

# Edinburgh OVER-SEAS NEWSLETTER



The latest news and events from the Royal Over-Seas League, Edinburgh.

AUTUMN 2017



## From the Branch Chairman



From the  
CHAIRMAN

Dear Members and Friends,

At our AGM in May, I was re-elected as your Chairman. Thank you for your support and confidence in me and a huge thank you to our Committee, who are a constant and continuing inspiration on our behalf.

As I write, it is pouring rain but we hope for better weather for the rest of the year. Recent events have included Music & More, ROSL ARTS' long-running Fringe programme; 34 concerts that took place over two weeks in August, John Ramsay delighted us with a talk on Edith Piaf at our Coffee Morning on 3 June and an excellent Scottish Members' Dinner on 23 June when Dr. Donald Smith, Director of the Scottish Storytelling Centre was our guest speaker. Four of our members also represented ROSL Scotland at the Royal Garden Party at Holyrood Palace on 4 July.

A full list of forthcoming events can be read elsewhere in the newsletter, but I would like to highlight the visit to Pitlochry Festival

Theatre on 28 September. Following our successful trip to Tweedbank House in April, many of our members suggested we have an outing to Pitlochry Theatre as a follow up. If you would like to go, please sign up soon as numbers are limited.

Sadly, last month we said farewell to our Director-General, Major General Roddy Porter MBE. Roddy has been a huge encouragement to us in Edinburgh over the past six years and we wish him well in whatever lies ahead for him. We will miss him enormously. His successor has yet to be appointed.

I hope you are all having a restful and enjoyable summer. Your Committee look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events.

Warm good wishes to you all,

**Helen MacPherson, Branch Chairman**



## ROBERT FIDDES GREGOR 1924-2017

**Chairman ROSL Edinburgh 2007-2010**  
**Newsletter Organiser 1999-2010**  
**Born 4 February 1924, Woodside of Delgaty, Turriff**  
**Died 22 January 2017, Edinburgh**

To do justice to the incredible life of Bob Gregor in a few sentences is nigh impossible. Throughout his long and distinguished life, the key elements have always been his devotion and commitment to firstly, his family, and secondly, to the Young Farmers' Movement, not only in Scotland and the UK, but throughout Europe and internationally.

Between 1952 and 1984 he served as National Secretary, National Director and National Advisor to Young Farmers and Treasurer of the International Trust, the Ingliston Trust and the Ellen Kerr Awards panel in the West.

He was also a writer of distinction, with numerous papers and reports published across Europe. With his characteristic smile, he maintained that his book *Fifty Years of Challenge* would be worth more than its selling price of £9 "when I'm gone"!

He was awarded MBE in 1974. Among his many achievements, too many to mention here, Bob was a High Constable of Edinburgh and a keen photographer; his pride being his Hasselblad camera. A man ahead of his time all the time, he was a gentle man as well as being a gentleman. He was humble, dedicated and committed to his 'oh- so- many' undertakings.

A stickler for correctness, protocol, procedure, good practice, tidiness, we were privileged to have him responsible for our newsletter from 1999 to 2010 and as our Chairman of ROSL Edinburgh from 2007 to 2010. Bob had an uncanny ability to make people welcome and to entertain them.

He had an amazing memory for names and faces and was universally respected by everyone, whether young

or old, male or female, government official or government minister.

'Behind every great man is an even greater woman'. That phrase could have been written for Bob & Ada Gregor. Ada (also a member of ROSL) was always by his side, never seeking glory or credit or the limelight, just happy to be supporting her husband and caring for him and their two daughters, Alison and Lorna.

As I write, Ada is in failing health. As we remember and pay tribute to an outstanding and much loved Chairman of ROSL Edinburgh, we also remember with affection, Ada, Alison and Lorna; 'my girls' as Bob referred to them.

*Helen Macpherson, Branch Chairman*

## Clubhouse news



Summer is here at the Edinburgh clubhouse, though the sun may not be shining the view from the Restaurant looks magnificent today, with the castle partly shrouded in the Haar from the East Coast. The view continues to amaze our members and guests alike, living here we take it for granted but it is truly exceptional.

The Edinburgh Clubhouse has seen a busy first seven months of the year, with many highlights from welcoming the Dorothy Dunnett Society for their annual conference, Muriel Sparks association for their lunch, many curry lunches for our Asia societies, the Church of Scotland General Assembly events, and Dr Graham's Homes, to name but a few.

The new front door is also in place with the carpeting changed at the front door and steps. Handrails have been put in place on all staircases, as well as additional nosings (edging). Richard, our maintenance man, continues to paint and refresh the building through reactive and planned maintenance. The windows in the restaurant and two of our suites will be replaced from 10 September 2017. Scaffolding will be erected, but will not be block the entrance, so ease of access can still be maintained.

Our menu within the bar and restaurant is continuing to be developed and we do welcome any feedback from members on the menu, so if a firm favourite is no longer there, please inform the team and this will soon be back on the menu.

The walls of the main staircase are currently adorned with outstanding artwork by Scottish artist Damian Callan. The exhibition will be in place until the end of October when we hope to install further exhibitions.

With Christmas fast approaching, we are starting to prepare for the festive season, our new menu is available and our Christmas and Hogmanay packages can be viewed online or within the Edinburgh clubhouse. With many key dates in December already reserved by our members and organisations, we are looking forward to a very busy time.

As always, please do not hesitate to speak with me if there are any aspects of the clubhouse you wish to discuss, any suggestions or feedback are always welcome.

**Johanne Falconer, General Manager**

## BRANCH COMMITTEE

A Committee meetings on 14 June 2017 received reports from our Chairman and the House management. The Chairman welcomed the two new members, Mrs Hazel Norbury and Mr Alexander Merton. ROSL Chairman Sir David Brewer has been asked to attend our AGM on 17 May 2018.

Following the outing to Tweedbank, a card was received from Mrs Kathleen Sturrock, a New Zealand member, expressing the enjoyment both she and her sister in law had experienced during the day. A letter has also been received from Mr Terence Reid, Chairman of the Irish branch of Dr Graham's Homes, in Kalimpong, India, to express thanks for the excellent way they were treated in the clubhouse.

The Members discounts for catering were discussed. A new coffee machine will shortly be installed in the members lounge and it was agreed that a donation to charity of £2 would be appropriate.

The committee discussed and sought speakers for our programme of events well into next year and have set event types and dates to May 2019. Events are advertised in this newsletter and in notices placed in the Clubhouse. Committee Members Mr David Withington and Mrs Hazel Norbury put forward lists of possible speakers and these were slotted into available suggested dates. The chairman will contact them and try to place them into available events.

Please make payment when booking places at functions. This is to reduce the incidence of people not turning up. There are to be improvements in publicity.

We again appeal for you, if not already done, to send an email to our Secretary, Tom Murison ([tamurison@hotmail.com](mailto:tamurison@hotmail.com)), so that he can remind you of events. The address will only be used for that purpose. Your committee continues to welcome the return of questionnaires available in the Members' Lounge.

### ***Committee Members 2017***

Mrs Helen Macpherson, Branch Chairman,  
Mr Stuart Lynch, Deputy Chairman,  
Mr Tom Murison, Branch Secretary  
Mr Alex Lamley, Younger Members,  
Mrs Wilma Bernie Coffee Morning Administrator,  
Keith Stringer, Newsletter Editor  
Mr David Withington, Librarian  
Mrs Hazel Norbury  
Mr Alexander Merton

## *Improvements to the clubhouse*

The Central Council of ROSL is in the process of surveying the clubhouse and planning improvements. The committee would request suggestions from members for forwarding to the council.

## MEMBERS' LOUNGE

There is a box for members' feedback in the Members' Drawing Room. Members are asked to complete one of the forms placed there with their observations, comments and suggestions on the running of the Edinburgh clubhouse and branch. The completed form should be placed through the slot in the box.

The Branch Secretary empties it from time to time. The Committee and Management will then take any appropriate action arising from the comments.

There is a good range of books for you to choose from in our clubhouse library. When you return books, please place them in the basket provided and not back on the shelves yourself. It makes it easier to ensure everything is in the correct place.

## *Younger Members*

Please introduce your relatives and friends, particularly younger ones, to ROSL and invite them to join. The central location in Edinburgh, a clubhouse in London and links to reciprocal clubs around the world, ROSL membership is attractive to all ages.

Membership for those aged 17-30 is reduced. Contact the Membership Team by email on [membership@rosl.org.uk](mailto:membership@rosl.org.uk) or telephone 020 7408 0214 ext. 214 or 216.

## REVIEW OF RECENT EVENTS



L-R: Joanna Norman *soprano*; Svetlina Stoyanova *mezzo-Soprano*; David Lynn *tenor*; Jerome Knox *baritone*

## GALA OPERA EVENING

*Tuesday 23 May*

Members enjoyed an exceptional performance of arias, duets, and ensembles from opera students studying at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Opera School, directed and introduced by Professor Timothy Dean. The repertoire ranged from the familiar, including arias from Don Giovanni, Carmen and even South Pacific to new discoveries, such as the wonderful *Il Vient Un Jour* from Offenbach's little-known opera Robinson Crusoe.

We heard a superb evening from Joanna Norman *soprano*; Svetlina Stoyanova *mezzo-soprano*; David Lynn *tenor*; Jerome Knox *baritone*; accompanied by Professor Dean.

Whilst enjoying the subsequent drinks and canapés, members met two visitors from the USA staying in High St hotel that had found the concert in local paper. They had enjoyed opera throughout their tour of Europe, including Milan and Vienna. On their last evening before returning home, they had been "surprised to come across opera in Scotland"! They were blown away by the quality of the evening; enhanced by meeting the stars of the future and Professor Dean explaining the connection with ROSL.

This was one of Professor Dean's last concerts for the RCS as he retires this summer to Cornwall. He said he thought the four were among the best he had taught. We wish both him and all the students well in their future careers.

## COFFEE MORNING

*Saturday 3 June*

A talk and demonstration by John Ramsey on Edith Piaf made the 3 June coffee morning a joyful event. For those of us who love her music and enjoy hearing her story, his presentation was a delight. The urge to get up and dance was difficult to resist!

## SCOTTISH MEMBERS' DINNER WITH DR DONALD SMITH: REMEMBERING THE PAST, CREATING THE FUTURE

*Friday 23 June*

Dr Smith is Director of the Scottish Storytelling Centre. Between 2001 and 2007, he was the first Chair of the Literature Forum for Scotland and continues to chair its Literature and Education Task Group. He gave an enthusiastic and accessible presentation, touching on many points from Scottish history and considering how our stories help create and transmit our identity. His favourite writer on Scottish themes is Robert Louis Stevenson, a great storyteller who did careful research for his historical works, such as *Treasure Island*.



Dr Smith at the lecturn



L-R: Dorothy Wright and Johanne Mcleod, talking with Dr Smith and Chairman Helen Macpherson



Members and guests enjoy dinner together

## THE ROYAL GARDEN PARTY

*Tuesday 4 July*

Members Elizabeth Robertson and her son, together with David and Lorrie Osman (pictured below) were our nominated guests to the Holyrood Garden party. Hosted by HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, who mingled with all the guests, the slightly cool afternoon also featured two brass bands and delicious light refreshments were served to guests.



## DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S FAREWELL TO THE EDINBURGH COMMITTEE

*Tuesday 12 July*

The retiring Director-General, Major General Roddy Porter (pictured below) met with the Edinburgh Committee and several guests to whom he expressed his thanks for their support during his term of office.



Roddy enjoys lunch with the committee



## SCOTTISH MEMBERS' VISIT TO THE LONDON CLUBHOUSE

*Friday 29 July*

A Welcome Reception was held on Friday attended by Director-General Roddy Porter and his wife Marianne, who met with the Scottish members on their annual visit to the London clubhouse. Members then enjoyed the capital's sights, entertainment or visited relatives before meeting each evening for dinner in the clubhouse.



Scottish members on the Gibbs staircase

## MUSIC & MORE @ 100 PRINCES STREET

*Monday 7 - Friday 18 August*

Our 18th Music & More programme includes longstanding favourites Bach and Beethoven for Breakfast, Lunchtime Chopin or Schubert, and Teatime Tchaikovsky and much more.

This was too late for inclusion and will be reported in the next edition.

## *Forthcoming events*

**Lunches** are at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh. 12pm for 12.30pm. Tickets prices £18 or £24 for guests, otherwise will be on notices in the clubhouse and intimated in a telephone call when enquiring.

**Coffee Mornings** are on Saturdays. We gather at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh after 10.15am, speaker at 10.30am, may last until 11:30am. **£5.**

## FIREWORKS CONCERT DINNER

*Monday 28 August, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

To celebrate the end of the Fringe, guests can enjoy a glass of prosecco on arrival, a four-course meal and half a bottle of wine per person, including access to the roof for the fireworks and concert, which sees Estonian conductor Kristiina Poska conducts the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Followed by pyrotechnics from the Edinburgh Castle ramparts. The concert continues the International Festival's Shakespearean celebrations, commemorating 400 years since the great Bard's death with two very different but equally passionate musical interpretations of the greatest love story ever told. Prokofiev's ballet music for Romeo and Juliet *Dance of the Knights*, *Morning Dance* and the *The Fight*. Leonard Bernstein's West Side Story Symphonic Dances. Shostakovich's joyful Festive Overture. **£78. £95 guests. Black tie.**

## FIREWORKS MEMBERS BUFFET

*Monday 28 August, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

If you would prefer a less formal environment in which to enjoy the fireworks, opt for the members only fork buffet in the bar, which includes a glass of wine and prosecco. Includes access to the roof for the fireworks and concert. **£45.**

## COFFEE MORNING: ROBERT BRECHIN

*Saturday 2 September, 10.15am, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Speaker Robert Brechin discusses *Looking Back on Forty Years as a Vet*.

**£5.**

## ARTS LUNCH: ELLIE UPDALE

*Wednesday 13 September, 12pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Eleanor Updale studied history at St Anne's College, Oxford, before becoming a producer of television and radio current affairs programmes for the BBC. She is also a trustee of the charity Listening Books. *Montmorency* was her first book, quickly followed by three sequels.

**£18. £24 guests. Includes two-course meal.**

## HIGH SOCIETY

*Thursday 28 September, 2pm, Pitlochry Festival Theatre*

The Edinburgh Committee has provisionally reserved 25 seats at Pitlochry Festival Theatre for the 2pm performance of High Society. Please register your interest and pay £15 deposit at Edinburgh clubhouse Reception. The total price of £45 includes the discounted show price, coach transfer and a two-course lunch with coffee or tea. The menu will be available prior to the event and choices are to be made in advance.

**£45. Final payment to be made to reception by 21 August.**

## COFFEE MORNING: JIM MOIR

*Saturday 7 October, 10.15am, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Speaker Jim Moir discusses bird photography.

**£5.**

## ARTS LUNCH: ST MARY'S MUSIC SCHOOL

*Wednesday 11 October, 12pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Members and guests will be joined by pupils of St Mary's Music School. Founded in 1880 the school is Scotland's only full-time independent specialist music school.

**£18. £24 guests. Includes two-course meal.**

## A FRESH LOOK AT LITTLE SPARTA

*Wednesday 18 October, 6pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Little Sparta is Ian Hamilton Finlay's greatest work of art and was named one of the 'top 10 masterpieces of Scottish art' by the *Guardian* in 2014. Professor Andrew Patrizio will discuss this hugely significant Scottish artwork in a contemporary context as his 2016-17

project has explored the fusion of different art forms through the work of selected, practising artists.

**£12. £10 Friends of ROSL ARTS. Includes wine.**

## NEW MEMBERS' RECEPTION

*Thursday 2 November, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Would you like to find out about ROSL, the benefits and the people that make this organisation so vibrant? New, prospective and current members are welcome.

**Free. Includes wine.**

## FLUTE AND PIANO RECITAL

*Friday 24 November, 7pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Flautist Charli Ashton won the solo woodwind section of the ROSL Annual Music Competition in 2016 and shortly after was appointed principal flautist with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Programme to include Bach C Major Sonata, Reinecke Sonata *Undine* and *Stardrift* by Edwin Roxburgh.

**£15. £12 Friends of ROSL ARTS. Includes wine.**

## ST ANDREW'S NIGHT DINNER

*Friday 1 December, 7pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Joined by Hope of Craighead, enjoy a drinks reception and three-course dinner with wine and tea or coffee.

**£30. £35 guests. Black tie.**

## COFFEE MORNING AND CAROL SINGING

*Saturday 9 December, 10.15am, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Coffee will be followed at 11am by mulled wine and carol singing with the St Andrew and St George choir.

**£10.**

## CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

*Monday 25 December, 12pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Celebrate Christmas at your home-away-from-home with our traditional three-course lunch, including festive canapés and bubbly on arrival, with coffee, mince pies afterwards. There will be a visit from Father Christmas with gifts for all the family and an opportunity to watch the Queen's speech while you relax with a coffee.

**£65.**

## HOGMANAY DINNER AND DANCE

*Sunday 31 December, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House, Edinburgh*

Watch the fireworks from the finest viewpoint in Edinburgh, including a glass of champagne on arrival, five-course meal, half a bottle of wine per person and a glass of champagne to see in the New Year. Plus, access to the roof terrace to watch the fireworks at midnight.

**£125. Black tie.**

## LOOKING AHEAD

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Coffee Morning**, Sat 13 Jan 2018, 10:15 am  
**Burns Night**, Sat 27 Jan 2018, 6.30 pm  
**Coffee Morning**, Sat 03 Feb 2018, 10:15 am  
**Arts Lunch**, Wed 14 Feb 2018, 12:00 pm  
**Coffee Morning**, Sat 03 Mar 2018, 10:15 am  
**Commonwealth Day Lunch**, Mon 12 Mar 2018, 12:00 for 12:30  
**Coffee Morning**, Sun 01 Apr 2018, 10:15 am  
**Arts Lunch**, Wed 25 Apr 2018, 12:00 pm  
**Coffee Morning**, Sat 05 May 2018, 10:15 am  
**Arts Lunch**, Wed 09 May 2018, 12:00 pm  
**Annual General Meeting**, Wed 16 May 2018, 3:00 pm  
**Coffee Morning**, Sat 02 Jun 2018, 10:15 am  
**Scottish members' dinner**, Fri 22 Jun 2018, 6:30 pm  
**Scottish members visit to the London Clubhouse**, Fri 27 Jul 2018  
**Music @ 100 Princes Street**, Mon 06 Aug 2018 to Fri 19 Aug 2018  
**Fireworks concert dinner**, Mon 27 Aug 2018, 6:30 pm  
**Members only Buffet - served in the bar**, Mon 27 Aug 2018, 6:30 pm  
**Fireworks concert**, Mon 27 Aug 2018, 9:30 pm  
**Coffee Morning**, Sat 01 Sep 2018, 10:15 am  
**Arts Lunch**, Wed 12 Sep 2018, 12:00 pm  
**Pitlochry Festival Theatre**, Thu 27 Sep 2018, 2:00 pm  
**Coffee Morning**, Sat 06 Oct 2018, 10:15 am  
**Arts Lunch**, Wed 10 Oct 2018, 12:00 pm  
**Annual Reception for New Members**, Wed 24 Oct 2018, 6:30 pm  
**Coffee Morning**, Sat 03 Nov 2018, 10:15 am  
**Arts Lunch**, Wed 14 Nov 2018, 12:00 pm  
**St Andrew's Night Dinner**, Fri 30 Nov 2018, 7:00 pm  
**Coffee Morning and Carol singing**, Sat 08 Dec 2018, 10:15 am  
**Christmas Day Lunch**  
**12:00 for 12:30**, Tue 25 Dec 2018, 12:00 pm

## GLASGOW EVENTS

### LUNCH

*Friday 13 October, 12.30pm, The Western Club*

A two-course lunch, followed by a talk from John Ramsay on 'How Elgin lost his marbles'.

**£25. Call William Agnew on 0141 884 8342 for further details.**

### CHRISTMAS LUNCH

*Friday 8 December, 12.30pm, The Western Club*

A three-course festive lunch.

**£30. Call William Agnew on 0141 884 8342 for further details.**

### THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

For over 100 years the Royal Over-Seas League (ROSL) – a unique not-for-profit membership organisation – has encouraged international friendship and understanding through social, music, arts and humanitarian programmes. With reciprocal arrangements with over 100 clubs around the world and splendid clubhouses in prime locations in St James's, London and Princes Street, Edinburgh, members can escape from the bustle of the city and meet friends and colleagues in a peaceful environment.

If you have a friend or family member that would be interested in joining, please contact the Membership Department on +44 (0)20 7408 0214 ext 214/216, [membership@rosl.org.uk](mailto:membership@rosl.org.uk) or visit [www.rosl.org.uk](http://www.rosl.org.uk).

Royal Over-Seas League  
 Founder: Sir Evelyn Wrench, KCMG  
 Patron: H.M. The Queen  
 Vice-Patron: HRH Princess Alexandra, KG, GCVO



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