

# Edinburgh Branch OVER-SEAS NEWSLETTER



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

SUMMER 2016



## A vibrant start to the summer



Mae Barr MBE  
CHAIRMAN

January's events had a distinctly Scottish flavour, starting with Eric Melvin speaking at our coffee morning on 'A Walk Down Edinburgh's Old Town: From Castlehill to the Tolbooth', followed by the ever popular Burns' Supper with a range of excellent speakers, bagpipe playing and a splendid traditional supper.

At the coffee mornings in February, March and April, members enjoyed talks by Jackie Sutherland on the subject 'For gallantry under enemy occupation', Margaret Allan on 'The Ethiopian Adventure' and Dr Joanna Soden, former Curator at the Royal Scottish Academy, who spoke about 'Lily, Joan, Joyce and Anne: Some Scottish women artists and travel'.

We were most fortunate to have a distinguished speaker at our Commonwealth Day lunch, Commodore Peter W.H. Swan, who served in the Royal Navy for 37 years. His entertaining presentation included several amusing anecdotes from the days he was attached to HMY Britannia as Royal Cypher Officer to HM the Queen.

At time of writing we have just had the pleasure of hosting the annual concert by the Royal Conservatoire of

Scotland, a coffee morning talk on 'Carpet Design' by Bill King, former Director of Design at BMK Carpets, and also our last Arts Lunch with John Macleod on 'Scottish Gaelic: minority language making an international impact'. John is the official Gaelic translator for the Scottish Parliament and in his spare time is very involved with 'The Mòd' Gaelic Festival.

A special date for your diary: The Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday lunch on 12 June at Over-Seas House. The lunch is also a fundraising event, with part of the proceeds from the ticket price going towards the Roderick Lakin Memorial Appeal. If you are not able to attend but would like to give a donation this would be most welcome (cheques should be made out to 'ROSL – The Roderick Lakin Appeal' and if applicable please write your membership number on the back).

Finally, on your behalf I would like to welcome Johanna Falconer, the new General Manager of our Edinburgh clubhouse. The next time you are on the clubhouse, please do make yourself known to her.

**Mae Barr, Edinburgh Branch Chairman**

## D-G'S LETTER

As summer draws nigh, I am in a daily dialogue with friends and colleagues in Edinburgh about which city is experiencing rain or sun – London or Edinburgh. The answer is, I think, both in turn, which brings me neatly onto the Edinburgh clubhouse. We have, of course, made some significant changes in how Edinburgh is being run. We have let the contract with LNCC go, concluding that there were too many differences between us to make an enduring relationship work to our members' benefit. Graysons, under the experienced and professional eye of Johanne Falconer, are now running the facilities there and supporting you for a period of time. This enables us to re-write the contract and organise a tendering process so that we can ensure that we find the best partner possible to take the clubhouse forward.

I am very grateful to Graysons for their excellent support at this time in Edinburgh. I think Johanne is doing an excellent job and making some fine improvements in every area. We will continue to support her from London with the tools she needs to look after our members better. A big 'thank you' also to our very loyal and very lovely staff in Edinburgh. They have been through some difficult times with you of late and I am very grateful to each of them for their unflinching support and loyalty. We all appreciate this very much.

And so summer draws close with the promise of good things ahead and I again underline my commitment to the clubhouse and our Scottish members. I look forward to attending the Edinburgh Branch AGM in a few days time and we are deep into planning for a really good Festival Fringe programme. Please come and listen to some of the finest music in town. And please continue to use the clubhouse and support ROSL and our staff in developing the atmosphere and the programme.

**Roddy Porter, Director-General**

## Members Comments Box

There is a box for members' feedback in the Members' Lounge. 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. It will be emptied from time to time by the Branch Secretary. The Committee will then take any appropriate action arising from the comments.

## Clubhouse News



It is hard to believe that it has only been two months since I joined the Royal Over-Seas League in Edinburgh. A lot has happened in such a short period of time and with plans for much much more.

It has been a pleasure to join the club and I would like to thank the Edinburgh Committee and

Royal Over-Seas League members for providing me with such a warm welcome. I am extremely grateful for all of the feedback provided on some of the changes we have made so far and also comments on what each member would like to happen within the club in the future. I am very much a firm believer in "if I don't know about it I cannot change it" so whether feedback is positive or negative it is always welcome and will allow myself and the team here at the club the opportunity to improve Over-Seas House and create a wonderful environment for members to enjoy.

During May we hope to introduce a few changes to the club, with a brand new members lounge door with a swipe card system ensuring members-only access to the lounge and its facilities. The members lounge will also benefit from new fabrics and furnishings.

The reception area within the club has still to be completed, with a brand new entrance. A meeting will soon be held with the architect to put final plans in place and to settle on a firm date for the refurbishment to begin. This will be communicated to all members to ensure minimum inconvenience while work is carried out.

Further refurbishment plans are being finalised to enhance the club; members will be updated as and when they are confirmed.

We have a busy summer season ahead with a host of member events. Highlights include The Queens 90th birthday lunch on Sunday 12 June, which will truly be a celebration, and the Scottish Members' Dinner on 24 June.

A busy time for us all and I am very much looking forward to welcoming you all over the coming months.

**Johanne Falconer, General Manager**

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## ROSL'S NEW DIRECTOR OF ARTS



The Royal Over-Seas League is delighted to announce the appointment of Geoff Parkin as Director of ROSL ARTS, following a highly competitive interview process. Geoff assumes this mantle from Roderick Lakin MBE, whose untimely death in August 2015 deprived ROSL and the arts world of a prodigious talent and personality. In Geoff we have a successor well able to develop ROSL's arts programme, further augmenting ROSL's considerable contribution to the Commonwealth's classical music and arts landscape.

Currently Chamber Music Manager at the Royal College of Music, Geoff has previously held positions at the Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT), the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) and the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM). Prior to this he was a professional freelance clarinettist and studied at the University of Birmingham and subsequently at the RNCM, graduating with a Masters in Performance.

Geoff commences his full time role with ROSL from 27 June 2016 and looks forward to continuing and building on Roderick's work. His arts management career to date has been focused on advising and mentoring young artists at the start of their careers, and he is delighted to be able to pursue this responsibility further at ROSL.

## *Announcing ROSL's new Chairman*



The Central Council has unanimously approved the election of Sir David Brewer CMG, CVO as the new ROSL Chairman. Sir David was introduced to members at the AGM on 3 May 2016. The former Magistrate, Lord Mayor of the City of London and Lord-Lietenant of Greater London, spoke warmly of his excitement at, and gratitude for, being invited to Chair ROSL. He and his wife Tessa are looking forward to getting started and to meeting as many members and staff as possible.

**Read more about Sir David on page 12 of the Jun-Aug edition of Overseas.**

## BRANCH COMMITTEE

The main occupations of your committee recently have been the activities programme and acquiring speakers. We are endeavouring to arrange this up to 12 months ahead so we all have plenty of time to make reservations in diaries.

The revised and shortened branch rules are with HQ and awaiting approval. The change in management of Over-Seas House Edinburgh has also been welcomed by the committee.

Next year's committee is under consideration at the time of writing but the AGM will be past by the time of publication. The term of office of our Chairman Mae Barr MBE ends at the AGM. We thank her for all her work, much of which she took on from the now defunct position of the Scottish Development Officer.

# MUSIC AND MORE AT 100 PRINCES STREET

**Monday 8 - Friday 26 August 2016**



On its 17th visit to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, ROSL ARTS boasts another bigger and better award-winning series of concerts, lectures, brunches and discussions.

From the expanded programme of 2015 there is still more to be added, spreading to 53 musical, artistic and literary events over the whole three weeks of the International Festival and Fringe.

The best selling ROSL ARTS classical music programme which includes Bach or Beethoven for Breakfast, Chopin after Lunch, Mozart at Teatime and Jazz Brunch, are augmented by new events in the lunchtime slot of each week – talks on the history of colour, literary panel discussions on fantasy, heroines, detectives and Scottish poetry, and anecdotes about famous composers.

Consistent quality is assured by continuing to focus on showcasing ROSL ARTS prizewinning musicians whatever the musical genre.

With its central location, relaxed ambiance and refreshments included in the ticket price, Music and More @100 Princes Street offers one of the most civilised experiences on the Fringe.

100 Princes Street, home to the Royal Over-Seas League (a unique non profit membership organisation) is a relaxed haven amid the hustle and bustle of the festival, where guest can enjoy stunning views of Edinburgh's Old Town and Castle over pre-concert light lunch with a glass of wine.

## **Ticket prices**

Music and book events are £12, £10 concessions (unless otherwise stated). Performances last approximately one hour. Complimentary refreshments are served after events (unless otherwise indicated)

## **Tickets available on the door or in advance from:**

Fringe Box Office  
180 High Street Edinburgh EH1 1QS  
0131 226 0000 (9am – 9pm)  
www.edfringe.com

# *Over fifty performances IN THREE WEEKS!*

- 9.30am**    **Bach/Beethoven for Breakfast**
- 11am**      **Sunday Jazz & Harp Brunches**  
Buffet of traditional Scottish Fayre,  
unlimited tea & coffee included
- 2pm**        **Chopin/ Mendelssohn/ Rachmaninov  
after Lunch**  
Tea, coffee and shortbread included
- 2pm**        **O, Flower of Scotland/ Why Harry Potter  
Matters/ The Heroine Question/ From  
Deerstalker to DCI literary panel  
discussions**  
Tea, coffee and shortbread included
- 2pm**        **The Colour Blue / The Colour Red artistic  
lectures**  
Tea, coffee and shortbread included
- 4pm**        **Mozart/Brahms / Schubert at Teatime**  
Tea, coffee and shortbread included
- 4pm**        **Conductors Unbecoming musical lecture**  
Tea, coffee and shortbread included
- 10.30pm**   **French, Russian, American Classics Late**  
Wine or craft beer included (served  
before performance)

## *Younger Members*

With a central location in Edinburgh, a clubhouse in London and links to reciprocal clubs around the world, ROSL membership is attractive to all ages. We'd like to encourage more young people to join and use the Edinburgh clubhouse. Please introduce your relatives and friends to ROSL and invite them to join.

**Membership for those aged 17-25 is just £97 per year. For more information please contact the Membership Team via [membership@rosl.org.uk](mailto:membership@rosl.org.uk) or 020 7408 0214 ext 216 or 214.**

***Alexander Lamley and Committee***

## Reviews of recent events

### BURNS NIGHT SUPPER – 30 JANUARY

After a reception in the Members' Drawing Room Piper Edward Seaman led members and guests upstairs for the Burns' Supper. Chairman Mae Barr introduced the speakers, including David Withington who said the Selkirk Grace.

After a starter of cock-a-leekie soup, Head Chef Andrew Robertson was piped in bearing the haggis, laying it before Ian Garden who gave an excellent 'Address to the Haggis' to the acclaim of an appreciative audience. The main course of 'Haggis, warm reeking, rich wi' Champit Tatties and Bashed Neeps' was followed by the cranachan dessert after which those present settled down with their coffee and tablet in anticipation of the speeches to follow.

The Rev. Dr. Russell Barr's presentation of 'The Immortal Memory' was filled with humour and quotations from Burns' poetry. The traditional 'Toast to The Lassies' given by Alex Lamley and the 'Response on behalf of The Lassies' by Lauren Byrne, both of whom are members of the Scottish Younger Members' Group, were well received by all present for the way they were able to tease each other also women and men in general. Branch Secretary and Vice-Chairman Tom Murison gave the vote of thanks to all participants for ensuring such an enjoyable evening which was then closed with the enthusiastic singing of "Auld Lang Syne".



**Above:** Members and guests enjoy the pre-dinner drinks reception.

Lauren Byrne delivers the 'Response on behalf of the Lassies' and Alex Lamley delivers the 'Toast to the Lassies'.

### COFFEE MORNING : 'FOR GALLANTRY UNDER ENEMY OCCUPATION' – 6 FEBRUARY



Members and guests who attended our coffee morning on Saturday 6 February were entertained by Jackie Sutherland (pictured) who gave a true life account of her mother's time spent in Hong Kong, Malaya and Singapore pre-WWII and during her time of confinement in Changi Internment Camp, Singapore.

Initially her mother the then Miss Elizabeth Petrie was employed in Hong Kong as a children's nanny by a British expatriate family and later moved to Malaya as a nurse where she met up with her future husband Jack Ennis. Elizabeth and Jack moved to Singapore and were married only hours before the island was invaded by the Japanese Army of Occupation.

Elizabeth and Jack were interned in Changi Internment Camp, Singapore (separate sections for women and men) 1942-1945 during which period Elizabeth formed a Girl Guides Group and with other women internees busied themselves with embroidery and quilt making etc.

Fortunately, despite the terrible living conditions in the camp, both Elizabeth and Jack survived and returned to the UK. In recognition of her services to the Girl Guides, Elizabeth was awarded the Association's Certificate for 'Gallantry under Enemy Occupation'.

### CONNECTIONS NETWORKING DINNER – 24 FEBRUARY

International banker and ROSL Central Council member Clive Carpenter spoke on 'Africa - a myriad of opportunities, a continent of superlatives', at a dinner hosted by Connections Networking Group. A number of younger people attended and were interested to hear about ROSL. More broadly the event was a good opportunity to showcase the clubhouse.

## IN PICTURES



### From top left to bottom right:

1. Dr Joanna Soden, former Curator of the Royal Scottish Academy, pictured with Mae Barr MBE and Catriona Dalling, spoke about Scottish artists Lily McDougal, Joan Eardley, Joyce Winford Cairns and Anne Redpath during her illustrated talk in April
2. Mae Barr with speaker Alistair Gibb, who gave a talk on 'Banking: Invented in Scotland' at the February Arts lunch
3. Guest speaker Margaret Allan gives a talk on 'Ethiopia' at the coffee morning in March
4. Commodore Peter W.H. Swan, former Royal Cypher Officer on HMY Britannia, speaking at the Commonwealth Day lunch
5. As part of his talk on 'Carpet Design' in May, speaker Bill King brought in some of his beautiful carpet designs for members to view, as well as notebooks filled with his ideas for patterns etc.
6. Mae Barr and John Macleod, President of An Comunn Gaidhealach at the Arts lunch in May



# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

## QUEENS BIRTHDAY LUNCH

*Sunday 12 June, 12pm*

While the official proceedings take place on The Mall, members in Edinburgh are invited to a drinks reception and threecourse lunch with wine to celebrate our Patron's birthday. Proceeds from the event and raffle will go towards the Roderick Lakin Memorial Fund. £25. Guests welcome.



## SCOTTISH MEMBERS' DINNER

*Friday 24 June, 7pm,*

Join fellow members and guest speaker Rt Rev John Chalmers, former Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, for a delicious three-course dinner with wine and coffee. £25.

## SCOTTISH MEMBERS' VISIT TO THE LONDON CLUBHOUSE

*Friday 29 July - Monday 1 August*

Take in the latest exhibitions, plays and performances on offer in the capital - all within easy reach of your London home-away-from-home. Or simply relax in the Garden and enjoy a drink on the Terrace, afternoon tea in the Brabourne Room and fine-dining in the Restaurant.

£325-£330pp. Includes three nights' accommodation (park view), three dinners and continental breakfasts. To book contact the London Reception team [reservations@rosl.org.uk](mailto:reservations@rosl.org.uk) or call 020 7408 0214 quoting 'Edinburgh Branch visit'.



## COFFEE MORNINGS

*Over-Seas House, Edinburgh,  
Coffee served from 10am, talk at 10.30am  
Tickets £3 payable on arrival*

## HOSPICES OF HOPE

*Saturday 4 June*

Speaker Graham Perolls OBE CMG

## 'THE BRIGGERS' : THE MEN THAT BUILT THE FORTH BRIDGE

*Saturday 3 September*

Speakers Frank Hay and Len Saunders

## COFFEE MORNING

*Saturday 1 October*

Speaker to be announced. Look out for updates and more information in the clubhouse.

## THE HISTORY OF THE FESTIVAL AND KINGS THEATRES

*Saturday 5 November*

Speaker Cerin Richardson, Head of Creativity and Diversity at the theatres.

## ARTS LUNCHES

*Over-Seas House, Edinburgh. 12pm for 12.30  
Members £20, guests £25*

Come along to our regular lectures, followed by a two-course lunch and coffee.

## CASABLANCA: THE FASCINATING SECRETS BEHIND THE 1942 CLASSIC

*Wednesday 14 September*

With speaker Ian Garden.



## ST MARY'S MUSIC SCHOOL

*Wednesday 12 October*

Further details to be announced in *Overseas*, on the ROSL website and in the next newsletter.

## FILM NIGHTS

*Balmoral Room, Over-Seas House, 5pm*  
Tickets for entry and refreshments £7.50

Each month ROSL members can enjoy a screening of a classic film in the comfort of the clubhouse. In exceptional cases the film may finish at 8pm.

## CHARIOTS OF FIRE

*Tuesday 7 June*

## A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

*Tuesday 12 July*

## THE HURT LOCKER

*Tuesday 13 September*

## GANDHI

*Tuesday 11 October*

## THE LAST EMPEROR

*Tuesday 8 November*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**about any of the above events or to reserve tickets please contact the Reception team on 0131 225 1501 or email [reception@rosl-edinburgh.org](mailto:reception@rosl-edinburgh.org)**

# GLASGOW BRANCH

Glasgow Branch meetings are usually held at the Western Club, 32 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow at 2pm unless otherwise stated. All members and their guests are welcome. For information about the branch, please call Bill Agnew on 0141 884 6342.

Please note there are no Glasgow Branch events during the summer. The programme resumes in October.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

### 'ALBANIA'

*Friday 14 October*

Talk by Norman MacGilvay.  
£2 donation for refreshments.

### ILLUSTRATED TALK'

*Friday 11 November*

With Alan Colvill.  
£2 donation for refreshments.

### CHRISTMAS LUNCH

*Friday 2 December*

Details tba. Contact Bill Agnew to register your interest.

## 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 80 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).

### Branch Chairman

Mrs Mae Barr  
T 0131 334 3005

### Vice Chairman / Branch Secretary

Mr Tom Murison  
0131 337 6439

### Newsletter Editor

Keith Stringer  
01796 472578

### Younger Members

Mr Alex Lamley

### Committee Members

Mr Graham Carnie, Mr Stuart Lynch, Mrs Helen McPherson, Mrs Majory Wilson, Mr David Withington

**This newsletter was printed prior to the Edinburgh Branch AGM on 18 May. The new committee will be announced in the clubhouse.**



Founder: Sir Evelyn Wrench, KCMG

Patron: H.M. The Queen

Vice-Patron: HRH Princess Alexandra, KG, GCVO

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