becomes as much a part of the experience as the performance itself. At Illyria, we love performing outdoors because it is such a levelling experience. When it rains, we all get wet, audience and actors alike; but when it's glorious we all share in the same magic. Of course, Shakespeare wrote almost all his plays to be performed outdoors, and those actually set outdoors, such as *As You Like It*, work especially well with no walls to contain them and only the sky above.

SHAKESPEARE IN THE ROSL GARDEN

Join us for an enchanting summer evening in the ROSL Garden with Illyria's production of *As You Like It* on 10 July.

Set under the trees and open sky, this outdoor performance brings one of Shakespeare's most joyful comedies to life with the company's signature blend of live music, inventive staging, and playful storytelling.

Whether you're a Shakespeare devotee or discovering the play for the first time, this performance promises a warm, witty, and thoroughly entertaining evening.

Members can enjoy a specially curated seasonal set menu from 5pm to 6.30pm in the Brabourne Room on the day as a pre-theatre meal before the play.

Book via rosl.org.uk/events



GOING FOR GOLD

February and March saw ROSL's prestigious Annual Music Competition return to Princess Alexandra Hall for a series of thrilling section finals. The exceptional musicianship and technical proficiency on display from all the competitors demonstrated an impressive amount of care, experience and maturity in their planning for the competition – a process that requires considerable preparation, confidence, and mental strength and agility.

At the time of writing, we are eagerly awaiting the all-female Gold Medal Final at Wigmore Hall to determine the overall winner of this year's AMC. The four finalists, and the Overseas and Ensemble winners, dazzled us in their respective section finals with their ability to perform and communicate in a way that really moved and resonated with the audiences as well as the judges – read on to find out all about them



Sofía Patterson-Gutiérrez, flute

Our first section final, for wind, brass and percussion, took place on 10 February, and showcased the talents of four outstanding female musicians. They all impressed the panel and audience in the Princess Alexandra Hall, but the evening's winner was flautist Sofia Patterson-Gutiérrez, who performed with her duo partner Milda Daunoraite. Sofia's winning programme included Darius Milhaud, *Sonatine for Flute and Piano, Op 76*; Brian Ferneyhough, *Cassandra's Dream Song*; and Carl Vine, *Sonata for Flute and Piano, 3rd movement, 'Very Fast'*. The judges were particularly impressed with Sofia's impeccable performance, her presence and her technical proficiency.

Currently studying with Michael Cox at the Royal Academy of Music, where she holds a full scholarship kindly supported by the Calleva Foundation Award, Sofia won the BBC Young Musician Woodwind Final in 2022, which led her to perform the *Ibert Flute Concerto* with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra (conducted by Mark Wigglesworth) in the Grand Final. During her time at the Academy, Sofia has participated in a number of projects including a side-by-side with the London Sinfonietta, performing one of the solo flute parts of Boulez's *Explosante-Fixe...* with renowned flautists Michael Cox and Karen Jones at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. She is also the winner of the Royal Academy of Music's Piccolo Prize and the Altus William Bennett Flute Prize.

A dedicated orchestral musician, Sofia has been guest principal with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Aurora Orchestra and the Philharmonia's Music of Today ensemble, and has also performed with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.



Photography: Frances Marshall



Gabrielė Sutkutė, piano

Our programme of section finals continued on 24 February with the Keyboard Final, featuring four remarkable pianists on stage to a full house. Each musician performed with sensitivity and musical maturity, but the judge's clear winner was Lithuanian Gabrielė Sutkutė. Gabrielė's winning programme included three of Beethoven's *Seven Bagatelles, Op 33*, and the Szymanowski *Variations in B-flat minor, Op 3*. It was her interpretation of the Szymanowski that stunned the judges and made her their chosen recipient of the £5,000 prize and a place in the Gold Medal Final.

From 2016 to 2022, Gabrielė studied with Professor Christopher Elton, and received her bachelor of music degree (first class honours) and master of arts degree with distinction from the Royal Academy of Music. In 2023, she graduated from the Artist Diploma course at the Royal College of Music. This year, Gabrielė was selected as one of eight fellows for the Gabriela Montero Piano Lab at OAcademy. Praised for her acute musical intuition, impeccable sense of style and genuine charisma, Gabrielė is a winner of 20 international piano competitions, including the first prize at the Chappell Medal Piano Competition 2023. She was also the recipient of the prestigious Mills Williams Junior Fellowship 2022/23. For her musical achievements, Gabrielė received Lithuanian Republic

Presidents' certificates of appreciation six times.

In addition to being a soloist, Gabrielė frequently performs with chamber ensembles and symphony orchestras. Last year, she performed Grieg's *Piano Concerto* with the Grammy-nominated Kaunas Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Markus Huber. She was also invited to play with the renowned Kaunas String Quartet in Lithuania twice. ▶



Binny Supin-Yang, soprano

Our Singers Section Final is always a popular event, and this year was no exception. Our audience on 17 February were captivated by performances from four outstanding singers, with the panel crowning Korean soprano Binny Supin-Yang the winner. Binny's winning programme, accompanied by Thomas Scott, included Wolf – *Er ist's*; Strauss – *Amor, Op. 68 No. 5*; Debussy – *Apparition*; Moore – *Willow Song (The Ballad of Baby Doe)*; and Donizetti – *O luce di quest'anima* (from *Linda di Chamounix*), the ending of which brought her performance to a dazzling close. The adjudicators felt that Binny's extensive experience, so early in her career,



enabled her to give a confident, assured and powerful performance.

Binny is rapidly establishing herself as a compelling artist on both the operatic and

concert stage. Last year, she won praise for her role as the Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Royal Academy of Music, with Mark Valencia of Bachtrack writing, 'Binny Supin-Yang was the youngest Queen of the Night I've heard and one of the finest. Every note was a jewel, every giddy peak of her coloratura a glittering diamond.'

This year she makes her US debut in the same role, performing as an Aspen Renée Fleming Artist Fellow under Patrick Summers, before returning to Korea for a solo recital at the Seoul Arts Centre as a Hyundai Motor Chung Mong-Koo Foundation Artist. Upcoming engagements also include covering the role of First Niece in *Peter Grimes* for Opera North.



Fanny Fheodoroff, violin

Our final solo Section Final, for strings, took place on 3 March in front of an enthusiastic audience of music lovers. The panel of judges had plenty to deliberate after compelling performances from all four competitors, but the last remaining place in our Gold Medal Final was awarded to Austrian violinist Fanny Fheodoroff. Her programme included Korngold's Suite from the incidental music to Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Op 11, *Maiden in the Bridal Chamber*; *Farewell to Cucullain (Londonderry Air) arr for violin and piano* by Kreisler & Kreisler; and Szymanowski's *Nocturne and Tarantella*, Op 28. The judges were particularly

impressed by Fanny's understated, confident and mature performance.

A graduate of the Juilliard School, where she completed her master's under the tutelage of Professor Li Lin, Fanny Fheodoroff has performed as a soloist and chamber musician at venues including the Berlin Philharmonic, Concertgebouw, Kraków Philharmonic, Hamburg Laeiszhalle, Beethoven Haus Bonn, Wigmore Hall and Barbican Hall. The desire to explore works of historically underrepresented composers led to the creation of *Adoration* in 2021 – an album featuring the works of eight female composers, supported by a project grant from the Juilliard School.

From 2022 to this year, she was the violinist of the internationally acclaimed piano trio Sōra. Their double album dedicated to the piano trios of Johannes Brahms was released in 2024 under the label La Dolce Volta. The album received a CHOC Classica, a Trophée Radio Classique and a nomination for the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik, among others, and was unanimously praised in the international press. Fanny plays a violin by Ferdinandus Gagliano (1769), a generous loan by a private sponsor.



To discover who won the AMC Gold Medal Final at Wigmore Hall on 15 May, visit our website or social media channels

AMC 2026 PRIZEWINNERS

Dyers Company Award for Wind and Percussion in memory of Lady Barbirolli
Sofia Patterson-Gutiérrez, *flute*

ROSL Award for Singers in memory of Pamela Faulkner
Binny Supin-Yang, *soprano*

ROSL Award for Keyboard
Gabrielé Sutkutė, *piano*

ROSL Award for Strings
Fanny Fheodoroff, *violin*

ROSL Strings and Keyboard Ensemble Winner
Elmore Quartet

ROSL Mixed Ensemble Winner
AERA Ensemble

Lorna Viol Memorial Prize for the Most Outstanding Musician from Overseas
Kwan Chai Wong, *piano*

Philip Jones Memorial Prize for an Outstanding Brass Player
Sophie Bright, *trombone*

Kerr Memorial Prize for a Young Pianist of Promise
Kwan Chai Wong, *piano*

Len Lickorish Memorial Prize for an Outstanding String Player of Promise
Alejandro Gomez-Páreja, *cello*

Richmond Concert Society Strings and Keyboard Ensemble Award
Astatine Trio

Philip Crawshaw Memorial Prize for an Outstanding Musician from Overseas
Ariana Ricci, *soprano*

Tait Memorial Prize for an Outstanding Australian Musician
Bella Marslen, *soprano*

ROSL Award for an Outstanding Musician from Hong Kong
NG Tin Lam, *piano*

ENSEMBLE AND OVERSEAS WINNERS



MIXED ENSEMBLE FINAL – 17 MARCH

Winner: AERA Ensemble

Formed in July 2025, AERA Ensemble is a piano, violin/viola and clarinet trio dedicated to adventurous chamber music that sparks curiosity and enjoyment. They seek to embrace diverse programming, exploring a wide range of styles and repertoire to create performances that are engaging, thoughtful and fun. Looking ahead, the ensemble hopes to grow into a larger collective, fostering collaboration and creative exchange across musical voices. With playfulness and passion at their core, they aim to make each performance a shared experience for both musicians and audiences.

Their programme included Bruch – *8 Pieces for Clarinet, Viola and Piano, Op 83 (I Andante)*; Beethoven arr Klengel – *Piano Trio in B Flat Major, Op 11 (I. Allegro con Brio)*; and Bartók – *Contrasts (III Sebes)*. The AERA Ensemble was selected not only for their accomplished and stylish performance, but also their programming which enabled the colours of the trio combination to really shine.

STRINGS AND KEYBOARD ENSEMBLE FINAL – 10 MARCH

Winner: Elmore Quartet

Founded in Manchester in 2017, the Elmore Quartet is an award-winning British quartet based in London, where they currently hold the position of Hans Keller Chamber Fellows at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Over the past two years, the Elmore Quartet has recorded multiple times for BBC Radio 3, and performed at esteemed venues throughout the UK and Europe. In 2024, the Elmore Quartet were selected as Penzance MusicAbility Foundation's first resident string quartet in partnership with the Frost Trust. This three-year position allows the quartet to integrate themselves into West Cornwall's unique community by performing regularly as part of the Concerts Penzance concert series, working with local schools, and embracing their passion for sharing classical music with new audiences.

The Elmore Quartet's winning programme was a striking contrast between Bartók's *String Quartet in No 3, BB 93, Sz 85*, and a traditional piece arranged by the Danish String Quartet, *Now Found is the Fairest of Roses*. Praised by the adjudicators for their collective musicianship and communication, the Elmore Quartet impressed with their highly accomplished performance.



OVERSEAS AWARD – 24 MARCH

Winner: Kwan Chai Wong, piano

Kwan Chai Wong spent six years studying with Christina Kwok in Hong Kong before moving to the UK in 2021 to study with Robin Green. He has also received additional coaching from various pedagogues such as Claudio Martinez Mehner and András Kemenes, as well as composers including Helena Winkelmann. He made his concerto debut with the orchestra of the junior conservatoire of the Royal Welsh College

of Music and Drama, before performing Rachmaninoff's *Piano Concerto No 2* as a result of winning the junior concerto competition at the college.

Currently taking a gap year before starting his bachelor's studies, he is spending his time exploring contemporary and orchestral music, aiming to convey how meticulously some works are composed in a way that is most accessible to audiences.



Daisy Clayton
Where the Light Falls



Aisha Plumridge Arosa'n
Ddewr, Brawd Bach (Have Courage Little Brother)

Mia Takemoto
Koinobori over the Pentland Hills



Emily Hana Hold



Erin Williams
Delicate Architecture

Hillary Emetuche 27



Louis Pohl
Horse Clone

RBA RISING STARS EXHIBITION

CHAMPIONING ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

Liam Dunne
Fractured Beauty



FROM 28 MAY

Sophie Lloyd
Semi-domesticated Poodle



William Lowry
Magi



Edward Jia
At Long as Last Love

ROSL is pleased to continue its long tradition of supporting emerging artistic talent through the Rising Stars Exhibition, presented in partnership with the Royal Society of British Artists. This exhibition showcases early-career artists who are developing ambitious and distinctive bodies of work – whether recent graduates or practitioners refining their professional direction, each exhibitor shares a commitment to quality, discipline and artistic growth. It also offers them a vital platform, providing not just visibility but also professional credibility; many artists who first exhibit here progress to major open exhibitions, secure representation and establish sustained practices. Visitors to Rising Stars encounter a breadth of contemporary practice, from carefully observed figurative studies to ambitious compositional works and explorations of abstraction. What unites the exhibition is vitality – the sense of artists finding and refining their voice within a public arena.

Members and their guests are warmly invited to view the exhibition from 28 May



Louisa Clark
Simulation

Phoebe Leach
Before 30 Fractions



Rufus Martin
Alexandra



Huiyan Zhang
Lichen

Shirley Chi
Tulips In Vases

Jenna Waldren
Wintering



NEWS & EVENTS

The latest from our Clubhouse; branches; art, music and announcements

Spring dining at the Clubhouse

February and March saw our culinary team showcase their creativity through a number of themed dining events, offering members something fresh and eclectic in the Duke of York Bar and the 1910 Dining Room.

Early March saw British Pie Week celebrated at ROSL, with our Executive Chef creating a culinary ode to Britain's most enduring indulgence. The menu featured a variety of comforting classics such as steamed mutton pudding and beef shin and oyster pie, as well as contemporary barbecued pulled pork and indulgent lobster and cod varieties.

The following week saw the celebration of Commonwealth Day with a week-long Commonwealth menu exploring dishes from the Caribbean to India, onwards to Australia and New Zealand, and home to the United Kingdom. This menu



proved particularly popular, and we were pleased to see so many members enjoying dishes inspired by the authentic traditions of each region.

With one-off specials for Margarita Day and our exclusive Chinese New Year menu from award-winning chef Daren Liew,

the beginning of spring was a delicious celebration of international cuisine.

For upcoming special celebration menus, keep an eye on our email newsletter and our online events page at rosl.org.uk/events

Clubhouse dress code

Now that warmer weather has arrived in London and our garden has reopened, we'd like to politely remind members of the ROSL dress code. We want our members to feel comfortable in the Clubhouse while respecting the unique atmosphere and etiquette of this grand Grade I-listed building, and as such some items including shorts, distressed clothing and flip flops are not permitted to be worn in the Clubhouse.

Our full dress code can be found at rosl.org.uk/club-rules



Commonwealth Day

ROSL Director-General Dr Annette Prandzioch was honoured to attend the Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey on 9 March, alongside members of the royal family, senior diplomats, faith leaders and other distinguished guests.

The theme for this year's service was 'Accelerating Partnership: A Connected Commonwealth', and featured performances by acts from around the Commonwealth, including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Town Hall Gospel Choir, and dancers from Sapnay School of Dance and The Royal Ballet School. The Act of Affirmation to the Commonwealth was led by the Honourable Shirley Botchwey, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations.

Dr Prandzioch also represented ROSL earlier in the day at a special service at the Memorial Gates, where she laid a wreath in memory of the five million men and women from Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent who volunteered to serve with the British Armed Forces during the First and Second World Wars.



Pictures courtesy of Royal Commonwealth Society

Finding Harmony: A King's Vision

A landmark documentary charting ROSL's patron HM The King's life as an environmentalist launched on Amazon's Prime Video streaming service earlier in the year. Made in collaboration with The King's Foundation, this fascinating film advocates the King's philosophy of harmony – the importance of ecological balance, and the essential relationship between humanity and the natural world.

Narrated by Oscar-winning actress Kate Winslet, *Finding Harmony* is not just the story of the King's lifelong advocacy for green initiatives – although the importance of his



role in promoting environmental action and convening those who can work towards protecting the future of the planet is at the heart of this documentary. The film highlights how his idea of harmony has informed community initiatives in the UK and abroad, focusing on sustainable design and urban planning, the revival of heritage skills, and nature-based farming practices. Weaving together interviews with charity heads,

scientists and farmers alongside archive footage, new material from Dumfries House and Highgrove Gardens, and personal reflections from the King himself, *Finding Harmony* invites viewers to consider how long-term stewardship and respect for nature can not only shape a healthier future for our planet, but also benefit us as individuals and communities. As the King himself says, 'We are a part of nature, not apart from her.'



New reciprocal club

We are delighted to announce that the Santa Barbara Club has joined our exclusive list of reciprocal clubs. Founded in 1892, the Santa Barbara Club is among California's most historic private clubs and holds the distinction of being recognised as a five-star Platinum

Club of America. Ideally located in downtown Santa Barbara, it provides a refined and welcoming retreat in an elegant setting.

Visit rosl.org.uk/reciprocal-clubs for a complete list of reciprocal clubs and details of how to request a letter of introduction

A home away from home

Bathed in natural light and framed by graceful drapery, the newly soft-refurbished executive bedrooms on the second floor of the Clubhouse's Park Wing embody a quiet, understated elegance.

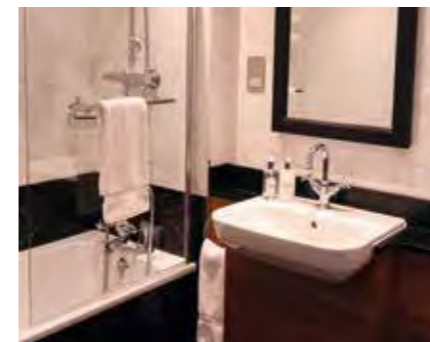
A palette of soft, neutral tones sets a serene backdrop, enhanced by plush new carpets that bring both comfort and cohesion to the space. Discreetly updated lighting and enhanced bathroom fittings add a contemporary touch, while preserving the classic character.

Each room has been thoughtfully reimagined to create a greater sense of space, with inviting seating areas positioned to enjoy tranquil views across Green Park and the city.

These six bedrooms represent a phase of a wider ongoing

transformation and improvements to the bedrooms. Over the summer, the fourth-floor Park Wing will undergo a complete refurbishment, elevating it to a new premium standard including the arrival of the Club's very first suite.

Visit rosl.org.uk/accommodation to book your stay and discover our latest room offers. Remember, four guest passes are issued per year, which means that members can book a separate bedroom for friends or family to enjoy a stay at Over-Seas House



Pre-Independence Day California wine tasting with Rutherford Hill, Napa Valley and The Federalist

1 JULY

Join us in celebrating the 250th anniversary of American Independence Day with a Californian wine and sliders tasting, bringing together the Napa Valley wine producer Rutherford Hill and the contemporary Californian wine brand The Federalist. Hosted by Chuck Cramer, Director of Sales and Marketing, EMEA and Asia at Terlato Wines, this guided tasting introduces the heritage, winemaking and character behind each producer, accompanied by a selection of sliders inspired by classic American flavours.

Book now at rosl.org.uk/events



Courtesy Sarah Creswell

Haydn, Britten and Schubert with the Brodsky Quartet

3 JULY

We're delighted to welcome the critically acclaimed Brodsky Quartet to the Clubhouse for a programme of Haydn, Britten and Schubert. Since forming in 1972, the Brodsky Quartet have performed over 3,500 concerts on the major stages of the world and have released more than 70 recordings. Their energy and craftsmanship have attracted numerous awards and accolades worldwide, while their ongoing educational work provides a vehicle to pass on experience and stay in touch with the next generation.

Receive £15 off your stay on 3 July 2026 when you book a ticket for Haydn, Britten and Schubert with the Brodsky Quartet on the same day. To claim this offer, please email your ticket confirmation to reservations@rosl.org.uk and request your preferred room



Jazz and classical guitar nights in the garden

MAY–AUGUST

What better way to spend a summer's evening than in the ROSL Garden, enjoying one of our delicious new summer dishes or a crisp glass of wine to a backdrop of smooth jazz or classical guitar music? Our series of open air music events continues throughout the summer, alongside our new summer menu, in the idyllic oasis of our Clubhouse Garden.

Visit rosl.org.uk/events for upcoming dates

Member-led Activities

BOOK GROUP

The Book Group meets in person at the Club, as well as on Zoom for overseas members, on **Wednesdays**, once a month, to discuss primarily novels. The discussion starts at 5pm but we meet beforehand for a drink and a chat in the Bar and afterwards for dinner (optional) at 6.30pm. We will be discussing *The Garden of Evening Mists* by Tan Twan Eng on 17 June, and *Marie Antoinette* by Stefan Zweig on 22 July.

To join any of the Member-led activities, please contact the Membership Team at membership@rosl.org.uk

BRIDGE CLUB

The Bridge Club meets every **Monday 2pm–4pm** (except on Bank Holidays) to play ACOL Bridge. New members are welcome. Lunch at 12.30pm is optional.

BACKGAMMON CLUB

Meets on **Wednesdays 2pm–4pm** and for lunch (optional) at 12.30pm. New members are welcome.



Dates for your diary

JAZZ AND CLASSICAL GUITAR NIGHTS IN THE GARDEN
May–August

RBA RISING STARS EXHIBITION
From 28 May

WIMBLEDON
29 June–12 July

PRE-INDEPENDENCE DAY CALIFORNIA WINE TASTING WITH RUTHERFORD HILL, NAPA VALLEY AND THE FEDERALIST
1 July

HAYDN, BRITTEN AND SCHUBERT WITH THE BRODSKY QUARTET
3 July

AS YOU LIKE IT IN THE GARDEN
10 July

NYETIMBER SPARKLING WINE AND CANAPÉS TASTING
17 July

CHRISTIAN FURR 'FRAGILE WORLD' EXHIBITION
From September

Keep up to date with all our upcoming events at www.rosl.org.uk/events



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