

OVERSEAS

THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE



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Cover Image: Expelled gas from a dying star.
Image courtesy of NASA, ESA and the Hubble Heritage Team (STScI/AURA).

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The journal is published by the Royal Over-Seas League, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR. Any views expressed in editorial and any advertisements included are not necessarily endorsed by the Central Council.
ISSN 00307424



WELCOME



“The garden is looking resplendent with new-season blooms and planting... it's the perfect place to entertain”

Welcome to the summer 2023 edition of *Overseas* magazine.

The night sky is the theme of this issue, and we'll be uncovering the myriad wonders of this fascinating subject, from space exploration to star spotting.

While there's lots to look forward to in London this summer – including a lively calendar of culture, arts and events at ROSL (p. 43) – sadly the night sky isn't one of them, largely because of the light pollution that continues to increase every year, as Editor Rosie Allen discovers on page 10. But we hope that many of our members enjoying darker skies across the globe will be able to marvel at the shift in constellations and planets that the new season brings.

One thing visitors to the clubhouse definitely can enjoy is our al fresco dining, and the garden is looking resplendent with new-season blooms and planting by our gardener, Simon Milner. It's the perfect space to entertain friends and family on a summer's day and sample our garden menu, expanded in choice from last year. Or you can retire to the elegant surroundings of our recently refurbished Brabourne Room and Duke of York Bar, which will be serving our excellent new cocktail menu, including exclusive expertly created drinks that you won't find anywhere but at ROSL!

Wishing all of our members a wonderful summer.

Dr Annette Prandzioch
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

INSIDE

3 From the D-G

Annette looks forward to a summer of outside entertaining at ROSL

6 Illuminating the darkest corners of the universe

Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith explains how the ambitious Square Kilometre Array telescope project aims to unravel the secrets of the big bang itself

10 The new pollution

As starlight disappears from our skies at an alarming rate, Rosie Allen investigates the impact of light pollution and its effect on the natural world

18 Stories in the stars

Behind the summer sky's constellations lies a glittering myriad of myth and magic, as Abi Millar explores

22 A place of ideas

Our Public Affairs series is putting ROSL on the map as a hub of ideas and great conversation. Director-General Annette Prandzioch tells us what's in store next

24 Illustrated Guide to London

ROSL's home city has long been a haven and inspiration to artists, musicians and writers. Here Arts Curator Robin Footitt introduces an exhibition celebrating interpretations of the capital through the decades

26 Varanasi: A place where death is celebrated

Winner of The Madiha Aijaz Prize for a young photographer of promise, Shubhdeep Roy presents an extract from his photo essay, discovering a place where life and death sit side by side

30 Inside the Royal Warrant Holders Association

Executive Director Mark Leishman reveals the history of this iconic institution

32 Summer Place Arts Festival

Discover our first four-day summer arts festival, a cornucopia of art, food, wellness and crafts

36 News & Views

Learn how to master our signature cocktail and take a look at our refurbished bedrooms

41 ROSL around the world

News from our branch network and upcoming events near you

43 Events highlights

Look ahead to the arts, events and concert highlights that will be brightening up summer 2023

32

‘Experience a summer of wonder with ROSL’s first festival dedicated to the arts, with a programme of talks, concerts and workshops, all expertly curated by our Arts and Food & Beverage teams’

From the EDITOR

As spring shifts into summer the sky reveals new constellations and planets, and with them the mythology and stories that humans have used for centuries to give meaning to an aspect of our natural world that often feels far beyond our understanding. In this summer edition of *Overseas*, we aim to illuminate the magical world of the night sky, providing a deeper understanding of this most enigmatic of subjects.

On page 6, we attempt to shine a light on the darkest corners of the universe with Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith, British-Australian Astrophysicist and member of the original team that planned the Square Kilometre Array telescopes. An astonishingly ambitious project, (SKA) will see space-age equipment scattering the desert wildernesses of Australia and South Africa to bring us never-before-seen data on the expanding universe, dark matter and the origins of the big bang itself. On page 10, I talk to experts about the problems of light pollution, and how the urbanisation of natural spaces is proving disastrous for both the animals that rely on the sanctuary of darkness to survive, and the circadian rhythms that keep humans functioning.

And for everyone that's ever gazed into the night sky and wondered what it all means, Abi Millar is here to give us some guidance on page 18, with a delve into the stories and myths behind the summer constellations.

Back to earth, we talk to Director-General Annette Prandzioch about the successes and future of our Public Affairs events programme, and Arts Curator Robin Footitt takes us on a tour of our summer exhibition, Illustrated Guide to London, which is sure to inspire you to explore more of ROSL's wonderful home city, whether by starlight or sun.

Enjoy a wonderful summer, from the team at ROSL

Rosie Allen
editor@rosl.org.uk

ILLUMINATING THE DARKEST CORNERS OF THE UNIVERSE

Imagine we could see aeons into the past, catching a glimpse of the big bang and the beginnings of the universe itself. British-Australian Astrophysicist and Australia's Women in STEM Ambassador, Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith, explains how an incredibly ambitious project, the Square Kilometre Array telescope, aims to achieve just that

From the ancient red outback of Western Australia to the dusty plains of South Africa's Karoo region, something extraordinary is emerging across the southern hemisphere. A collaboration of over a thousand scientists and engineers is developing a colossal network of radio telescopes spanning two continents. The goal? To write the history book of the universe.

The science of radio astronomy began in the 1930s following the invention of radio technology. Whilst transmitting voice signals across continents, and later hunting for aircraft during World War II, radio engineers noticed a background 'noise' or static coming from certain regions of the sky when no signals were expected. Upon further investigation, they realised that radio waves were coming from outside the sphere of the Earth – and later pinpointed them to exotic

objects including the remnants of long-exploded stars, the centre of the Milky Way, and distant galaxies.

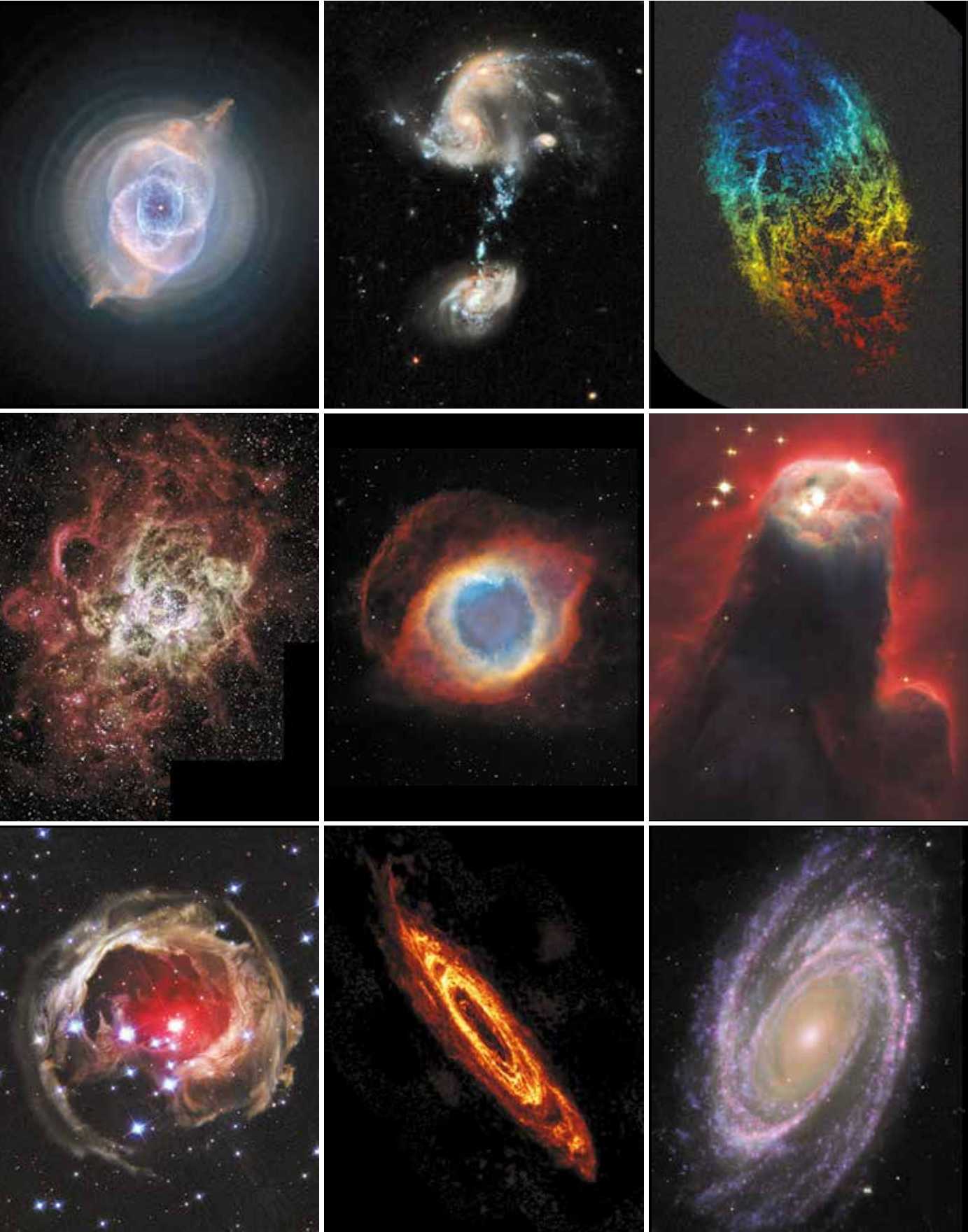
Those pioneers had discovered a whole new way of studying the universe. After the war, ever-larger radio telescopes sprung up around the world, enabling a new breed of scientist to investigate their cosmic origins. As a radio astronomer, I have spent almost two decades using radio telescopes to study the birth and death of stars, measure the chemical make-up of interstellar gas, and probe cosmic magnetic fields.

After decades of discoveries, the global astronomy community came together with a bold proposal: to build a radio telescope so large and powerful that it will be able to see the very first stars and galaxies that ever existed. In doing so, we hope to build up a more accurate timeline from the big bang to the present day.

But a radio telescope capable of studying the entire cosmos would need to be seriously big – more than a thousand miles across. The surface area of a telescope determines how sensitive it is – the bigger the better for seeing faint whispers from deep space. A large diameter also enables a telescope to make incredibly detailed images of distant objects.

With this in mind, the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) concept was born: a powerful scientific instrument made up of thousands of smaller radio telescopes connected to a smart computer 'brain'. By combining images from a large number of telescopes spaced widely apart, we will create a composite telescope with both the sensitivity and the resolution, or fine detail, that we need. And all this without covering an entire continent with a gigantic dish (for which we would no doubt struggle to get planning permission!). ♦

Images from a large number of telescopes spaced widely apart will create a highly sensitive composite telescope



Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith describes the SKA telescope system as 'a cosmic time machine', hopefully allowing scientists to see the formation of the first stars and galaxies, the origins of large-scale magnetic fields that pervade our universe, and the potential for life on other worlds

In 2012, a decision was made to build the SKA on two sites in Australia and Southern Africa. This was to ensure that the project had support from governments across the globe, and to boost the development of astronomy capability worldwide. In Western Australia, a region approximately 70km/43m wide will host approximately 130,000 2m/6ft 7in-tall metal antennas, standing amongst an iron-rich landscape that hosts some of the oldest rocks on planet Earth (4.4 billion years and counting). In the Karoo region in South Africa's Northern Cape province an impressive cluster of almost 200 steel dishes will spring up across an area spanning 150 km/93m, each 15m/50ft across. The project is run from a global headquarters at the Jodrell Bank Observatory near Manchester, UK, where I studied for my PhD back in the early 2000s.

The two components of the SKA are separate and complementary, with the Australian array 'tuning in' to low-frequency radio waves (50 – 350 megahertz) and the South African site focusing on the higher range (350 megahertz – 15 gigahertz). Since the universe is expanding, radio waves travelling through space expand too, meaning that the lower frequencies probe more distant parts of the cosmos and higher frequencies illuminate our more immediate cosmic environment.

Although the two telescopes look different, they fundamentally work in the same way. Radio waves from objects in space interact with a metal antenna which converts the waves into electrical signals: digital ones and zeroes. These signals are transported through fibre-optic cables to a powerful computer where they are processed into images and other data formats that enable us to extract meaning.

Supercomputing facilities on each site will process an astonishing flow of data – around 20 trillion bits per second – that's around 100,000 times the broadband speed to your home. Cutting-edge software will process this cascade of information in real-time and scan for interesting finds, with scientists across the globe having access to the results.

The name Square Kilometre Array comes from the early concept design, where the total collecting area was proposed as one square kilometre. Due to cost constraints, the initial build will be more modest. However, the modular design (an 'array' of smaller telescopes) means that more telescopes can be added in future to expand its capabilities.

Uncovering the mysteries of the universe

The SKA is a truly global project involving more than 16 countries on five continents. The ingenuity of thousands of scientists and engineers was harnessed over more than a decade to create the detailed designs that are now being realised as the construction

phase begins. So, what are some of the discoveries we can expect to see from the SKA as it comes online in the near future.

There are myriad mysteries the SKA will tackle including the formation of the first stars and galaxies, the origins of large-scale magnetic fields that pervade our universe, and the potential for life on other worlds. By surveying the skies for billions of stars and galaxies, measuring their properties and motions, and probing fundamental forces, we hope to get a handle on many of the questions that have been bamboozling astronomers for generations.

Perhaps the most challenging and far-reaching question the SKA aims to answer concerns the future of our cosmos. It rests on the nature of dark energy, which is a mysterious substance that is causing the universe to expand ever more rapidly. There is a wealth of evidence that the universe began with a big bang: a rapid expansion beginning around 13.8 billion years ago that led to the complex cosmos filled with stars and galaxies that we see today. Cosmologists studying the history of the universe had expected that the force of gravity, which is always attractive, would gradually slow down the expansion of space. But the motions of distant galaxies show that, in fact, the expansion is getting faster. This means that either our understanding of gravity is wrong, or the universe is filled with a substance – dark energy – which acts as a sort-of 'anti-gravity', pushing everything apart on cosmic scales.

Understanding the expansion of the universe and the role of dark energy requires a sensitive zore billions of light years away. Light signals (and radio waves) travel at the speed of light, around 300,000km/s, and therefore take aeons to travel from these far-flung regions of the cosmos. A light year is the distance taken for light to travel in one year, so when we look at the most distant galaxies now, we are seeing them as they were billions of years ago. **We are truly building a cosmic time machine.**

What the SKA uncovers over the coming years has the potential to transform the way we see our universe; and as beings assembled from molecules created in long-dead stars, this history is our story too.



SKA BY NUMBERS

The telescopes will be powerful enough to pick up faint signals emitted from cosmic sources up to

13 billion years ago

100

new roles will be created for the Wajarri people, the traditional owners of the Inyarrimanha Ilgari Bundara, and locals in the mid-west region of Western Australia to support construction

July 2029

Estimated completion of the building of the telescopes, which will take 8 years to construct in total

160 terabytes of raw data per second

is what scientists anticipate the SKA-Low machines will be able to produce in its first phase; for comparison, it's estimated that The Hubble Space Telescope generates about 10 TB of new data every year

1 square kilometre

of collecting area when completed will make SKA the most sensitive radio telescope in the world

15 countries

have collaborated on the design and build of the project

THE NEW POLLUTION

As humans continue our ceaseless expansion into the wild places of the world, starlight is disappearing from our skies. Rosie Allen investigates how light pollution is affecting the natural world and how we can save the species that rely on the cover of darkness to survive

Starlight has always seemed to us to be infinite, a presence as glitteringly permanent as the universe itself. Testament to this is the Ngaut Ngaut cliff shelter, an aboriginal sacred site that has perched on the banks of Australia's Murray River for over 6,000 years. Etched into the rockface are carvings that people travel from far and wide to see; observations representing the lunar calendar and the movements of the sun, and proof that the Nganguraku people have been recording and finding meaning in this night sky for millennia. Rock art across the globe shows that Prehistoric man had a relatively advanced knowledge of astronomy, using an understanding of the night sky to grow crops and navigate the seas. Even now, in an age where

seasonality and diurnal rhythms are rendered largely obsolete by industrial farming and artificial lighting, biodynamic farmers and gardeners still chart cosmological happenings to understand the best time for sowing, tending and harvesting crops.

But while starlight still figures large in our collective imaginations, the visibility of the constellations is disappearing from our night sky at an alarming rate. 'Light pollution is growing, much faster than had been predicted' says Professor Nick Dunn of Lancaster University's Dark Design Lab, the UK's first research centre looking exclusively at the impacts of light pollution. '83% of people live under a light-polluted sky and in the UK, Europe, and North America the figure is even higher at 99%. ›

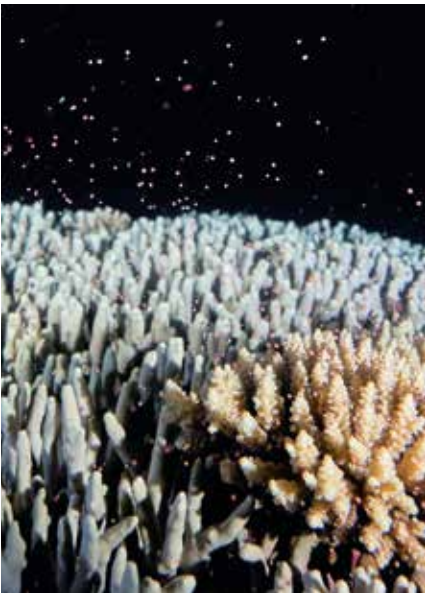
A recent 11-year citizen science study has shown that light pollution is not increasing at a rate of 2% per year, as previously thought, but at a much higher rate of around 10%.

Artificial lighting has extended our waking days far beyond the boundaries that would have dictated the diurnal patterns of our ancestors; by supressing the natural limitations of sunrise and twilight, we're able to work harder and longer and to engage in social activities long after the sun has set. Dark is considered an obstacle to progress, a narrative compounded by Hollywood movies, religious texts and epic novels and their infinite battles between darkness and light. Somewhere along the line, we've lost our respect for the dark; and it's slowly killing the natural world.

'Light and dark are essential to our body clocks, informing us when to be active or rest' says Professor Dunn. 'This is also true for many of the other species that we share the planet with. Yet artificial light at night can have profound impacts. When used carelessly, lighting disrupts wildlife, damages human health, wastes money and energy, contributes to climate change, and it blocks our view of the starry sky.'

The impact on the natural world
Johan Eklöf's groundbreaking book, *The Darkness Manifesto*, casts a rather bleak conclusion to the impacts that our seemingly insatiable need to expand and illuminate is having on the natural world, and which could potentially have devastating knock-on effects on the human one, from crop scarcity to disease. Eklöf argues that light pollution affects every single living thing on our planet, as 'every cell in every living organism has built-in machinery working with that rhythm' calibrating our circadian clocks. Furthermore, light pollution's effects on specific species could snowball into full-on biodiversity devastation; for example, half the insects in the world are nocturnal, including the moth, which is one of the planet's fastest disappearing creatures. While looking for nectar in the dark hours they can easily become confused by lights and, believing day is about to break, either not make their journey at all, or confusing lamplight for the

There is especially a concern for insects that lay their eggs in water as they mistake the pools of lamplight for the shining surface of water and then lay their eggs in these inhospitable environments



Clockwise from top: Light at night disorients many valuable night-time pollinators such as the moth; Turtle hatchlings can become confused by streetlights, leading to death on the roads; Some species of coral mate by moonlight, a natural phenomenon which is being affected by artificial light.

guiding glow of the moon, die exhausted or picked off by predators. This is worrying news when it comes to our food supply; nocturnal pollinators contribute significantly to the propagation of plants and flowers and the dramatic decline in these species, including moths, bees and even mice, while less well-studied than the impacts of the decline of daytime pollinators, is one we ignore at our peril.

Bats, nocturnal mammals that are natural seed dispersers as well as pollinators, are a particular victim of light pollution; Eklof found that the number of long-eared bats, which had generationally nested and given birth in Sweden's ancient church turrets, had dropped significantly in recent decades, affecting long-term populations of these extraordinary dark-seeking animals. A seemingly endless list of uncanny and unnatural disturbances makes for uncomfortable reading; corals that mate under the light of the moon, unable to carry out their most instinctive of rituals; birds tricked by an artificial dawn to sing during the night, and hatchling turtles making their way towards roads rather than the sea, guided by the trick 'moonlight' of street lighting.



'The affect of LAN (light at night) on nature is devastating' agrees Professor Russell Foster CBE, a Professor of Circadian Neuroscience and author of *Life Time: The New Science of the Body Clock* who has spent many years researching the circadian rhythms of humans and animals. He is Specialist Adviser for a House of Lords Select Committee on Light and Noise, and has spent much time researching these impacts. 'There is especially a concern for insects that lay their eggs in water' Professor Foster says 'as they mistake the pools of lamplight for the shining surface of ponds and pools and then lay their eggs in these inhospitable environments. Also, dung beetles, who have long used the stars to navigate their ways back to their burrows, and birds who use the constellations to guide their migratory journeys.'

The impact on humans
For humans, however, the impacts are less clearcut. 'We have to balance the pros and the cons – for example making streets safe to walk and drive at night, preventing the elderly from falling – with the negative effects that artificial lighting has on humans and animals' says Professor Foster, pointing to the fact that there is a dearth of long-term studies into the impact of LAN on humans.

In terms of inside lighting and its effect on circadian rhythms, the outcomes are initially more positive: 'To affect circadian rhythms you need relatively bright lights for long periods of time, so things like Kindles and reading by lamplight are likely to have a minimal effect.' Indeed, for humans there are many benefits to judicious inside and outside lighting; lengthening hours mean more time for work and therefore richer economies; more time for leisure, especially in the darker months when these activities would normally be curtailed by seasonally changing natural light.

But while moderate exposure to artificial lighting can be relatively harmless it's the intensity of many sources of outside light that we're exposed to that proves to be a problem, whether from the pools of streetlights that guide us home, advertising billboards, car headlights and municipal buildings and shops. LAN doesn't provide the gentle illuminating light of the moon's rays, or starlight on a cloudless night, but artificial lighting with its own spectrum of brightness, tending towards whiter lighting and those with a strong proportion of blue lighting, especially in LEDs. This is causing some researchers to fear that over the longer term, it could be detrimental to human health.



A study in China found that there were 'significant associations between chronic exposure to higher intensity of outdoors LAN, with increased risk of impaired glucose, homeostasis and diabetes prevalence... contributing to the growing evidence that LAN is detrimental to our health and point to outdoor LAN as a potential novel risk factor for diabetes.'

The study also concluded that light pollution affects not only big cities, but also suburbs and forest parks which are hundreds of kilometres away from the light source, making it an 'ubiquitous environmental risk' to which over 80% of the world's population is exposed. Apart even from the potential effects on human circadian systems, a depressing side effect is the fact that humans largely no longer see the glittering swirl of the Milky Way, or the beauty of the Aurora Borealis. Stars are receding ever further away from us in our day-to-day lives, just as space exploration technology attempts to bring them ever closer.

The 'lightbulb' moment – solutions to light pollution
Professor Nick Dunn is positive, though, that we can start to take back control; 'Design is brilliant at being able to bring information together in an accessible and practical'

HOW CAN WE HELP?

The International Dark Sky Association suggests the below as some ways in which we can help battle the problems caused by light pollution. Visit www.darksky.org for more details.



Assess the lighting around your home

Poor lighting creates glare and light pollution, and also wastes enormous amounts of energy and money. Take a few moments to inspect your property for inefficient, poorly installed, and unnecessary outdoor lighting.



Use dark-sky friendly lighting at your home and business

Look for the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) Fixture Seal Of Approval on any outdoor lighting you purchase. IDA maintains a searchable database of lighting products certified to minimize glare, light trespass, and skyglow.



Talk to your friends, family, and neighbours

You can be a powerful dark sky advocate for your region. Solving the light pollution problem involves raising awareness of the issue so that people are empowered to make better decisions as consumers, voters and community members.

manner, so we are working on new prototypes that will engage the public while also illustrating the issues. We are aiming to bring various organisations, groups and communities concerned with lighting, ecology, urban design, biodiversity etc, together so that we can form a ‘one-stop shop’ that provides clear and coherent resources for people to provide advice and support for protecting the night sky.’

Kerem Asfuroglu, an award-winning lighting designer and founder of DarkSource, works with companies and local authorities to create lighting solutions that have less impact on the planet; ‘we believe in a bottom-up grass roots approach’ he says. ‘Rather than imposing upon, we seek participation in order to make people a part of this journey by nurturing a sense of ownership and care for their dark skies. When people see the stars or bats returning to forage around the hedgerows at night, they realise the important qualities of the natural night, which they have been previously robbed. We receive positive feedback ranging from improved mental health to increased amount of outdoor time at night. I think the greatest difference we cherish is reconnecting people to the natural night they are severed from.

The new generation of designers and clients have a higher moral compass and sensitivity towards environmental issues, which gives me hope for the future.’

And in terms of what we can do ourselves? ‘Well, in theory it is as simple as flicking a switch, changing a bulb or fitting’ says Professor Dunn. ‘In practice, however, our relationship with light and dark is much more complicated. We need to do more to protect our environment, and this is just as important at night as during the day. We must rethink our values and take action to ensure a safe, inclusive and sustainable night for everyone and everything. As a member of the public, this can perhaps feel like a huge challenge, but everyone can make a difference. This is because if we all made small changes that reduced the light pollution we create, the sum of this would quickly have a significant positive impact. People have a lot of collective power. Now, more than ever, it is time for us to shed light for the sake of the night. After all, how we live during the day and night shouldn’t cost the Earth.’

Certified IDA International Dark Sky Reserves



RECLAIMING THE DARK

Imagine a utopia where artificial light has been banished, allowing the darkness of the night sky to reveal the glory of the milky way and galaxies beyond. International Dark Sky Reserves have been making this dream a reality in recent years, with 21 official IDSRs – certified for the exceptional quality of their starry skies and commitments of the local community to protect them – now in place across the world.

Here we take a look at some of these global reserves and talk to the people that have helped to pioneer them, to see how the preservation of darkness is helping wildlife populations there.

Idaho Dark Sky Reserve, US
Brian Jackson is the Principal Investigator for NASA's Central Idaho Dark Sky Reserve (CIDSr) STEM Network



The Dark Sky Reserve sprawls across the central southern region of Idaho, a state that is very rural and with only one really big city; in a sense it was the realisation that this area is already a natural dark sky reserve

that inspired the decision to become certified as one officially. In this beautiful state we're blessed with lots of beautiful rugged wilderness, small rural towns. It just made sense to keep this natural and rare resource. However, that doesn't mean that we're immune to the effects of light pollution – Boise is the fastest growing city in the US and the halo of light from the nearby 'Treasure Valley', the state's most populous metropolitan area, which runs like a smile across the map of Idaho, does pose a threat

to the integrity of the skies in the state. Across the US more generally, light pollution is a huge problem, especially in the big cities – many people will never have seen the Milky Way, or even the more identifiable constellations such as the Orion Nebula. As one of only two dark sky reserves in the US, we have a unique opportunity for education, and the STEM outreach programme, of which I'm the director, is part of a Nasa-funded programme that helps us to raise awareness – it's really the

most preventable pollution there is – as long as you can turn off a light, you can make a difference! The skies in the reserve itself are really something to behold; it's like the stars wash down from the sky and you can't tell where the horizon is because it's so lustrous. It becomes almost disorienting stargazing in the reserve. Even we astronomers struggle to identify a lot of the constellations when in a place where every single star is visible; you can just get lost in the glare of the Milky Way' ➔



River Murray Dark Sky Reserve, Australia
Chris Tugwell, Chairman,
Mid Murray Landcare
SA & River Murray
International Dark Sky
Reserve



The River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve was created primarily to protect this remarkably dark region (21.9 on a darkness scale that goes to 22) for future generations to experience the pristine night sky. Local residents were well aware of the amazing stars here, but had no idea it was special in world terms.

Light pollution is especially concerning for wildlife in Australia, where we have a mostly nocturnal animal population. Recent research is showing that it has a much bigger impact on wildlife here than was previously thought; artificial light at night can impact such things as breeding cycles (shorter nights can signal breeding at a time when food is not available), migration (turtles may not be able to find their breeding grounds), pollination of plants and even the natural behaviour of insects. It's a concern that most people are not aware of.

According to my scientist colleagues, winter is the best time for star-spotters to visit the reserve because there is less heat haze, meaning the 'seeing' is far better for astronomers. However, as I am not a scientist I would say that nearly any time of the year our reserve would provide an overwhelming experience for almost anyone from the northern hemisphere. Many Asian visitors are left speechless by their experience of our night sky. One of our friends told us she thought you could only see this many stars from space!

Rhön Dark Sky Reserve, Germany
Sabine Frank, official
Dark Sky Officer of the
Sternenpark Rhön



The UNESCO Biosphere Rhön is a step ahead in terms of education around light pollution. We started to draw attention to the idea of night as a habitat in and of itself, and the starry sky as a fascinating experience more than ten years ago. Since 2006 we've had guided star walks without technical aids and from 2009 there have been efforts to actively protect the night landscape. In 2011, the decision was made to have the Rhön recognised as an international star park and lighting guidelines were agreed with the municipalities. Because of this long period of environmental education, people in our country have been sensitised to the dangers of light pollution to a great extent. In the meantime, local authorities also switch off the lights at night and many people feel that this improves the quality of life. Certainly, the regained darkness has a positive, evident effect on the animal and plant world.

Outside the reserve, wild animals cannot escape artificial lighting with the dark spaces and corridors they need disappearing, along with the starry sky which is used as an orientation aid by many animals. The majority of our native species are crepuscular and nocturnal. This includes many species that have received strong

conservation attention in recent years, but are predominantly diurnal such as bats, beavers, field hamsters, wildcats, and amphibians. Among insect species, about half use the dark hours for activity. Day-active animals are also affected by light pollution, because they need darkness as well as quiet at night for rest and recuperation.



RECOMMENDED READING

The Darkness Manifesto – Johan Eklöf
The Swedish scientist's groundbreaking book on the impacts of light pollution takes a deep dive into the effects on wildlife and circadian rhythms, as well as celebrating darkness as 'a phenomenon in its own right'. Prepare to be enchanted by the night again.

Life Time – The New Science of the Body Clock – Professor Russell Foster
The Professor of Circadian Neuroscience explains how understanding our light-affected circadian rhythm can revolutionise every aspect of our health from our sleep to fertility, immune system, energy levels, mood and more.

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AMC FINALS 2023

Now in our 71st year, our renowned competition boasts £75,000 in awards and has provided a springboard into the industry for scores of musicians. Join us to see who will join the illustrious ranks of our ROSL Annual Music Prizewinners and support the brilliant young musicians who take to the Princess Alexandra Hall stage.

Visit rosl.org.uk/events for more details

STORIES IN THE STARS

For the ancient Greeks, the night sky was a picture book depicting scenes from their mythology. Getting to know the constellations can bring those myths to life today, as Abi Millar discovers

There's nothing quite as awe-inducing as looking at the sky on a clear summer's night. If you live in an urban area, these nights are the exception; a haze of cloud and light pollution being the rule. But every so often, the curtain falls on the day to reveal a black sky glittering with stars.

When this happens, I'm always struck with the fact of my own smallness – the realisation that all our human dramas are just a blip in the impossible magnitude of space. I'm also struck by my connectedness to other people in other times. On the face of things, I might not have that much in common with a Neolithic farmer in ancient Britain, or a hunter-gatherer on the African savanna. But they too would have looked up at the sky – most likely a clearer, brighter sky – to see this very same array of stars.

This is not to say that all people everywhere would have parsed up the sky in the same way. For one thing, the stars will shift depending on the time of year, or where you are in the world. For another thing, since the stars themselves are in motion, the outline of each constellation will morph beyond recognition over a period of thousands of years.

On top of that, different civilisations would have projected their own imaginings on the stars. I might look at the sky right now and, playing a game of join the dots, see an aeroplane or a double helix or a mobile phone. Someone living 5,000 years ago might notice a hand axe or a harpoon.

That means there's nothing inevitable about the existence of Ursa Major or Orion's Belt. The standardised list of constellations we have today – a list of 88 groupings agreed by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) in 1922 – could easily have been otherwise. But the fact we *do* see Ursa Major and Orion tells us a lot about the myths that have gone the distance; each constellation a piece of history crystallised in the sky.

Ian Ridpath, a well-known astronomy writer and lecturer, remarks there were probably several different reasons for the invention of constellations. 'The earliest of them were probably devised for practical purposes, such as to help seafarers and other travellers find directions at night,' he says. ●



CAPRICORN

The 'horned goat' is often depicted as the mythical half goat, half fish sea goat, and is among the brightest constellations



AQUARIUS

The 'water bearer' is one of the oldest observed constellations, and was first recorded by Greek astronomer Claudius Ptolemy in the second century



PISCES

This large constellation symbolises a distant pair of fishes connected by one cord, said in Greek legend to be a shape-shifted Aphrodite and her son Eros



ARIES

In ancient Egyptian myth, Aries was depicted as a man with a ram's head, and associated with fertility and creativity



TAURUS

The 'bull' is important in the agricultural calendar, marking the location of the sun during the spring equinox



GEMINI

When Castor, the mortal of Gemini's twins, died, immortal twin Pollux begged Zeus to grant them eternity in the stars together



CANCER

The 'crab' was slain by Heracles, and then placed in the stars by the Goddess, and Heracles enemy, Hera



LEO

The 'lion' was a beast that would take women as hostages to its cave, luring saviour warriors to their doom



VIRGO

This Goddess is associated with fertility and agriculture in ancient cultures, and during the middle ages was associated with the Virgin Mary



LIBRA

Latin for 'weighing scales' Libra is said to depict scorpion's claws in Greek mythology, and is associated with fairness and justice



SCORPIUS

In one Greek myth, a battling scorpion and Orion were placed in the heavens by Zeus as a reminder to humans to curb excessive pride



SAGITTARIUS

Depicted as a centaur drawing back a bow, in one myth Sagittarius was created to guide the Argonauts in their journey to find the golden fleece

'Another purpose, more social than practical, was to act as a picture book to illustrate scenes and characters from mythology.'

The constellations we recognise today originated in the Middle East around the second millennium BC. The ancient Greeks took these groupings and adapted and expanded them, culminating in the *Almagest* by Ptolemy – an astronomical treatise cataloguing 48 constellations. Each constellation, according to the Greeks, was placed there by the gods to honour to those who had performed great deeds on Earth.

'Back then no one knew what stars were, or how far away they were. Stars were regarded simply as lights hanging on a sphere that rotated around the Earth every day,' says Ridpath.

For those of us in the northern hemisphere, a good place to start might be the Summer Triangle, consisting of the bright stars Vega, Deneb, and Altair in the constellations Cygnus, Lyra, and Aquila. It should be noted

that the Summer Triangle itself is not a constellation but an asterism – an unofficial, though easily recognisable, grouping of stars.

Lyra represents the lyre (or harp) of Orpheus, a mortal man who was gifted with incredible musical powers. Crazed with grief after the death of his bride, he aimlessly wandered the hills strumming his lyre. After his death, the gods placed his magical harp in the sky.

Aquila, which means 'the eagle' in Latin, has several associated myths. In one story, the eagle held Zeus's thunderbolts; in another, the eagle was the love goddess Aphrodite in disguise. In another, the eagle kidnapped a prince called Ganymede; in yet another, the eagle was found guarding the arrow of Eros that struck Zeus.

Then there's Cygnus, Ridpath's personal summer favourite. 'It lies almost overhead during summer months, and appears to fly along the starry band of the Milky Way,' he says. 'It is also known as the

Northern Cross since its main stars form an easily recognised cross shape, far bigger and better than the more famous southern cross. In mythology it represents a disguise of Zeus (another one!) that he adopted to seduce Queen Leda of Sparta.'

Another important summer constellation is Hercules, the fifth largest constellation in the sky. Unsurprisingly, it is named after Hercules – the Roman name for the Greek hero Heracles. He was the son of Zeus and a mortal woman, and was known for killing Ladon the Dragon. The dragon in question is represented by the neighbouring constellation Draco, which is visible all year round.

Over the summer months, you might also catch a glimpse of two constellations of the zodiac – Scorpius and Sagittarius. As Ridpath explains, the constellations of the zodiac are those through which the sun appears to pass every year. 'The astrological signs do not coincide

with the astronomical constellations and the two should not be confused,' he adds.

Scorpius looks distinctively like a scorpion, with the bright red star Antares at its heart. In Greek mythology, it was the giant scorpion sent by the earth goddess Gaia to slay the hunter Orion.

Sagittarius, meanwhile, means 'archer' – even though to many modern observers, it looks more like a teapot. It is associated with the myth of Chiron, a centaur who acted as a teacher to many Greek heroes. The centaur was immortalised in the sky, shooting a bow and arrow into the heart of Scorpius.

'The old myths live on, and you can see them illustrated every night in the sky as constellations of stars,' says Ridpath. 'Learning about the myths of the constellations gives us a real connection with the ancient civilisations who first devised those pictures in the sky.'

A place of ideas

Director-General Dr Annette Prandzioch explains how our ongoing Public Affairs series is putting ROSL on the map as a hub of ideas and creativity in the realm of geo-political affairs



Have you ever imagined what it would be like to work undercover for MI6? Or wanted to know the real machinations behind Russia's invasion of Ukraine? Maybe you're fascinated by how foreign correspondents navigate war zones, or perhaps it's the skill behind political wranglings and deal-making that makes you tick? Whichever subjects pique your interest, ROSL aims to quench your thirst for knowledge, by platforming politicians, diplomats, journalists and historians as part of our Public Affairs series of events.

The Director-General Annette Prandzioch, together with the previous Chairman, the Hon. Alexander Downer AC, have been the driving force behind this series, using their networks to curate a varied and contemporary programme of talks. Their hope is to create a series of lectures that will challenge, provoke conversation and inspire curiosity.

'Since joining ROSL, I have taken the Royal Charter mandate of promoting international friendship and collaboration very seriously' says Annette. 'We are an internationally minded organisation, and keeping on the pulse of current world events and geo-politics felt integral to honouring the original tenets of this institution. One of the reasons we want to offer this for members is that we're far more than just a club. We have a role to play in convening and providing some thought leadership. 'The Public Affairs series, alongside the Annual Music Competition and visual arts programme are a 'golden thread' of internationalism that is embedded in the ROSL DNA.'

The series, which has seen BBC Diplomatic Correspondent James Landale, Julia Gillard, Former PM of Australia, Rt Hon. Jack Straw MP former Foreign Secretary, Lord George Robertson, former NATO Secretary General and Sir John Sawers, former Head of MI6, tread the boards of the Princess Alexandra Hall, has been very popular with members, and is very well attended, with a recent talk from The Rt. Hon Lord Frost, who helped end the deadlock over Brexit negotiations, proving another popular hit.

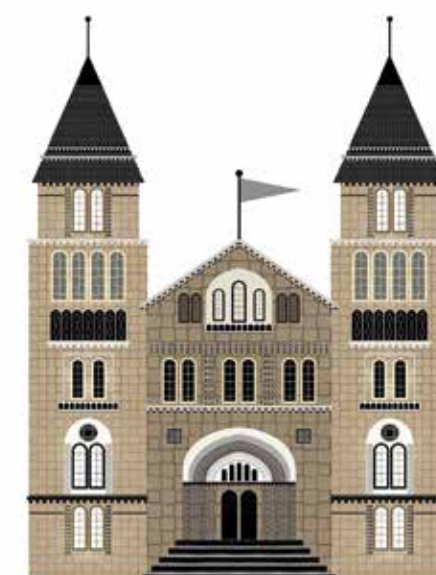
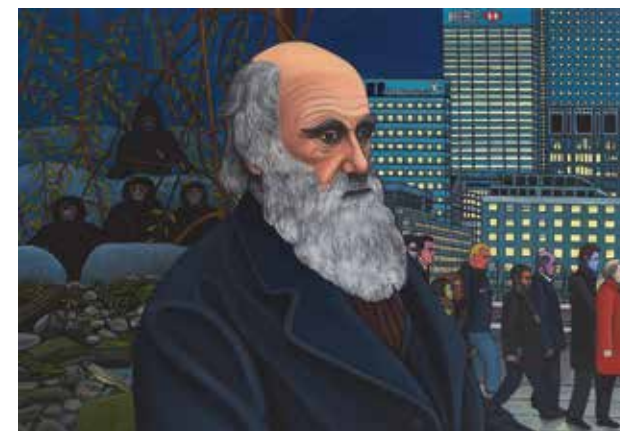
But does Annette ever worry that public affairs could prove too divisive for our members? 'It's very important that we remain apolitical non partisan and represent different views from across the spectrum' she says. 'I've always been a fervent believer that ROSL, with its 10,000-strong global membership with varied views,

shouldn't be the place for partisan politics. We reflect that as much as possible in the people we invite to speak at ROSL, who hold a variety of perspectives. I have noticed that in particular our members do love a spook, with our talks by former Heads of MI6 proving particularly popular.'

And what for the future of public affairs at ROSL? 'We're now entering our third year of the series and we've gone from strength to strength, with great feedback from members and speakers alike. As audiences grow, we want to keep the guest speakers varied and always interesting, offering insightful, thought-provoking content and addressing the pressing issues of the day. Having covered topics as diverse as the rise of China, Russia and the war in Ukraine, the Wuhan lab theory and more, I'm excited to see which issues we can explore and the experts in their fields that we can source next. We'll be continuing our Annual ROSL Lecture with a guest speaker yet to be revealed; but past speakers include Lord Chris Patten, Chancellor of Oxford University and the last Governor of Hong Kong, and renowned historian Lord Andrew Roberts, which gives members an indication of the standing and quality that members can expect from 2023's lecture.'

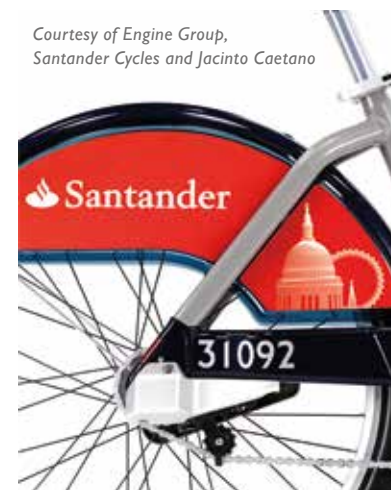
"Having covered topics as diverse as the rise of China, Russia and the war in Ukraine, the Wuhan lab theory and more, I'm excited to see which issues we can explore"





Previous page: Ed Gray, *St Thomas's hospital*; This page, L-R: Ben Edge, *On the origin of species*; Katie Ponder, *Natural History Museum*; Jacinto Caetano Project Baron exhibition; XL5 Zine; Clair Rossiter, *Hammersmith & Fulham*

Courtesy of Engine Group, Santander Cycles and Jacinto Caetano



Illustrated Guide to London

Visual Arts Curator Robin Footitt walks us through our summer exhibition, a visual guide to the city that ROSL calls home

After May's bustling crowds and tourism, received from the traditional pageantry of the recent Coronation, it is easy to forget how London's open city message has developed over time to form diverse communities, cultures and vibrant subcultures full of life and celebrations of their own. Upcoming art exhibition *Illustrated Guide to London* (14 July – 24 September) does just that; I've brought together the brightest talents in contemporary illustration, art and design to produce a highly anticipated summer exhibition depicting what makes London such a popular and unique destination told through the story of its people, landmarks, destinations and topography.

Hannah Warren takes inspiration from the people and sense of community she sketches as she walks around the city, or as Warren describes them 'little snapshots of life'. She often feels like London is misconceived as a touristy or transient place, a place to make money and leave, but since raising a child in the city she makes drawings showing another view – work that focuses on people and feelings, how we live and try to get along on this planet.

Painter Ed Gray (above) also focuses solely on what catches his eye, everyday crowd scenes become theatrical encounters played out in instant tableaux across London's city streets, enriched with microscopic detail to each character's behavioral aesthetics. Crowds also form the subject of Anna Rumsby's

studies. Anna has previously characterised Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in print commissions for ROSL.

The people of London are the subject for reading material available to enjoy during the exhibition. Café Royal Books are an award-winning publisher of documentary photography, committed to producing photobooks predominantly documenting social and cultural change. A sample of their volumes can be viewed in the Central Lounge on subjects such as *Down the Tube: Travellers on the London Underground 1987–1990*, *New Romantics: London 1980–81*, *Brixton 1973–1975* and *Soho 1997–1990*. There will also be reproductions of self-published fanzines *XL5*, *See You in Court*, *Rhythm Plus* and *Strong Foundation*, all written about the London

music scene in the early 1980s. These were originally photocopied, stapled and distributed by Kevin Bagnall, A.K.A. AFC Baggy and sold at legendary music venues around town such as The Marquee and the Bridge House.

Navigating the big city, you may have encountered the layered colourful maps of Olivia Brotheridge, who has collaborated on many themed area designs for clients including Hackney Council, Westminster BID and Hilton Hotels. As a part of the exhibition Olivia has designed a new print edition map with a little cameo from a Clubhouse you may be familiar with.

Katie Ponder displays a new series of iconic London buildings in her own inimitable style, which recently saw her commissioned by Royal Mail to design the 2022 Christmas stamp series

series from digital drawings, these buildings will also come to life on a bigger scale on the Gibbs Staircase of ROSL's Central Lounge.

Since the advent of the London cycle scheme, designer and artist Jacinto Caetano's *Twisted Line* vision of travelling through landmarks with kinetic white line drawings of buildings and structures move daily, emblazoned on all 12,000 iconic red Santander Cycles throughout the capital. For this exhibition he also displays *Soho Stories* for the first time, an unrealized set of illustrated sonnets dedicated to the energetic life and times of the heart of London's West End (originally proposed for the site entrance to the Tottenham Court Road Crossrail station).

Clair Rossiter's illustrated mapped history of lesser-known landmarks and strange events will take the story of London on an alternative plotted walking tour.

Clair is best known for her work on Nadiya's *Bake Me a Story*, a collection of children's books written by *The Great British Bake Off 2015* winner Nadiya Hussain, as well as editorial work for *The Washington Post*, *Hello Magazine* and *Sainsbury's*.

Ben Edge's figurative paintings depict aspects of British folklore and storytelling. In one of his portraits exhibited *On the Origin of Species* (2017) we see naturalist, geologist, and biologist Charles Darwin set against an allegorical London backdrop which references his own life history. Darwin was inspired by observations of the struggling lives of Victorian Londoners and the unforgiving 'survival of the fittest' nature of London itself.

Illustrated Guide to London is on view in the Central Lounge, ROSL Clubhouse, London 14 July – 24 September.

RSVP to attend the Private View Drinks Reception on Thursday 13 July, 6-8PM at rosl.org.uk/events

VARANASI

A place where death is celebrated

Winner of The Madiha Aijaz Prize for a young photographer of promise in ROSL PHOTO 21 Shubhodeep Roy used his prize money to make a journey to Varanasi, to document the lives of the cremation workers of the region. Here is an extract from his ongoing photo essay, in which he makes a plea for better conditions for those who do such vital work

Lying in the south of the state of Uttar Pradesh on the banks of the holy River Ganges, is Varanasi, which is believed to be the oldest inhabited city in the world. For centuries, the mystery of this place has attracted pilgrims from across India and the rest of the world. Varanasi is closely associated with the River Ganges. Hindus believe that death in the city will bring salvation, making it a major centre for pilgrimage. The city has 87 ghats (river-front steps leading to the banks of the river), most of which are used for bathing and religious ceremonies, while a few are used

exclusively as cremation sites. Here in Varanasi, death is very much part of life itself and thousands of people come each year hoping to live their last moments by the river; it is a sacred honour to die by the Ganges. The city is known as one of the world's largest cremation grounds, a place where life and death co-exist. Manikarnika is the largest and most auspicious cremation ghat, with cremations taking place on wooden pyres along the river's edge. Throughout the day and night, you can see funeral pyre flames burning bright, every single day, just as they have done for thousands of years. ➔



SHUBHODEEP ROY
22-year-old award-winning photographer Shubhodeep Roy has a passion for capturing socially important issues on camera.



Serendipity



Along The River



Ganga Aarti



Deevotee



Eternal Flame



Ganges



Morning Activities



The task of burning is arduous and is undertaken by doms, who belong to the lowest ranks of the Hindu caste system and who earn their livelihood through what we call the 'business of death.' In Varanasi, the profession is carried forward through generations of families and as a result those born as doms are trapped in this destiny; their caste dictates that earning a livelihood at the cremation ground is their only option. The term 'dom' is the name given to morticians in the Hindu tradition and they have faced prejudice since time immemorial, considered 'outcasts' in the Hindu society. Many people are taught that doms are 'untouchables', belonging to a lower class. Tragically, some people even see them as barely human at all. In my eyes however, it's doms who help us to perform the funeral rites of our loved ones, and they pave the way for departed souls in their

The task of burning is arduous and is undertaken by Doms, who belong to the lowest ranks of the Hindu caste system and who earn their livelihood through what we call the 'business of death.'

heavenly journey. While their role is an essential one, there is little pause for thought to consider their pain and social isolation; but the time has come to change this age-old orthodox mindset. We must appreciate doms as those that stand by us during the most painful hours of our life.

Through my photo essay I feel proud to act as a voice for the doms. I still believe and hope that the mind-set will change and someday doms will gain equality. Photography has the power to change people's perspective towards social changes and issues, and my photographic journey is to capture not just social, political and financial issues and conflicts, but also to portray the artistic beauty and enduring power of the human spirit. I am on an endless journey of documenting the untold human stories through my lens. Here I have the chance to tell the dom's stories on their behalf.

ROSL PHOTO 23 IS OPEN

Entries have been pouring in for ROSL's PHOTO 23, our photography competition which aims to find the very best photography talent, and there's still time to make a submission before the closing date of 1 September 2023. This year the theme is 'Viewpoint' and each entrant can submit up to five digital images of their choice taken in the past 18 months, tackling the subject however they wish. ROSL PHOTO 23 is free to enter and offers £3,500 of prize money, an exhibition of shortlisted entries in London, winning images published in *Overseas Magazine* and open to any photographer 18+ who is a citizen of a Commonwealth or former Commonwealth Country, the US, EU and EEA countries or Switzerland. ROSL will also accept images that have a link to current countries of the Commonwealth from entrants outside of the geographical areas listed above.

rosl.org.uk/photography



ROSL's Coronation Appeal

Support ROSL with a donation to our appeal

The ROSL Foundation (previously known as the Golden Jubilee Trust) was founded during the Golden Jubilee of the Royal Over-Seas League, with the purpose of supporting our aims. Over the last few decades we have promoted and supported hundreds of young musicians and artists. The jewel in the ROSL crown is the renowned Annual Music Competition, now in its 71st year, with previous winners including cellist Jacqueline Du Pre and pianist Melvyn Tan, and more recently cellist Abel Selaoe and violinist Emily Sun. Our Vice Patron HRH Princess Alexandra has attended many of the finals of this incredible competition. In more recent times we have promoted international visual arts residences, hosting young emerging talent from countries such as Nigeria and India. As ROSL's ethos is that of a family, we keep in touch with the young winning artists and musicians, and provide bespoke guidance and support during the crucial early years of their careers. Winners such as pianist Piers Lane who have gone on to stellar careers continue to perform at ROSL. The ROSL Foundation more recently has looked to support the heritage of ROSL and upkeep of our unique Grade I listed properties in which these important and uplifting activities take place, including the Public Affairs series now into its third year. Renovating, preserving and modernising our home at Overseas House, Park Place St. James's is critical to the work we do.

As we celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, this is an ideal moment to look forward to many more years of bringing people together through shared interests and cultural engagements. That's why we are launching The Coronation Appeal to help grow the funds already held by the Foundation.

You can build on the generosity of current and previous generations and help to maintain our long-held traditions of international friendship and support. If you would like to make a financial donation to the Coronation Appeal of the ROSL Foundation this can be done online by secure link at <https://tinyurl.com/Coronation-Appeal>. If you would like to discuss giving a substantial donation or a legacy please get in touch with the Director-General at bneale@rosl.org.uk.

Thank you very much for your support.

Dr Annette Prandzioch, Director General



Inside Royal Warrant Holders Association

What makes a product worthy of a Royal Warrant, and how has the institution maintained relevance in a country where public opinion on the monarchy is ever-changing? Mark Leishman, Executive Director of the Royal Warrant Holders Association gives us a glimpse behind that iconic crest

What attracted you to working at the Royal Warrant Holders Association?

It struck me as an organisation with a fascinating history, and like a number of rather unusual British organisations, at its heart bears a centuries-old heritage, yet carries weight and relevance in the modern age. The Association also appeared to me to inspire great loyalty, and I was drawn to its ability to touch its members through a rich network, ranging from tiny companies to global giants.

There was also the opportunity to engage with a range of dynamic people and to enhance awareness of the value of appointments of a Royal Coat of Arms by the senior members of the Royal Family.

Was there anything that particularly surprised you, or any interesting stories about the history or processes of granting a Royal Warrant that you learned when you began your role here?

In some respects, there is a simple truth at the heart of the whole warrants process, some would refer to it as 'soft power', which is that it represents an easily understood form of brand association. That is not to diminish, far from it. But if you consider the fact that particular traders and businesses have attracted the attention of Kings and Queens and their heirs throughout British history, what is retained is an attractive consistency through recognition of standards of excellence and craftsmanship in the

development and delivery of an array of goods and services.

The most oft-quoted example you hear is people recognising the legend 'By Appointment to...' which appears on products you would find on the breakfast table, or at a drinks reception, or on a supermarket shelf or in a local grocery store. And in a whole range of others places too – farmyards, places of work, transport, clothing and jewellery outlets, bookshops and concert halls – the list goes on. In terms of the consumer, the calculation can simply amount to the sense that, 'if the product is used by members of the Royal Family, then that's good enough for me.'

Remarkable in the digital age, some would

say, and especially when you think that the first documented act of recognition of a group of traders and craftspeople by the Sovereign was in 1155, when King Henry II granted a Charter to the Company of Weavers. Merchants were then able to display it and to tell people, ensuring a clear distinction in the ancient marketplace.

Could you give a brief history of the Royal Warrant?

From those beginnings, the Royal Warrant became increasingly established and by the Middle Ages was flourishing. Amongst some of its most famous recipients, was William Caxton, appointed the King's Printer in 1476.

In the 17th century, Oliver Cromwell abolished the practice, though Royal Warrants were re-established by Charles II. During the following century, Royal tradespeople began to display the Royal Arms on their premises. In 1837, Queen Victoria ascended the throne and during her reign, no fewer than 2,000 Royal Warrants were awarded and Royal tradespeople began to gather in celebration of the Monarch's birthday.

In 1840, today's Association was created, known then as the Royal Tradesmen's Association, whose 25 founder members began to challenge the improper use of Royal Arms. Forty years later, new rules governing their use were introduced, and Parliament acted to prevent the false display of Royal Arms. The Association was incorporated as an official body, and in 1907, it became the Royal Warrant Holders Association, granted a Royal Charter to secure its remit and governance.

Today, the Association has over 700 companies in membership, with a combined turnover of around £200 bn. The Association is funded solely through company subscriptions, and we assist in the process of warrant applications, renewals, and reviews.

The decisions and outcomes are determined by a committee of the Lord Chamberlain at Buckingham Palace. It's important to understand that the RWHA is not part of the Royal Household, but provides an essential service in enabling the Grantors, as they are known, to consider recommendations on company applications.

The late Queen Elizabeth The Queen

The objective is to ensure companies bearing the arms provide evidence they are taking real action to minimise damage to the environment

Mother, Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh were Grantors, as was The Prince of Wales, now of course, His Majesty King Charles III. These appointments lie solely within the gift of the Sovereign – the ability to grant Royal Appointments to providers of goods and services. That is why, following the death of Queen Elizabeth II last September –

as happens every time there is a change of Sovereign – the warrants are reviewed.

To qualify, a company has to provide evidence of trade for the previous five out of seven years, and undergo a financial and environmental audit. The latter was introduced by HRH The Prince of Wales in the early 1990s, and subsequently

adopted by The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh in 2008. This ensures that companies are questioned in detail on a range of environmental issues, from the use of plastics, to energy consumption and recycling. The objective is to ensure that companies bearing the Arms provide evidence they are taking real action to minimise damage (reducing carbon emissions, for example) to the environment in systematic ways.

How does the concept of the Royal Warrant maintain relevance and distinction in a society where views on monarchy is constantly changing?

It seems trite to say so, but of course views have ebbed and flowed throughout the entire history of Monarchy in this country and elsewhere, and that will always be the case. What is interesting is that in this respect, recognition of a company, be it large, medium-sized or small by a senior member of the Royal Family, carries considerable weight and draws attention.

There's an important distinction to make by saying that simply because a company has been awarded a Royal warrant, it does not denote it as the best in its class, or top among its competitors. It means what it says on the label – this product or service is used by the Royal Household and has been approved to carry a Royal Coat of Arms having met the qualifying criteria.

Against this background, the Association will continue to enhance its offering to member companies, with a range of social, sporting events and business-led workshops and seminars which offer advice and guidance on issues such as cybersecurity, managing family businesses, true sustainability and how to navigate the journey, digital transformation and others.

The Association also has a first rate commitment to charitable

endeavour, another reason I was attracted to it. In 1990, the RWHA created the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST) which, since those beginnings has been playing a significant and growing role in providing scholarships for craftspeople and makers, that is, skilled craftsmen and women who need support in their chosen specialism. Last year alone, QUEST was able to award over £500,000 of grants, including scholarships and apprenticeships, and the RWHA continues to support its work financially and otherwise.

I do believe there is yet more the Association can deliver in terms of building the reputation and the value of the warrant, through the commitment of its members and my team.

One example of this is what I see as new opportunities to contribute to the standing of British business skills and professionalism, deployed throughout so many companies, both here and overseas.

And more of that will come a little further into the future...

Royal Warrant Holders A HISTORY



19th Century

In 1837 Queen Victoria ascends to the throne and under her reign almost 2000 Royal Warrants are granted

1870s & 1880s

The false display of the Royal Arms is outlawed by Parliament and the Association becomes the official body

1907

The institution is officially named the 'Royal Warrant Holders Association'

1953

Queen Elizabeth II is crowned and many Warrant Holders are called upon to assist at the coronation

2007

The Royal Association of Warrant Holders charter is renewed

2015

The Association celebrates its 175th birthday



ROSL

PRESENTS

SUMMER
PLACE
FESTIVAL

A four-day celebration of art, music, food and wellness
5–8 July 2023

Experience a summer of wonder with ROSL's first festival dedicated to the arts, with a programme of talks, concerts and workshops, all expertly curated by our Arts and Food & Beverage teams. We'll be fusing ROSL's unique heritage with spectacular music, ceramics, wine, food, wellness and much more, as we lift the curtain on a truly special four-day extravaganza of all things cultural



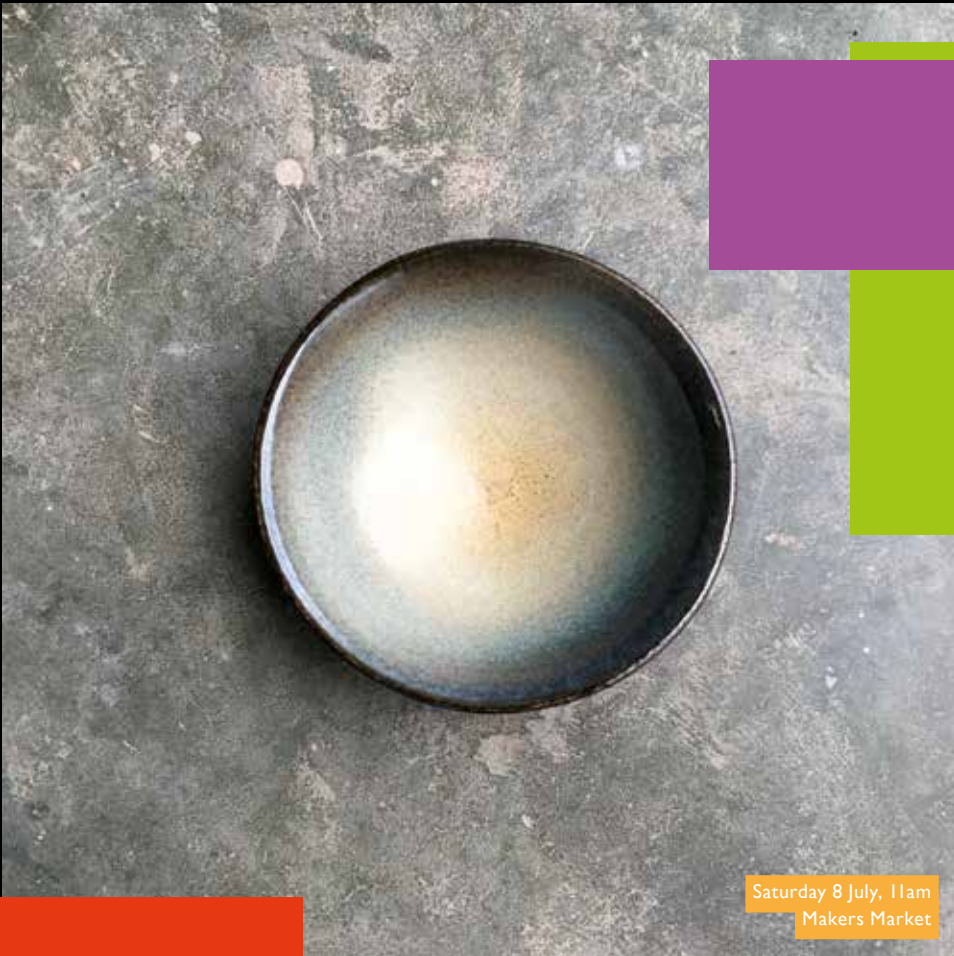
Saturday 8 July, 11am
Makers Market



Thursday 6 July, 3pm
Portrait Photography Workshop
with Tirtha Lawati and Casey Ward



Friday 7 July, 3pm
Chocolate Masterclass with Elliot Plimmer



Saturday 8 July, 11am
Makers Market

Wednesday 5 July

5.30pm
Hall of India & Pakistan

'From Knightsbridge and South Kensington – Japan comes to The Savoy'
Catherine Haill, Curator of Popular Entertainment at V&A Museum reveals the story behind, Gilbert & Sullivan's much-loved comic opera, *The Mikado*.

7.30pm
Princess Alexandra Hall

The Charles Court Opera presents *The Mikado*
The 'masters of G&S in small spaces', Charles Court Opera, present their stylish, highly successful five-star London production of the most loved of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic masterpieces, *The Mikado*.

Thursday 6 July

1pm
Wrench Room

Wrench Room Sessions with Jack Hancher
AMC Gold Medal-winning guitarist Jack Hancher has been described as 'a poet and a painter colouring sound out of guitar as if his imagination and the guitar were one'. Experience the magic for yourself in the intimate setting of the Wrench Room.

3pm
Members' Drawing Room

Portrait Photography Workshop with Tirtha Lawati and Casey Ward
ROSL PHOTO 21 Camera Winner Tirtha and landscape and portrait photographer Casey know a thing or two about taking impactful photographs. Hone your skills with this fascinating masterclass. Tea and cake included.

5pm - Wrench Room

Wrench Room Sessions with Tuulia Hero
Join Tuulia Hero, violinist of award-winning London-based ensemble Paddington Trio, in the Wrench Room for an intimate recital.

7pm
Princess Alexandra Hall

Roscoe Piano Trio (with Medical Music Society of London)
Enjoy an evening of wonderful music in the Princess Alexandra Hall with the Roscoe Piano Trio, uniting celebrated pianist Martin Roscoe, violinist Fenella Humphreys and cellist Jessica Burroughs.

Friday 7 July

3pm
1910 Kitchen (meeting point at Reception)

Chocolate Masterclass with Elliot Plimmer
Discover the secrets of the world's most decadent treat, with a cookery masterclass with Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer.

3pm
Overseas Magazine archive display
Explore the *Overseas* Magazine archive with Editor Rosie Allen, tea and biscuits included

5.30pm
Hall of India & Pakistan

Gin Tasting & Masterclass by Interrupt the Routine and Wildleaf Drinks
Discover the versatility of this iconic spirit with a tasting and masterclass, learning more about the distillery process and why distinct gins pair better with different mixers.

7pm
Princess Alexandra Hall

The Gin Chronicles presented by Interrupt the Routine
A vintage, radio-style comedy set in a world of mischief, mayhem, live sound effects and 1940s derring-do that'll have you leaving the Princess Alexandra Hall with a smile on your face.

Saturday 8 July

11am
Princess Alexandra Hall

Gong Bath Relaxation
Relax and unwind as you bathe in the healing and meditative sound of the gong – a restorative way to start your weekend. Herbal teas and biscuits included afterwards.

11am
ROSL Garden

Makers Market
Explore and purchase creations from a selection of artisan craft makers with our Makers Market, featuring ceramics, prints, and more.

2pm - Central Lounge

A Midsummer Night's Dream presented by the HandleBards
Four young lovers find themselves lost in a magical forest, where the Fairy King and Queen are fighting for the possession of a changeling boy in this wonderful take on Shakespeare's quintessentially summery romantic comedy.

5pm - Rutland Room
Pairings: A Musical Wine Tasting

Join Director of Food and Beverage Serge Pradier and Davy's wine merchant's expert Francis Flavin for a globe-trotting wine experience, paired with live music from AMC Gold Medal-winning saxophonist Huw Wiggins and award-winning harpist Oliver Wass.



Saturday 8 July, 11am
Makers Market



Wednesday 5 July, 5pm
'From Knightsbridge and South Kensington – Japan comes to The Savoy'



Saturday 8 July, 2pm
A Midsummer Night's Dream presented by the HandleBards



Wednesday 5 July, 7.30pm
The Charles Court Opera presents *The Mikado*



Thursday 6 July, 1pm
Wrench Room Sessions with Jack Hancher



Saturday 8 July, 11am
Makers Market



Friday 7 July, 7pm
The Gin Chronicles presented by Interrupt the Routine

For more details and tickets, please visit
rosl.org.uk/events

NEWS & EVENTS

The latest from our clubhouse; branches; and art, music, and education projects

The perfect mix

Duke of York bar reopens with an exciting new cocktail list

Any mixologist will tell you that creating a cocktail is an art form; a precise skill in balancing bitters and sweet notes, perfecting peels and garnishes, the choice between shaking and stirring, from mastering timeless classics to working with trending ingredients and new techniques.

As part of the refurbishment and relaunch of our Duke of York bar, we wanted to ensure that our team are well-versed in making the perfect cocktail. Enter Brian Silva, a legend on the drinks scene in both the UK and US, who's used his many decades of expertise to train our bar staff to create world class cocktails.

This side of the pond he has run bars at

The Connaught, Balthazar and iconic London restaurant Rules. A focus on classic cocktails is how Silva made his name, learning the tips and tricks of the trade at local bars and restaurants before becoming a master mixologist in his own right. He's now passed his secrets on to our own bar staff, teaching them to mix up a classic cocktail that rivals the best in the city.

Try our new cocktail menu for yourselves at the Duke of York bar, and why not sample from our regularly refreshed wine list, selected by Head of Food and Beverage Serge Pradier, to match both the season and our food menu.

DUKE OF YORK COCKTAIL

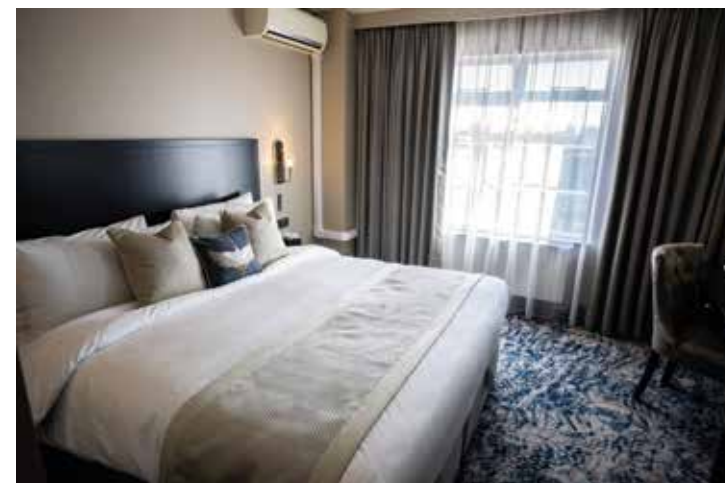
Create a taste of ROSL in the comfort of your own home, with our Duke of York cocktail, one of several specially created to relaunch our newly refurbished bar area.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 45ml extra dry Martini
- 25ml Amaretto
- 25ml cherry juice
- 15ml Remy Martin Cognac
- A martini glass
- Maraschino cherry for garnishing

HOW TO MAKE IT

Simply give all of the ingredients a good stir with ice, then strain into your martini glass. Garnish with a maraschino cherry; simple but stylish.



Sleep, eat and celebrate in style

A new look for our bedrooms, Park Room and Bennet-Clark Room

Eagle-eyed members will have spotted that many of our bedrooms have been undergoing refurbishment in recent months, as part of a larger project to modernise the Clubhouse, whilst respecting the character and history of this wonderful building. As you can see above, many of our rooms are

now looking much more modern and welcoming, with new carpets, beds, wallpaper and artwork to make you feel right at home when you stay with ROSL. The Park Room and Bennet-Clark Room have also undergone a refresh and are looking resplendent.

BOOKING DETAILS

To book accommodation please email reservations@rosl.org.uk or to book one of our recently-refurbished public rooms for a meeting or event, please contact kate@sixparkplace.co.uk

Essence of India

Chef Cyrus Todiwala comes to ROSL

We were delighted to welcome renowned Chef and author, Cyrus Todiwala OBE who brought an elegant taste of Indian and Parsee cuisine to the 1910 Dining Room back in April.

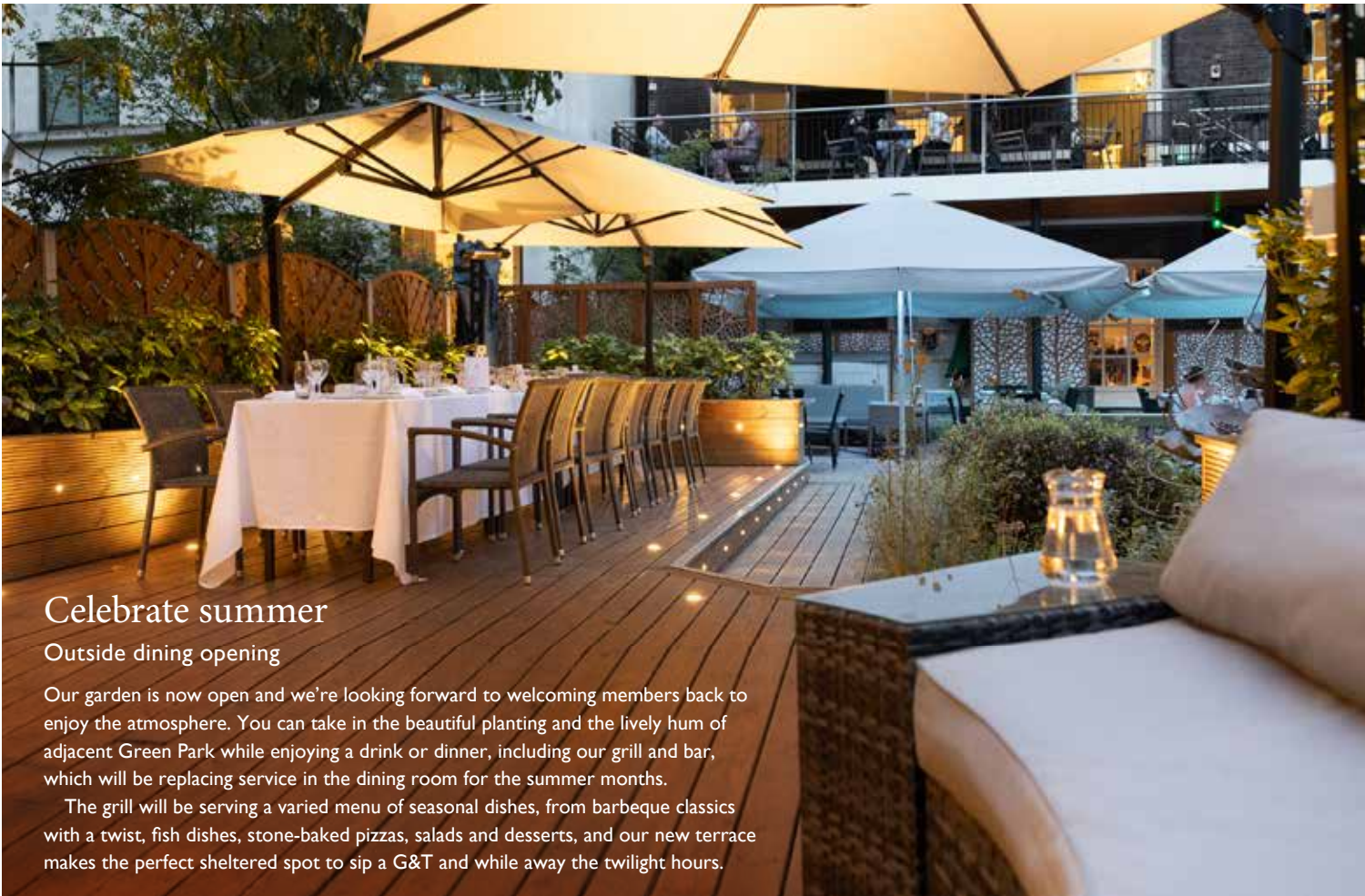
‘When asked to plan a small menu at The Royal Over-Seas League’ Cyrus says, ‘the idea was to encompass a regional variation. So we included a starter from Goa in the prawn and crab spring roll, a main course from the Parsee community in Bombay – the murg kofta korma – and a dessert of Kulfi, a Persian influenced pudding perfected in North



India during the Mughal regime. I thought it would be something to suit any palate – a bit of heat to start the meal, a luscious curry for the main and a rich creamy iced dessert; a really balanced menu.’

With more collaborations planned with Cyrus throughout 2023, we’re excited to be bringing his elevated Indian cuisine to more members this summer.

"I wanted to include regional variation, a bit of heat, a luscious curry and a rich, creamy dessert"



Celebrate summer

Outside dining opening

Our garden is now open and we’re looking forward to welcoming members back to enjoy the atmosphere. You can take in the beautiful planting and the lively hum of adjacent Green Park while enjoying a drink or dinner, including our grill and bar, which will be replacing service in the dining room for the summer months.

The grill will be serving a varied menu of seasonal dishes, from barbeque classics with a twist, fish dishes, stone-baked pizzas, salads and desserts, and our new terrace makes the perfect sheltered spot to sip a G&T and while away the twilight hours.

Support Us

To allow ROSL to continue funding art and music education projects in the UK and around the Commonwealth, please consider donating at www.rosl.org.uk/supportus

Edinburgh festival

ROSL Recitals return to the Fringe 7-12 August 2023

With a slight revamp to our format this year, we are excited to be returning to the Fringe in our 24th year of the ROSL Recitals series. Join us from 7-12 August, at the Princess Royal Suite, Royal Scots Club as we showcase some of our fantastic prize winners and scholars in the longest running classical recital series at the Fringe.

Set to join us this summer are recent prize-winners, Scottish accordionist and 2021 Gold Medal winner Ryan Corbett, Scottish saxophonist Lewis Banks, pianist Hamish Brown, flautist Marie Sato and 2022 String and Keyboard Ensemble winners, the Paddington Trio.

JOIN US AT

- 9.30am for **Breakfast Classics**: kickstart your Fringe day with a ROSL recital, and immerse yourself in amazing classical music performed by some of the finest talent, in comfortable surroundings.
- 1pm for **Lunchtime Classics**: take the load off at lunchtime, as this hour-long recital is the perfect haven on a busy Fringe day.
- 3.30pm for **Afternoon Classics**: escape the afternoon crowds and enjoy some relaxing classical music with a ROSL recital.



To book visit tickets.edfringe.com/
For our full programme visit rosl.org.uk/fringe



A winning line-up

Former AMC winners support our 2023 Competition

We were very lucky to have a raft of former AMC winners, from 1972 to present day, in attendance at our Keyboard group final in February, lending their support to our AMC 2023 competition Keyboard finalists, including winner Bocheng Wang.

From left to right: Danny Driver (2001 winner), Dominic Degavino (2017 winner), Ben Schoeman (2009 winner), Tessa Uys (1972 winner), Bocheng Wang (2023 winner), George Todică (2022 winner), Sophia Rahman (1992 winner) Piers Lane (1982 winner).

Hitting the high notes

A new musical partnership with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

ROSL were pleased to present a concert in partnership with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, in celebration of the ROSL Miss Small Legacy scholarships, which supports the fees of a Commonwealth postgraduate student at the college each year. Miss Small left a gift of over £65,000 to support young musicians studying in Scotland. ROSL members and RCS supporters enjoyed an exceptional concert of music in the

Ledger Recital Room from RCS graduates and ROSL winners Ryan Corbett on accordion, and Lewis Banks on saxophone. The concert was introduced by RCS Principal Jeffrey Sharkey and ROSL Artistic Director Geoff Parkin. Following the concert a generous afternoon tea was enjoyed by audience and musicians alike. We look forward to future events in Glasgow as this partnership continues.



Picture perfect

Legendary portrait artist June Mendoza OBE, paints former Chairman Alexander Downer

The latest addition to our portrait collection of former ROSL Chairmen is Hon Alexander Downer AC, who served as ROSL Chair from 2019 to 2022, and has been painted for us by the celebrated Australian portrait artist June Mendoza, shown here with Alexander.

With an illustrious career painting royalty, sports stars, politicians, religious leaders and actors, June Mendoza is one of the world's foremost portrait artists, and at 98 years old shows no signs of slowing down. Born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1924, June showed an early talent for capturing likenesses on canvas, and from the age of 17 was working as an artist producing book jackets, magazine illustrations and some portraits, and has since had her work hung in the prestigious surrounds of the



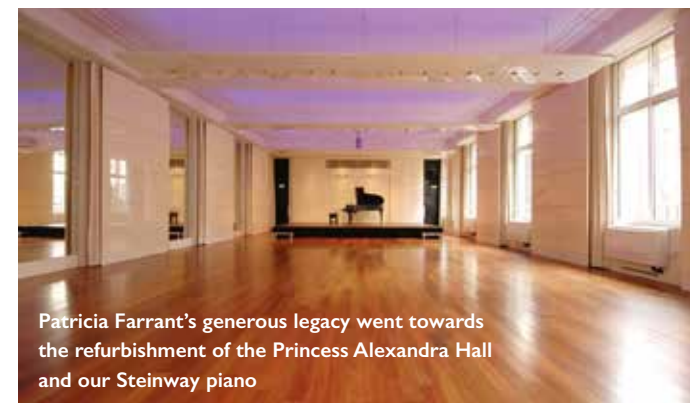
National Portrait Gallery, Britannia Royal; Naval College and the Palace of Westminster. June painted the late HM The Queen five times and counts the Duke of Edinburgh, Margaret Thatcher and Diana, the Princess of Wales among her notable subjects. We're delighted to hang her portrait of Alexander on the walls of Over-Seas House.

Patricia Farrant

A treasured legacy for the League

We're very grateful to have been left a generous legacy to the ROSL Foundation, by Former Central Council member Patricia Farrant. A member of the London Group and a keen follower of ROSL's artistic output, she also lent her expertise to several ROSL committees.

Former Director-General Major-General Roddy Porter MBE says: 'We are all the poorer for her passing but Patricia's generosity towards the ROSL Foundation will ensure that she lives on long in our memories and also in the rich artistic talent that her kindness will help unlock.'



Patricia Farrant's generous legacy went towards the refurbishment of the Princess Alexandra Hall and our Steinway piano

In memoriam

In memory of Stephen Hobbs-Hurrell

Former Director-General Robert Newell gives a touching tribute to Stephen Hobbs-Hurrell, who passed in February 2023. 'Stephen joined ROSL in 1978 when he took over as Chief Accountant from Ernest Hall. In 1991 he was appointed Director of Finance and Administration the position he held until his retirement in 2006. During his long period of exceptional service Stephen contributed to the strengthening of the League's finances but perhaps his most significant achievement was the installation and implementation of computer

systems for all departments which he upgraded at regular intervals. Stephen was a popular and well-liked colleague with some of whom he played tennis to a very good standard. He was also a keen golfer, bowls player and had been a yachtsman but only sailed remote model sail boats in later life! He is survived by his wife Jennifer and his children Simon and Jane and his grandchildren Robyn, Ray and Alana to whom with his other family members and friends we convey our condolences and sympathy.'



Western Australia Symphonic Orchestra Concert
© Stephen Heath photography



ROSL around the world

Our branches provide an opportunity for members in all parts of the world and across the UK to enjoy a range of social events close to home. To find out more about getting involved, simply contact your local representative

CANADA

British Columbia

This is a reminder to take advantage of the online ROSL events and concerts through the ROSL YouTube channel so we can stay in touch with our worldwide community.

Membership of ROSL means we are part of a global organisation with shared interests. The challenge in such an organisation is to stay connected. One way that I have recently learned about from our Director-General, Dr Annette Prandzioch is to tune into the ROSL YouTube channel: YouTube.com/@RoyalOverseasLeague1910

Subscribing (free) to this YouTube channel will bring ROSL concerts, talks and public affairs talks right into our homes, and creates alerts when new videos are uploaded. Additionally, we can link with ROSL members around the world by joining the ROSL Bookclub, which is in person and online. My husband, Desmond, and I have recently started ROSL online Bridge lessons, where we join members from Jersey and Singapore. The availability of on-line events has been an unexpected benefit of the lockdowns and the need to adapt to new ways of communicating

and staying in touch. In British Columbia for the last few years we've held an informal no-host lunch following an exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery and some members have attended.

During February, I advised our members by email of a concert in the Early Music Vancouver series by Consone Quartet, winners of the 2016 ROSL Ensemble competition. The concert was a success and the ROSL connection was announced in the concert introduction.

Elizabeth Murray Alexander,
British Columbia ROSL Branch

AUSTRALIA

Victoria

As the Coronation of our new King approached, the Victorian Branch hosted or participated in a number of events to celebrate the historic occasion. These included invitations to members to attend Choral Evensong to mark the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III at St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne and a Service of Thanksgiving at All Saints Church East St Kilda, both held on 7 May. Branch members also had the opportunity to celebrate the Coronation and HM The King's

first official birthday at a formal dinner held at the Hotel Windsor and included a very special presentation by life member Mr Kenneth Park. Kenneth has been and remains a much-appreciated supporter of the Branch and is a respected aficionado on a range of subjects. Branch members also had the opportunity to attend the Annual General Meeting held at ANZAC House on 24 May 2023.

More events will be featured in future Victorian Branch's news bulletins and will include the Annual Christmas Reception held at the British Consul General's residence at a date to be confirmed.

And a reminder for Victorian Branch members that their membership renewals are now being looked after by the London Membership Team.

Keir Watt, Branch Secretary,
ROSL Victoria Branch

Western Australia

Saturday 18 February saw beautiful gardens overlooking Perth's majestic Swan River echoing to fine music performed by several of the young musicians supported by ROSL WA as they begin their professional careers. 'Music Under The Stars'

performers, in the most part, prize winners of ROSL WA awards, and supported by the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra of WA, all donated their services to raise funds for medical support for Ukraine. They were joined by the 12-member 'Echoes of Ukraine Choir' and WA Perth music theatre stars. This function was organised by The Order of St John Knights Hospitaller and ROSL as part of ROSL WA's joint activity programme.

The next activity occurred on 25 March in the historic Government House Ballroom. The Royal Over-Seas League of WA's Symphonic Gala Concert, another sold out event, saw and heard the leading Perth soprano with an international reputation, Emma Matthews, as the soloist with the Perth Symphony Orchestra augmented by a large number of West Australian Academy of Performing Arts students, perform arias by Handel and Mozart, Giuseppe Verdi's thrilling overture *The Force of Destiny* and Ludwig van Beethoven's mighty and majestic *Fifth Symphony*.
Antony Howes, Chairman,
ROSL WA

Tasmania

The Tasmanian branch have the following events coming up this summer:

King Charles's Birthday luncheon

Tuesday 14 June 12pm,
Lenah Valley RSL,
Augusta Road, Lenah Valley
The guest speaker will be the Governor of Tasmania Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC. Please contact the Secretary for further details.

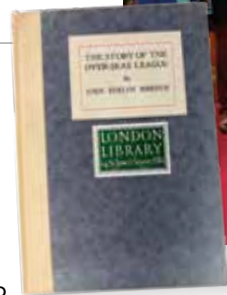
News & views

ROSL NEWS

Tasmanian Branch 75th Anniversary reception at Government House Tuesday 11 July, 6pm

Members are welcome to bring a guest to this event – the dress code is lounge suit and day dress. Please contact the Secretary for further details.

Monthly Tasmanian Branch book group afternoon teas
These are held on the last Thursday of each month, and are based on an agreed theme for each event. If you would like to participate, please contact the Secretary for further details.



London Group visit to the London Library in January. The Library presented a book and newspaper articles from the early 20th century featuring ROSL, for members to view.

Tasmanian Branch 75th anniversary luncheon.

A special luncheon for members to celebrate the branch's 75th anniversary will be held in August. This luncheon will be paid for by the branch in recognition and appreciation of members' ongoing support for the branch, during a very difficult time. More details will be provided as soon as they become available.

London Group Literary Tour of St James's Monday 5 June, 2-4pm, Carlton Gardens

London Group members will tour the streets of St James's, led by London Literary Tour guides, with performances from excerpts from books, plays, poems, letters and diaries, by the writers who penned them, all linked to the locations we visit. We finish close to our club and can then relax over a cup of tea! Booking is via Eventbrite and numbers will be capped at 20.

Member-led Activities



ROSL Bridge Club

The Bridge Club meets at ROSL every **Monday 2pm-4pm** (except on Bank Holidays) in the Drawing Room to play ACOL Bridge. Once a month there is a seminar with a truly excellent tutor (£20pp) and all other play is free. New members are welcome.

International Online ROSL Bridge Club:
10-week Beginners' Course online on **Tuesday evenings at 5pm-7pm** UK time. The course started in February with a truly international group with members from Cyprus, Jersey and Singapore! Members visiting the Club can join the Monday afternoon play.

ROSL Backgammon Club

Meets on **Wednesdays 2pm-4pm** in the Drawing Room and for lunch (optional) at 12.30. New members are welcome.

Evening informal Backgammon play. Members can play whenever they wish, once they have a partner. Contact Stelina at stelina@hotmail.com for further details and to be shown where the boards are kept. These must be returned to the correct location, every time.

ROSL Book Group

The ROSL 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 **6pm**, but we meet beforehand for a drink and a chat and afterwards for dinner (optional) at **7.30pm**.

To join any of the Member-led activities, please contact Eve at E.Mitleton-Kelly@mitleton-kelly.org.uk

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AMC Gold Medal Final

Wednesday 14 June, 7.30pm, Wigmore Hall

It's the jewel in the crown of our arts calendar, and the culmination of months of hard work for the winners of the ROSL Music Competition solo section finals. Join us at Wigmore Hall as these talented young musicians compete for the prestigious ROSL Gold Medal and £15,000 first prize. Former renowned winners include Jacqueline du Pré cello, Melvyn Tan harpsichord, Susan Chilcott soprano, Sean Shibe guitar and Jonathan Lemalu bass. The evening also includes performances from the winners of the two ROSL Ensemble Prizes. Join us at Wigmore Hall to celebrate another fantastic year of the Annual Music Competition. Tickets available directly from Wigmore Hall box office or call 020 7935 2141

Summer Place Festival

From Wednesday 5 July – Saturday 8 July,
from 5pm, Over-Seas House

An oasis of culture all in one place, our first arts festival will feature a mix of music, food, wine, art and wellness for members and non-members alike to enjoy. See page 32 for our festival guide, with more details of performances, exhibitors and workshops.



London Group Walk: Literary Tour of St James

Monday 5 June, 2pm, Carlton Gardens



An exclusive tour for LG members provided by London Literary Tours. Guides Mike and Cindy will lead you on a literary odyssey around St James's, performing excerpts from books, plays, poems, letters, reviews and diaries of writers linked to the area. Expect to hear excerpts from Wilfred Owen, Graham Greene, Ian Fleming, Virginia Woolf, and Noël Coward. The tour starts at Carlton Gardens (top of the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth memorial) and ends close to Over-Seas House.

ROSL Recitals at Edinburgh Fringe

From Monday 7 August

Join the ROSL Arts team at the Edinburgh Fringe festival for a series of relaxing music recitals that will provide a haven from the hustle and bustle of the festival. With Breakfast, Lunchtime and Afternoon Classics taking place every day, there's sure to be something for everyone. See page 39 for more details.



Illustrated Guide to London Exhibition

From Friday 14 July, 6pm, Over-Seas House

London has historically been a melting pot of music and art, high culture and sub-culture, heritage architecture melding with the new; in this exhibition we celebrate what makes London such a vibrant city to inhabit, launching with our Exhibition Private View on Thursday 13 July. See page 24 for more details.





PETER SOMMER
TRAVELS

**"A perfect combination of intellectual, aesthetic, sensual and physical experiences.
Activities were excellent, the scenery was breathtaking and swimming off the gulet was magical."**

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